

CITY OF EDEN, N.C.

The regular meeting of the City Council, City of Eden, was held on Tuesday, July 19, 2022 at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 308 E. Stadium Drive. Those present for the meeting were as follows:

Mayor:	Neville Hall
Council Members:	Gerald Ellis Jerry Epps Phillip Hunnicutt Kenny Kirkman Bernie Moore Bruce Nooe Tommy Underwood
City Manager:	Jon Mendenhall
City Attorney:	Erin Gilley
City Clerk:	Deanna Hunt
Media:	Mike Moore, Mike Moore Media Roy Sawyers, Rockingham Update

MEETING CONVENED:

Mayor Hall called the regular meeting of the Eden City Council to order and welcomed those in attendance. Reverend Karen Willis of Bluestone Missionary Baptist Church explained the pastor scheduled to give the invocation was delayed at work and that was why she was there. She gave an invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Police Chief/Assistant City Manager Clint Simpson.

PRESENTATIONS:

- a. Strategic Planning Commission activities and accomplishments.

Mayor Hall called on Marketing & Special Events Manager and commission staff advisor Cindy Adams.

Ms. Adams said she was there to present the impressive list of accomplishments of the Strategic Planning Commission's first five-year plan called Positively Eden. It was a bold plan and it cranked out some awesome projects that enhanced our City in five different categories: broaden the impact of downtown Eden, increase economic vitality, boost neighborhood development, integrate health and recreation development, and engage citizens. She read the list of accomplishments: branding study, downtown promotional rack cards, story boards at City Hall, Bridge Street parking lot, Bridge Street parking lot sign, Washington Street façade grant, Washington Street pedestrian walkway, wire sculptures as public art in Grogan Park, Karastan mosaic, otter sculpture at the greenway, Children's Interactive Trail at the Smith River Greenway, Eden movie night at Winterfest, Reynolds Brewery façade grant, GIS WebTech on City website, job shadow program of City employees by MHS students, four Delta dental water fountains for Morehead High School, Washington Street mural, Meadow Road and Stadium traffic island landscaping, Spray mural, developer's luncheon and consultant that came for that, small area brands were completed with the Eden Branding Study Project, Panther murals at Morehead High School, the Unified Development Ordinance, Freedom Park Dog Park, Matrimony Creek Greenway grant supplement, Freedom Park Nature Trail grant supplement, Fieldcrest Road public space, Matrimony Creek Trail amenity package, Matrimony Creek Trail mileage markers, Smith River Greenway sunflowers, Leaksville Landing parking lot paving, Fieldcrest Road Public Space, Fieldcrest Road Public Space ribbon cutting, Dan River Nature Trail, Smith River Greenway Butterfly Trail, Klyce Street Landing/river access amenities, Spring Grown & Gathered, Bridge Street and Mill Avenue walking tracks and Fall Grown & Gathered. They supplemented both of those for one to two years. An Eden brand was developed within the branding study, Eden license plates and coasters, text messaging service, CTT Productions Did You Know series, WGSR advertising package, Our State Magazine video and digital article, marketing brochures, a boost to social marketing and the Explore Eden website upgrade.

Ms. Adams explained the commission was citizen driven and made up of the following members she asked to stand and be recognized for their dedication and hard work for the betterment of the City of Eden: Jim Burnette, Judge Ed Wilson –original member, Gerri Hunt, Jamie Galloway, Christy Hensley, Sandra Meadows, Houston Barrow, Sarah Griffith Heston – original member, Hope Bogaert, Sarah Stokes and John LeSueur. Staff representatives who worked closely with the group and worked very hard as well were: Mike Dougherty, Randy Hunt, Terry Vernon, Johnny Farmer, Kelly Stultz and herself. The plan at one time or another involved most every employee within the City. It might be on the financial end or installation of art pieces on the other end. A lot of employees touched the projects. Last but certainly not least she wanted to thank Council for their support and financial backing of all the projects that the commission believed positively affected the wonderful City of Eden.

Mayor Hall asked Mr. Sawyers to check and make sure the meeting was streaming live. He said he hoped it was and that everyone got to see what the commission had been able to accomplish in five years. Positively Eden was the name of it and as they could tell by the list of the accomplishments, it was a positive influence on the City. He appreciated the commission members and the council members past and present who supported the projects. Many of the comments he got throughout the community were about the items Ms. Adams just discussed and how appreciative people were for what the City had tried to do to make Eden a better place to live. He thanked Ms. Adams, her team and the staff who worked with the members. He hoped they could continue to make improvements.

b. The Retail Coach services and commercial recruitment.

Mayor Hall called on Ms. Stultz.

Ms. Stultz said for more than a year, she and her staff had been looking into various companies that did that sort of work. The previous week she had a conversation with Council Member Hunnicutt and he advised her that at a meeting former Community & Economic Development Manager Randy Hunt had shared some figures with that group and Council Member Hunnicutt thought they should be shared with Council. In the last five years, \$5 million had been spent in the various downtowns. There had been 82 housing units erected, 20 building rehabs, 33 façade grants, 28 new businesses, 88 full-time jobs and 31 part-time jobs. A representative, Charles Parker, was present from The Retail Coach. They were the original firm to do that type of work. He would like to make a presentation.

Mr. Parker thanked the person who set up his presentation and thanked Council for allowing him to present. He was a project director with The Retail Coach. Council had a proposal from The Retail Coach for retail recruitment and development strategy. The firm was founded in 2000 to help communities identify what their retail opportunities were; actively recruit new brands - restaurants, retailers, hotels - they had a very broad sense of the word retail; to fill the gaps in the communities; and overall coach them to retail success. Over the last 22 plus years, they had worked in more than 40 states with 650 plus communities across those states with a 90 percent retention rate with the clients on those services because they had been successful with the communities they were working with growing their business infrastructure and business ecosystem recruiting new businesses to their communities. They were a very experienced team. Kelly Cofer, the founder, in 2000 was the national site selector for a retailer and realized that while cities were fairly good at working on the industrial side of things, workforce development and traditional economic development, there was a gap as to how to go and get a new Zaxby's, a new restaurant, a new clothing store, how to fill 3,000 square feet of empty space in a grocery anchor shopping center. Mr. Cofer came up with the idea and pioneered the service of being the plug-and-play consultant to go in and actively recruit and call on the site selectors and represent the cities by touting the great pad site or 5,000 square feet. It was just like the site down the road. They would ask why a company was not in Eden and tell them they needed to be there. The firm provided all the data and the legwork to let the companies know about the opportunities in the client communities and fulfill those open voids. The firm had a full staff, everything from data analysis, multiple retail recruitment specialists whose

job was to hound those site selectors all day long and ask why they were not in Eden, or Gastonia, or Camden, South Carolina, to make sure that they knew about the opportunities by putting their best foot forward for the client communities. They were the original company that started the process over 20 years ago, pioneering the aspect and they had been very successful in the last 20 years. They were consultants, they were not brokers. They did not have a brokerage arm, no sister company that did brokerage. That allowed the firm to work with the local brokers and let them know the firm was not coming in to step on their toes. The firm would be there as a resource to them on behalf of the City. Brokers usually embraced the firm – they knew the staff was ultimately there to help them do their jobs. Ultimately their network became the broker’s network, either to fill a space or move properties. The firm did multi-concept recruitment. They had a wide range of the term retail, using it to mean anything from soft and hard goods – restaurants from everything such as the sit-down Darden brands to fast-food restaurants and everything in between; entertainment – anything from Malibu Jacks taking over former Kmart’s of 2,000 square feet, and even hotels to a certain extent. They worked with a lot of hotels. He had noticed by staying at the Hampton Inn the prior night and that night, it was hard to get a hotel room there. It was the only major flag of that tier in town. It was \$175 a night, which was a very high rate with a very high occupancy rate. He questioned why there were not more hotels. He thought a hotel study would show there was quite a bit of demand for additional hotels. That was overall under their umbrella as well. The firm had very consistent project teams. They had a team of 10 to 12 people and they had always maintained that small boutique style. They were better able to serve their clients. There was no sales team. He was there on day one and if they signed a contract, three months from now there would not be a new person replacing him. It would be him coming back to give them updates and him that the City called to ask about the status of a retailer. There would be consistent communication throughout the overall process.

Mr. Parker said he did want to touch on a few things about their strategy and what that looked like for the City. The first step would be analyzing the market. There was a data component to it. Although they did a lot of data, they were not a data company. That was not how they saw themselves. They saw themselves as a services company, being that recruitment tool. They were putting together the deals and talking to the local property owners, the local brokers. The firm wanted those people to know who they were and what they could bring to the table with a site selector, with a national tenant rep out of Charlotte or Raleigh, wherever it may be and ultimately putting the deal together. That was their job rather than just data. But data was a big component to it. They looked at the competitive markets and what the communities around them had and why they were more retailed in a sense. Looking at the market in Eden, there was only one major national restaurant and that was Ruby Tuesday. He guessed they would count Pizza Hut and Wing Street across from the street from them but other than that, there were not a lot of sit-down national restaurants. He questioned why. That was something his firm would dig into. They would question why the City could not get a Darden brand or a steakhouse in Eden. Those would be the top priorities from them looking from the outside before they got the feedback from the inside. Additionally, they would look at things on the workforce. Purina would mean jobs coming to town that would lead to more rooftops, more retail demand, on top of the existing needs not being met. The megasite just outside of town between Eden and Danville, ultimately that would start up at some point and create a whole lot more new opportunities for jobs and more demand for retail. There was a lot of opportunity that could be seen there on day one. They could also break it down and look at the community as a whole, whether that was north 14, south 14, near the Walmart, by the old mall and even Uptown Eden. He knew there were several more sub nodes. They looked at each part of town as its own unique district. They would ask what was needed there, what pieces would fit there. Some may just need a sit-down restaurant. Some may be a fit for a bigger box store. One may be a fit for independent brands and they would ask how they could help local entrepreneurs that were thinking about opening a shop. They would question how to provide those people with the right tools to get that boutique up and running, or that drink shop or whatever it might be. They had a little different strategy for each of those areas that they looked at in each of their markets. They ultimately got down to the trade area, and that was the key recruitment to any process was how they would pitch Eden to the people who wanted to be there. They used a lot of different technology but mobile location data was one where basically all the things people opted to on their phone shared location data for research. That research allowed them to show, there was a little five-mile radius there looking at the

Walmart in Eden, that there had been 1.5 million visits to that Walmart over the last 12 months and over 140 unique individuals had been within that Walmart in the last 12 months. For a town that had about 20,000 to 25,000 within five miles of where they were standing, that was significant pull factor for that Walmart. They knew that they were not just looking at five miles for where they were serving. They were serving well beyond that. He asked how they framed that as not you need to come to Eden but as we are not a town of 25,000 or 30,000 people but we are serving a market of probably close to 50,000 when they mapped out where people were coming from to buy their groceries or go eat. That was their ultimate crux when they looked at their overall retail trade area. They built everything else out from that as well, looking down the rabbit hole as to what were their psychographics, which were kind of demographics on steroids. Two people may look exactly alike, have gone to the same college and have the same job but if one goes hunting on the weekend while the other plays golf on the weekend, and one drives a truck while the other drives a sports car, they were going to spend their money significantly differently. They needed to figure out how to match that up to what retailers were a good fit there. Things like Tractor Supply that was already in town looked hard at psychographics. They went down the rabbit hole and tried to identify what the true opportunities were in town and then match up with the expanding brands in the region and say the core customer was here and they did not have a location there but needed to be there and there was a spot in the empty 3,000 square foot building and what the lease rate was. They would go have coffee together and tell them they needed to go sign the lease. That was the firm's role in all of that. Taking that a step further to look at leakage analysis, it put on paper a number amount of how much of certain brands were missing. They only had one sit-down restaurant. Overall, they were serving less than 80 percent of the demand within five miles. They were at 79 percent of meeting local demand. They were serving much beyond that five miles so they were really under retail in terms of sit-down restaurants. Grocery stores were another aspect of that. They were only serving 81 percent of demand essentially with the two Food Lions. That was a big component. They would have to figure out how to get that next tier grocery there to serve the customers. Both of those Food Lions were in the top half in terms of foot traffic and one was in the top third across the country for Food Lions. They had a strong grocery market there. They needed to figure out how to go in and expand and grow that market as well.

Mr. Parker said the key to the game was looking at the available retail and restaurant real estate. They would take a full retail best use analysis and go and do a site inventory. He had driven around that day with Ms. Stultz and Planner Jeff Alderman looking at sites. That was where they would take a next best look. They would ask the questions like why there was an outparcel in front of Tractor Supply and the storage unit and if that was an available unit. They would talk to that property owner and find out what the asking price was and be a facilitator. He referenced the old Winn-Dixie on the west side of town and asked if that was a key property the firm could go and be a matchmaker for a new tenant. Obviously, the big setbacks at Kings Highway. The helipad eliminated a full cloverleaf aspect to it. He questioned what that left with the other three quadrants. He asked if that was something they could talk to DOT about and see if that was potentially available. For an outsider those were questions that popped up as that was all key real estate as it was one of the highest trafficked intersections in the county. Those were key things that some of the brands that were missing here – Starbucks, Chipotle, Zaxby's of the world, Slim Chickens of the world. Those were all brands that were in markets much smaller than Eden so the question was why they were not there. That was the role of the firm – to go and figure out and to talk to additional shopping centers and look at those outparcels and find out if those were things the firm could go and help fill up, find the right tenants to make it work. As part of their process, they got into marketing and branding. They would put together traditional realtor site profiles so they could submit them to the proper site submission profile and processes that the national and regional retailers had to get them to come look. If they had not been to Eden in 10 years they were missing out because it had changed so drastically and they may have a dated impression of it. They would do all of that analysis to say they knew they had the numbers, specific sites and those were the brands that were expanding in the region. All the stars were aligning. As they continued on, they would build everything out from a marketing platform and a retail dashboard that could be part of the City's website or a standalone as well. The site selectors or real estate committees had gone from 15 to 20 to one or two across the country. Publix did not have the same staff - they had to farm it out. They were constantly traveling. They had to do so much research

digitally. To make sure they had all the information they would direct them to the site to check out the drive times and radius. They provided all those pieces to execute the retail recruitment process from day one. They were the megaphone for the community. They had the resources and the network over the last 20 years. They knew who the key decision makers were for Aldi, for Chick-fil-A, they talked to them on a regular basis. The firm could get feedback and understand why they were not in Eden, what the timeline would be to get in Eden and how they could ultimately move that up. There was a live tracking platform to note every conversation they had. The client would know exactly who they had talked to and what the feedback was. Even if it was not a yes, a no and why was very important information. It would allow them to determine what they needed, such as additional rooftops, a site closer to Walmart. That was all part of what they did and what they tracked and provided through their services. A big part of what they did was go to tradeshow and represent the City there as well. That was the National Council of Shopping Centers conferences which had the national show in Vegas in May every year. There were close to 25,000 that year. It was the first one since covid. Generally, it was about 40,000 to 50,000 people out there. There were regional shows in Charlotte and Atlanta as well where it was basically a big speed dating of sites and site selectors pitching projects to be at. The firm represented their client communities at those events. Overall, they became plugged in and an extension of the Planning and Community Development Department, of Ms. Stultz's office. They wanted to become part of the community and work with the property owners, understanding what their goals were and ultimately how to fill their space and bring new brands to the City. From that they have helped communities get brownfield grants as well. They would really be a part of the economic development team and strategy in the long term. They took their partnerships seriously and wanted to ensure they had a productive, long-term partnership with each of their communities. He knew that was throwing a lot of information out at once. It was a bit of catchall economic development and understanding how it all worked, who the right people were and what the numbers were they needed to see and that was their expertise and why they had been so successful in the communities they had worked in.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked what kind of timing Mr. Parker expected from the time a contract was signed to the time he would actually be out engaging. He asked how long it took to do the deep dive of data collection, local conversations with whomever the stakeholders would be to be interviewed, and putting together the marketing. He asked how long that would take from the time they signed.

Mr. Parker advised from the first part to compile, put the dashboard together, pull all the reports together was usually between 45 to 60 days. That being said, they would start picking up the phone and calling on brokers to ask their general interest in the area of a few outparcels they were checking on. There should be immediate feedback in the sense they started recruitment day one as much as they could. If they were told someone was interested, they would finish putting the information together and keep them on the line. In that sense, recruitment started day one.

Council Member Hunnicutt said part of that would be to talk to clients, or potential clients, about what was available, both existing buildings and land. He asked if the firm built the real estate inventory.

Mr. Parker replied absolutely, that was something they kept a running track of. If six months from now, someone decided to sell his property, that would be added to the property, and if one sold, it would be rolled off. Whether it was available property, often it was off-market property. Local knowledge helped and that was a key part of why they wanted to be so plugged into the community. They kept a running inventory of the available sites and built out the profile sites. When they were told someone needed a one-acre outparcel, they would have seven or eight options to send them. That was how they were successful.

Council Member Hunnicutt said his last question was what staff's requirements would be needed in terms of not only startup, but the ongoing process. He asked if there were specifics the firm would be looking to staff to help.

Mr. Parker said the minimum would be general information such as the number of housing permits, things that ultimately would play a role in recruiting retail. If there were contacts to be made, introductions to local property owners. That was usually the bare minimum that helped them do their job more. The flip side of that was as involved as they would like to be, they would be included. If the firm went to a conference and a council or staff member wanted to go to Charlotte and sit in on those meetings and meet the brokers face-to-face, they would set an agenda for them and be right there in the passenger seat. Staff could be involved as much as Council would like their staff to be. But generally they were pretty plug and play. If they could not track down a property owner through their own research and staff knew somebody, that was really about all they needed to get rocking and rolling.

Council Member Hunnicutt said he actually did have one more question. At the last meeting, Council had briefly touched on the topic and Council Member Underwood had asked a very legitimate question – it appeared they may be edging into a recession. He asked if Mr. Parker, given the timing, could talk a little bit about the retailers and if they actually stopped their process during a recession. He questioned what was going on with them. Going into a recession, he asked if that created opportunity for the City.

Mr. Parker said generally the looming recession seemed to be targeted to specific areas, not as blanketed as others had been, such as '07 or even the covid recession. During covid, although people were furloughed and travel restrictions were in place, the firm was still talking to people weekly whose number one goal was to drop new stores. Even when construction costs went through the roof or tough times lay ahead, those people were still looking and going ahead with their overall plans. Currently, the firm was looking for 2024, 2025, 2026 locations. At the end of the year each year, if five or six of their 15 or 20 spots fell through, the firm could look for 2023. It was a long-term play. Currently, Texas, Georgia and the Carolinas were probably four of the top states because that was where people were moving. There was migration in. Retailers knew that and understood that and needed to keep up with that pipeline. That was an area the firm questioned all the time, what was going on in the Carolinas. It was one of the hotter of the markets despite some overall trending things that may be looming. The impression of retail was still pretty bullish even with high gas prices over the summer that had knocked out some travel. Inflation was a big piece of it but retail sales still went up in June. Things were still trending in the right direction, despite a lot of headwind. The expectation was to still drop a significant amount of stores in the next three to five years.

Council Member Ellis welcomed Mr. Parker to Eden. He was glad Mr. Parker was there and of course he had been to North Carolina in the past. He could see that Mr. Parker had had 650 assignments in 40 states. He asked which was the smallest city Mr. Parker had worked with.

Mr. Parker advised the firm had worked in towns as low as 1,200 and lower. Loxlee, Alabama, was one town of about 1,200, now it was a city. They had a Buc-ee's down there. Anywhere from as small as 1,200 to Dallas, Texas. They were working in San Antonio currently with some of their projects. They had a wide range of figuring out the right pieces. The key was figuring out the specifics of what each city needed.

Council Member Ellis asked if those cities already had economic developers working there.

Mr. Parker replied that all of them had someone who wore that hat. Obviously, San Antonio had a team of economic developers. In Loxlee, they did not necessarily have anyone overseeing it. They had a council member who kind of volunteered to oversee it. It was along that same continuum of how involved someone wanted to be or if they wanted to outsource it.

Council Member Ellis asked how many cities the firm worked with between Virginia and the Carolinas.

Mr. Parker answered there were eight or nine communities they had worked with.

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Council Member Ellis asked if any were in a 100-mile range of Eden.

Mr. Parker advised they had worked in Thomasville for two years but were not currently working there.

Council Member Ellis asked about their work in the coastal area.

Mr. Parker said they had worked in coastal South Carolina and in Halifax County.

Council Member Ellis asked if it was correct that they would only talk over the phone. That was what he understood from the packet Council received.

Mr. Parker said they would make at least three trips back to Eden over the next year. Usually it was closer to four or five. The firm did a lot of work in Charlotte and it was not a very far trek to Eden. They did also work in Halifax County and across the state. They could expect to see him three or four more times, maybe not officially at a council meeting but stopping in. If there was a site tour and he needed to be there, he would be sure to make a trip and work with a local property owner or developer if they needed him there. He could fly in. The firm had a budget for travel to get back. There would be monthly update calls. Whoever wanted to participate in those was welcome to. The firm would make at least three additional trips back to Eden in person in some form or fashion.

Council Member Nooe told Mr. Parker he liked a good portion of what he had presented, getting ready, having information and all that available. His biggest concern was recruiting businesses to compete with people who were already here. He asked if the firm had tracked over their years the impact on existing owners and operators in town providing the same service when a new business was brought in.

Mr. Parker said the last thing they wanted to do was put out especially a local business. That was not something they ever wanted to do. That was one of the key focuses they worked on, looking at where the gaps were that were not meeting demand, that there would be room for a new restaurant or that there was room for a new clothing store. That they were not putting one out. They wanted to make sure the pie was large enough for that. That was a key component. If there were other subjects or other topics they would be told to nix that. If they went through their list of 25 or 30 targets and the City advised one was not something they wanted to go after, the firm could nix it and go on to just certain concepts they wanted to make sure fit. He would say overall in competition, there was a reason CVS went across from Walgreen's and why Lowe's went across from Home Depot. It created a destination. People would know they could go to Eden and get what they wanted. If one did not have it, across the street would. That was the rising tide of that mentality. There was a reason competition was healthy. At the same time they wanted to make sure the right pieces came in, there was room for them and they complemented the overall ecosystem already in place.

Council Member Nooe said he wanted to be able to answer the questions of people who wanted to come to Eden and provide as much service from staff and whatever else to give them as much information as they needed. Still, there was just something about bringing restaurants in with the restaurants here struggling to get staff. If you went by places you saw places needing people to work and they were competing for the same people to work.

Mr. Parker said staffing was an issue all over the country. It was a real issue.

Council Member Nooe said that was what he had to justify to himself, if it was something the City needed to be doing ... recruiting people to come in and compete with current taxpayers. That was his biggest concern about it.

Mr. Parker said he understood. It was a balancing act of employment, sales tax dollars, providing amenities. The recruiting industry asked do you have a Starbucks, do you have a Chick-fil-A, if they had certain brands that people would want who were moving there. They would google it on a map and would not see the brands and question if that was somewhere they really wanted to live. Overall it was an amenities act and that was how they saw retail. It was not just an end-all equation anymore. There were questions industries asked about certain thresholds because at that point they would have kind of made it as a city. They were seeing retail ultimately as an input for larger businesses too which was how they could ultimately recruit more people to town. It was certainly a balancing act.

Council Member Underwood asked what kind of guarantee the firm could give for the \$43,000 for the first year and \$33,000 for the years after. He asked how many businesses the firm would be able to bring in.

Mr. Parker advised there were no guarantees in it ultimately because the firm was not brokers. They could not ultimately make anyone sign for that aspect of it. There were no guarantees. He would say the best metric they had to show their success was that 90 percent retention rate, 90 percent of their clients over the last 20 years had opted to continue on with the firm. Even if he called Zaxby's that night and they said they were on board, Council would not be eating chicken strips a year from now. It was a process overall from that aspect but their backdrop and their history of success of bringing businesses in over time he thought did speak to the volumes that they could be successful and the fact that the level of existing retail and restaurants currently in Eden showed there was significant room to bring in those brands.

Council Member Ellis said with another person they had really tried in the past seven or eight years to bring in the chains. He thought they had a very fine economic developer in the past and he had just retired from the City which was why he had asked Mr. Parker if he worked with economic developers. It was like Council Member Nooe had said ... they just had one lumberyard close and bought out and they had another one in Eden. The same chain was less than 15 miles away. And then they had a Lowe's within 10 miles on each side and going into Danville as well. It was very difficult for them to say they were going to bring in someone to recruit. Eden had restaurants. It was difficult for them to say they were going to use \$40,000 for that. If the firm could bring industry in, he would be very happy.

Mr. Parker asked what the struggle had been with industry recruiting.

Council Member Ellis said currently the City did not have the roads to bring them in. There were two-lane roads coming in from the east and west. Madison and Reidsville had gained a lot. Currently they were waiting on the Berry Hill project and hopefully it would take off, maybe more for future generations. It was a positive thing and they wanted to keep positive thoughts. He appreciated Mr. Parker taking the time to do the presentation. Undoubtedly there were many successes in those 40 states he had worked in.

Mr. Parker said he did believe Eden was primed to attract that next tier of retail that was missing.

Council Member Moore said he knew Mr. Parker's business was named retail and he knew that was what they were going after. He noted Council Member Ellis had brought up businesses. It was his thinking that big industry was looking for parks and recreation, what types of restaurants were in town and things like that. In his opinion, this was something they needed to do. It may be six or seven years, it could be two or three years. It was not going to just happen on its own. They had to have some leadership to get it done and somebody who knew what they were doing. Evidently the firm did. That was his thinking. He asked for an approximate number of retailers, whether restaurant, retail clothing or motel/hotel, the firm had in their network.

Mr. Parker said well over 100. Then they worked for brokers who tenant rep for dozens at a time. As many as expanding brands were, whether they had three, five, six locations up to 350 locations, odds were the firm had at least cross referenced them or checked in some of their key markets. Council Member Moore had made



an interesting point – retail did need to be recruited. It took constant attention. The guys did have to cover five or six states at a time for one person. They could not cover every small market. It did take overall attention for that.

Council Member Hunnicutt said in his view, retail recruiting should be a complement to industrial recruiting. As Council Member Ellis pointed out, geographically Eden did not have interstates. Eden was the largest city in the county and probably unfortunately never going to get an interstate access like Reidsville or western Rockingham County had. They had to look at how they could grow and part of the strategy in his mind was to continue industrial recruiting like they were doing, they needed to do more work on that, and not only that but to complement. He had done a little bit of research just to see what other cities had been able to do in terms of dollars. He was not sure if Mr. Parker was familiar with Albemarle but it was the same size as Eden, 16,000 people, with no interstates and very similar to Eden. Even though they did not use The Retail Coach, they had a retail strategy they had put together and over a six-year period, they recruited and landed 11 national brands, created 200 jobs and \$27 million of investment. For Eden, that was a big industry. They were spreading the risk on it and meeting some demand. Speaking of demand, if basically anyone was asked in terms of what number one thing they would love to see Eden have, the answer was Chick-fil-A. The former economic development director even put together a group and they went to Burlington to say Eden wanted a Chick-fil-A. They recruited. There was a demand and a need for it. For recruiting, inbound industry would look at quality of life. They heard a lot of folks talking about having to go to Greensboro to get a steak or whatever it was. He certainly respected Council Member Nooe's view on it but it was kind of a chicken or egg thing. They were not going to get people there if they did not grow. They had to create the platform for growth and they had to be able to push it. He realized that yes, there was some competition that would occur but hopefully it would be backfill that was in. One of the things that he had heard for years, and he was born and raised in Eden, was that there were no opportunities for the youth in town. Maybe working at a restaurant was not their forever job but there were a lot of people who started there who developed a good work ethic, learned how to get a payroll, and then they moved on up. He thought there were a lot of opportunities there. His last comment at that point was he did not feel that Eden was or had ever been staffed to be able to do that and for him, part of that proof was that it had not happened. Yes, they had picked up a Family Dollar or something like that. He did think there were opportunities. He went to Martinsville, which was smaller than Eden was, and rode around up there. They had a Marshalls, Belk, Aldi, Harbor Freight for the guys. There were a number of brands that were in smaller cities than Eden. He felt like they had the opportunity if they would just go after it. They had some excellent spaces and sites, one that Mr. Parker even indicated on 14. So the question was why, why were they not. He thought it was beholden to them to try to lead the City in the direction of growth not only for investment but for the opportunity for the City to have a department store for the ladies to go shop or a steakhouse or whatever it may be. Those were his views.

Council Member Epps asked if Mr. Parker was able to pinpoint what he had been able to accomplish in cities the size of Eden.

Mr. Parker said that one much smaller was Camden, S.C., with about 7,500 and the firm had helped them infill with Marshalls, Hobby Lobby, Five Below, Eggs Up Grill, Ollie's Bargain Outlet, as well as Popeye's near the interchange as well. They had been successful with communities much smaller than Eden. It was key as to what everything aligned to and the fact that they had key properties on the major thoroughfares that had high traffic counts that were in front of the major retailers. That was usually the biggest trouble more than interstates was if a place had the key real estate aspects. Eden had a plethora of sites that seemed to be available which was usually the biggest hurdle in smaller communities but did not seem to be in this case.

Council Member Epps said the reason he asked that was because Martinsville had to close about two restaurants and Greensboro about three. He asked if that impacted the situation.

Mr. Parker replied he did not think so. He thought each one was a little different in the fact that there were a lot of stores closing and a lot of stores opening currently but it was net positive. It was finding the right people. A lot of them on the national and regional side were franchise driven. Maybe there had not been a franchise dedicated to the area yet. Maybe they needed to go on that side and find who the closest franchise was, who had the rights and figure it out that way, more of a grassroots pitch. There were a lot of ways to skin the cat on it but ultimately the firm's job was to figure out what that looked like. There certainly was opportunity. There were too many communities much smaller than Eden that had a plethora of brands that were not in Eden. It was not really a size issue. It was why they had not been aligned and executed yet.

Council Member Ellis said Mr. Parker had spoken about Camden and the six or seven businesses that came there. He asked what the next city within 15 or 20 miles was to Camden.

Mr. Parker said it was about 30 miles from Columbia.

Mayor Hall thanked Mr. Parker for his presentation and said there would be action on the item under unfinished business.

SET MEETING AGENDA:

A motion was made by Council Member Moore to set the meeting agenda. Council Member Underwood seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried 7-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

There were none at this time.

REQUESTS AND PETITIONS OF CITIZENS:

City Attorney Erin Gilley read the policy for speakers.

Michelle Barnes, 708 Washington Street, said she was going to tell Council to smile. It was hard enough to get up and talk and no one was smiling. She appreciated the opportunity. She was there to talk about the parking lot behind 708 Washington Street. It was a public parking lot. It got a lot of use now that her business was there, the DMV was there. The mayor should know – his wife had been there for years at The Front Porch. Those who had lived in Eden a long time, or all their lives, knew that most of the public parking lots were one way in and one way out. A lot of people did not realize that now. The signage was very vague if any was up. The arrows on the asphalt were extremely faded that showed a driver which way to go. She herself had almost had a couple of accidents. People would back up, come out of the DMV, immediately turn left and that was actually the in way. Drivers should enter in the lower parking lot. All the parking spaces were aligned for someone to come in that way and park at an angle so when they backed up they could go out the upper parking lot close to the fence at the old Karastan. In the grand scheme of things, it was not a big deal. It was not like they were trying to get retail there. She was just trying to prevent accidents from happening because she, her husband, her mother and her kids, her staff and friends all turned in that way. There was always someone coming out the wrong way. They would either have to stop in the street and let them go or they would have to back up. Or, instead of fixing the signs, they could always widen them and make them in and out but that would be another problem.

Mayor Hall said Ms. Barnes had a timely presentation for Council because item 10a was discussion of that exact parking lot and that exact issue.

Council Member Ellis said he wanted to apologize for not smiling. He was focused on the discussion.

Ms. Barnes said it was OK. Someone could smile and be serious at the same time.

Marie Hackbart, 925 Seymour Court, said she came about a problem with someone phrogging, living in her house, and getting the K9 to come and possibly get him out. She did find out that did not work. The guy who was phrogging had been in the house longer than she had. He had been in the house since 2018. As far as a dog, he pooped and he was marking his territory, the person who was under her house was, so it was marked as his house. She had to think of some other way to go about it. One of the things she had been thinking about was a crimestopper or suing him personally. She needed to get with a lawyer. She appreciated the fact that the chief of police sent the K9 to the house and they found out it did not work in her instance. If somebody was running, yes, the dog could catch them but nobody was running. As soon as the K9 left, he was there. What he did was he walked, she could hear him. He busted her ceilings and things like that. She had to be a lot smarter. She had had five alarm systems and locks on the door changed and changed. It did not work. She had to find out how she could be aggressively safe and get that person out of her house, other than burn her house down. He would leave then, that was for sure. She thanked the Council very much for the opportunity and she wished them best of luck. Her only comment with the consultant they were talking to was they had to decide if they wanted to stay a small, personal town or if they wanted to become a megalith. They wanted to stay small and personal so they could keep track of their children, religion, everything that stood for family. That was her opinion. She thanked them very much and wished Council best of luck.

Council Member Epps advised Ms. Hackbart to check with the magistrate's office and they could give her some information on how to take care of it.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- a. Consideration to authorize a commercial recruitment engagement with The Retail Coach.

Ms. Stultz wrote in a memo: At the July City Council Meeting, a representative from The Retail Coach will make a presentation about the services they provide. This will provide the Council with the opportunity to ask questions as you consider their company. The cost of their program is \$40,000 for the first year and \$30,000 per year for future years if the service is renewed. Each year there is the possibility of up to \$3,000 in expenses. The Retail Coach seems to be the best fit for our current needs with available staff. If a contract with them is approved by the City Council, staff recommends that the program be evaluated in a year to determine effectiveness.

Mayor Hall called on Ms. Stultz.

Ms. Stultz said she did not have anything else to add.

Council Member Ellis asked how many employees were currently in her department.

Ms. Stultz replied she had six and a half, which included a part-time employee.

Council Member Ellis asked how many she had lost in the last 24 months due to retirement.

Ms. Stultz said one employee would retire at the end of August and one in December. Her vacant positions were codes inspector, community and economic development manager, and community and economic development specialist.

Council Member Ellis asked if there were then one and a half people in her department.

Ms. Stultz said there were more than that. She was not counting the vacant positions in that number she gave.

Council Member Hunnicutt made a motion to proceed with hiring The Retail Coach for retail recruiting. He said it was not clear in the proposal but he thought it was listed as one year with a one-year renewal. He wanted

to address that as part of the motion. They were already at August and that was part of why he asked Mr. Parker about the time getting started. There would be a couple of months of trying to do that if they proceeded. They were immediately going to go in budget retreat for next year's budget in February. There would not be enough time for the firm to even get going to see if they were effective. If they got it approved, his motion would be a two-year contract that could be terminated at the end of one year. It was the same thing. They were basically making a one-year commitment on it but the difference being if they signed now, the renewal would be around September of next year and they would not have to make a decision until September whereas if they did a one year, they would have to start looking in February or they would not have the budget for it. He clarified that his motion was that the City hire The Retail Coach for a two-year contract that could be terminated at the end of one year.

Mayor Hall asked if Ms. Gilley or Mr. Parker saw any contractual concerns with that. He thought it was the same thing as the proposal.

Ms. Gilley said she thought they could negotiate it between the two parties and if not, it would obviously be brought back to Council.

Council Member Hunnicutt said the only reason was the timing on it. Again it would be September for it to start and then it would be February and time to budget for it or not. There would not be time to make a good decision.

Council Member Moore said that would give them a full year.

Council Member Hunnicutt agreed he wanted to give them a full year to at least see if they could get some traction and that sort of thing. It was the same thing. If at the end of the first year they were not happy, they would stop it.

Mayor Hall said he thought what Council Member Hunnicutt was saying to some degree was at the budget time next year, they would budget for it and if they decided they did not want to at the end of the full year, they would opt out.

Council Member Hunnicutt agreed and said the money would be put back into the general fund.

Mayor Hall said he understood the motion.

Council Member Moore seconded the motion.

Council Member Nooe asked if anyone had talked to the local business owners, operators, to see if anyone had concerns about recruiting businesses. He had been busy and had not gone out like he should. He had one or two say something to him about it. He had not gone personally to try to track it down. He made a substitute motion to table the item until the next month. He would make an effort, and charged the rest of Council to make an effort, to talk to a few people and see if they had any concerns and get the contract straightened out and vote on it next time if that would be allowed as a substitute motion.

Mayor Hall said he had talked to several people who had said the recruiting was what they needed to do. He understood Council Member Nooe needed to talk to whoever he thought.

Council Member Nooe apologized for not taking care of that before the meeting.

Mayor Hall said there was a substitute motion to table the issue to the following month.

Council Member Epps seconded the substitute motion.

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Council Member Kirkman said he agreed with Council Member Nooe. He had several experiences with seeing businesses decline.

Mayor Hall asked if people were opposed to the growth or scared of competition.

Council Member Kirkman said scared of competition.

Mayor Hall said that was not a good thing.

Council Member Kirkman said he was on the road a lot and most days in Greensboro. He had customers talk about having up to 40 percent less business. He saw a decline right now. He thought it was a bad time to try to do it, although it was a wonderful idea.

Mayor Hall asked if he thought it was a bad time to go after the growth.

Council Members Underwood, Kirkman, Nooe, Ellis, Hunnicutt and Epps voted in favor of tabling the issue to the next month. Council Member Moore voted in opposition. The motion carried 6-1.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Consideration of two ordinance text amendments addressing traffic and parking in the Uptown Eden/Leaksville area.

Sgt. Jim Robertson wrote in a memo: Police Department staff request you consider the adoption of two ordinances: to rescind existing two-hour parking and to designate an alleyway as one way. Two-hour parking (Ordinance 23-1): As far back as November of 2020 (and probably prior to that) there has been a question about the two-hour parking on Washington Street and the surrounding streets. The City Code defines those parking zones thusly: § 9-156 LOCATION OF TWO-HOUR PARKING ZONES. The following areas are hereby designated as two-hour parking zones: (A) Washington Street, from the intersection of Bridge Street to the intersection of Hamilton Street; (B) Bridge Street, from the intersection of Jay Street to a point 200 feet south of the intersection of Washington Street; (C) Henry Street, from the intersection of Harris Street to a point 200 feet north of the intersection of Washington Street; (D) Monroe Street, from the intersection of Washington Street to the intersection of Jay Street. ('89 Code, § 9-156). The problem with the two-hour parking that has arisen is threefold: first, the two-hour parking signs were removed several years ago when Washington Street was being resurfaced and were never reinstalled; second, due to the signs not being present, the two-hour parking has not been enforced; and finally, with the refurbishing and projected economic growth of the Downtown Leaksville business district (also known as Uptown Eden), two-hour parking restrictions may no longer adequately service the businesses. It is the recommendation of the Police Department that the ordinance established in 1989 which regulated two-hour parking on Washington, Monroe, Bridge and Henry streets (Eden City Code §9-156) be rescinded to more accurately reflect the needs of today's community. This would require the adoption of Ordinance 23-1. Alleyway (Ordinance 23-2): Council Member Underwood contacted Sgt. Robertson regarding the alleyway behind the DMV License Plate Office on Washington Street and requested that a study be conducted to determine if the alleyway could be designated as "ONE WAY." After studying the layout of the parking lot and reviewing the N.C. General Statutes, it was determined that the alleyway portions of the parking lot could be regulated with "ONE WAY" directional signs to be enforceable by designated City Ordinance. Attached to this memo is a map showing the suggested placements for "ONE WAY" signs and a "DO NOT ENTER" sign. It is the recommendation of the Police Department that an ordinance, 23-2, be adopted to designate the alleyway as one way.

Mayor Hall called on Chief Simpson.

Chief Simpson said there a couple of items for Council to consider. The first item addressed in Council's packet was two-hour parking in the areas of Washington, Henry and Monroe streets. The department had taken a look at it. It was established in 1989 and had been on the books since then. The last time Washington Street was paved and looked after by the state, the signs were taken down and never put back up. To be honest, in probably 15 years, the department had not enforced two-hour parking on Washington Street. The ordinance was to do away with two-hour parking on Washington, Henry and Monroe streets. There were a couple of

reasons for it. First, he did not want the department to be adversarial with the downtown businesses. He did not want to be adversarial with the patrons of those businesses. They wanted those people to come, walk and spend money. Looking at the downtown area, there were hairdressers. If someone went in for a haircut, perm and color, it would take more than two hours. If someone were waiting at That Little Pork Shop and the wait was an hour and a half, it would be a little while. Staff had looked at it from multiple avenues. He had also visited there two or three times a week and had not had an issue finding a parking spot on Washington Street. He patronized some of those businesses there. There was some talk about why they did not enforce, why they should enforce or if they should enforce. The purpose of the recommendation was simply to bring it to the forefront and have Council make a decision on two-hour parking in that area.

Council Member Epps asked if enforcement involved someone from the City chalking the tires.

Chief Simpson answered yes.

Mayor Hall said it was that option or a meter.

Council Member Nooe asked if there were other areas in town that had hourly parking limits.

Chief Simpson said none that he was aware of. On Washington Street, all the signage was gone from the lower end but there were two signs stating no parking from 8 to 5 by the church that was the former Eden Daily News. They were not taken down because they were not in the way when the work was done on Washington Street. There were none that he could think of but that did not mean they would not come up. It had been a discussion for years, all the way through back to the previous two chiefs.

Council Member Nooe said if there were more, they could straighten them all out at once.

Chief Simpson agreed.

Council Member Ellis said he did not think there were any in Draper or on The Cook Block. He asked if Patrick Street would be done as well if there were two-hour parking there.

Chief Simpson said yes, it covered the entire area addressed in the ordinance. If Council saw fit to do so, it would repeal the two-hour parking in that entire area.

Council Member Epps asked if chalking would be cheaper than signs and meters.

Chief Simpson said not necessarily because he would then have to request for someone to do it, someone would have to be hired.

Council Member Hunnicutt said that morning he did a count within that little district to try and determine how businesses were negatively impacted. There were nine hair salons and he personally went to visit each one he could. Of the nine, five were open. He spoke directly with the owners. Every one of them confirmed they had lots of clients who were there more than two hours. Every one of them, without a doubt, asked that the two-hour ordinance not be put on them because they would have clients who would be penalized and would have done nothing wrong. They were there patronizing the businesses. One of the individuals told him she formerly had worked in Reidsville and they did have it. That person had personally paid from her pocket \$10 fines for anybody who got a ticket because they were sitting that long. A hundred percent of the ones he was able to talk to said please do not do two-hour parking. To Council Member Nooe's point, he did reach out as he wanted to hear people's opinions on it. He would say, if they have a problem with parking, they needed to address the problem. They should not throw everyone under the bus by having an ordinance that did not work for what they were trying to do. If there was something they needed to address and look at, he was OK with that. He

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was saying that an ordinance that had been on the books for 30 years was not effective and he thought it needed to go away.

Mayor Hall asked if the proposed ordinance changes needed to be voted on one at a time.

Ms. Gilley advised no.

Chief Simpson said the follow up to that was that things could change. Right now, they did not want to be adversarial with businesses. They wanted people to come and patronize those businesses and spend money and be there. That did not mean things could not change. The department's job was to objectively look at the safety and quality of life in that area. Currently, they believed this was the correct course of action.

Council Member Underwood said he would like to ask that the items be voted on separately.

Ms. Gilley asked Mayor Hall if he had meant to vote separately on the parking ordinances or those and the one-way ordinances.

Mayor Hall said he meant the two ordinances.

Ms. Gilley advised they should be voted on separately. She apologized as she thought he meant the parking areas.

Council Member Ellis asked if the streets would be clear of parked vehicles overnight.

Chief Simpson asked if the question was if someone could park there 24 hours.

Council Member Ellis said yes.

Chief Simpson said they could but it was something to think about. If they were to keep the ordinance the same from 8 to 5, he could go up there and park his car in a parking space at 3:01. At 5:01, his two hours would be up but he would not have to move his car and it started over again at 8 a.m. From there he would have until 10 a.m. to continue to park so he could keep it there all night anyway even under the current ordinance.

Council Member Epps asked about parking in the municipal parking lot on Henry Street.

Chief Simpson advised they would discuss that issue next.

A motion was made by Council Member Moore to rescind the 1989 ordinance and go back to open parking. Council Member Hunnicutt seconded the motion. Council Members Nooe, Ellis, Hunnicutt, Moore and Epps voted in favor of the motion. Council Members Kirkman and Underwood voted against the motion. The motion carried 5-2.

ORDINANCE 23-1

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF EDEN, PROVIDING THAT ITS CODE OF ORDINANCES BE AMENDED BY CHANGING AND ALTERING THE TWO HOUR PARKING ALONG WASHINGTON STREET, MONROE STREET, HENRY STREET, AND BRIDGE STREET (EDEN CITY CODE §9-156) OF THE CITY A GENERAL ORDINANCE AS DEFINED IN GS 160A-77

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Eden as follows:

Section 1: 2-Hour Parking (Eden City Code §9-156) – Repealed.

Section 2: All ordinances and parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section 3: This ordinance shall be effective as of the date of the date of final adoption.

In the COUNTY OF ROCKINGHAM  
Adopted this 19 Day of July, 2022  
CITY OF EDEN CITY COUNCIL  
BY: Neville Hall, Mayor  
ATTEST: Deanna Hunt, City Clerk  
Approved as to form: Erin Gilley, City Attorney

Chief Simpson said someone had just come up and spoke on this. Council Member Underwood had contacted Sgt. Jim Robertson who did the research for a traffic study concerning one-way traffic in the alleyway of Patrick and Henry streets and behind the license tag agency. After looking at it, Chief Simpson thought it was designated one way but was not officially one way. It had some markings that said one way. He went to the site and looked for himself and found the markings were not true and correct, were not visible. He went to the DMV office and when he left he turned left and came down Henry Street. Obviously, he did not even pay attention to that because of the markings. The request was an ordinance declaring that one way. From the map attached, they could see a vehicle would have to enter on Henry Street and exit on Patrick Street. The map showed the location of signage and markings on the roadway so that it was clearly marked. Obviously, it would be a period of time for not technical enforcement but to gain compliance by enforcement. In other words, they would have some officers up there to make sure people were following one way in an attempt to gain compliance, not necessarily through citations but through conversations.

Council Member Underwood wanted to clarify that people could still go through the parking lot on Henry Street according to the diagram.

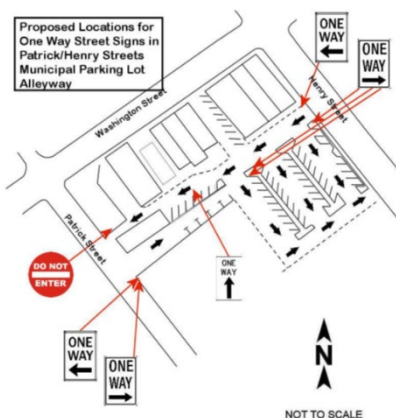
Chief Simpson agreed as long as they came out on the upper side of the parking lot.

Mayor Hall said it was basically a signage issue and markings on the pavement.

Chief Simpson added that it would make it official.

Mayor Hall said it would be operated as intended. The City just needed to do marking and the signs better.

A motion was made by Council Member Nooe to adopt an ordinance that traffic flow be one way in the Patrick Street/Henry Street municipal lot alleyways. Council Member Underwood seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried 7-0.



ORDINANCE 23-2  
AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF EDEN, PROVIDING THAT ITS CODE OF ORDINANCES BE AMENDED BY CHANGING AND ALTERING THE TRAFFIC FLOW TO ONE WAY IN THE PATRICK STREET/HENRY STREET MUNICIPAL LOT ALLEYWAYS OF THE CITY  
A TECHNICAL ORDINANCE AS DEFINED IN GS 160A-77

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Eden as follows:

Section 1.1 – It shall be unlawful for the driver of a vehicle to proceed in a northeasterly direction into and/or through the Patrick Street/Henry Street Municipal Lot long alleyway located closest to and running parallel with Washington Street.

Section 1.2 – It shall be unlawful for the driver of a vehicle to proceed in a southwesterly direction into and/or through the Patrick Street/Henry Street Municipal Lot short alleyway located furthest from and running parallel with Washington Street.



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Section 1.3 – “ONE WAY” signs shall be placed, erected or installed throughout the Patrick Street/Henry Street Municipal Lot long alleyway in such a manner as to direct motorists to proceed only in a southwestwardly direction through the Patrick Street/Henry Street Municipal Lot long alleyway.

Section 1.4 – “ONE WAY” signs shall be placed, erected or installed throughout the Patrick Street/Henry Street Municipal Lot short alleyway in such a manner as to direct motorists to proceed only in a northeastwardly direction through the Patrick Street/Henry Street Municipal Lot short alleyway.

Section 1.5 – A “DO NOT ENTER” sign shall be placed, erected or installed at the Patrick Street/Henry Street Municipal Lot long alley exit at the intersection of Patrick Street directing traffic that is proceeding or attempting to proceed in a northeastward direction from Patrick Street that such action is prohibited.

Section 1.6 – The OFFICIAL TRAFFIC MAP of the City of Eden is hereby amended to conform with this Ordinance.

Section 2: All ordinances and parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section 3: This ordinance shall be effective as of the date of the date of final adoption.

In the COUNTY OF ROCKINGHAM  
Adopted this 19 Day of July, 2022  
CITY OF EDEN CITY COUNCIL  
BY: Neville Hall, Mayor  
ATTEST: Deanna Hunt, City Clerk  
Approved as to form: Erin Gilley, City Attorney

**REPORTS FROM STAFF:**

- a. City Manager’s Report

Mayor Hall advised there were copies available for the public, the report was published in Eden’s Own Journal and it was online as well.

City Manager’s Report July 2022 City Manager Jon Mendenhall

**ADMINISTRATION**

*Marketing & Special Events*

SHAGGIN’ ON FIELDCREST: We along with the Draper Merchants Association invite you to join us for SHAGGIN’ ON FIELDCREST on Saturday, July 23!! Jim Quick & Coastline will be performing LIVE from 7 to 10 p.m. on Fieldcrest Road in downtown Draper. There will be delicious food and beverages on site. Admission is FREE! Bring your chairs! No coolers are allowed.

SUMMER GROWN & GATHERED: Our SUMMER GROWN & GATHERED is set for Thursday, Aug. 11 at the Spray Mercantile. This will be a great evening under the stars that includes great food and beverages, live music and a celebration of local grown and made products!! Tickets are on sale now and going fast!! Call 623-2110 and ask for Marketing & Special Events to reserve our seat.

RIVERFEST APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED: We are still taking applications for these RIVERFEST (Sept. 16 and 17) vendors: Artisan/Crafter, Business Display, Food, Large Business – Vehicle Display  
Contact the marketing office at 336-623-2110 or [cadams@edennnc.us](mailto:cadams@edennnc.us) or get your application at [www.edennnc.us](http://www.edennnc.us).

OINK & ALE RECAP: We want to thank everyone who came out and enjoyed OINK & ALE on June 18!! We had a huge crowd from all over the Triad and region that enjoyed an awesome live concert by On The Border – The Ultimate Eagles Tribute, delicious barbecue and refreshing beverages. Another Thank You to all the volunteers and vendors that made this night the success it was!

TOUCH-A-TRUCK: We are looking for cool vehicles to display on Saturday, Aug. 20. If you have a piece of equipment, truck, etc. that you think kids (little and big) would enjoy seeing, touching, etc. please let us know. This is an awesome event that kids really enjoy!

### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

**SCAM AVOIDANCE CLASS:** Detective Sgt. Andrew Kenyi and Information Technology Director Kevin Taylor will be teaching how to avoid phone and online scams. The class is free and open to anyone who would like to attend. It will be held from 10 to 11 a.m. on Tuesday, August 23 at the Garden of Eden Senior Center, 508 Orchard Drive. Kevin will cover online, email and text message scams and offer tips and tricks for recognizing phishing emails using actual phishing messages received on the City's email system while Sgt. Kenyi will discuss active scams that are being reported in the Eden area and give tips on how to avoid becoming a victim.

### PARKS AND RECREATION

**AQUATICS:** The Freedom Park Splash Pad and Mill Avenue (Draper) Pool are open daily from noon until 6 p.m. Call 336-623-2110 to reserve for a private party. FREE swim lessons for kids and adults every

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Saturday at the Mill Avenue Pool: 5-8 years old at 8:45 a.m., 9-16 years old at 9:30 a.m., 17 and older at 10:30 a.m. No preregistration required.

**MUSIC & CRUZ IN:** Come out to Freedom Park on July 30 at 6 p.m. to hear live music at our amphitheater. Admission is free! Bring a lawn chair and your friends. Concessions will be available. The car cruise in starts at 5:30.

**PROWLERS REGISTRATION IS OPEN!** We are now registering for our fall Prowler football teams and our cheerleading program for ages 5-12. Practice begins Aug. 1. Sign up your child at Bridge Street, Mill Avenue, Customer Service at City Hall or online at [www.edennc.us](http://www.edennc.us).

**PROWLERS FOOTBALL AND CHEER CAMPS:** For ages 5-12, completely free! Cheer camp is 5:45-7, while football is 6-7:30, both at Freedom Park. No preregistration required.

**RECREATION CENTERS:** Bridge Street and Mill Avenue recreation centers are open Monday – Friday from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. Come walk our track and exercise; play tennis, basketball, pickleball or shuffleboard; or use the playground.

**FREEDOM PARK:** We're excited to announce the dog park has been relocated to the back of the park, away from the noise of the playground, splash pad and road. We think this will be a better fit for the dogs and their owners.

**SENIOR CENTER:** The center continues to be active, with an average of 26 people attending daily.

**SUMMER DAY CAMP:** The camp is hosting 25 children this summer, with several on the wait list. These kids enjoy trips to Mill Avenue Pool, Freedom Park Splash Pad, Roll-A-Bout Skating Center, playgrounds and have tennis lessons. They have adopted "Daisy Duck" as their mascot after she wandered into camp the first day it started.

### PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**COLLECTIONS:** We received \$573.69 in code enforcement fees in the month of June.

**GRANTS: CDBGNR-Draper:** The PTRC will be assisting with the site inspections and bidding of the repairs beginning in July.

**LOCAL CODES AND INSPECTIONS:** 119 were performed with 48 notices sent.

**PERMITS AND INSPECTIONS:** 290 inspections were performed with 166 permits issues. The Purina project is now accelerating as deadlines approach. A demolition permit was issued for the Spray Cotton Mill renovation project. A new Dollar General is proposed to be located on the corner of N.C. 14 and Town Creek Road. Several new single family dwellings are under construction with more expected.

**BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:** The Community Appearance Commission met to replant the planters on Fieldcrest Road. The Historic Preservation Commission met June 13 and recommended in favor of a request for Local Landmark designation for the Spray Cotton Mill. This request went to Council was approved. The Tree Board did not meet in June. An Arbor Day program was held for the Leaksville United Methodist Church Child Development Center on June 22.

### POLICE

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES: The department currently has several openings for police officers and continues to work toward recruiting excellent law enforcement officers to serve the citizens of Eden.

NEW EQUIPMENT: The Axon fleet camera install will be completed the week of August 1. The department is coordinating with Eden Fire to conduct the install at Station 4.

b. Report on advisory committee proceedings.

(1) Strategic Planning Commission.

Mayor Hall said that report had already been presented and he told Ms. Adams she did a good job.

(2) Planning Organization Boards.

Mayor Hall called on Ms. Stultz.

Ms. Stultz said most of the boards did not meet in July of each year. The Planning Board meeting would be the following week.

(3) Parks Commission.

Mayor Hall called on Mr. Vernon.

Mr. Vernon said the commission had not met but he would give Council a little feedback on what had been going on. Football and cheer registration had been going on the last couple of months. A camp would be held for both football and cheer on July 25, 26 and 28. It was free to all kids and would be held 6 to 7:30 each evening. The first practices for football and cheer would begin August 1 and staff was looking forward to that. Summer Camp was going strong with 25 kids which was the limit. They were going to the swimming pool, splash pad, Roll-A-Bout and to the playground at Osborne Baptist Church. The kids were enjoying it. He was sure Council had read about the duck that was adopted for the camp. It had grown from a little chick to a monster. It would not hardly stay in the tote when he had to carry it back and forth. The kids had watched it grow and had enjoyed watching it. He had enjoyed taking care of it although his wife was not too thrilled with it. They were doing alright. The Summer Camp was going well. He asked how many of Council had been to the swimming pool. It was asset for that community. He had been down there several times and they had reached capacity which was 150 swimmers several times. It seemed to be going real well. He thanked Council for their support in getting that done because it was a real asset to the community once again.

Council Member Epps said Mr. Vernon had done something several had tried and never done. Council appreciated him.

Mr. Vernon said he appreciated Council as well.

Council Member Ellis thanked Mr. Vernon for leaving part of history there at the pool by leaving the cabinets which had been there through many lifeguards, some who had passed away. There was a lot of history there. He really admired the centerpiece that had been put in, that Assistant Director Ray Thomas had put in.

Mr. Vernon said Mr. Thomas was in charge of that.

Council Member Ellis said the program had worked good together that involved City Plumbing and Mr. Thomas and his crew. It was really a big plus for Eden. The pool was the best thing for families. The front and sides had been dressed up and steps had been installed for adults to use, which was a big plus. The hardware in the bottom was top of the line. It was well balanced and he appreciated it.

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Mr. Vernon thanked Council Member Ellis. He said the swimming pool was more for the older kids, they did not have as many younger kids there even though they had the kiddie pool. The splash pad was where it was at for the younger kids and of course they came up there and were full blast everyday too. The splash pad was somewhere that families could come and go within a couple of hours. The kids could get their energy out. People stayed at the pool all day long. Both places were good to go for families. He appreciated the support.

Council Member Ellis asked how much water was used in one dump at the splash pad.

Mr. Vernon did not know but said he could check and see what the size of the bucket was and how full it got.

Council Member Ellis asked how much water was used when it flipped and things of that sort.

Mr. Vernon said the pool held 450,000 gallons but he did not know about the splash pad.

Council Member Ellis said he thought it was more like 150,000.

Mr. Vernon said the pickleball program continued strong Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at the Mill Avenue Recreation Center and Tuesdays and Thursdays in the evening at the Bridge Street Recreation Center. There was a cornhole league going again. They traveled and played the previous night at Freedom Park with about 25 players. It was a beautiful evening and they had a good time.

Council Member Ellis said he spoke with Mr. Vernon's brother about cornhole and he said they traveled to four or five places in the county.

Mr. Vernon said it was all in the city. Staff tried to get people to different parks and areas and stuff. Some people had never seen Mrs. Ernestine Hampton Park or the Matrimony Creek Nature Trail shelter. They went to different places so people could visit them. They may never venture over there unless they went to play. That was something they tried to do.

c. Report on proposed plans for Monroe Street improvements.

Planning & Community Development Director Kelly Stultz and Public Works Director Paul Dishmon wrote in a memo: A public meeting was held in late June with the Uptown Merchants and property owners. At that time, there was discussion about the Monroe Street Improvements. The parking lot project has been completed and plans are for Monroe Street from Washington Street to Jay Street to be repaved. The sidewalks and curb and gutter are also to be replaced. The travel lanes and parking will remain as they are currently and will be re-stripped according to the current design and to meet safety standards. The scheduling and execution of this project is to be undertaken by Municipal Services. If you have any questions, please let staff know.

Mayor Hall called on Ms. Stultz.

Ms. Stultz said it was a subject they had discussed and had public meetings about over the last year. At that point, the recommendation from staff and the ITRC after discussions about one-way travel was that the sidewalks be improved/replaced, the street repaved with new markings as is. There were some areas that were not marked now, they were painted out. In the future staff may be back to ask about doing some landscaping in those but currently, the recommendation was to move forward just like it was.

d. Report on citywide curbside recycling marketing effort.

Mayor Hall called on Ms. Adams.

Ms. Adams said the City had partnered with JCR Recycling in Eden to offer curbside recycling to residents with a biweekly Wednesday pick up at the cost of \$15.86 per month billed by the City. The marketing effort

had begun and the deadline for sign up was set for September 30 to reach the 200-household minimum requirement to implement the program. Efforts included the following: a press release was sent to Eden's Own Journal with a half-page ad to appear in the August issue highlighting the Trash Talk flyer and to run in From the Desks of City Hall, Mike Moore Media, Roy Sawyers with Rockingham Update, Susie Spear with Rockingham Now, Eden Chamber of Commerce for their newsletter blasts and Star News. The City had placed the information on the City Facebook page, Twitter, Instagram, website news, public works and finance pages, scroller on the homepage, August e-newsletter and on the LED sign. Staff in customer service and the finance department had all the correct information when citizens called and either wanted to sign up or had questions. Staff created a flyer called Trash Talk with simple signup information that was pushed out the previous day. The information in it would change over the next few weeks while the format stayed the same. Staff would put little tidbits in there that people needed to know and encourage them to sign up. When the 200 mark was reached, there would be another information blitz with more educational materials included such as: what you could recycle and what you could not and why not; the blue can gets this; what happens if you mixed in household garbage with recyclables; when the carts would be rolled out and what days recyclables would be picked up; holiday recycling; recycle smart and avoid having recyclables sent to the landfill; possibly use magnetics that people could put on their refrigerators or filing cabinets or wherever they wished; and finally more information on the Mebane Bridge Recycling Center and what they took and did not take. As of that day, there were a little over 50 households signed up for the service. They had until September 30 to go.

Council Member Epps asked if it would be on the regular water/sewer/trash bill.

Ms. Adams asked Finance & Human Resources Director Tammie McMichael who answered it would be on the bill. Ms. Adams said that was great because the only thing left they could do was by direct mail and that covered it.

Mayor Hall said it was important to point out that although they said it was billed by the City, the City was not getting the money. They would take it and pay it to the recycling company. The City was sending out the bill. It was not a new bill that the City was collecting. It was just a pass thru to the company. He thanked Ms. Adams and said he hoped everyone would sign up. They would probably have opportunities at some of the events like RiverFest and other venues to make it available for people to sign up.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. Approval and adoption of the June 21, 2022 Council meeting minutes.
- b. Approval of an extension to the commercial dumpster contract with Waste Management.

Solid Waste Superintendent Dusty Curry wrote in a memo: Please find attached a second amendment to the City's agreement with Waste Management of the Carolinas, Inc., for stationary container (dumpster) solid waste service. An original contract was entered into on March 15, 2016 with a first amendment following June 18, 2019. Exhibit A of the attached amendment shows an increase of around 16 percent. This increase is due to continuing rising metal and fuel costs, as well as the lack of availability of material. This second amendment is for a term of three years. Staff did reach out to Waste Management to seek a reduced rate which was not granted. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

EXHIBIT A

Effective July 1, 2022								
Account	Container Size	EOW	1X per Wk	2X per Wk	3X per Wk	4X per Wk	5X per Wk	Rental
359-7353	4	\$32.00	\$64.25	\$128.50	\$192.76	\$257.04	\$321.29	\$13.12
	6	\$48.01	\$96.39	\$192.76	\$289.16	\$385.54	\$481.93	\$15.31
	8	\$64.01	\$128.50	\$257.04	\$385.54	\$514.06	\$642.57	\$17.50
	Cardboard Recycling	\$92.34	\$147.26	294.52				
	Lockbar	\$8.00						

*A copy of this contract is on file in the City Clerk's Office.*

Council Member Underwood said he had a question regarding 12b. He asked if they were going up on the City in their rates.

Mr. Mendenhall advised yes. He asked for Public Works Director Paul Dishmon to come forward to explain.

Mr. Dishmon said the rates from Waste Management would be going up with about a 16 percent increase overall. The increase could have been a lot more than that. They had asked for Waste Management to back down the increase and were told it could not be done. Waste Management said they needed to go up to about 43 percent on a lot of them but currently the City was looking at 16 percent. It was a three-year contract. It could be to the City's advantage to take it as opposed to not taking it knowing how the market would end up going. If the City did not take it, the current customers would be without dumpster service.

Council Member Underwood asked if Mr. Dishmon had explored other options, other companies, and he hoped he had.

Mr. Dishmon said that would come in year two. They would get it out to three vendors in year two of the new contract if it was approved.

Council Member Underwood asked him to repeat that.

Mr. Dishmon said they would bid it out in year two of the three-year contract. Anybody who wanted to bid on it could.

Council Member Underwood asked if it was done prior.

Mr. Dishmon said due to the material hike and the availability of material, it was probably the low end of an increase compared to what it could be.

A motion was made by Council Member Epps to approve the consent agenda. Council Member Ellis seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried 7-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Hall said Saturday night in the Draper section of town was Shaggin' on Fieldcrest. It was always a popular event. It was put on by the merchants and the City. He hoped everyone could make it out for that and hoped the weather held out. He congratulated his lifelong friend, Jason Tuggle, who was named principal at Morehead High School that week. He was a local boy and was excited about starting the new challenge there as principal. Since the last meeting, Randy Hunt had moved on from the City and Mayor Hall wanted to thank him publicly for the things that he was able to do, particularly for the downtown areas. He did not think anyone could argue that the downtown areas were in much better shape than they were without Mr. Hunt.

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Council Member Epps thanked the Lord for touching Brother Mike Moore, who had been very sick there for a while. It was good to see him at the meeting.

Council Member Nooe said it was not an announcement he had but a request that the city attorney, if it was appropriate, provide Council with information concerning changing the number of council members. He had heard a couple of rumors about a request for information going around asking for stuff on reducing the number of council people and he would just like to get what the process was and how it was initiated from start to finish.

Council Member Underwood said he had heard the same thing and he was definitely concerned with it.

Council Member Epps said he was satisfied with what they had to which several members agreed.

Mayor Hall said he did not know who had proposed that but they would get the info.

Council Member Nooe said he just wanted to know how it was done if someone was trying to do it.

Mayor Hall said the way it was done from what he understood was a general statute change through the North Carolina General Assembly but it had to be approved by Council before it even went to them.

Ms. Gilley advised she was not sure it had to be approved by Council. It was in the City's charter which was approved by the Legislature, so it had to start with the North Carolina Legislature but she would get them out information.

Mayor Hall said he had heard rumors of having possibly less wards and three at-large votes, of having the same number of council members but having four wards and three at large, not reducing the number of taking the votes away from anybody but just allowing people to run whereas if they were in one district and decided they wanted to be a council member but a member was just elected in their ward, they were out for three and a half or four years before they could file to run. That was the way Reidsville did it. That was the only discussion he had heard was the possibility of having four wards and three at large. Nothing had ever been discussed formally to his knowledge.

Council Member Epps said actually Council was at large anyway because they worked together.

Mayor Hall said the City voted one every ward. In the ward system they had now, a member had to live in one of the seven districts. He had a citizen call him and ask about doing Leaksville, Spray, Draper and Central and three at-large seats. He did not know the process and how that worked but he did think it had to come from the General Assembly as a change to the charter. That was the only rumor he had heard but they knew the town had a few rumors going from time to time.

Ms. Gilley said she could get that information to Council. The legal process of what it would take to make that change, not any sort of recommendation.

Mayor Hall said exactly and thanked Ms. Gilley.

Council Member Epps said to hope it was just a rumor.

Council Member Underwood said he just wanted to make sure it came before Council before any decision was made.

ADJOURNMENT:

Minutes of the July 19, 2022 meeting of the City Council, City of Eden:

As there was no further business to discuss, a motion was made by unanimous consent to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

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Deanna Hunt  
City Clerk

ATTEST:

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Neville Hall  
Mayor