

Brooklet City Council approves water and sewer services for schools, adopts comprehensive plan

Brooklet City Council took significant steps toward enhancing city services and future development during its February 19th meeting, approving a crucial intergovernmental agreement to provide water and sewer services to local school facilities and adopting the City of Brooklet Comprehensive Plan 2025.

Gary Roberts

Mayor L.W. “Nicky” Gwinnett Jr. poses with newly appointed Planning and Zoning Commission members Nathan Nall and Willow Farmer following their appointment to two-year terms during the Feb. 19 Brooklet City Council meeting.

The Brooklet City Council approved a major Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the Bulloch County School District on February 19 during their regular monthly council meeting. This approval cleared the way for the city to provide water and sewer services to local school facilities.

The agreement was one of several significant actions taken during a meeting that focused heavily on infrastructure expansion, public safety investments, and long-term financial planning. The council also adopted the City of Brooklet Comprehensive Plan 2025, setting a strategic framework for future growth and development.

Infrastructure and Transportation Projects

In addition to the school district agreement, the council approved an agreement with the Georgia Department of Transportation for a sidewalk expansion along West Lane Street. The city’s required local match of \$134,141.55 will be funded through T-SPLOST revenues.

City Engineer **Wesley Parker** reported that inspections at the WoodsEdge subdivision are complete. The city is also reviewing plans for a new 12-inch water main designed to strengthen connections to the downtown system.

The council adopted Resolution 2026-01, authorizing a \$10,000 payment to the Neville family for a utility easement required to meet Georgia Power safety regulations concerning the proximity of water lines to power transmission towers.

Financial Oversight and Tax Sale Plans

During review of the January 2026 financial report, officials noted that most city funds are tracking within expectations. However, the sanitation budget has reached 113 percent of its annual allocation. Councilman **Brad Anderson** indicated that a budget amendment will likely be necessary, noting that initial allocations were set lower than in previous years.

Interim City Manager **Lori Phillips** announced that Brooklet will hold its first-ever tax sale in December. The city has contracted with Appalachian Services to manage the collection of delinquent property taxes, and the sale is expected to be conducted on the steps of City Hall.

Public Safety Investments

Interim Police Chief **Nicki Garman** reported \$9,446 in fines collected in January. She also noted that the department's patrol fleet has sustained multiple deer-related collisions, placing strain on available vehicles.

The council authorized the purchase of four new radar systems at a cost of \$10,361, selecting a "plug-and-play" model to minimize vehicle downtime. Additionally, members approved \$34,699.20 for new tasers from Axon Enterprise.

A proposed purchase of a sanitation truck priced at \$331,922 was discussed but ultimately deferred. Council members voted to seek additional bids and revisit the matter during March budget planning in an effort to manage rising contract labor costs.

Community Concerns and Neighborhood Safety

The meeting opened with comments from resident **Dave Bircher**, representing neighbors on Cromley Road. Bircher urged the council to move forward with a previously discussed plan to install speed bumps, citing safety concerns related to high-speed chases and the presence of children in the area.

Mayor Nicky Gwinnett said the city is currently researching temporary “nail-down” speed bumps to avoid installing permanent structures that would be removed during an upcoming road project.

Personnel and Board Appointments

The council appointed **Debra Alexander** as chairwoman of the Planning and Zoning Commission, alongside **Nathan Nall** and **Willow Farmer**, to serve two-year terms.

Councilwoman **Sheila Wentz** reported that the search for a permanent city manager is progressing.

Mayor Gwinnett reminded residents of the second annual Hot Dog Social and Town Hall Meeting scheduled for March 12 at the Randy Newman Community Center.

Following an executive session to discuss personnel matters, council members voted to re-interview all positions within the municipal court. The meeting adjourned shortly thereafter.

Brooklet Comprehensive Plan 2025

Brooklet City Council Meeting Febuary 19, 2026

I. Call to Order

II. Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance

III. Approval of Agenda

IV. Approval of Minutes

- January 15, 2026 City Council Meeting

V. Approval of Financial Report

- January 2026 Financial Report

Reports

VI. Comments by Interim City Manager

VII. City Attorney Comments

VIII. City Engineer Comments

IX. Police Department Report

X. Safety Coordinator Report

XI. Comments by Council Members

New Business / Action Items

XII. Discussion & Consideration of Motion to Approve:

1. City of Brooklet Comprehensive Plan 2025

What Brooklet’s New Comprehensive Plan Means for the City’s Future

With the adoption of the Brooklet Comprehensive Plan 2025, the city now has its first independently developed long-term planning document — a move that sets the stage for how Brooklet will grow, develop and preserve its character in the years ahead.

While the plan does not immediately change zoning rules or property rights, it establishes a framework that will guide future decisions about land use, infrastructure, housing, transportation and economic development.

So what does that mean for residents?

A Roadmap for Growth

The comprehensive plan functions as a roadmap. It outlines the city’s vision and priorities, identifies areas of need and opportunity, and establishes policy guidance that city leaders will use when evaluating future development proposals.

Importantly, the plan does not alter the zoning map on its own. Any zoning changes would require a separate process and formal approval by city officials.

Instead, the document provides direction — helping ensure that future growth aligns with Brooklet’s long-term goals rather than happening in a piecemeal or reactive way.

Introducing “Character Areas”

One of the most significant elements of the plan is the introduction of a “Character Areas Map.” Unlike zoning districts, which regulate specific uses, character areas describe the intended look and feel of different parts of the city.

The plan identifies nine character areas, including:

- Downtown
- Town
- Suburban
- Gateway Corridor
- Light Industrial
- Institutional
- Rural
- Conservation
- Potential Annexation areas

Each area reflects how the city envisions development in that part of Brooklet. For example, the Downtown designation emphasizes maintaining a traditional center for business and civic life, while Suburban areas focus on residential neighborhoods and future housing growth.

The map does not rezone properties, but it signals the direction the city wants to move as development occurs.

Managed Growth Along Highway 80

The plan places particular emphasis on the “Gateway Corridor” along U.S. Highway 80. This corridor is identified as a primary area for commercial growth.

However, the plan suggests that growth along the highway should be managed carefully. The goal is to accommodate business development while preserving the small-town character and avoiding unchecked strip-style expansion.

In short, commercial growth is expected — but with structure and intentional planning.

New Zoning Tools on the Horizon

While the comprehensive plan does not change zoning rules immediately, it recommends the creation of four new zoning districts that could be adopted during the upcoming zoning ordinance revision process:

- A Conservation Overlay District to protect natural areas and open space
- A Mixed-Use district allowing residential and commercial uses together
- A Downtown Overlay District to guide development in the city's core
- An Institutional district for schools, churches and public facilities

These proposals are not yet law. They would be implemented only after a formal zoning update process, which is expected to include public input.

Zoning Update Is Next

Now that the comprehensive plan has been adopted, the city's next major step will be revising its zoning ordinance.

That process will likely involve reviewing current zoning categories, clarifying development standards and potentially adjusting zoning boundaries to align with the goals outlined in the comprehensive plan.

Residents can expect opportunities for engagement as the zoning revision moves forward.

Infrastructure and Funding Implications

Comprehensive plans are also important for infrastructure planning and grant eligibility. By maintaining an updated plan, Brooklet positions itself to compete for state and federal funding for projects such as sidewalks, utilities, transportation improvements and community facilities.

The plan provides justification and policy support for infrastructure investments that may come before the council in future years.

The Bigger Picture

For residents, the immediate impact of the comprehensive plan is minimal — no property changes, no automatic rezoning, no new regulations overnight.

But long-term, the document shapes how Brooklet evolves.

It establishes where growth is encouraged, where conservation is prioritized and how development should support the city's identity. As Brooklet continues to expand, the comprehensive plan will serve as the guiding document for decisions that affect housing, business development, transportation corridors and neighborhood character.

The zoning update that follows will be the next major step in translating that vision into enforceable rules.

For now, the comprehensive plan represents a formal declaration of where Brooklet sees itself headed — and how it intends to manage the path forward.

2. Intergovernmental Agreement with Bulloch County School District (Water & Sewer Services)

The intergovernmental agreement approved Thursday follows months of discussion between Brooklet and the Bulloch County School District regarding water and sewer service to the Southeast Bulloch school campus.

In November, council members reviewed financial spreadsheets tied to the city's broader sewer project and discussed how capacity and construction costs related to serving the schools would be handled. Councilman Brad Anderson noted at the time that the city's sewer revenues totaled approximately \$12.1 million, with about \$8 million spent, leaving remaining funds available to complete outstanding components of the project.

A key point of discussion during the fall meeting centered on "aid-to-construction" fees — including whether costs associated with wastewater capacity charged by the City of Statesboro would be passed through directly to the school system rather than absorbed by Brooklet.

City Engineer Wesley Parker explained then that the understanding was for Statesboro's capacity charge to be passed through to the school district, ensuring the city of Brooklet would not retain or absorb that fee.

The agreement approved Feb. 19 formalizes the partnership between the city and the school district for provision of water and sewer services. During Thursday's meeting, council members described the agreement as "a big move for this town,"

signaling the importance of the schools to the city's infrastructure planning and long-term growth.

3. Memorandum of Agreement with GDOT

- Local match: \$134,141.55 (T-SPLOST)
- For preliminary plans, environmental documentation, and right-of-way plans for Cromley Road sidewalk enhancement project

4. Resolution #2026-01

- Acceptance of Water & Sewer Utility Easement
- \$10,000 payment from Water/Sewer Construction Fund

5. Purchase of Four Police Radar Systems- From Police Technology Fund

6. Purchase of Four Axon Tasers- \$34,699.20 (SPLOST funded)

7. Proposed Purchase of Sanitation Truck -\$331,922

8. Appointments to Planning & Zoning Commission

- Deborah Alexander – Chairwoman
- Nathan Nall – Commissioner
- Willow Farmer – Commissioner

9. Acceptance of Streets in WoodsEdge Subdivision

XIII. Executive Session (Personnel Matters)

XIV. Adjournment