

**MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF KENNESAW
Council Chambers
(2529 J.O. Stephenson Avenue, Kennesaw, GA 30144)**

**Livestream: www.kennesaw-ga.gov/publicmeetings/
September 2, 2025
6:30 PM**

Present	Mayor Derek Easterling Mayor Pro Tem Pat Ferris Councilmember Madelyn Orochena Councilmember Tracey Viars Councilmember Antonio Jones Councilmember Anthony Gutierrez City Clerk Lea Alvarez City Manager Jeff Drobney City Attorney Sam Hensley, Jr.
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1. Invocation

Mayor Easterling led the Invocation.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Captain Ricky Shumpert led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Call to Order

Mayor Easterling called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

4. Announcements

5. Presentations

A. Proclamation: Childhood Cancer Awareness Month

Presentation of a proclamation declaring the month of September 2025 as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in the City of Kennesaw.

Mayor Easterling presented a proclamation declaring the month of September 2025 as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in the City of Kennesaw to members of the Mighty Millie Foundation.

6. Public Comment

This section is for comment on any item on the agenda.

6:36 p.m. Floor Open for Public Comments

No comments.

6:37 p.m. Floor Closed for Public Comments

7. Old Business

8. New Business

9. Committee and Board Reports

10. Public Hearing(s)

A. First Public Hearing: FY26 Operating Budget

Consideration to approve a Resolution adopting the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Operating Budget for the City of Kennesaw.

Finance Director Jennifer Gordy presented Items 10. A and B concurrently [See **Exhibit A**]. She noted this was the first of two public hearings with the final hearing scheduled for September 15, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.

6:43 p.m. Floor Open for Public Comments

No comments.

6:44 p.m. Floor Closed for Public Comments

B. First Public Hearing: FY26 Capital Improvement (SPLOST) Budget

Consideration to approve a Resolution adopting the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Capital Improvement (SPLOST) Budget for the City of Kennesaw.

6:44 p.m. Floor Open for Public Comments

No comments.

6:45 p.m. Floor Closed for Public Comments

11. Consent Agenda

A. Minutes: August 18, 2025 Regular Meeting

Approval of the August 18, 2025, City Council regular meeting.

B. Resolution: Allocation of 2022 SPLOST Funds

Consideration for approval of a Resolution to allocate 2022 SPLOST excess funds to the Public Safety project.

[Resolution No. 2025-50](#)

C. Resolution: Allocation of 2022 SPLOST Funds

Consideration for approval of a Resolution to allocate 2022 SPLOST excess funds to the Cathey Rutledge project.

[Resolution No. 2025-51](#)

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Ferris to approve the Consent Agenda engross. Seconded by Councilmember Viars.

Vote taken: unanimously approved, 5-0. Motion passed.

12. General and Administrative

13. Public Safety

14. Information Technology

15. Public Works and Building Maintenance

A. Resolution: Transfer 2016 SPLOST Funds

Consideration for approval of a Resolution to transfer 2016 SPLOST funds from Sardis Street projects to Ben King Road improvements.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferris announced that Items 15.A–C affect his property on Sardis Street and that he would abstain from discussion and voting on those items.

Public Works Director Ricky Stewart then presented a resolution to transfer \$4.9 million from the 2016 SPLOST Sardis Street Overpass fund and \$36 from the 2016 SPLOST Sardis Extension fund to Ben King Road Improvements in order to adequately fund the Ben King and Cherokee Street projects.

Motion by Councilmember Gutierrez to approve [Resolution No. 2025-52](#) transferring 2016 SPLOST funds from the Sardis Street projects to Ben King Road improvements as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Viars.

Vote taken: motion approved, 4-0-1 [Mayor Pro Tem Ferris abstained]. Motion passed.

B. Resolution: Allocation of 2022 SPLOST Funds

Consideration for approval of a Resolution to allocate 2022 SPLOST excess funds to the Neighborhood Improvements project.

Mr. Stewart presented a resolution to reallocate \$3 million in excess 2022 SPLOST funds to the Neighborhood Improvements project. He noted that the 2022 SPLOST has generated approximately \$6.5 million in excess revenue, minus funds previously approved in Consent. The proposed reallocation would also help adequately fund the Ben King Road and Cherokee Street projects.

Motion by Councilmember Orochena to approve [Resolution No. 2025-53](#) allocating 2022 SPLOST excess funds to the Neighborhood Improvements project as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

Vote taken: motion approved, 4-0-1 [Mayor Pro Tem Ferris abstained]. Motion passed.

C. Resolution: Transfer of 2022 SPLOST Funds

Consideration for approval of a Resolution to reassign 2022 SPLOST funds from Sardis Extension project to Neighborhood Improvements project.

Mr. Stewart presented a resolution to reallocate \$9,000,000 from the 2022 SPLOST

Sardis Street Extension project to the Neighborhood Improvements project. He explained that this transfer is necessary to adequately fund the Ben King Road and Cherokee Street projects.

Motion by Councilmember Viars to approve [Resolution 2025-54](#) reassigning the 2022 SPLOST funds from Sardis Extension project to Neighborhood Improvements project as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Jones.

Vote taken: motion approved 4-0-1 [Mayor Pro Tem Ferris abstained]. Motion passed.

16. Recreation and Culture

17. Community Development

18. Public Comment

This section is for general comment.

6:50 p.m. Floor Open for Public Comments

ANDREW BRAMLETT [City Resident]: Mr. Bramlett spoke about Theodore R. Davis, an artist for *Harper's Weekly* who traveled with Sherman's army during the Atlanta Campaign and produced one of the few illustrations of Big Shanty (present-day Kennesaw) before its burning in November 1864 [See **Exhibit B**].

PEYTON SPURLOCK [Kennesaw State University Student]: Ms. Surplock asked the Council how the neighborhood improvements would spur Kennesaw's local economy. City Manager Jeff Drobney explained that the projects involve Cherokee Street and Ben King Road. Cherokee Street, a designated commercial corridor, includes commercial development as part of the East Park project. Developers have consistently indicated they want the road improvements completed before investing and moving forward now allows the City to finish the projects sooner while continuing discussions with potential investors along Cherokee Street.

6:53 p.m. Floor Closed for Public Comments

19. City Manager's Report

A. Reports, Discussions, and Updates

Dr. Drobney did not have any updates this evening.

20. Mayor's Report

A. Mayor and Council (re)appointments to Boards and Commissions. This item is for (re)appointments made by the Mayor to any Board, Committee, Authority, or Commission requiring an appointment to fill any vacancies, resignations, and to create or dissolve boards and commissions, as deemed necessary.

Motion by Councilmember Jones to appoint the following staff to the Pension Committee for terms ending Decemeber 2027: Lea Alvarez, City Clerk; Jeff Drobney,

City Manager; Sam Hensley, Jr., City Attorney; Brian Acker, Human Resources; Lori Rogers, Public Works; Miranda Taylor, Community Development; Berry Wilson, IT and GIS; Dave Simpson, Smith-Gilbert Gardens; Richard Banz, Southern Museum; Bill McNair, Parks and Recreation; Meredith Staton, Finance; Nikki McGraw, 911; and Lieutenant Joseph Morgan, Police Department. Seconded by Councilmember Viars.

Vote taken: motion unanimously approved, 5-0. Motion passed.

21. Council Reports & Discussions

Mayor Pro Tem Ferris noted that football season had begun. He shared that Kennesaw State University played its first game last week, and although they lost, he was impressed with the team's performance.

Councilmember Gutierrez had no report.

Councilmember Orochena said she hoped everyone enjoyed the Labor Day weekend. She noted that her family visited the soft opening of Smith-Gilbert Gardens and enjoyed the pleasant weather.

Councilmember Jones had no report.

Councilmember Viars reminded everyone to purchase tickets for Life in the Cemetery, scheduled for October 24–26. She stated that the event features members of the community portraying residents of the cemetery and encouraged the public not to miss it.

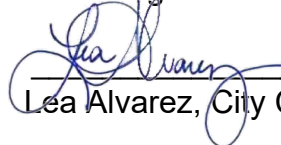
Mayor Easterling announced that the Pigs and Peaches Festival will be moved to October 16–17 in 2026.

22. Executive Session

Pursuant to the provisions of O.C.G.A 50-14-3, the City Council could, at any time during the meeting, vote to close the public meeting and move to executive session to discuss matters relating to litigation, legal actions and/or communications from the City Attorney; and/or personnel matters; and/or real estate matters.

23. Adjourn

Mayor Easterling adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m. The next work session will be held on Monday, September 8, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The public is encouraged to attend.



Lea Alvarez, City Clerk



City of Kennesaw, GA

September 2, 2025

FY 2026 PROPOSED BUDGET

FY 2026 BUDGET SCHEDULE

Public Hearing

- September 2, 2025 (6:30 p.m.)

Public Hearing

- September 15, 2025 (6:30 p.m.)

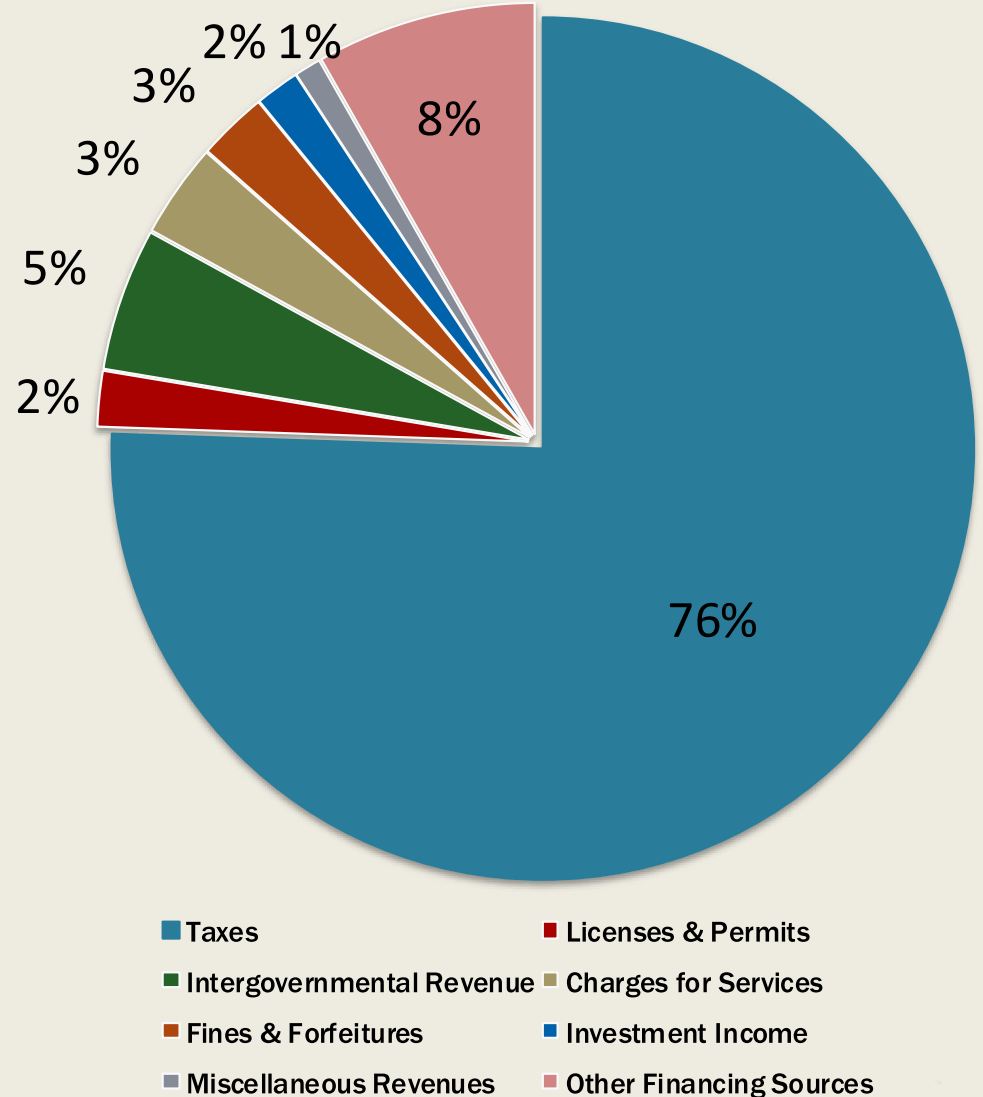
Adoption

- September 15, 2025 (6:30 p.m.)



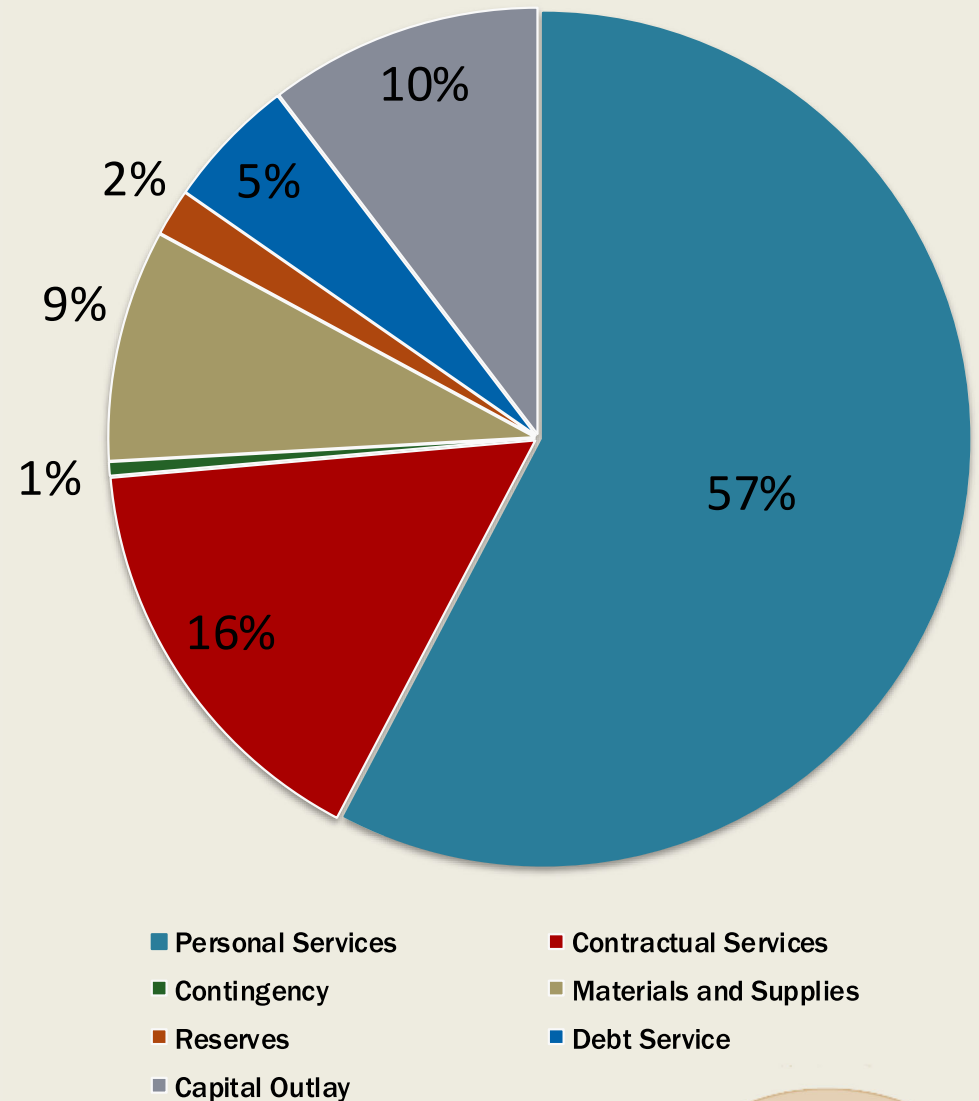
FY 2026 PROPOSED GENERAL FUND OPERATING REVENUES & OTHER SOURCES

CATEGORY	AMOUNT
Taxes	\$25,977,503
Licenses and Permits	\$713,850
Intergovernmental	\$1,838,028
Charges for Services	\$1,211,900
Fines & Forfeitures	\$900,000
Investment Income	\$570,000
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$340,261
Other Financing Sources	\$2,831,650
TOTAL REVENUES	\$34,383,192

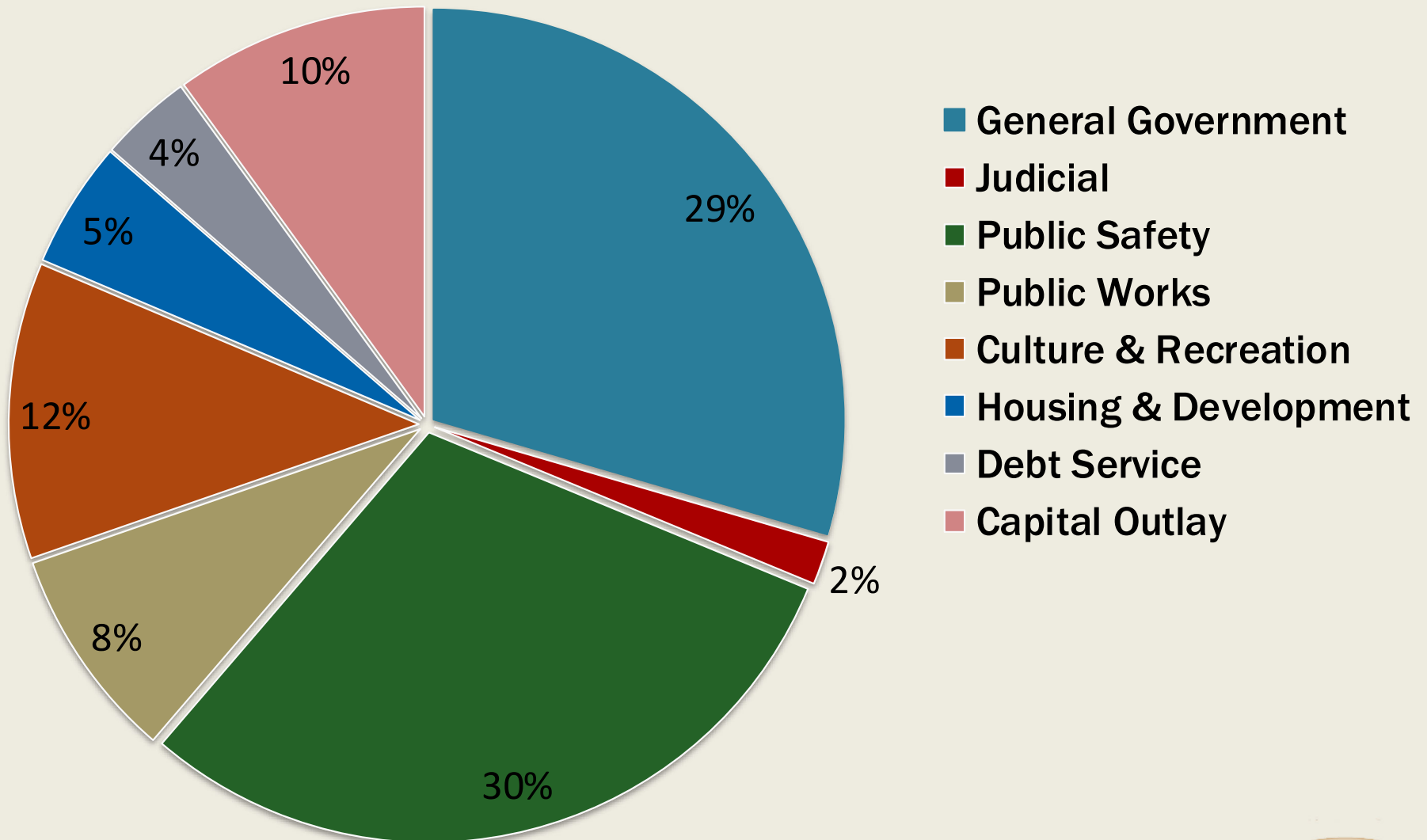


FY 2026 PROPOSED GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES (CATEGORIES)

CATEGORY	AMOUNT
Personal Services	\$19,101,177
Contractual Services	\$5,262,433
Contingency	\$170,000
Materials and Supplies	\$2,904,748
Reserves	\$585,581
Debt Service	\$ 1,649,151
Capital Outlay	\$3,428,900
TOTAL DEPT EXPENDITURES	\$33,101,990
Transfers to Other Funds	\$1,281,202
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$34,383,192



FY 2026 PROPOSED GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES (BY FUNCTION)



FY 2026 PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET

Operating Budgets:	FY 25 Adopted	FY 26 Proposed	% Change
Governmental Fund Types			
General Fund	\$32,095,024	\$34,383,192	7%
Asset Forfeiture	\$21,200	\$21,200	0%
Treasury Equitable	\$20,500	\$20,500	0%
Opioid Settlement	\$36,069	\$51,992	44%
Emergency 911	\$1,534,400	\$1,512,400	-1%
American Rescue Plan Act	\$1,405,708	\$0	-100%
Hotel Motel	\$101,550	\$101,550	0%
Impact Fee	\$450,000	\$520,000	16%
Cemetery	\$22,000	\$31,350	43%
Debt Service	\$ 1,461,068	\$ 1,649,151	13%
Subtotal	\$37,147,519	\$38,291,335	3%

FY 2026 PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET

Operating Budgets:	FY 25 Adopted	FY 26 Proposed	% Change
Business - Type Funds			
Sanitation	\$4,022,100	\$4,321,751	7%
Museum	\$1,074,846	\$1,153,363	7%
Smith Gilbert Gardens	\$832,236	\$883,669	6%
Storm Water	\$1,491,130	\$2,500,374	48%
Streetlights	\$415,000	\$424,035	2%
Subtotal	\$7,835,312	\$9,283,192	18%
Total Operating Funds	\$44,982,831	\$47,574,527	6%

FY 2026 PROPOSED BUDGET

SPLOST FUND

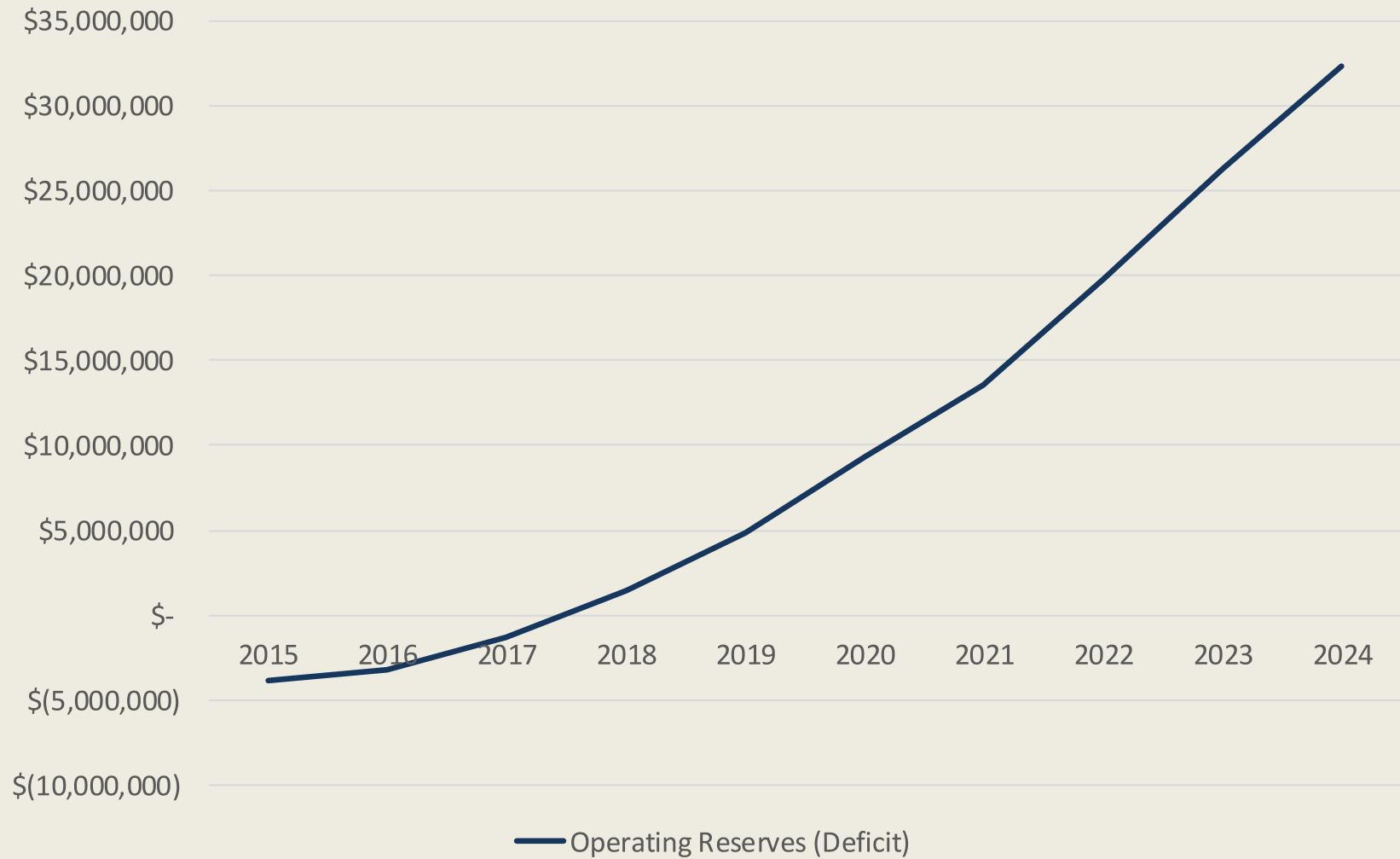
SPLOST BY YEAR	
Remaining Dollars to be Spent	
2011 SPLOST	\$2,395,000
2016 SPLOST	\$7,667,300
2022 SPLOST	\$24,785,850
TOTAL	\$34,848,150



FY 2026 PROPOSED INTERNAL SERVICE FUND BUDGET

PARTIALLY SELF-INSURED HEALTH INSURANCE FUND	FY 25 Adopted	FY 26 Proposed	% Change
Fixed Cost	\$788,097	\$880,646	12%
Claims	\$2,621,346	\$3,169,510	21%
Total	\$3,409,443	\$4,050,156	19%

Operating Reserves



FY 2026 PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS

New Full-time Positions (2)

Building Maintenance

- Custodian

Smith-Gilbert Gardens

- Horticulture Technician

New Part-time Seasonal Positions (2)

Parks & Recreation

- Parks Worker 1



FY 2026 PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS

Freeze Positions (6)

Finance

- Utility Billing Support Clerk

Public Works

- Fleet Lead Mechanic
- Landscape (3) Maintenance I
- Landscape (1) Maintenance III

FY 2026 PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS

Reclassifications

- Assistant Director of Finance retitled to Assistant Director of Administration (no change to salary)



FY 2026 PROPOSED CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

- Police –Ten (10) vehicles, Ten (10) B&T Subguns, Six (6) 40MM Launchers, Thirty (30) Patrol Rifles, Public Safety Facility
- Parks & Recreation – One (1) SUV, One (1) Enclosed Trailer, One (1) Exmark Rear Discharge Mower, One (1) Leaf Vacuum, Replacement lights & poles on fields 5 & 6 in Adams Park
- Public Works Fleet – One (1) GMC SUV, One (1) Ford Ranger
- Southern Museum – Fifteen (15) Two-way Motorola Radios
- Streets- One (1) 60” Turn mower, One (1) Black Cat Radar Traffic Counter



QUESTIONS?

City of Kennesaw, GA

FY 2026 PROPOSED BUDGET



KENNESAW HISTORY

Harper's Weekly

During the Civil War, the periodical *Harper's Weekly* distinguished itself through its detailed illustrations of battles and campaigns. Many are still commonly used in books and museums across the country today. Artists were sent across the country to follow the armies and sketch scenes for a public hungry for news of the war. One artist, Theodore R. Davis, traveled with Sherman's army during the Atlanta Campaign, and provided one of the few illustrations of Big Shanty (today's Kennesaw) before its burning in November 1864.

Theodore R. Davis was only twenty-one when the Civil War broke out, and served both as a wartime artist and as a soldier in a Connecticut regiment. Interestingly, he was wounded twice. Davis followed the Atlanta Campaign, and sketched many local sites, including Acworth, Marietta, and Kennesaw Mountain. While other Civil War illustrators made depictions of Big Shanty, Davis is the only major artist we know was in this area during the war. His depiction of our town was published in the July 9, 1864 edition of *Harper's Weekly*, and shows a large depot labeled "Big Shanty" next to two small houses or stores, with several Union cavalymen in the foreground.



After the war, Davis traveled south during Reconstruction, and west to document wars against Native Americans. Because he was an eyewitness to the Atlanta Campaign, Davis served as a consultant for the Atlanta Cyclorama. According to one source, an image of Davis can be found in the painting. He passed away in New Jersey in 1894.

"Big Shanty Station"
By Theodore R. Davis

Presented by Andrew J. Bramlett at the August 29, 2025,
City of Kennesaw Mayor & Council Meeting

Names and Addresses will be disclosed in the Permanent Minutes of the
City of Kennesaw

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR NAME IS LEGIBLE AND CLEAR

**City Council Meeting
9/2/2025
Public Comment Sign-in**

	Name	Address	Topic
1	<u>Andrew J. Brantlett</u>	<u>2990 Somerfield Dr.</u>	<u>Local History</u>
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