

**Columbus Consolidated Government
Council Meeting Agenda Item**

TO:	Mayor and Councilors
AGENDA SUBJECT:	2020 Legislative Agenda – Add-Ons
AGENDA SUMMARY:	Approval is requested of the resolution for the 2021 Legislative Session of the Georgia General Assembly, which the Mayor and Council deem appropriate.
INITIATED BY:	Isaiah, Hugley, City Manager

Recommendation: Approval is requested of the resolution for the 2021 Legislative Session of the Georgia General Assembly, which the Mayor and Council deem appropriate.

Background: Each year elected and appointed officials of the Columbus Consolidated Government develop a list of issues important to the citizens of Columbus that requires action by the Local Legislative Delegation. Once approved, a meeting will be held with the Delegation to explain the rationale behind these issues and to solicit their support. The Hometown Connection and Legislative Agenda meeting will be held on October 29, 2020.

Analysis: Staff, elected and appointed officials were asked to present issues they felt were important to the operation of city government. Research and justification for these issues were presented to the City Manager and a list was prepared for presentation to the Mayor/Council.

Financial Considerations: The City is expected to receive additional revenues if many of the issues are passed by the Georgia General Assembly.

Recommendations/Actions: Approve those resolution, which the Mayor and Council deem appropriate.

**COLUMBUS CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT
2021 PROPOSED LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**

1. CASINO GAMING REFERENDUM:

The Columbus Consolidated Government is requesting the legislative delegation introduce or support legislation to authorize a statewide referendum for a constitutional amendment to allow Georgia citizens to vote as to whether casino gaming should be allowed in Georgia for the purpose of Hope Scholarship funding. Further, if any such constitutional amendment is adopted, this Council requests a local referendum be established for approval or rejection of any such casino gaming in Muscogee County. *(Request of Councilor Evelyn Mimi Woodson/Carry Over From Previous Years)*

Explanation:

To provide Hope Scholarships to college bound students to ensure that a lack of funding does not prevent them from going to college, staying in college and graduating from college.

2. INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS WHERE CASSINOS ARE APPROVED:

The Columbus Consolidated Government respectfully requests that the local legislative delegation advocate for any legislation authorizing a referendum on the approval of casino gaming operations in Georgia also require a funding mechanism from the proceeds from such operation to be used to fund county infrastructure serving casino gaming operations, including but not limited to, roads and streets, sewage disposal, trash collection, law enforcement and fire and ems response. *(Request of Councilor Glenn Davis)*

Explanation:

Should casino gaming operations be allowed in any Georgia county, a portion of the proceeds from such operation should be set aside for expansion of county infrastructure supporting such a project, including but not limited to, services such as roads and streets, sewage disposal, trash collection, law enforcement and fire and ems response to compensate local governments for the additional costs to be incurred as result of the presence of casino operations.

3. SMALL BUSINESS RELIEF:

The Columbus Council is requesting that the legislative delegation introduce legislation to study and implement ways that programs of temporary loan deferment and forbearance can be implemented in Georgia to provide temporary relief to small businesses facing disruption, closure, foreclosure or bankruptcy as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Explanation:

Georgia's small businesses are facing an unprecedented economic disruption due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. As a result, the Columbus Council urges the General Assembly to study ways that programs of temporary loan deferment and forbearance can be implemented in Georgia to provide temporary relief to small businesses facing disruption, closure, foreclosure or bankruptcy as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

4. OPPOSE PREEMPTION OF REGULATION OF PET SALES BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

The Columbus Council is requesting that the local delegation oppose any legislation in the General Assembly which would preempt local governments from regulating the sales of animals to be kept as pets. (*Request of Councilor Davis*)

Explanation:

In past years, the General Assembly has considered legislation which would protect "puppy mills" and other retail animal outlets from local regulation. Such legislation would prevent local governments from regulating the conditions under which these animals are bred, born, and sold and might also impact regulations that would favor the adoption of animals already born in the jurisdiction.

5. RESIDENTIAL DRUG ABUSE TREATMENT CENTERS (*Prompt Notification of Local Authorities Upon Licensing*):

The Columbus Consolidated Government respectfully requests that the local legislative delegation introduce state-wide legislation that will require prompt notification of county and city police and fire departments, licensing departments, and planning and zoning departments upon licensing or licensing changes of residential care centers as defined and used below. (*Request of Councilor Glenn Davis*)

Explanation:

This Council recognizes that the State of Georgia licenses facilities which provide therapeutic care for drug dependencies in a residential setting. Notification of county agencies and officials is often lacking at the time licenses to such facilities are granted by the State, including but not limited to, "residential care centers" defined at O.C.G.A. Section 26-5-3. The lack of awareness of the licensed facilities or changes in licensing status may prevent local governmental entities from acting promptly to protect the health and welfare of those persons in such facilities. The Council hereby requests that the local legislative delegation introduce a state-wide bill to require prompt notification to certain county/ municipal officials upon licensing or changes in license status of any residential care center in the State of Georgia.

6. PUBLIC UTILITIES AND PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM RESERVOIRS:

The Columbus Consolidated Government is requesting the following actions of the legislative delegation so as to better protect public water system reservoirs such as Lake Oliver in Columbus, Georgia:

- (1) consider amendments to or removal of exemptions to the Erosion and Sedimentation Act of 1975 for certain public utilities and public water system reservoirs;
- (2) request that the General Assembly and U.S. Corps of Engineers perform additional environmental studies at appropriate intervals to evaluate water flows, water quality siltation and sedimentation buildup on riverbanks in the Chattahoochee River above Columbus, Georgia; and
- (3) explore options whereby the State can provide funding necessary for dredging of such local public waterways to mitigate and restore siltation and sedimentation damage.
(Request of Councilor Glenn Davis)

Explanation:

The above amendments would ensure that water quality, water flows, siltation and sedimentation buildup on riverbanks in Lake Oliver and the Chattahoochee River above Columbus are appropriately monitored and remediated.

7. PERSONAL CARE HOMES (Prompt Notification of Local Authorities Upon Licensing):

The Columbus Consolidated Government respectfully requests that the local legislative delegation introduce state-wide legislation that will require prompt notification of county and city police and fire departments, licensing departments, and planning and zoning departments upon licensing or licensing changes of child-caring institutions, foster care homes, and personal care homes as defined and used above. *(Request of Councilor Glenn Davis/Carry Over From Previous Years)*

Explanation:

This Council recognizes that the State of Georgia licenses facilities for various types of assistance for both children and adults in a home-like setting. Notification of county agencies and officials is often lacking at the time licenses to such facilities are granted by the State, including but not limited to, “child-caring institutions” defined at O.C.G.A. Section 49-5-3, “foster care homes” as defined at O.C.G.A. Section 49-5-60, and “personal care homes” as used in O.C.G.A. Section 25-2-13. The lack of awareness of the licensed facilities or changes in licensing status may prevent local governmental entities from acting promptly to protect the health and welfare of those persons in such facilities. The Council hereby requests that the local legislative delegation introduce a state-wide bill to require prompt notification to certain county/ municipal officials upon licensing or changes in license status of child-caring institutions, foster care homes, and personal care homes by the State of Georgia.

8. PERSONAL CARE HOMES (Minimum Staffing Requirement):

The Columbus Consolidated Government is requesting the local legislative delegation to the Georgia General Assembly introduce state-wide legislation that will require minimum staffing of two trained supervisors or managers between the hours of 6:00 pm and 6:00 am

at child-caring institutions, foster care homes, and personal care homes. We also request that the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly require that all such child-caring institutions, foster care homes, and personal care homes be accredited by a national accrediting body such as COA or CARF. *(Request of Councilor Glenn Davis/Carry Over From Previous Years)*

Explanation:

The Council supports legislation to require better staffing and training for personal care homes operated in Columbus and the State of Georgia.

A RESOLUTION
NO. _____

WHEREAS, this Council desires to facilitate the provision of Hope Scholarships to college bound students to insure that a lack of funding does not prevent them from going to college; and,

WHEREAS, additional funding sources are necessary to be able to fully implement the Hope Scholarship program.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA,
HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:**

We hereby respectfully request that the local legislative delegation to the Georgia General Assembly introduce or support legislation to authorize a referendum to allow Georgia citizens to vote as to whether casino gaming should be allowed in Georgia for the purpose of Hope Scholarship funding. Let a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia held on the _____ day of _____ 2020, and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of _____ members of Council.

Councilor Allen voting	_____.
Councilor Barnes voting	_____.
Councilor Crabb voting	_____.
Councilor Davis voting	_____.
Councilor Garrett voting	_____.
Councilor House voting	_____.
Councilor Huff voting	_____.
Councilor Thomas voting	_____.
Councilor Tucker voting	_____.
Councilor Woodson voting	_____.

Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

B. H. "Skip" Henderson III, Mayor

A RESOLUTION

NO.

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA REQUESTING THAT THE LOCAL DELEGATION TO THE GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY PROVIDE FOR COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING FROM THE PROCEEDS OF ANY CASINO GAMING OPERATION PERMITTED UNDER GEORGIA LAW.

WHEREAS, in recent years, the Georgia General Assembly has considered constitutional amendments and legislation to allow the operation of casino gaming in Georgia; and,

WHEREAS, the introduction of casino gaming into any county will necessitate expansion of county infrastructure, including but not limited to, services such as roads and streets, sewage disposal, trash collection, law enforcement and fire and ems response; and,

WHEREAS, this Council desires that should casino gaming be permitted in this county or others, that the General Assembly mandate that a portion of the proceeds from any casino gaming operation be set aside for expansion of county infrastructure to support such an operation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA, AS FOLLOWS:

The Council of Columbus, Georgia respectfully requests that should casino gaming be allowed in Columbus or any other county, the local legislative delegation to the Georgia General Assembly introduce legislation that will set aside a percentage of the proceeds from such operation to be used to fund county infrastructure serving casino gaming operations, including but not limited to, roads and streets, sewage disposal, trash collection, law enforcement and fire and ems response.

Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia held the _____ day of _____, 2020 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of _____ members of said Council.

Councilor Allen voting	_____.
Councilor Barnes voting	_____.
Councilor Crabb voting	_____.
Councilor Davis voting	_____.
Councilor Garrett voting	_____.
Councilor House voting	_____.
Councilor Huff voting	_____.
Councilor Thomas voting	_____.
Councilor Tucker voting	_____.
Councilor Woodson voting	_____.

Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

B.H. "Skip" Henderson, Mayor

A RESOLUTION

NO.

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA REQUESTING THAT THE LOCAL DELEGATION TO THE GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO STUDY WAYS TO PROVIDE TEMPORARY RELIEF FOR SMALL BUSINESSES IN GEORGIA FACING CLOSURE, FORECLOSURE OR BANKRUPTCY AS A RESULT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

WHEREAS, Georgia’s small businesses are facing an unprecedented economic disruption due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic; and,

WHEREAS, in O.C.G.A. Section 50-5-121, “small business” is defined as “a business which is independently owned and operated. In addition, such business must have fewer than 300 employees or less than \$30 million in gross receipts per year;”

WHEREAS, Georgia’s small businesses are the backbone of our State’s economy and should receive more temporary relief similar to the SBA programs for temporary deferment and forbearance of business loan payments;

WHEREAS, this Council urges the General Assembly to study ways that programs of temporary loan deferment and forbearance can be implemented in Georgia to provide temporary relief to small businesses facing disruption, closure, foreclosure or bankruptcy as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA, AS FOLLOWS:

The Council of Columbus, Georgia respectfully requests that the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly introduce legislation to study and implement ways that programs of temporary loan deferment and forbearance can be implemented in Georgia to provide temporary relief to small businesses facing disruption, closure, foreclosure or bankruptcy as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia held the _____ day of _____, 2020 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of _____ members of said Council.

Councilor Allen voting	_____.
Councilor Barnes voting	_____.
Councilor Crabb voting	_____.
Councilor Davis voting	_____.
Councilor Garrett voting	_____.
Councilor House voting	_____.
Councilor Huff voting	_____.
Councilor Thomas voting	_____.
Councilor Tucker voting	_____.
Councilor Woodson voting	_____.

Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

B.H. “Skip” Henderson, Mayor

A RESOLUTION

No. _____

WHEREAS, over the past several sessions the General Assembly has considered legislation which would preempt local governments from banning the sale by retail of goods or items regulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture or the Georgia Department of Agriculture; and,

WHEREAS, under these proposed measures, local governments would be unable to regulate so-called puppy mills or similar practices; and,

WHEREAS, this Council desires that the local legislative delegation continue to oppose any legislation introduced which would seek to preempt local control over the retail sale of pets and other local measures that could encourage the adoption of animals already born.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA HEREBY RESOLVES:

We hereby respectfully request that the local legislative delegation to the Georgia General Assembly oppose any legislation which would pre-empt local control over the retail sale of pets. Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia held the _____ day of _____, 2020 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of _____ members of said Council.

- Councilor Allen voting _____.
- Councilor Barnes voting _____.
- Councilor Crabb voting _____.
- Councilor Davis voting _____.
- Councilor Garrett voting _____.
- Councilor House voting _____.
- Councilor Huff voting _____.
- Councilor Thomas voting _____.
- Councilor Tucker voting _____.
- Councilor Woodson voting _____.

Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

B.H. "Skip" Henderson, Mayor

A RESOLUTION

No. _____

WHEREAS, this Council recognizes that the State of Georgia is licensing facilities for the treatment of drug abuse in a residential setting; and,

WHEREAS, notification of county agencies and officials is often lacking at the time licenses to such facilities are granted by the State, including but not limited to, “residential care centers ” as defined in O.C.G.A. Section 26-5-3; and,

WHEREAS, this Council desires that the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly address these matters and require prompt notification of certain county agencies and officials upon the granting of licenses to such facilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA HEREBY RESOLVES:

We hereby respectfully request that the local legislative delegation to the Georgia General Assembly introduce state-wide legislation that will require prompt notification of county and city police and fire departments, licensing departments, and planning and zoning departments upon licensing of residential care centers as defined and used above.

Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia held on the _____ day of _____ 2019, and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of _____ members of Council.

- Councilor Allen voting _____.
- Councilor Barnes voting _____.
- Councilor Crabb voting _____.
- Councilor Davis voting _____.
- Councilor Garrett voting _____.
- Councilor House voting _____.
- Councilor Huff voting _____.
- Councilor Thomas voting _____.
- Councilor Tucker voting _____.
- Councilor Woodson voting _____.

Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

B. H. “Skip” Henderson III, Mayor

A RESOLUTION

No. _____

WHEREAS, in recent years, Lake Oliver in Columbus, Georgia has suffered from increased siltation from upstream development and runoff; and,

WHEREAS, certain public utilities and public water system reservoirs are exempt from the provisions of the Erosion and Sedimentation Act of 1975; and,

WHEREAS, today's environmental issues demand greater scrutiny by the Georgia General Assembly with respect to operations of certain public utilities and public water system reservoirs; and,

WHEREAS, this Council desires that the local legislative delegation to the Georgia General Assembly consider amendments to or removal of such exceptions to the Erosion and Sedimentation Act of 1975 so as to better protect public water system reservoirs such as Lake Oliver in Columbus, Georgia; and,

WHEREAS, this Council further desires that the General Assembly and U.S. Corps of Engineers perform additional environmental studies at appropriate intervals to evaluate water flows, water quality, siltation and sedimentation buildup on riverbanks in the Chattahoochee River above Columbus, Georgia; and

WHEREAS, this Council further desires that the General Assembly explore options whereby the State can provide funding necessary for dredging of such local public waterways to mitigate and restore siltation and sedimentation damage.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA HEREBY RESOLVES:

We hereby respectfully request the following:

- (1) that the local legislative delegation to the Georgia General Assembly consider amendments to or removal of such exceptions to the Erosion and Sedimentation Act of 1975 so as to better protect public water system reservoirs such as Lake Oliver in Columbus, Georgia.; and,
- (2) that the General Assembly and U.S. Corps of Engineers perform additional environmental studies at appropriate intervals to evaluate water flows, water quality, siltation and sedimentation buildup on riverbanks in the Chattahoochee River above Columbus, Georgia.; and,
- (3) that the General Assembly explore funding options for State funding of the dredging, mitigation and restoration of siltation and sedimentation damage to public waterways that impacts local governments.

Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia held on the _____ day of _____ 2020, and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of _____ members of Council.

Councilor Allen voting _____.
Councilor Barnes voting _____.
Councilor Crabb voting _____.
Councilor Davis voting _____.
Councilor Garrett voting _____.
Councilor House voting _____.
Councilor Huff voting _____.
Councilor Thomas voting _____.
Councilor Tucker voting _____.
Councilor Woodson voting _____.

Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

B. H. "Skip" Henderson III, Mayor

A RESOLUTION

No. _____

WHEREAS, this Council recognizes that the State of Georgia is licensing facilities for various types of assistance for both children and adults in a home-like setting; and,

WHEREAS, notification of county agencies and officials is often lacking at the time licenses to such facilities are granted by the State, including but not limited to, “child-caring institutions” defined at O.C.G.A. Section 49-5-3, “foster care homes” as defined at O.C.G.A. Section 49-5-60, and “personal care homes” as used in O.C.G.A. Section 25-2-13; and,

WHEREAS, this Council desires that the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly address these matters and require prompt notification of certain county agencies and officials upon the granting of licenses to such facilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA HEREBY RESOLVES:

We hereby respectfully request that the local legislative delegation to the Georgia General Assembly introduce state-wide legislation that will require prompt notification of county and city police and fire departments, licensing departments, and planning and zoning departments upon licensing of child-caring institutions, foster care homes, and personal care homes as defined and used above.

Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia held on the _____ day of _____ 2019, and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of _____ members of Council.

- Councilor Allen voting _____.
- Councilor Barnes voting _____.
- Councilor Crabb voting _____.
- Councilor Davis voting _____.
- Councilor Garrett voting _____.
- Councilor House voting _____.
- Councilor Huff voting _____.
- Councilor Thomas voting _____.
- Councilor Tucker voting _____.
- Councilor Woodson voting _____.

Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

B. H. “Skip” Henderson III, Mayor

A RESOLUTION
NO. _____

WHEREAS, this Council has previously requested legislation from the General Assembly to provide notice to counties upon licensing of child-caring institutions, foster care homes, and personal care homes as defined at O.C.G.A. Section 49-5-3, O.C.G.A. Section 49-5-60, and Section 25-2-13; and,

WHEREAS, alleged criminal activities have occurred at or near some of these homes in the State of Georgia, and most recently in Muscogee County, bringing the issues of staffing and training of supervisors and managers to the forefront; and,

WHEREAS, this Council desires that the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly address these matters and require minimum staffing of two trained supervisors or managers at such homes between the hours of 6:00 pm and 6:00 am; and,

WHEREAS, this Council also desires that the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly require that all such child-caring institutions, foster care homes, and personal care homes be accredited by a national accrediting body such as the Council on Accreditation (“COA”) or the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (“CARF”).

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA HEREBY RESOLVES:

We hereby respectfully request that the local legislative delegation to the Georgia General Assembly introduce state-wide legislation that will require minimum staffing of two trained supervisors or managers between the hours of 6:00 pm and 6:00 am at child-caring institutions, foster care homes, and personal care homes.

We also request that the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly require that all such child-caring institutions, foster care homes, and personal care homes be accredited by a national accrediting body such as COA or CARF.

Let a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the Clerk of Council to each member of the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia held on the _____ day of _____ 2019 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of _____ members of Council.

Councilor Allen voting	_____.
Councilor Barnes voting	_____.
Councilor Crabb voting	_____.
Councilor Davis voting	_____.
Councilor Garrett voting	_____.
Councilor House voting	_____.
Councilor Huff voting	_____.
Councilor Thomas voting	_____.
Councilor Tucker voting	_____.
Councilor Woodson voting	_____.

Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

B.H. “Skip” Henderson, III, Mayor