

**Columbus Consolidated Government
Council Meeting Agenda Item**

TO:	Mayor and Councilors
AGENDA SUBJECT:	2027 Legislative Agenda
AGENDA SUMMARY:	Approval is requested of the resolutions for the 2027 Legislative Session of the Georgia General Assembly, which the Mayor and Council deem appropriate.
INITIATED BY:	City Manager's Office

Recommendation: Approval is requested of the resolutions for the 2027 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 require 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 28, 2026.

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 resolutions, which the Mayor and Council deem appropriate.

1. AMENDMENT OF CONFLICT-OF-INTEREST PROVISION FOR REDEVELOPMENT POWERS LAW:

The Columbus Council requests the local legislative delegation introduce/support legislation to revise and to clarify the conflict-of-interest provisions in the Redevelopment Powers Law which address the participation of local government elective and appointive officials and employees in the creation and administration of Tax Allocation Districts. *(Request of Councilor Glenn Davis/Carry Over From Previous Years)*

Explanation:

1) With respect to property acquired after the designation of a redevelopment area or TAD, the current law very broadly prohibits any "elected official, appointed official, **or employee** of any political subdivision, board, commission, or redevelopment agency from voluntarily acquiring any interest, direct or indirect, in any property contract or transaction or proposed contract or transaction in connection with the redevelopment of that redevelopment area..." The proposed revision would remove the blanket prohibition against voluntary property acquisition in a redevelopment area and instead provide that any official or employee who has a direct ownership interest in a property that is proposed to receive payment of redevelopment costs shall disclose the interest in writing to the legislative body and shall not vote or in any way participate in considering the matter or seek to influence the votes of others on the matter.

2) The current law requires that any elected or appointed official or employee of a political subdivision who has acquired any interest direct or indirect in property in the redevelopment area within the two years immediately prior to the date the plan is submitted to the local legislative body shall disclose the interest in writing 30 days in advance and "not participate in any action of the political subdivision which affects that property." The revision would cut the time of written notice to 5 days and limit the coverage of the provision to public officers as defined by O.C.G.A. Section 21-5-3 (22) instead of the current general reference to all elected officials, appointed officials and employees.

3) The proposed revision also refines the definition of the property interest covered by the conflict provision. The current law covers any transaction which facilitates the acquisition "any interest direct or indirect" in property and substitutes a direct ownership interest in property as defined by O.C.G.A. Section 21-5-3(8).

2. 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/Carry Over From Previous Years)*

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.

3. OPEN MEETINGS AMENDMENT:

The Columbus Council requests that the local delegation to the Georgia General Assembly introduce legislation at the 2027 Legislative Session to amend O.C.G.A 50-14-1(g) so that telephonic or video meetings can be held by local boards and commissions under non-emergent circumstances as long as the public can hear, view and participate in the meeting contemporaneously. *(Request of Mayor Pro Tem Allen/Carry Over From Previous Years)*

Explanation:

Official Code of Georgia Annotated Section 50-14-1(g) provides that local government boards and commissions may only hold a legal open meeting when a quorum of the members can be present in person unless there is a declared emergency. The General Assembly could amend the Open Meeting Law to allow local governments and their boards and commissions to take advantage of the same teleconferencing ability and permit meetings to be held when there is not a quorum of members present.

A RESOLUTION

NO. _____

WHEREAS, the conflict of interest provision of Redevelopment Powers Law, Title 36, Chapter 44 is broadly and unclearly worded in a way that leaves all CCG officials, even employees whose positions have nothing to do with the creation or administration of a Tax Allocation District, subject to possible disclosure requirements and prohibitions from voluntarily acquiring a direct or indirect interest in property in any TAD created by Council; and,

WHEREAS, this Council desires that the conflict of interest provision applicable to TAD's be more specific and limited as to the persons covered by its requirements and use definitions consistent with the Ethics in Government Act found in Chapter 5 of Title 21 of the Georgia Code.

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

This Council hereby request that the local delegation to the General Assembly introduce/support the attached proposed amendment to O.C.G.A. § 36-44-21 or any similar proposal, which clarifies that code section by providing standard definitions and eliminates the prohibition against the acquisition of property in TAD's by all CCG employees. 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 the _____ day of _____, 2026 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of _____ members of said Council.

Councilor Allen voting	_____.
Councilor Barnes voting	_____.
Councilor Chambers voting	_____.
Councilor Cogle voting	_____.
Councilor Cook voting	_____.
Councilor Crabb voting	_____.
Councilor Davis voting	_____.
Councilor Garrett voting	_____.
Councilor Huff voting	_____.
Councilor Tucker voting	_____.

Lindsey G. McLemore, Clerk of Council

B.H. "Skip" Henderson III, 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 _____, 2026 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of _____ members of said Council.

Councilor Allen voting	_____.
Councilor Barnes voting	_____.
Councilor Chambers voting	_____.
Councilor Cogle voting	_____.
Councilor Cook voting	_____.
Councilor Crabb voting	_____.
Councilor Davis voting	_____.
Councilor Garrett voting	_____.
Councilor Huff voting	_____.
Councilor Tucker voting	_____.

Lindsey G. McLemore, Clerk of Council

B.H. "Skip" Henderson III, Mayor

A RESOLUTION
NO. _____

**A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE LOCAL LEGISLATIVE
DELEGATION INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO AMEND THE GEORGIA OPEN
MEETINGS ACT TO ALLOW THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES MAY
HOLD PUBLIC MEETINGS VIA TELECONFERENCE OR OTHER DIGITAL MEANS
ON THE SAME BASIS AS STATE AGENCIES.**

WHEREAS, during the period of COVID-19 Emergency, the Mayor, Council and City staff have invested in and perfected the use of technology that allows for the conduct of virtual meetings that allow contemporaneous observing and participation in meetings of its Council and various Boards and Commissions; and,

WHEREAS, Official Code of Georgia Annotated Section 50-14-1(f) allows statewide agencies to provide for the use meetings by teleconference; and,

WHEREAS, Official Code of Georgia Annotated Section 50-14-1(g) provides that local government boards and commissions may only hold a legal open meeting when a quorum of the members can be present in person unless there is a declared emergency; and,

WHEREAS, the General Assembly could amend the Open Meeting Law to allow local governments and their boards and commissions to take advantage of the same teleconferencing ability and permit meetings to be held when there is not a quorum of members present.

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

We hereby respectfully request that the Local Legislative Delegation to the Georgia General Assembly introduce legislation at the 2027 Legislative Session to amend O.C.G.A 50-14-1(g) so that telephonic or video meetings can be held by local boards and commissions under non-emergent circumstances as long as the public can hear, view and participate in the meeting contemporaneously.

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 27th day of October, 2026 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of _____members of said Council.

Councilor Allen voting	_____.
Councilor Barnes voting	_____.
Councilor Chambers voting	_____.
Councilor Cogle voting	_____.
Councilor Cook voting	_____.
Councilor Crabb voting	_____.
Councilor Davis voting	_____.
Councilor Garrett voting	_____.
Councilor Huff voting	_____.
Councilor Tucker voting	_____.

Lindsey G. McLemore, Clerk of Council

B.H. "Skip" Henderson III, Mayor