

**Columbus Consolidated Government
Council Meeting Agenda Item**

TO:	Mayor and Councilors
AGENDA SUBJECT:	Property Exchange with Mt. Pilgrim Baptist Church
AGENDA SUMMARY:	Approval is requested to enter into an agreement with Mt. Pilgrim Baptist Church for the exchange of city property with the church as needed for the construction of a new interstate interchange at I-185 and Old Cusseta Road. In addition to the exchange of properties, the initial offer of \$2 million by GDOT for this project would still be honored by the City, with those funds coming out of the \$58 million TIA budget for this project. The church has also asked for consideration of waving city building permit fees (approximately \$15,000); help with the removal and disposal of trees on the property; and assistance with water and sewer tap fees from the Columbus Water Works (\$3,000).
INITIATED BY:	Planning Department

Recommendation: Approval is requested to enter into negotiations with Mt. Pilgrim Baptist Church for the potential exchange of property needed for the construction of a new interstate interchange at I-185 and Old Cusseta Road.

Background: In 2012 voters approved the construction of a new interstate interchange at I-185 and Old Cusseta Road under the local Transportation Investment Act (TIA) program. Construction of the project will require the acquisition of the Mt. Pilgrim Baptist Church located at 4400 Old Cusseta Road. The church from the beginning of this project has been a key partner and has been kept informed every step along the way. To help facilitate this project, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) was made the project manager primarily due to their experience in dealing with matters of this type with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Initially, GDOT handled all right-of-way negotiations with the church offering \$2 million for the 3.67 acres, included all buildings and fixtures. When the church rejected that offer, GDOT asked the City to become involved in the negotiations. The church has counteroffered asking for an exchange of property at 375 Farr Road, currently owned by the Housing Authority of Columbus (HAC) in addition to the \$2 million allocated by GDOT to the TIA budget for this project.

Analysis: The HAC board has approved disposing of the Farr Road property to the City as part of a property swap. In exchange, the HAC is interested in parcels owned by the City in the City Village area (1st Avenue and 21st-24th Streets) for potential development. Currently, the City owns 23 parcels or approximately 4.23 acres. Appraisals for these properties have been ordered. Once this transaction has occurred, the City Manager would then be able to negotiate an exchange of the

Farr Road property to the church as a part of the acquisition of the Church's property for the interstate interchange. Completion of this action would give the City the needed property for the construction of the interstate interchange.

Financial Considerations: In addition to the exchange of properties, the initial offer of \$2 million by GDOT for this project would still be honored by the City, with those funds coming out of the \$58 million TIA budget for this project. The church has also asked for consideration of waving city building permit fees (approximately \$15,000); help with the removal and disposal of trees on the property; and assistance with water and sewer tap fees from the Columbus Water Works (\$3,000).

Legal Considerations: The exchange of property between the City and the church requires the authorization of the Council.

Recommendation/Action: Authorize the City Manager to enter into negotiations with Mt. Pilgrim Baptist Church for the potential exchange of property needed for the construction of a new interstate interchange at I-185 and Old Cusseta Road.

A RESOLUTION

NO. _____

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE EXCHANGE OF CERTAIN PROPERTIES BETWEEN THE CITY AND THE MOUNT PILGRIM BAPTIST CHURCH AS PART OF AN ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY FOR AN INTERSTATE INTERCHANGE.

WHEREAS, under the 2012 election of certain local Transportation Investment Act (TIA) projects, the Cusseta/Old Cusseta Road Improvements project to develop and construct a new interstate interchange was approved by citizens to provide transportation benefits to south Columbus and the surrounding region; and,

WHEREAS, it is necessary to acquire certain private properties for right of way needed around the proposed project including the property owned by the Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church; and,

WHEREAS, the Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church located at 4400 Old Cusseta Road has identified a site to relocate and build a new facility at 375 Farr Road on property that is owned by Housing Authority of Columbus; and,

WHEREAS, to accommodate the church in this effort will require a swap between the Housing Authority of Columbus and the City, and then a swap of property between the City and Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church; and,

WHEREAS, the acquisition of church property for the interstate interchange improvements will require a swap between the Housing Authority of Columbus and the City, and then a swap of property between the City and Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church in order to provide a place for the church to relocate; and,

WHEREAS, all of the aforementioned parties are in general agreement to this proposed action pending negotiation;

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

That the City Manager is hereby authorized to enter into negotiations with Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church for the purposes of exchanging property at 375 Farr Road for property owned by the church at 4400 Old Cusseta Road for the construction of a new interstate interchange at I-185 and Old Cusseta Road.

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