

# Mayor and Council Work Session Notes

## Capital Projects Report – December 1, 2025

All were present, the work session focused on presenting a comprehensive year-end report on the city's capital projects, led by City Administrator Andrew Parker and featuring updates from the Directors of Parks and Recreation, Public Works, and the Airport Manager.

### Funding and Scope

- **Total Capital Projects:** Staff has been executing over **\$50 million** in capital projects since 2023
- **Funding Sources:** The majority of projects were funded through **SPLOST, bonds, and grants**
- **Grant Success:** The city obtained about **\$8 million** in grant funding from state and federal partners during this period, with another \$2.5 million grant request currently submitted



### Administration and Recreation Projects

Project	Funding Source	Status/Completion Date	Key Features
<b>John Davis Recreation Center</b>	2020 SPLOST	70% complete; Expected completion: <b>March 2026</b>	Complete transformation; new gymnasium (seating for 370+), versatile meeting rooms, new pool access building, and a <b>climbing wall</b> .
<b>Mill Line Extension (Phase 2)</b>	2024 SPLOST (PAYGO)	Design underway; Expected construction start: <b>Late Summer 2026</b>	Extends the trail ~2 miles from the Paul Belk Honorary Trailhead down to Burr Park, with on-street accommodations downtown.
<b>Police Dept. Property &amp; Evidence Building Expansion</b>	2020 SPLOST	Virtually complete (waiting on one HVAC component)	7,200 sq. ft addition with 3,000 evidence storage bays, a new processing lab, and a new vehicular bay.

## **Parks and Recreation Updates (Steve Roberts)**

- **Pickleball Complex:**
    - **Status:** Approximately **80% complete**
    - **Features:** 15 lighted courts (3 covered), new building with restrooms/concessions
    - **Delay:** Expected completion is December 20th, but the acrylic finish on the courts will be delayed until spring 2026 due to cold weather requirements (above 40 and rising).
  - **Al Rollins Park (Local Little League Park):**
    - **Status:** Design finished; Looking to bid this month.
    - **Scope:** Re-grade all grass baseball fields with new drainage, new building with **ADA-compliant restrooms**, renovating existing restrooms, and covered batting cages
  - **Heritage Point Park Improvements (Tournament Park):**
    - **Funding:** 2024 SPLOST and a request for the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship (GOSP) grant
    - **Scope:** Renovate the park, build connecting trails/pedestrian bridges, new restroom at the playground, river access point, outdoor classroom pavilion, and replace lights with LED fixtures
  - **Hagmill Lake Paved Trail:** Public Works has just begun the in-house construction to pave the trail around the lake (little over 3 miles)
- 

## **Public Works Projects (Chad Townsend)**

- **Pentz Cuyler Streetscape Improvements:** Completed in **August 2025**. Addressed storm drain issues, relocated utilities underground, and updated sidewalks to be ADA-compliant.
  - **Walnut North Drainage Improvements:** All four phases funded by bonded capital. Installed a regenerative stormwater system, detention pond, and stormwater bypass pipe, providing flood reduction to 24 downstream parcels. Received a Georgia APWA Project of the Year Award.
  - **Prater Alley Detention Pond:** Completed in **September 2024**.
  - **Pipelining Program (Trenchless Pipe Rehabilitation):** Completed three projects to date, offering a less intrusive, quicker, and more cost-effective method for repairing failing infrastructure under roads.
  - **Temple Beth El Stormwater Detention Facility and Memorial Park:** Construction anticipated to begin in **February 2026**. Will bring flood reduction and serve as a memorial park commemorating the Jewish community.
  - **North Thornton Sidewalk Improvements:** 90% complete on design; Will install 3,300 linear feet of new sidewalk/curb for pedestrian safety.
  - **East Morris Corridor Improvements:** Awarded a \$2 million grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) to expand on the \$2 million from 2024 SPLOST. Construction expected to start **Late 2027**.
  - **Underwood Street Bridge Replacement:** Full replacement budgeted for \$4 million (funded by 2024 SPLOST) with a 50-year lifespan, deemed more cost-beneficial than a repair.
-

### Airport Projects (Andrew Wiersma)

The airport projects are primarily related to 20-30-year safety and maintenance issues, along with revenue-generating opportunities.

Project	Funding Source	Status/Completion Date	Key Highlights
<b>Hangar Development Project</b>	75/25 State/Local Grant	95% complete; Substantial completion <b>December 15th</b>	Three new hangar buildings (27,000 sq. ft total). Expected to bring <b>\$150,000 in additional revenue</b> and significant ad valorem tax. The 62x60 hangar will house firefighting aircraft for the Georgia Forestry Commission.
<b>Taxiway Rehab Project</b>	75/25 State/Local Grant	75% complete; Expected completion <b>December 28th</b>	Crack repair and two-inch overlay of taxiways, including widening the ends (fillets) and constructing a new taxiway connector.
<b>Lighting Electrical Rehab Project</b>	Federal Grant (5% local match)	Not yet started; Estimated start <b>March 2026</b>	Replacing all existing runway/taxiway lights, approach lighting, wind cone, segment/circle, and the airport beacon.

---

### Conclusion

- Councilmember Steve Farrow commended the city's strong fiscal management and efficient use of resources. He noted that the city has effectively leveraged federal, state, and SPLOST funds, along with grants secured by staff, to support a wide range of projects. He also highlighted the use of bond funding, which is repaid through the regular city budget, as a key contributor to these efforts.

Despite these financial commitments, Farrow emphasized that the city continues to operate efficiently and deliver essential services.

Conclusion Cont'd

He pointed out the relatively low portion of city taxes on his personal tax bill, stating that the city's share was significantly less than school taxes and even lower than county taxes—despite the city providing its own fire, police, and recreation services.

Farrow concluded by praising city staff for their financial stewardship and their ability to maximize resources without placing additional burdens on taxpayers.

- Katheryn Sellers specifically requested that the North Thornton corridor sidewalk design be mindful of preserving the existing tree cover.
- The city plans to continue periodic work sessions to engage citizens on future projects.