



ATHENS CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

City Hall Conference Room
Monday, March 9, 2026, 5:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. INVOCATION

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. DISCUSSION

- (1-2) A. Resolution 2026-10, a Resolution Authorizing the City of Athens to Apply for Funding Through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program.
- (3-4) B. Resolution 2026-11, a Resolution Authorizing Application to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) / Federal Emergency Management (FEMA) for a Fiscal Year 2026 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG).
- (5-7) C. Resolution 2026-12, a Resolution Authorizing Application for the 2026 Community Development Block Grant.
- (8-9) D. Resolution 2026-13, a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Athens, Tennessee, Authorizing the Submission of an Application for the Tennessee Department of Health Healthy Built Environment Grant for Improvements at Prof Powers Park (Brody Ellis Field).
- (10-15) E. Resolution 2026-14, a Resolution Authorizing The City Of Athens, Tennessee, to Apply for a Traffic Signal Modernization Program (TSMP) Grant Through the Tennessee Department of Transportation and to Commit Local Funding for the Project if the Grant is Awarded.
- (16-20) F. Ordinance 1150, an Ordinance for to Amend 'The Zoning Ordinance of the City of Athens, Tennessee, so as to Amend the Official Zoning Map to Rezone the Property Located on the Corner of Hicks Street and Eastanallee Avenue from I-1 (Light Industrial District) to R-2 (Medium Density Residential) said Area Being Located Within the Corporate Limits of Athens, Tennessee.
- (21-24) G. Request for Extension – Athens Wine & Liquor
- (25) H. Amend the Athens City Code Title 8, Chapter 8-III ("Beer") and the Municipal Zoning Ordinance to add a Craft Beer Restaurant (Brewpub)

V. NEW BUSINESS

VI. BOARDS & COMMITTEES

A. Vacancies

1. Board of Adjustments & Appeals – 1 Vacancy (alternate)
2. Historic Preservation Commission – 1 Vacancy (an architect, if available (MZO 3.04.14(B)))

VII. ADJOURNMENT



Agenda Item

IV. A. Resolution 2026-10, a Resolution Authorizing the City of Athens to Apply for Funding Through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program

Overview

The city's Fire Department would like to apply for a SAFER grant from FEMA to provide funding to hire up to 9 additional full-time firefighters to operate the new fire station that is currently in design phase. The cost of these 9 full-time firefighters is \$77,000 each (salary, benefits, and required gear) for a total annual cost of approximately \$700,000. The grant is a three-year grant with the city funding 25% of the actual cost in years 1 and 2 and 65% in year 3, if awarded. After three years, the city funds the entire cost of the firefighters.

Action to Consider

Consensus is needed to move this item to the March 17, 2026 regular session for consideration.

Affected Departments

Fire Department

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-10

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF ATHENS TO APPLY FOR FUNDING THROUGH THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY’S (FEMA) STAFFING FOR ADEQUATE FIRE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE (SAFER) GRANT PROGRAM.

WHEREAS, the City of Athens recognizes the need to maintain and enhance the capabilities of its Fire Department to effectively and safely respond to emergencies; and

WHEREAS, the City of Athens Fire Department seeks to increase staffing levels to meet industry minimum standards, comply with NFPA 1710 guidelines, and ensure timely and efficient emergency response for the growing needs of the community; and

WHEREAS, the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant offered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides financial assistance to support the hiring of additional firefighters by covering a significant portion of their salary and benefits for a period of up to three years; and

WHEREAS, the SAFER Grant program requires that grant recipients contribute 25 percent of the actual costs incurred in each of the first two years and 65 percent in the third year of the grant; and

WHEREAS, the cost of these 9 full-time firefighters is \$77,000 each (salary, benefits, and required gear) for a total annual cost of approximately \$700,000.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ATHENS, TENNESSEE:

That the City of Athens hereby authorizes the submission of an application for funding through the FEMA SAFER Grant program.

That the City Mayor, City Manager, Fire Chief, and/or other designated officials are authorized to prepare and submit all necessary documentation, and to take all actions necessary, to apply for and administer the grant.

That the City acknowledges the cost-share requirements of the grant and commits to providing the necessary matching funds as specified in the grant program guidelines.

ON MOTION BY _____

SECONDED BY _____

said Resolution was approved by roll call vote on the **DD** day of **Month**, **YYYY**.

ATTEST: _____
Larry Eaton, Mayor

Randall Dowling, City Manager

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Christopher M. Caldwell, City Attorney



Agenda Item

IV. B. Resolution 2026-11, A Resolution Authorizing Application to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) / Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the 2026 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) and to Commit Local Funding for the Project if the Grant is Awarded.

Overview

This Resolution authorizes the City of Athens to apply to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the Fiscal Year 2026 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG). The purpose of the grant is to improve public and firefighter safety and to support training and operational readiness. If awarded, the grant funds will be used to support Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT) School costs for Fire Department personnel, including college tuition, registration and application fees, and overtime or shift coverage necessary to allow employees to attend classes. The total cost is approximately \$150,000, with the City providing the required five percent (5%) local match in an amount not to exceed \$7,500.

Action to Consider

Consensus is needed to move this item to the March 17, 2026 regular session for consideration.

Affected Departments

Fire Department

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-11

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS) / FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (FEMA) FOR A FISCAL YEAR 2026 ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT AND TO COMMIT LOCAL FUNDING FOR THE PROJECT IF THE GRANT IS AWARDED.

WHEREAS, The 2026 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program is one of three grant programs that constitute the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) focus on enhancing the safety of the firefighters and therefore the public with respect to fire and fire-related hazards; and,

WHEREAS, the AFG program objectives are to provide critically needed resources that equip and train emergency personnel to recognized standards, enhance operational efficiencies, foster interoperability, and support community resilience; and,

WHEREAS, the City’s desire in applying for this grant is to utilize the funding to cover college tuition to send staff members to Advanced EMT School, registration and application fees, overtime for staff attending class on scheduled off days and shift coverage to back fill on duty staff; and,

WHEREAS, the City, if the grant is awarded, will commit to a local match of 5%, not to exceed \$7,500.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ATHENS, TENNESSEE:

That the City of Athens hereby authorized to submit an application for funding through DHS and FEMA.

That the City Mayor, City Manager, Fire Chief, and/or other designated officials are authorized to prepare and submit all necessary documentation, and to take all actions necessary, to apply for and administer the grant.

That the City acknowledges the cost-share requirements of the grant and commits to providing the necessary matching funds as specified in the grant program guidelines.

ON MOTION BY _____

SECONDED BY _____

said Resolution was approved by roll call vote on the **DD** day of **Month**, **YYYY**.

ATTEST: _____
Larry Eaton, Mayor

Randall Dowling, City Manager

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Christopher M. Caldwell, City Attorney



Agenda Item

IV. C. Resolution 2026-12, a Resolution to Apply for a 2026 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Overview

The Public Works Department is requesting authorization to submit an application for a federal CDBG grant to construct downtown improvements along Madison Avenue, Washington Avenue, White Street and Jackson Street in accordance with the Downtown Master Plan concept from 2020 (see attachment) and specific downtown plans that are currently being developed. Specific improvements consist of curbing improvements, landscaping, pedestrian signals, ADA accessibility improvements, stormwater enhancements, and pedestrian crosswalk improvements. This project would improve pedestrian safety, reduce vehicle crashes, address ADA issue, and improve the aesthetics of the downtown area.

The estimated cost for this project is \$1,008,000 with \$900,000 coming from the grant and the balance of \$108,000 (required local match) coming from the city's Capital Improvement Fund, if the grant is awarded.

Attached is a memo from the Public Works Department with additional details.

Action to Consider

Consensus is needed to move this item to the March 17, 2026 regular session for consideration.

Affected Departments

Public Works Department

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-12

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATION FOR THE 2026 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT AND TO COMMIT LOCAL FUNDING FOR THE PROJECT IF THE GRANT IS AWARDED..

WHEREAS, the City of Athens is experiencing safety issues at a crossing at State Route 30 and the campus of Tennessee Wesleyan University; and

WHEREAS, the City of Athens has determined that this current dangerous traffic and pedestrian problem makes these improvements of the utmost importance

WHEREAS, the City of Athens is eligible to apply to The State of Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development for Community Development Block Grant to assist with these type of safety projects ; and

WHEREAS, since McMinn County and the City of Athens are members of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development's Three-Star Economic & Community Development Program, the City of Athens is eligible to apply for up to \$1,000,000 in CDBG funds and is eligible for a Three Star discount towards the required local match;

WHEREAS, the City of Athens will be responsible for the required 9% in matching funds required by the grant and all additional project costs that exceed grant funding;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ATHENS, TENNESSEE:

That Athens City Council does hereby authorize the Mayor and/or City Manager to submit an application for up to \$1,000,000 in CDBG funds for a safety improvements project; and

The Mayor is hereby authorized to enter into any agreements necessary for the successful award of the grant, subject to its approval by the State.

If said application is approved, the Mayor is hereby authorized to accept on behalf of the City of Athens said Community Development Block Grant, execute any and all documents and enter into agreements necessary for the successful application and award of the grant and to enter into a project administration agreement with the Southeast Tennessee Development District, subject to TNECD approval.

ON MOTION BY _____

SECONDED BY _____

said Resolution was approved by roll call vote on the **DD** day of **Month**, **YYYY**.

ATTEST:

Larry Eaton, Mayor

Randall Dowling, City Manager

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Christopher M. Caldwell, City Attorney



PUBLIC WORKS

TO: Randall Dowling, City Manager
FROM: Kevin L. Helms, Project Manager
Cc: Ben Burchfield, Public Works Director
DATE: March 5, 2026
SUBJECT: Congressional District Block Grant (CDBG) 2026

Background

In 2025, the City of Athens applied for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to fund improvements at Knight Park and the surrounding area. The application was not funded. Following the grant award announcements, staff met with grant administrators to review the scoring of the application and identify opportunities to improve the competitiveness of future submissions. Based on this feedback, it was determined that the project area previously selected was unlikely to receive funding due to scoring factors related primarily to safety data.

Based on the information received, staff evaluated other potential project areas and determined that the intersections of Madison Avenue with White Street and Jackson Street would be much more competitive for grant funding based on available crash data. As the scope of the project was further evaluated, it was determined that the intersections of Washington Avenue with White Street and Jackson Street should also be included.

These intersections operate in coordination with one another, and maintaining consistent design and functionality is important for overall traffic operations and safety. Significant differences in design or function between closely coordinated intersections can create operational issues and increase the potential for crashes.

The proposed improvements address priorities identified in several recently adopted or ongoing planning efforts, including the Community Mobility Plan, Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan, and the Traffic Safety Action Plan. The final design will also be informed by the Downtown Master Plan, which is currently under development and is expected to be finalized prior to the availability of grant funding.

The upgrades are intended to accomplish four primary goals:

- Improve pedestrian safety
- Reduce vehicle crashes
- Address ADA compliance issues
- Improve the aesthetics of the downtown area



PUBLIC WORKS

While the project scope may evolve as design progresses, improvements anticipated to be included as part of the project currently include:

- Curbing improvements
- Landscaping
- Pedestrian signals
- ADA accessibility improvements
- Stormwater infrastructure adjustments, as needed
- Pedestrian crosswalk enhancements

Based on the preliminary project estimate, the grant application would request \$900,000 in funding. The required local match for this program is 12%, which would require the City to contribute \$108,000, resulting in a total project cost of approximately \$1,008,000.

The project budget has been developed based on feedback received from the review of the previous application and is believed to represent a funding request that will receive legitimate consideration. Additional improvements consistent with the Downtown Master Plan may be appropriate to incorporate into the project in the future. If desired, a future phase of downtown improvements included in the City's Capital Improvement Plan could be coordinated with this project to address those additional items; however, the proposed scope can be implemented independently if necessary.

Action Item

Approve a resolution authorizing the City of Athens to apply for a Congressional District Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) in the amount of \$900,000 and authorize City matching funds of 12% (\$108,000). Funding would be used to implement the improvements described above, including enhancements intended to increase pedestrian and vehicular safety, improve ADA compliance, and enhance the appearance and functionality of the downtown area.

DOWNTOWN

PROJECTS

EXPERIENCE MASTER PLAN

12. Downtown Square

Recommended from the Downtown Experience Master Plan, the Courthouse Square area can be repurposed to better accommodate all users. Remove the center turn lane, narrowing to two lanes and convert existing parking spaces to a mix of reverse angle parking and parallel parking. Planted bump outs and crosswalks at all four intersections improve pedestrian crossing opportunities. Side streets should be redesigned to accommodate on-street parking.

How does this recommendation advance this plan's goals?

 ALL USERS	 ATHENS AS A DESTINATION	 ECONOMIC GROWTH	 CONNECT TO REGION	 EQUITABLE ACCESS
Creates safe pedestrian/multimodal infrastructure around a key community landmark	Increases bikeability and walkability at a key local cultural resource.	Supports walkability and bikeability, growth in foot traffic at key downtown landmark	Creates parking space at key regional destination for visitors from outside Athens	Ensures safe vehicle and pedestrian access to Courthouse & nearby destinations for all users

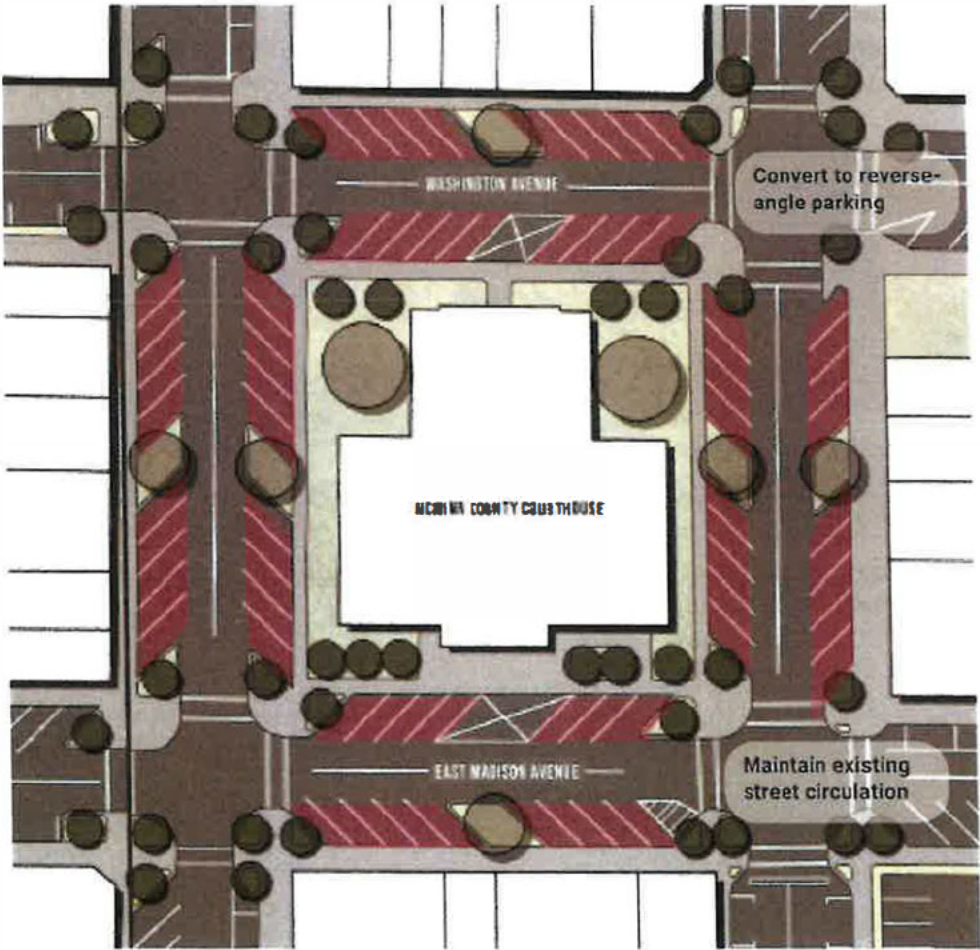


Figure 4.34: From the Experience Master Plan, Downtown Square Option One is seen above. The Focus Area recommendation builds from this Option, but recommends maintaining the existing street circulation as one-way streets, and converting the proposed angled parking to reverse-angle and parallel parking.







Agenda Item

IV. D. Resolution 2026-13, a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Athens, Tennessee, Authorizing the Submission of an Application for the Tennessee Department of Health Healthy Built Environment Grant for Improvements at Prof Powers Park (Brody Ellis Field).

Overview

The Parks & Recreation Department is requesting authorization to submit a grant application to the Tennessee Department of Health to renovate Brody Ellis Field at Prof Powers Park. Specific improvements consist of repairing/replacing the fence, improving infield and outfield grading and drainage, new dugout covers, and repair/renovate the concessions/scorekeepers building.

The estimated cost and grant amount for this project is \$80,000 with no city match required.

Action to Consider

Consensus is needed to move this item to the March 17, 2026 regular session for consideration.

Affected Departments

Parks & Recreation Department

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-13

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ATHENS, TENNESSEE, AUTHORIZING THE SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION FOR THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH HEALTHY BUILT ENVIRONMENT GRANT FOR IMPROVEMENTS AT PROF POWERS PARK (BRODY ELLIS FIELD).

WHEREAS, the City of Athens desires to improve and preserve public recreational facilities for the health, safety, and welfare of its residents; and

WHEREAS, Brody Ellis Field at Prof Powers Park is a long-standing community recreational asset and supports McMinn County Little League participation, which has significantly increased in recent years; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Department of Health offers the Healthy Built Environment grant opportunity to support projects that promote safe, accessible, and healthy community environments; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ATHENS, TENNESSEE, AS FOLLOWS:

- 1. **Authorization to Apply.** The City Council hereby authorizes the City of Athens to submit an application to the Tennessee Department of Health for the Healthy Built Environment grant for improvements at Prof Powers Park – Brody Ellis Field, in the amount of \$80,000.
- 2. **Designation of Authorized Representative.** The Mayor and/or City Manager or a designee, is hereby designated as the City’s authorized representative to execute and submit the grant application, certifications, assurances, contracts, and any other documents required in connection with the grant, and to take all actions necessary to carry out the intent of this Resolution.
- 3. **Project Scope.** The intended scope of work includes, but is not limited to: replacement of fencing; infield and outfield drainage and grading improvements; construction/installation of metal roofs to cover dugouts; and removal and replacement of the concessions/scorekeepers building, subject to grant requirements, procurement requirements, and final project budget.
- 4. **Budget and Compliance.** Any grant award accepted pursuant to this Resolution shall be administered in accordance with applicable grant conditions, City policies, and state and federal requirements. The City’s local share, if any is required by the grant, shall be addressed through the City’s budgeting process and in accordance with applicable law.

ON MOTION BY _____

SECONDED BY _____

said Resolution was approved by roll call vote on the DD day of Month, YYYY.

ATTEST: _____
Larry Eaton, Mayor

Randall Dowling, City Manager

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Christopher M. Caldwell, City Attorney



Agenda Item

IV. E. Resolution 2026-14, a Resolution Authorizing The City Of Athens, Tennessee, to Apply for a Traffic Signal Modernization Program (TSMP) Grant Through the Tennessee Department of Transportation and to Commit Local Funding for the Project if the Grant is Awarded.

Overview

The Public Works Department is requesting authorization to submit a grant to the Tennessee Department of Transportation to improve traffic signals at the intersections of College Street and White Street and College Street and Jackson Street. Specific improvements consist of actuated pedestrian detection, emergency vehicle signal preemption, vehicle detection for six approaches, and updated traffic signal controllers/cabinet.

The estimated cost for this project is \$200,000 (including a contingency for unforeseen costs) with \$125,000 coming from the grant (grant maximum) and the balance of \$75,000 coming from the city's Capital Improvement Fund, if the grant is awarded.

Attached is a memo from the Public Works Department with additional details.

Action to Consider

Consensus is needed to move this item to the March 17, 2026 regular session for consideration.

Affected Departments

Public Works Department

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-14

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF ATHENS, TENNESSEE, TO APPLY FOR A TRAFFIC SIGNAL MODERNIZATION PROGRAM (TSMP) GRANT THROUGH THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND TO COMMIT LOCAL FUNDING FOR THE PROJECT IF THE GRANT IS AWARDED.

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Department of Transportation administers the Traffic Signal Modernization Program (TSMP) to assist municipalities with updating and modernizing traffic signals within their transportation systems; and

WHEREAS, the City of Athens desires to submit an application for TSMP grant funding for traffic signal and pedestrian improvements at the intersection of College Street with White Street and Jackson Street; and

WHEREAS, the proposed improvements include actuated pedestrian detection, emergency vehicle signal preemption, vehicle detection for six approaches, and an updated traffic signal controller; and

WHEREAS, the estimated total project cost is \$200,000, including a contingency for unforeseen costs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ATHENS, TENNESSEE:

The City Council hereby authorizes the City of Athens to apply for a Traffic Signal Modernization Program (TSMP) grant through the Tennessee Department of Transportation in the amount of \$125,000.

If the grant is awarded, the City Council hereby commits \$75,000 from the City's Capital Improvement Fund for the local share necessary to complete the project.

The Mayor, City Manager or designee are hereby authorized to execute all documents and take all actions necessary to apply for the grant and, if awarded, to carry out the project in accordance with the grant requirements.

ON MOTION BY _____

SECONDED BY _____

said Resolution was adopted and approved by roll call vote on the **DD** day of **Month, YYYY**.

ATTEST:

Larry Eaton, Mayor

Randall Dowling, City Manager

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Christopher M. Caldwell, City Attorney



PUBLIC WORKS

TO: Randall Dowling, City Manager
FROM: Kevin L. Helms, Project Manager
Cc: Ben Burchfield, Public Works Director
DATE: March 5, 2026
SUBJECT: Traffic Signal Modernization Program (TSMP) 2026

Background

In 2025, the City of Athens applied for and received funding through the Traffic Signal Modernization Program (TSMP) grant administered by the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT). The program assists municipalities with updating and modernizing traffic signals within their transportation systems.

The 2025 funding was used to upgrade traffic signals along Green Street and White Street from Elizabeth Street to Ingleside Avenue/Washington Avenue.

The City is eligible to submit another application in 2026 to address additional signals within the system. The maximum grant request is \$125,000, and no local match is required. However, if the total project cost exceeds the maximum grant amount, the City would be responsible for funding the remaining balance.

After evaluating the age and condition of various traffic signals, staff has identified the intersection of College Street with White Street and Jackson Street as the best candidate for the 2026 TSMP application. Pedestrian improvements at this intersection were also identified as a priority in the Downtown Master Plan and were frequently mentioned during public input collected as part of the Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan.

The proposed improvements include:

- Actuated pedestrian detection
- Emergency vehicle signal preemption
- Vehicle detection for six approaches
- Updated traffic signal controller

The estimated project cost is \$185,000. Allowing for contingency, the total project cost is estimated at approximately \$200,000. Based on this estimate, the City would need to allocate approximately \$75,000 in local funds in addition to the \$125,000 TSMP grant to complete the project.



PUBLIC WORKS

The cost estimate for this project is \$185,000 and if we allow for contingency, it places the cost at approximately \$200,000. Based upon this the City would need to allocate \$75,000 in addition to the grant funding of \$125,000 to complete the total scope of work.

Action Item

Approve a resolution authorizing the City of Athens to apply for the TDOT Traffic Signal Modernization Program (TSMP) grant in the amount of \$125,000 and allocate City matching funds needed to complete the proposed traffic signal and pedestrian improvements listed above.



Agenda Item

IV. F. Ordinance 1150, an Ordinance To Amend ‘The Zoning Ordinance Of The City Of Athens, Tennessee, So As To Amend The Official Zoning Map To Rezone The Property Located On The Corner Of Hicks Street And Eastanallee Avenue From I-1 (Light Industrial District) To R-2 (Medium Density Residential) Said Area Being Located Within The Corporate Limits Of Athens, Tennessee.

Overview

Scott Underwood requests that a combined 1.16-acre property at 613 Eastanallee Avenue at the corner of Hicks Street and Eastanallee Avenue (Tax Map 057I Group D Parcels 020.00, 021.00, and 022.00) be rezoned from I-1 (Light Industrial) to R-2 (Medium Density Residential), citing that the tract is not large enough for substantial industrial uses and is adjacent to existing R-2 zoning to the west and across the street; the applicant intends to remove the existing structures (a demo permit has been issued) and redevelop the site for duplex-style multi-family housing, with discussion indicating the site could accommodate up to five duplexes (ten units).

The Athens Municipal-Regional Planning Commission considered the request on March 2, 2026, noted the surrounding residential zoning and that the request would not constitute spot zoning while helping resolve a substandard industrial lot, and voted unanimously to recommend approval; staff likewise recommends approval, and City Council is asked to consider adopting the ordinance amending the Official Zoning Map to rezone the property from I-1 to R-2.

The first reading of the rezoning ordinance will be during the March 17, 2026 regular session and a public hearing and second reading will be advertised for the April 13, 2026 regular session.

Action to Consider

Consensus is needed to move this item to the March 17, 2026 regular session for consideration.

Affected Departments

Community Development Department

ORDINANCE NO. 1150

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ‘THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ATHENS, TENNESSEE, SO AS TO AMEND THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP TO REZONE THE PROPERTY LOCATED ON THE CORNER OF HICKS STREET AND EASTANALLEE AVENUE FROM I-1 (LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT) TO R-2 (MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL) SAID AREA BEING LOCATED WITHIN THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF ATHENS, TENNESSEE.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF ATHENS AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1.

That the Official Zoning Map of Athens, Tennessee, identified and referred to in Section 3.02 of said Zoning Ordinance, be amended to show the following described property and zoning designation as described within the body of this ordinance and shown on the attached illustration titled; “Rezoning Request for Scott Underwood to change a parcel identified as a combined lot including Tax Map 057I Group D Parcels 020.00, 021.00 and 022.00 located at on the corner of Hicks Street and Eastanallee Avenue from I-1 Light Industrial District to R-2 Medium Density Residential District” said property being within the corporate limits of Athens, Tennessee:

Area Description (I-1 to R-2)

The parcel to be rezoned from I-1 to R-2 is shown on Tennessee Property Assessment Data - Property Viewer as Tax Map 057I Group D Parcels 020.00, 021.00 and 022.00. The parcel is further described in the attached illustration that has been created from the Official Zoning Map of the City of Athens, Tennessee (Exhibit A).

SECTION 2.

That all ordinances, resolutions, motions, or parts thereof in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict only. If any sentence, clause, phrase, or paragraph of this Ordinance shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such holding shall not affect the remaining portions of this Ordinance, which shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 3.

As required by T.C.A. § 13-7-203, a public hearing subject to twenty-one (21) calendar days’ notice has been held, and the ordinance meets the requirements of T.C.A. § 13-7-201 through 13-7-210, including the approval of all necessary agencies.

SECTION 4.

That this Ordinance shall take effect upon final passage and as provided by law.

First Reading: March 17, 2026
Public Hearing Notice:
Second Reading:
Date of Public Hearing

ATTEST:

Larry Eaton, Mayor

Randall Dowling, City Manager

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

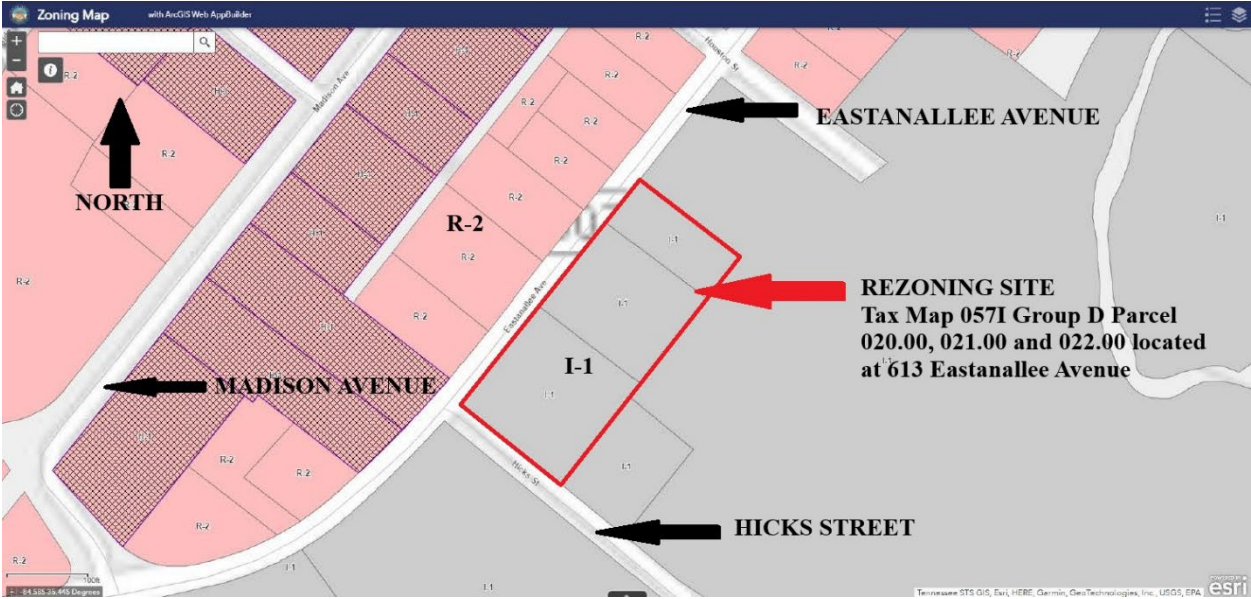
Christopher Caldwell, City Attorney

ORDINANCE NO. 1150

Rezoning Request for Scott Underwood to change a parcel identified as a combined lot including Tax Map 057I Group D Parcels 020.00, 021.00 and 022.00 located at on the corner of Hicks Street and Eastanallee Avenue from I-1 Light Industrial District to R-2 Medium Density Residential District

Exhibit A

Official Zoning Map of the City of Athens, Tennessee





4. **Public Comments and Recommendation on rezoning request** by Scott Underwood to change parcel identified as a combined lot including Tax Map 057I Group D Parcel 020.00, 021.00 and 022.00 located at 613 Eastanallee Avenue from I-1 Light Industrial District to R-2 Medium Density Residential District containing approximately 1.16 acres.

Mr. Casteel said Eric Burgess was present at the meeting to represent this item. He said this is a plat that came to this Board on Eastanallee and Hicks Street where they combined three substandard industrial lots before they sold them to Mr. Scott Underwood. Instead of him incorporating them into his existing industrial, he would like to rezone this to the R-2 District across the street to build some multi-family duplexes. There is R-2 across the street and there is no spot zoning issue. It does solve the problem of it being a substandard industrial lot. It gives them a chance to build some much needed housing. Staff recommends approval.

Mr. Proffitt asked if there was an existing structure on the site.

Mr. Casteel said yes. It will be torn down. Mr. Underwood already has a demo permit. It will be a vacant lot. It is estimated they can get up to five duplexes(ten units) on this lot.

MOTION: To approve the plat as presented.

MADE: John Proffitt

SECOND: Sam Stephens

VOTE: Unanimous

MOTION PASSES





Agenda Item

IV. G. Request for Extension – Athens Wine & Liquor

Overview

On May 20, 2025, City Council adopted Ordinance No. 1139, increasing the number of retail package stores authorized in the City from two to three and establishing an application period from June 20 through July 7, 2025. Only one application was received, submitted by Amar M. Patel for Athens Wine & Liquor, located at 312 Congress Parkway South, Unit #1.

Under T.C.A. § 57-3-208, an applicant must obtain a local Certificate of Compliance (CoC) before applying to the Tennessee Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC) for a state retail package store license. On July 31, 2025, City Council denied Mr. Patel's request for a CoC and established a new application period. City Council later approved Mr. Patel's CoC on October 21, 2025.

Under Athens City Code § 8-49(4), titled "Time Periods for Action," an applicant who has obtained a Certificate of Compliance must open the business within six (6) months unless City Council grants an extension. Otherwise, the Certificate of Compliance is revoked, the City must notify TABC, and the applicant becomes ineligible to apply for the local liquor store privilege license.

Mr. Patel's current deadline to open is April 21, 2026. By letter dated February 23, 2026, Mr. Patel requested that City Council extend the opening deadline to August 31, 2026, citing unforeseen construction delays and pending Tennessee Department of Transportation permits.

Action to Consider

Consensus is needed to move this item to the March 17, 2026 regular session for consideration.

Affected Departments

City Manager's Office and Community Development Department

Amar Patel



February 23, 2026

City of Athens

Attn: Bridget Roberts

851 N. Jackson St

Athens, TN 37303

Dear Ms. Roberts,

I hope you are doing well. I am writing regarding my approved liquor license permit for Athens Liquor. As per the terms, operations were to begin before April 21, 2026.

However, due to unforeseen construction delays and pending Department of Transportation permits, I am unable to meet this deadline.

The site address for Athens wine & Liquor is 312 Congress Parkway, Unit 1, Athens, TN 37303. I respectfully request an

extension of the deadline until August 31, 2026, to finalize construction and secure the required permits. I am fully committed to opening Athens Wine and Liquor in complete compliance with all regulations.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. I look forward to your positive response.

Sincerely,

Amar Patel



8-49 Restrictions Upon Issuance

- (1) *Certificates of compliance.* The city council shall not issue a certificate of compliance unless the applicant has complied with all the requirements of state liquor statutes, the rules and regulations of the alcoholic beverage commission (Tenn. Comp. Rules and Regs. 0100-03), and this chapter.
- (2) *No violations of chapter.* No certificate of compliance shall be issued unless a license issued on the basis thereof can be exercised without violating any provisions of this chapter.
- (3) *Prerequisites of issuance.* The city manager, upon approval of city council, shall not sign any certificate of compliance for any applicant or applicant group until:
 - (a) An application has been filed with the city manager which complies with this chapter and a showing has been made that the applicant has met all the conditions for a certificate of compliance as stated in T.C.A. § 57-3-208;
 - (b) The notice required by Tenn. Comp. Rules and Regs. 0100-03-.09(10)--(11) has been published and the public hearing noticed therein has been conducted;
 - (c) The location stated in the certificate has been approved by the city council as a suitable location for the operation of a liquor store; and
 - (d) The application has been considered at a public meeting of the city council and approved by a vote of at least three members thereof.
- (4) *Time periods for action.* Any applicant or applicant group who has obtained a certificate of compliance as provided herein must open a liquor store in the city within six months or, unless an extension is granted by city council, the certificate will be revoked by the passage of this amount of time, and a certification thereof will be sent to the state alcoholic beverage commission, and the application for a local liquor store privilege license shall be considered canceled and revoked.
- (5) *Granting or denial.* The city council shall decide, within 45 days of request, whether to grant the certificate of compliance.

(Ord. No. 1035, § 1(8-215), 3-17-2015)

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. [1035](#) was 8-215 on 3/17/2015



Agenda Item

IV. H. Amend the Athens City Code Title 8, Chapter 8-III (“Beer”) and the Municipal Zoning Ordinance to add a Craft Beer Restaurant (Brewpub)

Overview

During the December 8, 2025 work session, Main Street Athens asked City Council to consider adding or amending land use regulations to allow brewpubs, microbreweries, and/or taprooms within the city limits as a potential economic development tool.

The Athens Municipal Regional Planning Commission discussed the matter at its January 5, 2026 meeting. Following discussion, the Planning Commission concluded that additional research and further discussion were needed. At the January 12, 2026 work session, City Council heard a presentation from Matt Altobell, Executive Director of the Tennessee Craft Brewers Guild, followed by discussion among Council and staff, as well as comments from a potential applicant. The consensus of that meeting was for staff to continue researching the issue and preparing proposed amendments for future consideration.

A common best practice in economic development is to ensure that regulations are clear, understandable, and predictable. When requirements and review procedures are straightforward, applicants are better able to evaluate projects in advance and can have confidence that proposals meeting adopted standards will be able to proceed. For that reason, any proposed changes should be thoroughly reviewed by city staff, City Council, the Athens Municipal Regional Planning Commission, and the City Attorney before an ordinance is introduced.

Accordingly, additional time is needed to continue reviewing the draft and to ensure that any amendments to both Title 8, Chapter III of the Athens City Code and the Municipal Zoning Ordinance are clear, effective, and legally sound.

Action to Consider

Consensus is needed to move this item to the March 17, 2026 regular session for consideration.

Affected Departments

City Manager’s Office and Community Development Department

