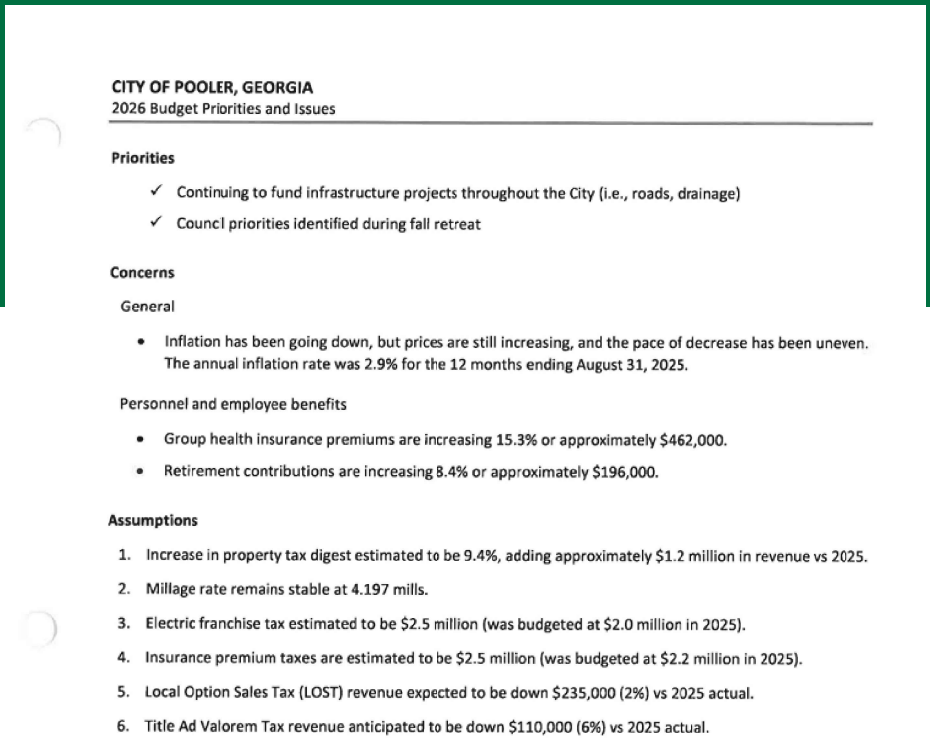
Agenda

- 2026 Fiscal Priorities and Concerns
- 2026 Year in Review
- 2027 Fiscal Priorities and Concerns
- 2027 Fiscal Year Budget and Funding Concerns

2026 Priorities



CITY OF POOLER, GEORGIA
2026 Budget Priorities and Issues

Priorities

- ✓ Continuing to fund infrastructure projects throughout the City (i.e., roads, drainage)
- ✓ Council priorities identified during fall retreat

Concerns

General

- Inflation has been going down, but prices are still increasing, and the pace of decrease has been uneven. The annual inflation rate was 2.9% for the 12 months ending August 31, 2025.

Personnel and employee benefits

- Group health insurance premiums are increasing 15.3% or approximately $462,000.
- Retirement contributions are increasing 8.4% or approximately $196,000.

Assumptions

1. Increase in property tax digest estimated to be 9.4%, adding approximately $1.2 million in revenue vs 2025.
2. Millage rate remains stable at 4.197 mills.
3. Electric franchise tax estimated to be $2.5 million (was budgeted at $2.0 million in 2025).
4. Insurance premium taxes are estimated to be $2.5 million (was budgeted at $2.2 million in 2025).
5. Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) revenue expected to be down $235,000 (2%) vs 2025 actual.
6. Title Ad Valorem Tax revenue anticipated to be down $110,000 (6%) vs 2025 actual.

Invested in Vehicles for Public Safety

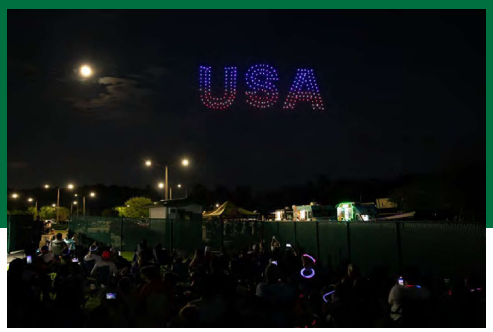


Fire Truck - First of its kind in the county



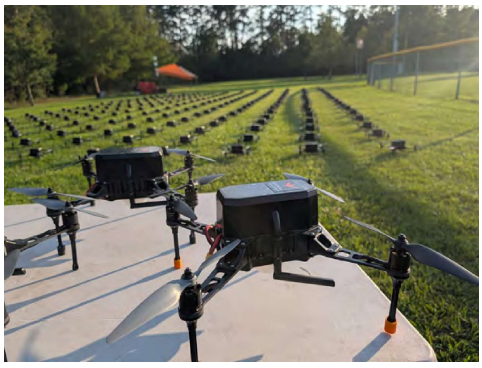
26 Police Vehicles

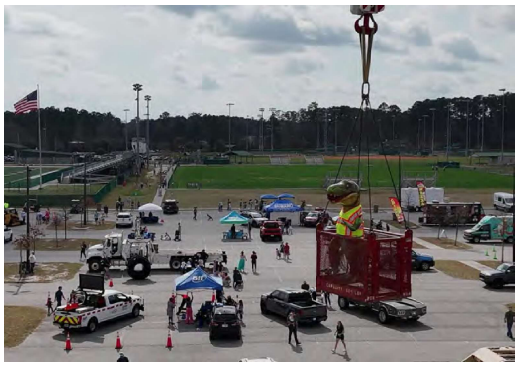
Invested in Community Events





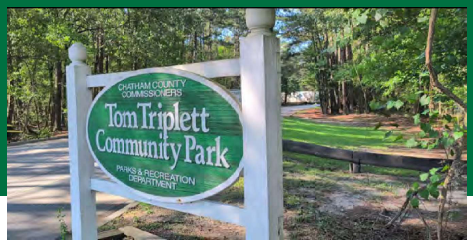
Independence Day Drone Show



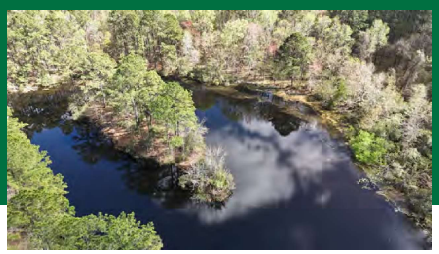


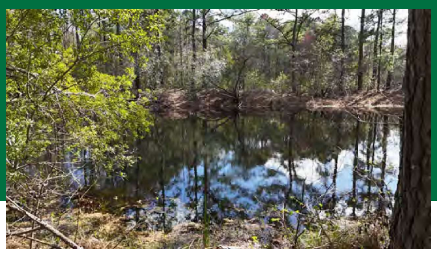
Pooler Truck Town

Invested in Greenspace



Tom Triplett Park Frontage – 28 Acres



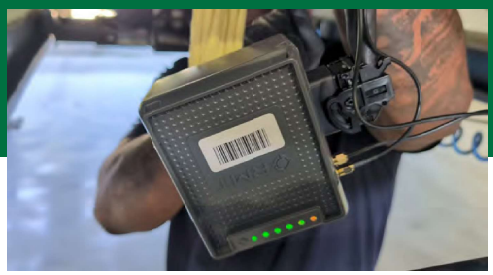


Pine Barren Wetland and Woodland Conservation – 35 Acres

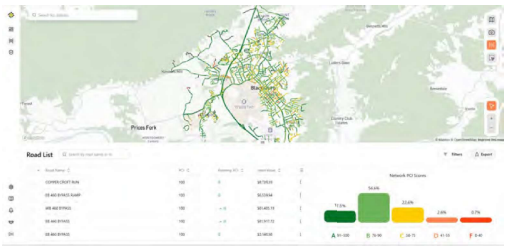




Invested in Tech to Support Data-Driven Decisions



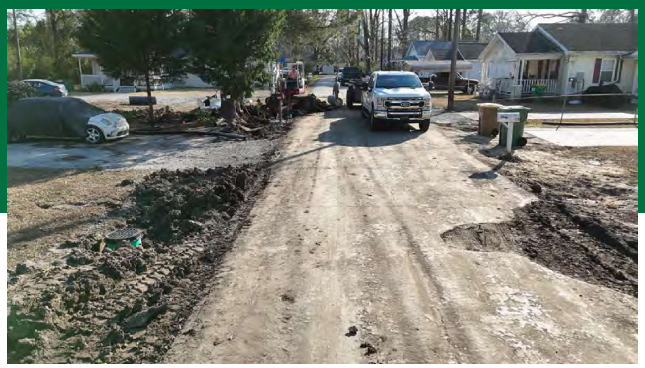
Road Management Technologies Road Assessment



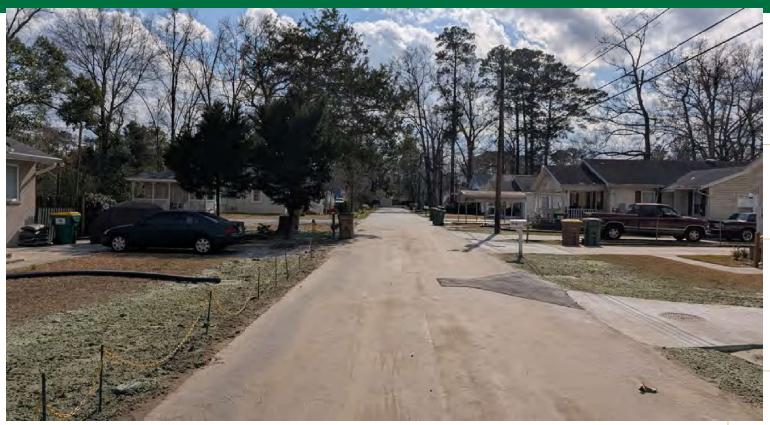


Cypress Works GPS Software

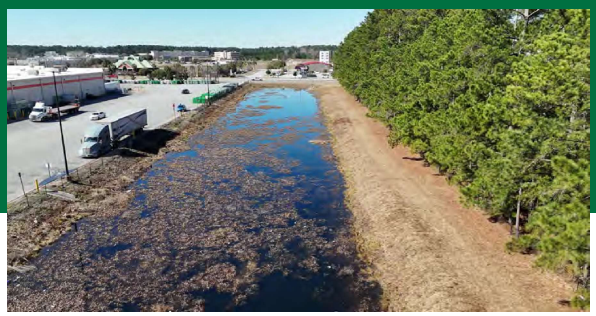
Invested in Drainage Improvements

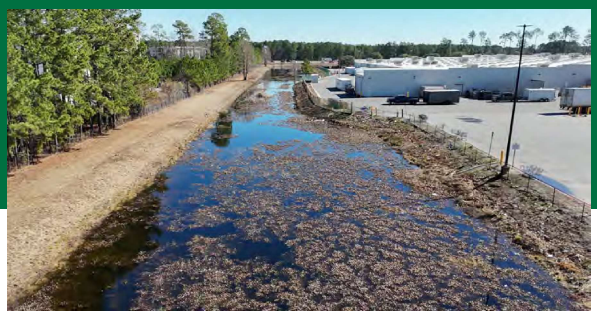


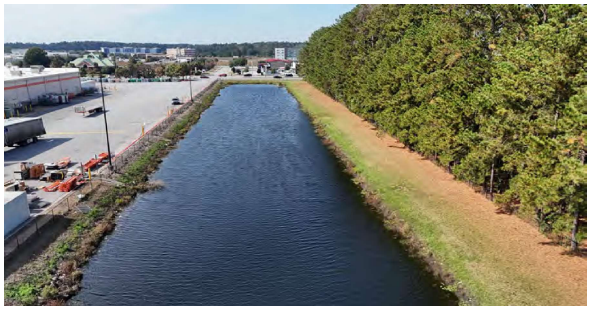
Kelly Street Drainage



Detention Pond Compliance

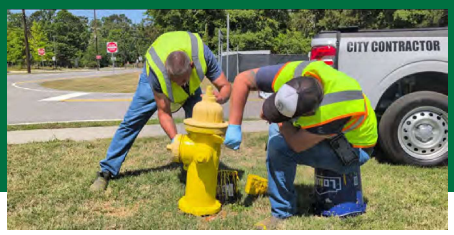


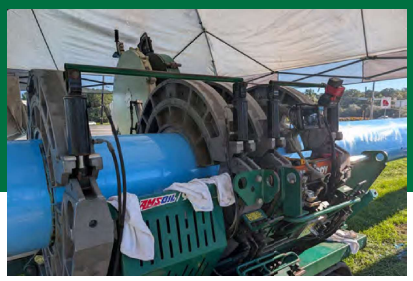






Fortified Our Water Infrastructure





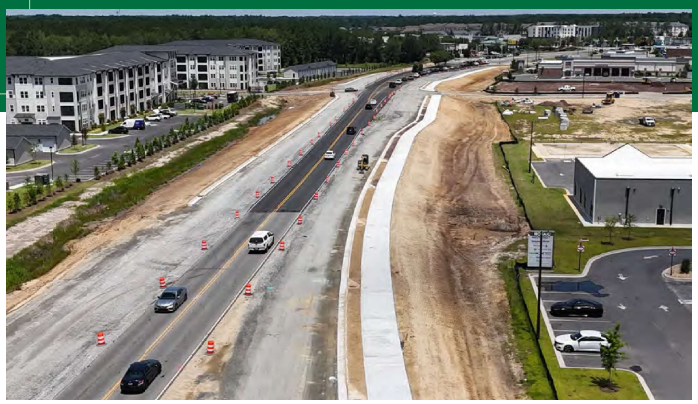
Citywide hydrant testing



Highway 80 water line expansion



Invested in Transportation Projects

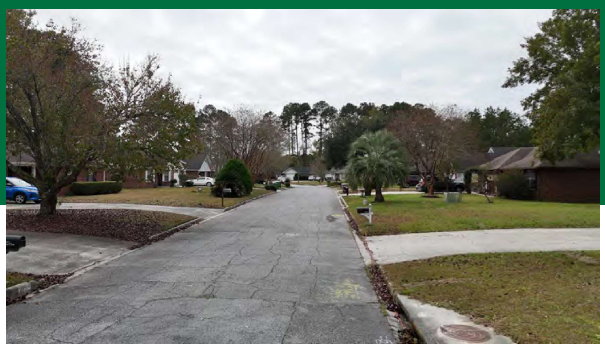


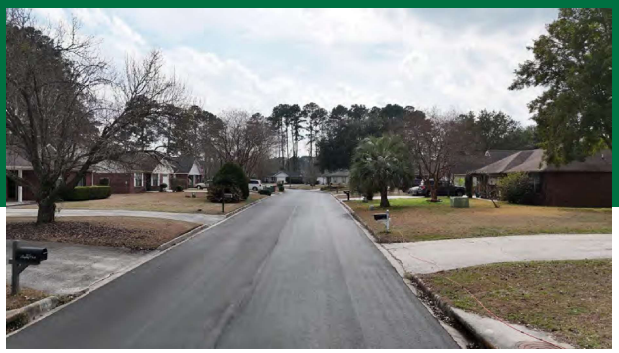
Quacco Phase 1-July 2025



Quacco Phase 1-September 2026

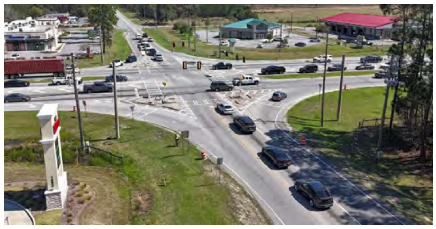
Invested in Transportation Projects

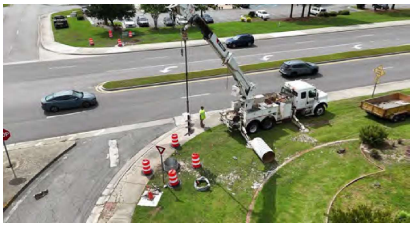




Hunters Ridge Repaving Before & After

Benton and Mulberry Traffic Signal



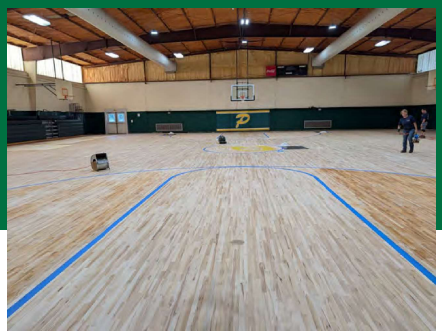




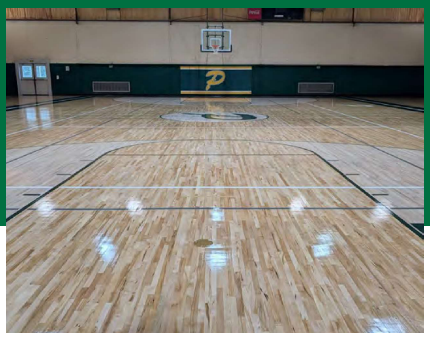
Invested in Recreation



Rogers St Indoor Court Before

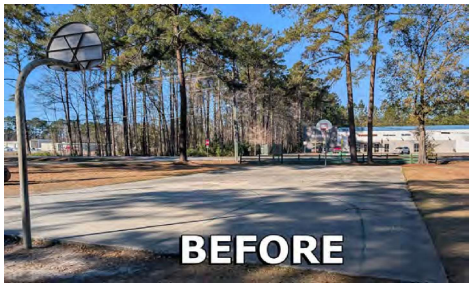


In Progress



Rogers St Indoor Court After

Rogers St Outdoor Court





Gave Back To Our Community



Second Harvest Food Drive



Pooler Youth Council



Secured Grants

GEORGIA / CHATHAM COUNTY / POOLER

Pooler accepts $240,000 federal SS4A grant; commits $60,000 local match for roadway safety plan

May 17, 2026

Full story + Follow

The council unanimously approved acceptance of a $240,000 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) federal grant to create a comprehensive safety action plan; Pooler will provide a $60,000 local match, bringing total investment to $300,000.

NEWS

FEMA awards $1.9 million to help Pooler develop stormwater plan

Latrice Williams
Savannah Morning News

Aug. 6, 2026, 5:10 a.m. ET



Diversified Our Revenue Streams



PUBLIC NOTICE | CITY OF POOLER ADOPTS IMPACT FEE ORDINANCE

Published on: Oct 20, 2026

In May 2025, Pooler City Council approved an impact fee study to determine the feasibility and analyz development on public facilities or services and to calculate impact fees based on that analysis. On O Pooler adopted an Impact Fee Ordinance with the goal of promoting orderly growth and development, needed public services and facilities shared proportionally with that development.

CITY of POOLER
GEORGIA

ADVANCING GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY

Pooler's 2026 Legislative Vision

The City of Pooler's 2026 Legislative Agenda reflects the needs of one of Georgia's fastest-growing communities and aligns with the core policy priorities of City Council. These priorities emphasize sustainable growth, infrastructure investment, workforce readiness, fiscal responsibility, and preservation of local authority.

INFRASTRUCTURE, TRANSPORTATION, AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Support state and local investments that ensure transportation networks, utilities, public safety, and community infrastructure keep pace with rapid population and economic growth. Priority projects include improvements to the I-95/Pooler Parkway–Airport Interchange (Exit 104) and expanded local infrastructure funding tools. Preserve Home Rule authority over zoning, design standards, and short-term rentals to allow communities to manage growth responsibly.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM, AND REVENUE FLEXIBILITY

Support policies that strengthen local and regional economies while reducing reliance on property taxes. This includes increased flexibility in the use of hotel/motel excise tax revenues under O.C.G.A. § 48-13-51(b) and sustained, expanded state investment in tourism marketing to drive job creation, visitor spending, and community reinvestment.

EDUCATION, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, AND CHILDCARE

Support investments that expand access to education and workforce pathways at all levels. Priorities include funding for construction of the Pooler Library, continued support for the CAPS program, revisions to the childcare tax credit, and sustained funding for early childhood education, Pre-K, public schools, charter schools, and career-focused training programs.

LOCAL GOVERNANCE, FISCAL TRANSPARENCY, AND LEGAL REFORM

Protect taxpayers and ensure effective local governance through preservation of Home Rule authority, clarification of public notice and tax advertisement requirements to improve transparency, and tort reform that aligns municipal liability protections with those provided to counties and the state.

CONTACT US

FY 2026 - 1% Efficiency Target

A 1% efficiency reduction target, equating to approximately $220,000, was established for the FY 2026 budget.

This target was set *outside* of any personnel-related cuts.

Total Realized or Secured Savings:

- Copier Contract: $10,000
- Tree Pruning Contract: $100,000
- New Utility Bill Pay Service: $180,000

Cumulative Estimated Savings: $290,000

FY2027 OVERVIEW

BUDGETARY CHALLENGES AND ASSUMPTIONS

Priorities:

- Continuing to fund infrastructure projects throughout the City (i.e., roads and drainage)
- Increasing community events and engagement

Challenges:

- Inflation rose to 4.02% year-over-year at October 31, 2026
- Slowing development
- Employee benefits

Assumptions:

- General property tax collections are expected to increase $1.8 million (3.21%) in 2027 vs 2026
- No plans for a property tax increase in 2027
- Electrical franchise tax is estimated to be $2.7 million (was budgeted at 2.5 million in 2026)
- Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) revenue expected to be down $400,000 (3.7%) vs 2026
- Title Ad Valorem Tax revenue anticipated to increase $130,000 (6.9%) vs 2026
- Insurance premium taxes estimated to be $2.8 million (was budgeted at $2.5 million in 2026)

CITY OF POOLER FUNDS

Governmental Funds

- **Fund 100** General Fund **(Major Fund)**
- **Special Revenue Funds**
  - **Fund 201** Tree Fund
  - **Fund 210** Forfeiture Fund
  - **Fund 275** Accommodation Excise Tax Fund
- **Capital Funds**
  - **Fund 320** SPLOST Fund **(Major Fund)**
  - **Fund 350** Local Resources Fund
  - **Fund 370** Tourism Product Development Fund

Proprietary Funds

- **Enterprise Fund**
  - **Fund 505** Water and Sewer Fund **(Major Fund)**
- **Internal Service**
  - **Fund 6XX** Group Health
  - **Fund 6XX** Fleet Management

Fiduciary Funds

- **Custodial Funds**
  - **Fund 745** Municipal Court Fund
  - **Fund 746** Seizure Fund (Reported in the ACFR)

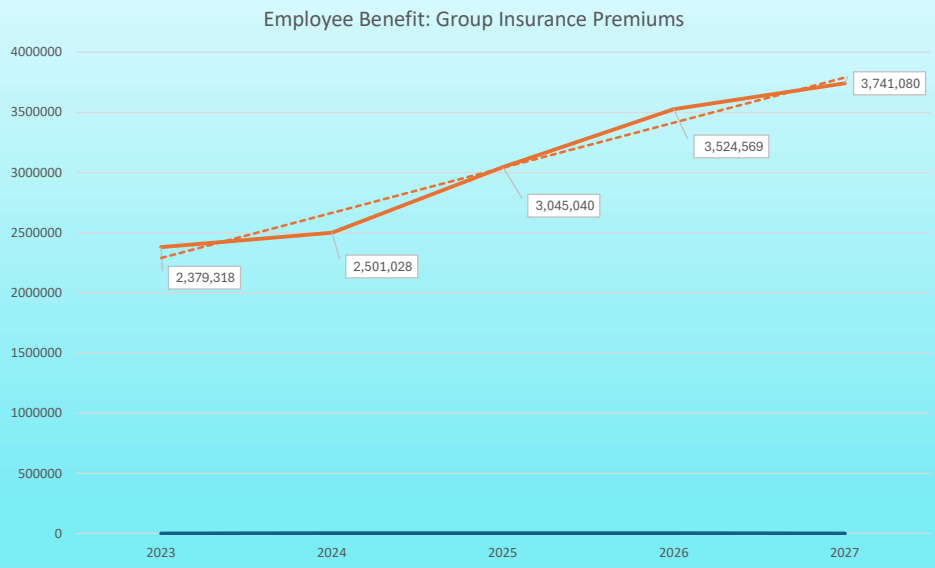
MAJOR FUND DESCRIPTIONS

The General Fund – the City's primary operating fund. It accounts for all financial resources of the general government, except those required to be accounted for in another fund.

The Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax Fund – used to account for SPLOST revenue and related capital expenditures.

The Water and Sewer Fund – used to account for the revenues and expenses of the City's water and sewer system.

GROUP INSURANCE PREMIUMS



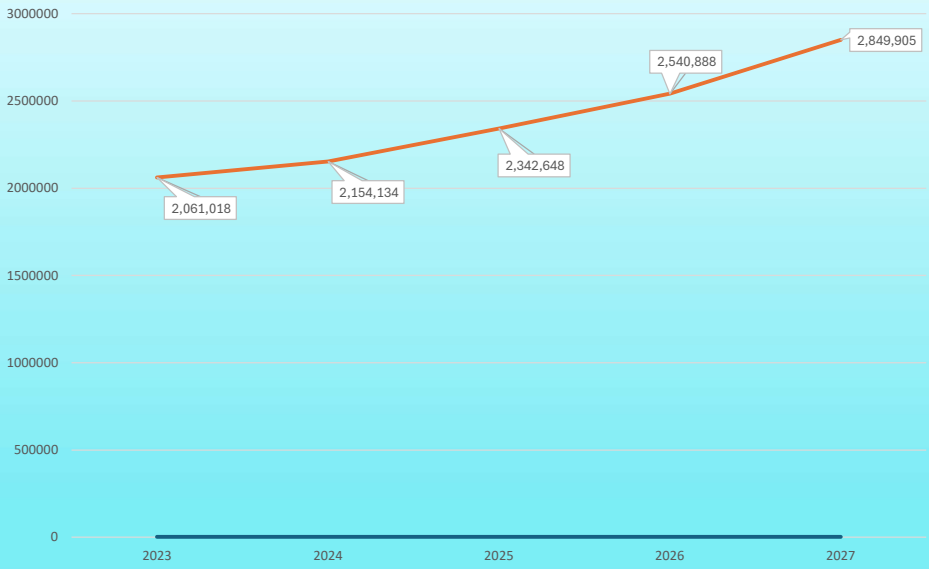
Concerns:

- Current year increase negotiated down from $960,700 (33.4%) to $216,500 (6.1%)
- Over the last five years premiums have increased $1,361,762 (57.2%)

Solutions:

- Self-fund health insurance premiums
  - Data to understand and manage health concerns
  - Stop-loss insurance to limit the city's financial liability
- Share future increases with employees using cost-sharing strategies

RETIREMENT CONTRIBUTIONS



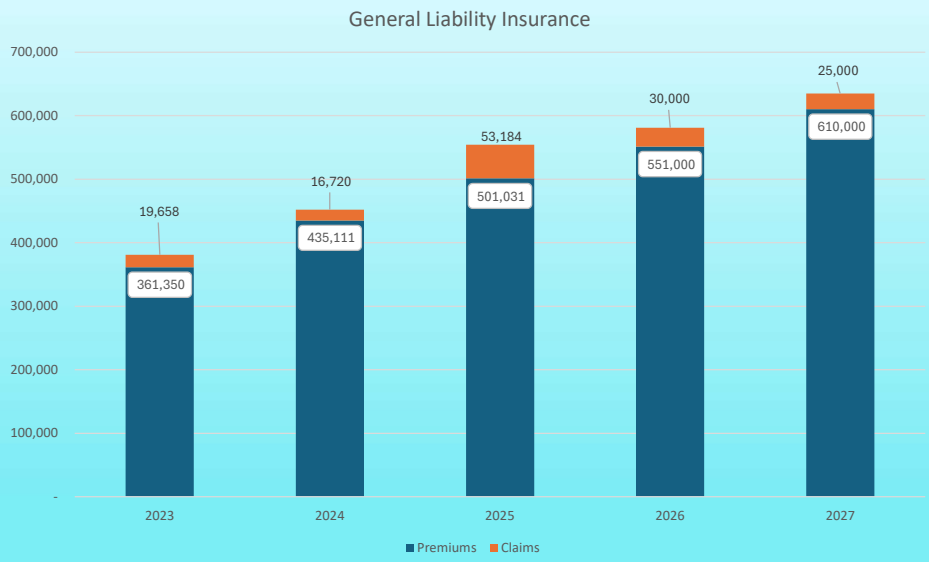
Concerns:

- Current year increase is $309,000 (12.2%)
- Over the last five years contributions have increased $788,900 (38.3%)

Solutions:

- Adjust benefit and contribution levels for new employees
- Plan modifications

GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE



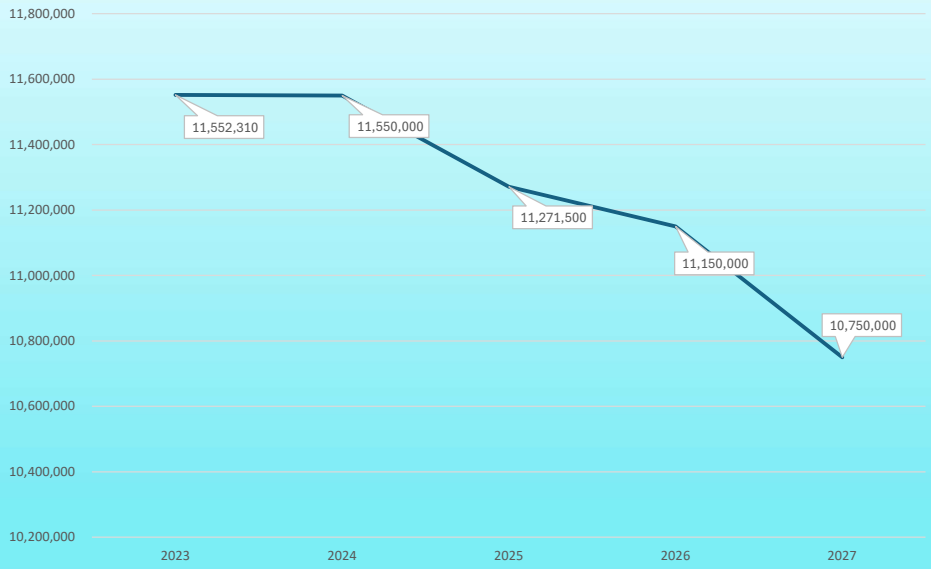
Concerns:

- Current year estimated premium increase is $59,000 (10.7%)
- Over the last five years premiums have increased $248,650 (68.8%)

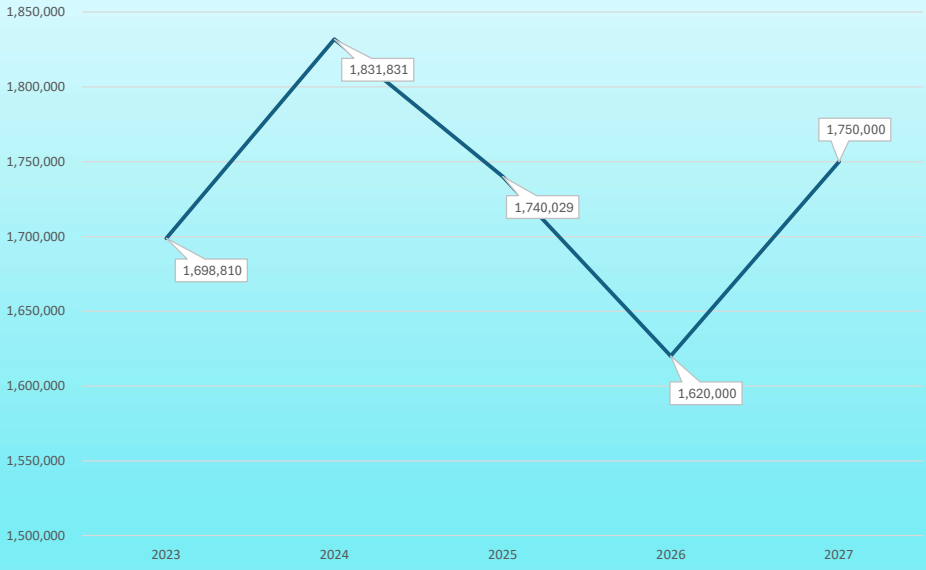
Solutions:

- Shop liability insurance coverage
- Provide employee training as part of a risk management strategy

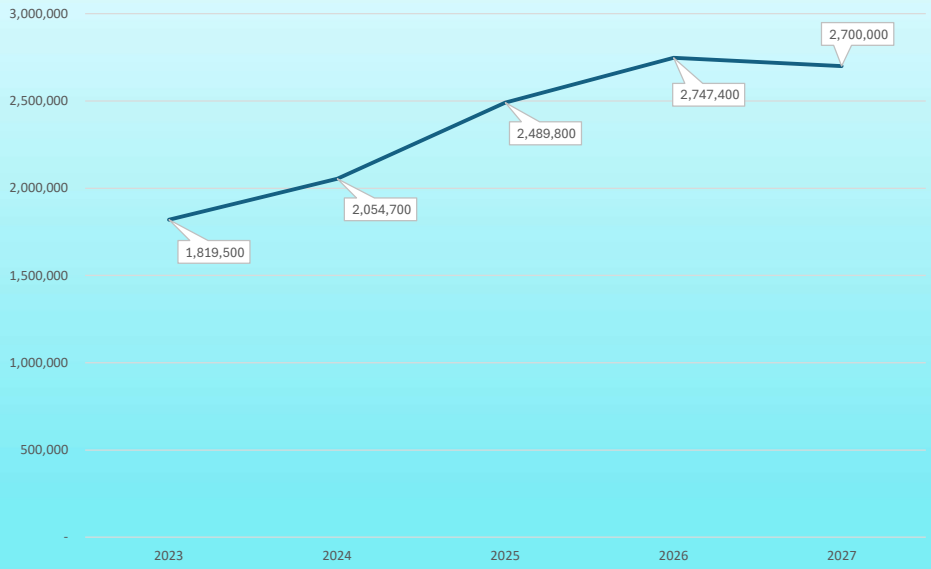
LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX (five-year history)



TITLE AD VALOREM TAX (five-year history)

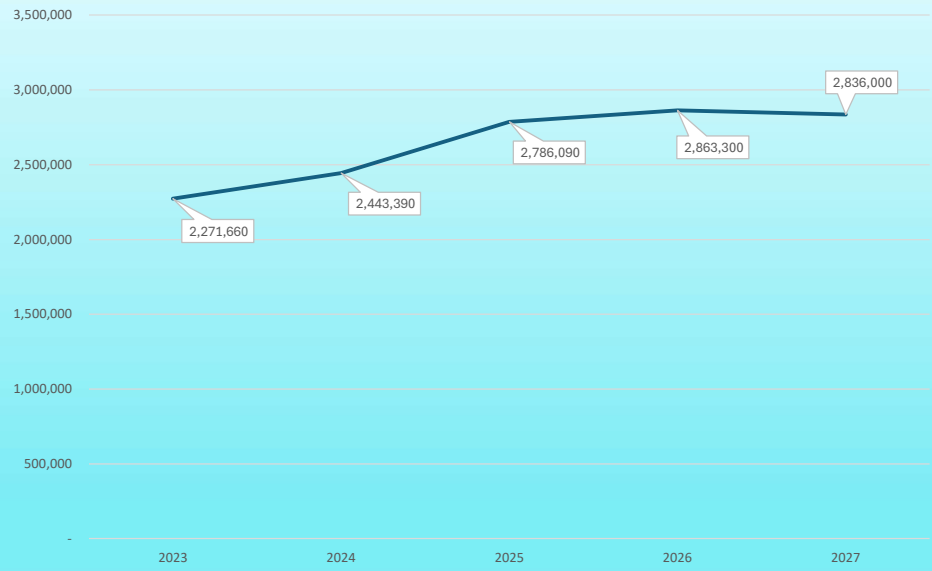


ELECTRIC FRANCHISE TAX (five-year history)



- Increased $257,600 (10.4%) in 2026 vs 2025
- Included in the 2027 budget at $2.7 million vs $2.5 million in the 2026 budget

INSURANCE PREMIUM TAX (five-year history)



- Increased $77,210 (2.8%) in 2026 vs 2025
- Included in the 2027 budget at $2.8 million vs $2.5 million in the 2026 budget

GENERAL FUND

2027 Budget Summary (including capital expenditures)

Inflows:	2026 Budget	Proposed 2027 Budget	Inc (Dec)	
Taxes	$ 32,140,500	$ 34,448,320	$ 2,307,820	
Licenses and permits	1,690,000	1,529,000	(161,000)	
Intergovernmental	500,000	475,000	(25,000)	
Charges for services	4,342,000	5,012,000	670,000	
Fines and forfeitures	580,000	660,000	80,000	
Interest	500,000	484,000	(16,000)	
Contributions	50,000	125,000	75,000	
Miscellaneous	82,660	102,660	20,000	
Other financing sources	1,620,000	2,750,000	1,130,000	
	41,505,160	45,585,980	4,080,820	9.83%
Outflows:	**2024 Budget**	**Proposed 2025 Budget**	**Inc (Dec)**	
100-1000 General Government	6,399,215	6,944,470	545,255	
100-2650 Municipal Court	522,170	490,035	(32,135)	
100-3000 Public Safety	20,849,745	22,426,080	1,576,335	
100-4000 Public Works	10,484,100	11,248,450	764,350	
100-5520 Senior Citizens Center	236,370	371,560	135,190	
100-6000 Recreation and Parks	3,043,050	3,167,195	124,145	
100-7000 Housing and Development	1,856,730	1,981,430	124,700	
100-8000 Debt Service	2,028,690	2,017,000	(11,690)	
	45,420,070	48,646,220	3,226,150	7.10%
Change in fund balance	$ (3,914,910)	$ (3,060,240)	$ 854,670	

* Department increases include impacts of City Council priority considerations

FY2027 PRIORITIES

Public Safety - Preparing for Growth:
Allocate $1.7M

Key Points:

- BWC Equipment/Axon Contract
- Vehicles (2 vehicles for Fire and 8 Vehicles for Police)

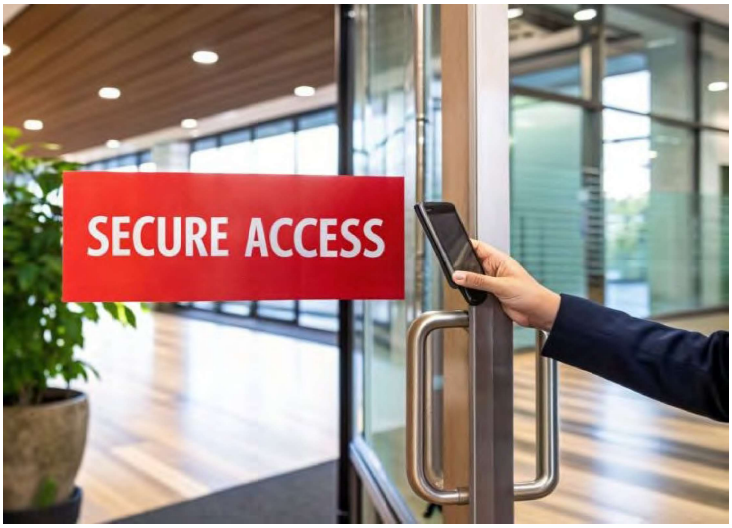






Public Safety - Expanding Access Control:
Allocate $200K





Community Events: Allocate $100K

Key Points:
- Need to build on our existing community events
- Added and Easter Event

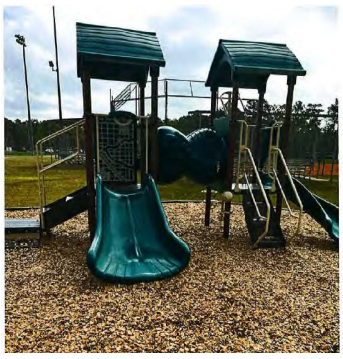




Modernized Family-Friendly Parks & Rec Planning: Allocate $100K

Key Points:
- Completed facility assessments
- Equipment replacement funding will be a priority (CIP)

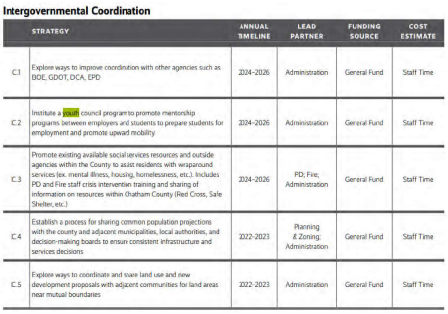






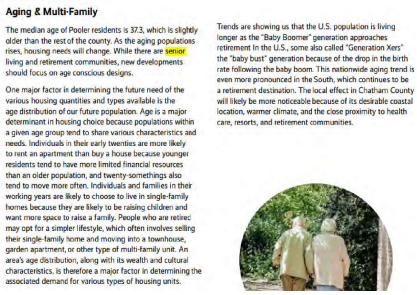
Implementation of Councils/ Committees: Allocate $50K

Key Points:
- Completed facility assessments
- Equipment replacement funding will be a priority (CIP)



Intergovernmental Coordination

	STRATEGY	ANNUAL TIMELINE	LEAD PARTNER	FUNDING SOURCE	COST ESTIMATE
C.1	Explore ways to improve coordination with other agencies such as BOE, GDOT, DCA, EPD	2024-2026	Administration	General Fund	Staff Time
C.2	Institute a youth council program to promote mentorship programs between employers and students to prepare students for employment and promote upward mobility	2024-2026	Administration	General Fund	Staff Time
C.3	Promote existing available social services resources and outside agencies within the County to assist residents with wraparound services (ex. mental illness, housing, homelessness, etc.). Includes PD and Fire staff crisis intervention training and sharing of information on resources within Chatham County (Red Cross, Safe Shelter, etc.)	2024-2026	PD; Fire; Administration	General Fund	Staff Time
C.4	Establish a process for sharing common population projections with the county and adjacent municipalities, local authorities, and decision-making boards to ensure consistent infrastructure and services decisions	2022-2023	Planning & Zoning; Administration	General Fund	Staff Time
C.5	Explore ways to coordinate and share land use and new development proposals with adjacent communities for land areas near mutual boundaries	2022-2023	Administration	General Fund	Staff Time



Aging & Multi-Family

The median age of Pooler residents is 37.3, which is slightly older than the rest of the county. As the aging populations rises, housing needs will change. While there are senior living and retirement communities, new developments should focus on age conscious designs.

One major factor in determining the future need of the various housing quantities and types available is the age distribution of our future population. Age is a major determinant in housing choice because populations within a given age group tend to share various characteristics and needs. Individuals in their early twenties are more likely to rent an apartment than buy a house because younger residents tend to have more limited financial resources than an older population, and twenty-somethings also tend to move more often. Individuals and families in their working years are likely to choose to live in single-family homes because they are likely to be raising children and want more space to raise a family. People who are retired may opt for a simpler lifestyle, which often involves selling their single-family home and moving into a townhouse, garden apartment, or other type of multi-family unit. An area's age distribution, along with its wealth and cultural characteristics, is therefore a major factor in determining the associated demand for various types of housing units.

Trends are showing us that the U.S. population is living longer as the "Baby Boomer" generation approaches retirement In the U.S., some also called "Generation Xers" the "baby bust" generation because of the drop in the birth rate following the baby boom. This nationwide aging trend is even more pronounced in the South, which continues to be a retirement destination. The local effect in Chatham County will likely be more noticeable because of its desirable coastal location, warmer climate, and the close proximity to health care, resorts, and retirement communities.

Enhanced Communication: Allocate $45K

Key Points:
- ADA Compliance for City Website
- Social Media Aggregations
- Additional Communication Support as necessary





Modernized Sound System: Allocate $80K

Key Points:

- Modernize Stadium Equipment



FY2027 Budget Timeline Outline

- Both City Council and the public received the first version of the proposed budget beginning Monday, November 16, 2026.
- A Budget Workshop is scheduled for Monday, November 16, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.
- The first Public Hearing is scheduled for Monday, November 16, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. The second public hearing is scheduled for Monday, December 7, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.
- The proposed budget is available for review on our website at www.pooler-ga.gov and in person at City Hall during normal business hours (9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday).
- Residents have a number of ways to submit comments: email budgetquestions@pooler-ga.gov, use the comment form on our website, write to our Finance Department, or comment in person during the public hearings.