



CITY OF DAHLONEGA

City Council Work Session Agenda

February 16, 2026, 4:00 PM

Gary McCullough Council Chambers, Dahlonega City Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

III. BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

- (1.) Cemetery Committee - January 2026
Mark Buchanan, City Engineer
- (2.) Downtown Dahlonega Main Street Program - January 2026
Ariel Alexander, Dahlonega Main Street Program Director

IV. DEPARTMENT REPORTS AVAILABLE AT:

<https://dahlonega.gov/catergory/department-reports/>

- (1.) Community Development - January 2026
Allison Martin, City Manager
- (2.) Finance and Administration Department - January 2026
Kimberly Stafford, Finance Manager
- (3.) Police - January 2026
George Albert, Chief of Police
- (4.) Public Works - January 2026
Mark Buchanan, City Engineer
- (5.) Water and Wastewater Treatment - January 2026
John Jarrard, Water/Wastewater Treatment Director

V. APPOINTMENTS, PROCLAMATIONS, AND RECOGNITIONS

- (1.) Proclamation declaring February 20, 2026 as *Arbor Day* in the City of Dahlonega, Georgia
Sam Norton, Mayor
- (2.) Employee Recognition - Winter Storm Response
Mark Buchanan, City Engineer

VI. PRESENTATIONS

- (1.) Tourism Report - Q4 2025 and Year End Report
Sam McDuffie, Dahlonega-Lumpkin County Visitors Bureau Executive Director

- (2.) Briefing regarding City of Dahlonega Zoning Ordinance Update
Caleb Racicot, TSW Principal

VII. ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

- (1.) FY2025 Budget Amendment
Allison Martin, City Manager
- (2.) FY2026 Budget Amendment
Allison Martin, City Manager

VIII. OTHER ITEMS

- (1.) Removal of Island at Crown Mountain Place/Morrison Moore Parkway
Allison Martin, City Manager / Mark Buchanan, City Engineer
- (2.) 0018256 Yahoola Bridge Replacement - Bridge Beautification
Allison Martin, City Manager / Mark Buchanan, City Engineer

IX. STAFF / COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS - PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

Clerk Comments

City Manager Comments

City Attorney Comments

City Council Comments

Mayor Comments

X. ADJOURNMENT



Department Report

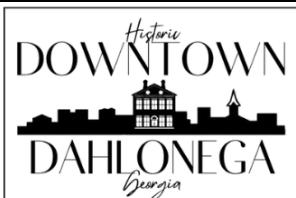
Report Title: Cemetery Committee—January 2026

Report Highlight: Guided Tour Rehab

Name and Title: Rick Harris, Dahlonega Cemetery Committee



- Beginning efforts in January '26 to landscaping entrance and exit areas with assistance from the Master Gardeners of Dahlonega.
- UNG/MCG Cadets to repaint six sections of gates
- Working with City Staff to rehab the existing, but somewhat dated guided tour signs.
- Officer elections upcoming.



Department Report

Report Title: Downtown Dahlonega Main Street Program – January 2026

Report Highlight: 2026 Program Planning

Name and Title: Ariel Alexander, Director, Dahlonega Main Street Program

Recently Completed:

- Attended January 5 City Council Meeting.
- Attended Dahlonega Downtown Business Association Meeting on January 13.
- Attended and photographed the groundbreaking for the North Grove Street sidewalk project.
- Held Art in the Park pre-event meeting for 2026 with Dahlonega Arts Alliance and Chestatee Artists.
- Attended the Dahlonega Old Fashioned Christmas After-Action Review. The group reported a successful season. For 2026, the Main Street Program will assist with food truck planning.
- Launched “Love Letters to Downtown” Valentine’s Day promotional campaign.
- Submitted required annual assessment documentation for Dahlonega’s Georgia Exceptional Main Street designation.
- Managed regular postings for City Hall social media and special storm notifications.

Underway:

- 6th Annual Chocolate Crawl promotions are underway. A proposal was shared with participating businesses to ensure the event is successful for all businesses. The crawl will be held March 5th through the 8th. Main Street staff will operate the passport table at the Dahlonega Visitor Center.
- Due to inclement weather, the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing Orientation was canceled. It will be rescheduled before the program’s first Spring retreat.
- The group that hosted the Hallmark convention “Christmas in July” will host their event again. Planning is underway and permits for Hancock Park events will be received in March.
- Requests for First Friday Concert performances have been sent out. Performers for May, June, August, and September have been confirmed.

Near Term:

- The city will celebrate Arbor Day on February 20, 2026. Invitations will be shared with the Council and community first week of February.
- Created the First Friday Alcohol service policy and vendor agreement to streamline the process for the future. Will be presented to Council in February.



City of Dahlonega
465 Riley Road
Dahlonega, GA 30533
Telephone: 706-864-6133 Fax: 706-864-4837

Activity Report for January 2026

Community Development Department

(11) Permits were issued for January 2026.

4- Residential	0- Annex	1-Sign permits	0-Variances	0-Tree Removal	
1-Zoning	3-Minor Plats	0-Final Plats	1-Pool	0 -ZVL -	1-STR-
1-Commercial	3-Cemetery	0- land Disturbance	0-COA	1-Misc	0 LGT

96 - Total open active permits

49- Residential permits	2-Pool permits	5- Commercial permits	0 Tree
19- Land Disturbances permits	3- Sign permits	4- Cemetery permits	1-ZVL 0-LGT
3- Rezoning permits	0- Variances	3- BZA permit-	1-Annex 0- Demo
3- MP/FP/Misc	1- COA Permit	0- Outdoor dining permit	1-STR 1-Tapp

Analytic Records submitted for January 2026.

20- Records were created. 84- Inspections.

\$92,566.28 - Collected revenue. 11- Permits were issued.

Breakdown of inspections for January 2026.

34- Residential.	0- Commercial.	46 - Land Disturbances.	4-Other
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(Projects Under Review).

Lauren Hackenson REZN 25-9 BZA 25-6 Shaman Way REZN 26-1 Pine Tree
Greg Imig BZA 25-5 REZN 25-6 Warren Welch



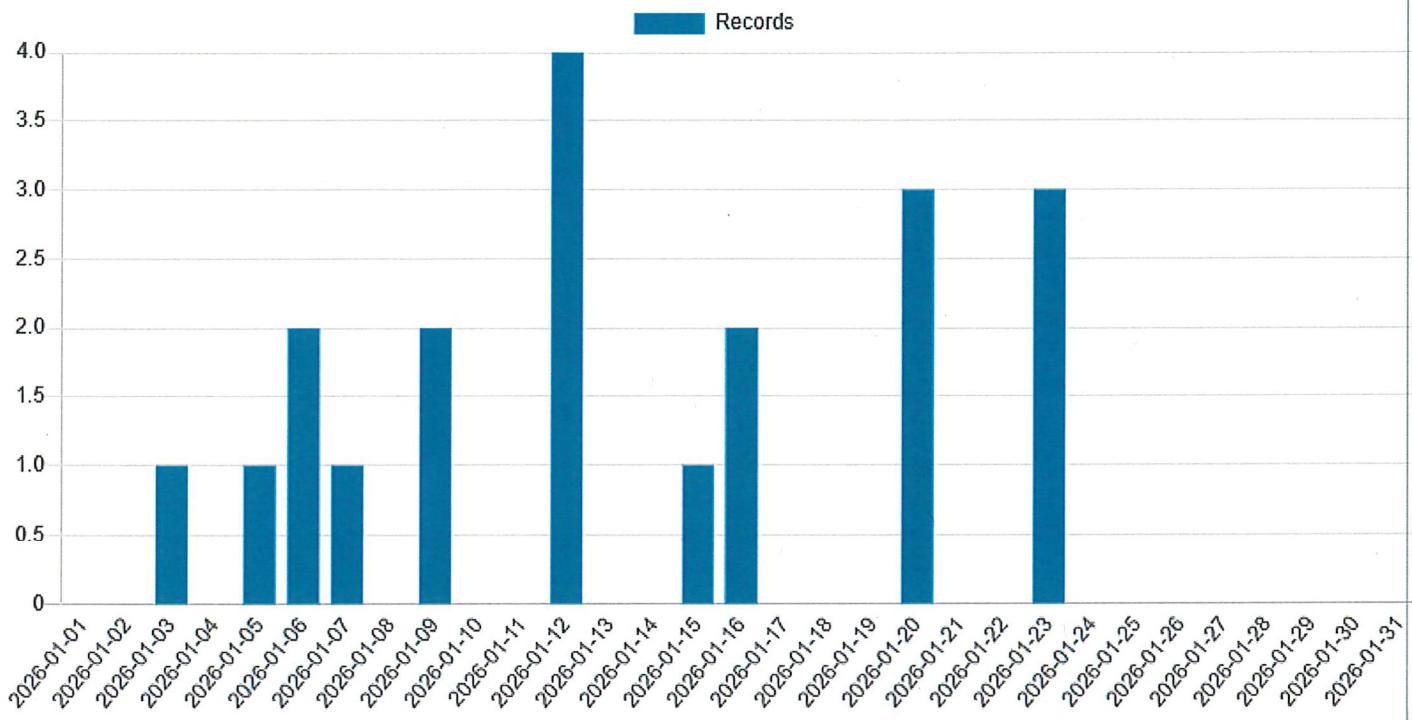
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City of Dahlonega activity report for January 2026.

1-Animal Complaints.	0- Disrepair notice.
2- Debris/removal of items.	46- LDP inspection.
1-Excessive trash.	2- Other complaints.
11- Sign Removals.	0- Inoperable vehicle.
2- Sign Violation Notices.	0- Signage Complaints.
0- Traffic-Vehicle Assistance.	0- Property Owner complaints.
0-Parking Tickets.	0 -Lighting Complaints.
0- Warning Tickets.	3- Business inspections.
0-Noise Complaints.	1-Camper Parking
0- Courtesy grass cutting.	0-Operating w/o OTC
3-Soil Erosion Complaint.	
0-Commercial Dumpster trash complaint	
2- Drainage issues complaint.	
0 -Right-of-way complaint.	

Analytics

Records submitted over time



Totals

20
Records Created

\$92,566.28
Revenue Collected

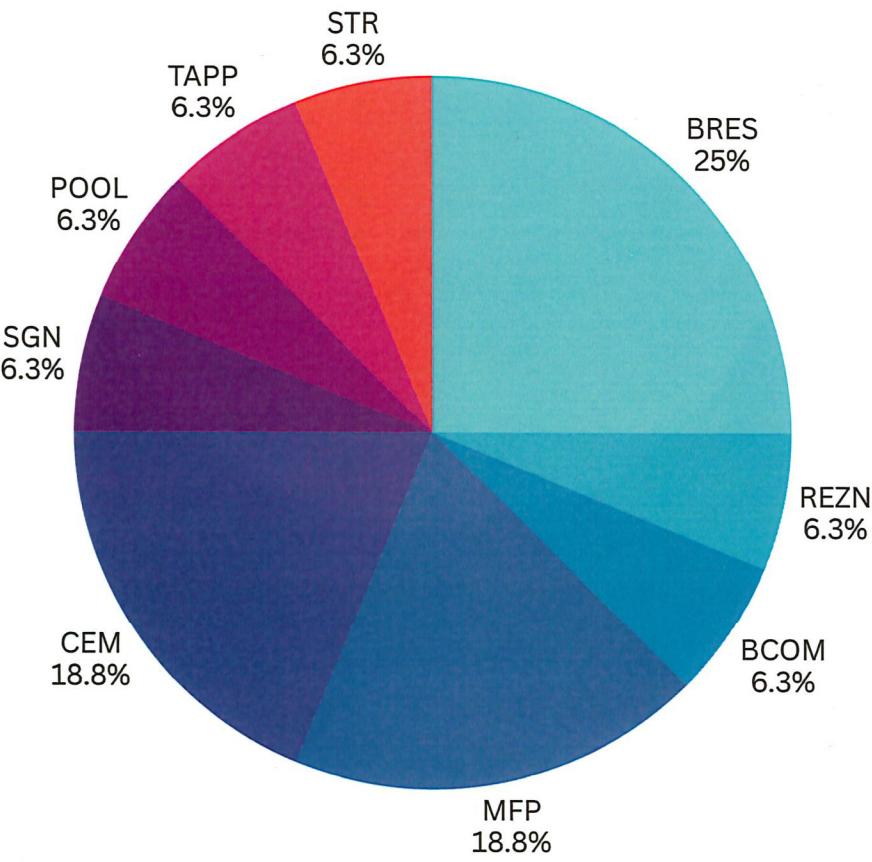
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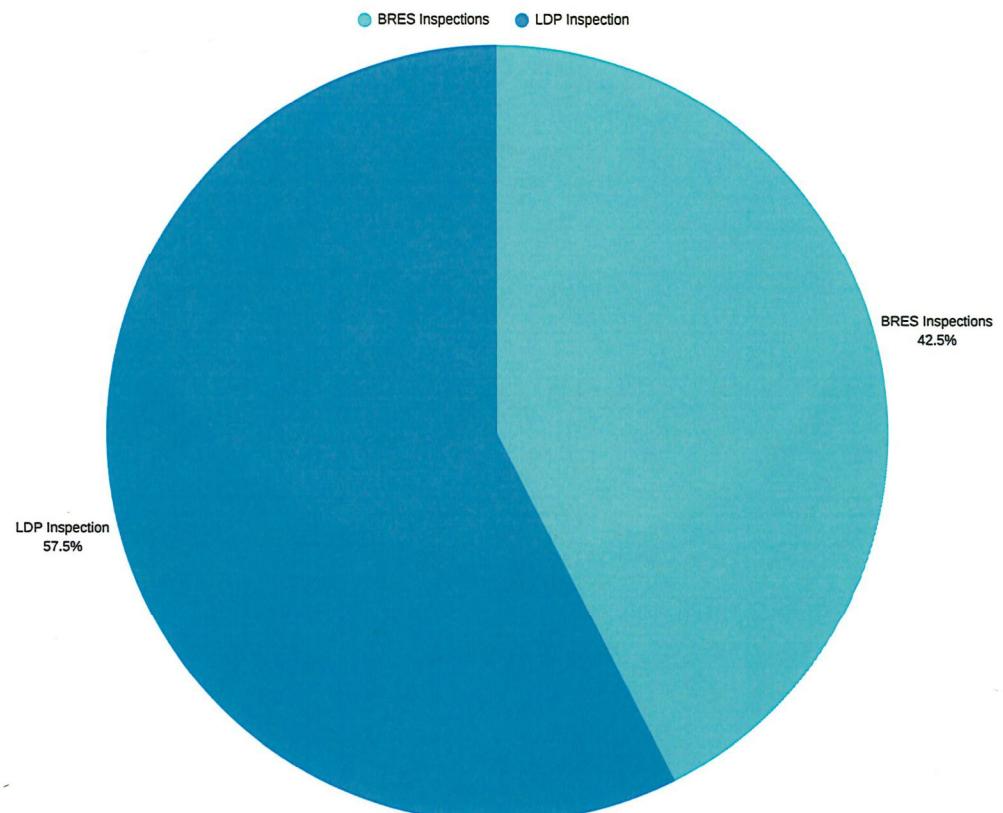
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Date



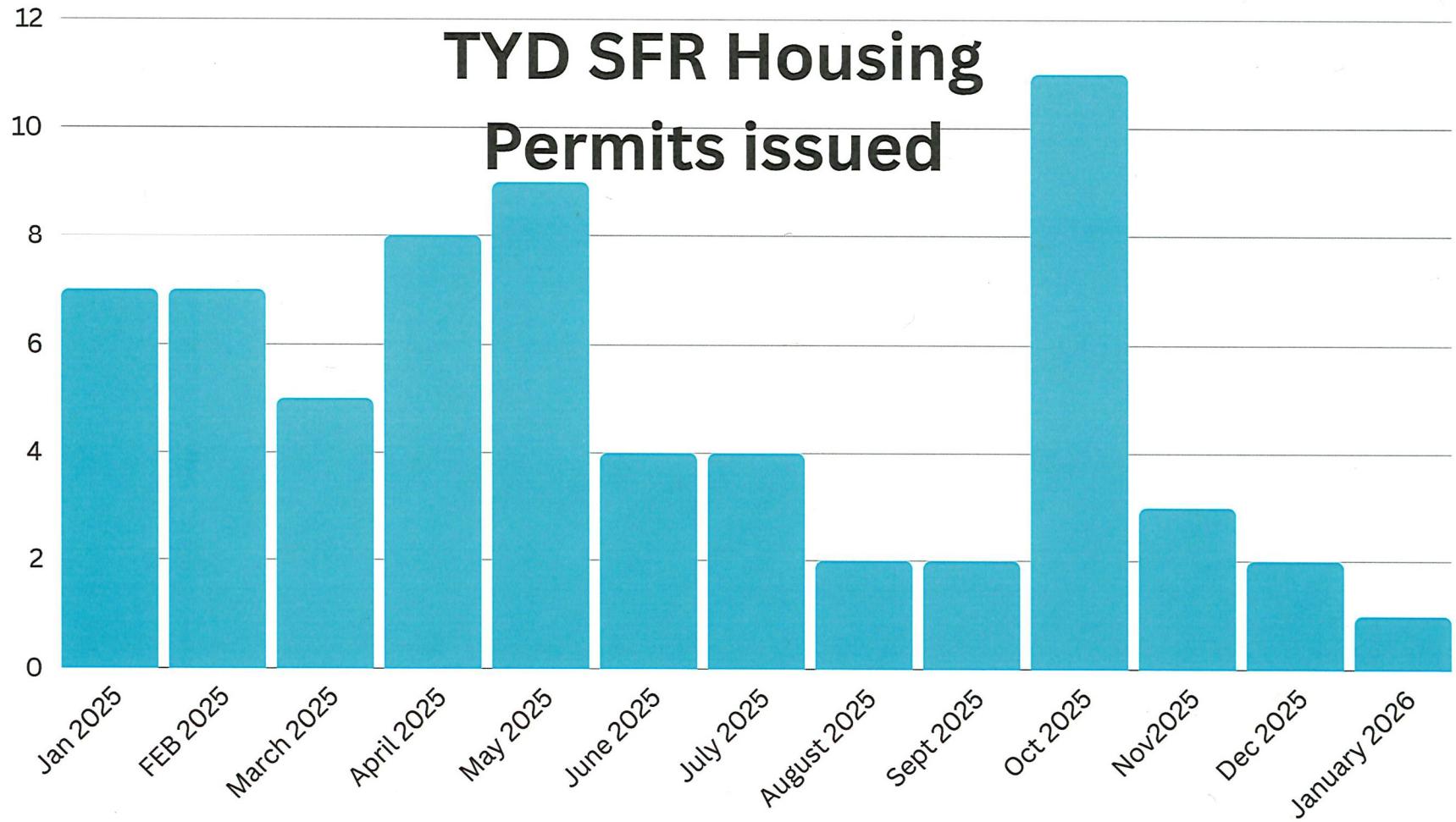
January 2026 permits



January inspection

TYD SFR Housing

Permits issued





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1-Zoning	3-Minor Plats	0-Final Plats	1-Pool	0 -ZVL -	1-STR-
1-Commercial	3-Cemetery	0- land Disturbance	0-COA	1-Misc	0 LGT

96 - Total open active permits

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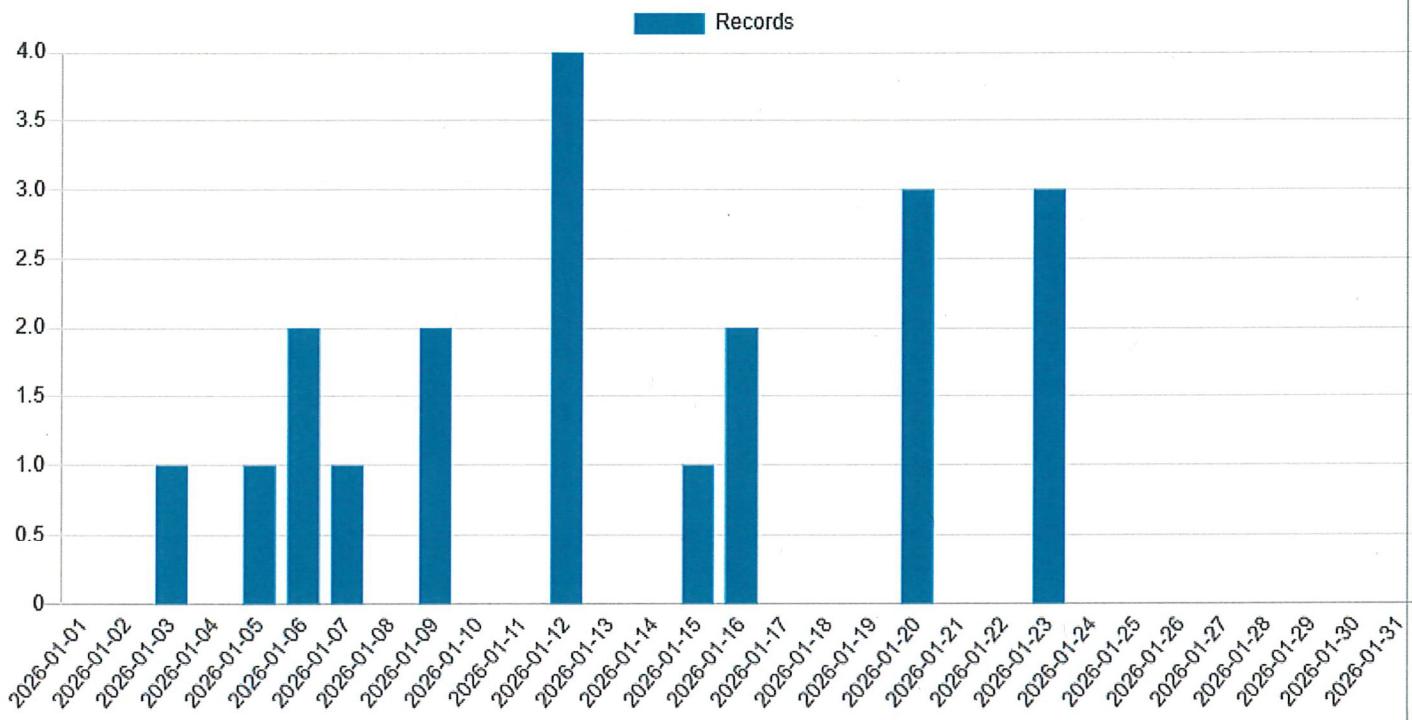
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0- Traffic-Vehicle Assistance.	0- Property Owner complaints.
0-Parking Tickets.	0 -Lighting Complaints.
0- Warning Tickets.	3- Business inspections.
0-Noise Complaints.	1-Camper Parking
0- Courtesy grass cutting.	0-Operating w/o OTC
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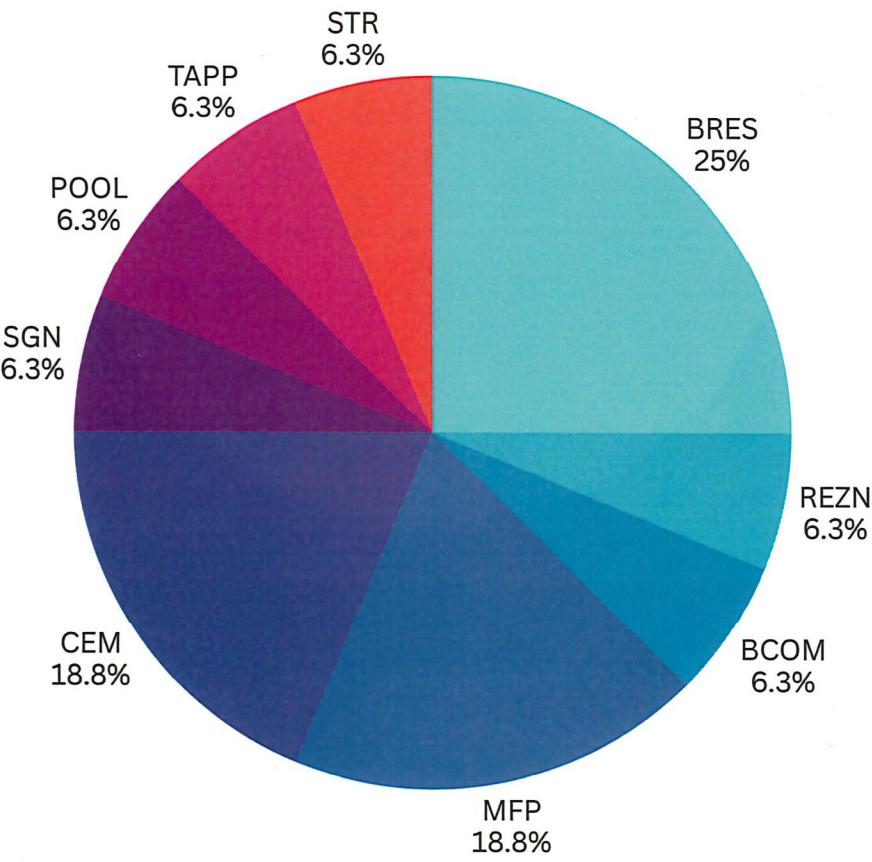
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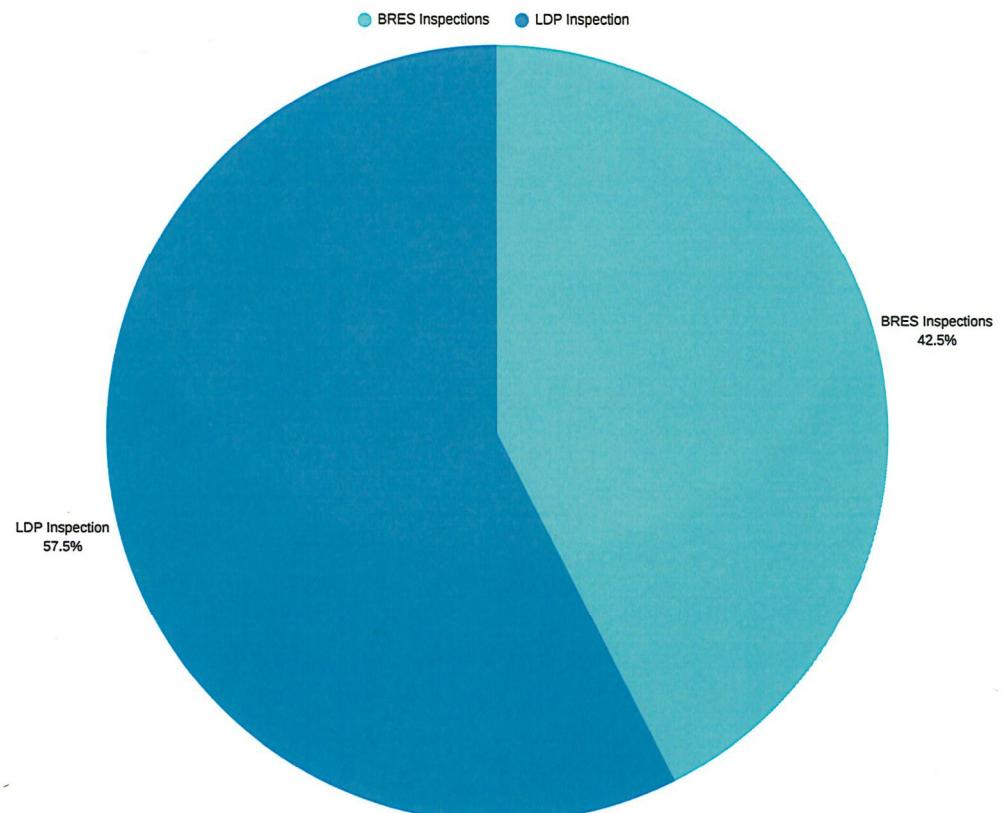
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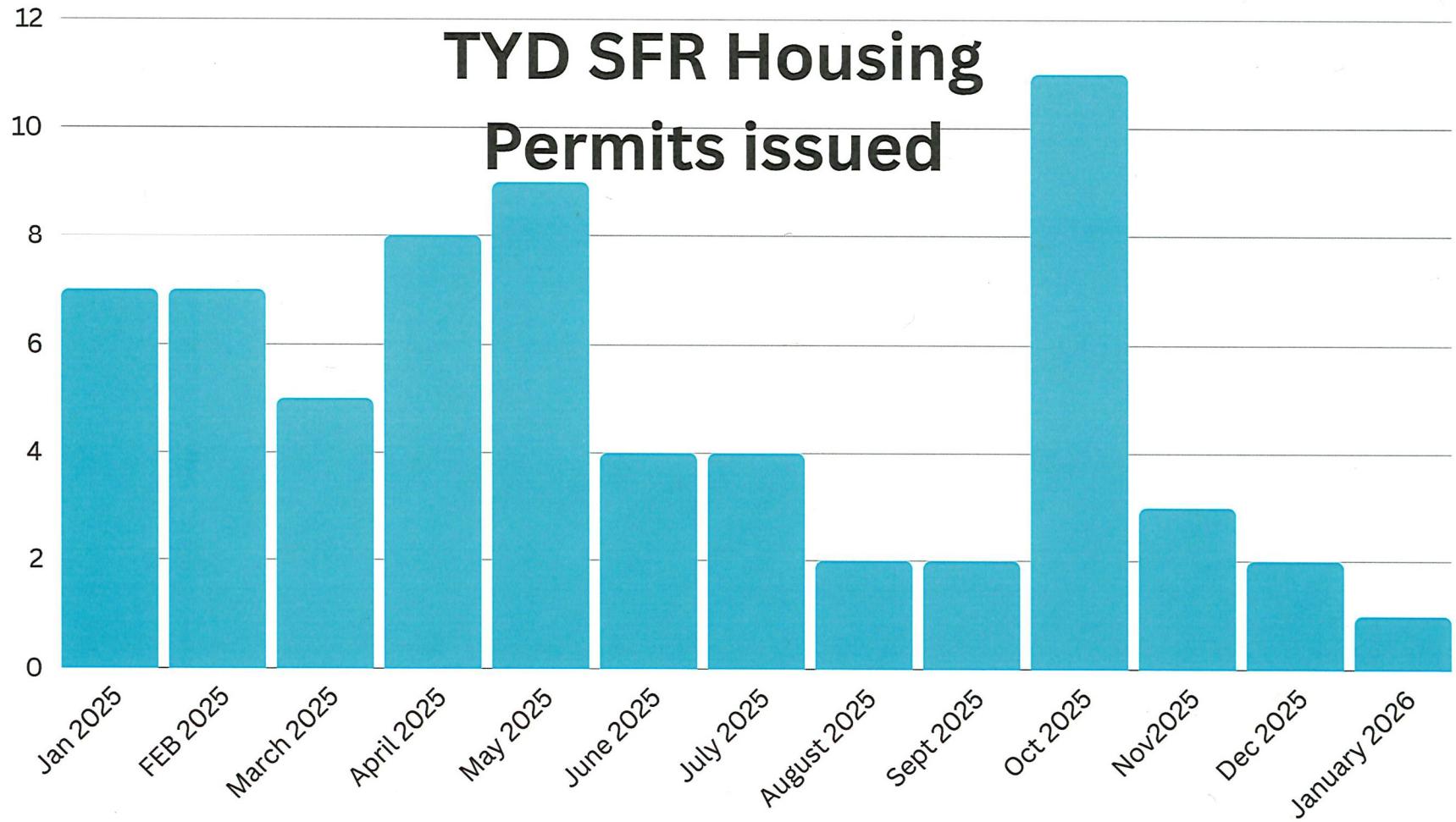
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1-Zoning	3-Minor Plats	0-Final Plats	1-Pool	0 -ZVL -	1-STR-
1-Commercial	3-Cemetery	0- land Disturbance	0-COA	1-Misc	0 LGT

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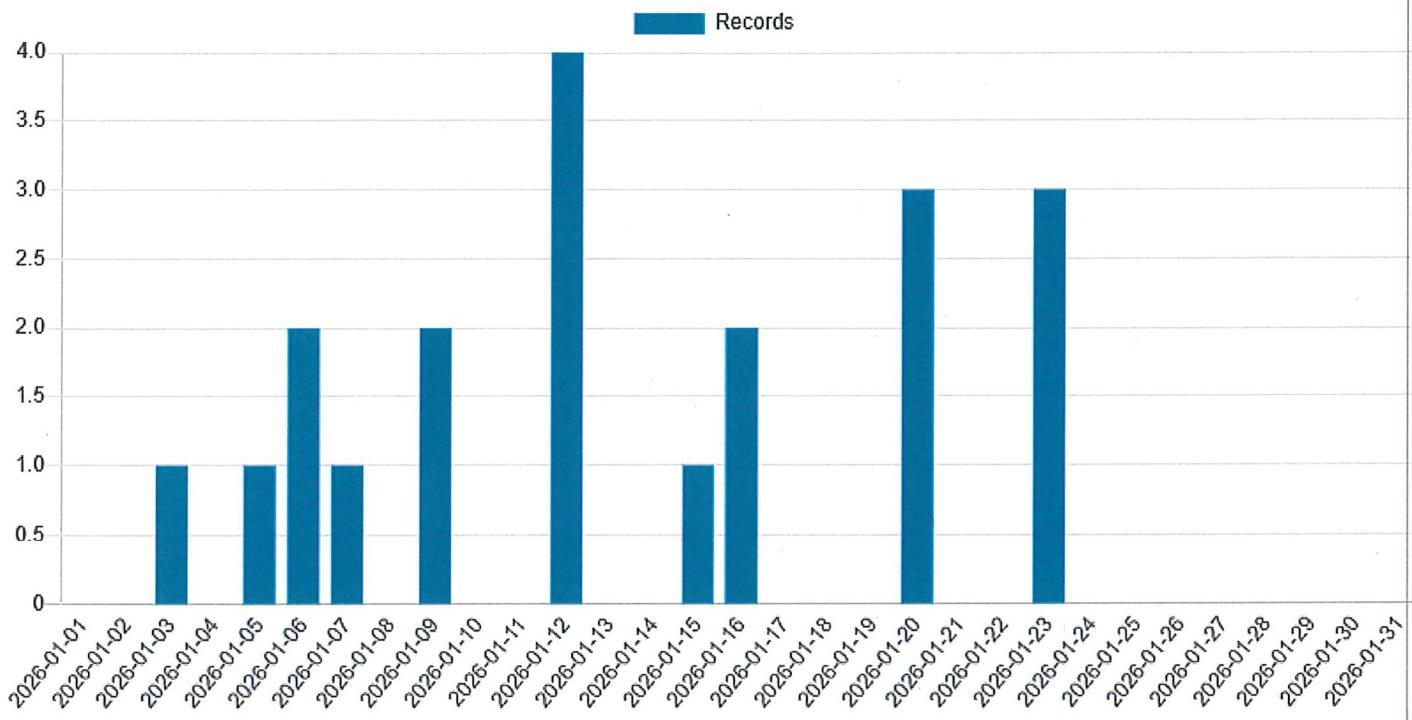
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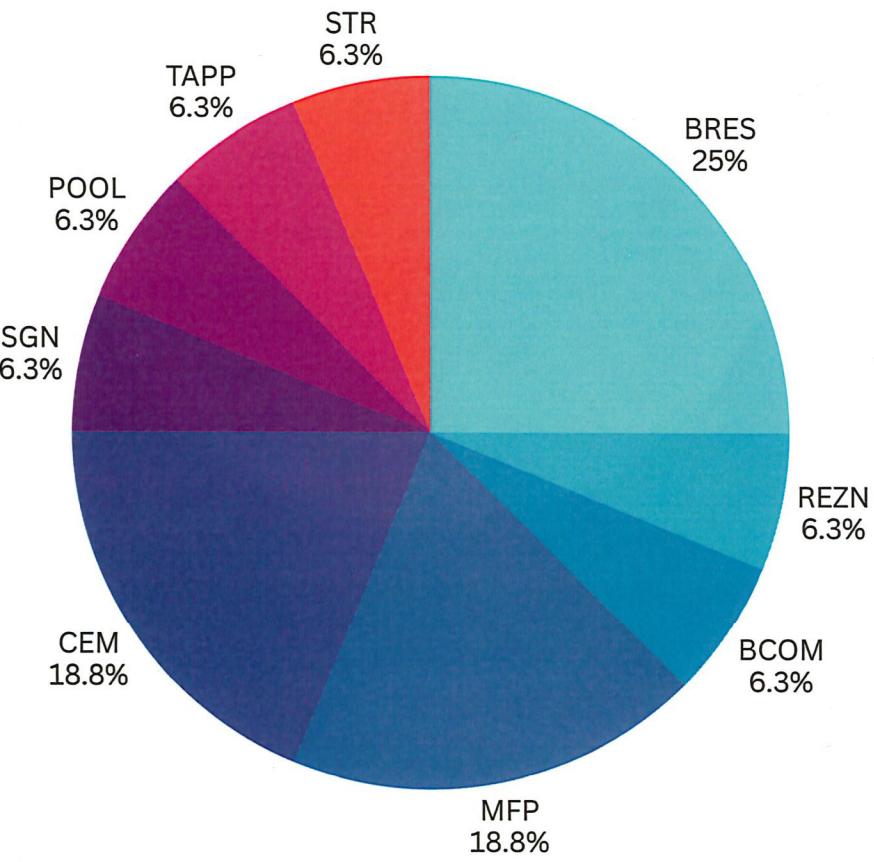
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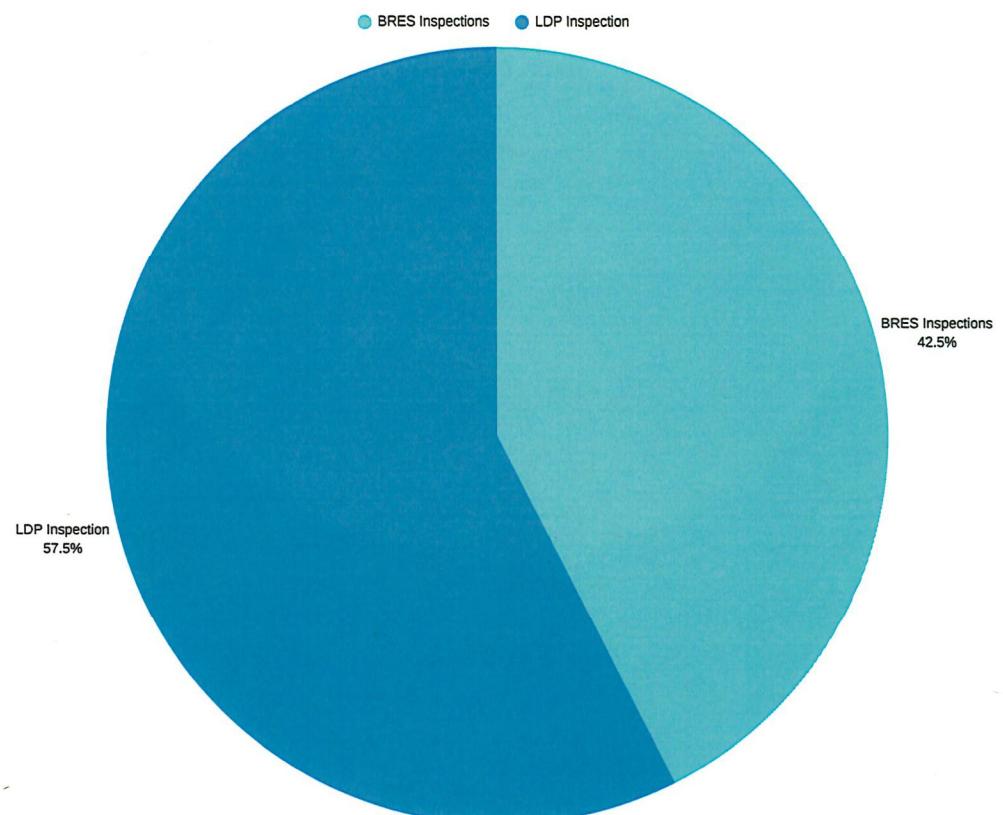
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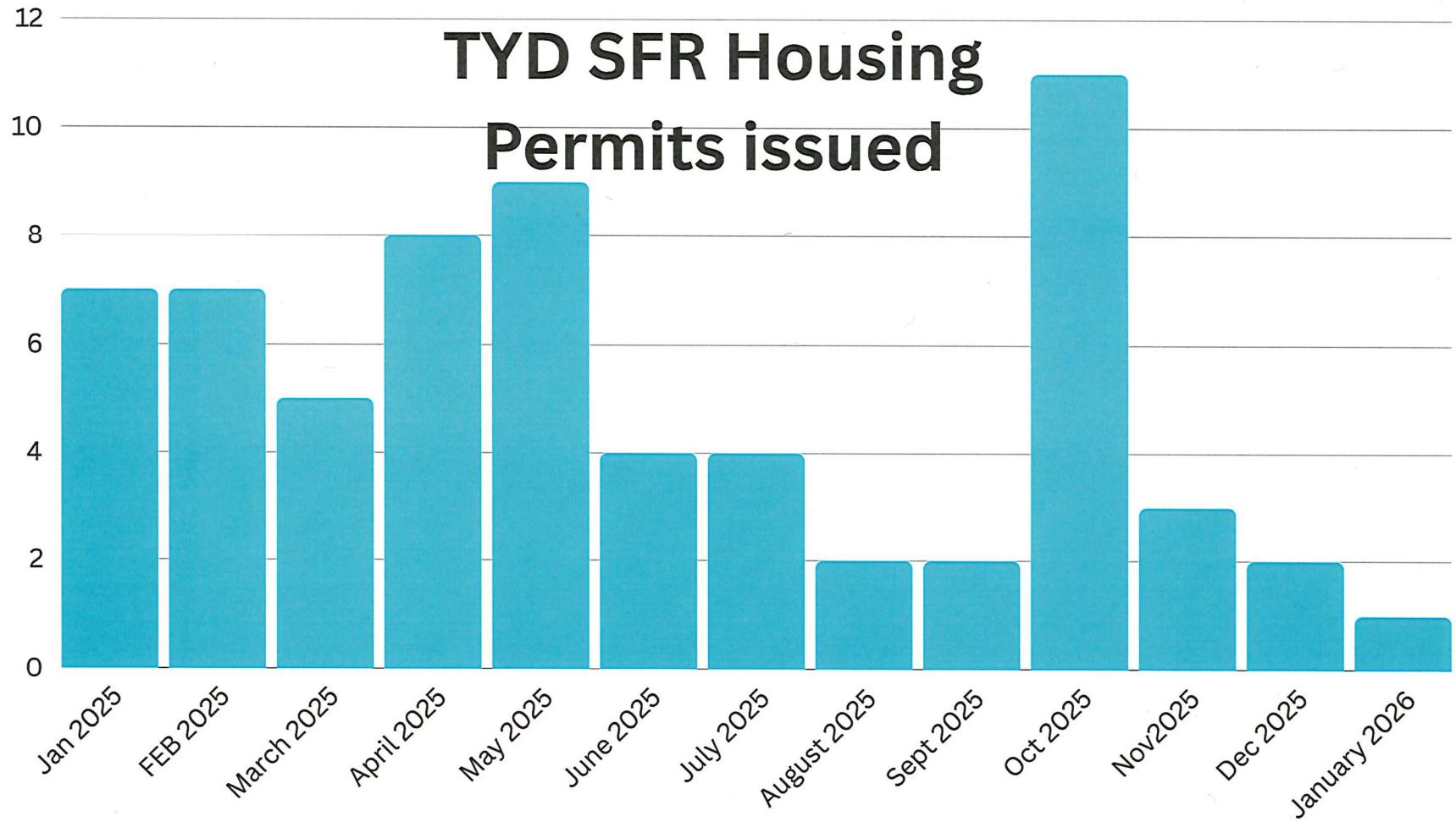
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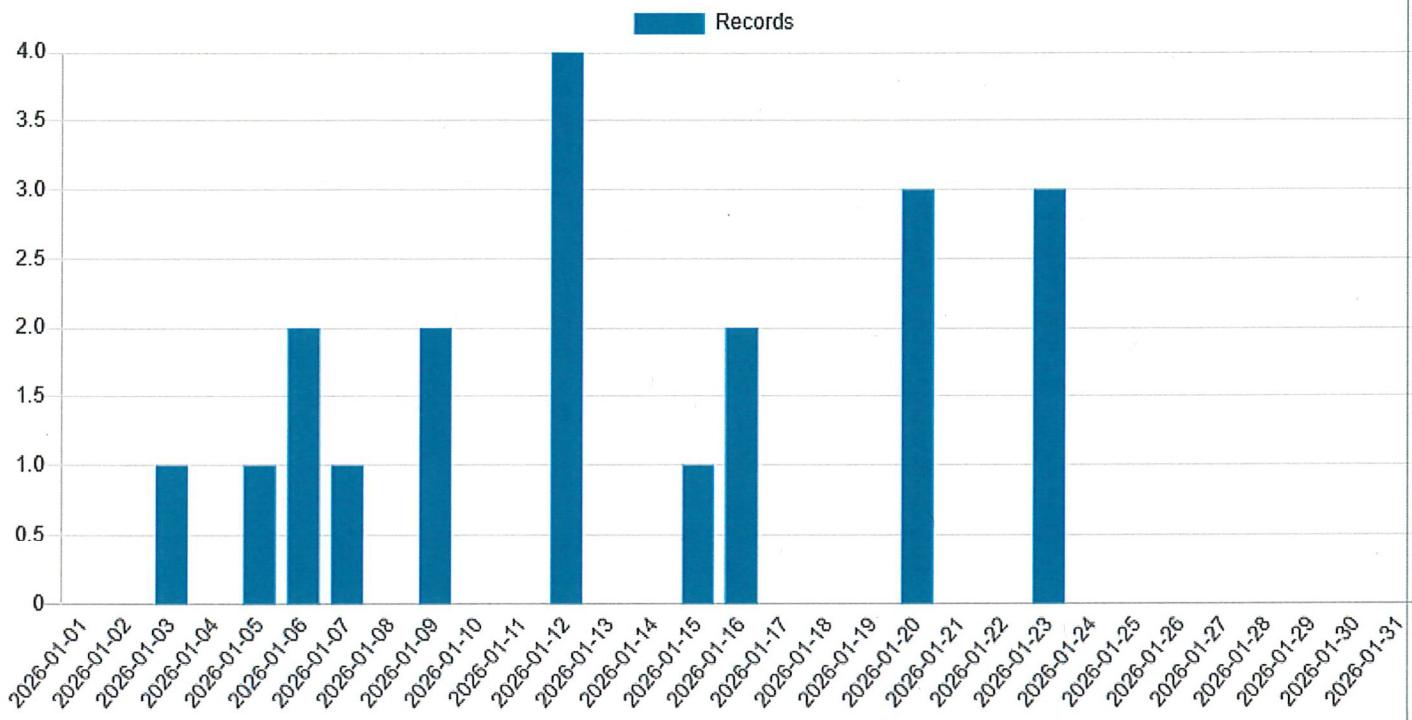
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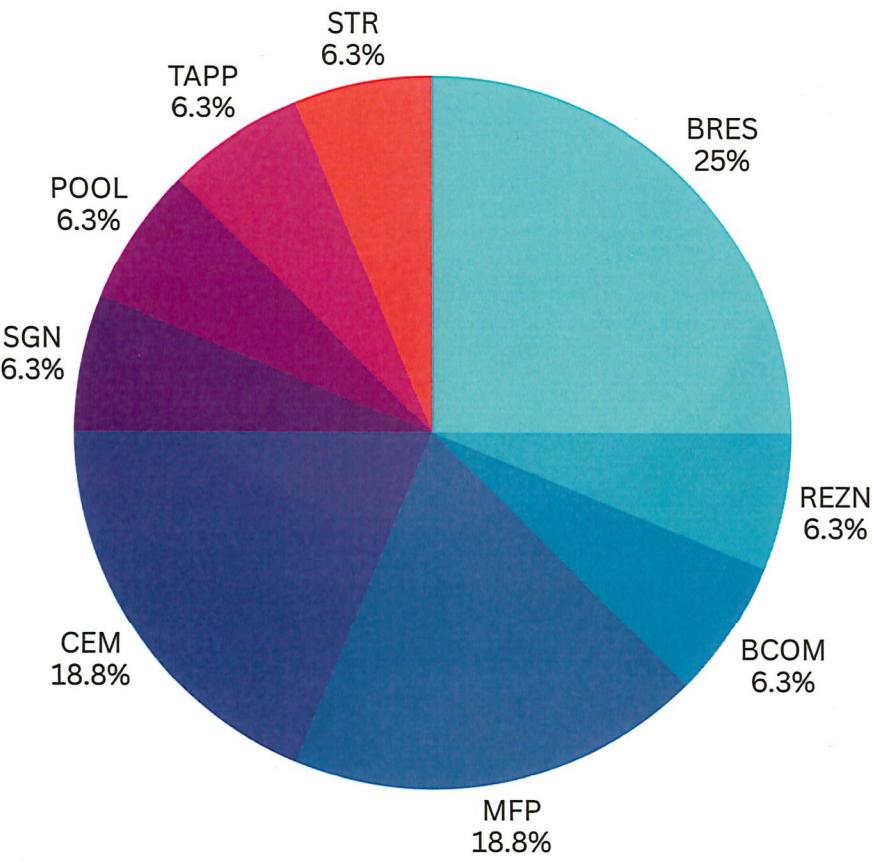
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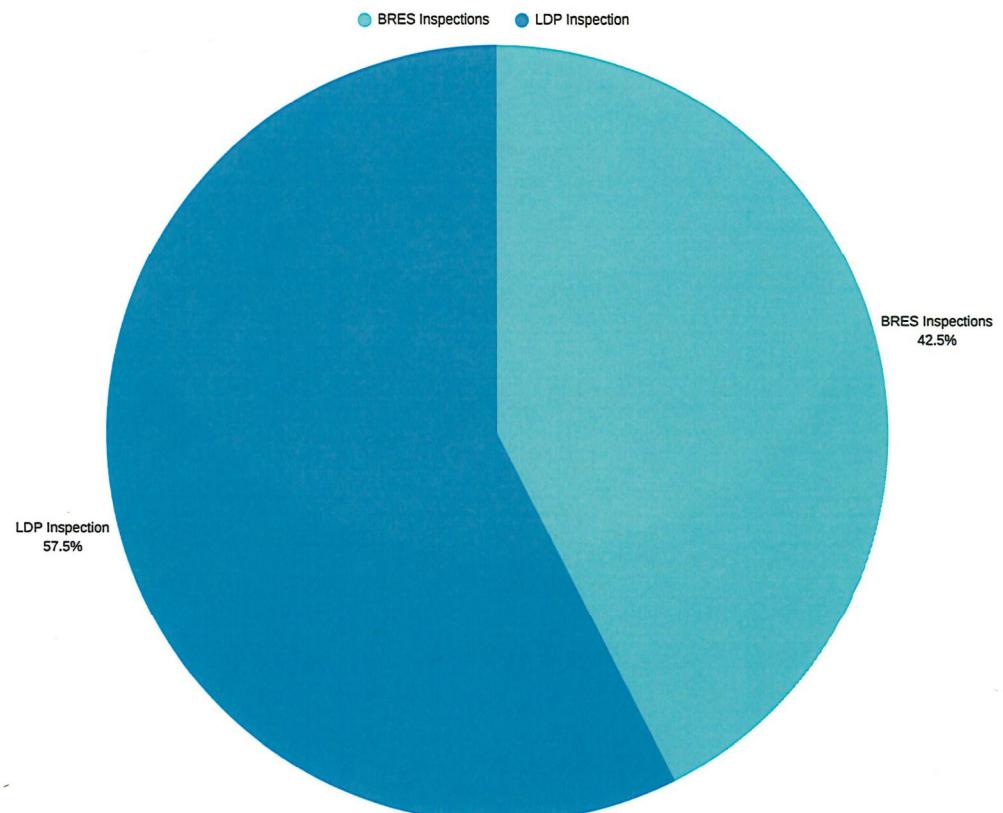
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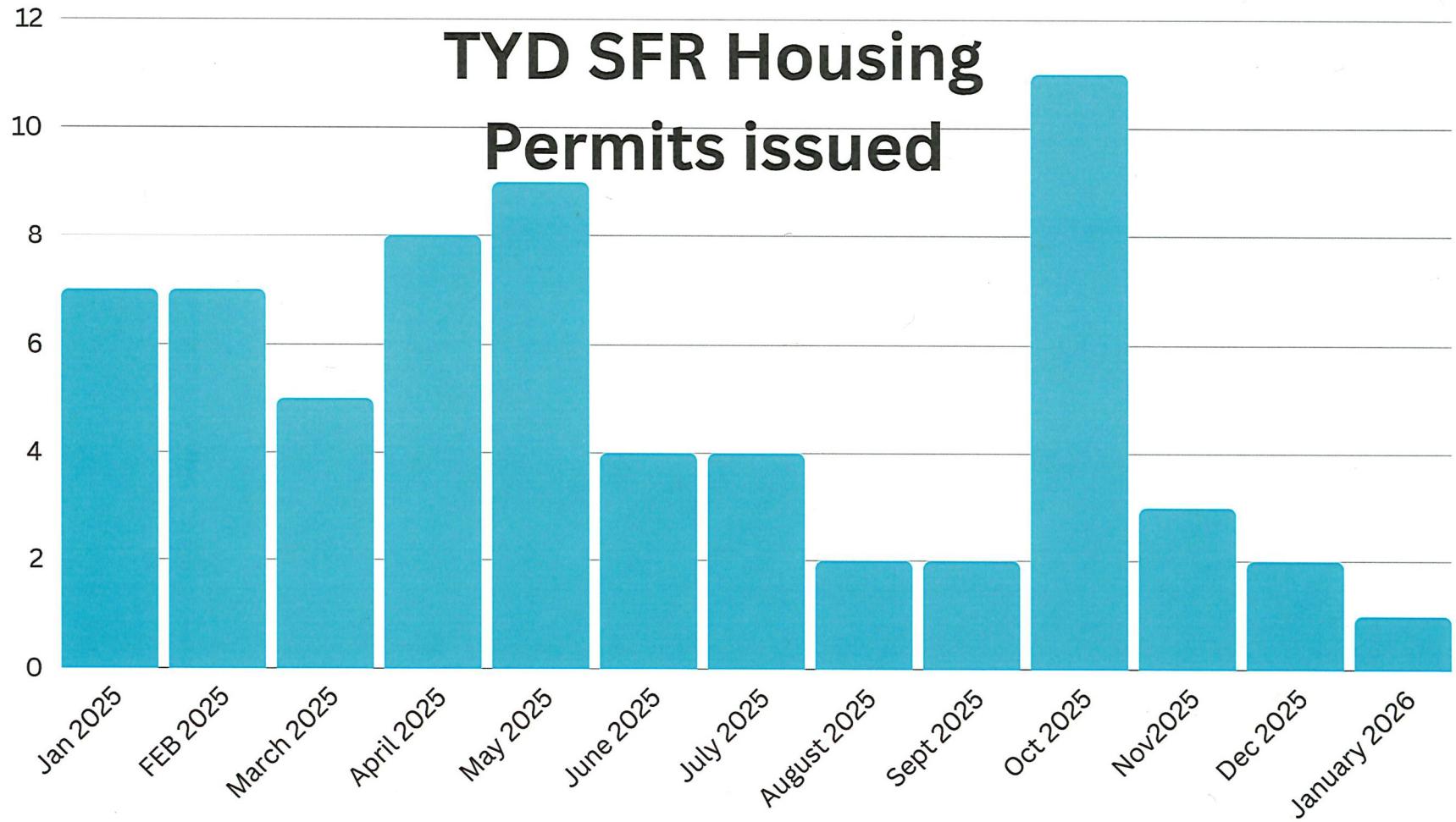
January 2026 permits



January inspection

TYD SFR Housing

Permits issued





Department Report

Report Title: Finance and Administration Department – January 2026

Report Highlight: City servers are now virtualized.

Name and Title: Kimberly Stafford, Finance Manager

Recently Completed:

- Compilation of property and easement files complete/moving to database creation continues.
- Searchable Database for right-of-way documents available to staff.
- Phase I of the Master Plan update for Water and Sewer is wrapping up.
- KOYO Lift Station funds approved – awaiting contract docs from federal government.

Underway:

- Inventory module discovery for design and implementation; preliminary review at department.
- Internal audit of assets – 95% complete
- Update employee evaluation forms and document procedures for employee review processes and performance development plans.
- Staff continue to review forms for needed updates.

Near Term:

- Update financial policies. – We have an intern starting in February to work on this project.
- Update the purchasing policy to include a vendor preference provision.
- Develop and implement employee meetings to provide appropriate training and update HR forms;
- Review additional finance files in long-term storage to determine what should be destroyed per the retention schedule.
- Audit of Utility Billing address points against MSAG/E911/USPS data.



Department Report

Report Title: City of Dahlonega Police Department – January 2026

Report Highlight: Commendation Officer Cody Sprague, Noah Sprague and Hunter Bauman.

Name and Title: George Albert, Chief of Police.

Recently Completed:

- Chief spoke to the Newcomers Club at Parks and Recreation.
- Attended monthly meetings with the U.S. Attorney's Office to discuss the Violent Repeat Offender (VRO) program, hosted by the Dawson County Sheriff's Office.
- Attended the law enforcement business summit in Sandy Springs.
- Attended the Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) meeting in Blairsville.
- Chief served as a guest speaker for Drug Free Lumpkin.
- Officer Sprague attended a GOHS (Governor's Office of Highway Safety) training class.
- All officers completed firearms qualification training.
- Attended the after-action report for Old Fashioned Christmas.
- Attended flag raising Ceremony City Hall.

Underway:

- RADAR speed trailer deployed to educate motorists and encourage reduced speeds.
- Officer Noah Sprague started with the police department and is getting familiar with the community.
- Foot patrols in the downtown business district.
- Continued traffic enforcement in community to obtain voluntary compliance with traffic regulations.

Officer's Commendation: Officers Cody Sprague and Noah Sprague were commended by a citizen for their assistance in unlocking a vehicle. Officer Bauman was featured in a Dahlonega Nugget article and formally commended by the publisher.

January Pictures



Placement of the RADAR speed trailer



GOHS meeting in Blairsville

January Pictures



Swearing in of all Officers by Mayor Sam Norton



January Pictures



Welcoming Officer Noah Sprague to the DPD team



Newcomers Club at Parks and Recreation

January Pictures



After-action report for Old Fashioned Christmas



Flag raising ceremony

January Pictures



Flag raising ceremony



January Pictures



EOC briefing for Ice Storm Fern

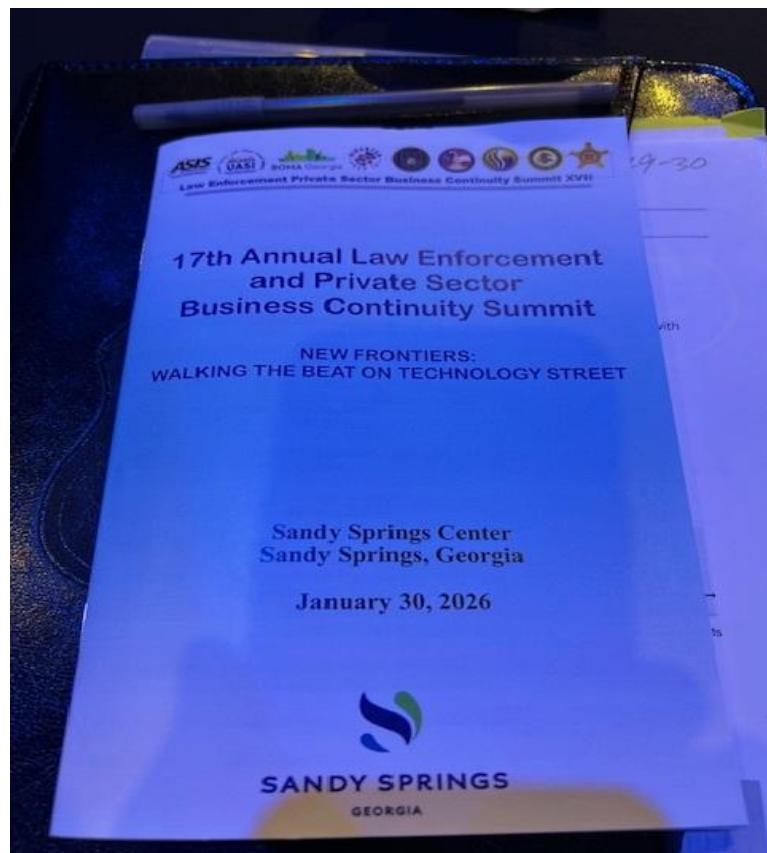


Guest speaker for Drug Free Lumpkin

January Pictures



Officer Bauman receives formal commendation



Chief attends law enforcement business summit in Sandy Springs

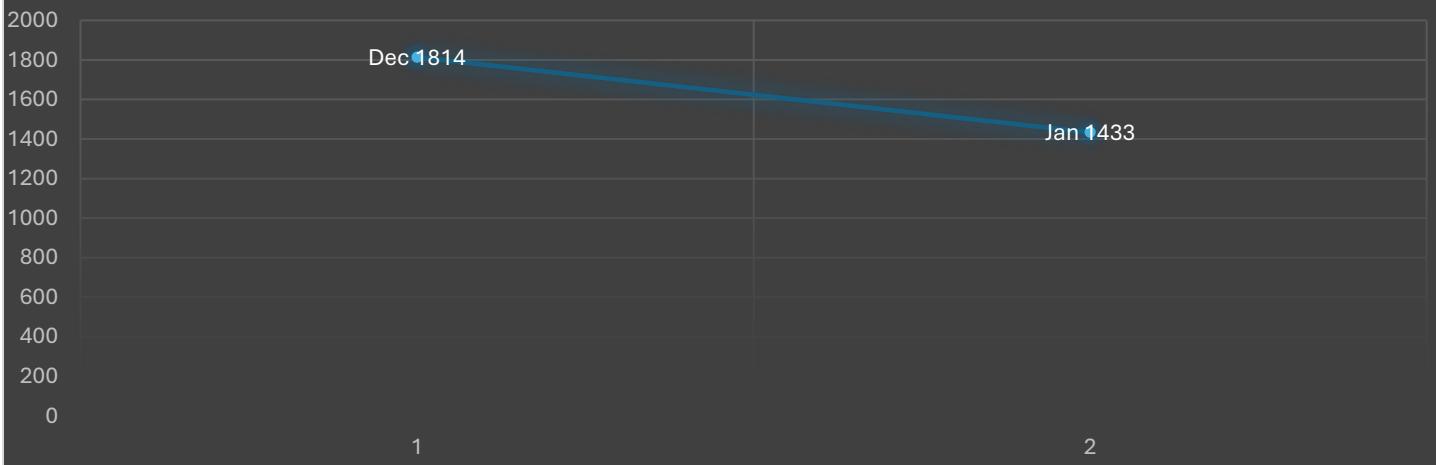
2026 Call Type by Month



	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Traffic Stops	216											
Extra Patrol	654											
Citations	35											
Arrests	6											
Parking Citations	59											
Parking Warnings	20											
Traffic Accidents	27											
Code Comp Viol	119											
Foot Patrol	59											
Total CFS	1433											

█ Traffic Stops █ Extra Patrol █ Citations █ Arrests █ Parking Citations
█ Parking Warnings █ Traffic Accidents █ Code Comp Viol █ Foot Patrol █ Total CFS

Total CFS 2026



2026 Calls for Service

Call Type	25-Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>Traffic Stops</i>	267	216											
<i>Extra Patrol</i>	918	654											
<i>Citations</i>	61	35											
<i>Arrests</i>	7	6											
<i>Parking Citations</i>	73	59											
<i>Parking Warnings</i>	58	20											
<i>Traffic Accidents</i>	36	27											
<i>Code Comp Viol</i>	99	119											
<i>Foot Patrol</i>	105	59											
Total CFS	1814	1433											

Calls for Service Comparison

	Jan-24	Jan-25	Jan-26
<i>Traffic Stops</i>	74	286	216
<i>Extra Patrol</i>	830	1979	654
<i>Citations</i>	17	48	35
<i>Arrests</i>	12	9	6
<i>Parking Citations</i>	34	20	59
<i>Parking Warning</i>	8	29	20
<i>Traffic Accidents</i>	25	35	27
<i>Code Comp Viol</i>	35	37	119
<i>Foot Patrol</i>	0	8	59
	1176	2599	1433

January 2026 Police Department Stats

Number of Calls for Service: 1433

Incident Reports: 35

Accident Reports: 14

Traffic Stops: 216

Juvenile Complaint: 2

Criminal Trespass: 2

Domestic Problem: 0

Vehicle Unlock: 15

Traffic Citations Issued: 35

Traffic Warnings Issued: 93

Shoplifting: 0

Parking Citations Issued: 59

Animal Complaint: 2

Public Drunk: 1

Traffic Fatalities: 0

Motorist Assist: 11

Accidents to GSP: 2

Trouble Alarms: 14

DUI: 1

DUI to GSP: 0

Arrests: 35

Officer Assist LCSO: 7

Funeral Assist: 2

Officer Assist Other: 6

Other: 10

Welfare Check: 12

Foot Patrol Time: 15 Hours

Extra Patrol: 654



Department Report

Report Title: Public Works—January 2026

Name and Title: Mark Buchanan, PW Director/City Engineer

Recently Completed:

- Responded to two winter storm events and a heavy rain/flooding event.





- White Fringe Tree planting at corner of North Park Street and Warwick Street.



- Groundbreaking on North Grove Sidewalk Phase 2.



- Installation of street signs. This will be a multi-year process.



- Pipe and outlet repair on Arcadia Street.



- East Main sidewalk widening and improvements.



Ongoing:

- Morrison Moore Pedestrian Bridge & Sidewalk.



- Memorial Park Cemetery lot layout. New lots have been preliminarily laid out and await installation of plot markers by volunteers with City staff guidance. Following this, staff will work with City legal counsel to determine following steps to prepare the plots for sale and present to City Council.



- Golden Avenue storm drain. The culvert and street redesign files have been sent to GDOT for coordination into the Yahoola Bridge project.

- Phase 2 of the North Grove sidewalk project from Subway to Skyline Drive.
- Forest clearing at Memorial Park Cemetery. At this time, there is no interest in gaining burial plots in this area, it is simply a clean up of dead, dying and decaying timber. Before and after photos below:



Upcoming (these projects are currently either in concept, design or construction phase):

- City Park playground renovation.
- Preliminary procurement work for school to school sidewalk and roundabouts. This is another GDOT Transportation Alternatives project estimated at around \$11m.
- Boat Ramp Picnic Area beautification. The goal is to perform this work to coincide with completion of the Morrison Moore Pedestrian Bridge & Sidewalk.
- Planting of native dogwoods on Park Street to come in several weeks/months as directed by nursery. Scheduled date is March 2, 2026.
- Concrete work and resurfacing of Warwick Street between Park and Chestatee.
- Coordination with GDOT regarding Yahoola Bridge replacement, South Chestatee slope repair in multiple locations and the Auraria/Torrington intersection improvements.



TREE CITY USA®

An Arbor Day Foundation Program

★★★ **OFFICIAL PROCLAMATION** ★★★

WHEREAS in 1872, the Nebraska Board of Agriculture established a special day to be set aside for the planting of trees, *and*

WHEREAS this holiday, called Arbor Day, was first observed with the planting of more than a million trees in Nebraska, *and*

WHEREAS Arbor Day is now observed throughout the nation and the world, *and*

WHEREAS trees can be a solution to combating climate change by reducing the erosion of our precious topsoil by wind and water, cutting heating and cooling costs, moderating the temperature, cleaning the air, producing life-giving oxygen, and providing habitat for wildlife, *and*

WHEREAS trees are a renewable resource giving us paper, wood for our homes, fuel for our fires, and countless other wood products, *and*

WHEREAS trees in our city increase property values, enhance the economic vitality of business areas, and beautify our community, *and*

WHEREAS trees — wherever they are planted — are a source of joy and spiritual renewal.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Sam Norton, Mayor of the City of Dahlonega, Georgia, do hereby proclaim February 20, 2026 as **ARBOR DAY**. In the City of Dahlonega, and I urge all citizens to celebrate Arbor Day and to support efforts to protect our trees and woodlands, *and*

FURTHER, I urge all citizens to plant trees to gladden the heart and promote the well-being of this and future generations.

DATED THIS 3rd day of March, 2026

Mayor _____



Arbor Day Foundation®



City Council Agenda Memo

DATE: 2/9/2026

TITLE: Employee Recognition - Winter Storm Response

PRESENTED BY: Mark Buchanan, City Engineer/Public Works Director

PRIORITY Strategic Priority - Communication

AGENDA ITEM DESCRIPTION

Employee Recognition - Winter Storm Response

HISTORY/PAST ACTION

During the recent winter weather events, streets department staff went above and beyond to keep city streets passable and safe. We will recognize the following employees with a certificate of appreciation for their efforts: Troy Armstrong, Tony Hurley, John Sweat, Justin Priest, Kenny Wells, Michael Bailey, Jeremy Tanner, and Zack Rumsey.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

n/a

RECOMMENDATION

n/a

SUGGESTED MOTIONS

n/a

ATTACHMENTS

n/a



DISCOVER

DAHLONEGA

DAHLONEGA-LUMPKIN COUNTY
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
QUARTER 4 AND EOY OVERVIEW

Q4 - PUBLIC RELATIONS

□ October

- Monthly Impressions totaled 2,700,174,544 with an editorial value of \$79.9 Billion.
- Key pitched topics included Gold Rush Days, Fall Getaways, Old Fashion Christmas
- Content creator *Spouse, Sprouts, and Me!*
- Featured Publications
 - Garden & Gun : "7 Small GA. Mountain Towns to Love"
 - Atlanta Magazine: "FIFA World Cup Visitor Destinations outside Atlanta"
 - Georgia Magazine: "Serving Culture with Cuisine"

□ November

- Monthly Impressions totaled 1,658,304,211 with an editorial value of \$46.2 billion.
- Key pitched topics included Holiday Travel destinations, Locally Made Holiday Gift, Destination Weddings, The Best Afternoon Teas Around the World.
- Featured Publications
 - Blue Ridge Country: "Upcoming Winter Travel"
 - AJC: "Georgia Gift Brands"
 - Real Simple: "Georgia's Tinsel Town"

Q4 - PUBLIC RELATIONS(CONT)

□ December

- Monthly Impressions totaled 4,086,912,728 with an editorial value of \$114 billion.
- Key pitched topics included Last Minute Holiday Getaways, Southern Destination with Retro Attractions, Winter Getaways, Old Fashioned Christmas
- Featured Publications
 - NewsNation: "Most Festive Holiday Towns"
 - USA Today: "10 Destinations that feel straight out of a Hallmark..."
 - MSN: "America's 50 Most charming small towns for the holidays."

Q4- DIGITAL MARKETING

- In September we decided reallocated money from the Atlanta and Augusta DMA to Tampa/St. Petersburg DMA, Savannah DMA, and continued with that Atlanta DMA (smaller amount)
- This ended up being a great decision and contributed to a big Q4 for Dahlonega and Lumpkin County.
- Below are the results:
 - Impressions - 136,260 (8% increase from Q3)
 - Website
 - Sessions: 229,370 (2% decrease from Q3)
 - Pageviews: 658,797 (1% decrease from Q3)
 - New Users: 159,403 (11% increase from Q3)

Q4- DIGITAL MARKETING (CONT.)

TOP LANDING PAGES

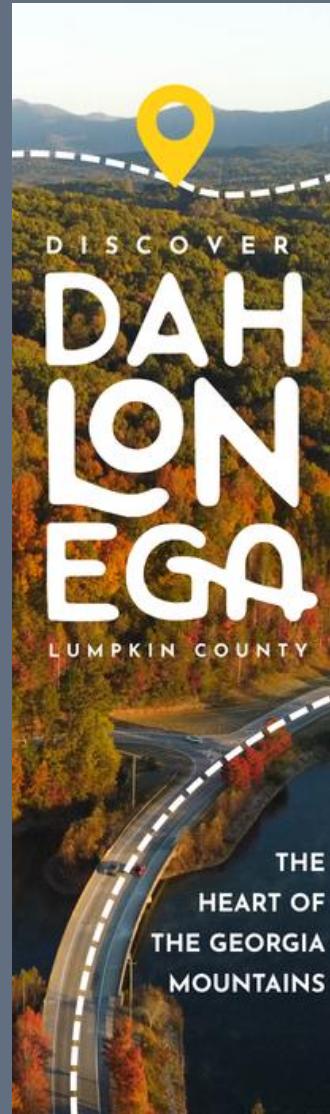
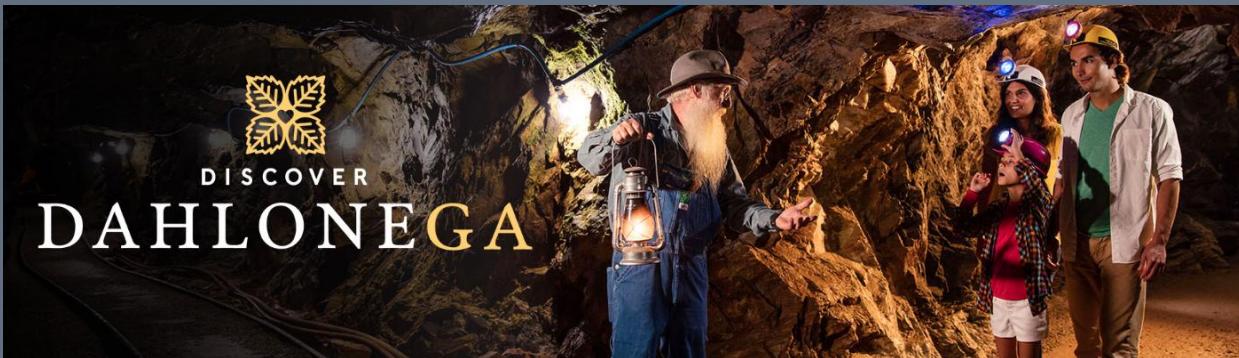
- 1) Discover Dahlonega (Home)
- 2) Events Calendar
- 3) See & Do
- 4) Stay the Night
- 5) Dahlonega Christmas
- 6) Cabins & Cottages
- 7) Attractions
- 8) Shopping & Specialty Retail
- 9) Restaurants
- 10) Wineries & Vineyards

TOP 10 DESTINATIONS

- 1) Atlanta
- 2) Tampa
- 3) Cumming
- 4) Marietta
- 5) Augusta
- 6) Savannah
- 7) Gainesville, FL
- 8) Lakeland
- 9) Sarasota
- 10) Clearwater

NEW BILLBOARDS FOR 2026

- Locations:
 - Valdosta - I-75: Exit 32
 - Savannah - I-16: Exit 90
 - Macon - I-75: Exit 186
 - Augusta Masters - I-20: Exit 199

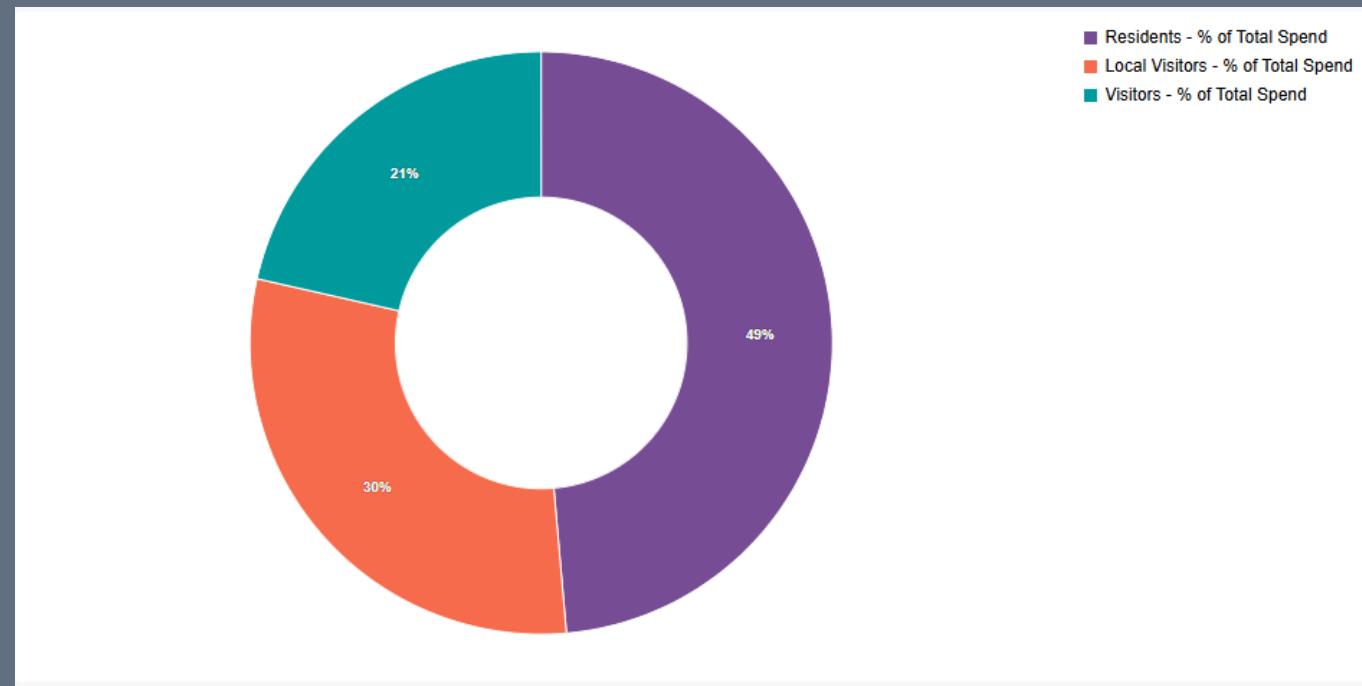
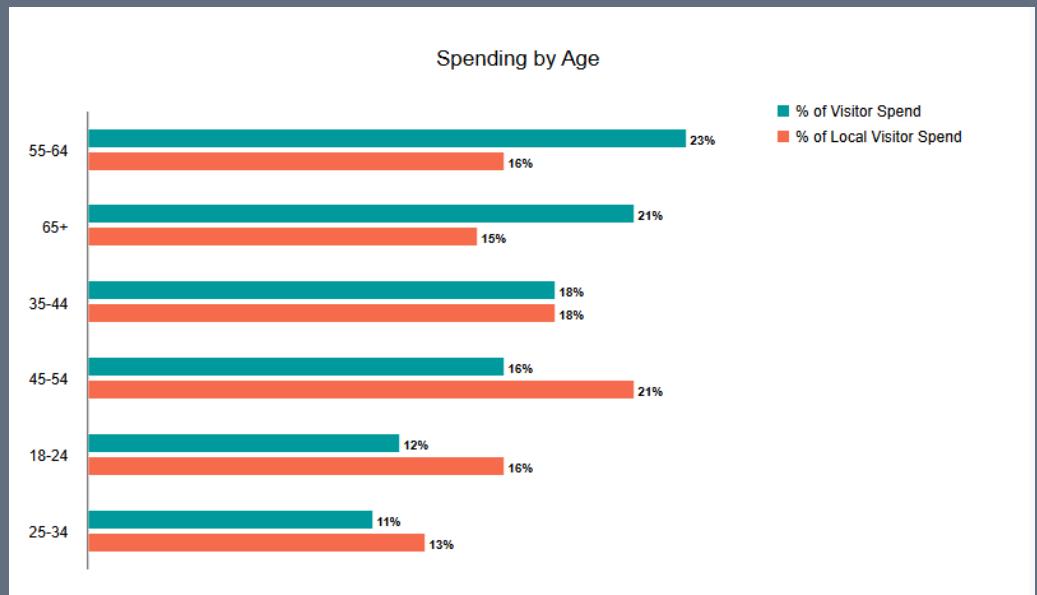
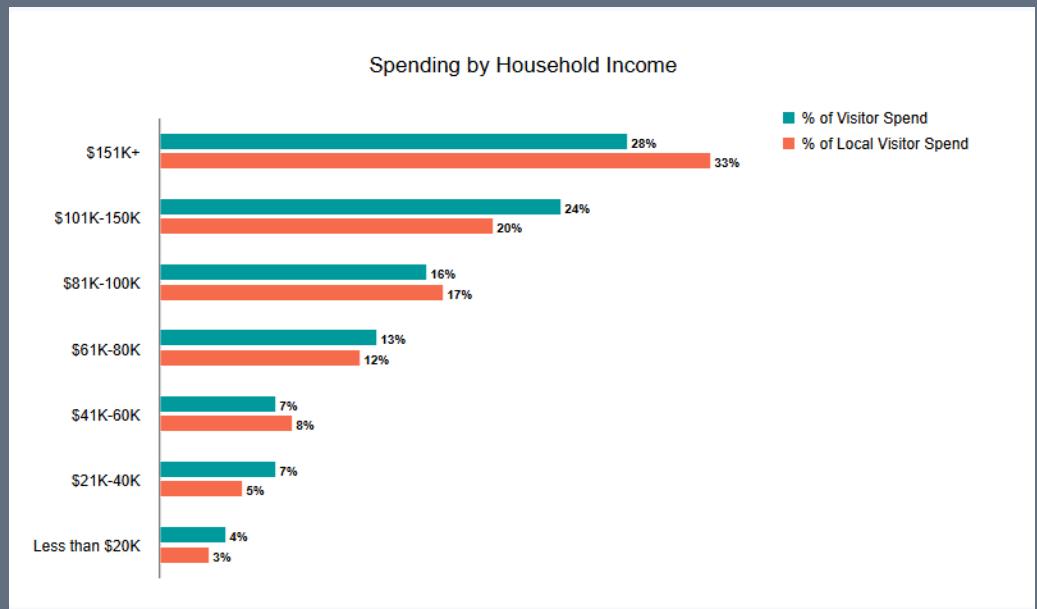




Q4 -VISITOR DATA



Q4 - LOCAL VISITOR LENSE



Q4: QUALITY VISITOR MARKETS

Visitor Origin Market	% of Visitors ▼	% of Spend	Quality Visit Index	% of Visitors in Accommodations	% of Spend in Accommodations	Local Business Avg. Daily Spend	% of Spend in Local Businesses	Website Engagement Rate
Atlanta GA	26%	22%	▲ 101	9%	13%	\$52	31%	81%
Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson SC-Ashe...	4%	4%	▲ 100	7%	5%	\$70	47%	83%
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Sarasota FL	3%	3%	▲ 100	13%	4%	\$43	17%	83%
Birmingham-Anniston-Tuscaloosa AL	3%	2%	▲ 104	11%	11%	\$53	49%	84%
Miami-Ft. Lauderdale FL	3%	2%	▼ 95	9%	2%	\$46	24%	81%
Cleveland-Akron-Canton OH	3%	0.1%	▼ 92	3%	-	\$51	45%	76%
Macon GA	2%	3%	▲ 100	7%	14%	\$60	33%	82%
Chattanooga TN	2%	3%	▲ 100	7%	3%	\$60	54%	84%

Average Visitor Spend

\$128

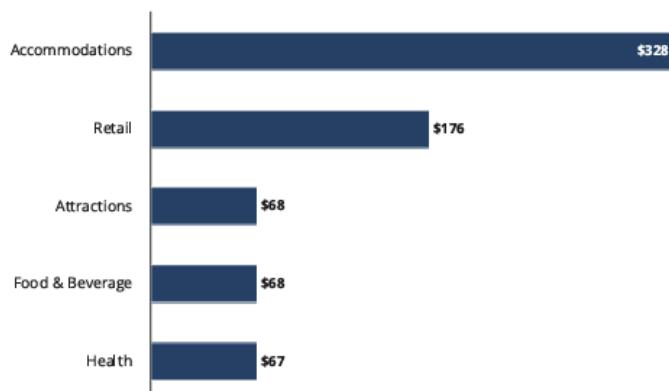
\$133 **\$-5**
Spend time previous year Difference

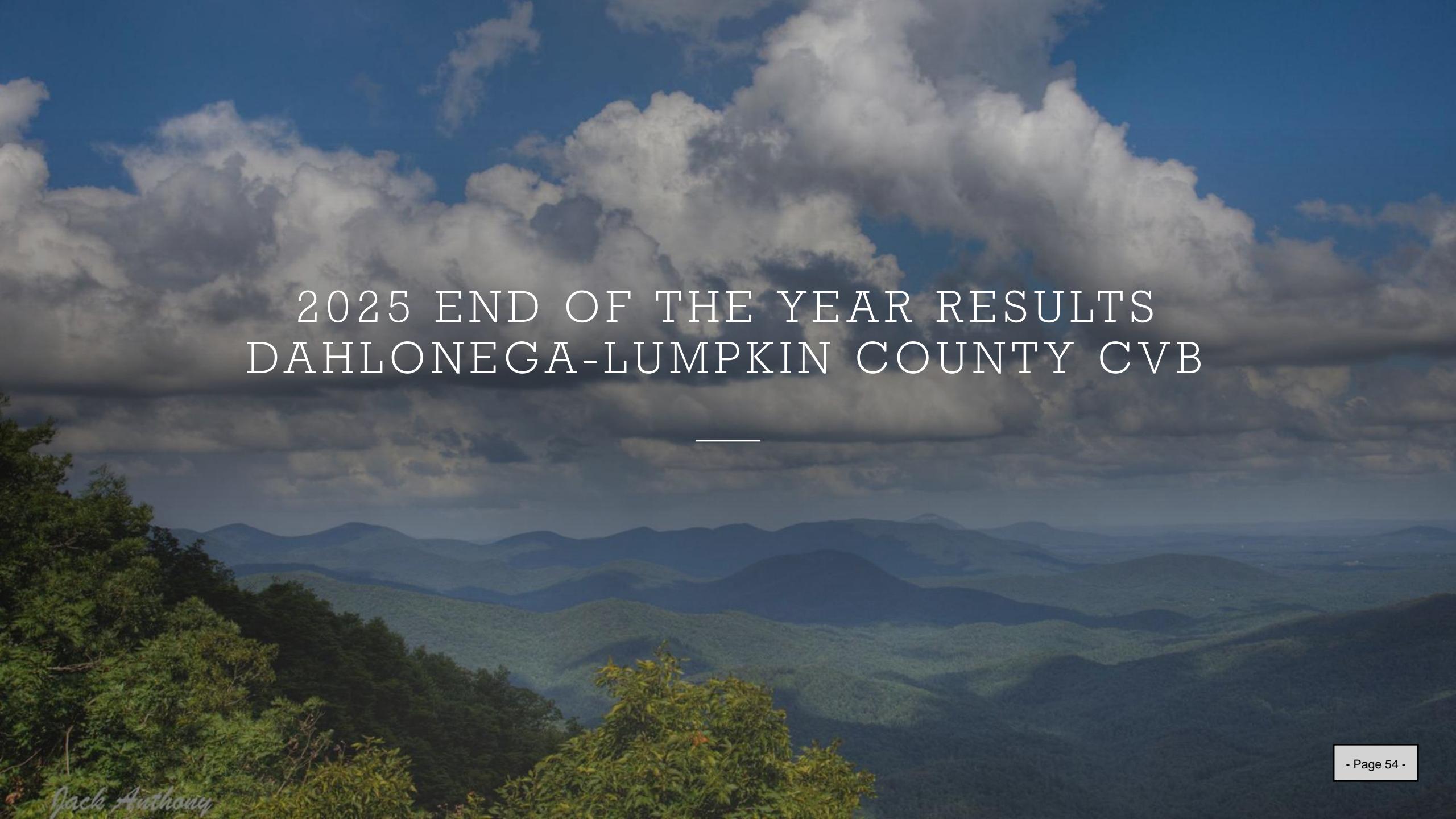
% of Out-of-State Visitors

73%

58% **14.7%**
Same time previous year Difference

Avg. Visitor Spend by Category





2025 END OF THE YEAR RESULTS DAHLONEGA-LUMPKIN COUNTY CVB

Jack Anthony

2025 OBJECTIVES

- ❑ To gain strategic insights into 2025 visitor patterns and their impact on Dahlonega & Lumpkin County.
- ❑ Continued to focus on Quality Visitors rather than Quantity of Visitors with our marketing efforts
- ❑ Create and implement 4 committees that will continue to help our marketing efforts
 - ❑ *Policies & Procedures, Welcoming our Guest, Film & Entertainment, and Community Outreach and Advocacy (COA)*
- ❑ Design and Launch new Website
- ❑ Increase our Social Media Presence and Followers

KEY INSIGHTS: VISITOR

25%

% of People that are Visitors

8% Decrease from previous year

18%

% of Spend from Visitors

4% Decrease from previous year

58%

% of Out-of State Visitors

3% Increase to previous year

- While visitor volume and spending shared a decline year over year, Dahlonega saw a positive shift toward high value out-of-state travelers. This will continue to grow during 2026

VISITOR CENTER (12/31/25)

- Saw 5.8% increase in our YoY Visitation (2025 vs 2024)
- Extended Hours during Holiday Season to 4 days versus 2 days

	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
January	7,984	9,090	9,250	7,899	8,464
February	8,483	10,466	7,958	9,673	6,760
March	17,122	12,413	19,928	15,585	11,492
April	14,366	16,059	15,040	16,810	12,460
May	14,544	14,104	16,677	15,378	15,966
June	14,801	15,895	15,674	14,330	16,457
July	17,828	17,447	19,265	18,019	20,089
August	14,195	9,994	12,449	14,722	13,604
September	13,901	11,524	13,711	14,375	15,393
October	23,102	22,655	26,852	18,192	25,900
November	20,870	20,781	21,412	8,256	21,319
December	34,482	29,751	36,027	26,423	31,046
YEAR END TOTAL	201,678	190,179	211,243	179,662	198,950

KEY INSIGHTS: STVR & LODGING

37%

Paid Occupancy

2% increase from previous year

\$283

Avg. Daily Rate

13% increase from previous year

\$104

RevPAR

\$14 increase from previous year

52.3K

Demand

1% increase from previous year

2.6 days

Avg. Length of Stay

No change from previous year

43 days

Avg. Booking Window

3 day decrease from previous year

\$14.8M

Revenue

\$1.8M increase from previous year

- Short-term vacation rentals in Dahlonega had a strong YoY revenue growth, demonstrating the health of Dahlonega's Vacation Rental Market.
- Visitors are planning trips on average of 6 weeks out and staying almost 3 days. (weekends)

KEY INSIGHTS: VISITOR IMPACT ON THE LOCAL ECONOMY



35%

% of Visitor Spend towards **Local Businesses**



32%

Share of **Restaurant** Spend from Visitors



36%

Share of **Retail** Spend from Visitors



47%

Share of **Arts, Entertainment & Attractions** Spend from Visitors



\$55

Avg. **Daily** Visitor Spend



\$49

Restaurant Average Daily Spend of Visitors



\$84

Retail Average Daily Spend of Visitors



\$90

Arts, Entertainment & Attractions Average Daily Spend of Visitors

KEY INSIGHTS: WHO ARE THE DAHLONEGA-LUMPKIN COUNTY VISITORS?



60%

are **45+** years old



51%

have an avg. household income **\$101k+**



62%

do not have children in the household



FY 25 HIGHLIGHTS

❖ Website Performance

- *653,357 Sessions // 1,878,629 Pageviews // 452,783 New Users*

❖ Public Relations

- *25,802,155,367 Impressions // \$724,678,314 Publicity Value*

❖ Discover Dahlonega - Social Media Platforms

- Overall: *19,809,019 Impressions // 656,945 Engagements // 11,558 post clicks*
- Audience: *170,113 Followers (FB, IG, TikTok) // Net Growth FY25 - 32,225*
- Video Views: *7,893,151*
- Published Posts: *1,401 (IG largest with 825)*



ANY QUESTIONS?


DISCOVER
DAHLONEGA



THE CITY OF DAHLONEGA

ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE

City Council Work Session
February 16, 2026



The Process of Updating Zoning



Recurring Themes

- General Code Format
- Housing Attainability
- Quality Design
- Central Business District
- Citywide Standards



Draft v1 Updates

98% Draft

General Code Format

- Reorganized for usability
- Consolidated similar provisions
- Reduced from 28 to 7 Articles
- Reduced *legalese*



93%
Technical Clean Ups



7%
Drill Down/Policy Updates

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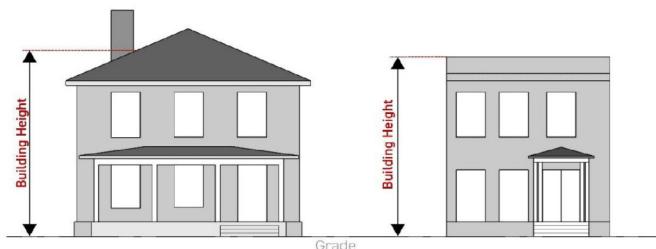
ARTICLE 2. RULES FOR ALL DISTRICTS

The rules in this Article apply to all zoning districts unless expressly stated otherwise.

Div. 2.1. Measurements and Exceptions

Sec. 2.1.1. Building Height

- A. Building height is the vertical distance measured from the grade to the highest point of the parapet or coping of a flat roof; to the decklines of a mansard roof; or to the mean height level between the eaves and ridge of a gable, hip, or gambrel roof.



- B. Building height does not include chimneys, smokestacks, church spires and steeples, domes, flag poles, public monuments, observation towers, water towers, non-commercial radio and television towers, electricity transmission towers, utility poles, and similar structures.

Sec. 2.1.2. Density

- A. Density is the number of principal dwelling units developed, or to be developed, per gross acre of land, or the gross square footage of a building per acre of land.
- B. Density does not include accessory dwelling units.
- C. When a district establishes a maximum density, it includes the total of principal dwellings dwelling units on the property, whether the same or different residential uses, unless otherwise specified. District minimum lot sizes may also further restrict the actual achievable density for certain uses, such as single-family detached dwellings.
- D. Density may not exceed the maximum density established by the district, unless otherwise specified.

Sec. 2.1.3. Floor Area

- A. Floor area is the sum of the gross horizontal areas of all stories of a building, measured from the exterior faces of the exterior walls or from the centerline of the party walls.

Added graphics

Consolidated definitions and standards

Added clear headers

Broke up long standards into smaller pieces

Div. 3.3. Industrial Districts

Sec. 3.3.1. I Industrial District

A. Purpose and Intent

The Industrial District is established with the purpose of reserving certain areas with relatively level topography, adequate water and sewerage facilities, and access to arterial streets for industrial operations, but where such areas' proximity to residential and other districts makes it desirable to limit industrial operations to those that are not objectionable by reason of the emission of noise, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors or radiation and that do not create fire or explosion hazards or other objectionable conditions. Uses within this district do not require substantial quantities of water for manufacturing operations and do not necessarily require rail, air and water transportation. Certain commercial uses having an open storage characteristic, or which are most appropriately located as neighbors of industrial uses, are also included within this district.

B. Lot Development Standards Excerpt Table

The following table provides excerpts of lot development standards that apply in the I district. If there is a discrepancy between the excerpt table and [Sec. 3.5.2. Comprehensive Lot Development Standards Table](#), the latter will apply.

Dimensional Standards	
Lot Size	21,780 sf. min.
Lot Width	100' min.
Setback Standards	
Front (arterial)	60' min.
Front (other street)	35' min.
Side	15' min. [note 1]
Rear	15' min. [note 1]
Height Standards	
Building height	35' max.
Residential Standards	
Dwelling Units Per Acre (multiple family units)	n/a
Floor area per dwelling unit	650 sf. min.
Table Notes:	
1. An additional setback and buffer may be required in accordance with Section 2102 .	

C. Permitted Uses

See Article 4, Use Provisions.

Avoid duplicate text

Added tables when possible

Housing Attainability

Sec. 3.1.2. R-1A Small Lot Single-Family

- Reduced lot and house sizes
 - 5,000 SF minimum lot area
 - 40' min. lot width
 - Reduced setbacks
 - 1,000 SF min. floor area
- Allowed by rezoning only



Housing Attainability

Sec. 4.4.1.C. Cottage Courts

(R-2, R-3, B-2, CBD)

- 3-12 detached units
- Fee-simple sale
- Open space and porch standards
- Density per district regulations
(5-8 units/acre)



Housing Attainability

Sec. 4.4.2. Group Living

- Updated to match State of Georgia standards
 - General supervised group living
 - General unsupervised group living
 - Maternity supportive housing



Housing Attainability

Sec. 4.8.2.B. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

(R-1, R-1A)

- 300 to 800 sf. in area
- Attached or detached
- Max. 2 bedrooms, 2 occupants



Courtesy KUA

- Page 73 -



Quality Design

Div. 2.4. Architectural Standards

- Materials for all uses
 - No EIFS (fake stucco), metal buildings, plywood
 - Finished foundations
- Single-family and duplexes
 - Pitched roof
 - Limits on driveways width and parking in front of houses

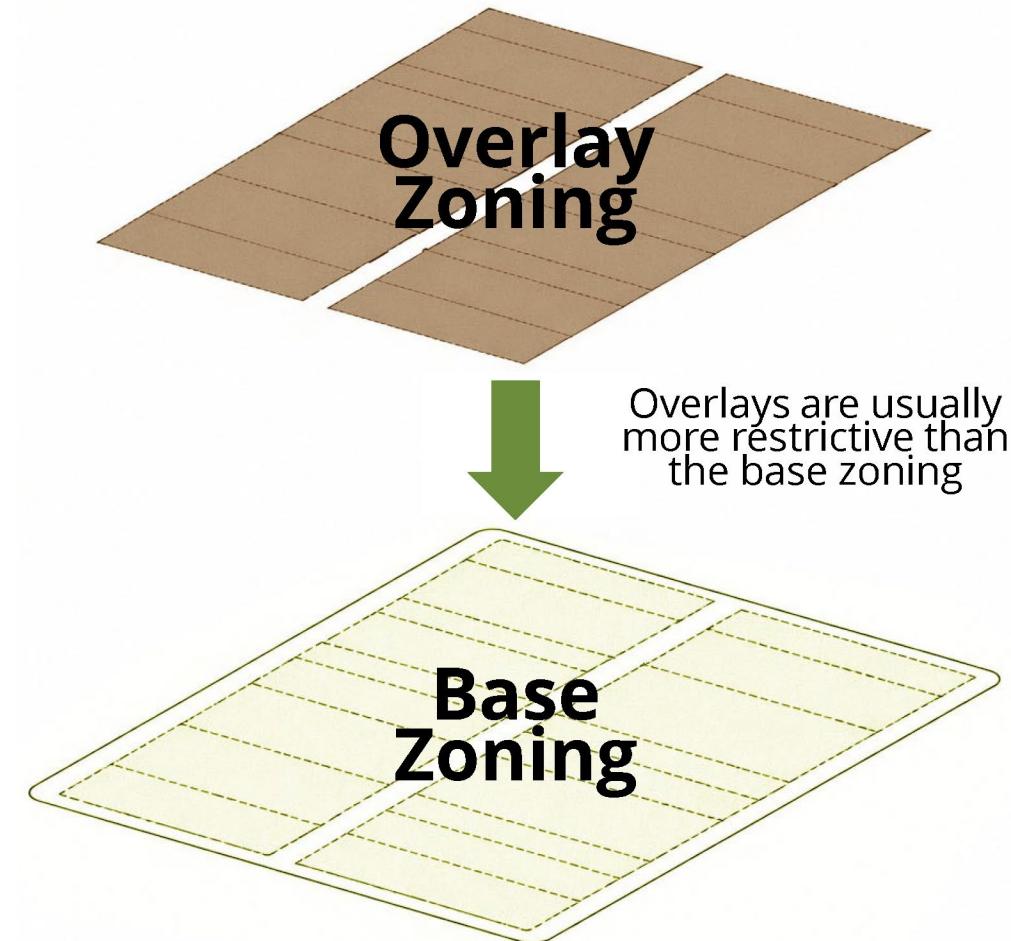


Quality Design

Sec. 3.4.2. GWO Gateway Overlay

- Major corridors into town
- Prohibited uses?
- Lighting standards
- Screening standards
- Landscaping standards
- Building massing and style

How Overlays Work



Quality Design

Div. 5.1. Parking and Loading

Div. 5.3. Inter-Parcel Access

- Parking lot layout and circulation standards
- Drive-throughs standards
- Shared driveways





Quality Design

Sec. 5.4.9. Screening of Dumpsters

- Placed in the side or rear
- Opaque fence or wall with gate
- 6' min. height



Quality Design

Div. 5.4. Buffer, Landscape, Screening, and Open Space

- No invasive species
 - For required landscaping
- Uniform planting standard
 - Plant materials
 - Maintenance
 - Trees in landscape strips (30' o.c.)



Quality Design

Sec. 5.4.10. Open Space

- Open space standards
 - Greenspaces
 - Amenity space
 - Percent varies by size
- Required in several districts
 - R-1A (new)
 - R-2, R-3
 - B-1, B-2, O-1



Central Business District

Sec. 2.1.4. Upper Story Residential Incentive (CBD only)

- For units over commercial
- No numeric density cap
- No minimum unit size for buildings 50+ years old



Note: Photo to illustrate concept only

Central Business District

Sec. 4.4.1.G Live-Work

(B-3, CBD)

- Nonresidential uses on ground story only
- Max. 2 employees, 5 customers
- Equipment and storage standards



Citywide Standards

Article 4. Use Provisions

- Use table
- Use groups
- Use standards

	P = Allowed Use	C = Allowed by Conditional Use Permit				* = Use Standards Apply				-- = Use Not Allowed	
		Residential Districts				Mixed-Use and Business Districts				Ind'l Dist.	
USE CATEGORY	R-1	R-1A	R-2	R-3	B-1	B-2	B-3*	CBD	O-1*	I-1*	Definition/Standards
Specific use											
General unsupervised group living (11 or more residents)	--	--	C*	P*	--	--	--	--	P*	--	Sec. 4.4.2.B
Maternity supportive housing	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	--	Sec. 4.4.2.C
PUBLIC AND INSTITUTIONAL USES											
CIVIC USES											Sec. 4.5.1
Community center	P	P	P	P				P	P	P	Sec. 4.5.1.A
Cultural facility, private	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	--	--	Sec. 4.5.1.B
Place of worship	P*	P*	P*	P*	P	P	P	P	P*	--	Sec. 4.5.1.C
Public use	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	--	Sec. 4.5.1.D
PARKS AND OPEN SPACE											Sec. 4.5.2
General parks and open space	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Sec. 4.5.2.A
Cemetery	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	Sec. 4.5.2.B
PRIVATE EDUCATION USES											Sec. 4.5.3
General private education	P	P	P	P	--	--	--	--	P	--	Sec. 4.5.3.A
College, private	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	--	Sec. 4.5.3.B
Commercial school	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	P	P	--	Sec. 4.5.3.C
Day care center (up to 12 children)	--	--	P*	P*	P	P	--	P	P*	--	Sec. 4.5.3.D
Day care center (13 or more children)	--	--	C*	C*	P	P	--	P	P*	--	Sec. 4.5.3.D
UTILITY USES											Sec. 4.5.4
General Utility	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	--	Sec. 4.5.4.A
Radio and television broadcasting tower	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	P	Sec. 4.5.4.B
COMMERCIAL USES											
ADULT ENTERTAINMENT ESTABLISHMENT											
ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION USES											Sec. 4.6.2
General indoor recreation and entertainment	--	--	--	--	--	P	--	P	--	--	Sec. 4.6.2.A
General outdoor recreation and entertainment	--	--	--	--	--	P	--	--	--	--	Sec. 4.6.2.B
Club, private	--	--	--	--	P*	P*	P	P	P*	--	Sec. 4.6.2.C
Convention hall or event facility	--	--	--	--	--	P	P	P	--	--	Sec. 4.6.2.D
Race track	--	--	--	--	--	P*	--	--	--	--	Sec. 4.6.2.E

Citywide Standards

Article 4. Use Provisions

- Definitions and standards
 - Hookah or vapor consumption
 - Artisan manufacturing
 - Data centers
 - Purpose built student housing



Citywide Standards

Div. 7.2. Defined Terms

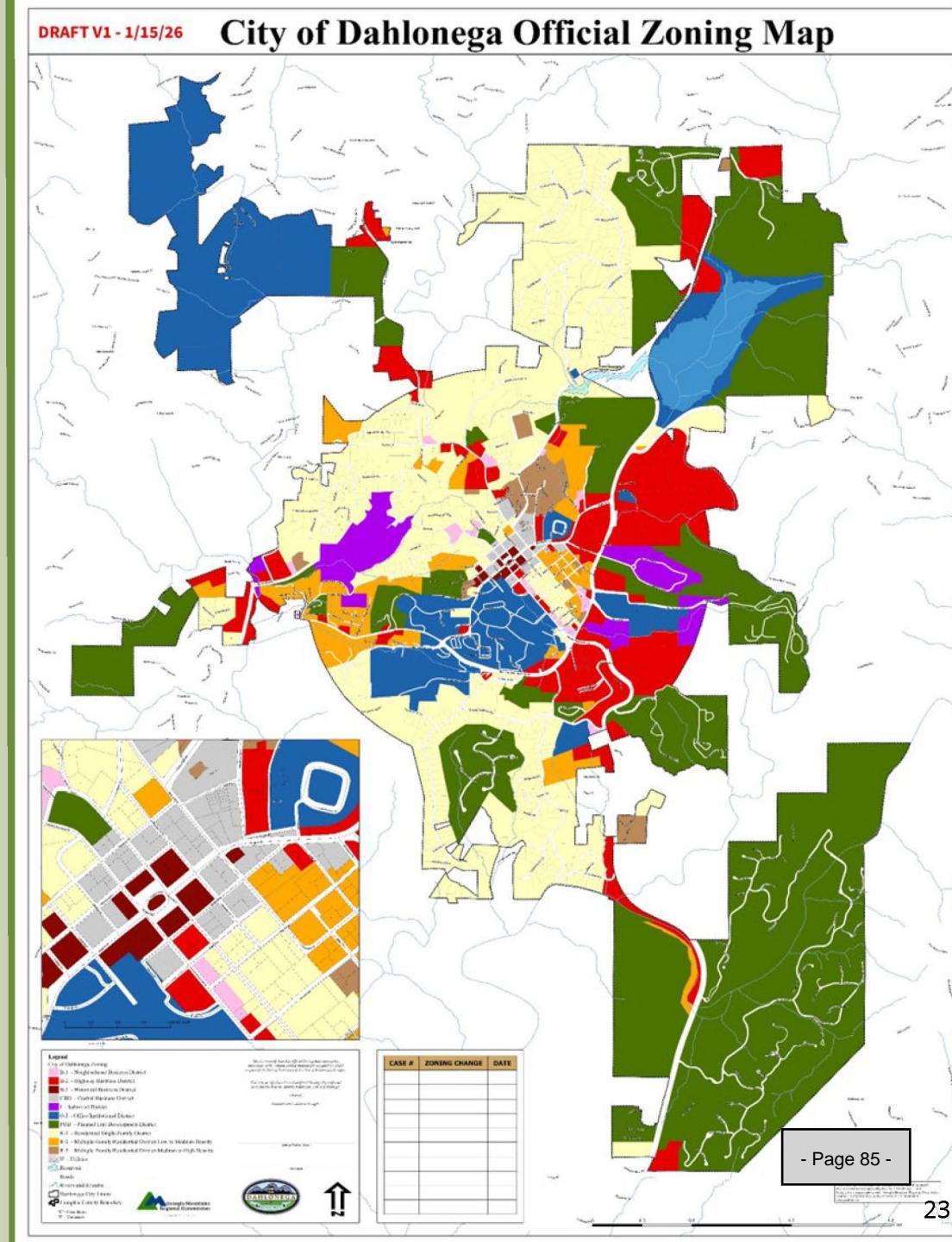
- Definition of “family”
 - Up to 2 “persons” (all related individuals count as 1 “person”); or
 - Up to 6 developmentally disabled persons and up to 2 supervisors or surrogate parents (must be licensed with the State)
 - Does not apply to “purpose-built student housing”



Other Standards

Official Zoning Map

- Includes recent rezonings
- Includes new overlay
- No other changes



Other Standards

Development Regulations

Sec. 7.12. Sidewalks

- Citywide standards
 - Sidewalks and street trees
- Relief available
 - Topo, anticipated use, existing buildings, etc.





Thank you!

Discussion



Introduction

The City of Dahlonega is making targeted updates to its Zoning Ordinance to **improve clarity, expand housing opportunities, enhance quality design, and support other local priorities**, while preserving the City's historic character and sense of place. After a review of Dahlonega's key plans and regulations, including the existing zoning ordinance, the 2022 Comprehensive Plan, and the 2023 Housing Needs Assessment, which highlighted gaps between community goals and zoning regulations, the following proposed changes were identified. Stakeholder interviews, City Council work sessions, and guidance from a steering committee have also helped shape the proposed changes.



What's Changing?

Most of the proposed updates focus on making the code easier to read and use. These include adding graphics and tables, improving organization, and improving clarity. About 93% of the revisions are these types of "technical clean-ups," and they do not significantly change the rules that apply to development.



The remaining 7% of updates include more specific changes to standards. These targeted updates reflect community priorities identified throughout the update process.

A summary of both types of changes is provided below, organized by theme.

Modernized Organization & Format

- Reorganized for usability and consolidated similar provisions
- Reduced from 28 Articles to 7
- Reduced legal complexity ("legalese") and added clear tables, graphics, and headers

Housing Attainability Updates

- New R-1A zoning district
Small-lot single-family homes with 5,000 SF min. lot area, 40' min. width, reduced setbacks. Available by rezoning only.



The proposed R-1A district would allow narrower lots and shallower setbacks than the existing R-1 district.

- **New cottage courts standards**
3-12 cottages with a common open space. May be sold fee-simple but will typically require a homeowners association.
- **Updated group living standards to match State standards**
- **New accessory dwelling unit standards**
300-800 SF unit with up to 2 bedrooms that is accessory to a single-family house. Only allowed in R-1/R-1A.

Quality Design Updates

- **New citywide standards**
No exterior building walls of EIFS (fake stucco), metal, plywood. Finished foundations.
- **New one- and two-family standards**
Pitched roofs. Limits on driveways width and parking in front of houses.
- **New Gateway Overlay (GWO)**
Along major corridors: lighting, screening, landscaping, building style, etc.
- **Updated parking, drive-through, and access standards**
- **New dumpster screening standards**
Located in side or rear. 6' opaque fence or wall.
- **Updated landscaping standards**
No invasive species for required landscaping (still allowed for non-required). Uniform planting and maintenance standards.
- **New open space requirements**
10-20% of site in R-1A, R-2/R-3, B-1/B-2, O-I. May vary by site acreage.

Central Business District Updates

- **New upper story residential incentive**
Encourages housing above commercial; no numeric density cap; no minimum unit size for buildings 50+ years old.

- **New live-work standards**
Non-residential activity in a dwelling. Ground-floor only; max. 2 employees and 5 customers.

Other Citywide Standard Updates

- **Legal updates**
Per recent changes in Georgia law.
- **New, modernized use provisions**
Consolidated use table, use groups, and standards.
- **Assorted new use definitions and standards**
Hookah/vapor consumption, artisan manufacturing, data centers, purpose-built student housing, etc.
- **Updated definition of "family"**
Up to 2 "persons" (relatives count as 1 "person"); or up to 6 developmentally disabled persons + up to 2 supervisors or surrogate parents (must be State-licensed). Excludes "purpose-built student housing."

Other Updates

- **Updated Official Zoning Map**
With recent rezonings and a new GWO.
- **Updated sidewalk standards**
Citywide sidewalk and street tree requirements with relief options. Located in Appendix A Development Regulations.

What's NOT changing

The update is not a complete rewrite of Dahlonega's zoning standards.

No citywide rezoning is proposed, and all existing zoning districts and development patterns will remain in place.

The City is not changing the community's historic character or sense of place, but rather improving how the ordinance is organized and making targeted adjustments where appropriate.



City Council Agenda Memo

DATE: 2/9/2026

TITLE: Removal of Island at Crown Mountain Place/Morrison Moore Parkway

PRESENTED BY: Allison Martin, City Manager & Mark Buchanan City Engineer/Public Works Director

PRIORITY Strategic Priority - Effectively Manage Growth

AGENDA ITEM DESCRIPTION

Removal of Island at Crown Mountain Place/Morrison Moore Parkway

HISTORY/PAST ACTION

The island was installed by the Georgia Department of Transportation in an effort to manage traffic flow in and around the intersection of Crown Mountain Place and Morrison Moore Parkway. They have offered to remove the island to allow additional stacking capacity in the lanes. They recommend removal and thermoplastic pavement marking encouraging motorists to not block eastbound Morrison Moore traffic when queueing for the traffic signal. This will allow left hand turns from Morrison Moore West onto Crown Mountain Place

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Unknown – pending council direction

RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation of staff is to explore the realignment of Crown Mountain Place, work with GDOT to remove the island and update striping in the area to allow for greater stacking capacity in the lanes.

SUGGESTED MOTIONS

n/a

ATTACHMENTS

Google Earth & Qpublic images of the location.





City Council Agenda Memo

DATE: 2/9/2026

TITLE: 0018256 Yahoola Bridge Replacement - Bridge Beautification

PRESENTED BY: Allison Martin, City Manager & Mark Buchanan, City Engineer/Public Works Director

PRIORITY Strategic Priority - Infrastructure

AGENDA ITEM DESCRIPTION

0018256 Yahoola Bridge Replacement - Bridge Beautification

HISTORY/PAST ACTION

The council previously approved adding bridge beautification and lighting when GDOT replaces bridges inside the city limits. We now have the costs of the bridge beautification for the Yahoola Bridge project to review with the council. GDOT also priced treating the slope repair project walls with the same form liner/treatment for a cohesive look to the area. This cost does not include bridge lighting as that falls outside the scope of the bridge replacement project. GDOT cannot proceed further with their project until the city decides on whether to proceed with the form liners and color treatment. A point of consideration is that the city has to fund the realignment of Golden Ave as part of the bridge replacement project along with costs to upgrade utility lines on the bridge.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This project would be paid for by TSPLOST funds should council choose to proceed.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff supports the council's decision regarding this project.

SUGGESTED MOTIONS

n/a

ATTACHMENTS

GDOT Cost Estimate, photo of bridge lighting



Bridge and Wall Aesthetics Cost Estimates

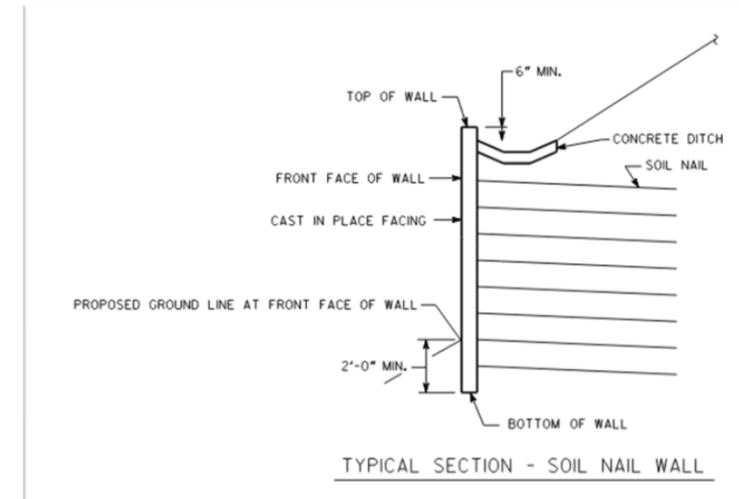
0018256 – SR 60 over Yahoola Creek

**0019355 – SR 60 Slope Repair from Bear Paw Ridge to
Yahoola Creek**

Project Information

0018256 – Bridge and Soil Nail Walls

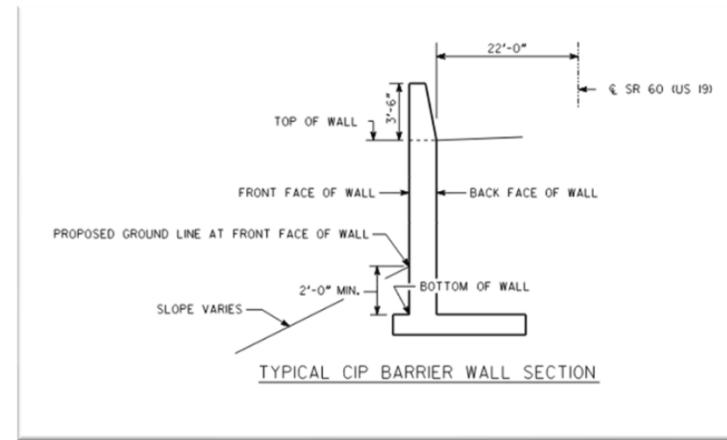
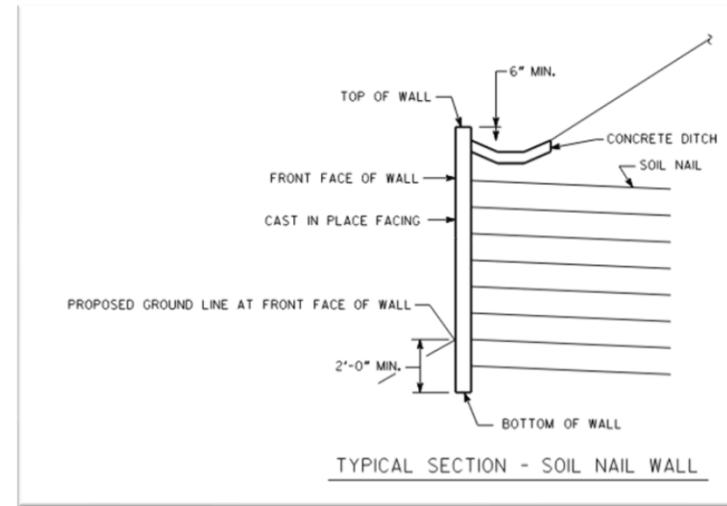
- Bridge Parapet (Formliner on Traffic Face, Both Sides)
 - 3'-6" Height
 - 1'-2.5" Width
 - 390' Bridge Length
- Wall 1 Facing
 - 22.26' Average Height
 - 1'-1.5" Concrete Facing Width
 - 525' Wall Length
- Wall 2 Facing
 - 24.79' Average Height
 - 1'-1.5" Concrete Facing Width
 - 355' Wall Length
- Wall 3 Facing
 - 18.4' Average Height
 - 1'-1.5" Concrete Facing Width
 - 411' Wall Length



Project Information

0019355 – Walls

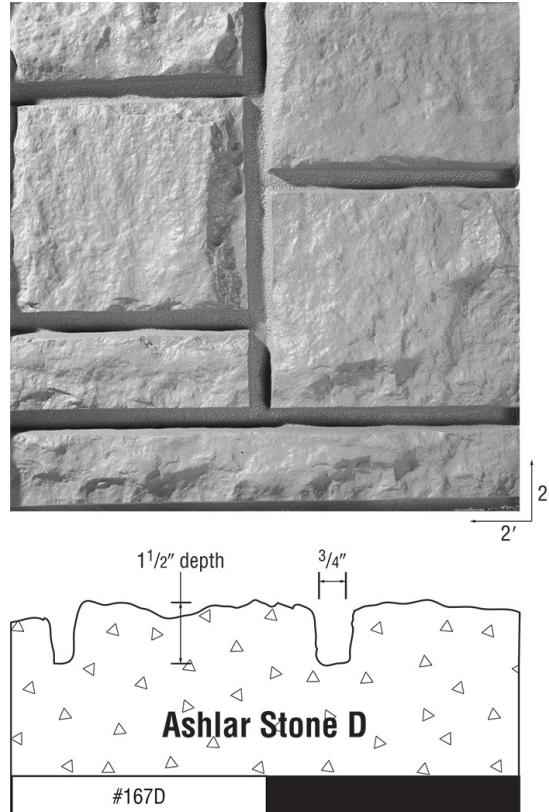
- Wall 1 Soil Nail Wall Facing
 - 21.32' Average Height
 - 1'-1.5" Concrete Facing Width
 - 554' Wall Length
- Wall 2 – Type 2S – Formliner on barrier only, color full stem
 - 3.5' Barrier Height
 - 1'-9.5" Maximum Width
 - 1664' Wall Length
- Wall 3 Soil Nail Wall Facing
 - 14.29' Average Height
 - 1'-1.5" Concrete Facing Width
 - 613' Wall Length
- Wall 4 Soil Nail Wall Facing
 - 22.14' Average Height
 - 1'-1.5" Concrete Facing Width
 - 534' Wall Length



Aesthetic Options - Formliner

Scott System Urethane Formliner: #167D Ashlar Stone D

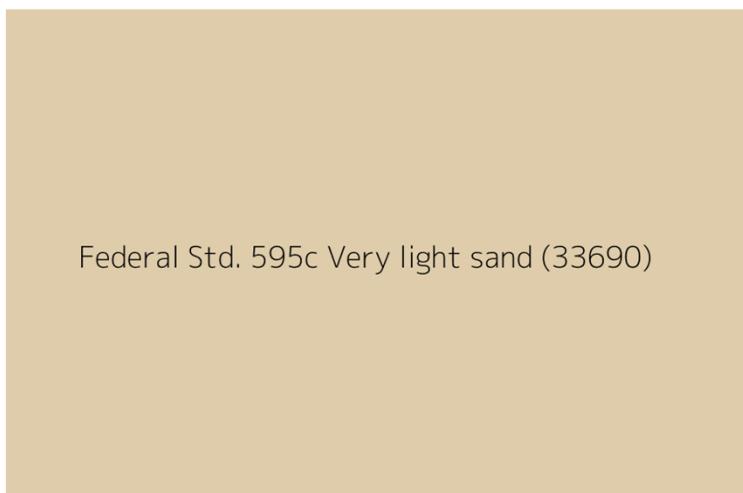
- Cost Range: \$8-\$10 per square foot



Aesthetic Options - Coloring

Federal Color HEX Code 33690

- Staining
 - \$10 per Square Foot
 - Surface Treatment
 - Generally permanent, but may dull over time
 - A sleeker, less “concrete”-looking finish
- Painting
 - \$2-\$3 per Square Foot
 - Surface Treatment
 - Will need to be reapplied every 5-10 years
 - Capable of similar-looking finish to staining, depending on paint type used
- Dye
 - \$100 per Cubic Yard
 - Applied to entire concrete mass, cannot be applied to specific locations on wall height without a joint
 - Generally permanent, but may dull over time
 - Will typically still “look like concrete”
 - Finish can be inconsistent across the walls due to variations in concrete mix



Federal Std. 595c Very light sand (33690)

Cost Estimates

0018256 – Bridge Parapets Only

Aesthetic Treatment	Cost Range
Formliner Only	\$22,000 - \$28,000
Formliner + Stain	\$49,000 - \$55,000
Formliner + Paint	\$28,000 - \$36,000
Formliner + Dye	\$34,000 - \$40,000

0018256 – Walls Only

Aesthetic Treatment	Cost Range
Formliner Only	\$225,000 - \$281,000
Formliner + Stain	\$505,000 - \$561,000
Formliner + Paint	\$281,000 - \$365,000
Formliner + Dye	\$341,000 - \$398,000

Cost Estimates

0018256 – Bridge Parapets and Walls

Aesthetic Treatment	Cost Range
Formliner Only	\$247,000 - \$309,000
Formliner + Stain	\$554,000 - \$614,000
Formliner + Paint	\$309,000 - \$401,000
Formliner + Dye	\$375,000 - \$438,000

0019355 – All Walls

Aesthetic Treatment	Cost Range
Formliner Only	\$306,000 - \$382,000
Formliner + Stain	\$863,000 - \$939,000
Formliner + Paint	\$417,000 - \$549,000
Formliner + Dye	\$588,000 - \$665,000

Cost Estimates

0018256 and 0019355 – Total - Bridge and All Walls

Aesthetic Treatment	Cost Range
Formliner Only	\$553,000 - \$691,000
Formliner + Stain	\$1,417,000 - \$1,553,000
Formliner + Paint	\$726,000 - \$950,000
Formliner + Dye	\$963,000 - \$1,103,000

