

**Action Requested/Required:**

- ☐ Vote/Action Requested
☒ Discussion or Presentation Only
☐ Public Hearing
Report Date: _____
Hearing Date: _____
Voting Date: _____

Department: Administration **Presenter(s) & Title:** Billy Peppers
City Manager

Agenda Item Title:

Discussion of a Request from Canton First United Methodist Church to Consider Waiver of Fees for a Construction Project

Summary:

Canton First United Methodist Church is currently working on an expansion project to its campus at 930 Lower Scott Mill Road. The project includes the construction of a 10,000-square foot expansion for classrooms and space for the children's and student ministry programs. The Church is requesting the Council consider a reduction or waiver of permit and inspection fees related to the project. Land Disturbance and Review Fees total \$3,404.75, with \$2,922.50 paid to date. Building Fees total \$33,923.26. Permit fees associated with a retaining wall total \$1,991.72. Total unpaid fees on the project total \$36,397.23. The Council cannot waive Impact Fees, totaling \$4,492.37, without replacing those impact fees with another general fund source.

Staff will present history on other like projects.

Budget Implications:

Budgeted? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

Total Cost of Project: _____ Check if Estimated ☐

Fund Source: General Fund ☐ Water & Sewer ☐ Sales Tax ☐ Other: _____

Staff Recommendations:

Discussion only at this time.

Reviews:

Has this been reviewed by Management and Legal Counsel, if required? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Attachments:

Letter of Request from Canton First Methodist Church.



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July 29, 2026

Mayor Bill Grant and Members of the Canton City Council
Canton, Georgia

Dear Mayor Grant and Members of the City Council,

On behalf of the congregation of Canton First Methodist Church, I want to express our sincere appreciation for your faithful service to the City of Canton and your commitment to helping our community flourish. We recognize the many responsibilities you carry, and we are grateful for your leadership.

Canton First Methodist Church is currently constructing a **10,000-square-foot addition** to our campus. This expansion is intended to provide much-needed classroom space and, most importantly, to accommodate the continued growth of our children's and student ministries. It represents an investment in the next generation and in the families who call Canton home.

As we have moved through the permitting process, we recently learned that the City's permitting fees for this project currently total **\$36,064.01** and could increase. While we fully understand the need for permitting requirements and appreciate the work performed by City staff, this fee presents a significant financial hardship for our church as we seek to be wise stewards of the resources God has entrusted to us.

For more than **184 years**, Canton First Methodist Church has been woven into the fabric of this community. Since our founding, we have sought to be more than a place of worship—we have endeavored to be a faithful partner in strengthening Canton and Cherokee County. Today, our church continues that commitment by serving **140 preschool families** like we have for the last 32 years, opening our campus to **40 community organizations** that regularly use our facilities, contributing **hundreds of volunteer hours** each year through local mission projects, and investing **tens of thousands of dollars annually** in outreach ministries that care for our neighbors. We are deeply committed to continuing this legacy of service for generations to come.

This expansion is a continuation of that commitment. The additional space will allow us to better serve the growing number of children, students, and families who participate in our ministries each week, providing safe, welcoming environments where young people can learn, grow, build healthy relationships, and develop into compassionate, contributing members of our community.

Importantly, this project is not a commercial development that will create significant new demands on City infrastructure or municipal services. Rather, it is an investment in community life that will continue to provide lasting public benefit through programs that strengthen families, support children and youth, encourage volunteerism, care for those in need, and foster the civic and spiritual health of our community.

With these considerations in mind, we respectfully request that the Mayor and City Council consider **waiving or substantially reducing the permitting fees** associated with this project. We believe such consideration would represent an investment in a longstanding community partner whose mission has consistently aligned with the well-being of the citizens of Canton. A reduction in these fees would allow us to direct more of our financial resources toward the ministries and outreach efforts that continue to serve our city every day.

We make this request with humility and appreciation, recognizing that such decisions require careful consideration. We would be grateful for the opportunity to answer any questions, provide additional information, or meet with you if that would be helpful. We respectfully ask that this request be considered at the Council's earliest convenience.

Thank you for your continued leadership and your service to the citizens of Canton. We look forward to continuing our partnership with the city as we work together to strengthen our community for generations to come.

Respectfully,



Rev. Dr. Kenny Ott
Lead Pastor
Canton First Methodist Church