



Proposed 2026 Annual Budget for the Town of Talking Rock

PRESENTED BY

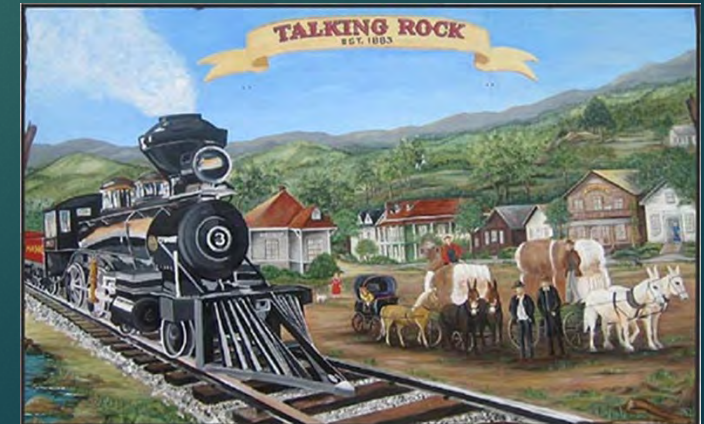
MAYOR JAMES W. BRYANT, JR.

13 NOVEMBER 2025

FY2025 Year in Review

Accomplishments

- Drainage System for the Park - \$2.6K
- Shed Demo - \$3K
- Asphalt install and repair - \$29.2K
- Train Car Restroom restoration - \$14.8K
- Building Material for Train Car Restrooms - \$4.8K
- Tree Removal - \$1.8K
- Town Hall Propane Tank - \$3.5K
- Installation for Propane Tank - \$1.1K
- Town of Talking Rock Billboard setup fee - \$2.7K
- Land Survey for Park and Town - \$1.2K
- Front Entrance of Town Hall - \$16K (ARP Funding)
- Directional Signs for the Town of Talking Rock - \$500
- Talking Rock Easter Egg Hunt
- Farmers Market
- Bronco Stampede
- 31st Annual Heritage Days Festival
- Groundbreaking of the new Fire Station



FY2026 Year Outlook

- No significant increase in non-property tax revenue
- Milage Rate remains the same as of 2025
- Town of Talking Rock continues to grow
- Operation of the new Fire Station
- Restoration Project for the School House museum



Goals – FY2026 Budget

Deliver Core Functions:

- Develop a progressive, responsible, and responsive budget
- Respond to service expectation of the community
- Address unmet needs and respond rapidly for the community

Balanced Budget:

- Maintain adequate undesignated fund balances
- Rebuild stable funding for capital improvements
- Project revenue and expenses to prevent supplemental needs

City Manager Efficiency Insights

- **Insurance Premium Tax:**

- Our office identified that the town should have received yearly collections of this tax.
- It was confirmed that the process was initiated in 2023 but was not completed, nor paid out.
- Our office completed the process in 2025, resulting in receiving \$10K
- The tax is based on the size of our population

- **Ellijay Telephone Company (ETC) Tax:**

- ETC was charging monthly tax on our telephone and internet services
- Our office identified that the town should not pay for any taxes
- ETC reimbursed the town for 3 years, resulting in \$2K

City Manager Efficiency Insights

- **Insurance for the Town of Talking Rock:**

- Our office identified that we were using a private insurance company.
- Our office researched and found an insurance company that covers only government municipalities
- Georgia Interlocal Risk Management Agency (GIRMA)
- This change saves the town \$4K a year

- **Georgia Power of Street Lights:**

- Our office identified that our monthly bill was higher than expected
- We determined that Georgia Power was charging the town for lights we did not own
- Georgia Power reimbursed the town for excess charges for 2025, resulting in a lower monthly payment (1K total)

City Manager Efficiency Insights

- **Franchise Fees:**

- The Town of Talking Rock is authorized to received franchise fees from 3 companies
 - ETC
 - Georgia Power
 - Amicalola EMC
- Our office researched and identified that the town was only receiving fees from Georgia Power
- Our office contacted both ETC and Amicalola EMC through Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) to apply for Franchise Fee Agreements
- The town will receive reimbursement fees for 3 previous years (Amount to be determined)

City Manager Efficiency Insights



Interest on Bank Accounts:

- Our office identified that we have never received any interest on any of our bank accounts
- We researched and voted on changing our bank accounts to Renasant Bank gave us the best interest rate
- Starting in 2026, the town will receive interest on all accounts, based on 2025 account it would have been approximately \$14K

FY2026 Goals

- Pedestrian Crossings on Main Street
- Asphalt Installations and repairs for town roads and parking lots
- Repairs for Rail Cars currently being leased
- Park Improvements such as adequate sidewalks, benches and children's activities
- Restoration of School House Museum
- Sidewalks and Street Lights
- Town Of Talking Rock Sign
- Increase activities for community
- Tourism
- Event Schedule

Expenses - Departments

- **Administration - \$4,800.00**

- Mayor & 5-member council
- No increase from 2025
- Mayor - \$150.00 a month
- Council Members - \$50.00 a month

- **Town Clerk - \$40,800.00**

- Full Time Position
- \$20.00 an hour for a 40-hour week
- No Overtime
- \$200.00 Monthly Compensation for Medical Expenses

- **Maintenance Contract - \$24,000.00**

- Monthly Service Contract for \$2000.00 a month, paid by-weekly
- 1 Year Contract

- **Cleaning Services**

- Contract to clean Town Hall
- \$150.00 a month

- **Legal Services - \$6,000.00**

- Purposed budget for 2026
- As needed for council meetings
- Any additional unidentified support



Operating Budget (Last 3 Years)



2023 - \$107.5K

2024 - \$123.8K

2025 - \$173.8K



Expense Summary Proposed for FY2026 “Town Hall”

"Town Hall"	2025 Operating Budget	2025 "Proposed" Operating Budget	Notes
Maintenance & Repairs	\$20,000.00	\$15,000.00	Decrease
Maintenance Contract	\$24,000.00	\$24,000.00	
Town Clerk	\$40,800.00	\$41,952.00	Recommended 3% annual increase
Council Compensation	\$4,800.00	\$4,800.00	
Telephone	\$1,700.00	\$1,700.00	
Power	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	
Propane*	\$3,067.86	\$4,200.00	Increase
Water	\$532.00	\$532.00	
Audit*	\$2,500.00	\$3,500.00	Increase

"Town Hall"	2025 Operating Budget	2026 “Proposed” Operating Budget	Notes
Membership Dues*	\$700.00	\$1,500.00	Virus Protection, GMA Dues, Pickens County Library Fee, Various Dues
Advertising	\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00	Decrease
Office Supplies	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	
Legal & Professional Fees	\$5,500.00	\$6,000.00	Increase
Training	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	
Insurance*	\$7,000.00	\$7,200.00	Increase/New Company
Postage	\$200.00	\$200.00	
Awards & Recognitions	\$2,300.00	\$3,000.00	Increase

"Town Hall"	2025 Operating Budget	2026 "Proposed" Operating Budget	Notes
Railroad Lease	\$400.00	\$400.00	
Septic Services	\$1,200.00	\$1,200.00	
Cleaning Services	\$1,800.00	\$1,800.00	
Storage Unit	\$1,200.00	\$1,440.00	\$120.00 a month
Computer Programs (New)		\$300.00	Licensee and Virus Protection
Miscellaneous (New)		\$1,000.00	
Payroll Expense (New)		\$528.00	ADP charges \$44.00 a month
Travel (New)		\$100.00	

Building Inspections

- Building Inspections both Town Fees and Collections cover both 2024 and 2025
- In 2024 the town paid \$7,362.50 and collected \$20,370.54
- In 2025 the town paid \$9,262.50 and collected \$11,050.32
- Combined paid was \$16,625.00
- Combined collected was \$31,420.86
- Revenue for the town was \$14,795.86

Town Hall
FY2026
Proposed Budget
\$129,852.00



Expense Summary Proposed for FY2026 “Road Maintenance”

“Road Maintenance”	2025 Operating Budget	2026 “Proposed” Operating Budget	Notes
Streetlights & Power	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	
Maintenance & Repairs*	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	LMIG was used in 2025
Street Supplies (New)		\$1,000.00	



Road Maintenance FY2026

Proposed Budget
\$6,500.00



Expense Summary Proposed for FY2026 “Sanitation Services”

"Sanitation Services"	2025 Operating Budget	2026 "Proposed" Operating Budget	Notes
Dumpster (Waste Pro) 8 Yard Dumpsters (2 Each)	\$7,319.88	\$7,116.00	New Company to avoid overages
Trash Pickup Services (J&S Disposal)	\$4,392.00	\$4,000.00	\$3,840 a year currently

Sanitation Services
FY2026
Proposed Budget
\$11,116.00



Expense Summary Proposed for FY2026 “Park Services”

"Park Services"	2025 Operating Budget	2026 "Proposed" Operating Budget	Notes
Water	\$500.00	\$500.00	
Power	\$2,100.00	\$2,100.00	
Maintenance & Improvements	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	
Septic Services	\$500.00	\$500.00	
Vehicle Maintenance (Gator & Lawn Mower)	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	
Fuel Cost	\$1,000.00	\$500.00	Decrease
Park Supplies (New)		\$1,500.00	

Park Services
FY2026
Proposed Budget
\$9,600.00



Expense Summary Proposed for FY2026 “Train Car Support”

“Train Car Support”	2025 Operating Budget	2026 “Proposed” Operating Budget	Notes
Water	\$600.00	\$600.00	
Power	\$2,200.00	\$2,200.00	
Maintenance & Improvements	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	
Septic Services	\$500.00	\$500.00	



Train Car Support FY2026

Proposed Budget
\$8,300.00



Expense Summary Proposed for FY2026 “Tourism”

"Tourism"	2025 Operating Budget	2026 "Proposed" Operating Budget	Notes
Heritage Days Festival	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	
Website Services	\$3,200.00	\$1,800.00	\$450 quarterly
Video Services (Meetings)	\$600.00	\$1,200.00	\$100 a meeting
Various Events (TBD)	\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00	Decrease

Tourism
FY2026
Proposed Budget
\$5,000.00

Town of Talking Rock
Total Operating Proposed
FY2026 Budget
\$170,386.00*

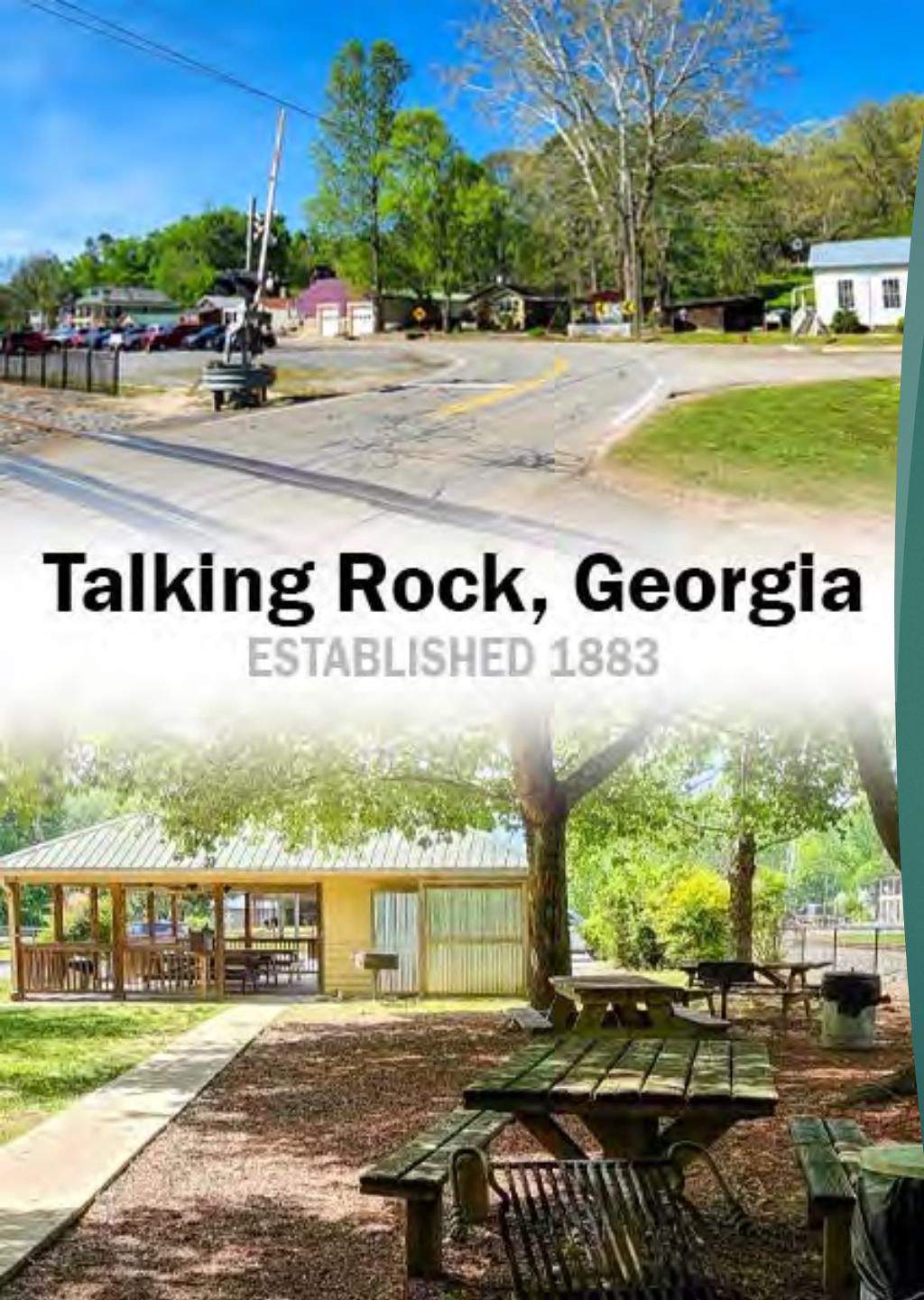
*** This proposed budget is less than the 2025 budget**

Projected Revenue for FY2026

- Leasing for Caboose (Storage for Talking Rock Brewery)
- Leasing for Train Cars (Brewery & Box Car Grill)
- Rental of Park Pavilion
- Town Hall Community Room Rental
- Vendor Booth Rental for Various Events
- Sponsorship for Various Events
- Monthly Tax Collection (Average is \$15K monthly)
- SPLOST (Average is \$1.7K monthly)
- LOST (Average is \$10.9K monthly)
- Alcohol License
- Building Permits
- Business License
- Insurance Premium Tax
- Alcohol Excise Tax
- Franchise Tax
- Property Transfer Tax
- Intangible Tax
- Title Ad Valorem (TAVT) Tax
- Mobile Home Tax
- Motor Vehicle Tax
- Property Tax

Proposed Recommendations

- 3% Pay Increase for Town Clerk Position (annual increase of \$1,152.00)
- Move \$30,000.00 from the balance of FY2025 General Operating Account into Special Projects
- Move \$20,000.00 into School House Museum Fund from balance of FY2025 General Operating Account
- Projected 2025-year end balance will be \$66.3K



Talking Rock, Georgia
ESTABLISHED 1883

**Thank you to the Town of
Talking Rock, the Council and
staff for their support in
developing the Proposed
FY2026 budget**