

House Bill 1505

By: Representative Butler of the 18<sup>th</sup>

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To provide a new charter for the City of Waco; to provide for incorporation, boundaries, and  
2 powers of the city within the County of Haralson; to provide for a governing authority of  
3 such city and the powers, duties, authority, election, terms, method of filling vacancies,  
4 compensation, qualifications, prohibitions, and removal from office relative to members of  
5 such governing authority; to provide for inquiries and investigations; to provide for  
6 organization and procedures; to provide for ordinances and codes; to provide for the office  
7 of mayor and certain duties and powers relative to the office of mayor; to provide for  
8 administrative responsibilities; to provide for boards, commissions, and authorities; to  
9 provide for a city attorney, a city clerk, and other personnel; to provide for rules and  
10 regulations; to provide for practices and procedures; to provide for taxation and fees; to  
11 provide for franchises, service charges, and assessments; to provide for bonded and other  
12 indebtedness; to provide for accounting and budgeting; to provide for purchases; to provide  
13 for the sale of property; to provide for bonds for officials; to provide for eminent domain; to  
14 provide for penalties; to provide for definitions and construction; to provide for other matters  
15 relative to the foregoing; to repeal a specific Act; to provide for an effective date; to repeal  
16 conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

17 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

18 ARTICLE I  
19 INCORPORATION AND POWERS  
20 SECTION 1.01.  
21 Name.

22 This city and the inhabitants thereof are reincorporated by the enactment of this charter and  
23 are hereby constituted and declared a body politic and corporate under the name and style  
24 "Waco, Georgia", and by that name shall have perpetual succession.

25 **SECTION 1.02.**

26 Corporate boundaries.

27 (a) The boundaries of this city shall be those existing on the effective date of the adoption  
 28 of this charter with such alterations as may be made from time to time in the manner  
 29 provided by law. The boundaries of this city at all times shall be shown on a map, a written  
 30 description, or any combination thereof, to be retained permanently in the office of the Clerk  
 31 of the City of Waco and to be designated, as the case may be: "Official Map of the Corporate  
 32 Limits of the City of Waco, Georgia." Photographic, typed, or other copies of such map or  
 33 description certified by the City Clerk shall be admitted as evidence in all courts and shall  
 34 have the same force and effect as with the original map or description.

35 (b) The city council may provide for the redrawing of any such map by ordinance to reflect  
 36 lawful changes in the corporate boundaries. A redrawn map shall supersede for all purposes  
 37 the entire map or maps which it is designated to replace.

38 **SECTION 1.03.**

39 Powers and construction.

40 (a) This city shall have all powers possible for a city to have under the present or future  
 41 constitution and laws of the State of Georgia as fully and completely as though they were  
 42 specifically enumerated in this charter. This city shall have all the powers of  
 43 self-government not otherwise prohibited by this charter or by general law.

44 (b) The powers of this city shall be construed liberally in favor of the city. The specific  
 45 mention or failure to mention particular powers shall not be construed as limiting in any way  
 46 the powers of this city.

47 **SECTION 1.04.**

48 Examples of powers.

49 The powers of the city shall include, but are not limited to, the power:

50 (1) Animal regulations. To regulate and license or to prohibit the keeping or running  
 51 at-large of animals and fowl, and to provide for the impoundment of same if in violation  
 52 of any ordinance or lawful order; to provide for the disposition by sale, gift, or humane  
 53 destruction of animals and fowl when not redeemed as provided by ordinance; and to  
 54 provide punishment for violation of ordinances enacted hereunder;

55 (2) Appropriations and expenditures. To make appropriations for the support of the  
 56 government of the city; to authorize the expenditure of money for any purposes

57 authorized by this charter and for any purpose for which a municipality is authorized by  
58 the laws of the State of Georgia; and to provide for the payment of expenses of the city;

59 (3) Building regulation. To regulate and to license the erection and construction of  
60 buildings and all other structures; to adopt building, housing, plumbing, electrical, gas,  
61 and heating and air conditioning codes; and to regulate all housing and building trades;

62 (4) Business regulation and taxation. To levy and to provide for the collection of  
63 regulatory fees and taxes on privileges, occupations, trades, and professions as authorized  
64 by Title 48 of the O.C.G.A., or other such applicable laws as are or may hereafter be  
65 enacted; to permit and regulate the same; to provide for the manner and method of  
66 payment of such regulatory fees and taxes; and to revoke such permits after due process  
67 for failure to pay any city taxes or fees;

68 (5) Condemnation. To condemn property, inside or outside the corporate limits of the  
69 city, for present or future use and for any corporate purpose deemed necessary by the  
70 governing authority, utilizing procedures enumerated in Title 22 of the O.C.G.A., or such  
71 other applicable laws as are or may hereafter be enacted;

72 (6) Contracts. To enter into contracts and agreements with other governmental entities  
73 and with private persons, firms, and corporations;

74 (7) Emergencies. To establish procedures for determining and proclaiming that an  
75 emergency situation exists within or without the city, and to make and carry out all  
76 reasonable provisions deemed necessary to deal with or meet such an emergency for the  
77 protection, safety, health, or well-being of the citizens of the city;

78 (8) Environmental protection. To protect and preserve the natural resources,  
79 environment, and vital areas of this state through the preservation and improvement of  
80 air quality, the restoration and maintenance of water resources, the control of erosion and  
81 sedimentation, the management of solid and hazardous waste, and other necessary actions  
82 for the protection of the environment;

83 (9) Fire regulations. To fix and establish fire limits and from time to time to extend,  
84 enlarge, or restrict the same; to prescribe fire safety regulations not inconsistent with  
85 general law, relating to both fire prevention and detection and to fire fighting; and to  
86 prescribe penalties and punishment for violations thereof;

87 (10) Garbage fees. To levy, fix, assess, and collect a garbage, refuse, and trash collection  
88 and disposal and other sanitary service charge, tax, or fee for such services as may be  
89 necessary in the operation of the city from all individuals, firms, and corporations  
90 residing in or doing business therein benefiting from such services; to enforce the  
91 payment of such charges, taxes, or fees; and to provide for the manner and method of  
92 collecting such service charges;

- 93 (11) General health, safety, and welfare. To define, regulate, and prohibit any act,  
94 practice, conduct, or use of property which is detrimental to health, sanitation,  
95 cleanliness, welfare, and safety of the inhabitants of the city, and to provide for the  
96 enforcement of such standards;
- 97 (12) Gifts. To accept or refuse gifts, donations, bequests, or grants from any source for  
98 any purpose related to powers and duties of the city and the general welfare of its  
99 citizens, on such terms and conditions as the donor or grantor may impose;
- 100 (13) Health and sanitation. To prescribe standards of health and sanitation and to  
101 provide for the enforcement of such standards;
- 102 (14) Jail sentences. To provide that persons given jail sentences in the city's court may  
103 work out such sentences in any public works or on the streets, roads, drains, and other  
104 public property in the city, to provide for commitment of such persons to any jail, or to  
105 provide for commitment of such persons to any county work camp or county jail by  
106 agreement with the appropriate county officials;
- 107 (15) Motor vehicles. To regulate the operation of motor vehicles and exercise control  
108 over all traffic, including parking upon or across the streets, roads, alleys, and walkways  
109 of the city;
- 110 (16) Municipal agencies and delegation of power. To create, alter, or abolish  
111 departments, boards, offices, commissions, and agencies of the city, and to confer upon  
112 such agencies the necessary and appropriate authority for carrying out all the powers  
113 conferred upon or delegated to the same;
- 114 (17) Municipal debts. To appropriate and borrow money for the payment of debts of the  
115 city and to issue bonds for the purpose of raising revenue to carry out any project,  
116 program, or venture authorized by this charter or the laws of the State of Georgia;
- 117 (18) Municipal property ownership. To acquire, dispose of, lease, and hold in trust or  
118 otherwise, any real, personal, or mixed property, in fee simple or lesser interest, inside  
119 or outside the property limits of the city;
- 120 (19) Municipal property protection. To provide for the preservation and protection of  
121 property and equipment of the city, and the administration and use of same by the public;  
122 and to prescribe penalties and punishment for violations thereof;
- 123 (20) Municipal utilities. To acquire, lease, construct, operate, maintain, sell, and dispose  
124 of public utilities, including, but not limited to, a system of waterworks, sewers and  
125 drains, sewage disposal, gas works, electric light plants, cable television and other  
126 telecommunications, transportation facilities, public airports, and any other public utility;  
127 and to fix the taxes, charges, rates, fares, fees, assessments, regulations, and penalties,  
128 and to provide for the withdrawal of service for refusal or failure to pay the same;

- 129 (21) Nuisance. To define a nuisance and provide for its abatement whether on public or  
130 private property;
- 131 (22) Penalties. To provide penalties for violation of any ordinances adopted pursuant to  
132 the authority of this charter and the laws of the State of Georgia;
- 133 (23) Planning and zoning. To provide comprehensive city planning for development by  
134 zoning; and to provide subdivision regulation and the like as the city council deems  
135 necessary and reasonable to insure a safe, healthy, and aesthetically pleasing community;
- 136 (24) Police and fire protection. To exercise the power of arrest through duly appointed  
137 policemen, and to establish, operate, or contract for a police and a fire fighting agency;
- 138 (25) Public hazards: removal. To provide for the destruction and removal of any  
139 building or other structure which is or may become dangerous or detrimental to the  
140 public;
- 141 (26) Public improvements. To provide for the acquisition, construction, building,  
142 operation, and maintenance of public ways, parks and playgrounds, recreational facilities,  
143 cemeteries, markets and market houses, public buildings, libraries, public housing,  
144 airports, hospitals, terminals, docks, parking facilities, or charitable, cultural, educational,  
145 recreational, conservation, sport, curative, corrective, detentional, penal and medical  
146 institutions, agencies, and facilities; and to provide any other public improvements, inside  
147 or outside the corporate limits of the city; to regulate the use of public improvements; and  
148 for such purposes, property may be acquired by condemnation under Title 22 of the  
149 O.C.G.A., or such other applicable laws as are or may hereafter be enacted;
- 150 (27) Public peace. To provide for the prevention and punishment of drunkenness, riots,  
151 and public disturbances;
- 152 (28) Public transportation. To organize and operate such public transportation systems  
153 as are deemed beneficial and economically feasible;
- 154 (29) Public utilities and services. To grant franchises or make contracts for, or impose  
155 taxes on public utilities and public service companies; and to prescribe the rates, fares,  
156 regulations, and standards and conditions of service applicable to the service to be  
157 provided by the franchise grantee or contractor, insofar as not in conflict with valid  
158 regulations of the Public Service Commission;
- 159 (30) Regulation of roadside areas. To prohibit or regulate and control the erection,  
160 removal, and maintenance of signs, billboards, trees, shrubs, fences, buildings, and any  
161 and all other structures or obstructions upon or adjacent to the rights of way of streets and  
162 roads, within or abutting the corporate limits of the city; and to prescribe penalties and  
163 punishment for violation of such ordinances;
- 164 (31) Retirement. To provide and maintain a retirement plan for officers and employees  
165 of the city;

- 166 (32) Roadways. To lay out, open, extend, widen, narrow, establish or change the grade  
167 of, abandon or close, construct, pave, curb, gutter, adorn with shade trees, or otherwise  
168 improve, maintain, repair, clean, prevent erosion of, and light the roads, alleys, and  
169 walkways within the corporate limits of the city; and to grant franchises and rights of way  
170 throughout the streets and roads, and over the bridges and viaducts for the use of public  
171 utilities; and to require real estate owners to repair and maintain in a safe condition the  
172 sidewalks adjoining their lots or lands, and to impose penalties for failure to do so;
- 173 (33) Sewer fees. To levy a fee, charge, or sewer tax as necessary to assure the acquiring,  
174 constructing, equipping, operating, maintaining, and extending of a sewage disposal plant  
175 and sewerage system, and to levy on those to whom sewers and sewerage systems are  
176 made available a sewer service fee, charge, or sewer tax for the availability or use of the  
177 sewers; to provide for the manner and method of collecting such service charges and for  
178 enforcing payment of the same; and to charge, impose, and collect a sewer connection fee  
179 or fees to those connected with the system;
- 180 (34) Solid waste disposal. To provide for the collection and disposal of garbage, rubbish,  
181 and refuse, and to regulate the collection and disposal of garbage, rubbish, and refuse by  
182 others; and to provide for the separate collection of glass, tin, aluminum, cardboard,  
183 paper, and other recyclable materials, and to provide for the sale of such items;
- 184 (35) Special areas of public regulation. To regulate or prohibit junk dealers, pawn shops,  
185 the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors, and the use and sale of  
186 firearms; to regulate the transportation, storage, and use of combustible, explosive, and  
187 inflammable materials, the use of lighting and heating equipment, and any other business  
188 or situation which may be dangerous to persons or property; to regulate and control the  
189 conduct of peddlers and itinerant traders, theatrical performances, exhibitions, and shows  
190 of any kind, by taxation or otherwise; and to license, tax, regulate, or prohibit  
191 professional fortunetelling, palmistry, adult bookstores, adult entertainment  
192 establishments, and massage parlors;
- 193 (36) Special assessments. To levy and provide for the collection of special assessments  
194 to cover the costs for any public improvements;
- 195 (37) Taxes: ad valorem. To levy and provide for the assessment, valuation, revaluation,  
196 and collection of taxes on all property subject to taxation;
- 197 (38) Taxes: other. To levy and collect such other taxes as may be allowed now or in the  
198 future by law;
- 199 (39) Taxicabs and other public transportation. To regulate and license vehicles operated  
200 for hire in the city; to limit the number of such vehicles; to require the operators thereof  
201 to be licensed; to require public liability insurance on such vehicles in the amounts to be  
202 prescribed by ordinance; and to regulate the parking of such vehicles;

203 (40) Urban redevelopment. To organize and operate an urban redevelopment program;  
 204 and  
 205 (41) Other powers. To exercise and enjoy all other powers, functions, rights, privileges,  
 206 and immunities necessary or desirable to promote or protect the safety, health, peace,  
 207 security, good order, comfort, convenience, or general welfare of the city and its  
 208 inhabitants; and to exercise all implied powers necessary or desirable to carry into  
 209 execution all powers granted in this charter as fully and completely as if such powers  
 210 were fully stated herein; and to exercise all powers now or in the future authorized to be  
 211 exercised by other municipal governments under other laws of the State of Georgia; and  
 212 no listing of particular powers in this charter shall be held to be exclusive of others, nor  
 213 restrictive of general words and phrases granting powers, but shall be held to be in  
 214 addition to such powers unless expressly prohibited to municipalities under the  
 215 Constitution or applicable laws of the State of Georgia.

216 **SECTION 1.05.**

217 Exercise of powers.

218 All powers, functions, rights, privileges, and immunities of the city, its officers, agencies, or  
 219 employees shall be carried into execution as provided by this charter. If this charter makes  
 220 no provision, such shall be carried into execution as provided by ordinance or as provided  
 221 by pertinent laws of the State of Georgia.

222 **ARTICLE II**

223 **GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE**

224 **GENERALLY**

225 **LEGISLATIVE BRANCH**

226 **A. Creation.**

227 **SECTION 2.01.**

228 City council creation; number; election.

229 The legislative authority of the government of this city, except as otherwise specifically  
 230 provided in this charter, shall be vested in a city council to be composed of a mayor and four  
 231 councilmembers. The councilmembers shall be elected by city-wide, at large elections. Each  
 232 duly elected councilmember will occupy a seat on the council to be designated as Post One,  
 233 Post Two, Post Three, and Post Four, respectively. The city council established shall in all  
 234 respects be a successor to and continuation of the governing authority under prior law. The

235 mayor and councilmembers shall be elected in the manner provided by general law and this  
236 charter.

237 **B. Terms and Qualifications for Office.**

238 **SECTION 2.02.**

239 City council terms and qualifications for office.

240 The members of the city council shall serve for terms of four years and until their respective  
241 successors are elected and qualified. No person shall be eligible to serve as a councilmember  
242 unless that person shall be a citizen of the United States of America; have attained the age  
243 of 21 years; and have established his or her domicile within the city, so as to be a legal  
244 resident of the city, for the 12 consecutive months prior to the first day of the period of time  
245 set for qualification as a candidate for the office of councilmember. A duly elected  
246 councilmember shall continue to reside within the city during that individual's period of  
247 service and shall continue to be registered and qualified to vote in municipal elections of this  
248 city.

249 **C. Vacancies in Office.**

250 **SECTION 2.03.**

251 Vacancy; filling of vacancies.

252 (a) Vacancies - The office of mayor or councilmember shall become vacant upon the  
253 occurrence of any event specified by the Constitution of the State of Georgia, Title 45 of the  
254 O.C.G.A., or such other applicable laws as are or may hereafter be enacted.

255 (b) Filling of Vacancies - A vacancy in the office of mayor or councilmember shall be filled  
256 for the remainder of the unexpired term, if any, by appointment of the city council if less than  
257 12 months remains in the unexpired term, otherwise by an election, as provided for in  
258 Section 4.04 of this charter and in accordance with Titles 21 and 45 of the O.C.G.A., or other  
259 such laws as are or may hereafter be enacted.

260 **D. Compensation and Expenses.**

261 **SECTION 2.04.**

262 Compensation and expenses.

263 The mayor and councilmembers shall receive compensation and expenses for their services  
264 as provided by ordinance.

## E. Prohibitions.

**SECTION 2.05.**

## Conflicts of interest; holding other offices.

268 (a) Elected and appointed officers of the city are trustees and servants of the residents of the  
 269 city and shall act in a fiduciary capacity for the benefit of such residents.

270 (b) Conflict of Interest - No elected official, appointed officer, or employee of the city or any  
 271 agency or political entity to which this charter applies shall knowingly:

272 (1) Engage in any business or transaction, or have a financial or other personal interest,  
 273 direct or indirect, which is incompatible with the proper discharge of that person's official  
 274 duties or which would tend to impair the independence of the official's judgment or action  
 275 in the performance of those official duties;

276 (2) Engage in or accept private employment, or render services for private interests when  
 277 such employment or service is incompatible with the proper discharge of that person's  
 278 official duties or would tend to impair the independence of the official's judgment or  
 279 action in the performance of those official duties;

280 (3) Disclose confidential information, including information obtained at meetings which  
 281 are closed pursuant to Chapter 14 of Title 50 of the O.C.G.A., concerning the property,  
 282 government, or affairs of the governmental body by which the official is engaged without  
 283 proper legal authorization; or use such information to advance the financial or other  
 284 private interest of the official or others;

285 (4) Accept any valuable gift, as defined by state law, whether in the form of service,  
 286 loan, thing, or promise, from any person, firm, or corporation which to the official's  
 287 knowledge is interested, directly or indirectly, in any manner whatsoever, in business  
 288 dealings with the governmental body by which the official is engaged; provided,  
 289 however, that an elected official who is a candidate for public office may accept  
 290 campaign contributions and services in connection with any such campaign;

291 (5) Represent other private interests in any action or proceeding against this city or any  
 292 portion of its government; or

293 (6) Vote on any contract with any business or entity in which the official has a  
 294 significant financial interest.

295 (c) Disclosure - Any elected official, appointed officer, or employee who shall have any  
 296 financial interest, directly or indirectly, in any contract or matter pending before or within  
 297 any department of the city shall disclose such interest to the city council. The mayor or any  
 298 councilmember who has a financial interest in any matter pending before the city council  
 299 shall disclose such interest and such disclosure shall be entered on the records of the city  
 300 council, and that official shall disqualify himself or herself from participating in any decision

301 or vote relating thereto. Any elected official, appointed officer, or employee of any agency  
302 or political entity to which this charter applies who shall have any financial interest, directly  
303 or indirectly, in any contract or matter pending before or within such entity shall disclose  
304 such interest to the governing body of such agency or entity.

305 (d) Use of Public Property - No elected official, appointed officer, or employee of the city  
306 or any agency or entity to which this charter applies shall use property owned by such  
307 governmental entity for personal benefit, convenience, or profit except in accordance with  
308 policies promulgated by the city council or the governing body of such agency or entity.

309 (e) Contracts Voidable and Rescindable - Any violation of this section which occurs with  
310 the knowledge, express or implied, of a party to a contract or sale shall render said contract  
311 or sale voidable at the option of the city council.

312 (f) Ineligibility of Elected Official - Except where authorized by law, neither the mayor nor  
313 any councilmember shall hold any other elective or compensated appointive office in the city  
314 during the term for which that official was elected.

315 (g) Political Activities of Councilmember and Certain Officers and Employees -

316 (1) No councilmember or appointive officer of the city shall continue in such position  
317 or employment upon qualifying as a candidate for nomination or election to any public  
318 office. This section shall not apply to a councilmember that qualifies as an incumbent  
319 seeking reelection to his or her seat on the council.

320 (2) No employee of the city shall continue in such employment upon election to any  
321 public office in this city or any other public office which is inconsistent, incompatible,  
322 or in conflict with the duties of the city employee. Such determination shall be made by  
323 the mayor and council either immediately upon election or at any time such conflict may  
324 arise.

325 (h) Penalties for Violation -

326 (1) Any city officer or employee shown to have knowingly concealed such financial  
327 interest or knowingly violated any of the requirements of this section shall be guilty of  
328 malfeasance in office or position and shall be deemed to have forfeited that person's  
329 office or position.

330 (2) Any officer or employee of the city who shall forfeit an office or position as  
331 described in paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be ineligible for appointment or  
332 election to or employment in a position in the city government for a period of three years  
333 thereafter.

334 F. Inquiries and Investigations.

335 **SECTION 2.06.**

336 Inquiries and investigations.

337 Following the adoption of an authorizing resolution, the city council may make inquiries and  
 338 investigations into the affairs of the city and the conduct of any department, office, or agency  
 339 thereof, and for this purpose may subpoena witnesses, administer oaths, take testimony, and  
 340 require the production of evidence. Any person who fails or refuses to obey a lawful order  
 341 issued in the exercise of these powers by the city council shall be punished as provided by  
 342 ordinance. This provision is intended to allow the council to conduct comprehensive  
 343 investigations of the city's affairs as well as the conduct of any of its departments, offices,  
 344 or agencies so as to maintain proper legislative oversight of city government. The inquiries  
 345 and investigations authorized may only be conducted by the council, not individual  
 346 councilmembers, and only for the purposes of an official investigation.

347 G. General Power and Authority.

348 **SECTION 2.07.**

349 General power and authority of the city council.

350 Except as otherwise provided by law or this charter, the city council shall be vested with all  
 351 the powers of government of this city.

352 H. Eminent Domain.

353 **SECTION 2.08.**

354 Eminent domain.

355 The city council is hereby empowered to acquire, construct, operate, and maintain public  
 356 ways, parks, public grounds, cemeteries, markets, market houses, public buildings, libraries,  
 357 sewers, drains, sewage treatment, waterworks, electrical systems, gas systems, airports,  
 358 hospitals, and charitable, educational, recreational, sport, curative, corrective, detentional,  
 359 penal and medical institutions, agencies and facilities, and any other public improvements  
 360 inside or outside the city, and to regulate the use thereof, and for such purposes, property  
 361 may be condemned under procedures established under general law applicable now or as  
 362 provided in the future.

363 ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURES

364 I. Meetings.

365 **SECTION 2.09.**

366 Organization.

367 (a) The city council shall hold an organizational meeting at the first regular meeting in the  
 368 first full month following the passage and adoption of this charter; provided, however, that  
 369 the mayor and councilmembers in office at the time of adoption of this charter shall continue  
 370 in office until that date. The meeting shall be called to order by the city clerk and the oath  
 371 of office shall be administered to any and all newly elected members as follows:

372 "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully perform the duties of  
 373 (mayor)(councilmember) of this city and that I will support and defend the  
 374 charter thereof as well as the constitution and laws of the State of Georgia and  
 375 of the United States of America."

376 (b) By a majority vote, the city council shall elect a councilmember to serve as mayor pro  
 377 tem. During the absence or physical or mental disability of the mayor for any cause, the  
 378 mayor pro tem shall be clothed with all the rights and privileges of the mayor and shall  
 379 perform the duties of the office of the mayor so long as such absence or disability shall  
 380 continue. Any such absence or disability shall be declared by majority vote of the city  
 381 council. The mayor pro tem shall sign all contracts and ordinances in which the mayor has  
 382 a disqualifying financial interest as provided in Section 2.05 of this charter.

383 **SECTION 2.10.**

384 Regular and special meetings.

385 (a) The city council shall hold regular meetings at such times and places as shall be  
 386 prescribed by ordinance.

387 (b) Special meetings of the city council may be held on call of the mayor or two members  
 388 of the city council. Notice of such special meetings shall be served on all other members  
 389 personally, or by telephone personally, at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting. Such  
 390 notice to councilmembers shall not be required if the mayor and all councilmembers are  
 391 present when the special meeting is called. Such notice of any special meeting may be  
 392 waived by a councilmember in writing before or after such a meeting, and attendance at the  
 393 meeting shall also constitute a waiver of notice on any business transacted in such  
 394 councilmember's presence. Only the business stated in the call may be transacted at the  
 395 special meeting.

396 (c) All meetings of the city council shall be public to the extent required by law and notice  
 397 to the public of special meetings shall be made fully as is reasonably possible as provided by  
 398 Code Section 50-14-1 of the O.C.G.A., or other such applicable laws as are or may hereafter  
 399 be enacted.

400 J. Procedures.

401 **SECTION 2.11.**

402 Rules of procedure.

403 (a) The city council shall adopt its rules of procedure and order of business consistent with  
 404 the provisions of this charter and shall provide for keeping a journal of its proceedings, which  
 405 shall be a public record.

406 (b) All committees and committee chairs and officers of the city council shall be nominated  
 407 and appointed by the mayor with the approval of the city council and shall serve at the  
 408 pleasure of the city council. The mayor shall have the power to recommend and appoint,  
 409 with the approval of the city council, new members to any committee at any time.

410 **SECTION 2.12.**

411 Quorum: voting.

412 Three councilmembers, or two councilmembers and the mayor, shall constitute a quorum and  
 413 shall be authorized to transact business of the city council. Voting on the adoption of  
 414 ordinances shall be by voice vote and the vote shall be recorded in the journal, but any  
 415 member of the city council shall have the right to request a roll call vote and such vote shall  
 416 be recorded in the journal. Except as otherwise provided in this charter, the affirmative vote  
 417 of three councilmembers, or two councilmembers and the mayor only when the mayor has  
 418 been counted as a member for purposes of a quorum, shall be required for the adoption of  
 419 any ordinance, resolution, or motion. An abstention shall be counted as an affirmative vote.

420 K. Ordinances.

421 **SECTION 2.13.**

422 Ordinance form; procedures.

423 (a) Every proposed ordinance shall be introduced in writing and in the form required for  
 424 final adoption. No ordinance shall contain a subject which is not expressed in its title. The  
 425 enacting clause shall be "It is hereby ordained by the governing authority of the City of  
 426 Waco" and every ordinance shall so begin.

427 (b) An ordinance may be introduced by any councilmember and be read at a regular or  
 428 special meeting of the city council. Ordinances shall be considered and adopted or rejected  
 429 by the city council in accordance with the rules which it shall establish; provided, however,  
 430 that an ordinance shall not be adopted the same day it is introduced, except for emergency  
 431 ordinances provided in Section 2.15 of this charter. Upon introduction of any ordinance, the  
 432 clerk shall as soon as possible distribute a copy to the mayor and to each councilmember and  
 433 shall file a reasonable number of copies in the office of the clerk and at such other public  
 434 places as the city council may designate.

435 **SECTION 2.14.**

436 Action requiring an ordinance.

437 Acts of the city council that have the force and effect of law shall be enacted by ordinance.

438 **SECTION 2.15.**

439 Emergencies, emergency ordinances, procedures, and limitations.

440 (a) To meet a public emergency affecting life, health, property, or public peace, the city  
 441 council may convene on call of the mayor or two councilmembers and promptly adopt an  
 442 emergency ordinance, but such ordinance may not levy taxes; grant, renew, or extend a  
 443 franchise; regulate the rate charged by any public utility for its services; or authorize the  
 444 borrowing of money except for loans to be repaid within 30 days. An emergency ordinance  
 445 shall be introduced in the form prescribed for ordinances generally, except that it shall be  
 446 plainly designated as an emergency ordinance and shall contain, after the enacting clause,  
 447 a declaration stating that an emergency exists, and describing the emergency in clear and  
 448 specific terms. An emergency ordinance may be adopted, with or without amendment, or  
 449 rejected at the meeting at which it is introduced, but the affirmative vote of at least three  
 450 councilmembers shall be required for adoption. It shall become effective upon adoption or  
 451 at such later time as it may specify. Every emergency ordinance shall automatically stand  
 452 repealed 30 days following the date upon which it was adopted, but this shall not prevent  
 453 reenactment of the ordinance in the manner specified in this section if the emergency still  
 454 exists. An emergency ordinance may also be repealed by adoption of a repealing ordinance  
 455 in the same manner specified in this section for adoption of emergency ordinances.

456 (b) Such meetings shall be open to the public to the extent required by law and notice to the  
 457 public of emergency meetings shall be made as fully as is reasonably possible in accordance  
 458 with Code Section 50-14-1 of the O.C.G.A., as amended, or such other applicable laws as  
 459 are or may hereafter be enacted.

460

**SECTION 2.16.**

461

Codes of technical regulations.

462 (a) The city council may adopt any standard code of technical regulations by reference  
463 thereto in an adopting ordinance. The procedure and requirements governing such adopting  
464 ordinance shall be as prescribed for ordinances generally except that:

465 (1) The requirements of Section 2.17(b) of this charter for distribution and filing of  
466 copies of the ordinance shall be construed to include copies of any code of technical  
467 regulations, as well as the adopting ordinance; and

468 (2) A copy of each adopted code of technical regulations, as well as the adopting  
469 ordinance, shall be authenticated and recorded by the clerk pursuant to Section 2.17 of  
470 this charter.

471 (b) Copies of any adopted code of technical regulations shall be made available by the clerk  
472 for inspection by the public.

473

**SECTION 2.17.**

474

Signing; authenticating; recording; codification; printing.

475 (a) The clerk shall authenticate by the clerk's signature and record in full in a properly  
476 indexed book kept for that purpose all ordinances adopted by the council.

477 (b) The city council shall provide for the preparation of a general codification of all the  
478 ordinances of the city having the force and effect of law. The general codification shall be  
479 adopted by the city council by ordinance and shall be published promptly, together with all  
480 amendments thereto and such codes of technical regulations and other rules and regulations  
481 as the city council may specify. This compilation shall be known and cited officially as "The  
482 Code of the City of Waco, Georgia." Copies of the code shall be furnished to all officers,  
483 departments, and agencies of the city, and made available for purchase by the public at a  
484 reasonable price as fixed by the city council.

485 (c) The city council shall cause each ordinance and each amendment to this charter to be  
486 printed promptly following its adoption, and the printed ordinances and charter amendments  
487 shall be made available for purchase by the public at reasonable prices to be fixed by the city  
488 council. Following publication of the first code under this charter and at all times thereafter,  
489 the ordinances and charter amendments shall be printed in substantially the same style as the  
490 code currently in effect and shall be suitable in form for incorporation therein. The city  
491 council shall make such further arrangements as deemed desirable with reproduction and  
492 distribution of any current changes in or additions to codes of technical regulations and other  
493 rules and regulations included in the code.

494 L. Mayor-Council Form of Government.

495 **SECTION 2.18.**

496 Election of mayor; forfeiture; compensation.

497 The mayor shall be elected and serve for a term of four years and until a successor is elected  
 498 and qualified. No person shall be eligible to serve as mayor unless that person shall be a  
 499 citizen of the United States of America; have attained the age of 21 years; and have  
 500 established his or her domicile within the city, so as to be a legal resident of the city, for the  
 501 12 consecutive months prior to the first day of the period of time set for qualification as a  
 502 candidate for the office of mayor. A duly elected mayor shall continue to reside within the  
 503 city during that individual's period of service and shall continue to be registered and qualified  
 504 to vote in municipal elections of this city. The mayor shall forfeit the office on the same  
 505 grounds and under the same procedure as for councilmembers. The compensation of the  
 506 mayor shall be established in the same manner as for councilmembers.

507 **SECTION 2.19.**

508 Powers and duties of mayor.

509 The mayor shall:

- 510 (1) Preside at all meetings of the city council;
- 511 (2) Be the chief executive officer and head of the city for the purpose of service of  
 512 process and for ceremonial purposes, and be the official spokesperson for the city and the  
 513 chief advocate of policy;
- 514 (3) Have power to administer oaths and to take affidavits;
- 515 (4) Sign as a matter of course on behalf of the city all written and approved contracts,  
 516 ordinances, and other instruments executed by the city which by law, this charter, or city  
 517 ordinances are required to be approved by the city council and to be in writing;
- 518 (5) Represent the city in intergovernmental relations;
- 519 (6) Appoint members of citizen advisory boards and commissions with the advice and  
 520 consent of the council, and make recommendations to the city council concerning the  
 521 appointment of members of regulatory agencies, boards, or authorities whose members  
 522 are subject to appointment and approval by the city council;
- 523 (7) Present an annual state of the city message;
- 524 (8) Recommend to the city council such measures relative to the affairs of the city,  
 525 improvement of the government, and promotion of the welfare of its inhabitants as the  
 526 mayor may deem expedient;

- 527 (9) Call special meetings of the city council as provided for in Section 2.10(b) of this  
 528 charter;
- 529 (10) Approve or disapprove ordinances as provided in Section 2.20 of this charter;
- 530 (11) Provide for an annual audit of all accounts of the city;
- 531 (12) Require any department or agency of the city to submit written reports whenever  
 532 the mayor deems it expedient; and
- 533 (13) Fulfill such other executive and administrative duties as the city council shall by  
 534 ordinance establish, or as may be required by law, this charter, or by ordinance.

535 **SECTION 2.20.**

536 Submission of ordinances to the mayor; veto power.

- 537 (a) Every ordinance adopted by the city council shall be presented promptly by the clerk to  
 538 the mayor.
- 539 (b) The mayor, within ten calendar days of receipt of an ordinance, shall return it to the clerk  
 540 with or without the mayor's approval, or with the mayor's disapproval. If the ordinance has  
 541 been approved by the mayor, it shall become law upon its return to the clerk; if the ordinance  
 542 is neither approved nor disapproved, it shall become law at 12:00 Noon on the tenth calendar  
 543 day after its adoption; if the ordinance is disapproved, the mayor shall submit to the city  
 544 council through the clerk a written statement of reasons for the veto. The clerk shall record  
 545 upon the ordinance the date of its delivery to and receipt from the mayor.
- 546 (c) Ordinances vetoed by the mayor shall be presented by the clerk to the city council at its  
 547 next meeting. If the city council then or at its next meeting adopts the ordinance by an  
 548 affirmative vote of three members, it shall become law.
- 549 (d) The mayor may disapprove or reduce any item or items of appropriation in any  
 550 ordinance. The approved part or parts of any ordinance making appropriations shall become  
 551 law, and the part or parts disapproved shall not become law unless subsequently passed by  
 552 the city council over the mayor's veto as provided herein. The reduced part or parts shall be  
 553 presented to city council as though disapproved and shall not become law unless overridden  
 554 by the council as provided in subsection (c) of this section.

555 **SECTION 2.21.**

556 Limitation on terms of service.

557 There shall be no limitation on the terms of election for a mayor or a member of the council.



592 (d) Except as otherwise provided by charter or by law, no member of any board,  
593 commission, or authority shall hold any elective office in the city, unless approved by the  
594 city council.

595 (e) Any vacancy on a board, commission, or authority of the city shall be filled for the  
596 unexpired term in the manner prescribed herein for original appointment, except as otherwise  
597 provided by this charter or by law.

598 (f) No member of a board, commission, or authority shall assume office until that person has  
599 executed and filed with the clerk of the city an oath obligating himself or herself to faithfully  
600 and impartially perform the duties of that member's office, such oath to be prescribed by  
601 ordinance and administered by the mayor.

602 (g) All board members serve at will and may be removed at any time by a vote of three  
603 members of the city council, or in the event of a tie vote, by the vote of two members of the  
604 council and the affirmative vote of the mayor, unless otherwise provided by law.

605 (h) Except as otherwise provided by this charter or by law, each board, commission, or  
606 authority of the city shall elect one of its members as chair and one member as vice chair,  
607 and may elect as its secretary one of its own members or may appoint as secretary an  
608 employee of the city.

609 (i) Each board, commission, or authority of the city government may establish such bylaws,  
610 rules, and regulations, not inconsistent with this charter, ordinances of the city, or law, as it  
611 deems appropriate and necessary for the fulfillment of its duties or the conduct of its affairs.  
612 Copies of such bylaws, rules, and regulations shall be filed with the clerk of the city.

613 **ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS**

614 **SECTION 3.03.**

615 City attorney.

616 The mayor and city council shall appoint a city attorney, together with such assistant city  
617 attorneys as may be authorized, and shall provide for the payment of such attorney or  
618 attorneys for services rendered to the city. The city attorney shall be responsible for  
619 providing for the representation and defense of the city in all litigation in which the city is  
620 a party; may be the prosecuting officer in the municipal court; shall attend the meetings of  
621 the council as directed; shall advise the city council, mayor, and other officers and employees  
622 of the city concerning legal aspects of the city's affairs; and shall perform such other duties  
623 as may be required by virtue of the person's position as city attorney.

624 PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

625 **SECTION 3.04.**

626 Position classification and pay plans.

627 The mayor shall be responsible for the preparation of a position classification and pay plan  
 628 which shall be submitted to the city council for approval. Such plan may apply to all  
 629 employees of the city and any of its agencies, departments, boards, commissions, or  
 630 authorities. When a pay plan has been adopted, the city council shall not increase or decrease  
 631 the salary range applicable to any position except by amendment of such pay plan. For  
 632 purposes of this section, all elected and appointed city officials are not city employees.

633 **SECTION 3.05.**

634 Personnel policies.

635 All employees serve at will and may be removed from office at any time unless otherwise  
 636 provided by ordinance.

637 **ARTICLE IV**

638 **ELECTIONS AND REMOVAL**

639 **ELECTIONS**

640 A. General Law.

641 **SECTION 4.01.**

642 Applicability of general law.

643 All primaries and elections shall be held and conducted in accordance with Chapter 2 of Title  
 644 21 of the O.C.G.A., the "Georgia Election Code," as now or hereafter amended.

645 B. Election of Officers.

646 **SECTION 4.02.**

647 Election of the city council and mayor.

648 (a) There shall be a municipal general election biennially in the odd years on the Tuesday  
 649 next following the first Monday in November.

650 (b) In order to provide for staggered terms of office, the term of office for the candidates for  
 651 mayor and all councilmembers elected at the November, 2011, election only shall be as  
 652 follows: the office of mayor and the positions on the council designated as Post Two  
 653 (Treasurer) and Post Three (Streets and Roads) shall be for a four-year period. The

654 remaining elected councilmembers, Post One (City Clerk) and Post Four (Water and Sewer),  
655 shall be for an initial period of two years. On the Tuesday next following the first Monday  
656 in November, 2013, Post One and Post Four shall be up for election and serve a four-year  
657 term. All terms thereafter shall be for four years.

658 **SECTION 4.03.**

659 Nonpartisan elections.

660 Political parties shall not conduct primaries for city offices and all names of candidates for  
661 city offices shall be listed without party designations.

662 **SECTION 4.04.**

663 Election by plurality.

664 The person receiving a plurality of the votes cast for any city office shall be elected, so long  
665 as the candidate receiving the most votes shall receive more than 40 percent of the votes cast  
666 in the election. In the event no candidate receives more than 40 percent of the votes cast, a  
667 special runoff election shall be called and held in accordance with provisions for notice, time,  
668 and elections procedures for runoff elections as established by Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the  
669 O.C.G.A., the "Georgia Election Code," as now or hereafter amended.

670 C. Vacancies.

671 **SECTION 4.05.**

672 Special elections; vacancies.

673 In the event that the office of mayor or councilmember shall become vacant as provided in  
674 Section 2.03 of this charter, the city council or those remaining shall order a special election  
675 to fill the balance of the unexpired term of such official; provided, however, that if such  
676 vacancy occurs within 12 months of the expiration of the term of that office, the city council  
677 or those remaining shall appoint a successor for the remainder of the term. In all other  
678 respects, the special election shall be held and conducted in accordance with Chapter 2 of  
679 Title 21 of the O.C.G.A., the "Georgia Election Code," as now or hereafter amended.

680 D. Other Provisions.  
 681 **SECTION 4.06.**  
 682 Other provisions.

683 Except as otherwise provided by this charter, the city council shall, by ordinance, prescribe  
 684 such rules and regulations it deems appropriate to fulfill any options and duties under  
 685 Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the O.C.G.A., the "Georgia Election Code," as now or hereafter  
 686 amended.

687 **REMOVAL OF OFFICERS**  
 688 **SECTION 4.07.**  
 689 Removal of officers.

690 (a) The mayor, councilmembers, or other appointed officers provided for in this charter shall  
 691 be removed from office for any one or more of the causes provided in Title 45 of the  
 692 O.C.G.A., or such other applicable laws as are or may hereafter be enacted.

693 (b) Removal of an officer pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall be accomplished  
 694 by one of the following methods:

695 (1) Following a hearing at which an impartial panel shall render a decision. In the event  
 696 an elected officer is sought to be removed by the action of the city council, such officer  
 697 shall be entitled to a written notice specifying the ground or grounds for removal and to  
 698 a public hearing which shall be held not less than ten days after the service of such  
 699 written notice. The city council shall provide by ordinance for the manner in which such  
 700 hearings shall be held. Any elected officer sought to be removed from office as herein  
 701 provided shall have the right of appeal from the decision of the city council to the  
 702 Superior Court of Haralson County. Such appeal shall be governed by the same rules as  
 703 govern appeals to the superior court from the probate court; or

704 (2) By an order of the Superior Court of Haralson County following a hearing on a  
 705 complaint seeking such removal brought by a minimum of five residents of the city.

706 ARTICLE V  
 707 FINANCE  
 708 GENERALLY  
 709 TAXATION AND VARIOUS FEES

710 A. Property Taxes.

711 **SECTION 5.01.**

712 Property tax.

713 The city council may levy and collect an ad valorem tax on all real and personal property  
 714 within the corporate limits of the city that is subject to such taxation by the state and county  
 715 within which the property is situate. This tax is for the purpose of raising revenues to defray  
 716 the costs of operating the city government, of providing governmental services, for the  
 717 repayment of principal and interest on general obligations, and for any other public purpose  
 718 as determined by the city council in its discretion.

719 **SECTION 5.02.**

720 Millage Rate; due dates; payment methods.

721 The city council, by ordinance, shall establish a millage rate for the city property tax, a due  
 722 date, and the time period within which these taxes must be paid. The city council, by  
 723 ordinance, may provide for the payment of these taxes by installments or in one lump sum,  
 724 as well as authorize the voluntary payment of taxes prior to the time when due.

725 B. Occupation Taxes and Regulatory Fees.

726 **SECTION 5.03.**

727 Occupation and business taxes.

728 The city council, by ordinance, shall have the power to levy such occupation or business  
 729 taxes as are not denied by law. The city council may classify businesses, occupations, or  
 730 professions for the purpose of such taxation in any way which may be lawful and may  
 731 compel the payment of such taxes as provided in Section 5.09 of this charter.

732 **SECTION 5.04.**

733 Regulatory fees; permits.

734 The city council, by ordinance, shall have the power to require businesses or practitioners  
 735 doing business within this city to obtain a permit for such activity from the city and pay a

736 reasonable regulatory fee for such permit as provided by general law. Such fees shall reflect  
737 the total cost to the city of regulating the activity, and if unpaid, shall be collected as  
738 provided in Section 5.09 of this charter.

739 **SECTION 5.05.**

740 Franchises.

741 (a) The city council shall have the power to grant franchises for the use of this city's streets  
742 and alleys for the purposes of railroads, street railways, telephone companies, electric  
743 companies, electric membership corporations, cable television and other telecommunications  
744 companies, gas companies, transportation companies, and other similar organizations. The  
745 city council shall determine the duration, terms, whether the same shall be exclusive or  
746 nonexclusive, and the consideration for such franchises; provided, however, that no franchise  
747 shall be granted for a period in excess of 35 years, and no franchise shall be granted unless  
748 the city receives just and adequate compensation therefor. The city council shall provide for  
749 the registration of all franchises with the city clerk in a registration book kept by the clerk.  
750 The city council may provide by ordinance for the registration within a reasonable time of  
751 all franchises previously granted.

752 (b) If no franchise agreement is in effect, the city council has the authority, as permitted or  
753 regulated by state law, to impose a tax on gross receipts for the use of this city's streets and  
754 alleys for the purposes of railroads, street railways, telephone companies, electric companies,  
755 electric membership corporations, cable television and other telecommunications companies,  
756 gas companies, transportation companies, and other similar organizations.

757 **SECTION 5.06.**

758 Service charges.

759 The city council by ordinance shall have the power to assess and collect fees, charges, and  
760 tolls for sewers, sanitary and health services, or any other services provided or made  
761 available within and without the corporate limits of the city for the total cost to the city of  
762 providing or making available such services. If unpaid, such charges shall be collected as  
763 provided in Section 5.09 of this charter.

764 **SECTION 5.07.**

765 Special assessments.

766 The city council, by ordinance, shall have the power to assess and collect the cost of  
 767 constructing, reconstructing, widening, or improving any public way, street, sidewalk,  
 768 curbing, gutters, sewers, or other utility mains and appurtenances from the abutting property  
 769 owners under such terms and conditions as are reasonable. If unpaid, such charges shall be  
 770 collected as provided in Section 5.09 of this charter.

771 **SECTION 5.08.**

772 Construction; other taxes and fees.

773 This city shall be empowered to levy any other tax or fee allowed now or hereafter by law,  
 774 and the specific mention of any right, power, or authority in this article shall not be construed  
 775 as limiting in any way the general powers of this city to govern its local affairs.

776 C. Collection of Delinquent Taxes.

777 **SECTION 5.09.**

778 Collection of delinquent taxes and fees.

779 The city council, by ordinance, may provide generally for the collection of delinquent taxes,  
 780 fees, or other revenue due the city under Sections 5.01 through 5.08 of this charter by  
 781 whatever reasonable means as are not precluded by law. This shall include providing for the  
 782 dates when the taxes or fees are due; late penalties or interest; issuance and execution of  
 783 fi.fa.'s; creation and priority of liens; making delinquent taxes and fees personal debts of the  
 784 persons required to pay the taxes or fees imposed; refusal to issue city permits or revocation  
 785 of city permits for failure to pay any city taxes or fees; and providing for the assignment or  
 786 transfer of tax executions.

787 **BORROWING**

788 **SECTION 5.10.**

789 General obligation bonds.

790 The city council shall have the power to issue bonds for the purpose of raising revenue to  
 791 carry out any project, program, or venture authorized under this charter or the laws of the  
 792 state. Such bonding authority shall be exercised in accordance with the laws governing bond  
 793 issuance by municipalities in effect at the time said issue is undertaken.

794 **SECTION 5.11.**

795 Revenue bonds.

796 Revenue bonds may be issued by the city council as state law now or hereafter provides.  
797 Such bonds are to be paid out of any revenue produced by the project, program, or venture  
798 for which they were issued.

799 **SECTION 5.12.**

800 Short-term loans.

801 The city may obtain short-term loans and must repay such loans not later than December 31  
802 of each year, unless otherwise provided by law.

803 **SECTION 5.13.**

804 Lease-purchase contracts.

805 The city may enter into multiyear lease, purchase, or lease-purchase contracts for the  
806 acquisition of goods, materials, real and personal property, services, and supplies, provided  
807 the contract terminates without further obligation on the part of the municipality at the close  
808 of the calendar year in which it was executed and at the close of each succeeding calendar  
809 year for which it may be renewed. Contracts must be executed in accordance with the  
810 requirements of Code Section 36-60-13 of the O.C.G.A., or other such applicable laws as are  
811 or may hereafter be enacted.

812 **ACCOUNTING AND BUDGETING**

813 **SECTION 5.14.**

814 Fiscal year.

815 The city council shall set the fiscal year by ordinance. This fiscal year shall constitute the  
816 budget year and the year for financial accounting and reporting of each and every office,  
817 department, agency, and activity of the city government.

818 **SECTION 5.15.**

819 Preparation of budgets.

820 The city council shall provide an ordinance on the procedures and requirements for the  
821 preparation and execution of an annual operating budget, a capital improvement plan, and

822 a capital budget, including requirements as to the scope, content, and form of such budgets  
823 and plans.

824 **SECTION 5.16.**

825 Submission of operating budget to city council.

826 On or before a date fixed by the mayor and city council but not later than 45 days prior to the  
827 beginning of each fiscal year, the treasurer shall submit to the city council a proposed  
828 operating budget for the ensuing fiscal year. The budget shall be accompanied by a message  
829 from the treasurer containing a statement of the general fiscal policies of the city, the  
830 important features of the budget, explanations of major changes recommended for the next  
831 fiscal year, a general summary of the budget, and such other pertinent comments and  
832 information. The operating budget and the capital budget hereinafter provided for, the  
833 budget message, and all supporting documents shall be filed in the office of the city clerk and  
834 shall be open to public inspection.

835 **SECTION 5.17.**

836 Action by city council on budget.

837 (a) The city council may amend the operating budget proposed by the treasurer, except that  
838 the budget as finally amended and adopted must provide for all expenditures required by  
839 state law or by other provisions of this charter and for all debt service requirements for the  
840 ensuing fiscal year, and the total appropriations from any fund shall not exceed the estimated  
841 fund balance, reserves, and revenues.

842 (b) The city council by ordinance shall adopt the final operating budget for the ensuing fiscal  
843 year not later than the last day of the month prior to the beginning of a new fiscal year. If the  
844 city council fails to adopt the budget by this date, the amounts appropriated for operation for  
845 the current fiscal year shall be deemed adopted for the ensuing fiscal year on a  
846 month-to-month basis, with all items prorated accordingly until such time as the city council  
847 adopts a budget for the ensuing fiscal year. Adoption of the budget shall take the form of an  
848 appropriations ordinance setting out the estimated revenues in detail by sources and making  
849 appropriations according to fund and by organizational unit, purpose, or activity as set out  
850 in the budget preparation ordinance adopted pursuant to Section 5.15 of this charter.

851 (c) The amount set out in the adopted operating budget for each organizational unit shall  
852 constitute the annual appropriation for such, and no expenditure shall be made or  
853 encumbrance created in excess of the otherwise unencumbered balance of the appropriations  
854 or allotment thereof, to which it is chargeable.

855 **SECTION 5.18.**

856 Tax levies.

857 The city council shall levy by ordinance such taxes as are necessary. The taxes and tax rates  
858 set by such ordinance shall be such that reasonable estimates of revenues from such levy  
859 shall at least be sufficient, together with other anticipated revenues, fund balances, and  
860 applicable reserves, to equal the total amount appropriated for each of the several funds set  
861 forth in the annual operating budget for defraying the expenses of the general government  
862 of this city.

863 **SECTION 5.19.**

864 Changes in appropriations.

865 The city council by ordinance may make changes in the appropriations contained in the  
866 current operating budget at any regular, special, or emergency meeting called for such  
867 purpose, but any additional appropriations may be made only from an existing unexpended  
868 surplus.

869 **SECTION 5.20.**

870 Capital Budget.

871 (a) On or before the date fixed by the city council but no later than 45 days prior to the  
872 beginning of each fiscal year, the mayor shall submit to the city council a proposed capital  
873 improvements plan with a recommended capital budget containing the means of financing  
874 the improvements proposed for the ensuing fiscal year. The city council shall have power  
875 to accept, with or without amendments, or reject the proposed plan and proposed budget.  
876 The city council shall not authorize an expenditure for the construction of any building,  
877 structure, work, or improvement, unless the appropriations for such project are included in  
878 the capital budget, except to meet a public emergency as provided in Section 2.15 of this  
879 charter.

880 (b) The city council shall adopt by resolution or ordinance the final capital budget for the  
881 ensuing fiscal year not later than the last day of the month prior to the beginning of a new  
882 fiscal year. No appropriation provided for in a prior capital budget shall lapse until the  
883 purpose for which the appropriation was made shall have been accomplished or abandoned;  
884 provided, however, that the mayor may submit amendments to the capital budget at any time  
885 during the fiscal year, accompanied by recommendations. Any such amendments to the  
886 capital budget shall become effective only upon adoption by ordinance.

887 **SECTION 5.21.**

888 Independent audit.

889 There shall be an annual independent audit of all city accounts, funds, and financial  
890 transactions by a certified public accountant selected by the city council. The audit shall be  
891 conducted according to generally accepted auditing principles. Any audit of any funds by  
892 the state or federal governments may be accepted as satisfying the requirements of this  
893 charter. Copies of annual audit reports shall be available at printing costs to the public.

894 **PROCUREMENT AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

895 **SECTION 5.22.**

896 Contracting procedures.

897 Except in an emergency situation, no contract with the city in excess of \$15,000.00 shall be  
898 binding on the city unless:

899 (1) It is in writing;

900 (2) It is drawn by or submitted and reviewed by the city attorney, and as a matter of  
901 course, is signed by the city attorney to indicate such drafting or review; and

902 (3) It is made or authorized by the city council and such approval is entered in the city  
903 council journal of proceedings pursuant to Section 2.11 of this charter; provided,  
904 however, that in the event of an emergency, the contract may be submitted to the city  
905 council at the next regularly scheduled meeting of mayor and city council for review  
906 and ratification.

907 **SECTION 5.23.**

908 Centralized purchasing.

909 The city council shall by ordinance prescribe procedures for a system of centralized  
910 purchasing and contracting for the city.

911 **SECTION 5.24.**

912 Sale and lease of city property.

913 (a) The mayor and city council may sell and convey or lease any real or personal property  
914 owned or held by the city for governmental or other purposes as now or hereafter provided  
915 by law.

916 (b) The city council may quitclaim any rights it may have in property not needed for public  
917 purposes upon report by the mayor and adoption of a resolution, both finding that the

918 property is not needed for public or other purposes and that the interest of the city has no  
 919 readily ascertainable monetary value.

920 (c) Whenever in opening, extending, or widening any street, avenue, alley, or public place  
 921 of the city, a small parcel or tract of land is cut off or separated by such work from a larger  
 922 tract or boundary of land owned by the city, the city council may authorize the mayor to sell  
 923 and convey said cut-off or separated parcel or tract of land to an abutting or adjoining  
 924 property owner or owners where such sale and conveyance facilitates the enjoyment of the  
 925 highest and best use of the abutting owner's property. Included in the sales contract shall be  
 926 a provision for the rights of way of said street, avenue, alley, or public place. Each abutting  
 927 property owner shall be notified of the availability of the property and given the opportunity  
 928 to purchase said property under such terms and conditions as set out by ordinance. All deeds  
 929 and conveyances heretofore and hereafter so executed and delivered shall convey all title and  
 930 interest the city has in such property, notwithstanding the fact that no public sale after  
 931 advertisement was or is hereafter made.

932 **ARTICLE VI**

933 **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

934 **BONDS FOR OFFICIALS**

935 **SECTION 6.01.**

936 Bonds for officials.

937 The officers and employees of this city, both elective and appointive, shall execute such  
 938 surety or fidelity bonds in such amounts and upon such terms and conditions as the city  
 939 council shall from time to time require by ordinance or as may be provided by law.

940 **SECTION 6.02.**

941 Existing ordinances, resolutions, rules, and regulations.

942 All ordinances, resolutions, rules, and regulations now in force in the city not inconsistent  
 943 with this charter are hereby declared valid and of full effect and force until amended or  
 944 repealed by the city council.

945 **SECTION 6.03.**

946 Existing personnel and officers.

947 Except as specifically provided otherwise by this charter, all personnel and officers of the  
 948 city and their rights, privileges, and powers shall continue beyond the time this charter takes

949 effect for a period of 90 days before or during which the existing city council shall pass a  
 950 transition ordinance detailing the changes in personnel and appointive officers required or  
 951 desired and arranging such titles, rights, privileges, and powers as may be required or desired  
 952 to allow a reasonable transition.

953 **SECTION 6.04.**

954 Pending matters.

955 Except as specifically provided otherwise by this charter, all rights, claims, actions, orders,  
 956 contracts and legal or administrative proceedings shall continue, and any such ongoing work  
 957 or cases shall be completed by such city agencies, personnel, or offices as may be provided  
 958 by the city council.

959 **SECTION 6.05.**

960 Construction.

961 (a) Section captions in this charter are informative only and are not to be considered as a part  
 962 thereof.

963 (b) The word "shall" is mandatory and the word "may" is permissive.

964 (c) The singular shall include the plural, the masculine shall include the feminine, and vice  
 965 versa.

966 **SECTION 6.06.**

967 Severability.

968 If any article, section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, or part thereof of this charter shall be  
 969 held to be invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect  
 970 or impair other parts of this charter unless it clearly appears that such other parts are wholly  
 971 and necessarily dependent upon the part held to be invalid or unconstitutional, it being the  
 972 legislative intent in enacting this charter that each article, section, subsection, paragraph,  
 973 sentence, or part thereof be enacted separately and independent of each other.

974 **SECTION 6.07.**

975 Repealer.

976 An Act incorporating the Town of Waco in the County of Haralson, approved August 16,  
 977 1915 (Ga. L.1915, p. 941), is hereby repealed in its entirety and all amendatory acts thereto

978 are likewise repealed in their entirety. All other laws and parts of laws in conflict with this  
979 charter are hereby repealed.

980 **SECTION 6.08.**

981 Effective date.

982 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law  
983 without such approval.

984 **SECTION 6.09.**

985 General repealer.

986 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.