



April 15, 2026

My fellow neighbors in Mulberry,

Since 2024, the people of the City of Mulberry have fought to take back control of our own community -- especially when it comes to planning and zoning decisions that shape our daily lives. From the very beginning, our vision was simple: a city with no property tax, limited government, and decisions made by the people who actually live here.

Gwinnett County did not like that.

From day one, the County has taken extraordinary and aggressive steps to stop Mulberry from ever becoming a reality. They sued to block our referendum. They sued to stop our council elections. And now, in their most extreme move yet, they are trying to dissolve our city altogether.

The County claims this is about the law. They argue that no city should be limited in the services it provides, that no city should be restricted from raising property taxes, and that no city should have to seek voter approval to amend its charter. They say these limits violate the Georgia Constitution.

But let's be honest—this has never been about the Constitution.

This has always been about power.

Gwinnett County does not want to give up control over Mulberry. For years, that control has meant handing over planning and zoning decisions to developers, often without meaningful input from the people who actually live in these communities. Mulberry changed that. And that is exactly why the County is trying to tear it down.

Let me be clear: we would not be making any changes to our charter if we had not been dragged through years of unnecessary and costly litigation. These lawsuits were not about protecting the law -- they were about exhausting our city's time, money, and momentum.

But there comes a point when leadership means ending the fight, even when you know you are right. That is where we are today.

The proposed amendments to Mulberry's charter, based on the advice of legal counsel, are designed to put an end to this legal battle once and for all. The State Legislature gave Mulberry the clear authority to make these changes during the transition period. Section 8.11(f) -- a standard cleanup provision for new cities -- exists for exactly this reason. We are using it now to shut down the County's lawsuit and protect our city's future.

Let's also be clear about what is not changing:

- *Our commitment to no new property taxes.*
- *Our commitment to limited government.*
- *Our commitment to putting local decisions back in the hands of local residents.*

Those principles are not going anywhere.

What is changing is that we are refusing to waste any more time or taxpayer money on a fight that Gwinnett County never should have started. Mulberry deserves better than endless lawsuits and political games.

We are choosing to move forward.

We are choosing to protect this city.

And we are choosing to keep Mulberry in the hands of the people who built it.

Sincerely,



R. Michael Coker

Mayor, City of Mulberry

[michael.coker@mulberryga.gov](mailto:michael.coker@mulberryga.gov)

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS  
TO THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF MULBERRY, GEORGIA**

**Section 1.14.**

(a) This city shall have all the powers possible for a city to have under the present or future Constitution or laws of this state as fully and completely as though they were specifically enumerated in this charter, ~~except~~ and that the city shall ~~not~~ have the power to assess, levy, or collect ad valorem taxes on real or personal property within the corporate limits of the city. This city shall have all the powers of self-government not otherwise prohibited by this charter or by general law.

(b) The city ~~shall~~ may exercise ~~the all~~ powers granted to it under the present or future Constitution and laws of this state ~~for the purposes of including but not limited to~~ providing planning and zoning, code adoption and enforcement, and storm-water collection and disposal and those items related to the provision of such services and for the general administration of the city in providing such services.

(c) The provision of ~~all~~ services and exercise of powers enumerated in this Section of this charter may be provided by the city contracting with service providers via intergovernmental agreements or contracts with private parties.

**Section 1.16.**

~~(b) No amendment to this Act by the city council pursuant to the home rule powers granted by Chapter 35 of Title 36 of the O.C.G.A. shall be enforceable except upon ratification of such amendment by the registered voters of the city at a referendum held by the governing authority of the city and upon certification of the results of such referendum by the Secretary of State.~~

**Section 6.10.**

The city council ~~shall not~~ may assess, levy, or collect any ad valorem taxes on any real or personal property within the corporate limits of the city.

**Section 6.11.**

The city council shall not ~~be prohibited from~~ establishing a millage rate. ~~in excess of 0 mills.~~