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Henry candidates sound off at forum

By JOE ADGIE
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McDONOUGH — A large number of candidates for Henry County seats spoke to an overflow crowd at Mt. Olive Baptist Church on Monday evening.

Around 20 candidates spoke at the forum sponsored by the Henry

County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., as well as Henry County NAACP, Henry-Clayton Section of NCNW and Rho Sigma Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. Common issues raised by candidates included a prospective city of Eagle's Landing and any possible ramifications it could in-

spire, as well as transportation issues surrounding a recently passed transit initiative called The ATL. The ATL is short for the Atlanta Region Transit Link Authority, a group consisting of 13 counties in metro Atlanta. Candidates said they would support whatever Henry residents were in favor of, but differed on

what sort of transit solutions they supported. "Light rail is too expensive," Republican state Senate District 17 candidate Nelva Lee said. "We should expand GRTA, bus transportation so more people have access to it. People won't use GRTA now because it doesn't come back to the county in the middle of the day."

Those views conflicted with El-Mahdi Holly, Democratic candidate for the District 111 seat in the Georgia House of Representatives. "Light rail might allow for us to get some travel alternatives," Holly said. "We just have congested streets, and that's a state problem. Oftentimes, state reps don't have a say in

that arena, more so for the counties and federal government to work out." Holly suggested the problem could be partially solved by more Henry residents having the ability to work from the county, but said the new initiative could mean easier transit opportunities for all.

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Stockbridge residents attend one of two open house events about the city's 20-year comprehensive plan. (Staff Photos: Joe Adgie)

Fast food robber gets 25 years

By CHELSEA PRINCE
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McDONOUGH — A Macon man will spend 15 years in prison for two 2016 armed robberies at Henry County fast food restaurants.



Johnny Lee Wade

Johnny Lee Wade, 30, pleaded guilty Thursday in Henry County Superior Court to three counts of armed robbery, four counts of aggravated assault and one count of criminal attempt to commit armed robbery. He was sentenced to 25 years with 15 years to serve in the state prison system without the possibility of parole.

"This office will not tolerate violent crime in our businesses, family establishments, or anywhere else in Henry County," District Attorney Darius Pattillo said in a statement.

Wade was charged in two local fast food armed robberies, the first on March 30, 2016, at the North Park Drive Subway in Stockbridge and the second on

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Plotting a future

Stockbridge holds open house for 2038 Comprehensive Plan

By JOE ADGIE
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STOCKBRIDGE — The city of Stockbridge held two open houses last week for residents to provide their input for the future of their city. The city is putting together a 2038 comprehensive plan, which will serve as a road map for the city's future over the next 20 years.

In the open houses, which did not feature a formal presentation, Stockbridge residents were able to provide their feedback for what they'd like to see for the city.

Some of the feedback provided by residents included a desire to see more Fortune 100 companies in the



Stockbridge residents examine the city's boundary map. The residents were able to provide their feedback for what they'd like to see for the city.

city, a desire to see the city's boundaries closed up, more high-end retail and restaurants and a desire to "grow together

and work to become a more cohesive community." Specifically, one note said "no Eagle's Landing."

A number of Stockbridge city officials were on hand during the event, such as Assistant City Manager Camilla Moore, who spoke to residents and other stakeholders during the two open house events.

"This is a road map," Moore said of the comprehensive plan. "When the state Legislature put this in place, they wanted a bottoms-up approach to community and community development. The only way you can do that is by a process that allows your citizens to come in and say, 'This is what we want to see,' and that gives it directly to the policymakers to come

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Henry County takes first look at next budget

By JOE ADGIE
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McDONOUGH — Henry County commissioners took an initial look at the fiscal year 2018-19 budget, a budget that could likely change as tax assessments are received.

The budget, presented by City Manager Cheri Hobson-Matthews, is currently at \$161,281,568, which is an increase from the \$154,357,270 budget adopted last year.

However, that number is expected to change, Hobson-Matthews said, as the county gets a more concrete

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