



Norcross Comprehensive Plan Update & Town Center Livable Centers Initiative Update

VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY

September 7, 2023

6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Held via Zoom

6:30 Welcome

Jim Summerbell started the meeting by welcoming people to the meeting, introducing speakers and reviewing the agenda.

A couple questions were asked of meeting participants via an online poll. Seven people participated, and results are shown below.

- What is your affiliation with Norcross? (Live here, work here, etc.)

I live in Norcross full-time	7
I work, go to school, or own a business in Norcross	2
I visit Norcross for events, restaurants, and shopping	1
I do not live near Norcross	0
None of the above	0

- How long have you lived in the Norcross area?

Earlier than 1960	0
1960 - 1970	0
1970 - 1980	0
1980 - 1990	1
1990 - 2000	2
2000 - 2010	1
2010 - 2020	2
Later than 2020	1

6:35 Project Overview

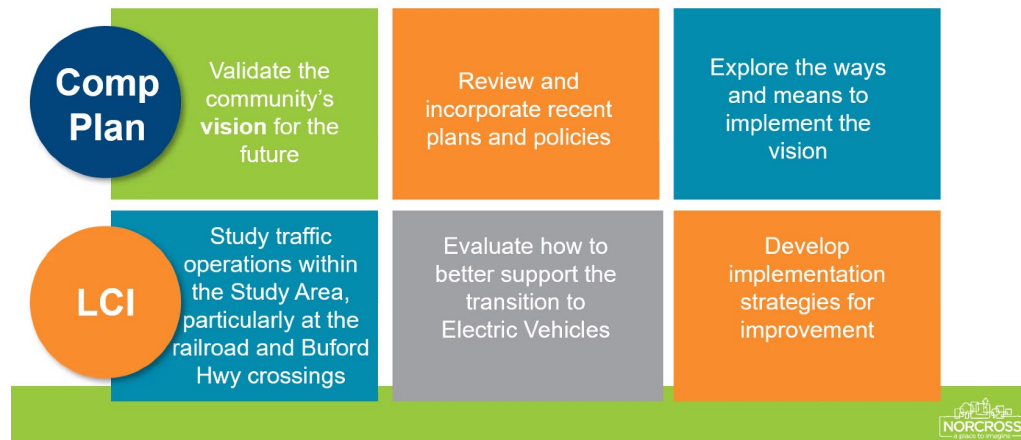
Jim talked about the reason the City is updating the City's Comprehensive Plan. It directs policy decisions and capital investment decisions. It is focused on next five years of implementation. The planning process is also updating the City's Town Center Livable Centers Initiative. The LCI is being funded by the Atlanta Regional Commission. The approved Comprehensive Plan ensures Qualified Local Government and access to funds. This LCI is focused on implementation.

The LCI is largely focused on traffic operations and electric vehicle operations. The Comprehensive Plan is validating the current plan and incorporating related studies.

A lot of the planning process is about paring down projects that have previously been identified. In October we'll be talking about the community work program. The Comprehensive Plan will be wrapped up in February.

Project Goals

Combined goals between updating the Comprehensive Plan and the LCI



6:45 What We've Heard to Date

Ansley talked about how we've been getting out into the community since February. There are more ways for people to participate after tonight.

Ansley talked about transportation related desires, including bike/walking, parking deck, and safety improvements.

Other desires beautification and gateway, more grocery options, more security

Just over 400 people participated in the first survey. There were 409 total participants. Ansley spoke about how there has been less participation from the Spanish-speaking community and

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how the planning team has been working to address that gap. Ansley shared highlights from the survey which are included in the slide deck.

6:50 Planning Context

Jonathan spoke to elements of the vision from the Comprehensive Plan.

- Overall vision statement covering the 20-year planning period and
- 13 Character areas – Smaller distinct areas of the community that have similar land uses and character and are expected to stay the same or change similarly.

The policy map and character areas help guide rezoning and development decisions.

Jonathan spoke to recent areas of change throughout the city. Most activity has been occurring along Buford Hwy and near Downtown Norcross. There has been additional gateway development in the AT-PIB Character Area.

Jonathan spoke to the Buford Highway Plan and the LCI Plan. Many of the projects were transportation projects and several have been completed. Jonathan spoke to how we are advancing some into this plan and handed it off to Geoff Warr.

Geoff spoke to three types of projects:

- bike projects
- pedestrian/trail projects
- small, other projects that are not bike/ped related.

Geoff spoke about quantifiable measures: costs, crash history, traffic stress, pedestrian use, proximity to schools, etc. to help prioritize projects. The public will be helping chime in to share their priorities.

7:15 Survey Demo

Ansley shared the map input tool and how to provide feedback. The link to the provide feedback page was shared in the chat. Ansley then walked through the second survey that allows community members to provide feedback on the Comprehensive Plan character areas.

Ansley discussed next steps before the final open house.

Tixie Fowler spoke to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. They are adding a whole new layer of projects. Is there any way to collaborate? Trails, foot traffic, and bikes are what we are focused on.

Geoff asked how far along the effort. Tixie answered that they have had one meeting so far. The next meeting is September 16.

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They are working to update the existing plan to take out what makes sense. The last plan didn't reflect the full community's priorities.

Jonathan noted that the plan recommendations from the parks and trail plan can be incorporated down the road as a Comprehensive Plan amendment. Jim discussed that the Comprehensive Plan is on a timeline for adoption based on its deadline from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The plan needs to be wrapped up before the holidays so that it can go through the state and regional review process, and then the City must adopt the plan in February.

Tixie will put the team in touch. Perez Planning and Bio Habitats are leading the effort.

Tixie asked if we have ever talked about preserving greenspace within areas. Jim noted that this is often covered in the parks and recreation plan.

Tixie said it would help if the Comprehensive Plan included language that forested areas/non-developed areas should be protected and if funding presents itself, it would be great to convert these greenspaces into parks.

Connie Weathers spoke to a past goal about greenspace being documented. The ARC Green Communities certification set these goals.

ARC Green Communities also has credits for bike-friendly and walk-friendly community certifications. The City was far away from achieving these during the last Green Communities update, but Connie would like to see these reflected in the plan as goals.

A community member asked if the downtown area is included in the Town Center. The team clarified that downtown is included in the Town Center Character Area.

Robert Forro spoke to transfer of development rights. Is there a way for the builder group to provide input to the Comprehensive Plan? The building community would like to be part of the process. He has 8 or 9 people that would like to provide input. Could they have a focus group meeting to discuss zoning issues (primarily single-family zoning)? They would like to discuss ways to make single-family housing easier to do. Robert spoke to a Wingo Street extension as a key gateway into the Town Center. He would like to talk to the City about plans to incorporate parallel parking and other aspects of the development.

Jim said yes; he would be happy to talk about things.

William Corbin said he would be happy to join that call.

Robert spoke to the fact that Norcross now has over \$1-million homes. They are still cheaper than other Atlanta suburban communities. As price points come up, the population may shift, which may have implications for the school system.

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Antonio asked Robert to email him to set up a meeting.

Tixie asked about zoning tools that can preserve trees and minimize taking them down. Is there anything we can do? Jim noted that the UDO does have a tree preservation ordinance. The City needs to review the existing ordinance to ensure that it has strong protections for priority tree protection, such as specimen trees and trees along our trails and in our parks.

Jim thanked participants for attending and closed the meeting.

7:30 Adjourn