

City of Norcross

65 Lawrenceville Street

Norcross, GA 30071



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 16, 2026

5:00 PM

2nd Floor Conference Room

Parks, Green Spaces, and Trails Commission

Tixie Fowler, Chair

Jon Davis, Commission Member

Joe Weber, Commission Member

Kassie Diehl, Commission Member

Scott Leslie, Commission Member

1. Call to Order

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Tixie Fowler	Chair	Present	
Jon Davis	Board member	Present	
Kassie Diehl	Board member	Present	
Joe Weber	Board member	Present	
Scott Leslie	Board member	Absent	

2. Ratification of March 17, 2026 meeting minutes

Motion to approve the March 17 meeting minutes of the Parks, Green Spaces, and Trails Commission.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS] 4-0

MOVER: Jon Davis, Board Member

SECONDER: Tixie Fowler, Chair

AYES: Fowler, Davis, Diehl, Weber

ABSENT: Scott Leslie

3. Ongoing Business

Item "B" moved up to the first item under Ongoing Business.

Chair Tixie introduced Robert Forro and provided the group with context regarding why she invited Forro to attend this meeting. In summary, this agenda item was a follow-up to conversations held by the Commission at the March (2026) meeting, in which Tixie and Terry Sutton proposed a framework of a checklist that will better align the UDO and city planning, clarifying expectations, regulations, and "next steps" for developers and city staff.

In this discussion, the following key observations and recommendations were shared:

- a. Norcross is transitioning from a suburban community model into an urban model; however, the City (and Gwinnett County in general) is still managing development using suburban and, in some cases, rural standards.
- b. Forro noted that Norcross already has a checklist; however, it is a "boilerplate" version based on the minimum County and State standards and doesn't effectively address unique challenges created by increasing urbanization, including more redevelopment than development of "raw land" (which is where current State and County development standards are focused).
- c. The Commission agreed that, in addition to potentially outdated ordinance standards, the city faces challenges with consistently high staff turnover in the Community Planning Department, political agendas, and a lack of Staff and/or City Council awareness of or valuing of more modern and innovative development opportunities.
- d. Forro noted that as a result of similar concerns, the City of Peachtree Corners is currently writing its own development ordinances.
- e. Forro noted that in his experience, "creative developers go to places where they're allowed to be creative." Tixie noted that this perspective supports Norcross as "a place to imagine" and agreed

that current ordinances regarding stormwater mitigation seem outdated in the face of a changing climate and increased urbanization. Commission members agreed that "creative" didn't mean finding loopholes or weaknesses in the current ordinances; rather, it meant allowing innovative developers to leverage green infrastructure assets and integrate more sustainability-focused approaches to development and redevelopment.

Discussion:

The group agreed that educating the public and offering educational opportunities for developers, city staff, and elected officials could be the first step in moving towards strengthening ordinances with BMPs that support a more creative, innovative, and ecologically-sensitive approach to development and redevelopment in the city.

ACTION ITEM: Motion made by Jon Davis to recommend development of public outreach workshops that engage members of volunteer boards and the public in learning more about collaborative sustainable green infrastructure development opportunities in Norcross. Motion seconded by Kassie; motion passed 4-0.

NEXT STEPS: This topic will be added to the May Agenda under "Ongoing Business," and the Commission will discuss strategies for moving forward with proposed public outreach and education.

Ongoing Business (continued in sequence):

A. City Updates (Michael Jones)

Michael provides updates on the following:

- Thrasher Park bench installation: bench has been installed.
- Status of recommended street signage to promote and direct to local parks: City Communications Officer Julie Brechbill told him this topic will be included in the overall rebranding of all city signage. Tixie argued that this was not a branding issue and underlined that the Commission is recommending standard Department of Transportation-issued signage for parks be integrated into the city. Michael said he would invite Julie to attend the next meeting for discussion.
- Status of city negotiations with church to purchase parcels expanding Johnson Dean: No update since last month's meeting.

4. New Business and General Updates

A. Greenspace Improvement along Mitchell Road (Tixie Fowler)

Tixie reported activity has been completed by Staff to clean up invasive plants, debilitated privacy fencing, and make other basic curb appeal improvements to the old city dumpsite facing Mitchell Road.

B. Programming in the Parks (Tixie Fowler and Michael Jones)

Tixie shared her interactions with students at Summerour Middle School and their programming requests for outdoor movies in the park. Michael shared costs secured from one vendor for a "Movie in the Parks" program.

Discussion included:

- a. showing a nature-themed movie (for example, "Princess Mononoke")
- b. line-up could extend into the Fall, and is scheduled for Saturday night viewing

ACTION ITEM: Motion made by Tixie to recommend that the city host four "Movies under the

Stars" events in Lillian Webb Park in 2026, prioritizing corporate funding. Motion seconded by Kassie; motion passed 4-0.

C. Other: NPAC Request for Support to extend White Squirrels Art Project into Pinnacle Park. Tixie explained NPAC's interest in expanding the current White Squirrels Project into Pinnacle Park as a way to engage community members equally across the community (and not just in the Historic Norcross area)

ACTION ITEM: Motion made by Tixie to support NPAC's Phase 2 White Squirrel Project into Pinnacle Park. Motion seconded by Kassie; motion passed 4-0.

4. **New Business**

a. Greenspace Improvement along Mitchell Road (Tixie Fowler)

Tixie will update the Board on the activity underway to clean up city property near the church that was the site of past dumping.

b. Programming in the Parks (Tixie Fowler and Michael Jones)

Tixie will update the Board on her interactions with students at Summerour Middle School and their programming requests. Michael will share the costs of the proposed "Movie in the Parks" program, and the Board will brainstorm potential funding resources.

ACTION ITEM: The Board will vote on the children's programming suggestion and recommend next steps for securing program funding.

5. **ADDITIONAL INPUT AND/OR DISCUSSION NOT OTHERWISE ADDRESSED BY THIS AGENDA**

6. **Adjourn**

ACTION ITEM: Motion to adjourn made by Jon Davis; seconded by Tixie. Motion passed 4-0.

Next regularly scheduled meeting to be held on Thursday, May 21, 2026