

City of Norcross

*65 Lawrenceville Street
Norcross, GA 30071*



Meeting Agenda

Friday, February 7, 2020

9:00 AM

2nd Floor Community Room

Mayor and Council Retreat

Mayor Craig Newton

Mayor Pro Tem Josh Bare

Councilmember Andrew Hixson

Councilmember Elaine Puckett

Councilmember Matt Myers

Councilmember Bruce Gaynor

- A. Roll Call (recorded)
- B. 8:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- C. 9:00 a.m. Welcome & Opening Remarks Mayor Craig Newton
- D. 9:05 Closed for Exec Session - Personnel
- E. 10:05 a.m. Break
- F. 10:15 a.m. Mayor's Vision 2020 and Beyond
[Presentation](#)
- G. 10:45 a.m. Project/Discussion Prioritization Paige Havens
- Community Work Program
 - Walk/friendly Community
 - Community Center long-term plans
 - Norcross 101/Youth Commission
 - Boards and Council Communications
 - Multicultural Advisory Committee
 - Citizen Budget Review commission
 - Linear Parks
 - Preservation of Historic Homes
 - Holding Developers Accountable (agreements made with the City)
 - Buford Highway Redevelopment Master Plan
 - Annexation Planning & Preparedness
 - Affordable/Workforce housing
 - Railroad Pedestrian Crossing
 - Marketing/PR/Communications
 - Infrastructure Planning - Other Master Plans Needed
 - Leveraging our Resources (Norcross Power)
- H. 11:05 a.m. Council Discussions Part I
- I. 12:20 pm Working Lunch Served
- J. 12:45 p.m. Council Discussions Part II
- K. 2:00 p.m. Break
- L. 2:15 p.m. Council Discussions Part III
- M. 3:30 pm Next Steps
- N. 3:55 pm Closing Remarks Paige Havens
- O. 4:00 pm Adjournment

Economic Development

Norcross is known as a hub for global business. We attract the best – a highly educated, entrepreneurial, and talented workforce. As well as headquarters for global businesses, we are attracting innovative startups that are moving beyond the garage.

The city provides the environment needed to attract businesses. Our infrastructure is ample and in excellent condition, including roads, rails, high-speed data, reliable electricity, and clean water. Business regulations are fair, and the tax structure is attractive. The city, region, and state offer appropriate incentives to locate businesses in Norcross. Affordable and flexible workspaces nurture small businesses, start-ups, and entrepreneurs.

We provide the lifestyle, amenities, and institutions that attract the next generation of business leaders and innovators: high-end entertainment, outdoor recreation, exceptional K-12 and higher education, transit, and a green and sustainable environment. Our educational institutions inspire innovation and train the talent needed to support our high-tech sector right here in Norcross.

We foster a diversified suite of business activities. We support our existing and traditional sectors, including retail, auto sales, financial services, logistics, and light industrial businesses. We are a growing center for a broad range of technologies – including software, mobile communications, and medical devices and services. Our arts and cultural opportunities, shopping, and proximity to major recreational activities make us a premier destination for tourism and conventions.

Three-Year (2020-23) Priorities

1. **Support and provide leadership to attract international and national business and investment to the city. Leverage involvement to produce investment in Norcross' identified Buford Highway growth corridor providing connectivity to the Doraville Transit Center.**
2. **Actively pursue business retention and growth at the local level, including diverse small, medium, and large businesses with an emphasis on high-tech, biotech, tourism, the arts, and international trade.**
3. **Leverage the annexation of the SWD with a focus on capitalizing on our current position as the region's 7th largest logistics hub. The SHEP project in Savannah harbor will produce substantial economic benefits for Georgia by enabling larger and more heavily-loaded vessels into the harbor with fewer tidal delays. The SWD is perfectly poised with direct accessibility to I-85 and its proximity to metro Atlanta.**
4. **Promote NorcrossWorks as a tool in our economic toolbox to help draw and retain business to Norcross and continue the discussion with Gwinnett Tech satellite in Norcross.**

Transportation and Mobility

Getting into, around and through Norcross relatively easily

Norcross is well connected to the rest of the region and its activities via roads and transit. Our commercial centers are bustling and can be reliably traversed by their employees and customers even during commute hours and

holidays. People come to Norcross's Downtown District for entertainment and shopping because it is convenient to get around.

Adequate regional road capacity handles a high volume of demand. Roads are well designed and maintained and are managed to minimize congestion and keep people moving even at peak periods. Those who choose to drive can find convenient parking. Visitors and those who do not drive enjoy ample public transportation with reliable connections through a wide variety of services, including local transit and ride-sharing services. Walking and biking are relatively safe and enjoyable, and pedestrians are comfortable and safe.

Three-Year (2020-2023) Priorities

- 1. Continue to execute our transportation capital plans for future growth and mobility of the city with PEDs initiatives. Use the funding provided by the ARC and CBDG to improve the safety of sidewalks. Continue to promote Safe Walks to School projects through Sustainable Norcross.**
- 2. Advocate with the State Department of Transportation and regional agencies for the acceleration of the Beaver Run Greenway project.**
- 3. Continue to fund, design and build Norcross shuttle projects that support tourism**
- 4. Continue to promote the county's Connect Gwinnett Transportation project.**
- 5. Implement an effective strategy for creating a city transit hub (Center) to benefit neighborhoods, traffic, and business in Norcross.**

Natural Environment and Greenspace

Norcross has it all. From livable five-story apartment high-rises to large wooded lots in a rustic setting, people can find exactly where they want to live and work in Norcross. The diverse and well-balanced mix of business and commercial properties and a wide variety of housing types attract workers and families who desire a safe, sustainable, and accessible community.

Norcross has an abundance of parks and natural open spaces. Lillian Webb Park is one of the best in the state due to its location, size, beauty, and accessibility.

From neighborhood walking paths like the Hunter-Walker Trail and forested trails at Johnson Dean Park, our City provides a variety of recreational opportunities within walking distance of our homes and businesses. Norcross is an emerging "Smart City" with a clean, high-quality environment and excellent, reliable infrastructure that supports our vibrant and growing city by including high-tech connectivity.

Our neighborhoods and businesses transcend age, ethnicity, and culture to create safe, welcoming places to live and work.

Three-Year (2020-23) Priorities

- 1. Execute Phase One of the Affordable Housing Strategy Implementation Program as created by GICH through "Live Norcross."**

2. **Complete construction of Phase One of the Beaver Ruin Greenway**
3. **Strategically implement the neighborhood planning process suggested in the Norcross Comprehensive Plan as written with few modifications.**
4. **Create an Environmental Stewardship Initiative and analyze additional steps that the city may wish to take in order to achieve environmental goals (including tree canopy).**
5. **Update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to include an analysis of the level of service for a growing population and the creation of a financial strategy for these services.**

A great place to live, work, learn and grow

Norcross is the place to be inspired by culture, entertainment, and nature. Learn, relax, shop, eat, cook, read, play, or marvel at our natural environment. Whatever your mood, there is a place for you in Norcross.

Centrally located, you may leisurely stroll around the town center for business and entertainment and along the way, enjoy nature, shopping, culture, and a variety of cuisines in our restaurants.

For many, Norcross is home. For the rest of the region and the world, Norcross has to become is a destination unto itself.

The arts are celebrated. Norcross's Cultural Arts Center is a success, attracting the best in onstage entertainment. Cultural arts organizations throughout the city are supported by private philanthropy. Arts and cultural opportunities stimulate our workers and residents, whether they are members of the audience or performers. The cultural arts attract Fortune 500 companies to our community, whether it is to locate their headquarters or as convention visitors.

In Norcross, the past is honored. Residents experience a sense of place through an understanding of our history.

Our community buildings -- libraries, community centers, City Hall and two museums provide places where neighbors can gather and connect with each other and support our civic and business institutions.

With the strategic location of our new library, we've enhanced our commitment to education by supporting the students of New Baldwin ES, Summerour MS, and Norcross ES into an educational quadrangle of learning -- all being within walking distance of the new library.

From our nearby urban center downtown, you can quickly escape into nature in our parks and trails.

Three-Year (2020-23) Priorities

1. **Create a Civic and Cultural Arts Center plan integrating City Hall, the Buford Hwy Corridor, a convention center expansion and a proposed transit center.**
2. **Continue to advance our current downtown while incorporating new initiatives along Buford Highway as an additional city signature gathering place.**

3. **Establish a crossing street feature at Buford Hwy at the new library.**
4. **Create a City School Education Council. This organization of principals and assistant principals of both public, private, and charter schools will meet with the City Council quarterly to inform, advocate for, collaborate, and strategize on our local Norcross educational institutions including Brenau University and Atlanta Leadership College.**
5. **Begin design discussions with the Gwinnett County CID to support completing the Buford Highway City project and integrate the vision of the Buford Hwy Master plan.**

High-Performance Government

A high-performance government characterizes Norcross. Our residents live in a safe, clean city that promotes healthy living. The perception of safety contributes to the success of businesses and neighborhoods. Police, fire and emergency personnel are seen by citizens every day, and we ensure that these services reflect high standards and pride.

People are attracted to live here because they see that city government is well managed. Our high quality of customer service ensures that residents realize a direct link between their tax dollar and the services they receive. We make public investments wisely, assuring taxpayers that we are living within our means, while also ensuring that we have superb infrastructure to support growing businesses and desirable residential living. We have beautiful public buildings that residents point to with pride. Government plays its role in supporting the careful balance of neighborhoods, commercial and retail growth, diverse residential living, and amenities that characterize Norcross. City leadership fosters careful long-term planning, responsible fiscal policy, and thoughtful partnerships with businesses, the non-profit sector, and the region.

We seek input from our residents and businesses and this input informs city decision-making. We make decisions in a transparent manner. We support public engagement and connectivity. Norcross does its business through cutting edge technology. City government uses technology to connect with its residents, giving them a voice in their community. Our boards, commissions, and other citizen advisory groups assist the City Council in providing superior leadership by representing the diverse interests of the City and providing thoughtful and creative ideas that assure sound policy direction and decisions.

Our residents care about Norcross. They speak up and collectively work to address our mutual needs. In Norcross, our commitment to public service is paramount. Our residents know that their local government listens, cares about, and responds to them.

Three-Year (2020-2023) Priorities

1. **Continue walkability throughout the entire city through our new “Complete Sidewalk Plan,” creating a connecting network of sidewalks all through the City of Norcross with an emphasis on handicap accessibility.**
2. **Build trust in government by developing and implementing a comprehensive communications plan with proactive strategies and systems, and robust, transparent, open public engagement processes. Characteristics discussed include:**

- Share clear and timely information
 - Engagement – getting input
 - The more we listen, the more responsive we are.
3. Identify and implement technologies that improve customer service with the City of Norcross.
 4. Establish a long-range financial strategy that includes options that respond to the future operating and capital needs of the city.
 5. Develop and establish a new brand identity for the city that reflects both our past and our future, an identity that is iconic and leaves a lasting impression that Norcross is a place that people want to live, work, learn and grow.

Regional Leadership and Influence

Norcross will lead, catalyze, and partner with our neighbors throughout the region. We are strategically the gateway to and the closest Gwinnett city to Atlanta.

Our county is made up of distinct cities that share common goals. As our county's demographics shift evolves, Norcross represents a major political, **economic, cultural, and educational force in the region.**

Three-Year (2020-2023) Priorities

1. Be an active regional partner, with other cities in schools, CIDs, or the state and federal government. Strategically pursue public and/or private funding and partnerships where beneficial to Norcross and the region.
2. Establish a better partnership with “Explore Gwinnett” and the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce on our mutual areas of interest, including attraction of international business and tourism.
3. Norcross will continue to collaborate, partner, and celebrate the benefits of working together as one region. Norcross should continue its work with the “One Region Initiative “through the Welcoming America program.
4. Continue to support GICH “LiveNorcross” through public/private partnerships promoting regional and national attention in addressing housing issues.