

City of Norcross

*65 Lawrenceville Street
Norcross, GA 30071*



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 20, 2025
5:00 PM

2nd Floor Conference Room

Parks, Green Spaces, and Trails Commission

Tixie Fowler, Chair

Joe Weber, Board Member

Kassie Diehl, Board Member

Scott Leslie, Board Member

Jon Davis, Board Member

1. Call to Order

The PGT meeting was called to order at 5:09 PM by Chair Tixie Fowler.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Tixie Fowler	Chair	Present	
Joe Weber	Commission Member	Present	
Kassie Diehl	Commission Member	Present	
Scott Leslie	Commission Member	Present	
Jon Davis	Commission Member	Present	

Attending

Bruce Gaynor - City Council, Council liaison

Len Housley - Director of Public Works

Hunter Rawls - Staff Liaison

Terry Sutton - Tree Preservation Board liaison

2. Action Item: Ratification of January 2025 Meeting Minutes

Parks, Green Spaces, and Trails Commission – Regular Meeting – Jan 16, 2025, 5:00 PM

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Kassie Diehl, Commission Member
SECONDER:	Joe Weber, Commission Member
AYES:	Fowler, Weber, Diehl, Leslie, Davis

5. *MOVED TO TOP OF AGENDA***Additional Input/Discussion Not Otherwise Addressed By This Agenda**

Len Housley addressed the Board; he was moved to the beginning of the agenda in respect to his schedule. Len reported that his meeting with Gwinnett County staff in charge of the Piedmont Pathway Project went well, and he is confident the County is now fully aware of Norcross' interests in collaborative action when connecting County trail projects with City trail projects. He and Scott Leslie (who also attended the County meeting) reported learning that Gwinnett County did not plan to fund the section of the Piedmont Pathway conceptualized running through the City of Norcross. Therefore, Len suggested that the Board support expanding the scope of the RFP originally proposed in January (see January Minutes) by issuing an RFP for a scope and feasibility plan that encompasses the entire proposed greenspace that includes City-owned property and the greenspace segments identified for the Piedmont Pathway. Len noted this high level conceptualization report will be a key tool in future grant applications, and specific projects within the report's parameters can be addressed in phases as directed by Council.

Scott added that County representatives agreed to write Letters of Support for any grant applications the City decides to pursue. He also reported they identified their top priority is to develop connectivity to their new wetlands park, located just outside of Norcross city limits.

Scott and Len reported a conversation with Carlos Perez (Perez Planning & Design, consultant for Norcross PGT&GI Master Plan) in which Carlos agreed the larger focus was a good idea and said he would (at no cost) write a "statement of work" to outline the scope, concept goals and potential phasing options, and include a general cost per phase.

Len said he would like to present this strategy for approval to Council at April Policy Work Session - the Board agreed to support staff as needed, and would await further direction and recommendations by Len.

3. Ongoing Business

A. Council Update (Councilman Bruce Gaynor)

Bruce felt there were no updates relevant to PGT Commission assignments, so no updates reported.

B. Tree Preservation Board Update (Terry Sutton)

Terry invited the Board to attend TPB's Arbor Day celebration at Summerour Park, noting 200 students from Beauty Baldwin Elementary would be attending. Hunter added that 1 tree would be planted near the park and that educational activities were also planned.

C. Parks, Greenspaces, Trails & Green Infrastructure Master Plan Updates

- Joe Weber provided highlights of 2025 AARP Community Challenge grants opportunities, noting that awards are capped at \$25,000 and prioritize transportation and pedestrian safety projects that support people ages 50+. Joe also noted no match is required. The Board agreed to keep this grant opportunity on list for future opportunities.

TO DO: Joe to start a spreadsheet listing grant opportunities for ongoing reference and updating.

- Kassie reported that she has spoken to stakeholders at Christ Episcopal Church re potential expansion of Johnson Dean Forest and they are interested in further discussion. Kassie added that she and Charlie Riehm (Tree Preservation Board) will meet with Church representatives the week of February 24th to brainstorm opportunities.
- Hunter Rawls gave a general update on his work developing management plans for Norcross parks and greenspaces, noting that a management plan for Johnson Dean Forest Preserve is second in priority to Pinnacle Park. Hunter asked the Board to help him look for grants to support plans development and said he anticipates prioritizing management focus on Johnson Dean in 2026.
 - Hunter also reported that Council has approved the green roof kiosk concept and formally extended access to project funds. Jalia Killings (Norcross Sustainability Manager) is currently getting with contractors to confirm cost. He suggested the Board work with Jalia to design and develop content for the educational elements planned for the kiosk.
 - Hunter said tree plantings at Summerour Middle School in city-managed area adjacent to Summerour Park have been approved by Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) and he is moving forward with some planting; however, the bulk of trees will be planted in the Winter of 2026 (seasonal timing.)
- Tixie shared Councilman Myers' report re discussions with Church re parking at proposed Phase 1 of development of 10-acre land as part of Agenda Item #5 (moved to top of agenda)
- Due to late hour, Tixie only briefly mentioned ongoing interest in self-assignment of Board member projects based on strategies prioritized in PGT&GI Plan. Kassie suggested the Board walk the proposed addition to the RFP to better visualize suggestions made by Len (see Agenda Item #5) Group discussion specified dates for a group walk and to invite Council and other potential stakeholders; the Board also agreed to read the "Piedmont Pathway Norcross Segment: Limited Scope Concept Report" provided in hard copies by Len. Recommendation is to use this report as a template for writing RFP if concept is approved by Council at April Policy Work Session.

4. New Business

None.

5. Additional Input/Discussion Not Otherwise Addressed By This Agenda

Discussion moved up to the beginning of the agenda.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:02pm with a motion made by Jon, seconded by Joe.

The motion passed 5:0.