

City of Norcross

65 Lawrenceville Street

Norcross, GA 30071



Meeting Minutes

Monday, December 15, 2025

6:30 PM

2nd Floor Conference Room

Policy Work Session

Mayor Craig Newton
Mayor Pro Tem Marshall Cheek
Councilmember Andrew Hixson
Councilmember Josh Bare
Councilmember Matt Myers
Councilmember Bruce Gaynor

Meeting Recording:

<https://norcrossga.portal.civicclerk.com/event/180/med>

A. Roll Call (recorded)

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Craig Newton	Mayor	Present	
Marshall Cheek	Mayor Pro Tem	Present	
Andrew Hixson	Councilmember	Present	
Josh Bare	Councilmember	Absent	
Matt Myers	Councilmember	Present	
Bruce Gaynor	Councilmember	Present	

B. Citizen Input

Edith Riehm commented on items 2025-325 and 2025-360, raising concerns about the property's known drainage issues and the request for a single driveway. She indicated a gap in the review process that should be resolved before the application is submitted to the ARB. She also questioned whether the Council would exercise its rights and authority to protect the city from developer influence.

Ian Lecroy, representing Stan Howington on Item 2025-325, emphasized the importance of the Mayor and Council's judicial and legislative roles and urged the Council to review the record by applying the architectural and design standards to ensure the ARB's decision was proper.

Paul Sumner – commented on item 2025-325, expressed concern that city surveys do not adequately reflect resident input, and questioned their use in the comprehensive plan revision. He stated that survey data show limited resident support for apartments and townhomes, while stronger support exists for restaurants, community spaces, retail, and additional grocery stores. He raised concerns that the proposal would convert adjacent properties to mixed-use residential development despite stated preferences.

Chris Casey – commented on 2025-325, opposing an increase in density in the comprehensive plan and urging the Council to maintain the current medium-density zoning and protect the historic district boundaries. She noted that public feedback indicates limited support for high-density apartments and that the proposed development would significantly exceed the surrounding residential density. She also raised concerns about traffic congestion, infrastructure strain, and reduced tax revenue if incentives are granted to the developer.

Lonnie Laham, commented on agenda item 2035-325, urging the Mayor and Council to stop adding new apartment developments, stating that they make areas less desirable and worsen traffic and safety issues. Drawing on extensive experience in real estate, the speaker said that owner-occupied housing, such as condominiums and townhomes, is a better alternative when increased density is needed. They recommended pausing apartment approvals until a sustainable plan is developed, emphasizing that continued growth is not always necessary for a city's prosperity.

Charlotte Osborn, commented on agenda item 2025-361, appreciated the inclusion of the TPB and PG&T recommendations being incorporated in the city's Park Plaza design. She emphasized that new trees will only survive and deliver lasting benefits if they are planted with sufficient soil volume, appropriate base materials, and good drainage. Trees placed in compacted or poor soil often fail and become long-term liabilities. Using tools such as expanded soil areas, connected tree pits, tree islands, and structural soil, sometimes with minimal reductions to park space, greatly improves tree survival, protects the city's investment, and allows trees to reach their full size and environmental benefits compared to those planted in constrained conditions.

Terry Sutton, commented on agenda item 2025-36. Expressed that trees with adequate soil and space—such as those in Thrasher Park and behind City Hall—show strong shape and healthy growth, even in parking areas. In contrast, trees in narrow downtown sidewalk planters grow less vigorously, whereas wider planters support better tree health.

Tixie Fowler, 2025-325. In reviewing the appeal, Council should apply Architectural Review Board standards

as if reviewing the project for the first time. She emphasized that ARB responsibilities include evaluating a structure's size, mass, and overall character, not just its appearance. She stressed the importance of preserving the city's established character and historic feel, noting that new construction should respect Norcross's long-standing identity rather than reflect only recent development trends.

Joe Beach, commented on agenda item 2025-325, echoing concerns about the city survey, which shows residents oppose additional apartments. He also criticized what he described as poor communication from the city, saying residents are not adequately informed about council meetings and planning sessions. He expressed frustration that decisions appear to be made without sufficient public awareness or engagement, which he believes limits community participation.

Ann Beach, described how trees identified for removal were cut down, but some were left dumped near a creek instead of being properly removed or reused. They express concern that this creates an unattractive area that could otherwise be improved, and question whether the city council is prioritizing the city's appearance and the quality of the pedestrian experience, noting that sidewalks should be clean, appealing, and enjoyable.

Jim Eyre, The expanded downtown parking project has made strong progress and is ready to move from 40% to 60% design. Thanks were given for support with financing, the 9 South Peachtree acquisition, and shared parking efforts. The project aligns with the Comprehensive Plan and supports growth and housing needs in Norcross, recognizing changing market trends and the importance of providing rental and flexible living options to attract younger generations.

Eleanor Gilchrist, expressed concern about the extent of the city's architectural control over new development, particularly multifamily housing. They believe recent apartment construction does not align with Norcross's historic character and worry that future projects could further harm the city's appearance. The speaker emphasizes the importance of strong design standards and city oversight to ensure new buildings, landscaping, and overall appearance are compatible with the historic area.

Donna Glaze, commented on agenda item 2025-325, thanking the city for recent updates on the barbershop and insurance company, and expressing appreciation for positive community developments. They voice concern about the growing number of apartments and suggest cottages as a better alternative, noting that cottage-style housing feels more welcoming, attractive, and community-oriented. The speaker also shares feedback from residents on trust in city leadership, emphasizing the importance of transparency, consistency, and maintaining a strong reputation in public service.

C. Board Updates

None

D. General Updates

E. Council- General Discussions

F. City Manager's Report

G. Board Appointments

There are no board appointments or reappointment for the Mayor and Council to consider at this time.

H. Items for Discussion

- 1. 2025-361: Expanded Downtown Parking Planning and Design**

RESULT:
Referred to the January 5 Regular Council Meeting.
- 2. 2025-360: Updates to the 2045 Comprehensive Plan**

RESULT:
Referred to the January 5 Regular Council Meeting.
- 3. 2025-325: City Council Appeal of ARB Approval of COA2025-037**

RESULT:
Referred to the January 5 Regular Council Meeting.
- 4. 2025-358: Adoption of the Norcross Public Arts Commission Bylaws**

RESULT:
Referred to the February 16 Policy Work Session.
- 5. 2025-357: Budget Amendment for Norcross Elementary Paint Love Mural Sponsorship**

RESULT:
Referred to the January 5 Regular Council Meeting.
- 6. 2025-410: Award of Contract for Lillian Webb Park Railing**

RESULT:
Referred to the January 5 Regular Council Meeting.
- 7. 2025-327: Amendment to Purchasing Provisions within the Norcross Code of Ordinances and Financial Policy**

RESULT:
Referred to the January 5 Regular Council Meeting.
- 8. 2025-359: Abandonment of City Right of Way on Lawrenceville Street**

RESULT:
Referred to the January 5 Regular Council Meeting.
- 9. 2025-411: City Financing of the DDA Acquisition's of 9 South Peachtree Street**

RESULT:
Referred to the January 5 Regular Council Meeting.

10. 2025-412: Intergovernmental Agreement with the Downtown Development Authority regarding 80 and 94 Wingo Street.

RESULT:

Referred to the January 5 Regular Council Meeting.

11. 2025-413: Election of Mayor Pro Tempore for 2026

RESULT:

Referred to the January 5 Regular Council Meeting.

I. Adjourn to Executive Session for Legal, Personnel, and Real Estate

The meeting adjourned to Executive Session for Personnel and Real Estate matters at 9:38 PM, following a motion by Councilmember Gaynor, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Cheek, approved unanimously.

J. Signed by _____ Mayor Craig Newton

K. Attest _____ Monique Philip, City Clerk