

**Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District  
Strategic Planning Session  
September 13, 2006  
Final Report**

**Facilitated by:  
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## Table of Contents

FACILITATORS .....	3
INTRODUCTION.....	3
Why do you serve?.....	3
What do you intend to impact? .....	3
What is unique about the Gwinnett CID area? .....	3
In your travels what communities have you seen that you liked? What did you like about them?.....	4
MISSION.....	4
What are the needs or opportunities (the purpose) that we, the Gwinnett Place CID, were created to address? .....	4
What are we, the Gwinnett Place CID, doing to address these needs or opportunities (the business)?.....	5
What principles or beliefs (the values) guide our work?.....	5
Current Mission Statement .....	5
GOALS .....	6
Current Goals (What do they mean?).....	6
Improving travel .....	6
Increasing attractiveness, safety and security .....	6
Raising property values .....	6
Representing collective interests .....	6
Do these goals accurately reflect the Mission of the CID?.....	6
SUCCESS .....	7
What is success?.....	7
How is it measured? .....	7
How do you communicate it? .....	7
SHORT TERM PROJECTS WITH NEXT STEPS.....	7
LONG TERM PROJECTS WITH NEXT STEPS.....	8
MISCELLANEOUS PROJECTS .....	8

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**FACILITATORS**

- Langford D. Holbrook, Public Service Associate, Fanning Institute, University of Georgia
- Danny Bivins, Public Service Assistant, Fanning Institute, University of Georgia

**INTRODUCTION**

*Tell me who you are, a little about your background and why you agreed to serve on the CID (What you wish to impact or change about Gwinnett Place).*

*Why do you serve?*

- The CID area is great and I want to make it greater
- Revitalize the area
- Growth
- Make the area nicer
- Improve the look, improve the aesthetics
- Redevelop existing sites not green fields
- Vitality
- The area is unique
- Traffic is a problem
- Property owner/business owner—vested interest in success of area
- Community Service
- Make the Gwinnett Place CID into a business Center drawing from the surrounding area
- Keep the CID area competitive

**Primary Point: CID board members serve to increase the vitality of the Gwinnett Place CID area by improving traffic, aesthetics, and perception**

*What do you intend to impact?*

- Create a great shopping experience
- Traffic impact—make it easy to get in and out of the CID area
- Redevelopment—continue economic growth; increase vitality
- The look/aesthetics—update and keep looking good, clean up and beautify
- Tap new markets—Asian and Latino market are expanding due to demographic changes
- The CID is at a cross roads—focus on unique elements of the CID area— “make new again”
- Help foster a live, work and play redevelopment model
- Originally the Gwinnett Place CID area was a regional commercial market—now there is a new market we have to capitalize, we need to make it safe and secure, accessible, keep it looking nice by using landscaping, lighting, and signs

**Primary Point: CID board members intend to impact the look (aesthetics), the flow (traffic) and the market (invigorate).**

*What is unique about the Gwinnett CID area?*

- The mall and community around it is becoming outdated
- It is now the Community Center “City Center”
- Hockey team arena and other cultural and sports attractions are in the immediate area. It has everything a city has. All the amenities
- Demographic evolution—larger minority and ethnic base, African-American, Asian and Hispanic.

- No sidewalks; built for cars; not for mass transit; car oriented
- Small town values
- Size of business center, regional center, everything you need
- Mostly rental property around the district
- Congestion, too much traffic—perception and reality
- Active business owners—proactive approach, still a market, make it easier for consumers to spend their money by making it easier to get in and get out

**Primary Point: the Gwinnett CID area has everything for everybody.**

*In your travels what communities have you seen that you liked? What did you like about them?*

- West or Midwest cities, i.e., Bridges—opportunities to dress up infrastructure
- St. Louis downtown
- Amarillo
- Rapid City, S. Dakota; street scapes
- Glendale Galleria
- California street scape
- consider residential siting
- adopt a cop, walk involved
- S.W. Orlando (Celebration), signage, landscaping; curb appeal
- Long Boat Key, hidden community area, green scape, more natural, keep trees
- South Park in Charlotte, NC, residential units with mall, recreational areas
- Disney World model—keep the CID area safe, fresh, easy to get around
- High rises, will attract a live-work-play atmosphere, good & bad will come, higher demographics with condos as opposed to apartments (owner occupied)

**Primary Point: take advantage of the ordinary. Improve the aesthetics of infrastructure.**

## MISSION

*What are the needs or opportunities (the purpose) that we, the Gwinnett Place CID, were created to address?*

- Revitalization/redevelopment
- Funding projects (implementation/action)
- Reduce traffic/congestion
- Clean up area, aesthetics, and maintenance
- Convene area businesses to work together on common issues
- Government voice; government resources in our area; zoning, development input—represent the CID area property owners
- Improve and maintain attractive visual appearance
- Advocate for area—voice of the CID area property owners
- Protecting and growing business owners' investment
- Cultivate the area—make it ripe for positive development
- Work with Chamber
- Security and safety in the CID area is a purpose but not a primary one. Property owners hiring off duty police to provide security
- Making the Gwinnett Place area a destination point for people, especially families
- Pedestrian mobility, alternative transportation
- Green space development, parks/recreation

**Primary Point: vital, viable, and sustainable**

***What are we, the Gwinnett Place CID, doing to address these needs or opportunities (the business)?***

- Identifying projects; feasibility, legwork/homework—especially what others are not doing, master planning
- Political buy-in; communication, building relationships
- Make it look better—directional signs, less weeds
- Getting the word out about the CID vision
- Implementation of projects – signage
- Funding; finding additional money
- Planning steps: 1) develop a vision for the area, 2) work with government on future land use planning (determine what we want and where), 3) master plan for community
- Identify decisions made in the past that can or will impact area, i.e., exit ramp construction (most get off I85 one mile north of Pleasant Hill after construction is complete)
- Have input in future decisions that impact the Gwinnett Place CID area
- Short list and prioritize potential projects for most impact—create noticeable success for CID
- Leveraging our funding to get more funding
- Bottom line benefit for business/property owner—sustainability

**Primary Point: plan, lead, and convene**

***What principles or beliefs (the values) guide our work?***

- Making it profitable for businesses in the area
- Stress the positives—counter the negative perceptions
- Take advantage of changing demographics economically, embrace/include all
- Go about the work of the CID focused on positive return on investment, ‘bang for buck’ for CID property owners
- Transparent process and decision making
- Cost effective; smart choices, smart use of member money
- Benefit everyone in district
- Positive advocate—keep it healthy

**Primary Point: transparent, effective, inclusive advocate**

***Current Mission Statement***

**“To enhance the economic vitality of Gwinnett’s central business corridor by strengthening the area’s role as the center of commercial, cultural. And social activity.”**

***Does this mission accurately describe the Gwinnett Place CID purpose, business and values expressed in #3?***

***If not, how should it be changed?***

- Develop a new mission statement—change to be more specific and show advocacy and efficiency
- Cultural—remove; others doing good job with cultural amenities in the Gwinnett Place CID Add long-term sustainability, economic vitality for businesses in CID
- Positive—traffic—return on the investment & revitalization—aesthetics—accessibility—perception—security
- Make it clear and catchy. Easy for people to know what you stand for, what you do and how you are going to do it (Purpose of CID—Business of CID—Values of CID)

## GOALS

### *Current Goals (What do they mean?)*

#### **Improving travel**

- Reduce gridlock
- Direct pass-through traffic around to improve traffic flow
- Pleasant Hill/I85 Over pass—over capacity/ congested—needs expansion
- Pleasant Hill Road; key issue—coordinate traffic signals—work with county DOT
- Directions—signage
- Enforcement of traffic codes—options—red light camera—CID hire off duty police

#### **Increasing attractiveness, safety and security**

- Perception, communicate the positive
- Youth—concern—enforcement; during school hours especially
- More people, more safety
- Attractiveness—plan—how do you implement?
- Who? Property owners, Chamber, Gov't, Civic Groups, Media, Public event open house
- Residents? See it, feel it, believe it
- Actions
- Congestion mitigation—flow
- Aesthetics—landscaping—street scape, etc.
- Political buy-in
- Additional funding
- Planning—overall vision
- Ordinances that don't prevent or discourage but encourage redevelopment, i.e., storm water management incentives
- Show results—noticeable success
- Annual meeting and report; convene CID members (will have first one this year)

**Primary Point: see it, feel it, believe it. Make the CID area a better experience for consumers.**

#### **Raising property values**

- Bottom line benefit to CID property owners
- Long-term sustainability, viability of business and property owners
- Return on capital
- Return on investment
- Trends

**Primary Point: the bottom line**

#### **Representing collective interests**

- Convener for area business and property owners—The Forum
- Relationship with Government—Advocate

**Primary Point: convene, advocate**

*Do these goals accurately reflect the Mission of the CID?*

*If, not what changes should be made to the existing goals?*

*Are there any additional goals that need to be listed, if so what?*

Communication—get the word out about the Gwinnett Place CID mission, goals & successes

## SUCCESS

### *What is success?*

- Transformation
- Reinvigorating/redevelopment
- Live/work/play developments
- City Center—The City of Gwinnett (not an incorporated city but have everything a city does to bring people into the area)

**Primary Point: reinvigorate**

### *How is it measured?*

*Is Success Different for CID Board and Staff and the CID property owners?*

### *How do you communicate it?*

- Vigorous economic activity
- Gradual progression—steady change
- Law changes, local & state
- Redevelopment—not greenfield development
- Clean and attractive community
- Better traffic flow
- Recognition of CID & its influence
- High lease rate—low vacancy rate
- No empty big boxes
- Recognition for ‘big pull event center’
- Understand and communicate CID vision
- Visual—street scape, attractive signage, maintain, CID branding
- CID will become an integral part of planning process for the area (partner with the county)
- Finding other funds to leverage the CID funds
- Skyline (like a city)
- Increased residential development (owner occupied)
- Quality growth ordinances
- Continue relationship with government and improve relations
- Find way for redevelopment to be easier

**Primary Point: visible improvement in the look, noticeable change in traffic flow, vigorous economy.**

## SHORT TERM PROJECTS WITH NEXT STEPS

### *Can be completed prior to CID renewal*

- Implement Signage plan, both phases
  - work with Street Smarts to order signs
  - meet with state and county DOT about locations per existing plan
- Landscape Master Plan for Pleasant Hill and Steve Reynolds Ramps
  - Coordinate with GDOT
  - Finalize contract/plan
  - Locate funding—legislature—transportation enhancement grant
- Pleasant Hill street scape—traffic improvement—get with police chief
  - Grant awarded
  - GDOT work—speed up schedule
  - Finalize landscape for all of Pleasant Hill—study hiring engineer
- Area redevelopment plan—The Gwinnett CID Vision
  - Get proposal from Street Smarts
  - Show proposal to County Commission

- Look at revitalization plan & other existing plans and studies for the Gwinnett Place area
- Satellite street scape
  - Master plan—complete
  - Locate funding—focus on ARC
  - Develop funding plan ‘B’
- Pleasant Hill Rd. mobility
  - Traffic signals—coordinate
  - Signage
  - Stop blocking of the intersections—police, cameras
  - Widen bridge over I85—traffic study for bridge

## **LONG TERM PROJECTS WITH NEXT STEPS**

### ***Started prior to CID renewal but longer term to complete***

- New I-85/316 SB Slip (revisit when 85 widened for HOV, 5 yrs out)
- Widen Pleasant Hill Rd Bridge
  - traffic impact study
  - County Commission/GDOT
  - State; Fed legislators
  - Funding strategy—CMAC
- Breckinridge-Venture Blvd Connector (Bridge)
  - feasibility study
- Pedestrian Refuge Island
  - Include in Satellite & Pleasant Hill streetscape plan
- Ga. Power Park
  - Finish the plan/storm water capacity
  - Meet w/key stakeholders

## **MISCELLANEOUS PROJECTS**

- Study to show how much sales tax is generated here & percentage compared to rest of Gwinnett