

**Work Session Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, November 6, 2012, at 7:12 p.m., Mayor Eva Galambos presiding.**

The Work Session began at 7:12 p.m. during the recess of the Regular meeting.

**Goody Clancy, Architect, Preservationist, Planner and Urban Designer Firm**

David Dixon, FAIA, Principal for Planning & Urban Design at Goody Clancy, gave the following presentation.

1. City Center Master Plan Presentation



**Agenda**

- Overview of planning process timeline
- Community goals for the City Center
- Market-based investment opportunity
- Masterplan framework
  - Streets, blocks and buildings
  - Roswell Road
  - Green space network
- Achieving the master plan
  - A walk through City Center
  - Implementation sequence
- Implementation strategies
  - Public/private partnerships
  - Next steps
- Your questions





## Master planning process timeline



## Initial goals for the City Center

- Identifiable sense of place
- A vibrant, walkable City Center
- New civic/cultural center
- Catalyze significant market-driven investment
- Infrastructure supporting the City Center
- Public open space



## What we heard

1. Make it active and walkable
2. Bring people together
3. Invite spontaneous fun
4. Create a variety of green spaces
5. Nurture unique local identity



May 8 opportunities and challenges meetings



June 25-27 Vision workshops



## Market analysis: potential for 8-10 blocks neighborhood housing

- Housing: 1,500 units over 7-10 years
  - Lofts, townhouses
  - 55% for-rent—underway
  - 45% for-sale—priority around Green





## ...and potential for 3-5 blocks of walkable retail

### 10-year market potential:

- Retail: 120,000-200,000sf
  - Walkable, mixed-use setting—complementing existing retail, not competing
  - Replacing underutilized retail
  - Dining
  - Specialty stores
- Hotel: 60-90 room boutique hotel
  - Distinct position from current hotels in market
- Office: 28,000-83,000sf
  - Small tenants
  - Emphasis on local customers and workforce



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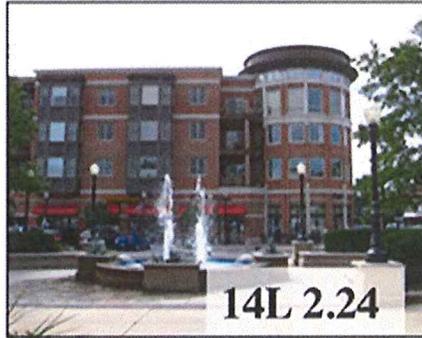


## ...adding up to a vibrant neighborhood



“allow courtyard type development, breaks the continuous rows of building”, “colors in vegetation”, “likes looking into community & landscaping, likes “courtyard feel” “likes open green space”, “group favorite, green, curving sidewalk, balcony, individual yards”, “(-) not at all, too much greenery”, “Like the courtyard, like the fences, “private look”, “walkway nice, landscape”, “parking in rear favorable”

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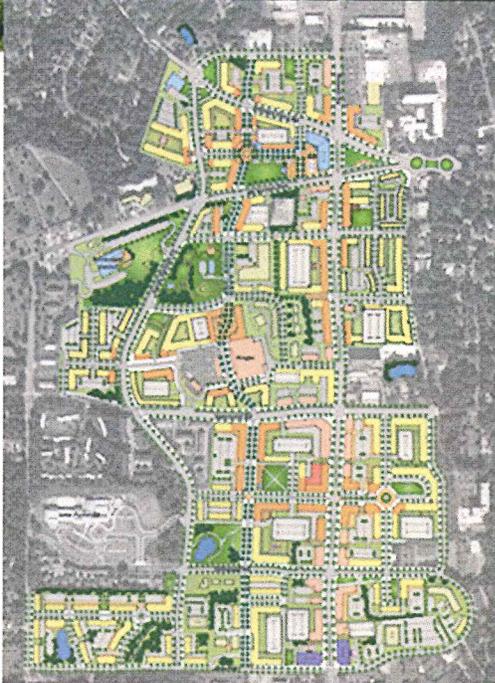


“+5, like the plaza, you can see what’s on the other side of the plaza, open, invites people”, “cool building, love the plaza and fountain, will wear well over time, color changes”, “fountain and courtyard good, architecture bad”, “parking in front, sharp angles”

Ben Carlson gave the following presentation.

### Master Plan framework

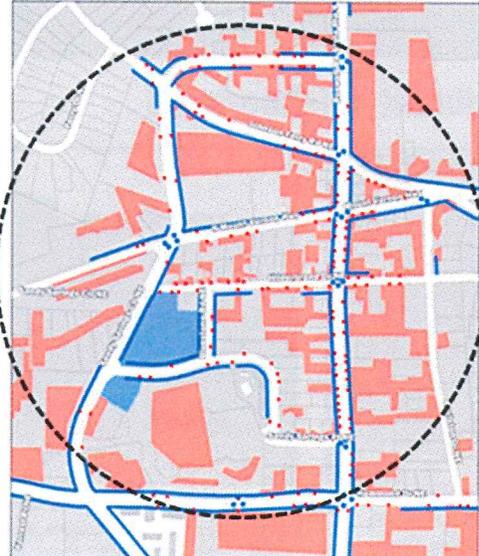
- Streets, blocks and buildings
- Roswell Road
- Green space network



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### Street and block network: scale

- How far will people walk?
- ...given current obstacles of curb cuts, parking lots, missing crosswalks, long blocks?
- What scale balances flexibility of building and site layout?
- ...supports potential for market-driven walkable development?
- ...and promotes safe, convenient traffic circulation?



City Center: Walkability

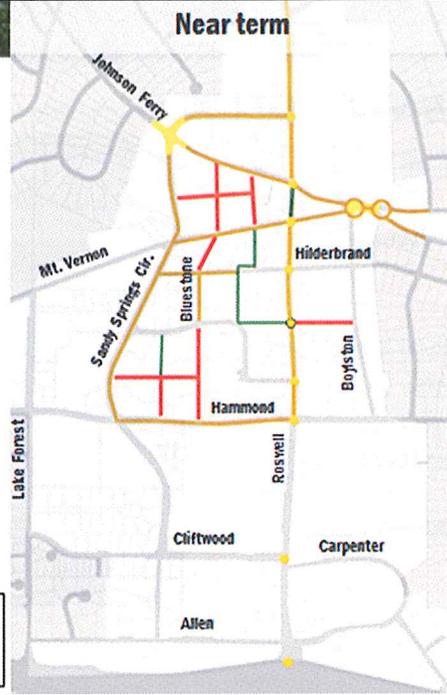
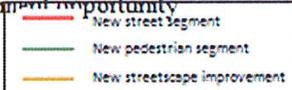
- Crosswalks
- Curb cuts
- Sidewalks
- Surface parking lots
- City parks

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## Street network standards

### Convenient, pedestrian-friendly

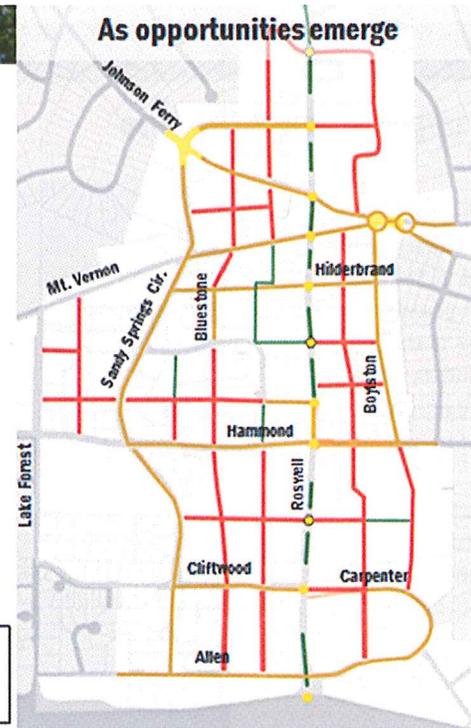
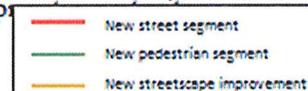
- Preferred max. block length 400'
- Enhanced pedestrian features on all roads
- No crossings >5 lanes across
- Support mixed-use development
- Distribute traffic – expanded route choices, fewer choke points
- Create safer, more convenient access to Roswell parcels via side streets
- Enables Roswell Road pedestrian improvements, expanded development opportunity



## Street network standards

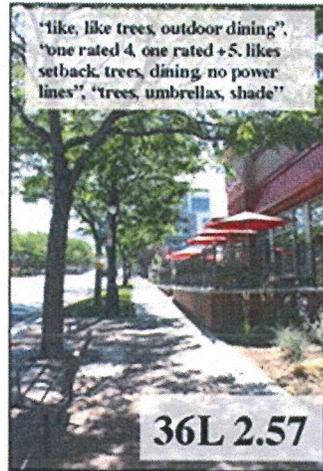
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- Enables Roswell Road pedestrian improvements, expanded development opportunity



## Roswell Road: City Center gateway

- First impression important
- Vital auto access
- Retail choices that complement walkable retail:
  - Larger-scale
  - Long-established local businesses
- Near-term improvements
  - Improve infrastructure
  - Unlock business and property reinvestment
  - Rebrand Roswell Road as City Center gateway



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## Roswell Road: improve infrastructure

- Rebuild Roswell/Johnson Ferry/Mt. Vernon intersections; Rebuild Roswell Rd. sidewalks and crosswalks on adjacent blocks, with bollards at traffic; bury electric distribution wires
- Automatic Traffic Management System (ATMS) – synchronizing traffic flow
- Offer street/intersection improvements in return for driveway consolidation that removes Roswell Road curb cuts



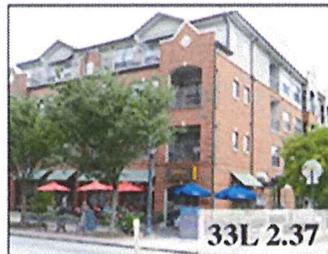
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## Roswell Road: unlock business and property reinvestment

- Today, property owners who upgrade property value 40%+ must pay for streetscape improvements. Replace this policy with incentives:
  - If owner provides wider sidewalk right of way through sale or easement, city will invest in sidewalk/streetscape
- Update development regulations to allow attractive single-use development supporting a walkable, mixed-use setting
- Make permitting process more user-friendly



"(+)" green



"like trees, residential over retail, like 4 stories", "nice for corner site - w/ dining along side street (maybe Roswell too)", "(+) bright ok, like trees, awnings, street oriented cafe", "(+) nice streetscape and retail use", "nice example of mixed use, nice feel for RK", "sidewalks, density, upper fl. setbacks varied, roofline"

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## Roswell Road: rebrand as City Center gateway

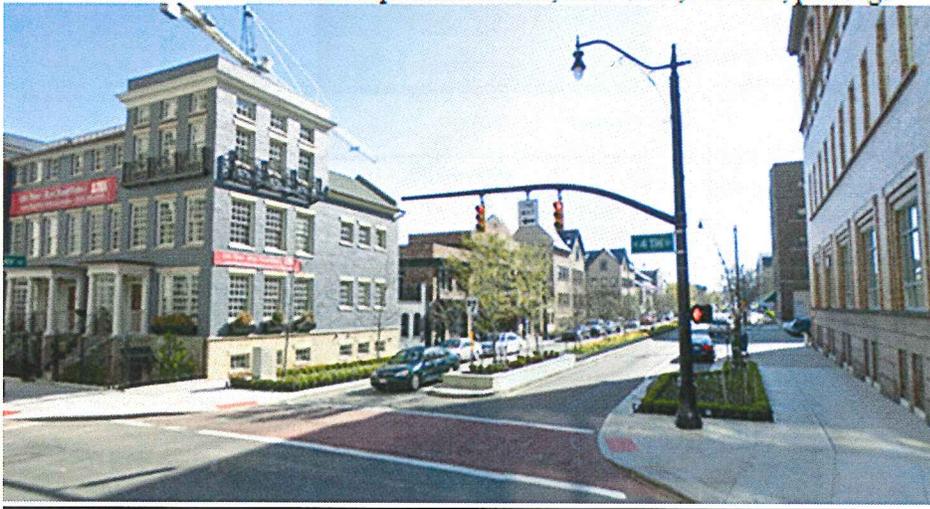
- Announce gateway points with distinctive signage, information and tree/median plantings
- Promote Roswell Road as an accessible retail destination
  - Highlight recent and planned roadway improvements
  - Partner with businesses and business organizations to market City Center's retail choices



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## Streets that invite walking

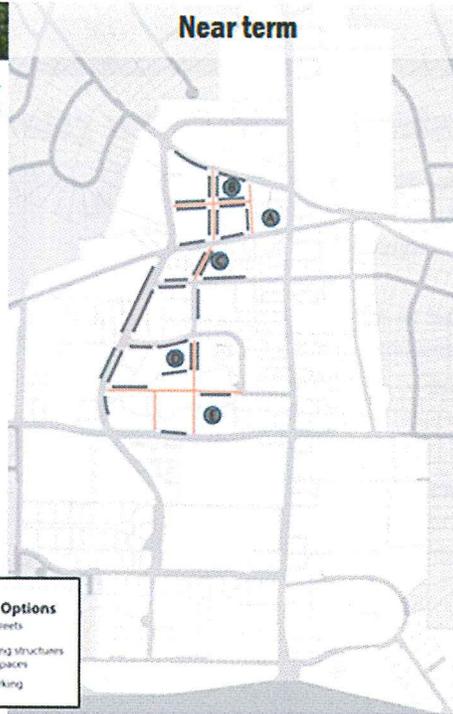
- Protect pedestrians from traffic
- Enliven sidewalks with frequent storefronts, front doors, windows, plantings



## Convenient, efficient parking Serving a variety of activities

- 'Park Once' Approach
- On-Street parking
- Shared parking structures, screened from sidewalks and parks
- Public parking spaces, typical day, within 1-2 blocks:
  - Civic facility/City Green area: 400
  - Heritage Green area: 140+
- Over 500 more spaces may be leased temporarily for events
- Apply similar approach to other redevelopment sites

### Near term



**Proposed Parking Options**  
Near-term streets  
Shared parking structures with public spaces  
On-street parking

## Add transit choices

### Appeal to new residents, jobs

- Enhance bus stops
- New neighborhood transit center
- City Center Circulator



- Proposed transit center
- Existing MARTA bus
- Potential shuttle loop
- 5 minute walk distance
- City-owned land



## Expand the bicycle network

### Linking activities and green spaces

- Multi-modal paths connecting school, library, and parks
- On-road facilities
- Connections to Sandy Springs and Duwoody MARTA stations
- Connection to Abemathy Greenway via N Hampton Drive

- |                               |                                  |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Proposed off-street bike path | New stormwater amenity           |
| New on-street bike lane       | Existing civic/cultural facility |
| New street segment            | Proposed civic facility          |
| New pedestrian segment        | Existing senior housing          |
| Existing park                 | Existing school                  |
| New park: near-term           | Proposed transit center          |
| New park: long-term           |                                  |



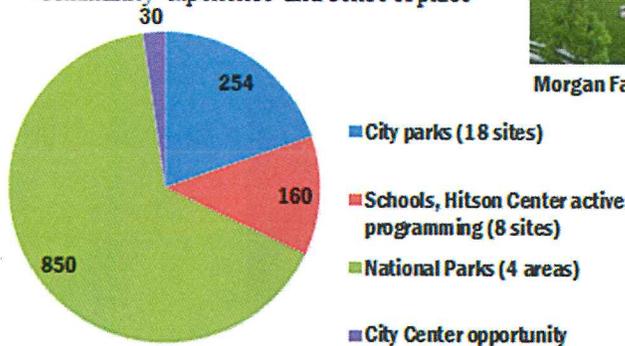


## Sandy Springs parks: varied roles and settings

- Wooded natural areas, walking trails, views
- Sports, active recreation
- Lawns and landscapes for events, picnics
- City Center: unique opportunity for community experience and sense of place



Morgan Falls Overlook Park



## Components of a great green space network

- Lawn space for events/performances: ~1 acre
- Passive park area: >5 acres (one or more locations)
- Small squares: .25-.5 acre, multiple locations
- Farmers market: 1-2 acre
- Sandy Springs Festival: close adjacent streets
- Fountains/water features: 0.5 acres
- Playground: .25-.5 acre
- Game space (bocce, chess etc.): <.5 acres
- Public art: integrated within parks
- Fitness stations: within parks
- Outdoor dining: within walkable street network
- Recreation paths: walking, biking: within mix of parks and street corridors
- Connecting sidewalks that welcome walking: within walkable street network





## Lawn space for events/performances

*Desired features:*

- Larger and more accessible than Heritage Green (1/2 acre)
- Suitable for concerts, festivals etc.
- Flexible for informal use at other times (frisbee, picnic etc.)



Botanical Garden oval (1 acre)



## Passive park area

*Desired features:*

- Walking paths
- Quiet sitting areas
- Significant tree canopy
- Gardens and/or natural vegetation
- Dual-purpose stormwater ponds



Yerba Buena Gardens, San Francisco (1.5 acres)



Post Office Square, Boston (1.5 acres)



Portland - park with stormwater pond amenity (1.5 acres)





## Farmers market

*Desired features:*

- 1.5 acres to accommodate growth & associated arts events (1 acre today)
- Surface suitable for vehicle and heavy foot traffic
- Shaded areas



Copley Square, Boston (0.75 acres)



Target lot, Sandy Springs (1 acre used)



## Fountains/water features

*Desired features:*

- Accommodate play
- Continuing theme in multiple places; highlight topography
- Interpretive history of springs
- White noise opportunity



Copley Square, Boston (0.25 acres)



Duluth (0.15 acres)



## Playgrounds

*Desired features:*

- Engaging play equipment
- Fenced
- Seating for adults
- Mixed sun and shade
- Accessible via safe sidewalks, paths
- Near retail
- Convenient public parking



Cambridge, MA (0.5 acres)



## Playgrounds

*Desired features:*

- Engaging play equipment
- Fenced
- Seating for adults
- Mixed sun and shade
- Accessible via safe sidewalks, paths
- Near retail
- Convenient public parking



Cambridge, MA (0.5 acres)



## Game spaces

*Desired features:*

- Variety of activities appealing to broad range of people
- Located near dining, retail, event spaces
- Located amidst residential neighborhood



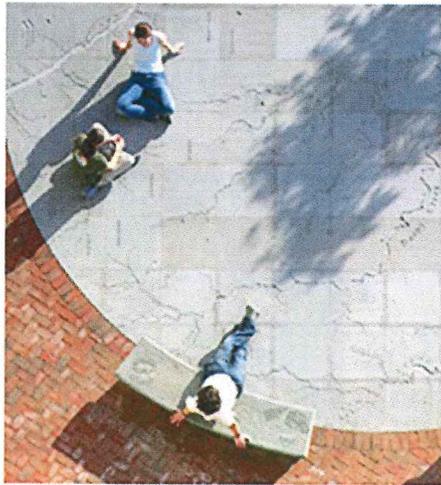
San Jose, CA (0.1 acre)



## Public art

*Desired features:*

- Integrate directly into public space elements: water features, seating, transit shelters, paving etc.
- Engage local artists/ community members in concept and production
- Integrate throughout green space network





## Active retail edges and outdoor dining

*Desired features:*

- Active storefronts, block to block
- Blocks no longer than approx. 400 feet
- "Critical mass" of at least 4 block faces
- Outdoor dining space adjacent to sidewalk
- Take advantage of views (near and far)
- Shade trees
- Visible and accessible
- Convenient public parking
- Near or facing programmed public park/plaza spaces and civic facility



Asheville, NC



## Active retail edges and outdoor dining





## City Green/Square objectives and precedents

*Desired features:*

- Lawn space
- Farmer's Market (with growth/arts)
- Water feature(s); springs theme
- Games (bocce, large chess etc.)
- Public art
- Adjacent active retail, outdoor dining, civic facility
- Connected to larger park/recreation path network and neighborhoods within and beyond City Center
- Highly accessible, visible
- Convenient public parking

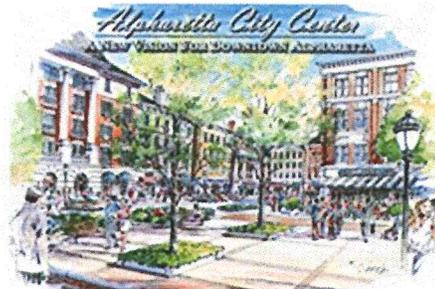


Savannah, GA



## Alpharetta City Center Proposal

- Green: 38,000 SF (.9 ac)
- Square: 100,000 SF (2.3 ac)
- Uses: City Hall, library, retail, public parking
- 5-ac City Park (22-ac site overall)





## Roswell Town Square

- Green: 57,000 SF (1.3 ac)
- Square: 156,000 SF (3.6 ac)
- Uses: restaurants, historical society, retail, galleries
- Hosts annual Taste of Roswell



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## Historic Woodstock

- Green: 46,500 SF (1.1 ac)
- Square: 84,000 SF (1.9 ac)
- Uses: City Center (civic), retail, hardware store



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## Woodstock Downtown

- Green: 4,050 SF (.1 ac)
- Square: 14,400 SF (.33 ac)
- Uses: restaurants, retail, residential



## Pack Square Park and City/County Plaza, Asheville NC

- Green: 129,400 SF (3.0 ac)
- Square: 257,000 SF (5.9 ac)
- Uses: City Hall, court house, fire station, retail, office



Court House



City Hall





## City Center Park, Greensboro, NC

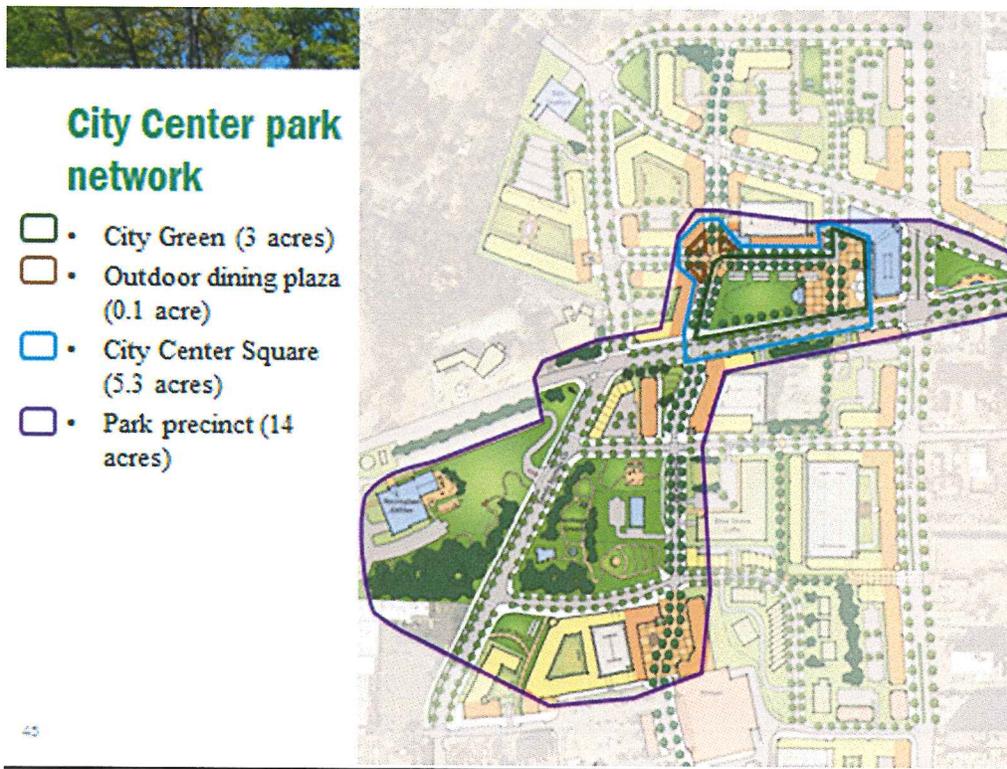
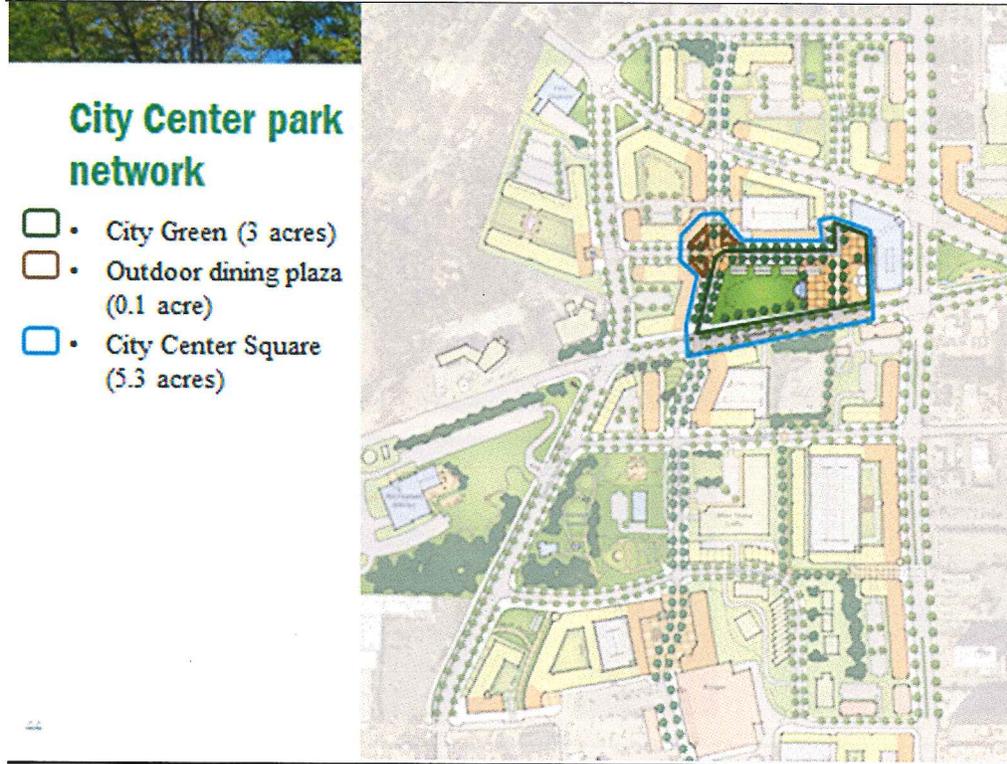
- Green: 88,350 SF (2.0 ac)
- Square: 162,800 SF (3.7 ac)
- Uses: retail, office, cultural center

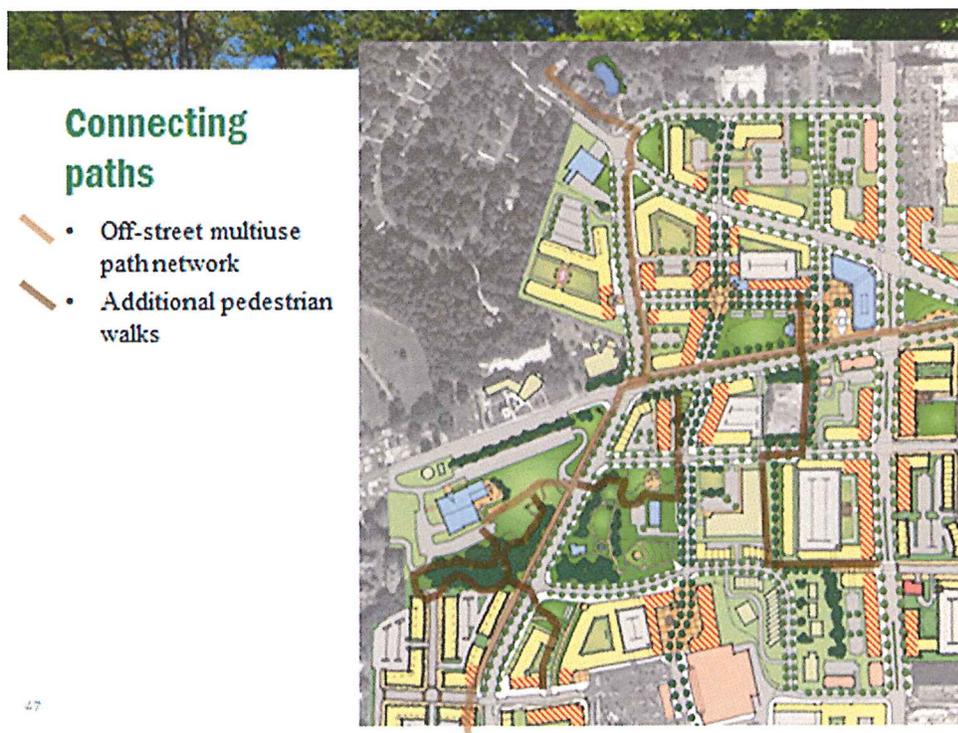
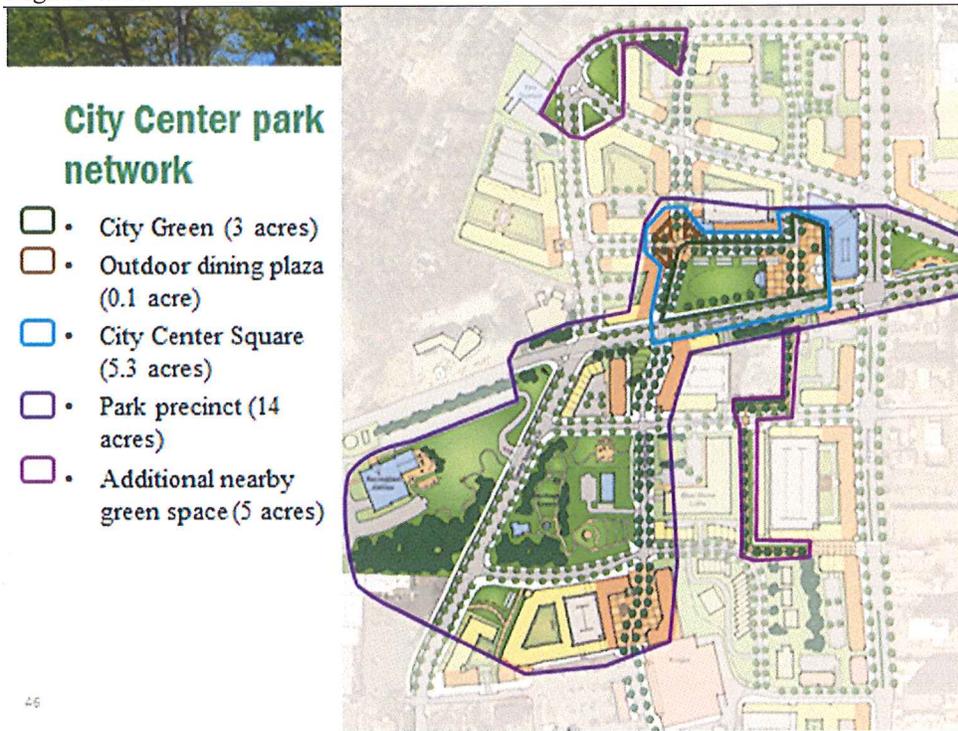


## City Center park network

- • City Green (3 acres)







## Connecting paths

- Off-street multiuse path network
- Additional pedestrian walks
- Continuous active edges with retail/dining



## Achieving the Master Plan

- A walk through City Center
- Potential investment sequence





## City Green

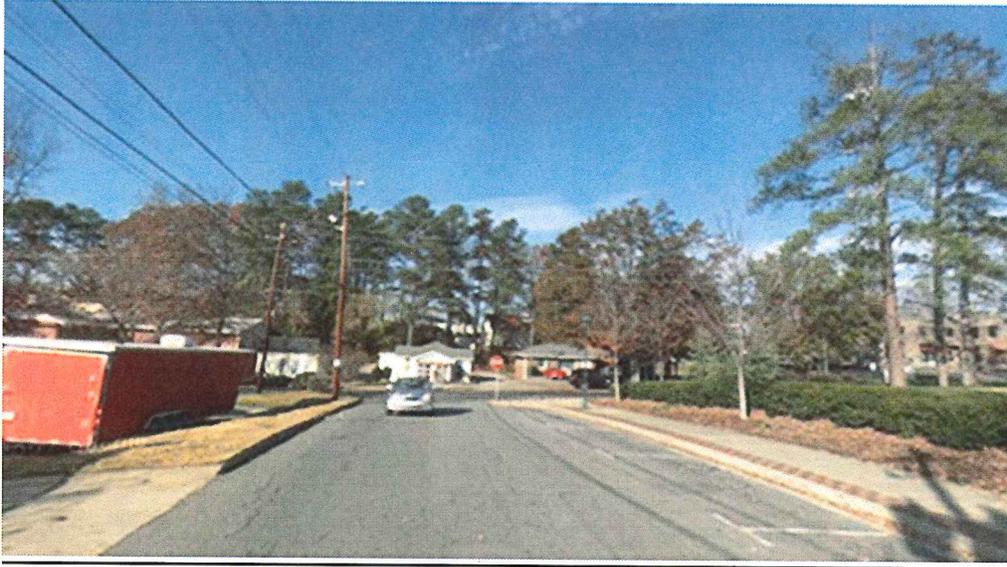


## City Green





## Bluestone Road/Hilderbrand

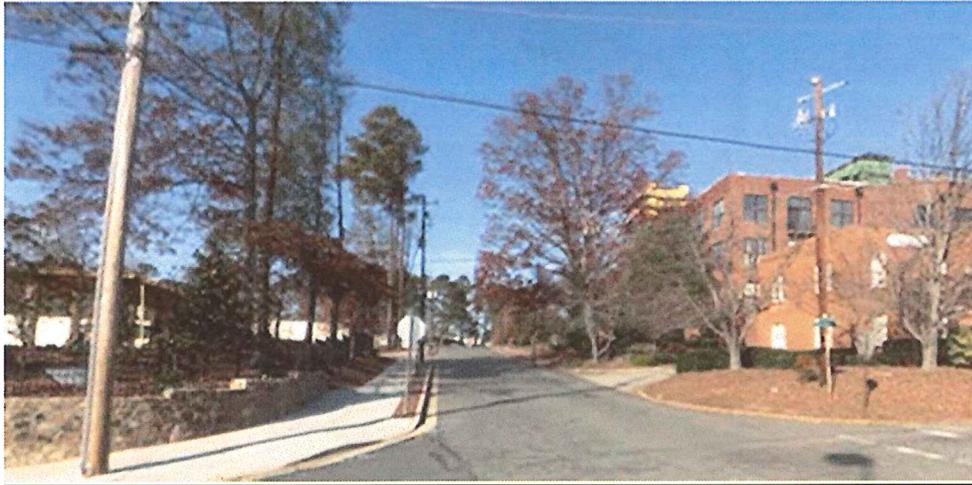


## Bluestone Road/Hilderbrand





## Bluestone Road/Heritage Green



## Bluestone Road/Heritage Green





## Johnson Ferry/Roswell



## Johnson Ferry/Roswell





## Mt. Vernon/Roswell



## Mt. Vernon/Roswell



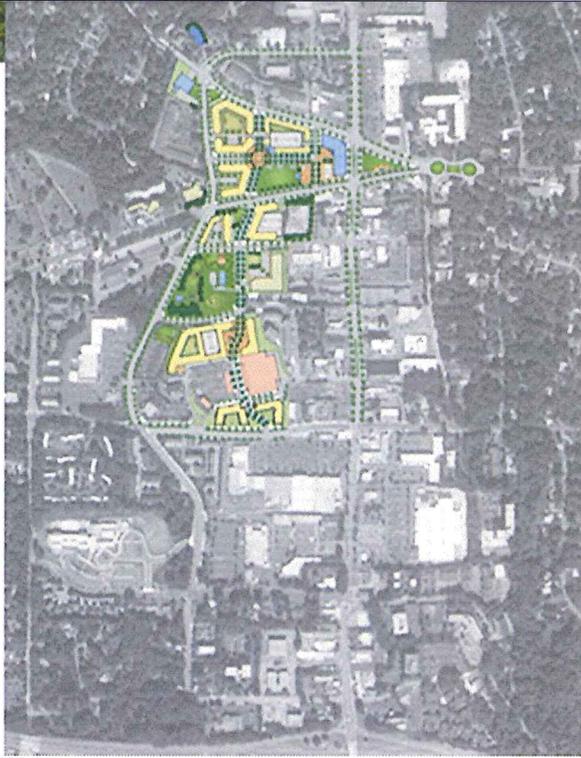
## Sandy Springs Circle



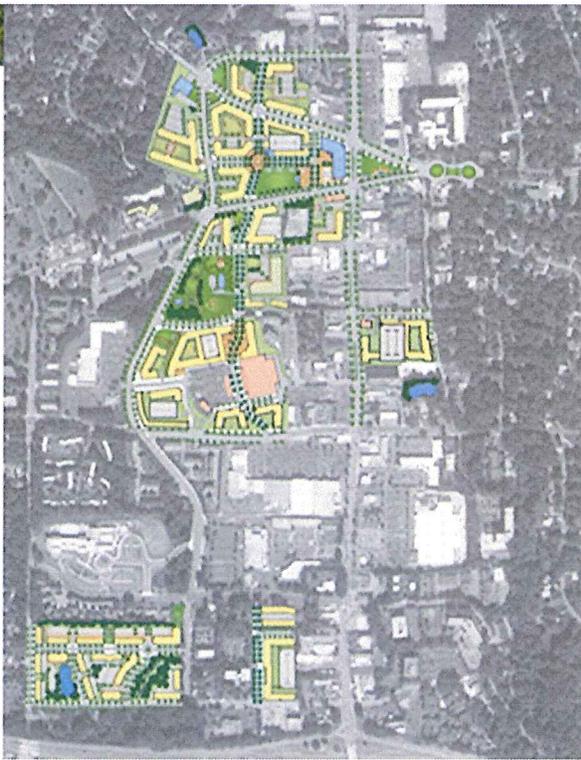
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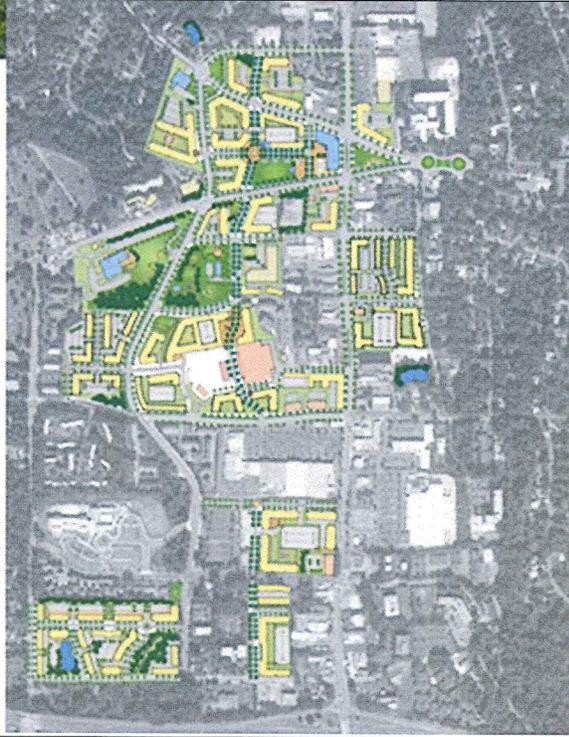
**Reinvestment  
sequence:  
step 1**



**As opportunity  
emerges:  
step 2 scenario**

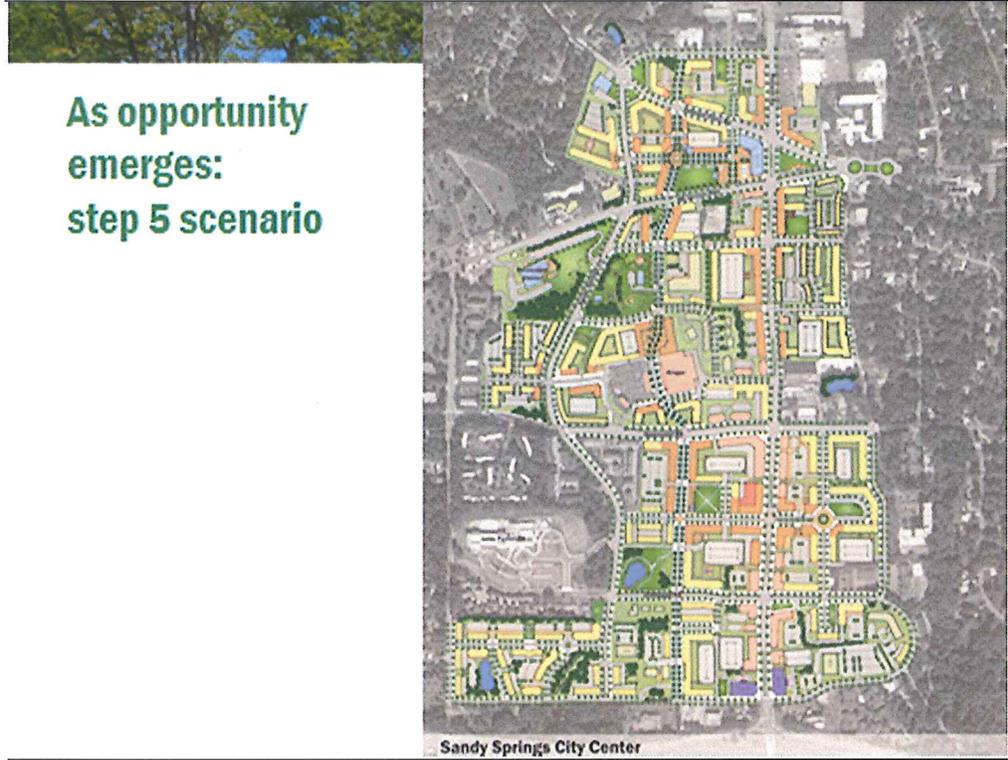


**As opportunity  
emerges:  
step 3 scenario**



**As opportunity  
emerges:  
step 4 scenario**





## Plan strategies

Themes	Strategies
Create mixed-use neighborhoods designed for people	1. Define <b>neighborhoods</b> within the center
	2. Bring a <b>mix of activities</b> together
	3. Support mixed use neighborhoods with a <b>network of walkable streets.</b>
	4. Take a <b>cost-effective approach</b> to utility infrastructure
Create places of community serving all of Sandy Springs	5. Expand Sandy Springs' network of <b>parks and greenways.</b>
	6. Attract more <b>arts, cultural and civic events</b> to City Center.
Encourage investment	7. Identify a clear, <b>predictable process</b> for development in the City Center.

## Public investment strategy

- Focus investments to support market-driven development creating a mixed-use City Center neighborhood
- Make the most of public and private investments by concentrating on walkable development corridors
- Pace public investment to private development projects through predictable plans, policies
- Invest only in lasting public benefits – like public parking, parks, streetscape
- Enable many individual entrepreneurs to participate
- Make public/private incentive policy clear, predictable



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## Public private partnership criteria

- The private sector investor
  - Appropriate experience (2-5 comparable projects by developer, designer)
  - Financial qualifications
  - Letters of reference (4-5)
  - Project economics
    - Demonstrated need for support
    - Public sector leverage (typical range: 1:2 to 1:6)
- The project
  - Required elements: walkable, mixed-use, appropriate location
  - Optional elements: additional public benefits (parks, streets, jobs or other economic development opportunities, etc.)



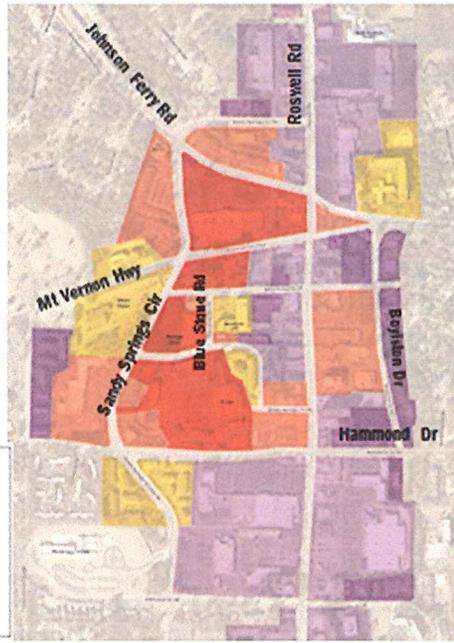
## Encourage investment: Where will near-term mixed-use succeed?

The optimal focus area must:

- Accommodate a substantial, active, market-driven mixed-use district
- Have ability to grow over time
- Offer many property owners opportunities to invest
- Include a prominent center of civic identity

These criteria will help target public investments for optimal results

Parcel Classification (Criteria)	
	Desirable
	Acceptable
	Unacceptable (cost)
	Unacceptable (other)
	Church/Residential



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## Achieving goals for the City Center

- Create a district with an identifiable sense of place
- ...a vibrant, walkable City Center rich in amenities and sense of identity desired by the community (retail, recreational, educational and cultural facilities...)
- Create an appropriate setting for a new civic/cultural center serving as a place of community activity
- Catalyze significant market-driven investment by the private sector in walkable, mixed-use, amenity-rich redevelopment supporting:
  - City Center development goals
  - Sandy Springs' fiscal goals
- Create a system of appropriate infrastructure supporting the City Center
  - attention to walkable streets, stormwater, traffic flow, transit services, bicycling facilities, parking, utilities and signage
  - public open space that supports the goals above and connects to neighborhoods and the City's larger open space network.





## Next steps

- November 13: public open house
- December: council action
- Action steps
  - Review investment priorities utilizing master plan cost-benefit analysis
  - Update capital improvement plan
  - Coordinate master plan recommendations with projects currently planned/under way
  - Initiate code changes that help implement the plan (December-February)

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## Discussion

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The Council returned to the Regular meeting at 8:13 p.m.

At the conclusion of the Regular meeting, the Work Session resumed at 8:37 p.m.

## **STAFF DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **Recreation and Parks**

#### 1. Update and Discussion of the Lost Corner Entrance and Parking Design

**Interim Director of Public Works Garrin Coleman** stated the current preferred alternative for the Lost Corner entryway will incorporate thirty parking spaces, including two handicap parking spaces. The current alternative is located in the area designated in the original master plan by McFarland, Dyer, and Associates. This company is the current designer on this plan. There will be a public information meeting on November 28, 2012. The final plan will be presented to Council by the second City Council meeting in December 2012.

**Councilmember Chip Collins** asked about the placement of the driveway.

Interim Director of Public Works Coleman stated staff had a couple of meetings with the Friends of Lost Corner. One of the aspects Council is trying to balance is the desire for a community garden area to the left side of the park. There are an existing forty-one trees that will be cleared when moving forward with the site plan. The area for the community garden will help frame the entryway to the homes. The width of the parking lot is twenty feet. Staff is looking at using the new paver system, which allows the use of water quality systems underneath the pavers.

**Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny** asked about installing gravel instead of the pavers.

Interim Director of Public Works Coleman stated he would prefer using the paver system, because it requires less maintenance.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny stated a gravel parking lot would save money and be more pervious than pavers.

Interim Director of Public Works Coleman stated the brick pavers have options for a variety of colors and textures that would be aesthetically pleasing.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny asked if the Friends of Lost Corner have agreed with the paver plan.

Interim Director of Public Works Coleman responded yes. The Friends of Lost Corner would like to see the curb portion of the house and driveway moved back towards Riverside Drive. This would open up the area to have the additional community garden planting area.

Councilmember Collins asked if staff took measures to ensure the entrance is not directly across the street from a homeowner's driveway on West Spalding Drive.

Interim Director of Public Works Coleman responded yes.

**Councilmember Dianne Fries** asked about an intersection improvement in this area that would include a roundabout. She asked if the entrance to the parking lot could be incorporated.

Interim Director of Public Works Coleman stated to create the four legs of the roundabout there would need to be equal distances around the circle. That would not be an ideal configuration for this area.

Mayor Galambos stated Council would have to approve that idea as an intersection improvement and it is not on the current capital improvement project list.

There was a consensus of Council to move this item forward to the next Regular City Council meeting.

### **Public Works**

1. SR 9 – Roswell Road HAWK (CIP T-0036P) Preferred Design Alternative Approval

**Interim Director of Public Works Garrin Coleman** stated the High Intensity Activated Crosswalk Beacon (HAWK) signal will be located south of Long Island Drive on Roswell Road. The median will be approximately 100 to 150 feet long. Staff is looking to consolidate four bus stops to be located at the HAWK signal. Currently, there are 472 pedestrian crossings at this location per day.

**Councilmember Dianne Fries** asked if traffic cameras were used for the pedestrian count or if someone physically counted the pedestrians.

Interim Director of Public Works Coleman stated the pedestrian numbers were determined by physically counting.

**Mayor Eva Galambos** asked when this project was authorized.

Interim Director of Public Works Coleman stated this project was envisioned in 2010.

Mayor Galambos asked when construction will begin.

Interim Director of Public Works Coleman stated the construction should begin in late spring 2013.

**Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny** asked that care be given to the tree in front of the Roswell Medical Office. She thanked staff for this plan as an adequate solution for this area.

There was a consensus of Council to move this item forward to a future Regular City Council meeting.

### **Fire Department**

1. City of Sandy Springs and DeKalb County Mutual Aid and Automatic Aid Agreement

**Fire Chief Jack McElfish** stated this agreement between the City of Sandy Springs and DeKalb County will provide emergency services to the citizens of Sandy Springs from a closer location.

**Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny** asked if there is a limitation on the automatic aid and how far the Sandy Springs Fire Department staff goes into DeKalb County.

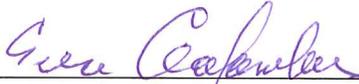
Fire Chief McElfish stated that limitations of the agreement will be worked out between Fire Chief O'Brien and himself.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery stated there is a lot of wear and tear on the fire trucks when they travel unlimited distances into another community, especially when the Quint located at Station 4 goes to Phipps Plaza.

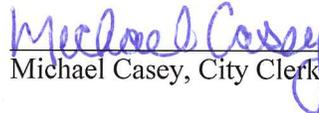
There was a consensus of Council to move this item forward to the next Regular City Council meeting.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Date Approved: December 4, 2012



Eva Galambos, Mayor



Michael Casey, City Clerk