
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

TO: Mayor & City Council **DATE:** July 31, 2012

FROM: John McDonough, City Manager

AGENDA ITEM: Economic Development Plan

MEETING DATE: For Submission onto the August 7, 2012, City Council Work Session Meeting Agenda

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: *(Attach additional pages if necessary)*

See attached:

Memorandum
Economic Development Plan
Plan Overview Slides

APPROVAL BY CITY MANAGER: JFM **APPROVED**

_____ **NOT APPROVED**

PLACED ON AGENDA FOR: 8/7/2012

CITY ATTORNEY APPROVAL REQUIRED: () **YES** () **NO**

CITY ATTORNEY APPROVAL: SM

REMARKS:



To: John McDonough, City Manager

From: Angela Parker, Community Development Director 

Date: July 24, 2012 for Submission onto the August 7, 2012 City Council Work Session Agenda

Subject: Economic Development Plan

Background:

Since the creation of the City of Sandy Springs Economic Development has become an increasingly more important component of the City's overall strategy. As a part of the 2011–2012 budget, the Mayor and City Council established economic development as a top priority and allocated funding to the City's economic development efforts. In January of 2012 the Mayor and City Council established the Economic Development Advisory Committee and charged the committee with providing input in the development of an economic development strategy and plan.

Discussion:

Since January the Economic Development Advisory Committee has focused on the development of the City's first Economic Development Plan. The attached plan defines the City's economic development vision, mission and goals providing a framework to guide actions regarding the City's economic development program. The plan is not intended to be a static document; the Plan will *updated* annually in advance of the City's annual budget process.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends placement of the Economic Development Plan on the August 21, 2012 Council Agenda for action.

Attachments:

Economic Development Plan
Economic Development Plan Overview Slides

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

NAVIGATING THE CHANGING ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE







TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	01
Charting the Course for Success: The Path Taken to Date	03
Economic Development Vision and Mission: The Destination	04
Guiding Principles: Rules of the Road	05
Economic Development Goals	06
Work Program	07
Conditions of the Road: Facts that Impact the Journey	10
Downtown Development	20
Appendix	23



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sandy Springs is a city founded on the principle of public-private partnership. As a result,

- Sandy Springs was ranked fourth in CNNMoney's list of Best Places to Live.
- Forbes.com named Sandy Springs as one of America's Top Towns to Live Well.
- A recent Portfolio.com study ranks Sandy Springs as the ninth-most affluent municipality in the United States.
- Sandy Springs has a reputation for fiscal frugality. Despite a low tax rate, the City allocates 20 to 25% of its budget annually for capital projects.
- Sandy Springs is home to more Fortune 500 corporations per capita than any other city in the United States; UPS, Newell Rubbermaid, First Data and Centene are headquartered in the City.
- The City's diverse population represents many different cultures and countries, and is the location of a growing number of consulates, most recently, the Indian Consulate announced it will locate in Sandy Springs.
- The Mayor and City Council have engaged private sector leaders to lead development of the City's Economic Development Plan as an embodiment of the philosophy of public-private partnership that is central to the City's success.

MISSION

The overarching purpose of economic development in the City of Sandy Springs is to sustain and further the attractive quality of life enjoyed by its citizens. This purpose will be achieved through the accomplishment of two interdependent objectives:

- Preservation and creation of neighborhoods that provide an environment for the security and enjoyment of families and individuals.
- Retention, expansion and attraction of businesses that result in a diverse economic base and the prosperity necessary to provide quality jobs, enhanced property values and stable communities.

GOALS

- Attract and recruit corporations and small businesses that will contribute to a diverse local economy through the creation of jobs that require a well-educated and skilled workforce.
- Retain and expand corporations and small businesses already located in Sandy Springs by delivering expedient and customer-friendly city services and maintaining a competitive rate of taxation.
- Recruit and sustain international business and investment to Sandy Springs.
- Develop and sustain business districts that contribute to the overall quality of life in the City of Sandy Springs by obtaining optimal rates of occupancy for retail and office buildings.
- Create a focus for community activities, including the arts and recreation, through creation of an innovative and engaging City Center.
- Develop and preserve neighborhoods that are attractive to families and individuals, safe, aesthetically pleasing and stable.
- Craft and implement a marketing campaign targeting both domestic and foreign businesses and focusing on the favorable business climate, quality of life and redevelopment efforts (including City Center) in Sandy Springs.



CHARTING THE COURSE FOR SUCCESS - THE PATH TAKEN TO DATE

BACKGROUND – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS TO DATE

The City of Sandy Springs incorporated on December 1, 2005, and since that time Economic Development has become a central focus of the City's overall strategy. The City's first [Comprehensive Plan](#), approved in November 2007, provided the initial Economic Development vision for the City as expressed in the Plan's Economic Development and Redevelopment Policies. These policies continue to be relevant today.

In 2010, the City conducted an [Economic Baseline Study](#) that examined the City's socio-economic profile, office and retail markets, and policies and initiatives that support economic development. The Study spoke to the need for the City to incorporate its strengths in overall positioning and develop new initiatives that capitalize on the assets the City offers within its economic development efforts.

The City Council recently approved three initiatives that reinforce Sandy Springs' strength as a business friendly city. In 2010, with the [Business License Fee Reduction](#), Sandy Springs became a regional leader in low-cost business license fees. Businesses located within the [Opportunity Zone](#), approved by the City in 2010, qualify for job tax incentives. The [Economic Development Incentive Policy](#) approved in 2011 focuses on creating employment opportunities and promoting investment in the City. The goals cited in the [Incentive Resolution](#) focus on the City's overall economic health.

As a part of the 2011-2012 budget, the Mayor and City Council established Economic Development as a top priority and allocated funding to the City's Economic Development efforts. In January 2012, the Mayor and City Council established the [Economic Development Advisory Committee](#) charged with providing input in the establishment of an Economic Development Strategy and Plan. A list of the community and business leaders on the Economic Development Advisory Committee is provided in Appendix F.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISION AND MISSION - THE DESTINATION

VISION

Sustain the long-term economic health and vitality of Sandy Springs through the retention, expansion and attraction of businesses and development, that enhance property values, increase personal income and make a positive contribution to the quality of life of the citizens of Sandy Springs

MISSION

The overarching purpose of economic development in the City of Sandy Springs is to sustain and further the attractive quality of life enjoyed by its citizens. This purpose will be achieved through the accomplishment of two interdependent objectives:

- Preservation and creation of neighborhoods that provide an environment for the security and enjoyment of families and individuals.
- Retention, expansion, and attraction of businesses that result in a diverse economic base and the prosperity necessary to provide quality jobs, enhanced property values and stable communities.

The Economic Development Plan is not intended to be a static document. The City is committed to regular and systematic economic development strategic planning and evaluation. Monitoring progress towards achieving Plan goals, measuring impacts and making strategic changes as needed are crucial to the successful execution of the Plan. The Economic Development Work Program will be updated annually in advance of the budget process.

The Economic Development Vision and Plan does not address every component necessary for future prosperity, but depends heavily on many other coordinated planning and implementation efforts such as the Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Map and the City's Capital Improvement Program. While the Economic Development Plan provides specific focus on the City's economic development vision and mission, achievement of the vision and mission cannot be accomplished in a vacuum.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES - RULES OF THE ROAD

Implementation of the Economic Development Plan will be collaborative, innovative and focused on enhancing the quality of life of the City's residents, and will be monitored for accountability.

Collaboration

- Participate in collaborative efforts with economic development partners including the Sandy Springs/ Perimeter Chamber of Commerce, Sandy Springs Hospitality and Tourism, Perimeter Community Improvement District and the Georgia Department of Economic Development.
- Work closely with the City of Dunwoody, as economic development in Dunwoody benefits Sandy Springs and growth and prosperity in Sandy Springs benefits Dunwoody.
- Continue to foster and promote innovative public-private partnerships.

Innovation

- Utilize the latest technologies, including web and social media, to communicate and market Sandy Springs and to deliver its economic and business development services and communications.
- Research economic development best practices among cities across the country, focusing on creative ways to implement the strategies outlined in the Plan.

Quality of Life

- Ensure adequate public infrastructure, continued provision of efficient and reliable City services and maintenance of strong, stable neighborhoods; recognize that these are key factors that make the City desirable for investment and growth.
- Use strategic infrastructure investment as both a quality-of-life enhancement and a catalyst for economic development.

Results-Oriented

- Conduct an annual review of the goals and implementation strategies to determine progress toward achieving the Plan goals.
- Measure impacts and make strategic changes as needed to ensure the success of the Plan.
- Create analytical tools to measure return on investment of City resources as a catalyst to economic development, including job creation and expansion of the tax base.
- Update the Work Program annually in advance of the budget process.

THE PLAN WILL:

- Communicate the City's vision and mission, define goals, set specific direction and clarify policy and budget priorities
- Provide a framework to guide actions
- Provide a structure to ensure oversight and management of the City's Economic Development Program

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Economic Development Goals define the broad, general actions designed to execute the Vision and Mission of the Economic Development Plan.

- **Attract and recruit corporations and small businesses** that will contribute to a diverse local economy through the creation of jobs that require a well-educated and skilled workforce.
- **Retain and expand corporations and small businesses** already located in Sandy Springs by delivering expedient and customer friendly city services and maintaining a competitive rate of taxation.
- **Recruit and sustain international business and investment** to Sandy Springs.
- **Develop and sustain business districts** that contribute to the overall quality of life of the City of Sandy Springs by obtaining optimal rates of occupancy for retail and office buildings.
- **Create a focus for community activities** including the arts and recreation through creation of an innovative City Center.
- **Develop and preserve neighborhoods** that are attractive to families and individuals, safe, aesthetically pleasing and stable.
- **Craft and implement a marketing and advertising campaign** targeting both domestic and foreign businesses, and focusing on the favorable business climate, quality of life and focused redevelopment efforts (including City Center) in Sandy Springs.



WORK PROGRAM

The Economic Development Advisory Committee has established eight sub-committees and identified specific objectives for each subcommittee. The objectives for the committees constitute the City's Economic Development Work Program. As the plan is a dynamic document, revisions to the work program will likely arise as the plan is implemented.

COMMERCIAL RETENTION/DEVELOPMENT

Objectives:

- Develop a profile of the City's current business mix and identify the types of businesses that might want to locate in Sandy Springs.
- Develop a strategy to attract and recruit businesses, identified through an analysis of the City's existing business mix and focusing on the needs of those types of businesses and the site selection factors they use.
- Identify businesses that will complement, supply and patronize existing businesses.
- Identify the workforce needs of business clusters within Sandy Springs and develop a strategy to encourage universities, colleges and schools to provide relevant skill training corresponding to the needs of those businesses.
- Develop a strategy to retain and expand existing businesses by building relationships with companies of all sizes in order to strengthen the market, establish early warning systems for at-risk businesses, and ensure that public programs meet local business needs.
- Develop a strategy for identifying and mitigating regulatory issues that inhibit attraction and retention of businesses.

SMALL BUSINESS RETENTION/DEVELOPMENT

Objectives:

- Develop a strategy to retain and expand existing small businesses by building relationships with companies of all sizes in order to strengthen the market, establish early warning systems for at-risk businesses, and ensure that public programs meet local business needs.
- Develop a strategy for identifying and mitigating regulatory issues that inhibit attraction and retention of small businesses.
- Develop a profile of City of Sandy Springs' current small business mix and what types of small businesses might want to locate in Sandy Springs.

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT/REDEVELOPMENT

Objectives:

- Conduct financial analysis of targeted multi-family properties to determine any necessary zoning modifications or incentives necessary to encourage redevelopment. Establish a redevelopment strategy.

CITY CENTER REDEVELOPMENT/ROSWELL ROAD REDEVELOPMENT

Objectives:

- Work alongside Goody/Clancy and the City of Sandy Springs to develop recommendations for the City Center redevelopment plan.
- Develop strategy recommendations for implementation of the City Center redevelopment plan.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Objectives:

- Develop a strategy to attract and recruit international businesses and investment to Sandy Springs.
- Develop a strategy to facilitate interaction between existing Sandy Springs businesses and incoming international businesses and investment.
- Develop a strategy to further Sandy Springs' success in attracting international consulates.

COMMUNICATIONS/BRANDING

Objectives:

- Develop a marketing campaign for Sandy Springs, targeting both domestic and foreign businesses and focusing on the favorable business climate, quality of life and focused redevelopment efforts (including City Center) in Sandy Springs. Include all Sandy Springs Profile information.
- Develop a recruitment strategy and associated marketing materials for each targeted industry identified in the business mix analysis.
- Develop a recruitment strategy and associated marketing materials for designated districts and preferred redevelopment sites within the City such as Downtown and the Medical Complex. Use the database of redevelopment sites to promote this effort.
- Create a web presence with options for locating, expanding and starting a business. The web area will have downloadable marketing materials, plans and data.
- Initiate an ongoing communications program with existing city businesses of all sizes, with a goal to call or

visit at least three businesses per week. Through the communications program, identify at-risk companies and determine how to help them.

- Create a small business assistance program that will include an outreach/welcome packet presented when a business license application is submitted. Coordinate City supported C-level roundtables, that will help new businesses and entrepreneurs gain useful information.

RESEARCH

Objectives:

- Develop a regularly updated database that provides geographical information, demographic information and detailed land use and real estate information to businesses that are considering locating in Sandy Springs.
- Develop an analysis of the City's existing business mix, focusing on the needs of those types of businesses and the site selection factors they use.
- Develop a Business Climate Scorecard that can be maintained by City staff so that any favorable/unfavorable business climate factors may be identified and addressed.
- Research peer cities for additional strategies to improve the business climate.
- Develop a strategy for the compilation and regular update of data in the GIS Redevelopment database of available underutilized and functionally obsolete properties of all types (retail, office, industrial and multi-family), including property owner, parcel size, building information, zoning, future land use designation, owner and broker contacts, and available incentives.
- Measure business retention and expansion efforts using quantitative metrics including number of retained businesses, jobs created/retained, businesses visited, businesses assisted, and average salary of jobs created/retained.
- Measure business retention and expansion efforts using qualitative measures including business perceptions of City government, business perceptions of the City, and involvement of assisted businesses in other community activities.

FINANCE

Objectives:

- Determine the menu of financial tools the City of Sandy Springs should consider developing and deploying to further economic development.
- Determine the sources of public and private finance available to fund the City of Sandy Springs' economic development activities.

CONDITIONS OF THE ROAD - FACTS THAT IMPACT THE JOURNEY

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats have to be considered in charting the course for the future. The data presented in the bullets and maps that follow impact the successful achievement of each Economic Development Plan Goal. As a result, this data warranted significant focus by the Economic Development Advisory Committee.

HOUSING MARKET OVERVIEW

- According to the 2009 American Housing Survey, Sandy Springs has a 55% homeownership rate
- Per the 2010 Census, 51% of all housing units in Sandy Springs are multi-family structures
- The Sandy Springs median home value of \$319,300 reflects the high quality and condition of the City's single family housing stock
- The housing related polices approved in the Comprehensive Plan underscore the need for Sandy Springs to provide a mix of quality housing in terms of size, cost, density and type in locations accessible to jobs and services for all sectors of the population including affordable, starter homes, as well as "life cycle" or "mixed generation" communities with housing attractive to seniors
- As less than 5% of the land inventory in Sandy Springs is vacant, new development in the future will consist of either small-scale infill development or redevelopment of existing parcels

SANDY SPRINGS APARTMENT INVENTORY

- Sandy Springs has 74 apartment complexes which contain a total of 20,124 dwelling units, and 43% of all housing units in the City
- Apartment properties total 1,441 acres, almost 6% of the land area of the City
- Apartment properties in the City are generally located along the Roswell Road corridor, with concentrations near the Atlanta city limits; at I-285, in the vicinity of Morgan Falls Road and to the north near the Chattahoochee River
- More recently, new apartment construction has been focused in the Perimeter Center activity node
- Densities range from just over 5 units per acre to more than 160 units per acre, with older developments constructed at lower densities and more recent apartment development at higher densities
- Construction types vary from older wood frame garden style apartments to newer high rise buildings

- More than 11,500 units, or 57% of the City's apartment housing stock was built in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s

Apartments can be categorized into classes that reflect the age, type, condition and characteristics of the tenants that they tend to attract. The bullets and map that follow provide additional information regarding the Sandy Springs apartment housing stock.

CLASS A APARTMENTS -

Developments are typically higher density and less than 10 years old; units tend to be smaller, with luxury-style features, and command higher rents; tenants are generally renters by choice

- A total of 17 Class A apartment properties developed with 4,256 units on 242 acres are located in Sandy Springs

CLASS B APARTMENTS -

Typically, developments are 10 to 25 years old, well maintained and attract a middle class tenant base consisting of some renters by choice, some by necessity

- Sandy Springs has 8,151 Class B apartment units located in 23 complexes on 631 acres

CLASS C APARTMENTS -

Complexes are typically 25 to 40 years old and developed at lower densities. Units tend to be larger and attract low to moderate income tenants; residents tend to be lifelong renters

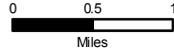
- Sandy Springs has a total of 7,717 Class C apartment units within 34 apartment complexes developed on 586 acres
- Crime rates are typically higher in Class C apartment complexes as compared to the rest of the city and Class A and Class B apartment properties



SANDY SPRINGS GEORGIA

City of Sandy Springs
Georgia

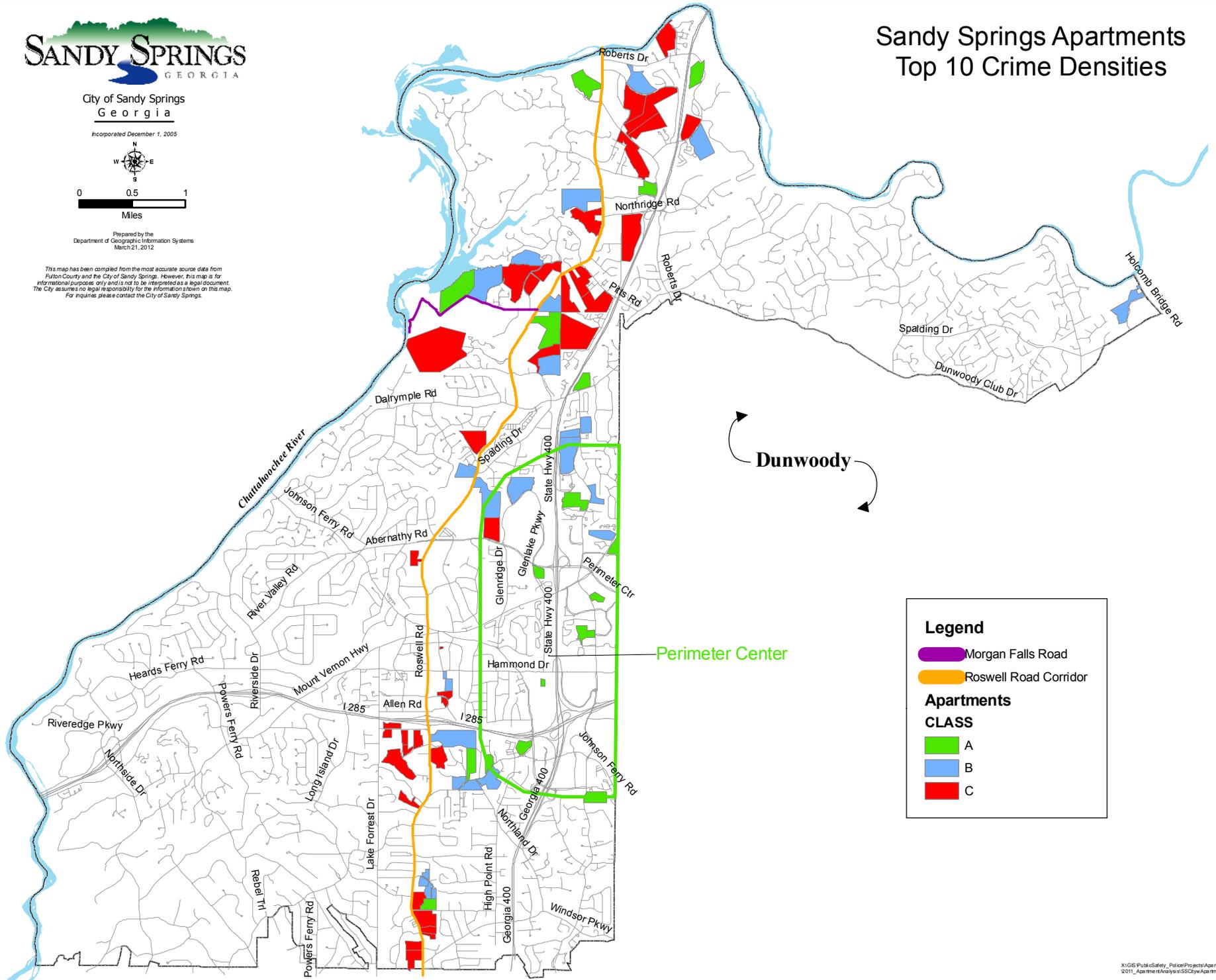
Incorporated December 1, 2005



Prepared by the
Department of Geographic Information Systems
March 21, 2012

This map has been compiled from the most accurate source data from Fulton County and the City of Sandy Springs. However, this map is for informational purposes only and is not to be interpreted as a legal document. The City assumes no legal responsibility for the information shown on this map. For inquiries, please contact the City of Sandy Springs.

Sandy Springs Apartments Top 10 Crime Densities



Legend

- Morgan Falls Road
- Roswell Road Corridor

Apartments

CLASS

- A
- B
- C

HOUSING MARKET PROJECTIONS:

The housing market has changed significantly in recent years. Development in Sandy Springs is reflective of these changes as evidenced by the location, density and unit size of single family and apartment units constructed in the last 8 - 10 years. The following bullets summarize projections regarding the housing market for the next 10 to 20 years:

- More Americans will be renting, and there will be an overall decline in homeownership
- By 2020, projections indicate that 27% of all households will be single person households
- The highest demand for apartments will come from persons currently in their late teens through early 30s, the largest demographic age cohort
- This market segment gravitates toward more urban places and will look for housing in suburban areas that are retrofitting, becoming more urban and are convenient to jobs
- Single family and townhome demand will be for small-lot, urban housing in walkable, mixed use environments
- Housing located in multi-use town centers that offer less car dependency and create a more walkable neighborhood can meet the intensifying demand for live-work environments

“The housing stock in Sandy Springs seems to be rather uneven compared to other similar areas of metro Atlanta--there are a lot of lower-end apartments, a lot of high-end townhomes and detached homes, and not very much in the middle...”

Sandy Springs Citizen, Comprehensive Plan
Visioning Workshop, 2007



RETAIL AND OFFICE MARKET OVERVIEW

- Sandy Springs has several distinct retail and office sub-markets, each having a unique identity
- Sandy Springs is home to more than 4,000 businesses that provide more than 95,000 private sector jobs
- The Sandy Springs workforce is heavily weighted in the service industry subsector with 54% of Sandy Springs' workers providing hospitality, legal, educational and professional services (See Appendix G)
- The next two dominant industries are Finance/Insurance/Real Estate and Retail Trade which provide 15% and 11% respectively of the jobs within the City as Appendix F indicates, Sandy Springs employees are concentrated in the higher paying categories of Management/Business/Financial and Professional occupations
- Appendix H, which provides a listing Sandy Springs' top 15 employers based upon the total number of employees, illustrates that the City's economy is not dominated by any one company
- 93% of the workers in Sandy Springs commute from outside the City, 84% of the Sandy Springs resident workforce commutes to work outside of the City



THE RETAIL MARKET

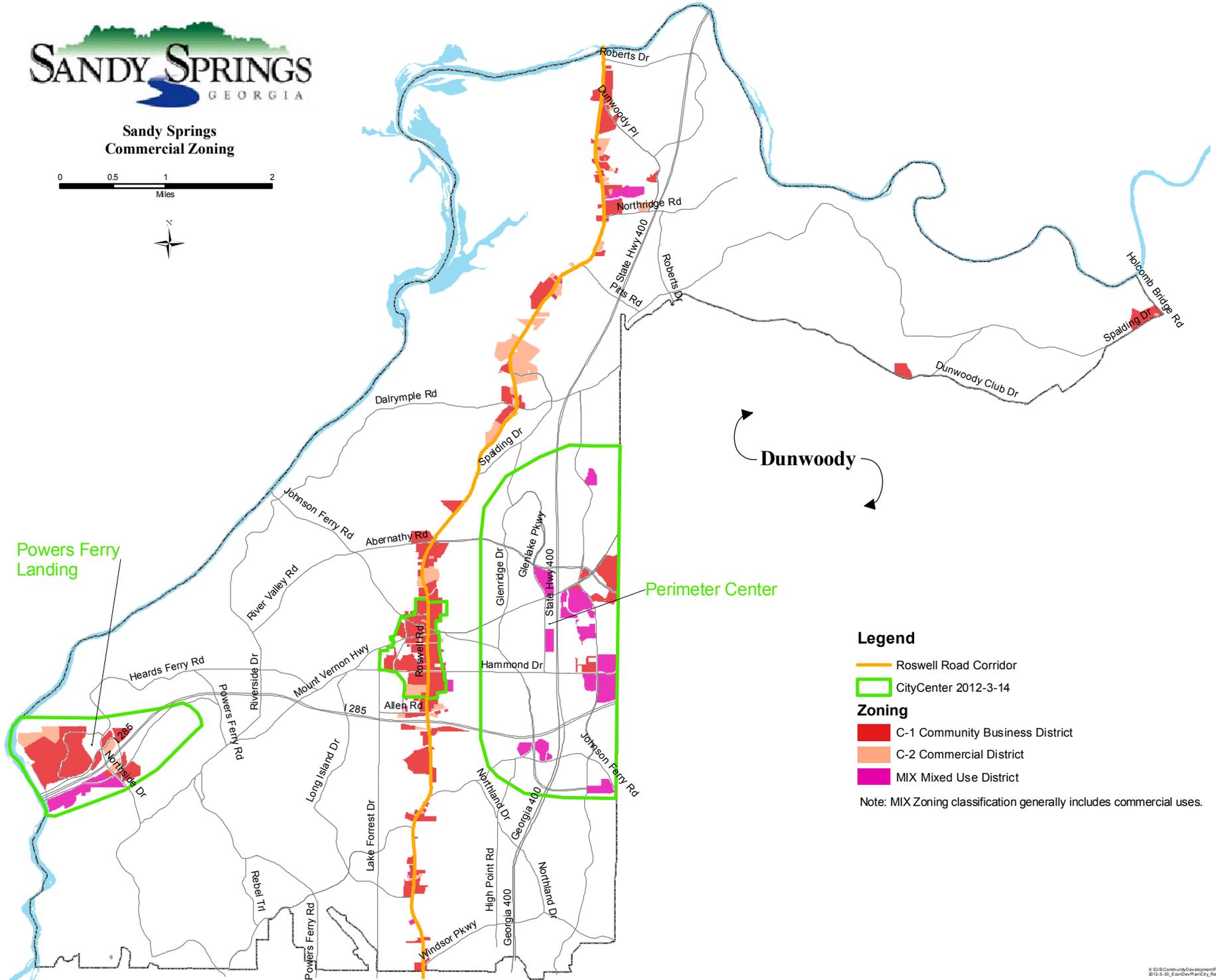
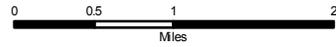
- The Roswell Road (SR 9) corridor is the primary location of retail space in the City
- Additional distinct commercial areas in the City are in the Perimeter Center area, in close proximity to Perimeter Mall, and Powers Ferry Landing, at the I-285/New Northside Drive interchange
- Five regional malls are located outside of, but in close proximity to, the City limits; they provide significant competition for the Sandy Springs retail market
- Except for the retail development in the Perimeter Mall area, much of the City's retail development is focused on serving nearby neighborhoods
- With more goods being purchased online, retail development in Sandy Springs is becoming increasingly more service oriented
- Sandy Springs residents are affluent - in 2010, the Sandy Springs median household income was \$68,200 compared to the national average of \$49,600.
- The retail vacancy rate in Sandy Springs consistently tracks higher than that of the metro Atlanta market
- The average rental rate for retail space in Sandy Springs is higher than the rate for the overall Atlanta market

Much of the existing retail in Sandy Springs is older, suburban, strip style commercial development and is auto dependent with poor vehicular and pedestrian connectivity between properties. This factor contributes to the vacancy rate of retail properties in the City. Recent trends in commercial development call for more connected and walkable environments that often incorporate a mix of uses, including housing. In response to this trend towards pedestrian connectivity and to the desires of the Sandy Springs community, the City has embarked on an aggressive streetscape improvement program that includes sidewalks, landscaping and decorative pedestrian lighting. Opportunities exist to further enhance the Sandy Springs shopping experience and capitalize on the significant buying power of the City's residents with the construction of multi-modal transportation improvements and with redevelopment that defines the City's unique commercial areas.

Given the low percentage of available vacant land in Sandy Springs, new retail development on vacant land is unlikely. However, the City should anticipate significant redevelopment of existing retail properties in a manner that responds to changing retail trends. To encourage redevelopment and renovation of existing properties, the City has to ensure that its business climate, including zoning and development regulations and processes, encourages redevelopment. Collaboration with area residents, businesses and property owners to identify improvements that will facilitate redevelopment of the City's distinct commercial areas should be a priority.



**Sandy Springs
Commercial Zoning**



Powers Ferry Landing

Perimeter Center

Dunwoody

Legend

Roswell Road Corridor

CityCenter 2012-3-14

Zoning

C-1 Community Business District

C-2 Commercial District

MIX Mixed Use District

Note: MIX Zoning classification generally includes commercial uses.

The Office Market

- Sandy Springs has three primary office sub-markets: the Perimeter Center area, Powers Ferry Landing at the I-285/New Northside Drive Interchange, and at the Georgia 400/Northridge Road Interchange
- While traffic congestion can be significant, Sandy Springs' office development is positioned well from a transportation standpoint with each sub-market having direct access to at least one limited access roadway.
- Perimeter Center office sub-market is served by four MARTA transit stations
- Land in both Sandy Springs and Dunwoody comprise the Central Perimeter office market. This market, with more than 29 million square feet of office space, is home to more than 5,000 companies and more than 100,000 jobs
- With three hospitals that provide more than 25% of the City's jobs and 40% of the available beds in the region, Sandy Springs has the largest concentration of healthcare facilities in metro Atlanta
- Sandy Springs boasts a significant international presence, including: five Consulates (Colombia, Czech Republic, India, The Netherlands and Nigeria), and six Bi-lateral Chambers of Commerce (Australia, Czech Republic, Israel, The Netherlands, Columbia and South Africa)
- City residents are well educated; 35% of City's residents have a bachelor's or advanced degree
- While the office vacancy rate in Sandy Springs tracks higher than the Atlanta metro area average, rental rates are generally higher than in other sub markets

The popularity of Sandy Springs for office development and as a place to work is due primarily to the City's convenient location with good access to freeways and mass transit; reputation as a good place to live, and the available inventory of high quality office properties. Increasing office occupancy will require promoting the City as a good place to work and highlighting the City's strengths.

“It is important that we develop the Sandy Springs brand and share that vision through targeted marketing campaigns. In doing so, we will need to target industry sections that build on existing assets, such as the concentration of health care jobs, our growth in IT, and the international character of the City. Moreover, retention and expansion of existing businesses should be an ongoing effort. Businesses that find the City business friendly, supportive and responsive become important advocates in promoting the City's economic development efforts.”

Sandy Springs Mayor Eva Galambos, 2012

“ The truest measures of a city’s success are whether the efforts of a community result in a vibrant and growing local economy and an attractive quality of life for its citizens. Economic development is essential to realizing these intertwined goals. The purpose of this plan is to provide the principles by which government and the business community can work together to further economic prosperity and enhance our already great quality of life. ”

Jim Comerford, Chairman of the
Economic Development Advisory Committee



DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

In addition to Economic Development, the Mayor and City Council also adopted Downtown Development as a new priority in the FY2012 Budget process. To further this priority, the City commissioned the preparation of a master plan for redevelopment of the City Center area as defined on the map. This master plan will help guide the City's decision-making process regarding public policy and investment in the City Center area. The vision for the City Center is the creation of a vibrant downtown for Sandy Springs. The Economic Development Advisory Committee is charged with focusing on implementation of the City Center Master Plan, particularly in identifying ways to catalyze development. Amendment of the Economic Development Plan will be required upon completion of the City Center Master Plan.

CREATING A DOWNTOWN CAN BE ABOUT...

...engaging in a community-wide discussion

...about how to grow

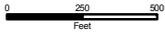
...and create vibrant new mixed-use neighborhoods (not developments), parks, mixed-use environments

...that embody a range of "personalities"

...and create a new "heart" that enriches Sandy Springs civically, socially, culturally... and economically.

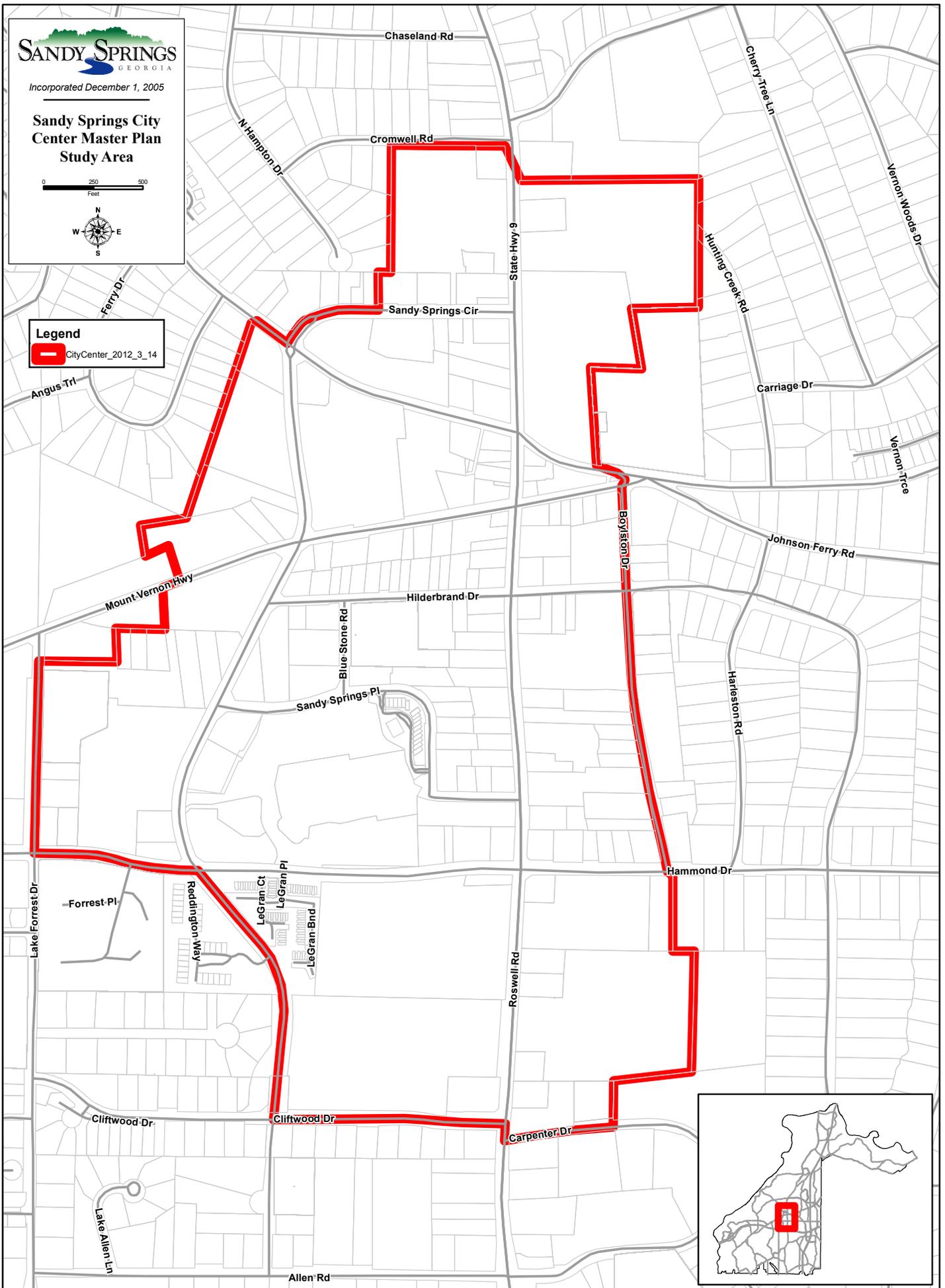


Sandy Springs City Center Master Plan Study Area



Legend

 CityCenter_2012_3_14





APPENDIX A: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

01. Since the formation of the City of Sandy Springs in 2005, the City has engaged its citizens in several visioning efforts. The first economic development vision for the City of Sandy Springs was expressed in the City's Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2006. The Comprehensive Plan has an entire chapter on Economic Development. Following is a list of the Comprehensive Plan Economic Development Policies.
02. Encourage businesses and industries to develop or expand in Sandy Springs that are suitable for the City in terms of job skills required, linkages to other economic activities in the City or region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.
03. A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.
04. Limit manufacturing, industrial, and distribution land uses to those areas currently zoned.
05. Economic development efforts in Sandy Springs will focus primary attention on redevelopment – including the implementation of specific strategies for the revitalization and redevelopment of the Roswell Road corridor and the Town Center area.
06. Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in the City – to permit City residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.
07. Continue to examine ways to retain corporate headquarters, and promote the location of technology-oriented and other desirable businesses in Sandy Springs.
08. Promote the upgrade and expansion of telecommunications infrastructure in the City.
09. Recognize the health care industry as one of the fastest-growing economic sectors in the City and anticipate and provide for the expansion of hospitals, medical offices and complimentary uses (assisted living facilities, nursing homes) in areas consistent with the future land use plan and zoning ordinance.
10. Promote intergovernmental and interagency coordination in economic development activities, including, where appropriate, utilizing the resources of the Sandy Springs Business Association/Sandy Springs Revitalization, Inc., Fulton County Department of Economic Development, the Development Authority of Fulton County, the Perimeter Community Improvement District, the Greater North Fulton Chamber of Commerce, and the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce in terms of business recruitment and retention programs.
11. Cooperate with private business associations in areas where common interests exist, such as maintaining and enhancing the economic environment of the City and the joint promotion of activities.
12. Promote the development of small businesses in the City.
13. Create and maintain a positive climate for business in the City.
14. Sandy Springs should balance the need to regulate the design and appearance of commercial properties with a positive regulatory environment that is sensitive to the need for businesses to be competitive in the marketplace.
15. In situations where economic development policies, strategies, or objectives conflict with policies and objectives for protected neighborhoods, the interests of protected neighborhoods should prevail.

APPENDIX B: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REDEVELOPMENT POLICIES

The Comprehensive Plan cites redevelopment as the highest priority for the purposes of programming Sandy Springs' economic development resources. The results of a 2007 citizen survey referenced in the plan indicate overwhelming support of the articulation of specific revitalization and redevelopment (and redevelopment financing) strategies. In response, the Plan includes redevelopment polices envisioned to guide redevelopment of the Roswell Road Corridor and the City Center area.

01. Sandy Springs should correct the common perception that it has no "downtown" by working to establish a sense of place and design the area for gathering and social interaction through redevelopment efforts within its Town Center.
02. The City should use its investment in civic buildings (e.g., new city hall) to strategically leverage and enhance private reinvestment in redevelopment areas.
03. Provide incentives and bonuses for additional density and/or height for the redevelopment of obsolete commercial areas along the Roswell Road corridor.
04. Redevelopment areas in Sandy Springs should be pedestrian and transit friendly.
05. Continue the provision of public streetscape improvements in areas targeted for redevelopment, including upgraded sidewalks, additional pedestrian lighting, and street furniture.
06. Assess the potential presence of Brownfield sites in Sandy Springs and take steps to return these areas to productive sites consistent with the future land use plan map and the zoning ordinance.
07. Consider, and if appropriate, implement ways to expedite the process of reviewing and approving economic development projects that are consistent with adopted economic development policies, objectives, and plans.
08. Maintain positive communication with national retailers and tenancy as a means to avoid the use of vacant stores to discourage competition.
09. Consider all financing options when the City focuses on its recently defined Town center, the Roswell Road corridor and other areas that are targeted for future redevelopment.

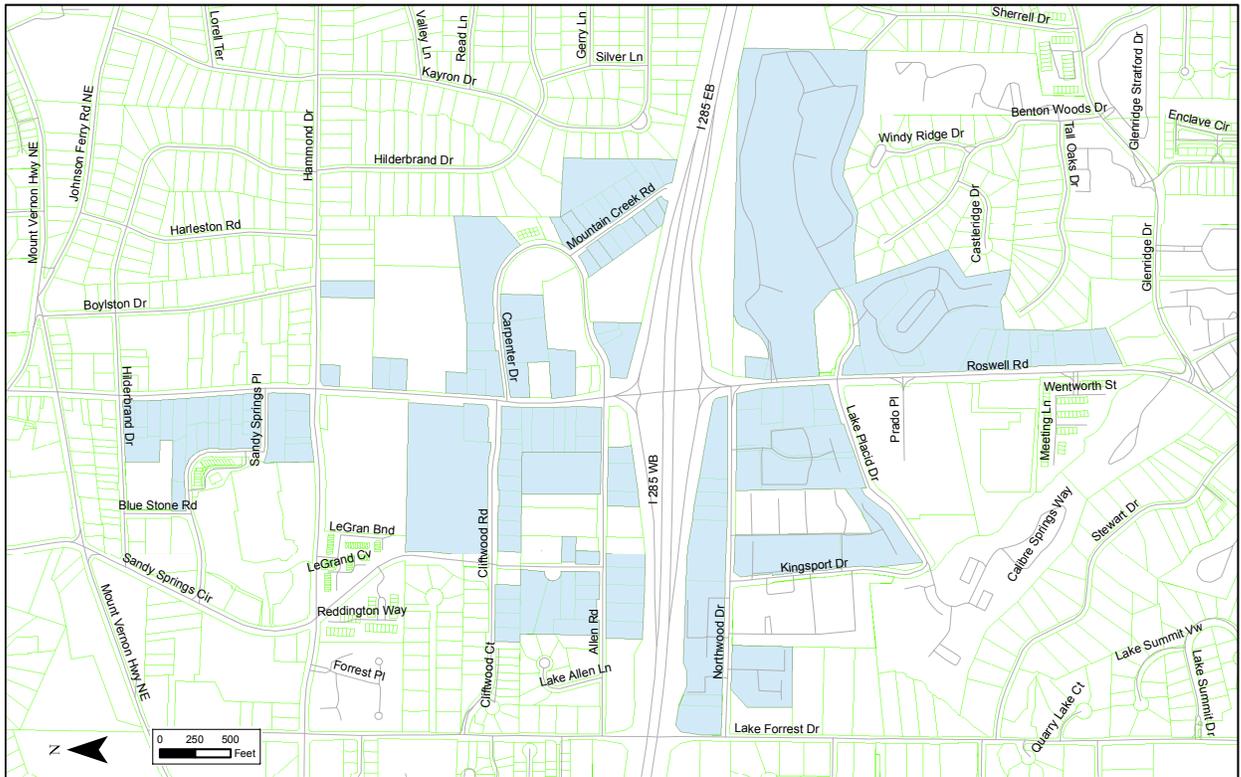
APPENDIX C: 2010 ECONOMIC BASELINE STUDY CONCLUSIONS

In 2010, the Community Development Department drafted an Economic Baseline Study as the beginnings of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. This document included a socio-economic profile of Sandy Springs, information about the City's office and retail markets and a summary of existing economic development policies and initiatives. The report provided a description of the opportunities and challenges for the City relative to economic development. The study conclusions cited the following strengths and called for the development of an overall brand or approach to economic development that capitalizes on the City's strengths.

01. Sandy Springs has high median and per capita incomes when compared to the rest of the metro, state and nation. According to a recent study by Portfolio.com, Sandy Springs is the ninth-most affluent area in the United States. This report stated nearly 18 percent of Sandy Springs households have annual incomes of \$200,000 or more. Portfolio.com also report Sandy Springs has a per capita income of \$55,752, a median household income of \$71,592 and a median house value of \$486,500 easily surpassing both Roswell and Atlanta.
02. Consistent with its high income levels, Sandy Springs has very low levels of poverty. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, only 3% of families in Sandy Springs had incomes below the poverty level.
03. Sandy Springs has a well-educated workforce. The well-educated workforce supports the high concentration of Fortune 500 and 1000 Corporations who call Sandy Springs home. Many of these companies such as UPS and Newell Rubbermaid have an international presence.
04. Although experiencing increasing vacancy rates, the Sandy Springs Sub-market compares favorably to the rest of the metro.
05. The City's adopted Comprehensive Plan includes policies to encourage both economic development and redevelopment within its higher-density land use nodes such as Town Center which includes the commercial areas along Roswell Road.
06. Sandy Springs has initiatives underway to work cooperatively with the Main Street Alliance to redevelop the commercial area along Roswell Road and is actively engaged to bring the Gwinnett Technical College to Sandy Springs.

APPENDIX D: OPPORTUNITY ZONE

On April 20, 2010 the City approved an Opportunity Zone for the parcels shown on the map below. The Opportunity Zone provides economic development incentives for businesses that create new jobs within the zone.



The Opportunity Zone program authorizes the designation of “less developed areas” for the purposes of economic development. In areas that meet this designation, the state allows enhanced job tax credits when a business:

- Relocates or expands in a designated Opportunity Zone
- Creates a minimum of two new jobs; and,
- Meets the other requirements of the program.

If the above requirements are met, the business may claim up to a \$3,500 maximum job tax credit for creating two or more new jobs, which is a 100 percent business income tax credit against tax liability and withholding for a five year period as long as the jobs are maintained.

APPENDIX E: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE POLICY

In October of 2011, the Mayor and Council adopted an Economic Development Incentive Policy designed to encourage the attraction, retention and/or expansion of businesses within the City. Eligibility for financial incentives is considered based upon the following requirements and criteria:

01. Achieve City goals, described below, as may be established and revised by the City of Sandy Springs from time to time;
02. Results in the location, expansion or retention of a business within the City;
03. Demonstrate the financial and management capability to implement and sustain the business;
04. Create fifteen or more full-time positions working at a business located within the City which meet or exceed the average wage level within the City of Sandy Springs; and
05. Provide new capital investment equal to or in excess of \$1.0 million for a business relocating or expanding in the City. Capital investment must be in new construction, an addition to an existing facility or capital improvements. For purposes of this policy, "capital improvements" means property improvements that either will enhance the property value or will increase the useful life of the property.

Underscoring the City's commitment to a diversified economic base, the following economic goals and strategies are included in the policy:

01. Attract and retain a variety of employment opportunities for Sandy Springs residents.
02. Encourage and support a high level of diverse, quality retail business and services, with an emphasis on local businesses that contribute to the City's sales and property tax base so that needed infrastructure, physical amenities, services and expansion of such services are provided.
03. Create a vibrant, unique downtown as a "destination" for Sandy Springs.
04. Encourage and support tourism, entertainment, arts and culture as an important contributor to the City's overall economic health.
05. Sustain the long-term economic well-being of the City and its citizens through redevelopment and revitalization efforts.

APPENDIX F: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Since appointment by the Mayor and City Council in January of 2012, the Economic Advisory Committee has been very much involved in the development of this plan. At the initial meeting of the Committee, the Mayor provided the Committee with the following charge:

- Serve as subject matter experts on economic development
- Serve as a sounding board on economic development related issues
- Provide input on the development of the Economic Development Plan
- Provide input on economic development strategies
- Bring economic development prospects to the City

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Jim Comerford, Proscenium Capital, **Chairman**

Graham McDonald, O'Daniel McDonald, LLC, **Vice Chairman**

Chris Burnett, Cornerstone Bank

Pat Chesser, Ackerman and Company

Eric deGroot, Holland America Chamber

Daniel DiLuzio, DiLuzio & Henssler

Mark Hackner, FOG Capital

Allan Herrick, Sapient Atlanta

Tom Mahaffey, Sandy Springs/Perimeter Chamber of Commerce

Tom Miller, Grubb & Ellis

Kevin Moyer, KAM Asset Management

Charlie Roberts, Roberts Properties

Dr. Josephine Tan, Georgia Power

APPENDIX G: LABOR FORCE BY INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION

The labor force data by industry indicates Sandy Springs workers are concentrated in the service industry, which includes hospitality, personal, automotive, recreational, legal, educational, professional, and other services. The labor force is also concentrated in the higher paying white collar jobs.

2009 EMPLOYED POPULATION OVER 16 YEARS OF AGE BY INDUSTRY

Agriculture/Mining	0.10%
Construction	4.30%
Manufacturing	3.70%
Wholesale Trade	2.70%
Retail Trade	11.10%
Transportation/Utilities	2.60%
Information	5.20%
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	15.00%
Services	53.60%
Public Administration	1.70%

2009 EMPLOYED POPULATION OVER 16 YEARS OF AGE BY OCCUPATION

White Collar	80.40%
Management/Business/Financial	27.90%
Professional	26.70%
Sales	16.70%
Administrative Support	9.10%
Services	12.40%
Blue Collar	7.10%
Farming/Forestry/Fishing	0.10%
Construction/Extraction	3.10%
Installation/Maintenance/Repair	1.10%
Production	1.10%
Transportation/Material Moving	1.70%

Source: Georgia Power Community and Economic Development

APPENDIX H: SANDY SPRINGS LARGEST EMPLOYERS

While health care related jobs comprise a significant portion of the overall Sandy Springs work force, the table below indicates that the City's economy is diversified and not dependent upon any particular employment sector or company. Sandy Springs is home to four Fortune 500 company headquarters, UPS, Newell Rubbermaid, First Data and Centene.

EMPLOYER	NUMBER EMPLOYED	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CITY EMPLOYMENT
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta	5,422	12.4%
Northside Hospital	4,241	9.7%
IBM Corporation	2,483	5.7%
St. Joseph's Hospital	1,969	4.5%
United Parcel Service	1,879	4.3%
Cisco Systems, Inc.	1,708	3.9%
ING North American Insurance Corp.	766	1.7%
At&T Mobility	656	1.5%
RBS Lynk Inc.	600	1.4%
Cox Enterprises	584	1.3%
ACS State Healthcare, LLC.	510	1.2%
National Account Service Company	480	1.1%
Newell Rubbermaid Inc.	453	1.0%
Global Payments	410	0.9%
Elavon, Inc.	400	0.9%

Source: 2012 Business License Database; Health Forum, LLC

APPENDIX I: LIST OF DOCUMENTS USED IN DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

- City of Sandy Springs 2027 Comprehensive Plan, adopted November 20, 2007
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy - Economic Baseline Study, 2010
- The City of Sandy Springs, Georgia Economic Development Incentive Policy
- Implementation Tools for Comprehensive Planning, Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- 2010 US Census
- 2010 American Community Survey
- Cushman & Wakefield Market Beat Atlanta Retail Report
- Cushman & Wakefield Market Beat Atlanta Office Report
- "What's Next? Real Estate in the New Economy", 2011 Urban Land Institute Report

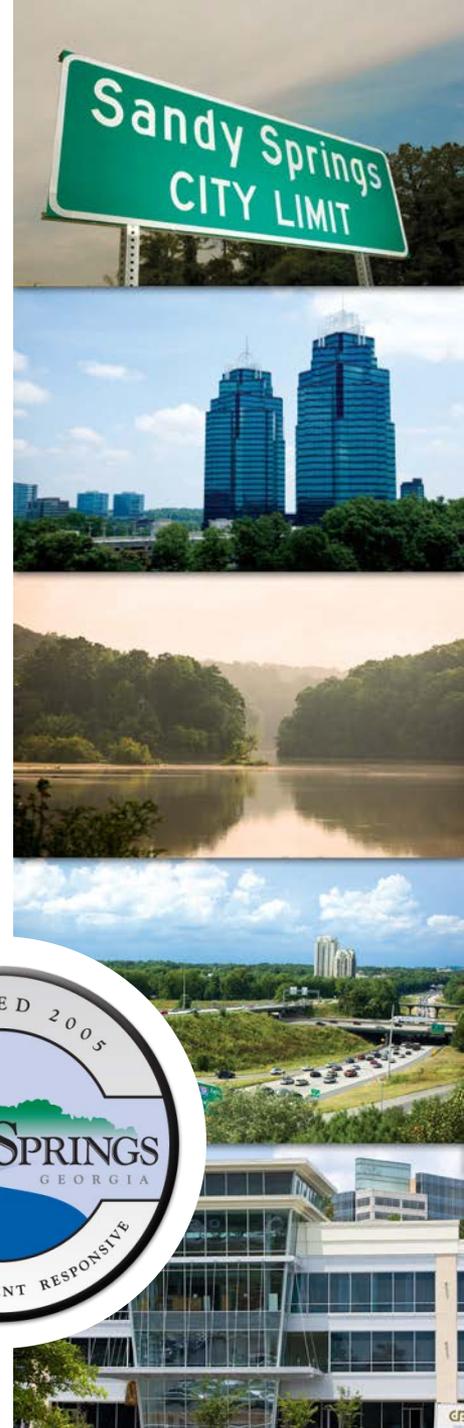




sandyspringsga.gov
770.730.5600
7840 Roswell Road, Sandy Springs, GA 30350

SANDY SPRINGS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

August 7, 2012



Background

2

Economic Development Efforts to Date:

- Comprehensive Plan which includes Economic Development and Redevelopment Policies
- Economic Baseline Study
- Business License Fee Reduction
- Opportunity Zone
- Economic Development Incentive Policy
- Economic Development Advisory Committee

The Economic Development Plan Will:

3

- Communicate the City's vision, define goals, set specific direction and clarify policy and budget priorities
- Provide a framework to guide actions
- Provide a structure to insure oversight and management of the City's Economic Development Program

Economic Development Plan Vision

4

Sustain the long-term economic health and vitality of Sandy Springs through the retention, expansion and attraction of businesses and development that enhance property values, increase personal income and make a positive contribution to the quality of life for the citizens of Sandy Springs.

Economic Development Plan Mission

5

The overarching purpose of economic development in the City of Sandy Springs is to sustain and further the attractive quality of life enjoyed by its citizens. This purpose will be achieved through the accomplishment of two interdependent objectives:

- Preservation and creation of neighborhoods that provide an environment for the security and enjoyment of families and individuals.
- Retention, expansion, and attraction of businesses that result in a diverse economic base and the prosperity necessary to provide quality jobs, enhanced property values and stable communities.

Economic Development Plan Goals

6

- **Attract and recruit corporations and small businesses** that will contribute to a diverse local economy through the creation of jobs requiring a well-educated and skilled workforce.
- **Retain and expand corporations and small businesses** already located in Sandy Springs through delivery of customer friendly city services and maintaining a competitive rate of taxation.
- **Recruit and sustain international business and investment** to Sandy Springs.
- **Sustain and develop business districts** that contribute to the overall quality of life of the City of Sandy Springs by obtaining optimal rates of occupancy for retail and office buildings.

Economic Development Plan Goals

7

- **Create a focus for community activities** including the arts and recreation through creation of an innovative City Center.
- **Preserve and develop neighborhoods** that are attractive to families and individuals, safe, aesthetically pleasing and stable.
- **Craft and implement a marketing and advertising campaign** for Sandy Springs targeting both domestic and foreign businesses, focusing on the favorable business climate, quality of life and focused redevelopment efforts (including City Center) in Sandy Springs.

Work Program

8

- Commercial Retention/Development
- Small Business Retention/Development
- Housing Development/Redevelopment
- City Center Redevelopment/Roswell Road Redevelopment
- International Development
- Communications/Branding
- Research
- Finance

Commercial Retention/Development

9

- Develop a profile of the City's current business mix and identify the types of businesses that would want to locate in Sandy Springs.
- Develop the strategy to attract and recruit businesses identified through an analysis of the City's existing business mix, focusing on the needs of those types of businesses and the site selection factors they use.
- Identify businesses that will complement, support, supply, sell to or buy from existing businesses.

Commercial Retention/Development

10

- Identify the workforce needs of business clusters within Sandy Springs and develop a strategy to encourage universities, colleges and schools to provide relevant skill training corresponding to the needs of those businesses.
- Develop a strategy to retain and expand existing businesses by building relationships with companies of all sizes in order to strengthen the businesses, establish early warning systems for at-risk businesses, and ensure that public programs meet local business needs.
- Develop a strategy for identifying and mitigating regulatory issues that inhibit attraction and retention of businesses.

Small Business

Retention/Development

11

- Develop a strategy to retain and expand existing small businesses by building relationships with companies of all sizes in order to strengthen the businesses, establish early warning systems for at-risk businesses, and ensure that public programs meet local business needs.
- Develop a strategy for identifying and mitigating regulatory issues that inhibit attraction and retention of small businesses.
- Develop a profile of City of Sandy Springs' current small business mix and what types of small businesses would want to locate in Sandy Springs.

Housing

Development/Redevelopment

12

- Conduct financial analysis of targeted multi-family properties to determine any necessary zoning changes or incentives necessary to facilitate redevelopment.
- Develop a redevelopment strategy.

City Center Redevelopment/Roswell Road Redevelopment

13

- Collaborate with Goody/Clancy and the City of Sandy Springs in developing the City Center redevelopment plan.
- Develop the strategy for implementation of the City Center redevelopment plan.

International Development

14

- Develop the strategy to attract and recruit international businesses and investment to Sandy Springs.
- Develop the strategy to facilitate interaction between existing Sandy Springs businesses and incoming international businesses and investment.
- Develop the strategy to further Sandy Springs' success in attracting international consulates.

Communications/Branding

15

- Develop marketing and advertising campaign for Sandy Springs targeting both domestic and foreign businesses, focusing on the favorable business climate, quality of life and focused redevelopment efforts (including City Center) in Sandy Springs. Include all Sandy Springs Profile information.
- Develop a recruitment strategy and marketing materials for each targeted industry identified in the business mix analysis.
- Develop a recruitment strategy and marketing materials for designated districts and preferred redevelopment sites within the City, such as Downtown and the Medical Complex. Use the database of redevelopment sites to facilitate this effort.

Communications/Branding

16

- Create a website or webpage with options for locating a business, expanding a business and starting a business. Webpage/website will have downloadable marketing materials, plans and data.
- Initiate an ongoing communications program with existing city businesses of all sizes, with a goal to call or visit at least three businesses per week. Through the communications program, identify at-risk companies and determine how to help them.
- Create small business assistance program that will include outreach/welcome packet when business license application is submitted and a City supported C-level roundtable that will help new businesses and entrepreneurs.

Research

17

- Develop a regularly updated database that provides geographical information, demographic information and detailed land use and real estate information to businesses that are considering locating in Sandy Springs.
- Develop an analysis of the City's existing business mix, focusing on the needs of those types of businesses and the site selection factors they use.
- Develop a Business Climate Scorecard that can be maintained by City staff so that any favorable/unfavorable business climate factors may be identified and addressed.
- Research peer cities for additional strategies to improve the business climate.

Research

18

- Develop a strategy for the compilation and regular update of GIS Redevelopment database of available underutilized and functionally obsolete properties of all types (retail, office, industrial and multi-family) including property owner, parcel size, building information, zoning, future land use designation, owner and broker contacts, and available incentives.
- Measure business retention and expansion efforts using quantitative benchmarks including number of retained businesses, jobs created/retained, businesses visited, businesses assisted, average salary of jobs created/retained.
- Measure business retention and expansion efforts using qualitative measures including business perceptions of City government, business perceptions of the City, and involvement of assisted businesses in other community activities.

Finance

19

- Determine the menu of financial tools the City of Sandy Springs should consider developing and deploying to further economic development.
- Determine the sources of public and private finance available to fund the City of Sandy Springs' economic development activities.