

Steering Committee #5

March 9, 2023 @ 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Connect Douglas Multi-Modal Center Transportation Center/Zoom

Attendees:

Commissioner Tarenia Carthan, Board of Commissioners (via Zoom)
Tabrieah Cobb, Legislative Aide to Commissioner Carthan (via Zoom)
Yvonne Cuffie, District 3 Appointee
Ron Anglin, District 3 Appointee
Sabine Kelley, District 4 Appointee
Mickey Thompson, Citizen - Hwy 92 LCI
Vanessa Livingston, Citizen - Placemaking Subcommittee
Sharon Bachtel, Chairman Appointee
Ed Daniell, Citizen – Scenic Bypass Steering Committee
Pam Daniell, Citizen – Scenic Bypass Steering Committee
Kevin Livingston, UGA Cooperative Extension
Brian Keel, Douglasville/ Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority
Cora Thompson, HOA Representative/ P&Z Board Member
Chris Pumphrey, Elevate Douglas/Economic Development Representative
Babs Russell, West Georgia Technical College
Richard Slaton, JP Morgan Chase (via Zoom)

Project Management Team:

Allison Duncan, Planning and Zoning
Phil Shafer, Planning and Zoning
Jacqualle Johnson, Planning and Zoning
Karla Poshedly, Engineering and Transportation
Chad Griffin, Parks and Recreation
Anna Baggett, TSW
Allison Stewart-Harris, TSW
Audra Rojek, VHB
Nick Stephens, Perez Planning (via Zoom)
Dr. Deborah Johnson-Blake, Writing Pad
Kristine Hansen-Dederick, Sycamore Consulting, Inc.

Summary of Meeting:

Attendees were greeted upon arrival into the physical and Zoom rooms, and in-person folks were offered lunch. Allison Duncan, Douglas County Planning and Zoning Manager, officially started the meeting at 11:30 a.m., welcoming the committee and thanking the members for their participation. Anna Baggett, TSW, then began the presentation (attached) talking about how the community's needs, goals and opportunities have been collected and organized, and how they inform the Comprehensive Plan Update's Community Work Program.

The committee was then led in an exercise to prioritize a short list of work program items. The following is a summary of the exercise. The results are organized by goal and include a description of the project, the level of priority assigned by the committee and any comments from the committee members.

Community Goal	Project	Description	Priority	SC Notes
Goal 1: PUBLIC SAFETY	Work with public safety to develop a plan for the installation of a countywide camera surveillance network and require camera installation for projects of a certain size or in proximity to an identified area of need	This would improve public safety by encouraging widespread use of security cameras	Medium/ Low	Targeted areas – not everywhere
Goal 1: PUBLIC SAFETY	Streetlight audit	Would examine streetlights throughout the County to see if work properly and where there may be needs for additional streetlights. Ensuring streetlights work properly contributes to public safety.	Medium/ Low	Ped-scaled lighting
Goal 2: INFRASTRUCTURE	Freight cluster study	This would examine freight truck travel in Douglas County and find ways to facilitate the efficient movement of freight, improve access to jobs, reduce traffic congestion, and improve safety, mobility, and access for all roadway users.	High	
Goal 2: INFRASTRUCTURE	Increase fees for the sidewalk fund and/ or requirements or alternatives for sidewalk construction/ construction of the countywide trail network	This would provide more funding for sidewalk and trail construction	Medium/ Low	Fees and requirements should ensure connectivity to outside subdivisions

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Goal 2: INFRASTRUCTURE	Work with GDOT to improve/beautify the Campbellton roundabout gateway (Hwy 166/92)	A student project idea - this would improve the landscaping and gateway signage at the Campbellton roundabout, improving the look and impression as travelers enter Douglas County	Low	Wrap into other plans for gateway signage
Goal 3: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	Complete zoning for cottage cluster housing	Would allow cottage court type housing in more areas in the County in line with the character areas	Medium	
Goal 3: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	Revise list of allowable uses in the UDC with a particular focus on encouraging shops, restaurants and entertainment and discouraging, warehouse, distribution and certain industrial uses; develop more stringent standards for gas station; car wash and dollar store uses	The zoning code defines which uses are appropriate and where and how certain developments can be built. County staff would examine Douglas County's zoning code to find ways to allow for uses people want – restaurants, shops - and discourage people do not want – warehouses, dollar stores.	High	No waffle houses
Goal 3: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	Investigate stronger enforcement mechanisms to remedy challenges posed by vacant, underutilized and blighted housing	County staff would research strategies to hold property owners accountable for the upkeep and appearance of their buildings to ensure proper living conditions for tenants and improve the appearance of the County	High	

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Goal 3: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	Modify the zoning code to discourage stand-alone apartment zoning and only allow as a part of a mixed use community with a variety of residential and non-residential uses and amenities	This would encourage developers to incorporate other uses, like retail, when developing apartment housing	High/ Medium	
Goal 3: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	Revise accessory dwelling provisions	This would allow accessory dwelling units in more areas in Douglas County in line with the character areas	High	
Goal 3: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	Develop Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program for protected Dog River Watershed	This program would allow property owners to transfer their right to develop their land from within the Dog River Watershed- where a lot of development is prohibited - to more appropriate areas, like Hwy 5. TDRs protect large swaths of land from future development while guiding smart growth and density in areas defined by the community.	High	Relates to public health re drinking water
Goal 4: PUBLIC HEALTH	Increase fees for the tree fund and/ or increase tree retention requirements	Would provide funding for planting trees and discourage tree removal.	High	Improvement but less onerous
Goal 5: RECREATION	Revise development standards in regard to the types of greenspace and amenities that are required in new developments	This would require developers to include greenspace in their residential development plans, increasing neighborhood parks around the County over time	High	Could make housing unaffordable, but too many children in Douglas cannot walk or bike to neighborhood parks

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Goal 5: RECREATION	Create Arts Master Plan and 1% for Arts	An arts master plan would establish a strategy for increasing public art and cultural programming in the County. The 1% tax would provide a steady source of funding for arts and culture projects.	High	
Goal 5: RECREATION	Parks and Recreation Master Plan	This plan would dig deeper on the high-level parks and recreation framework and better define parks and recreation needs throughout the county, including new parks and facilities, programming, and park maintenance.	High	
Goal 5: RECREATION	Sweetwater Creek Greenway Trail Scoping Study/ Feasibility Study	This study would identify the exact location of the future Sweetwater Creek Greenway as well as provide strategies for building out the trail system	Low	Not low priority, but more of a long-term project
Goal 5: RECREATION	Greenways and Trails Master Plan	This plan would examine the trails framework in a more detail, establishing a clear direction on how and where the County can build out a trail system	Medium	
Goal 5: RECREATION	Pursue installation of Hwy 92 Multi-Purpose Trail	This would construct a planned trail near Hwy 92 and Lee Road	Medium	
Goal 5: RECREATION	Complete PE for Chattahoochee Hill Country Trail System and acquire ROW	This would complete the preliminary engineering (PE) – a necessary step to build out the Chattahoochee Hill Country Trail system and acquire property where the trail will be built	High	

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Goal 6: TRANSFORM	Support Keep Douglas Beautiful initiatives for litter clean up along roadways countywide	County staff would work with the existing non-profit to improve the look/impression of Douglas County	High	
Goal 6: TRANSFORM	Update home occupation ordinance	Would revise an ordinance that regulates home-based businesses to reflect post-pandemic realities	High/ Medium	Increase code enforcement and staff
Goal 6: TRANSFORM	Improve architectural and design guidelines for corridors, non-residential and major subdivisions	This would ensure that new developments are of high quality and design, as well as cohesive with desired character	High	Make sure to emphasize quality
Goal 6: TRANSFORM	Work with Code Enforcement to undertake a sign audit and develop signage standards	Signage standards would provide guidelines to improve the look of various signs around the County	Medium	

Following the exercise, Allison Duncan presented and discussed the Future Land Use Map and the Character Area Map, and any changes since the last Steering Committee meeting. She then discussed the upcoming public Roadshow where citizens are invited to view and comment on the draft land use elements of the plan, at both in-person events and online. The participants were then thanked for their participation in the meeting and throughout the overall process, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.