

## DDA Update - April 2008

There are several projects and initiatives in the works, and we wanted to update everyone on where things stand. First of all Saturday April, 19th is our big race day and music fest. Pat Eidt and the Norcross Neighbors group have done a great job of putting this together. During the day the DDA will have a tent set up in Thrasher Park displaying some of the new development coming on and showing a marketing and promotions video that will begin to brand Norcross as "A Place to Imagine". The whole idea behind the brand is designed to capture peoples' imagination and to get them to think outside themselves. It's about creating a Place that stimulates new ideas, new possibilities, and creative thinking. It's also about embracing diversity and cultivating an environment that recognizes and encourages the talents and contributions of all its citizens. A Place to Imagine refers to not only what Norcross is today, but to what Norcross can be - a truly great place, with amazing opportunities for future growth and community redevelopment, as well as a place where people can come to think, create, and share new ideas with family, friends, and business associates. We'll be developing this theme throughout the year. Also, on Monday night, the Council approved the funding for the new park at Lillian Webb field unanimously with a 5-0 vote. This united commitment behind this project reflects the community's desire to get on with it. You should begin to see some activity by mid May. More on that later in the design committee section. Finally, each of our three primary working committees are chaired by a Board member - Promotions Committee, Erica Eby; Design Committee, Chuck Cimarik; and the Economic Development Committee, Bob Wilkerson. The following are the updates from each of those committees:

### **Promotions Committee**

"Communities who embrace and cultivate the spirit of creativity and innovation are more likely to thrive and prosper both spiritually and economically."

--excerpt from the Imagination Proclamation

By now you've likely seen Norcross' new logo and tagline, "A Place to Imagine" all over town. Hopefully you experienced our new branding campaign at the Corners to Crossing event, read about it in the AJC, or heard Bucky present the Imagination Proclamation to the city at the Banks and Shane concert.

As the excerpt above from the Imagination Proclamation states, one of the benefits of a thriving community like Norcross is the spiritual and economic prosperity of our citizens. Those who visit here can see clear evidence that Norcross is such a place. The branding campaign is designed to communicate the unique values of Norcross to people who have not yet been here in person – quite a tall order! Of course, one of the most cost effective ways to communicate with a broad audience is the Internet. If you haven't checked it out yet, we encourage you to visit [www.APlaceToImagine.com](http://www.APlaceToImagine.com). The site is designed to give visitors a sense of the heart of Norcross. No web site can fully convey all that Norcross has to offer, so the site is designed to engage the visitor and invite them to take that next step – whether that means changing their perception of Norcross, attending an event, or considering a personal or commercial investment in our community.

Perhaps this branding campaign reminds you of why you're proud to call Norcross 'home', or you're just curious to learn more about the campaign's intended results. We invite you to attend the Norcross Neighbors meeting Tuesday, May 13 at 7:00 p.m. at the Community Center. Among the items on the agenda, we'll be presenting an insiders' view of the marketing plan, identify the goals and strategies of the campaign, and let you know how you can be involved.

### **Design Committee**

The Design Committee has started the year with a focus on the look of the Downtown. We are working with the Parks & Green Space committee to see that the landscaping is spruced up for Spring - as much as we can considering the current watering regulations. In that light we have

approached the downtown merchants about them seeing the urns are watered after planting. We have been taking a look at the tree lighting and think that it may be time for a change for the twinkle lights. The Design Committee is also working closely with the 2 major projects - Webb Field site work and Skin Alley. With the Web Field project budget approved by the City Council the DDA is finalizing the contract to begin construction soon. The Design Committee will stay deeply involved with this project to ensure that the look we get is the look the City wants. The second project - Skin Alley, has been through initial concept design by Stephen Fuller and now we will work to blend that with the already planned road and sidewalk improvements for Cemetery, College St. & Skin Alley. We have also been collaborating with an architect for the renovation of the "Tea Folk" cottage; expect to see changes starting within the next couple of months.

### **Economic Development Committee**

The Economic Development Committee is concentrating on two objectives:

1) finding tenants for the 10,000 square feet of vacant retail/office space in the Downtown Historic District, and 2) helping to facilitate the city permitting process from the perspective of the applicants.

Toward the first end, we have initiated contacts with several restaurants, a school of massage therapy, a bicycle shop, a jewelry store, and a wine specialty store. Other potential business types we are considering would be a yarn shop, a doll house store, a clothing boutique, and a bakery.

With regard to the second goal, we have interviewed three recent applicants regarding their experiences with the permitting process and have discussed with the City Manager a feedback process for applicants. We will also examine the processes in place and try to determine what were the causes of those difficulties the applicants encountered.

As you can see, there is much going on within the DDA and within the City of Norcross. As spring and summer approach, the streets will come alive with friends and family taking in the new sights, shops, and restaurants. It's definitely a great time to be in Norcross! See you in town.

Skip Nau  
Chairman

**The DDA meets monthly on the 1st Thursday at 8:00 AM in the executive conference room on the second floor of City Hall. Attendance by all is welcomed.**