



TREES & GREENSPACE



27. GREENSPACE BENCHMARK

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURE

The local government has achieved at least one of the benchmarks defined below:

Option #1. The local government has at least 20 acres of greenspace for every 1,000 residents. The total number of residents is based on the most current ARC population estimate. The total number of greenspace acres is based on the most current information available in the ARC Regional Inventory of Parks and Greenspace.

Option #2. The local government has at least 8 percent of its total land protected for greenspace. The total number of greenspace acres is based on the most current information available in the ARC Regional Inventory of Parks and Greenspace.

Option #3. The local government has designated greenspace within at least a ½ mile distance of each resident.

Greenspace includes natural areas, open spaces and greenways that are federally, state, or locally owned and permanently protected. Conservation easements on private land that are held by either a land trust or local government are eligible as long as the total conservation easement acreage does not exceed 40% of the total greenspace area.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR CREDIT

For Option #1 ARC staff calculation of acres of greenspace per 1,000 residents using the most current ARC population estimates for the jurisdiction and the acreage of greenspace in the ARC Regional Inventory of Parks and Greenspace

For Option #2 ARC staff calculation using the Regional Inventory of Parks and Greenspace confirms that the jurisdiction has 8 percent or more of its land protected for greenspace

For Option #3 A map confirming that each resident is within a ½ mile radius of a publicly accessible park or greenspace

RECERTIFICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

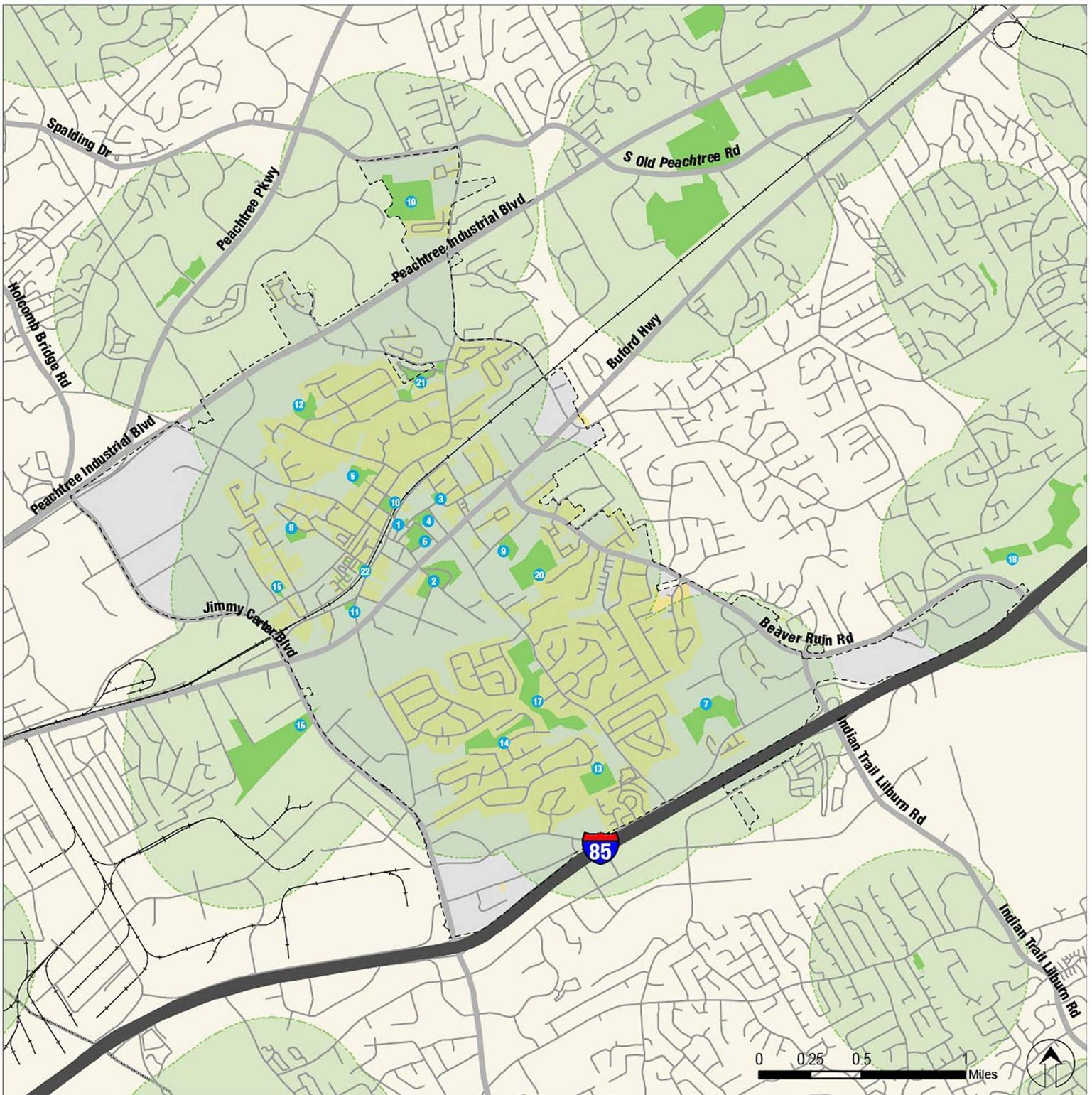
For Option #1 and Option #2 ARC staff will use the ARC Regional Inventory of Parks and Greenspace and current population estimates to determine if the local government is still meeting the requirements of the measure. For Option #3, the local government must submit a current map demonstrating that each resident is within a ½ mile radius of a publicly accessible park or greenspace.

RESPONSE

- Nearly every residential unit in the City is located within a half-mile of a publicly accessible park or greenspace. 10 residential units fall outside of this radius but are located less than 0.57 miles from a public greenspace and are located directly next to a community recreation facility managed by their subdivision. These locations are listed in the chart below. Additionally, many of these locations are listed within the 2024 Parks & Greenspaces Plan in the submittal folder:

Map ID	Name	Greenspace Type
1	Betty Maudlin Park	City park
2	Cemetery Fields	City park and adjacent publicly accessible private greenspace
3	Discovery Garden Park	City park
4	Heritage Park	City park
5	Johnson-Dean Park	City park
6	Lillian Webb Park	City park
7	Pinnacle Park	City park
8	Rossie Brundage Park	City park
9	Summerour Park	City park
10	Thrasher Park	City park
11	Veterans Memorial Park	City park
12	Fickling Parcel	City-owned conservation
13	Magneson Property	City-owned conservation
14	Norcross Sewer Pond	City-owned conservation
15	Water Tower Park	City-owned conservation
16	Best Friend Park	County park
17	Beaver Ruin Greenspace	County greenspace
18	Gwinnett County Greenspace	County greenspace
19	Norcross High School Recreation Fields	School recreation fields (joint-use agreement)
20	Summerour Middle School Recreation Fields	School recreation fields (joint-use agreement)
21	Adams Vineyard Conservation Area	Publicly accessible private greenspace (vineyard, community garden, park)
22	Seven Greenspaces	Publicly accessible private greenspaces

- Since the 2016 certification application, the City has increased access to greenspace through the creation and expansion of the Discovery Garden Park located in downtown Norcross. The City also constructed Pinnacle Park, a 12 acre park located on the site of a storm water retention pond, to ensure high-quality park access to residents in the southeastern corner of the city.
- In addition to city and county parks, residents have access to conservation land, school recreational facilities through joint-use agreements, and open space in several new residential developments that are accessible by the general public. Specifically, The Norcross Community Development Department worked with the developers of the Adams Vineyard and Seven projects to locate accessible open space along public frontages on these sites that are owned and managed by their homeowners associations.
- The attached map shows the locations of publicly-owned and publicly-accessible private greenspace in or within walking distance of the city.



Norcross ARC Green Communities Greenspace Analysis

- Highway
- Major Road
- Local Road
- Railroads
- Greenspace
- 1/2-mile to Green Space
- Residential Land Uses
- City of Norcross
- Unincorporated Gwinnett Co.

Greenspaces

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. Betty Maudlin Park | 12. Fickling Parcel |
| 2. Cemetery Fields | 13. Magneson Property |
| 3. Discovery Garden Park | 14. Norcross Sewer Pond |
| 4. Heritage Park | 15. Water Tower Park |
| 5. Johnson-Dean Park | 16. Best Friend Park |
| 6. Lillian Webb Park | 17. Beaver Ruin Greenspace |
| 7. Pinnacle Park | 18. Gwinnett County Greenspace |
| 8. Rossie Brundage Park | 19. Norcross High School Rec Fields |
| 9. Summerour Park | 20. Summerour Middle School Rec Fields |
| 10. Thrasher Park | 21. Adams Vineyard Conservation Area |
| 11. Veterans Memorial Park | 22. Seven Greenspaces |

28. GOVERNMENT NO NET LOSS OF TREES POLICY

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURE

The local government has a policy or ordinance stating that there will be no net loss of trees on government property. This policy can determine no net loss using either canopy coverage or the “diameter at breast-height” (DBH) method. The officially adopted policy or ordinance could also include benchmarks for increasing canopy density or DBH measurements. Additionally, clear guidelines are to be established regarding which trees are suitable for replacement and their necessary size.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR CREDIT

- A copy of the policy or ordinance with date of adoption
- A copy of the community’s tree coverage goals (no net loss, increasing coverage, etc.)
- An example of a property where the policy was followed

RECERTIFICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Provide a copy of the most recent version of the ordinance or policy and a description of any changes that have occurred since the local government’s most recent Green Communities certification. Provide a description of how the policy is being implemented including one or two examples of properties where the policy has been implemented since the local government’s most recent Green Communities certification.

RESPONSE

- The Norcross UDO, Sec. 205-5 and Sec. 205-6, establishes measures to conserve trees in the City of Norcross. Per the ordinances, builders in the City can either replace the trees they remove on site, or they can pay into a fund that is used to plant trees throughout the City. The fee is calculated based on the number of trees that cannot be replaced on site. Please see the related sections attached on the following pages, or refer to the complete document located in the application submission folder.
- An example of the ordinance being implemented:
 - 2024 Arbor Day planting was a replanting of a tree cut down at Pinnacle.
 - Rossie Brunadage Park had a Pine tree removed and replanted with another Pine
 - (2) Water Oaks at Heritage Park removed and replanted with two different Oaks
 - At North Peachtree Street by Buchanan intersection had a right of way Maple, replanted with a different Maple tree
 - In downtown, some of the Chinese elms were removed and replanted with the same species

may include but are not limited to the provision of tree wells, retaining walls, aeration, or supplementary irrigation, as applicable to the site of the tree and as approved by the Director.

B. Tree Density Standards

1. Tree Retention

On each property for which a Tree Preservation and/or Replacement Plan is required, existing trees shall be retained and new trees shall be planted such that the property shall attain or exceed a Tree Density Standard as follows:

- a. Residential - 16 Tree Density Units per acre,
- b. Office/Commercial/Mixed-use – 16 Tree Density Units per acre,
- c. Industrial – 16 Tree Density Units per acre.

2. Distribution

Trees, both existing and new, shall be reasonably distributed throughout the site, with emphasis on tree groupings to achieve aesthetic results following professional landscaping standards. Trees, including street trees, may be retained or planted for credit within a public street right-of-way.

3. Trees in Stream Buffer

Trees located in a stream buffer may be counted toward fulfilling the Tree Density Standard provided the acreage within the stream buffer is included in the calculations used to fulfill the Tree Density Standard.

4. Easement Exclusion

Properties possessing natural gas, petroleum or electric power transmission easements, or major sanitary sewer main (greater than 8 inches in diameter) or water main (greater than 16 inches in diameter) distribution easements, may exclude the land area contained in the easement from the total acreage of the property in fulfilling the Tree Density Standard provided that no improvements (e.g. parking lots, tennis courts, driveways, greenways, storm water detention facilities, etc.) are proposed within the easement. If any improvements are proposed within the easement, then the land area so used within the easement for the improvements, plus an additional 10-feet of land area surrounding the improvements, shall be included in the total acreage of the property to fulfill the Tree Density Standard.

5. Lake and Pond Exclusion

Properties with a lake or pond may exclude the land area contained in the lake or pond from the total acreage of the property in fulfilling the Tree Density Standard.

C. Tree Density Standard Calculation

The Tree Density Standard shall be calculated by summing the credits and dividing the sum by the total acreage of the project included within the limits of the permit application.

D. Community tree species list

1. The Tree Preservation Board shall maintain a list of tree species approved for conservation and planting within the city as well as those not recommended. The list shall be known as the city's community tree species list, hereinafter referred to as the tree species list. The tree species list includes the mature size category of each species, notations on which species may be planted beneath utility lines, and other species characteristics.

2. The list is maintained by the Tree Preservation Board and may change without notice to incorporate results of research and experience with individual species and is available from the Community Development Department.

E. Permeable surfaces under tree driplines

The minimum permeable surface area requirements under tree driplines are as follows.

1. For conserved trees in residential zones no more than 20 percent of the dripline can be encroached upon by impermeable surfaces provided the remaining area is mulched.
2. For planted trees in all zones the amount of permeable surface area required shall be based upon the mature tree size category on the Community Tree Species List as follows:
 - a. Large trees: 640 square feet;
 - b. Medium trees: 360 square feet;
 - c. Small trees: 160 square feet.
3. For planted trees the dripline shall be mulched.

F. Tree Protection

1. *Conserved trees.* All conserved trees shall be actively protected during the development process and passively protected throughout the life of the development. The entire tree, including the crown, trunk, and roots, and the critical root zone, shall be protected.
2. *Minimum tree protection measures.* Active tree protection shall consist of, at a minimum, establishing a tree protection zone around each tree or grouping of trees by the installation of fencing at the outer edge of the dripline or Critical root zone, whichever is greater. Minimum tree protection measures for boundary trees, existing on adjacent properties, whose critical root zones extend onto the project site is mandatory.
 - a. No more than 25 percent of a boundary tree's mature crown or 1/3 of a young tree's canopy shall be removed in one season.
 - b. Pruning of conserved trees should only be done by an ISA (International Society of Arboriculture) certified arborist.
 - c. Tree protection fencing and tree protection area signs shall be installed after the issuance of a disturbance Permit and prior to any land disturbance activity or building activity.
 - 1) Tree protection fencing shall be four feet high, made of orange high-visibility polypropylene, and erected with sturdy wooden or metal posts around the tree protection zone. A heritage tree, or a significant species tree, as determined by the Director, may require increased protection. Methods and extent of increased protection will be as directed by the Director.
 - 2) Signs shall be fabricated out of a sturdy material, shall be waterproof, and contain the following legible text in English and Spanish: "TREE PROTECTION AREA, ENTRY PROHIBITED." The signs shall be a minimum of 8.5 x 11 inches, shall be placed on a sturdy post a minimum of 30 inches off the ground, and shall be spaced a maximum of 50 feet apart.
 - 3) Tree protection fencing and signage shall remain in good condition throughout the development and construction processes, and shall only be removed after the final plat approval or a certificate of occupancy has been issued.
 - d. Encroachment into the tree protection area shall result in the loss of Tree Density Unit credit for preserved trees.

- e. The critical root zone within the tree protection area shall be mulched with a minimum of three inches and not more than five inches of organic mulch such as pine straw, wood chips, tree leaves, or compost, for a minimum of three years, or prior to issuance of the final certificate of occupancy for the project, whichever occurs last.
 - f. The Community Development Director or their designee may require the installation of additional tree protection measures to insure survivability of conserved trees.
3. *Prohibited activities.* Within the tree protection areas, without proper authorization or permit the following activities shall be prohibited:
- a. Vehicle traffic or parking;
 - b. Materials or equipment storage;
 - c. Soil disturbance;
 - d. Soil excavation;
 - e. Removal of topsoil;
 - f. Trenching;
 - g. Soil fill;
 - h. Change in soil pH;
 - i. Change in soil drainage;
 - j. Equipment washouts or disposal (including concrete);
 - k. Fires;
 - l. Chemical or trash disposal;
 - m. Other activities harmful to the trees as determined by the Community Development Director or their designee;
 - n. Encroachment into tree save area; and
 - o. Destruction or removal of trees.
4. Planted trees. All planted trees shall be actively protected during the development process and passively protected throughout the life of the development. The entire tree, including the crown, trunk, and roots, and the critical root zone, shall be protected.
5. Existing trees in construction zones. All trees that are outside the formal tree protection zone(s) as outlined in the Tree Protection and Replacement Plan and are equal to or greater than 12 inches DBH, and are in areas where construction will occur inside the crown of the tree shall be required to have an enhanced protection program. In order to maximize the ability of the selected trees to survive construction the proposed program will include the following steps.
- a. The tree will be surveyed and located with the species and DBH noted and approximate crown diameter shown.
 - b. Prior to the beginning of construction activities, the trees shall be inspected by a City Approved Arborist to determine their overall condition and ability to withstand construction activity around them.
 - c. Should the City Approved Arborist determine that with a proper protection plan the tree would survive the construction activity the Arborist shall prepare a care plan for the tree. The plan may involve elements such as crown pruning, fertilization, irrigation, root pruning or other activities.
 - d. The Contractor will be required to implement the Arborist's protection plan and to maintain the necessary activities to protect the tree until such time as the site construction is completed and accepted for maintenance by the property owner. The City Approved Arborist shall submit bi-weekly reports to the Contractor and the Department of Community Development during the construction process.
- e. The owner of the property shall receive a 20-percent bonus credit for canopy coverage for all trees that are under the enhanced protection program.
- f. No land disturbing activity or construction activity, including, but not limited to, grading, digging, soil disturbance or other activity within the critical root zone of any boundary tree, is permitted that will deprive the boundary tree of continued viability as determined by a certified arborist.
- g. The following parameters shall be followed when determining boundary tree viability interference:
- 1) CRZ/TPZ 19 percent or less impact and protected by tree protection, no arboricultural prescription required.
 - 2) CRZ/TPZ 20 percent — 33 percent impact but protected by tree protection (no structural root plate impact) provide arboricultural prescription with a plan for review by the city.
 - 3) CRZ/TPZ 20 percent — 33 percent impact and structural root plate has impact/not protected.
- h. The builder/developer/construction site property owner must submit a boundary tree agreement signed by the tree owner/co-owner and notarized giving permission for the tree that has construction impact to be treated or removed (see Community Development Department for the city boundary tree agreement). The minimum time length of the boundary tree agreement shall be three years. The receipt for the paid arboricultural prescription and signed agreement will need to be submitted with the plans for review.
- 1) The builder/developer/construction site owner must make at least three attempts to contact the owner of the boundary tree to enact a boundary tree agreement. The first two attempts may be in person or via telephone. The third attempt must be in the form of a written letter sent certified, return receipt requested to the property owner's address of record in the Gwinnett County Tax Database. If there is no response to any of the attempts, the builder/developer/construction site owner shall provide evidence to the city of the attempts at contact in addition to the arboriculture prescription for the affected tree.
 - 2) If no boundary tree agreement is reached, the affected tree shall not be removed but shall be protected during development based on this chapter and in accordance with the arboriculture prescription.
 - 3) A boundary tree bond or escrow account may be required based on the arboricultural prescription depending on the impact to a boundary tree covered under a boundary tree agreement.
 - 4) A boundary tree bond or escrow account shall be required where a boundary tree agreement cannot be reached.
 - 5) A boundary tree bond or escrow shall be 125 percent of the cost of removal and replacement of the tree(s) affected and will be held for three years by the city. The property owner of the affected tree(s) may apply to the city for the escrow funds to remove and replace the tree(s) during the three-year escrow period. If the boundary tree(s) is/are deemed healthy at the end of the three-year period by an Arborist, the developer may apply to the City for a refund of the original amount of escrow.
 - 6) The site/landscape plans cannot be approved without signed boundary tree agreement(s) or proof of attempts to contact the boundary tree owner in an attempt to reach a boundary tree agreement in addition to an arboriculture prescription where needed.

G. Seasonal planting.

Final plat approval or a certificate of occupancy may be issued prior to the establishment of trees planned to meet the tree canopy cover requirements, if the Community Development Director or their designee determines that the season is inappropriate for planting. In such cases the trees shall be planted by the last day of February

following the date of issuance of the certificate of occupancy or final plat approval. If they have not been planted by the last day of February following the issuance of the certificate of occupancy or final plat approval, the permit holder shall be considered to be in violation of the provisions of this article.

Sec. 205-6. Tree Bank

The intent of the requirements of this Section is to ensure that a minimum number of trees are replaced and/ or preserved on newly developed or redeveloped sites. The Tree Bank is an alternative option and may be used only in the event the site tree density or recompense tree requirement cannot be met on-site due to hardship. Hardship must be documented by the developer and presented to the Director before the Tree Bank may be used. The Tree Bank provides two options, which are described in full below.

A. Option One, Planting Trees Off-site.

Install an equal amount of required Tree Density Units in the form of an approved number of trees on an alternate site. In this case the following criteria shall be observed:

1. The Tree Preservation Board has identified alternate "Option One" sites. The Norcross Community Development Department has contacted the owners of these sites and these owners have expressed an interest in receiving trees from the Tree Bank. Persons wishing to use Option One should consult with the UDO Administrator to see if their required tree density units can be located on one of these alternate sites. The developer may present the UDO Administrator with alternate sites. Planting on individual residential lots is prohibited.
2. The developer shall submit a Tree Preservation and/or Tree Replacement Plan showing a location for the planted trees on the proposed site. The developer shall also provide calculations on the plan for tree density or recompense trees from the developed site. The site plan shall state the size, genus, species, and quantity of trees to be planted. Each tree must be 2 inches caliper at a minimum. For trees in which double recompense is required each tree must be 3 inches caliper at a minimum. Recompense calculations must be shown on plan.
3. If the proposed site is not one of the alternate sites, discussed above, an authorization from the title holder of the site indicating that the owner agrees to the planting of trees by the developer upon the site shall also be submitted along with the Tree Preservation and/or Tree Replacement Plan.
4. Trees are to be maintained and guaranteed for one full year after planting by the developer. Any trees that die during the one-year time period must be replaced by the developer. Standards for transplanting shall be in keeping with those established by the International Society of Arboriculture, as included in the "Tree and Shrub Transplanting Manual," latest edition.

B. Option Two, Monetary Compensation for Trees.

A developer may choose to provide the City with monetary compensation for trees. If this alternative for the development is chosen, then the following criteria shall be observed:

1. Provide tree density calculations on the Tree Preservation and/or Tree Replacement Plan. Show the total amount of Tree Density Units that cannot be met on-site.
2. Multiply the Tree Density Units that cannot be met on-site by the Monetary Compensation Value. The product of those two numbers shall be provided on the Tree Preservation and/or Tree Replacement Plan. Contact City approved certified arborist or landscape architect for the current Monetary Compensation Value.
3. Provide a certified check made payable to the City of Norcross in the amount of the product as listed in item B. above and as provided on the Tree Preservation and/or Tree Replacement Plan. Submit the certified

29. GOVERNMENT GREENSPACE PLAN

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURE

The greenspace plan must be comprised of natural areas, open spaces and greenways that provide for connectivity. Natural areas are spaces that are undisturbed by humans, sustain wildlife, and provide critical functions to the ecosystem. Open spaces are undeveloped lands that have been disturbed by humans but still provide habitat for species and also offer recreational opportunities and other benefits. Greenways are corridors composed of protected open space used for conservation or recreational purposes. For a city located in a county with an adopted greenspace plan, the city may receive credit for this measure by submitting documentation demonstrating that the plan has been officially adopted by the city and at least one example of a greenspace project from the plan that the city has implemented the since its adoption.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR CREDIT

- A copy of the adopted greenspace plan with date of adoption
- Provide description of how greenspace plan is actively being implemented

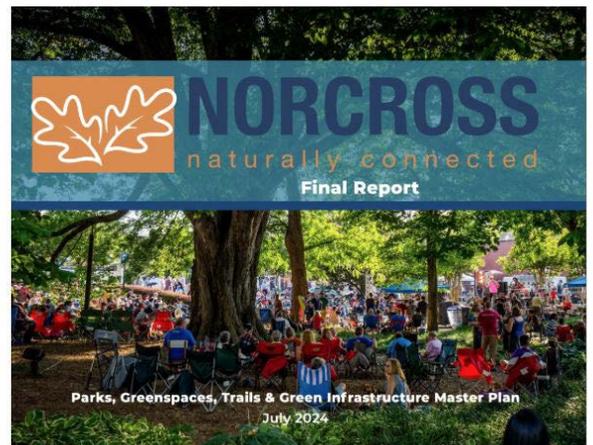
RECERTIFICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Provide a copy of the most recent version of the adopted greenspace plan. Also provide a description of how the plan is actively being implemented, including whether the plan has been updated and the number of additional greenspace acres acquired by the local government since its most recent Green Communities certification.

RESPONSE

- The City's Parks, Greenspaces, & Trails, Master Plan was updated in 2024. The full plan is available for review in the application submission folder.
- The City continues to actively implementing this plan through the projects listed below and working with the PGT. Please refer to the Park Master Plan for additional information and photos.
 - The Parks, Greenspaces, and Trails Commission (PGT) meets monthly and is currently discussing with staff a plan to implement projects identified in the report (see attached meeting minutes)
 - The PGT is looking to be actively involved with the Piedmont Pathway Project as well as Beaver Run Creek Greenway that will have a trailhead at Pinnacle Park. More information on the Greenway can be found at the link below:

Link: <https://0016067-gdot.hub.arcgis.com/>



City of Norcross

65 Lawrenceville Street
Norcross, GA 30071



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 20, 2025
5:00 PM

2nd Floor Conference Room

Parks, Green Spaces, and Trails Commission

Tixie Fowler, Chair

Joe Weber, Board Member

Kassie Diehl, Board Member

Scott Leslie, Board Member

Jon Davis, Board Member

1. Call to Order

The PGT meeting was called to order at 5:09 PM by Chair Tixie Fowler.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Tixie Fowler	Chair	Present	
Joe Weber	Commission Member	Present	
Kassie Diehl	Commission Member	Present	
Scott Leslie	Commission Member	Present	
Jon Davis	Commission Member	Present	

Attending

Bruce Gaynor - City Council, Council liaison
 Len Housley - Director of Public Works
 Hunter Rawls - Staff Liaison
 Terry Sutton - Tree Preservation Board liaison

2. Action Item: Ratification of January 2025 Meeting Minutes

Parks, Green Spaces, and Trails Commission – Regular Meeting – Jan 16, 2025, 5:00 PM

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Kassie Diehl, Commission Member
SECONDER:	Joe Weber, Commission Member
AYES:	Fowler, Weber, Diehl, Leslie, Davis

5. *MOVED TO TOP OF AGENDA*

Additional Input/Discussion Not Otherwise Addressed By This Agenda

Len Housley addressed the Board; he was moved to the beginning of the agenda in respect to his schedule. Len reported that his meeting with Gwinnett County staff in charge of the Piedmont Pathway Project went well, and he is confident the County is now fully aware of Norcross' interests in collaborative action when connecting County trail projects with City trail projects. He and Scott Leslie (who also attended the County meeting) reported learning that Gwinnett County did not plan to fund the section of the Piedmont Pathway conceptualized running through the City of Norcross. Therefore, Len suggested that the Board support expanding the scope of the RFP originally proposed in January (see January Minutes) by issuing an RFP for a scope and feasibility plan that encompasses the entire proposed greenspace that includes City-owned property and the greenspace segments identified for the Piedmont Pathway. Len noted this high level conceptualization report will be a key tool in future grant applications, and specific projects within the report's parameters can be addressed in phases as directed by Council.

Scott added that County representatives agreed to write Letters of Support for any grant applications the City decides to pursue. He also reported they identified their top priority is to develop connectivity to their new wetlands park, located just outside of Norcross city limits.

Scott and Len reported a conversation with Carlos Perez (Perez Planning & Design, consultant for Norcross PGT&GI Master Plan) in which Carlos agreed the larger focus was a good idea and said he would (at no cost) write a "statement of work" to outline the scope, concept goals and potential phasing options, and include a general cost per phase.

Len said he would like to present this strategy for approval to Council at April Policy Work Session - the Board agreed to support staff as needed, and would await further direction and recommendations by Len.

3. Ongoing Business

A. Council Update (Councilman Bruce Gaynor)

Bruce felt there were no updates relevant to PGT Commission assignments, so no updates reported.

B. Tree Preservation Board Update (Terry Sutton)

Terry invited the Board to attend TPB's Arbor Day celebration at Summerour Park, noting 200 students from Beauty Baldwin Elementary would be attending. Hunter added that 1 tree would be planted near the park and that educational activities were also planned.

C. Parks, Greenspaces, Trails & Green Infrastructure Master Plan Updates

- Joe Weber provided highlights of 2025 AARP Community Challenge grants opportunities, noting that awards are capped at \$25,000 and prioritize transportation and pedestrian safety projects that support people ages 50+. Joe also noted no match is required. The Board agreed to keep this grant opportunity on list for future opportunities.

TO DO: Joe to start a spreadsheet listing grant opportunities for ongoing reference and updating.

- Kassie reported that she has spoken to stakeholders at Christ Episcopal Church re potential expansion of Johnson Dean Forest and they are interested in further discussion. Kassie added that she and Charlie Riehm (Tree Preservation Board) will meet with Church representatives the week of February 24th to brainstorm opportunities.
- Hunter Rawls gave a general update on his work developing management plans for Norcross parks and greenspaces, noting that a management plan for Johnson Dean Forest Preserve is second in priority to Pinnacle Park. Hunter asked the Board to help him look for grants to support plans development and said he anticipates prioritizing management focus on Johnson Dean in 2026.
 - Hunter also reported that Council has approved the green roof kiosk concept and formally extended access to project funds. Jalia Killings (Norcross Sustainability Manager) is currently getting with contractors to confirm cost. He suggested the Board work with Jalia to design and develop content for the educational elements planned for the kiosk.
 - Hunter said tree plantings at Summerour Middle School in city-managed area adjacent to Summerour Park have been approved by Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) and he is moving forward with some planting; however, the bulk of trees will be planted in the Winter of 2026 (seasonal timing.)
- Tixie shared Councilman Myers' report re discussions with Church re parking at proposed Phase 1 of development of 10-acre land as part of Agenda Item #5 (moved to top of agenda)
- Due to late hour, Tixie only briefly mentioned ongoing interest in self-assignment of Board member projects based on strategies prioritized in PGT&GI Plan. Kassie suggested the Board walk the proposed addition to the RFP to better visualize suggestions made by Len (see Agenda Item #5) Group discussion specified dates for a group walk and to invite Council and other potential stakeholders; the Board also agreed to read the "Piedmont Pathway Norcross Segment: Limited Scope Concept Report" provided in hard copies by Len. Recommendation is to use this report as a template for writing RFP if concept is approved by Council at April Policy Work Session.

4. New Business

None.

5. Additional Input/Discussion Not Otherwise Addressed By This Agenda

Discussion moved up to the beginning of the agenda.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:02pm with a motion made by Jon, seconded by Joe.
The motion passed 5:0.

30. GOVERNMENT GREEN ROOF

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURE

The local government has a roof with vegetation on the majority of the surface on one of its properties. The objective of the roof is to reduce stormwater runoff and heat island effect while increasing the energy efficiency of the building. The demonstration project must provide onsite educational materials about green roofs. The educational materials can include plaques or pamphlets and should explain the benefits of having a green roof, what materials the project used, and how a green roof could be used by residents.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR CREDIT

- Description of project
- Submission of completed project photos, the education materials available for the community on site, and the location of the education materials on site

RECERTIFICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Provide an update on the number of buildings owned by the local government that have green roofs. For each building, provide the address (including street and zip code) and any additional information available regarding the roof, including size, plants used, etc. If possible, please provide any information the local government has on the stormwater benefits, energy savings or other measurable benefits achieved as a result of installing each green roof.

RESPONSE

- The City of Norcross has two Greenroof projects at the following locations:
 - Gwinnett County Library (Norcross Branch)
5735 Buford Hwy, Norcross GA 30071
The greenroof sits above the parking garage and serves as a sitting and event space.
 - Greenroof Kiosk - Pinnacle Park
250 Pinnacle Way, Norcross GA 30071
The greenroof was a donation in memory of longtime residents and service of the norcross community, Jim "James" Scarabrough and Martha Scarbrough and educates patrons on greenroofs as well as park amenities.
- Education and more information on both greenroofs can be found on the City's webpages linked below:
 - www.norcrossga.net/Sustainability
 - <https://www.norcrossga.net/2133/Gwinnett-County-Public-Library---Norcross>



31. GOVERNMENT LANDSCAPING PRACTICES

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURE

The local government has adopted a comprehensive landscape management plan that includes the following:

- Integrated pest management practices that require the use of least-toxic chemical pesticides, minimize the use of chemicals applied, and require that pesticides are used in targeted locations only and for targeted species;
- Landscape management practices that require planting of drought tolerant landscapes, minimal irrigation with potable water, the diversion of landscape trimmings from the waste stream (i.e. through mulching, composting, etc.) and the use of local mulch and compost; and
- Chemical fertilizer practices that encourage the planting of locally adapted plants that require no fertilizer and reduce the use of artificial chemicals.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR CREDIT

- A copy of the plan with date of adoption
- A site visit to an example property where the practices are implemented

RECERTIFICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Provide a copy of the most recent version of the adopted comprehensive landscape management plan. Also provide a description of how the plan is actively being implemented and one or two example properties where the plan has been implemented. If the local government uses a contractor for landscape services, a copy of the contract that includes specifications for organic and drought tolerant landscaping practices should be submitted.

RESPONSE

- The City of Norcross utilizes the Landscape Maintenance Specification (updated in 2022) to encourage high quality and efficient landscaping. The Specification intends to reduce maintenance cost, minimize waste, protect air and water quality, conserve energy and water, and protect natural ecosystems. Examples of the plan's specification are listed below, please refer to the complete document "2022 MASTER Landscape Maintenance Specification" in the application submission folder.
 - Section 3.1 of the Landscape Plan specifies that all plants shall use materials and methods that protect environmental quality and human health.
 - Section 2.1 Plants should be replaced with native and or drought tolerant plants
- The City maintains contracts with Imagescapes, and SaveATree. See relevant documents in submission folder.

32. COMMUNITY TREE CITY USA

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURE

The local government has received the Tree City USA designation from the Arbor Day Foundation. To obtain this certification, the jurisdiction has met four standards established by the program:

- The jurisdiction has a Tree Board or Department
- The jurisdiction has adopted a Tree Care Ordinance
- The jurisdiction has an Arbor Day Observance and Proclamation
- The jurisdiction has a Community Forestry Program with Annual Budget of at least \$2 per capita

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR CREDIT

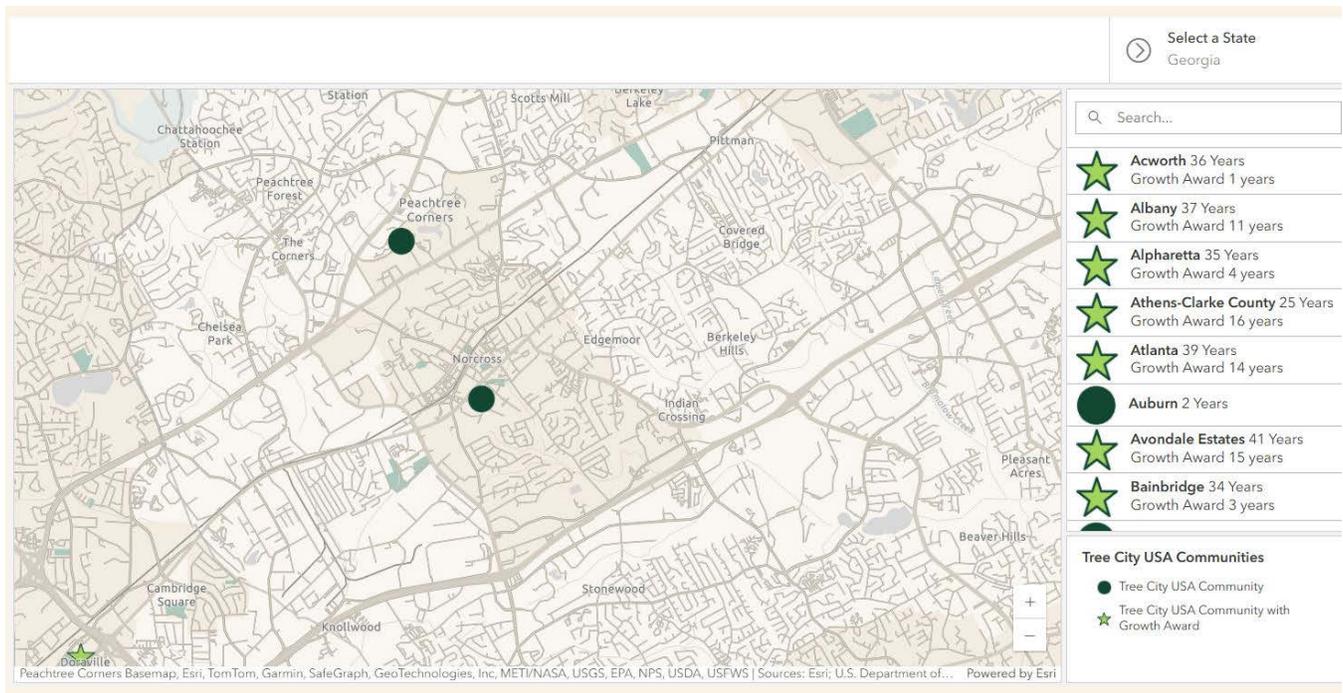
A copy of the Tree City USA designation letter for the current year

RECERTIFICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Provide a copy of the Tree City USA designation letter for the current year.

Response

- The City of Norcross has been a proud Tree City USA for 21 years.
- Please see approval reports located in the submission folder.



33. COMMUNITY PARKING LOT CANOPY REQUIREMENTS

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURE

The local government specifies in their landscape and development standards requirements for shade coverage in parking lots, at a minimum. The policy is equivalent to or exceeds the shade requirement in two of the following ways:

- Fifty percent canopy coverage will be obtained in parking lot after 15 years
- There will be at least one overstory tree for every eight parking spaces
- There will be at least 200 square feet of contiguous soil space per overstory
- tree No parking space shall be more than 40 feet from a tree

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR CREDIT

- A copy of the policy with date of adoption
- An example of a location where the policy has been implemented

RECERTIFICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Provide a copy of the most recent version of the landscape and development standards that require shade coverage

in parking lots and a description of any changes that have occurred since the local government's most recent Green Communities certification. Also provide one or two examples of properties where the requirements were followed since the local government's most recent Green Communities certification.

RESPONSE

- Parking Lot Canopy requirements are addressed in the Norcross UDO, adopted on June 4, 2019.
- Chapter 200, Section 205-4 "Landscaping Requirements and Tree Preservation" requires a landscaped median containing 1 shade tree for every 8 parking spaces. If the island abuts a double row of parking spaces, this ordinance requires 2 shade trees. The ordinance requires each parking space to be no more than 40' from the trunk of a tree. Please refer to the excerpt attached in the following pages, or to the complete document located in the application submission folder.
- Example properties which adhere to the ordinance found in this section include:
 - S Peachtree Parking Lot, Norcross, GA 30071
 - 6025 Northbelt Pkwy, Norcross, GA 30071

2. The required buffer shall be maintained by the record title holder at the time of development, for so long as he holds title, and thereafter by any subsequent record title holders, so as to provide an opaque visual screen to a height of 6 feet on a continuous, year-round basis
3. In the event a screen, wall, fence, planted dividing strip or any other type of buffer that is required by the UDO will be subjected to periodic inspections by the Community Development Department to determine that such required walls, fences, etc., are being properly maintained. After a lot is rezoned and a buffer is required, the lot shall not be used unless and until the required buffer is in place and is the required height and width. Failure to maintain such required walls, fences, etc., to an acceptable standard may be deemed a violation of the UDO.

Sec. 205-4. Landscaping Requirements and Tree Preservation

A. Applicability

1. New Construction.

Any new building or site improvement must comply with the landscaping and screening requirements of the UDO.

2. Maintenance and Repair.

An existing building or site may be repaired, maintained or modernized without providing additional landscaping or screening, provided there is no increase in gross floor area or improved site area.

3. Additions

- a. When an existing building is increased in gross floor area or improved site area by up to 25% cumulatively, landscaping and screening is required for the additional floor or site area only.
- b. When an existing building is increased in gross floor area or improved site area by more than 25% cumulatively, both the existing building and the additional floor or site area must conform to the landscaping and screening requirements of the UDO.

4. Change in Use.

A change in use does not trigger the application of these requirements except when there is a specific use standard requiring landscaping or screening for the new use.

B. Landscape Plan Required

1. Landscape design and planning must be integrated with the overall design concept for any project; therefore, the UDO Administrator will as part of site plan approval evaluate landscaping schemes as presented in a Landscape Plan. The reviewer will evaluate these schemes in terms of their relationship to the existing natural landscape, developed or proposed landscapes on adjacent properties and public rights-of-way, and the building or buildings existing or proposed on the subject property and adjacent sites.
2. Before any building permit is issued, any site improvements must be found by the UDO Administrator to be in compliance with any required landscape plan, if applicable.

C. Street trees

A minimum of one overstory tree for every 40 linear feet of road frontage is required on both sides of any new street, except alleys. The minimum caliper shall be two inches.

D. Parking Lot Landscaping

1. Applicability.

Parking lot landscaping is required on all on-site surface parking lots with more than 20 spaces created after the effective date of this UDO. Multiple platted lots contained on a single site plan and any separate parking areas connected with drive aisles are considered a single parking area.

2. Perimeter Screening.

Parking lots that are not next to a public street must provide perimeter screening a minimum of 5 feet in width with a single hedgerow.

3. Landscape Strips

All surface parking areas (of any size) abutting a public street (not including an alley) must be screened using one of the following options.

- a. **Landscape Strip with Shrubs.** A minimum 10-foot wide landscape strip planted with a minimum of 10 shrubs per 35 linear feet of street frontage, excluding driveway openings. Shrubs shall be provided to screen paved areas and parking lots from the right-of-way. Shrubs shall be 2 feet tall at time of planting. They must be planted 2 rows deep, and provide a screen within 3 years of planting.
- b. **Landscape Strip with Screening Wall.**
 - 1) A 2.5-foot high screening wall in a minimum 4-foot planting strip.
 - 2) Screening walls must be closed and be constructed of high quality materials including one or a combination of the following: decorative blocks; brick, stone; cast-stone; split-faced block; stucco over standard concrete masonry blocks; glass block; or other material approved by the Architectural Review Board or Historic Preservation Commission, as applicable.
- c. **Landscape Strip with Berm**
 - 1) An earth berm a minimum of 2.5 feet higher than the finished elevation of the parking area, planted with 5 shrubs for every 35 linear feet of street frontage, excluding driveway openings.
 - 2) The berm must contain a rounded crown suitable for planting, and a stabilized side slope of no greater than 3:1.
- d. **Landscape Strip with Grade Change.** A 6-foot landscaped strip with a minimum 3-foot grade drop from the public street to the parking area, planted with 5 shrubs for every 35 linear feet of street frontage, excluding driveway openings.
- e. **Location.** A required landscape strip must be located at the outer perimeter of the parking area and must be provided along the entire parking area abutting the street, excluding breaks for pedestrians, bicycles and driveways.
- f. **Plant Material.** Required shrubs must be a minimum of 2.5 feet in height at time of planting. 70% of the required amount of shrubs must be evergreen.

4. Interior Islands

- a. A landscaped interior island must be provided every 8 parking spaces. Interior islands must be distributed evenly throughout the parking area. Interior islands may be consolidated, or intervals may be expanded to preserve existing trees.
- b. An interior island abutting a single row of parking spaces must be a minimum of 9 feet in width and 200 square feet in area. Each island must include 1 shade tree.
- c. An interior island abutting a double row of parking spaces must be a minimum of 9 feet in width and 400 square feet in area. Each island must include 2 shade trees.
- d. All required shade trees must be chosen from the approved tree list. The approved tree list is available from the Community Development Department.
- e. All required shade trees must have a minimum caliper of 2 inches and be at least 10 feet tall at time of planting.
- f. Each parking space must be no greater than 40' from the trunk of a tree.

5. Median Islands

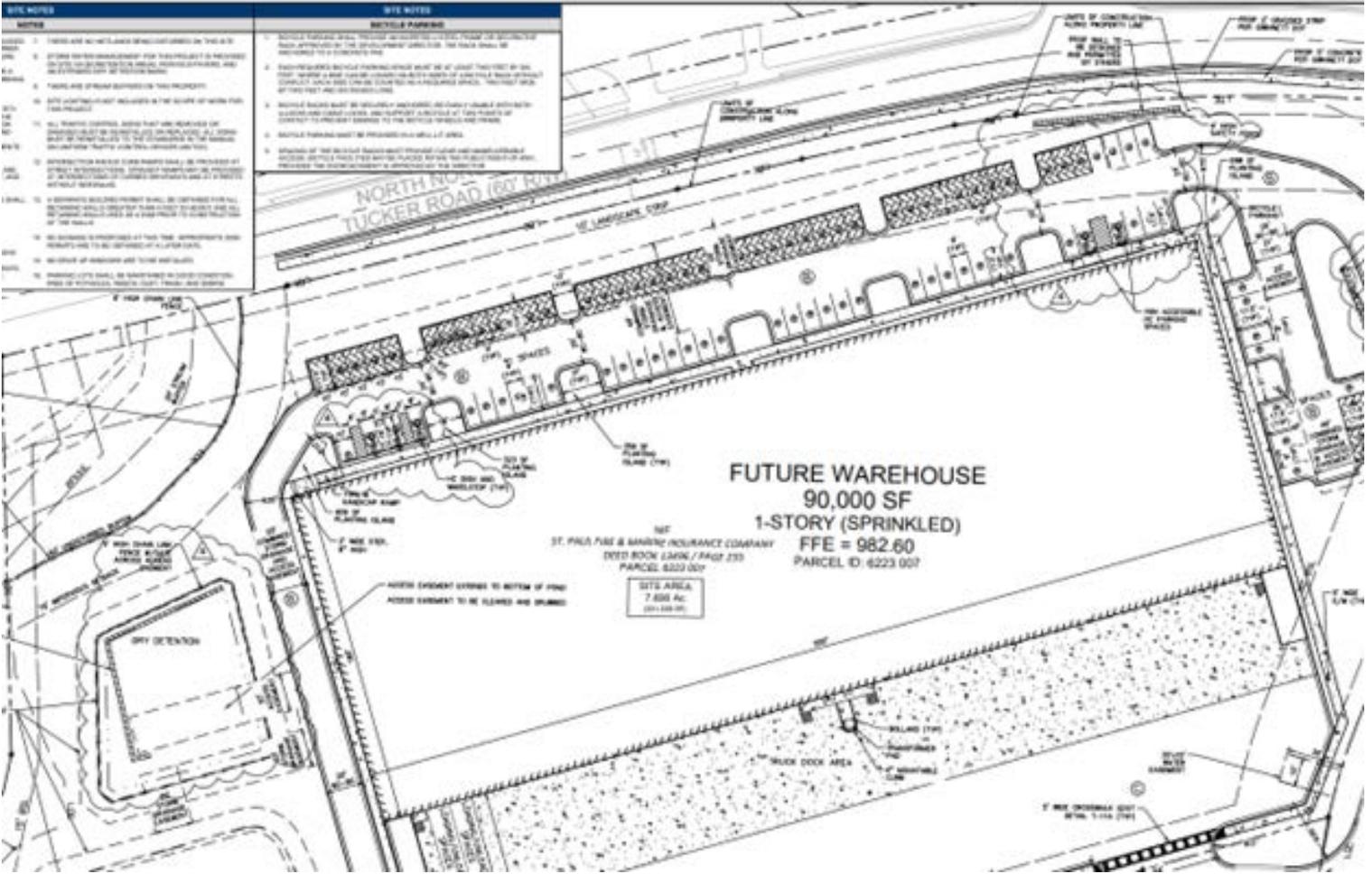
- a. A landscape median island must be provided between every 6 single parking rows. Intervals may be expanded to preserve existing trees.
- b. A landscape median island must be a minimum of 6 feet wide.

6. Pedestrian Corridor

- a. Every fourth row of parking shall have a minimum 15' wide continuous pedestrian corridor consisting of landscaping and a minimum 5' wide walkway dividing the parking row and connecting sidewalks on the street and along the front entrance of the principal building.
- b. The walkway shall be either patterned or colored material other than asphalt and may be at grade and a minimum of 5' wide. The remainder of the pedestrian corridor should be a landscaped area planted with ornamental trees every 40' on center at a minimum.
- c. The walkway is allowed to meander through the corridor, but in no case shall the walkway be less than 5' wide or closer than 3' to a parking space.
- d. If the development has less than 4 rows of parking or an uneven amount of parking rows then the location of the required walkway shall be subject to the approval by the Community Development Director.

E. General Requirements

- 1. **Limit on one genus.** No more than 30% of all trees planted shall be of any one genus.
- 2. **Deciduous requirement.** At least two genera of trees must be deciduous.
- 3. **Limit on understory trees.** Not more than 30% of the total number of trees planted shall be understory trees.
- 4. **Vision Clearance at intersections:** In all zoning districts, no fence, wall, structure, shrubbery or other obstruction to vision between the heights of three feet and 15 feet, except utility poles, light or street sign standards or tree trunks shall be permitted within 20 feet of the intersection of the right-of-way lines of streets, roads, highways or railroads.



34. COMMUNITY FOREST MASTER PLAN

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURE

The local government has developed and adopted a forest master plan with a comprehensive analysis of community forests and trees. Plans should include the jurisdiction's goals for its urban forest system, as well as the current status of that network (tree populations, distributions, species, etc.). Effective forest plans will document current tree canopy coverage and existing tree species (as well as populations of each). Plans should also outline short-term and long-term goals for the status of local forests. These goals should be accompanied by applicable action items and implementation tools. Plans receiving credit will also outline those tree species that are indigenous to the local community and are therefore recommended for residents to plant, as well as invasive species that should be eradicated and/or avoided.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR CREDIT

- A copy of the forest plan
- A copy of the policy or ordinance officially adopting the plan, with date of adoption

RECERTIFICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Provide a copy of the most recent version of the adopted forest master plan. Also provide a description of how the plan is actively being implemented, including whether the plan has been updated and examples of implementation or achievement of any of the short-term or long-term goals since the last Green Communities certification.

RESPONSE

- The City of Norcross and the Tree Preservation Board (TPB) Community Forest Master Plan was reviewed in August 2021 and adopted in September 2021. The Plan contains an aerial canopy survey, tree inventory, tree preservation ordinances, invasive plant eradication program, a tree board, and public education. See agenda item and report attached.
- Please refer to the complete document "Trees to Offset Stormwater, Case Study 06: City of Norcross, Georgia," located in the application submission folder.
- The City's 2024 Tree Inventory are attached in the submittal folder.



MAYOR **CRAIG NEWTON** • MAYOR PRO TEM **JOSH BARE** • COUNCILMEMBER **ANDREW HIXSON** • COUNCILMEMBER **MATT MYERS** •
COUNCILMEMBER **BRUCE GAYNOR** • COUNCILMEMBER **ARLENE BECKLES** • CITY MANAGER **ERIC JOHNSON** • CITY CLERK **MONIQUE LANG**

Agenda Report

To: Tree Preservation Board
Mayor & Council

From: Tracy Rye, AICP

Agenda: July 28, 2021

Agenda #: 21-6238

Item: Community Forest Master Plan

CC: Eric Johnson

Recommendation

To adopt the Community Forest Master Plan.

Background

Based on the City's designation as a Certified Platinum Green Community through the Atlanta Regional Commission, the staff and Tree Preservation Board Chairman present the attached Community Forest Master Plan for adoption. Having a Community Forest Master Plan is an item in the Green Communities Book for which jurisdictions can gain points. Since the City has a Tree City USA designation and has a keen interest in managing trees and local forests, it is felt that it would be worthwhile to adopt the attached plan

Financial Impact

None

Consistent with Comprehensive Plan?

This discussion is consistent with Goal 1 of the Comprehensive Plan to "Continue to Define Norcross' Sense of Plan" and Goal 6 of the Comprehensive Plan to "Further the City's Tradition of Strong Leadership and High Level of Quality Services".

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(678) 421-2027 UPSTAIRS CITY HALL (770) 242-0824 FAX (770) 448-2111 POLICE DEPARTMENT
<http://www.norcrossga.net>

Next Steps

Request the Mayor and Council to consider adopting the Community Forest Master Plan.

Attachments

N/A

Update

N/A

INTRODUCTION

The City of Norcross, Georgia earned the designation of **Tree City USA** in February 2003 by the Arbor Day Foundation. As the foundation web site states *“The Tree City USA program has been greening up cities and towns across America since 1976. It is a nationwide movement that provides the framework necessary for communities to manage and expand their public trees.”* Norcross has met the core standards of the designation by *“maintaining a tree board or department, having a community tree ordinance, spending at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry and celebrating Arbor Day.”* The city is committed to maintaining and improving a healthy forest canopy through maintenance, permitting, planting and public education.

Between 1995 and 2025, Georgia’s population is projected to grow by 37%, adding 2.7 million people. Only California, Texas, and Florida are expected to add more people (Georgia Department of Natural Resources, 2012). These new Georgians will expect housing, employment, transportation, and recreational opportunity close to home. Unless urban ecosystems are protected now, the trees, greenspace, rivers, and streams that make neighborhoods livable, walkable, and more desirable may become a casualty of growth.

Norcross recognizes that its community forests and greenspace are critical to ecosystem health, economic growth, and the character of the City, and that planning and action is required now if trees and greenspace are to be a part of the community’s future. Blending the historic character of the city with new higher-density growth while maintaining a viable tree canopy and healthy environment will take coordinated action and planning. A combination of strong, enforced ordinances, knowledgeable staff, an engaged community, and a diligent Tree Preservation Board will be required to maintain and improve the economic and ecological health of the city.

APPROACH FOR COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGEMENT

The best approach to managing a community forest is to have an organized, proactive management program that includes tools such as a tree inventory, benefit analysis, and canopy assessment from which goals are set and progress is measured. With these tools, the care of community trees can be prioritized, scheduled, and completed so that public safety is enhanced, canopy is created in strategic places, and budgets are effectively drafted based on need rather than reactive solutions to crises in the community forest.

In 2017, Norcross worked with a consultant, Downey Trees Inc., to develop an inventory of trees on public property. A spreadsheet of all city owned trees and a map showing forested areas were produced.

Public Works is tasked with managing these trees including pruning and removal when recommended. New trees are planted through a combination of Public Works budget and the city’s Tree Bank funding.

One of the challenges to new tree plantings is available space. Most rights-of-way are either fully planted or are not suitable locations due to limited space, the presence of underground and overhead

utilities, and poor soils. City parks may have some spaces for new trees, particularly when planting young trees to replace lost or aging trees. Community-owned forested areas may have a full canopy and are possibly candidates for invasive plant removal and new tree plantings to improve the quality of the forest environment.

This Plan is divided into five main sections:

1. **Benefits of Community Forests and Trees:** Presents information about the benefits trees provide to communities, both economically and ecologically.
2. **Existing Community Forest Program:** Provides a summary of current forest management in the city and presents goals and objectives.
3. **Community Forest Assessment and Analyses:** Summarized completed studies and the inventory and a land cover analysis with recommendations for increasing and promoting healthy tree cover.
4. **Tree Maintenance Program:** Describes maintenance protocols for tree protection, public safety, tree planting, educational outreach, and environmental health.
5. **Key Policy Actions:** Policy Actions to maintaining a healthy community forest

SECTION I – BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY FORESTS AND TREES

There is much evidence that the loss of trees and forested areas leads to environmental and economic decline. Alternatively, communities with well-managed forested spaces and street trees have a higher quality of life and thriving economies. The Georgia Forestry Commission lists the following benefits of community forests:

- Increasing property value. The presence of larger street trees can add from 3% – 15% to home values.
- Increasing spending in business districts. Shoppers spend 9% – 12% more for goods and services in central business districts with high quality tree canopies.
- Improving driving safety by decreasing highway and mid-block crash rates.
- Preventing crime. Public housing communities with more trees experience 52% fewer total crimes, 48% fewer property crimes, and 56% fewer violent crimes.
- Keeping citizens healthier by trapping dust, pollen and smoke, resulting in cleaner, cooler air.
- Providing environmental benefits like oxygen production, carbon dioxide absorption, erosion prevention, improved water quality, and wildlife habitat.

Now, more than ever, with increasing high-density development and decreasing tree cover, it is important to protect existing trees and larger tracts of forested spaces with a diverse mix of species including overstory, mid-level and understory types. The removal of invasive species should also be considered to decrease the competition with native preferred species. An individual tree has value but for real ecological health, a system of well-managed and interconnected forest spaces is paramount. The value of these remaining forested spaces cannot be over emphasized. If these spaces have their original undisturbed soils, a full complement of diverse native trees of differing sizes and ages along with

an understory regime untarnished by invasive plants, the ecological functions of this forest type are of exceptionally high value and should be protected and maintained.

At the same time, business areas benefit from healthy landscapes including trees. Consumers are willing to pay more to park and shop in landscaped business districts. On average, consumers will pay about 11% more for goods in landscaped areas, with this figure being as high as 50% for convenience goods (Wolf, 1998(a); Wolf, 1999; and Wolf, 2003). Consumers also feel that the quality of the products is better in business districts having trees over those that were considered barren (Wolf, 1998(a)). Additionally, the quality of landscaping along the routes leading to the business district had a positive influence on consumers' perceptions of the area (Wolf, 2000). In these more developed areas, a mix of native and non-native species may be required to withstand the harsh conditions of limited space, higher temperatures, poor soils, and exposure. Well planned and properly installed landscaping is worth the effort to reduce maintenance time and costs later on.

Several studies in the United States analyzed the effect of tree cover on the price of residential home sales, finding that values of properties in tree-lined areas may be 3% to 7% higher when trees are in the yard, 5% to 20% when the property is next to natural open space, and 9% when adjacent to street trees. Commercial property rental rates were 7% greater when trees were present on the property (Wolf, 2009).

Tree-lined streets also make our streets safer by reducing traffic speeds and the amount of stress drivers feel which likely reduces road rage (Wolf, 1998(b); Kuo and Sullivan, 2001(b)). Ulrich (1984, 1986) found that hospital patients who were recovering from surgery and had a view of a grove of trees through their windows required fewer pain relievers, experienced fewer complications, and left the hospital sooner than similar patients who had a view of a brick wall. The calming effects of trees and other greenery is well documented.

Trees improve air quality. During photosynthesis, trees remove CO₂ from the atmosphere to form carbohydrates that are used in plant structure/function and return oxygen (O₂) back to the atmosphere as a by-product. **Without trees and other living organisms that produce oxygen, we would not have an atmosphere that allows us to breathe.** Trees, therefore, act as a carbon (C) sink. Urban forests cleanse the air by intercepting and slowing particulate materials and by absorbing pollutant gases on their leaf surfaces. Pollutants partially controlled by trees include nitrogen oxides (NO_x), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), carbon monoxide (CO), CO₂, ozone (O₃), and small particulates less than 10 microns in size (PM₁₀). Coder (1996) found that trees can reduce street level air pollution by 60%.

Trees reduce energy usage by lowering local air temperatures when they transpire water and shade surfaces. Urban trees shade buildings in the summer and block winter winds. **The net cooling effect of a healthy tree is equivalent to 10 room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day** (North Carolina State University, 2012). Trees placed properly around buildings as windbreaks can save up to 25% on winter heating costs (Heisler, 1986).

Public safety must be considered when planning and maintaining community forests and street trees. Particularly following storm events, the public perception of trees may be of the hazards and risk of falling trees or limbs even though those risks may be low overall. Jurisdictions must **plan and budget for maintenance** to gain and keep public support for community forests.

Trees are typically not considered part of stormwater management systems; they are generally, and falsely, considered landscaping. Planting a tree as just landscaping is not taking advantage of the stormwater utility benefits it provides. Leafy tree canopies catch precipitation before it reaches the ground, allowing some water to gently drip and the rest to evaporate. This lessens the initial impact of storms, reduces runoff and erosion, and increases groundwater recharge. For every 5% of tree cover added to a community, stormwater runoff is reduced by approximately 2% (Coder, 1996). Research by the USDA Forest Service indicates that 100 mature tree crowns intercept about 100,000 gallons of rainfall per year, reducing runoff and providing cleaner water (USDA Forest Service, 2003(a)). A typical community forest of 10,000 trees will retain approximately **10 million gallons of rainwater** per year (USDA Forest Service, 2003(b)).

The city participated in a case study called *Trees to Offset Stormwater, Case Study #06* developed by the Green Infrastructure Center in October 2018. The study produced maps indicating areas of viable green infrastructure (primarily tree cover) and other areas where green infrastructure could be implemented to improve stormwater management.

On a typical residential property, trees reduce water loss to runoff and protect hardscapes and landscaping by capturing much of the rainfall in the canopy and protecting plants and structures underneath. The leaves and roots slow runoff and allow more infiltration of rainwater into the ground that can drastically reduce the need to water lawns and other plants and save money in water bills. It makes little sense to funnel rainwater off of a property in the quickest manner and then turn on the hose the next day to water the lawn.

The strategic location of trees to manage stormwater is another consideration when planning for the protection of existing trees and planting of new trees. Tree-filled bioswales, linear, connected or stormwater tree pits, structural soils, suspended pavements and structural cells, rain gardens, green roofs, and green streets are just a few of the many options available that integrate trees into stormwater infrastructure.

SECTION II – EXISTING COMMUNITY FOREST PROGRAM

The city of Norcross currently has a strong community forest program based in Public Works and Community Development but supported by all branches of government including the Mayor's office, the City Council, Code Enforcement and the Tree Preservation Board.

- Public Works – maintains city parks and rights-of-way including trees and other landscaping. With the help of the city Arborist, PW staff monitors the health of trees, implements a program of fertilization, watering, and other tree care services, and removes hazard trees and limbs that pose a potential risk to citizens and property.
- Community Development – reviews plans for new development and ensures that the code of ordinances is complied with pertaining to tree preservation, tree protection, and replanting requirements for new construction. The city Arborist is headquartered in Community Development and, besides plan review, oversees the Tree Removal Permit program.
- The city Mayor participates in Arbor Day events and issues proclamations related to Arbor Day and other tree related events.

- The City Council adopts and revises the ordinances for tree protection and provides the budgets for maintenance while considering the economic progress and healthy environment of the city.
- Code Enforcement patrols the city and enforces the ordinance related to tree removal permits through citations, stop work orders and other measures.
- The Tree Preservation Board is tasked with providing outreach to the community to promote the preservation of trees and healthy forests. The board also advises city staff and council on ways to improve the tree canopy through revisions to the Code of Ordinances and increased budgets for maintenance. The TPB promotes the planting of new trees wherever the opportunity arises and allocates funds from the Norcross Tree Bank for this purpose.

SECTION III – COMMUNITY FOREST ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

As previously mentioned, the city has an inventory of trees on public properties that lists almost 1,300 trees and includes species, size, location, general health, and action recommendations, if any. The list was developed by Downey Trees, Inc. in 2017 based on the information criteria below and is maintained and updated by city staff through January 2021. As identified unhealthy or other at-risk trees are removed, plans are developed and implemented to replace those trees within the City utilizing funds paid into the City's Tree Bank or replanted utilizing available funds from the City's Public Works budget. The Tree Preservation Board is asking for funding from the City in the FY 2022 budget to perform a brand new, updated tree inventory using new more efficient aerial technology. This request is currently under consideration at this time. The current tree inventory list is attached in Appendix.

Recognizing trends within the tree population can help guide both short- and long-term management planning. Usually tree inventory data are examined to determine the diversity of species present, the distribution of size classes (with size being based on DBH), and the general health of the tree population. Those analyses, along with professional judgment, are used to make generalizations about the state of the inventoried tree population. In this Plan, the following population characteristics were assessed:

Species Diversity—Species diversity is the variety and abundance of trees in a specific population. It affects the population's ability to sustain threats from invasive pests and diseases as well as impact tree maintenance needs and costs, tree planting goals, and canopy continuity. Having a low species diversity (large number of trees of the same species) can lead to catastrophic results in the event of species-specific epidemics (i.e., DED, Dutch elm disease) and can increase program costs should a particularly high-maintenance tree dominate streets and/or parks.

The composition of a thriving tree population should adhere to the 10-20-30 Rule for species diversity rule (Ohio Department of Natural Resources Urban Forestry Program, 2012). This rule implies that no more than 10% of the community forest should be of the same species, while no more than 20% of the forest should be of the same genera, and a single family should not make up more than 30% of the community's forest.

In this Plan, the species distributions for inventoried ROW and park trees are analyzed using the principles of the 10-20-30 Rule.

Diameter Size Class Distribution—Diameter size class distribution is the proportion of trees by diameter size class in a specific population. It affects the environmental and economic benefits provided by the population as well as tree maintenance needs and costs, tree planting goals, and canopy continuity. The diameter size class distribution can also be used to estimate relative age of a tree population.

General Health—The general health of a tree population indicates how well trees are performing given their site-specific conditions. General health affects both short- and long-term tree maintenance needs and costs as well as canopy continuity.

Priority Maintenance

The purpose of identifying and ranking the priority maintenance needs of the community forest is to enable managers to prioritize tree work based on observed risk. Once tree work is prioritized, it can be accomplished systematically to eliminate the greatest risk and liability first (Stamen, 2011).

Risk is a graduated scale that measures the potential danger associated with a tree. A tree is considered hazardous when the potential danger associated with it exceeds the level of risk that is acceptable by the governing agency.

It is important to understand that managing trees for risk reduction can provide many benefits including: Lower frequency and severity of accidents, damage, and injury. Fewer expenditures for claims and legal expenses. Healthier, long-lived trees. Over time, fewer tree removals. Over time, lower tree maintenance costs.

Regular inspection of trees and performance of cyclic tree maintenance generally reduces the risk of failure as problems can be found and addressed before they escalate.

How Risk Was Assessed

All community forests have inherent risks of tree or tree part failure. During the inventory, Downey performed a risk assessment and that assessment was used to assign a risk rating to each tree. To rate each tree, Downey used a protocol based on the USDA Forest Service Community Tree Risk Rating System (Pokorny, et.al, 2003). The probability of failure, size of defective part, probability of target impact, and other risk factors were evaluated for each tree inventoried. While our new anticipated survey technology will give Norcross more specific evaluations and maintenance recommendations our current inventory assessment is defined into three categories: good, fair, and poor.

Usually trees with elevated levels of risk (**Poor**) are removed or the defects that warranted their risk rating are eliminated via pruning. However, in some situations, risk can be reduced by adding support to the tree (cabling or bracing) or by moving the target away from the tree. Downey only recommends removal or pruning to alleviate risk. In special situations, such as significant or memorial tree or a tree in an historic area, Norcross may decide that cabling, bracing, or moving the target may be an option for alleviating risk.

Some trees described as **Poor** have defects that cannot be cost-effectively or practically treated. The majority of the trees in this category have multiple and significant defects present in the trunk, crown, or critical root zone. Defective trees and/or tree parts are generally larger than 20 inches in diameter and found in areas of frequent occupation, such as a main thoroughfare, congested street, and/or near a school.

Some trees designated as **Poor** have defects that may or may not be cost-effectively or practically treated. The majority of the trees in this category have multiple or significant defects affecting more than 40% of the trunk, crown, or critical root zone. Defective trees and/or tree parts are generally 4 to 20 inches in diameter and found in areas of frequent occupation, such as a main thoroughfare, congested street, and/or near a school.

Trees described as **Fair** have defects that may be cost-effectively or practically treated. The majority of trees in this category exhibit several moderate defects affecting less than 40% of a tree's trunk, crown, or critical root zone. These trees may be in high, moderate, or low use areas.

Trees designated as **Fair** have minor visible structural defects or wounds and are typically found in areas with moderate to low use.

SECTION IV – Tree Maintenance Program

Proactive Maintenance Proactive tree maintenance requires that trees are managed and maintained under the watchful eye of an individual, department, or agency. Typically, tree work is performed during a cycle. Individual tree health and form are addressed "routinely" during the cycle. When trees are planted, they are planted selectively and with purpose. Ultimately, proactive tree maintenance should reduce crisis situations in community forests as every tree in the managed population is visited, assessed, and maintained on a regular basis and tree planting is planned. Downey's recommended proactive tree maintenance includes cyclic pruning, inspections, and tree planting.

Cyclic Pruning

The goal of cyclic pruning is to visit, assess, and prune trees on a regular schedule to improve health and reduce risk. Typically, Downey recommends that pruning cycles begin after all Severe and High Risk trees are corrected through priority removal or pruning. However, because of the long-term benefit that will come from the implementation of cyclic pruning, Downey may recommend it be implemented sooner. To ensure all trees receive the type of pruning they need to mature with better structure and fewer hazards, two pruning cycles, the Young Tree Training Cycle (YTT Cycle) and the Routine Pruning Cycle (RP Cycle), are recommended. The cycles differ in the type of pruning, the general age of the tree they target, and the length of the cycle.

YTT Cycle. Young trees generally have a DBH of six inches or less. Sometimes young trees have branch structures that can lead to potential problems as the tree ages. Codominant leaders, many limbs attaching at the same point on the trunk, or crossing/interfering limbs are common problems young trees can have. If these problems are not corrected, they can become worse as the tree grows older, and may increase risk and create potential liabilities. During the YTT Cycle, pruning is performed to improve tree form or structure. The recommended length of the YTT Cycle is three years because young trees tend to grow at faster rates (on average) than more mature trees.

RP Cycle. The RP Cycle includes all small and large trees (most trees with a DBH greater than six inches) that need cleaning, crown raising, and reducing to remove deadwood and improve their structure. The length of the RP Cycle is based on the size of the tree population and what was determined by Downey to be a reasonable number of trees to prune per year. The RP Cycle recommended for Norcross is five years.

Pruning Cycle Progression. The recommended number of trees in the YTT Cycle and RP Cycle is constantly changing as trees are planted, age, and die. Newly planted trees will enter the YTT Cycle once they are established (generally one to two years after planting). Young trees will reach maturity and leave the YTT Cycle and enter the RP Cycle. And finally when a tree reaches the end of its useful life, it should be removed and, thus be eliminated from the RP Cycle.

Pest Management

Norcross has also adopted an Integrated Pest Management Program for tree and landscaping management. Norcross Landscape Maintenance seeks to control pests without harming non-target organisms, or negatively affecting air and water quality and public health. It relies on IPM which uses a range of cultural, mechanical, physical, and biological control methods **before using pesticides**. Chemical controls are applied only when monitoring indicates that preventative and non-chemical methods are not keeping pests below acceptable levels. When pesticides are required, the least toxic and the least persistent pesticide that will provide adequate pest control is applied.

Community Outreach and Education

Various avenues exist for outreach. The Tree Preservation Board has created a Walking Tour of Trees through two of our City parks – an older historical park (Thrasher Park) and a newly created park (Pinnacle Park). These tours are accompanied by an audio description of the select trees on the tour with information about the species and their history. The Tree Walking Tours can be accessed on our aplacetoimagine.com website. In addition, a Walking Tour of Trees brochure to accompany both tours was just recently updated within the last year and is available in print and electronic format for residents and visitors. In addition, the City, through its PR department, publishes a print and electronic monthly newsletter that routinely includes a section entitled “Tree Talk” that provides valuable tips and information on planting and maintaining trees and important information on the value of our trees and tree canopy. And, as an acknowledged Tree City USA affiliate for 16+ years, the City, through its Tree Preservation Board, hosts an annual Arbor Day event that highlights the benefits of trees and includes a tree planting.

SECTION V – Key Policy Actions

Key policy actions to continue the good work that has already been in place in Norcross is threefold.

Tree Maintenance

Continue to fund the Public Works Department to perform calculated and necessary tree maintenance based on the tree inventory plan on hand at the time and to at least partially fund tree replacement projects to enhance the existing Tree Fund.

Continue to outsource tree maintenance to include routine and structural pruning, tree and stump removal to accredited companies

Green Infrastructure

Continue to maintain the “no net loss of tree canopy” policy.

Incorporate engineered systems designed to promote tree growth and manage stormwater in the development code.

Continue to encourage tree planting citywide.

Growth and Development

Continue to fund the Tree Preservation Board activities, including annual funding of a City Arborist position from eight hours weekly to an integrated full time City staff person.

Update the existing tree canopy assessment

Update the existing City tree inventory with new aerial technology with an efficient “pull down” menu of information on individual trees.

Modify the Tree Preservation Ordinance as conditions warrant

Enhance public outreach programs to emphasize Best Management Practices (BMPs) such as proper pruning and mulching of trees.

REFERENCES

NORCROSS TREE INVENTORY 2017

DOWNEY CITY TREE MAP 2017

NORCROSS ARBOR DAY PROCLAMATION 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021

FEBRUARY 2013 NORCROSS APPROVED AS TREE CITY USA

TREES TO OFFSET STORMWATER – CASE STUDY 06 CITY OF NORCROSS GEORGIA

35. COMMUNITY GARDENS & ORCHARDS

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURE

The local government has partnered with a local citizen group or nonprofit organization to establish one or more community gardens or orchards in the jurisdiction. Through this partnership, the local government designates space, provides a cover or shade, provides free parking close by, or other actions to facilitate the success of the community garden or orchard. A community garden that is eligible to receive points is a garden where any resident can sign up to have his/her own individual plot or garden. In addition, the jurisdiction supports the community garden by providing the property or other means of support. A garden managed by the community's Master Gardener's association must have plots available for use by citizens who are not Master Gardeners to be eligible for this measure. A community orchard that is eligible to receive points is an orchard where the jurisdiction has partnered with an organization that will ensure that fruit not picked by the community is collected and distributed for beneficial community need, such as a food bank, senior center, community center, etc.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR CREDIT

- A description of each community garden or orchard with information on dates and times of operation, location, who operates the garden/orchard, how the local government supports it, and contact information for the coordinator.
- For orchards, a description of the process for ensuring that any fruit not picked by the community is gathered and distributed for beneficial use, including the name of the partner organization and contact information for the coordinator.

RECERTIFICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Provide an update on the number of community gardens or orchards in the jurisdiction to which the local government provides assistance. For each garden or orchard, provide the address (including street and zip code), how the local government supports its operation, who operates the garden/orchard, days and times of operation and any additional information to describe the garden. For orchards, provide a description of the process for ensuring that any fruit not picked by the community is gathered and distributed for beneficial use, including the name of the partner organization and contact information for the coordinator.

RESPONSE

- Discovery Garden Park is located at 189 Lawrenceville St. Norcross, GA 30071 and is open to the public daily from dawn to dusk.
- The garden consists of forty-one wooden and aluminum raised beds. All beds are currently rented by residents, with a wait list of community members waiting to participate. The Discovery Garden Park Board has plans to construct 6 new beds in coming months to meet the demands of growing community participation. Recently, Discovery Garden Park Board Chair constructed a raised bed that is wheelchair accessible.
- To support the garden, the City has constructed restrooms and a covered portico as well as designated several public areas that board members and volunteers fill with pollinator and butterfly friendly flowers.

36. COMMUNITY FARMERS MARKETS

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURE

The local government has partnered with a local citizen group or nonprofit organization to establish one or more farmers markets in the jurisdiction. Through this partnership, the local government designates space, provides a cover or shade, provides free parking close by, or other actions to facilitate the success of the farmers market.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR CREDIT

- A description of each farmers market with information on the goods offered, dates and times of operation, location, who it is operated by, how the local government supports it, and contact information for the coordinator

RECERTIFICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Provide an update on the number of farmers markets in the jurisdiction to which the local government provides assistance. For each farmers market, provide the address (including street and zip code), how the local government supports its operation, who operates the market, days and times of operation and any additional information to describe the market.

RESPONSE

- Up until 2021, The City of Norcross sponsored the Norcross Community Market in partnership with Sustainable Norcross Inc. and the Sustainable Norcross Commission (SNC). In 2023, Market leadership changed and was solely sponsored by the City and the SNC.
- In 2021 the market was located along Skin Alley, Norcross, GA 30071 and was held from 4pm to 7pm. In 2022 and 2023, the market was held at Thrasher Park, 93 Park Drive, Norcross, GA 30071 from 4pm to 7pm on Wednesdays. The market featured weekly themes with corresponding educational activities, workshops, entertainment, cooking demonstrations, and other community events.
- The City supports the Norcross Community Market as follows:
 - Provides free, public space to host the market
 - Provides funding toward market management
 - Promotes the farmer's market on social media platforms and monthly newsletters to residents and nonresidents
 - Provides power and water as needed
 - Provides labor to help set up tents and tables as outlined by the market manager
- In 2023, the City rebranded the market as "Farm Fresh Days" and in 2024, and 2025 due to the declining number of attendees and vendors from previous years, the City did not host a market, but continued to collect collect hard to recycle materials as well as provide educational programs. Please see photos and documents attached.
- The City is currently is still considering hosting markets again in some form, but want to make sure it provides a good quality and quantity of vendors for attendees.



Norcross Market 2021 at Skin Alley



Norcross Market 2022 at Thrasher Park



Farm Fresh Days 2023



Gwinnett County John Butler & City of Norcross Stormwater Superintendent, Donald Maxwell



NORCROSS

community market

Come out for opening day Wednesday, May 4th from 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. at Thrasher Park. Every Wednesday from May through August join us for live music, local farmers, artists, foods and children's activities such as the Power of Produce Program. All the summer produce is in season from blueberries, peaches, melons, tomatoes and everything in between!

SNAP/EBT is accepted and we will double your benefits on fresh fruits and vegetables!

May 2022 Norcross Community Newsletter



Farm Fresh Days 2023

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



ARE YOU READY FOR SOME FRESH AND DELICIOUS PRODUCE?

Join the City of Norcross for their Farm Fresh Days at Thrasher Park every Wednesday from May 10 to September 6, starting at 4:00 p.m. and ending at 7:00 p.m.

Bring your family and friends to enjoy the fresh produce and sweet treats available from local farmers, while also taking part in fun activities and listening to live music. And don't forget to explore the local downtown restaurants and shops for some extra fun!

But that's not all! You can also drop off your hard-to-recycle materials, such as natural wine corks, plastic bags, tennis shoes, empty medicine bottles and more! It's a great way to help the environment and make a positive impact.

And if you can't make it on Wednesdays, be on the lookout for information on "Pop-Up" Farm Fresh Days on the weekends or at special city events.

For the latest updates, check out aplaceoimagine.com.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE UPCOMING FARM FRESH DAYS!

MAY

May 10 • May 17
May 24 • May 31

JUNE

June 7 • June 14
June 21 • June 28

JULY

July 5 • July 12
July 19 • July 26

AUGUST

August 2 • August 9 • August 16
August 23 • August 30

SEPTEMBER

September 6

If you're interested in becoming a vendor or volunteer, you can contact communitydevelopment@norcrossga.net.

37. COMMUNITY LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS PLAN

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURE

The local government has developed a food systems plan in collaboration with local farmers, retailers, consumers, local nonprofit organizations, and local government officials. The plan outlines specific goals and policies which will be developed and implemented in order to influence and shape how food is produced, processed, distributed, consumed and disposed of in the community. These policies provide direction and guidance on how to address opportunities and challenges faced by the community's food system. For a city located in a county with an adopted local food systems plan, the city may receive credit for this measure by submitting documentation demonstrating that the plan has been officially adopted by the city and at least one example of a project from the plan that the city has implemented since its adoption.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR CREDIT

- A copy of the plan with date of adoption. May be a stand-alone plan or a section of the jurisdiction's comprehensive plan or sustainability plan. The plan must include, at minimum, specific goals and policies and a set of actionable implementation measures to address those policies.
- An example of how the plan is being used by the local government (i.e. updated in the last 5 years, example of an implemented project, etc.)

RECERTIFICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Provide a copy of the most recent version of the adopted plan with local food system policies. Also provide a description of how the plan is actively being implemented, including whether the plan has been updated since the local government's most recent Green Communities certification. Provide an example of an implemented project since the most recent Green Communities certification. Also provide information on the measurable benefits of plan implementation, such as quantity of food harvested/sold/donated, number of jobs created, etc. on an annual basis.

RESPONSE

The City will not be pursuing points for this measure at this time.

38. COMMUNITY HABITAT CERTIFICATION

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURE

The local government has received either the Bee City USA designation from the Xerces Society or a Community Wildlife Habitat certification from the National Wildlife Federation. These certifications are open to cities and counties across the U.S. By achieving certification, local governments help to preserve habitat that is vital to wildlife and pollinators, while in turn impacting community resiliency, urban forestry, water conservation, beautification, and more.

To obtain the Bee City USA certification, the jurisdiction has done the following:

- Passed a Bee City USA Resolution (pre-approve by the program);
- Committed to create and disseminate a local native plant list, and create and enhance pesticide-free pollinator habitat;
- Committed to host and promote pollinator conservation awareness activities through events, signage, and social media; and
- Committed to share their achievements with Bee City USA during annual renewal.

To obtain the Community Wildlife Habitat certification, the jurisdiction has done the following:

- Earned sufficient “Certification Points” by working with the community to certify individual properties like backyards, school grounds, public parks, community gardens, places of worship, and businesses, as National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitats. Commits to host and promote pollinator conservation awareness activities through events, signage, and social media; and
- Earned sufficient “Education and Outreach” points through a flexible checklist of options that engage the community in the certification process.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR CREDIT

- A copy of the Bee City USA designation letter for the current year and a copy of the annual report sent to Xerces upon renewal (if the designation is more than one year old, or;
- A copy of the jurisdiction's Community Wildlife Habitat certificate from the National Wildlife Federation and a link to the NWF website showing that the community is still active in the program.

RECERTIFICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- Provide a copy of the Bee City USA designation letter for the current year and a copy of the last 3 annual reports sent to Xerces or;
- Provide a link to the NWF website showing that the community is still active in the program and provide a description of how the local government remains active in the program, such as number of habitats certified, descriptions of recently created habitats, photos of educational events, etc.

RESPONSE

- The City became a certified Bee City USA in September 2018. See resolution and 2025 certification confirmation below.
- Please refer to annual reports on the Bee City USA website, or see previous submittals in the submittal folder.
- Since becoming a Bee City, the City has participated as follows:
 - Planted a pollinator garden at Johnson Dean Park
 - Started an award winning demonstration Pollinator Garden at City Hall
 - Hosted a Pollinator Week Farmer's Market providing a Bee Hive workshop, celebrating local Norcross Honey vendor, "Debs' Bees" with presentation bee hive, and community education.
 - Worked with Norcross Elementary School, Beaver Ridge Elementary School, and Summerour Middle School to construct pollinator gardens onsite and provide continual education to students on the importance of pollinators.
 - Encourages residents who plant pollinator gardens at their private residencies by providing celebratory signage for their yards
 - Hosted "Planting for Pollinator" workshops with UGA Extension Master Gardeners to educate residents how to garden with Pollinators in mind no matter the size of their yard.

to: Tracy Hye; Jalia Killings; Tixie <gardens4growingcommunity@gmail.com>; Jacquelyn Morgan; Susan Bell Mon 5/5/2025 2:50 PM

Norcross Bee City logos & st...
23 MB

Caution: This email came from outside Norcross Networks. Do not open attachments or click on links if you do not recognize the sender.

Hi Tracy, Jalia, Jackie, Susan, and Tixie,
I have approved Norcross's Bee City renewal report. Really excellent work! Thank you for sharing your accomplishments. It's so great to see the level of engagement you achieve. Really inspiring. Your report will be posted on our website, along with our annual report, in July.

Jalia, as you requested, I made your new street sign and logos files. (Sorry for the delay). They are attached, and can be [found here](#) (with login).

You can proceed with paying your renewal fee on the "Fee Payment" tab, then you will be all set.

Thank you everyone!

Warm wishes,
Laura
Laura Rost (she/they)
National Coordinator
Bee City USA and Bee Campus USA
The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation
503.212.0894 | laura.rost@xerces.org
Mailing address: 1031 NE Broadway St. #821, Portland, OR 97232
Payment address: PO Box 84274, Seattle, WA 98124-5574 USA

Bee City USA Links:
beecityusa.org [Facebook](#) [Bluesky](#) [Instagram](#) [Blog](#)

Xerces Links:
xerces.org [Facebook](#) [Donate](#) [Gift Center](#) [Blog](#)



**STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF GWINNETT
CITY OF NORCROSS**

A RESOLUTION of Norcross designating Norcross as a BEE CITY USA® affiliate.

WHEREAS, the mission of BEE CITY USA is to galvanize communities to sustain pollinators, responsible for the reproduction of 90% of the world's wild plant species, by providing them with healthy habitat, rich in a variety of native plants and free to nearly free of pesticides; and

WHEREAS, due in part to the tremendous diversity of wild native bees, along with the honey bees that were brought to the United States from Europe in the 1600s, we have very diverse dietary choices rich in fruits, nuts, vegetables and even dairy products--one in every three bites of food we eat is courtesy of insect pollination; and

WHEREAS, bees and other pollinators have experienced population declines due to a combination of habitat loss, use of pesticides, and the spread of pests and diseases; and

WHEREAS, pollinator-friendly communities can benefit local and regional economies through healthier ecosystems, increased vegetable and fruit crop yields, and increased demand for pollinator-friendly plant materials from local nurseries and growers; and

WHEREAS, ideal pollinator-friendly habitat:

- Provides diverse and abundant nectar and pollen from plants blooming in succession throughout the growing season;
- Provides water for drinking, nest-building, cooling, diluting stored honey, and butterfly puddling;
- Provides undisturbed spaces (leaf and brush piles, un-mowed fields or field margins, fallen trees and other dead wood) for nesting and overwintering for wild pollinators
- Is pesticide-free or has pesticide use carried out with least ill effects on pollinators;
- Is comprised of mostly, if not all, native species of annual and perennial forbs, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees in landscapes because many wild pollinators prefer or depend on the native plants with which they co-adapted;
- Includes, where possible, designated pollinator zones in public spaces with signage to educate the public and build awareness; and,
- Provides for safe and humane removal of honey bees when required.

WHEREAS, supporting pollinators fosters environmental awareness and sustainability, and increases interactions among community stewards, backyard beekeepers, farmers, children, educators, Master Gardeners, local businesses, faith-based organizations, and nature-related organizations; and

WHEREAS, in order to enhance understanding among local government staff and the public about the vital role that pollinators play and what each of us can do to sustain them, Norcross chooses to support and encourage pollinator habitat creation and enhancement on both public and private land; and

WHEREAS, Norcross should be certified a *BEE CITY USA* community because:

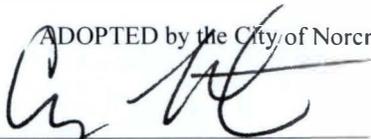
- Norcross is committed to sustainability and being certified provides credibility for grassroots pollinator conservation efforts.
- It will raise community awareness of how our food grows and improve local food production through expanded pollination.
- Norcross, as well as the greater community, will benefit by developing protocols, education and practices that reduce the levels of pesticides and herbicides contaminating our streams and aquifers to the benefit of present and futures residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, Norcross resolves as follows:

1. The Norcross Public Works Department is hereby designated as the BEE CITY USA sponsor.

2. The Director of Public Works, Utilities, and Parks of Norcross is designated as the BEE CITY USA liaison.
3. Facilitation of the Norcross BEE CITY USA program is assigned to the Sustainable Norcross Commission.
4. The Sustainable Norcross Commission is authorized to, and should:
 - a. **Celebration:** Annually celebrate National Pollinator Week (third full week of June) or some other appropriate occasion with educational events, pollinator habitat plantings or restoration, proclamations or promotions that showcase Norcross's commitment to enhancing pollinator health and habitat.
 - b. **Publicity & Information:** Install and maintain at least one authorized BEE CITY USA street sign in a prominent location, and create and maintain a webpage on the Norcross website which includes, at minimum, a copy of this resolution, links to the national BEE CITY USA website, contact information for the local government's BEE CITY USA liaison Director of Public Works, Utilities, and Parks, contact information for the Sustainable Norcross Commission," and reports of the pollinator-friendly activities the community has accomplished the previous year(s).
 - c. **Habitat:** Develop and implement a program to create or expand pollinator-friendly habitat, which can include, but is not limited to:
 - i. Identification and inventory of Norcross real property that can be enhanced with pollinator-friendly plantings.
 - ii. Creation of a recommended locally native species list to include forbs, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees and a list of local suppliers for those species.
 - iii. Creation of a least toxic integrated pesticide management plan, and
 - iv. Dissemination of informational and educational materials to the public.
 - v. Tracking annual area of pollinator habitat created or enhanced by square footage and/or acreage.
 - d. **Policy:** Establish, through Norcross, a policy in Norcross Comprehensive Plan to acknowledge and commit to the BEE CITY USA designation.
 - e. **Plan Review:** Review the Comprehensive Plan and other relevant documents to review pesticide management policies and practices as they relate to pollinator conservation, identify appropriate locations for pollinator-friendly plantings, and consider other appropriate measures.
 - f. **Renewal:** After completing the first full year as a BEE CITY USA affiliate, each January, apply for renewal of the Norcross's BEE CITY USA designation following the format provided by BEE CITY USA, including a report of the previous year's BEE CITY USA activities, and paying the renewal fee based on Norcross's population.

ADOPTED by the City of Norcross, Georgia, this 4 day of September, 2018.



Mr. Craig Newton
Mayor

ATTEST:


Morique Laog
City Clerk



Let's Pollinate
NORCROSS

NORCROSS IS A BEE CITY USA AFFILIATE





BEE CITY USA®

represents a national effort to galvanize communities to sustain pollinators by providing them with healthy habitat that is rich in a variety of native plants and free to nearly-free of pesticides. Bee City USA® is an initiative of the Xerces Society.

As a Bee City USA, Norcross has made a formal commitment to fostering dialogue in our community that raises awareness of the role pollinators play in our ability to enjoy a healthy community, and what each of us can do to make a positive difference in their ability to thrive.

This commitment is supported by volunteers with Sustainable Norcross, and a formal mayoral proclamation issued by the City of Norcross.



WHAT ARE POLLINATORS?

A Pollinator is “an animal that causes plants to make fruit or seeds.” They do by traveling from plant to plant, carrying pollen on their bodies. This interaction is vital for the sake of our food supply, agricultural economies and surrounding landscapes. Bees are the leading insect known for pollinating; however, other animals like butterflies, bats, moths, flies, beetles, hummingbirds and even small mammals are pollinators as well! If a creature visits flowers to drink its nectar or feed off pollen,



and transports the pollen grains during this process, it is considered a pollinator. There are over 4,400 different kinds of bees native to the United States – the honeybees most of us are familiar with originally came from Europe when early settlers brought their hives to enjoy honey in the New Land.

Fun Fact

Bees are good dancers. When a bee finds a good source of nectar it flies back to the hive and shows its friends where the nectar source is by doing a dance which positions the flower in relation to the sun and hive. This is known as the ‘waggle dance.’





Fun Fact

Butterflies eat with their feet. That's right! Butterflies have these taste sensors on their legs, which inform them about the taste of the plants they stand on. Not only that, these sensors also tell the butterflies if the plant is good enough to lay their eggs on.



WHY ARE POLLINATORS IMPORTANT?

One out of 3 bites of every piece of food you eat is directly related to the pollinators function to our ecosystem. Not only do they pollinate the food we eat, but they also support a healthy ecosystem that stabilizes soils, cleans the air, protects from severe weather and aids other wildlife. In the U.S., honey bees alone are responsible for between \$1.2 and \$5.4 billion dollars in agricultural productivity. Globally, pollinators contribute \$217 billion dollars to the worldwide economy.

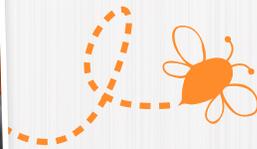
WHY ARE BEES STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE?

The main reasons for the decline in bees globally are industrial agriculture, parasites/pathogens and climate change. The loss of biodiversity, destruction of habitat and bee-killing pesticides are particular threats for honeybees and wild pollinators.



HOW CAN YOU HELP THE POLLINATORS?

Make room for pollinators in your yard and public parks, plant the right plants, spread the word about the importance of the pollinator population, support local beekeepers by buying honey and locally produced organic foods at your local farmer's market, reduce the impact of pesticides, and donate to organizations that strive to protect this nearly invisible ecosystem service.



WHERE CAN YOU GET THE PLANTS AND MATERIALS TO HELP THEM?

Below is a list of pollinator attractive plants that grow well in Georgia according to the UGA's Center for Urban Agriculture.



BUTTERFLY MILKWEED:

This drought tolerant perennial blooms in late spring with beautiful orange flowers, loves sunny areas and are wonderful hosts to the Monarch Butterfly.



BLUE-STEM GOLDENROD:

This perennial blooms in the fall with a cluster of yellow flowers. This plant loves partial shade and are loved by all pollinators.



REDBUD:

This tree blooms lovely pinkish-purple flowers in the spring, similar to sweet peas! They enjoy sunny to partial sunny spots and dry to moist soil. No soggy soil, please!

RED BUCKEYE:

This shrub is perfect for bees and hummingbirds. They love shade and moist soil, preferable under a nice tree! They bloom beautiful red, tubular flowers in the spring.



CONEFLOWER:

These perennials are heat and drought resistant, easy to grow and blooms for months. They bloom during summer and fall in all sorts of colors from purple, pink, red, orange and white. They thrive in full sun in moist soil. All types of pollinators love these flowers, birds, bees and butterflies.

BLACK EYED SUSAN:

This cheerful daisy-like annual requires full sun and moist soil. It blooms yellow flowers through summer and fall, and attracts butterflies and birds.



HOW TO ERADICATE UNWANTED BEES?

Before resorting to killing or harming any unwanted bees near your home, please contact your local beekeeper association. Homeowners can contact the Georgia beekeepers association for any kind of unwanted bee removal. You can find a list of local beekeepers who can help you remove an infestation by going to www.gabeekeeping.com



OTHER RESOURCES FOR SUPPORTING BEES IN OUR COMMUNITY:

Download the "BeeSmart – Pollinator Gardener" App! It is the easiest and most useful tool to identify native pollinator friendly plants based on which pollinators you want to attract. You can also filter the plants by light, soil, bloom color, and plant type.

Go to the Bee City USA website at www.beecityusa.org and the Pollinator Partnership website at www.pollinator.org.



LOCALLY OWNED PLANT NURSERIES

GREEN REYNO

5330 Old Norcross Rd,
Norcross, GA 30071
770.368.0505

MY SECRET GARDEN

3420 Woodhill Dr NW,
Peachtree Corners, GA 30092
678.805.8812

WOODY'S WHOLESALE NURSERY

2886 Buford Hwy,
Duluth GA 30096
770.476.1705

PIKE NURSERIES

2955 Holcomb Bridge Rd,
Alpharetta GA 30022
770.641.1217





Fun Fact

Honey bees have 170 odorant receptors, and have a sense of smell 50 times more powerful than a dog's.



For more information on local resources and bee ordinances, contact
Hannah Knab – City Planner / Norcross Bee City Committee Staff Member
Hannah.Knab@norcrossga.net | 678.421.2027
65 Lawrenceville St. Norcross, GA 30071

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