City Council of Peachtree City
Retreat Workshop Minutes
March 6, 2018

The Mayor and Council of Peachtree City met in a Retreat workshop session on March 6, 2018. Mayor Vanessa Fleisch opened the workshop at 6:30 p.m. Council members attending: Terry Ernst, Mike King, Kevin Madden, and Phil Prebor. Also present were Planning Commission members Jack Bernard, Lisa Ann Curtis, Paul Gresham, and JT Rabun, along with alternate Michael Link.

Topics for the workshop were Master Planning, Economic Development, and Annexation. City Manager Jon Rorie emphasized this was a forum, not a presentation, and encouraged participation from everyone in attendance. He noted this was the first time he had ever used the term "master planning" in a City meeting because it was difficult to "master plan" in a government environment due to changes in the elected and appointed boards. Rorie commented that the focus would be on strategic planning in regards to economic development and annexation as pieces of a big puzzle. The goal would be to bring all the puzzle pieces together to form a cohesive plan.

Overview Regional Context

Rorie summarized the City's mission statement into one sentence: "We exist to provide high quality services to our residents." He noted that providing high quality services led to a high quality of life, but that was defined differently by everyone. He used packets of candy distributed to all in attendance as an example. Madden noted that the package read "M&M's," but Rorie pointed out that from another perspective, the package read "W&W's." He said defining quality of life was similar: it all depended on the person's perspective.

A 2016 Citizen Satisfaction Survey noted that the top components for quality of life for most respondents were a low crime rate, manageable traffic, and access to the path system, Rorie reported. He presented the schedule of retreat workshops and meetings leading up to the adoption of the FY 2019 Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Program in July.

Rorie quoted from the Dalai Lama, saying, "just as ripples spread out when a single pebble is dropped into water, the actions of Individuals can have far reaching effects." He noted that where that pebble was dropped did not matter -- there would be consequences. For instance, if it was dropped in Atlanta or Newnan, there would be consequences to Peachtree City. In turn, what happened in Peachtree City impacted other areas.

Pete Frisina, Fayette County's Director of Planning and Zoning, was present to discuss the County Land Use Plan, Rorie said, adding that nearby communities would be discussed later that evening, with the final topics coveringthe City's plans for growth and development.

The City Manager pointed out that Fayette County was a member of the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), the regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency for 10 counties surrounding Atlanta. Fayette bordered other counties in the Three Rivers Regional Commission, and these communities impacted Fayette as well. Rorie reported that Metro Atlanta was No. 1 in job growth among the country's major metropolitan areas and that raised the question of where these workers would live, work, and play, which would be a recurring theme throughout the workshop.

Megan Baker of the Fayette County Development Authority (FCDA) would talk about economic development later, Rorie stated. He noted that people did not move where there were no jobs, but there were consequences to that migration. For example, the ARC reported that the region's population was predicted to go from 5.2 million in 2010 to more than 8 million by 2040, while the region would be home to about 4 million jobs by 2040. Growth was coming, Rorie emphasized, and would impact all communities in the region eventually.

Rorie noted frequent discussions about younger people moving to the City, as well as the growing population of retirees. He cited increased interest in building assisted living developments in the past few months, which would be an important issue in coming years. He said it was interesting to note that if people ages 18-64 moved to Metro Atlanta, they would bring an additional $4 billion in personal income and provide an additional $2.5 billion in gross domestic product (GDP). However, retirees would provide $40 billion in personal income and $7.8 billion in GDP. He said we were aging in place, and noted that, in general, people of any age wanted many of the same things in their community.

Rorie continued that there was a lot of growth projected for the north side of Atlanta, but that was beginning to shift south. Second ring suburbs were expected to continue their growth through 2040, and Fayette County's population was projected to grow by about 30%, to 143,000, in that time. Coweta County was expected to add about 98,000 people, bringing its population to 240,000. Rorie asked again where these new residents would live, work, and play, adding, "and drive."

Rorie displayed a chart of responses to the Metro Atlanta Speaks 2016 Survey showing that Fayette residents considered traffic as the top problem in the region, followed by crime; all were quality of life issues, Rorie noted. Pointing again to the population growth statistics, he said it was worthwhile to ask why Coweta was projected to see such an increase: was it a result of proximity to I-85 or due to the greater land mass? Challenges such as traffic were regional issues, as was crime.

Continuing with the ripple effect analogy, Rorie said events in Tyrone, Fayetteville, Senoia, and Coweta County all had major impacts on Peachtree City, because those were the communities surrounding the City. He displayed an image depicting the intersection of SR 74 and SR 54, the two state highways through these areas. Rorie read headlines from The Fayette Citizen that described growth plans. He introduced Frisina to talk about the County Land Use Plan and urged listeners to keep in mind the impact of County decisions regarding development on the City.

Frisina displayed a map of the County's previous Land Use Plan, in effect until 2017, noting that it had been updated that year. He showed the new Land Use Plan, which he said was slightly different. In developing the plan, Frisina noted, the County received input from about 1,500 people through an online survey and met with stakeholder groups, such as homeowner's associations (HOAs), business people, environmentalists, and recreational experts. Two things were clear, Frisina stated: people agreed that traffic was a major concern, as was the need for the County to retain its rural character. The new plan reduced residential densities in the County and pointed out a new density category for three-acre home sites. Formerly, there had been categories for one- to two-acre lots, two-to three-acre lots, and five-acre lots. In the 2017 Land Use Plan, Frisina noted, they reduced the area designated for one-acre lots, and split the two- to three-acre lots category into two separate areas for two-acre and three-acre lots. He explained that the southern portion of the County had always been planned as agricultural-residential, with a minimum of five-acre lots.

Frisina noted that the County was primarily a residential development area, and commercial development was limited because of the lack of a sewer system. The County required a septic system and to have a 100% septic replacement area, so non-residential development for the most part was confined to Peachtree City and Fayetteville. Fayetteville was mostly commercial, while Peachtree City, with its industrial park, had more industry, along with commercial businesses.

Fayette County should be able to house the ARC's projected population growth at the current densities, Frisina continued. Over the years, they had been working to convince the ARC that Peachtree City was basically done with residential growth, and he said they finally seemed to understand. Rorie summed up that most of the County land bordering Peachtree City was earmarked for three-acre or larger lots. He said he wanted people to see how the County Land Use Plan could influence growth in the City in terms of maintaining consistency.

Rorie asked if there was an overlay district on SR 54, and Frisina said there was, along SR 54 East relating to non-residential development, with dimensional requirements, setback standards, landscaping requirements, and architectural standards. He noted that it did not regulate uses, just architecture.

Fleisch was curious about situations where businesses on septic tanks had been approved on the City's border, citing assisted living facilities and day care centers as examples. When there was a septic problem, it became an emergency request to the City for annexation and sewer service. She asked if any new development was planned along SR 54. Frisina said the County did not foresee any land use going past the areas that were already developed. He said in the Sumner Road area, the overlay allowed for some office/institutional uses along SR 54. Many homes were impacted by the highway widening years ago, and they were converted into offices. Additionally, septic tank regulations from many years ago were not as stringent as those required today.

Rorie asked if there was consistency between the City and the County's requirements in the overlay district in regards to setback requirements. Frisina answered that he did not know, but the County called for a 50-foot landscape area along the highway. Rorie said overlay districts and corridors were designed to be gateways to the City, and it would be bad to lose continuity. He noted that representatives from the 74 Gateway Coalition would be speaking later and said he hoped Peachtree City and the County, and perhaps Fayetteville, too, could open discussions soon to form a similar coalition regarding access and mobility on the SR 54 East corridor.

Prebor asked about the boundaries for the overlay district. Frisina explained that actually there were two. One was in the Land Use Plan and dealt with the converted homes he mentioned earlier, Frisina said, while the Overlay Zone was part of the Zoning Ordinance and set requirements for dimensions, architecture, and landscaping. Frisina noted that the Overlay Zone ran the entire length of SR 54 from Fayetteville to Peachtree City. Frisina noted that all development in this zone, except for the Ankle and Foot Clinic, which had been annexed into the City, had occurred prior to the Overlay Zone being established. Frisina clarified that there were no plans for industrial development in the area, and the lack of sewer would limit any development.

Peachtree City Director of Planning and Development Mike Warrix said Frisina had always been a staunch advocate of cooperative planning between the jurisdictions. He reported that he had attended at least a half dozen staff meetings between planners where interjurisdictional development opportunities were discussed, and he looked forward to continuing that relationship. Frisina said he would like to see the County and City work together without regard to jurisdictional boundaries in pursuit of a common goal.

SR 74 N Corridor

Rorie then reiterated that the City was not in charge of traffic control on SR 74 and SR 54 because they were state roads. There were no easy solutions to traffic problems. He introduced Richard Fangmann of Pond and Associations and the 74 Gateway Coalition, to discuss findings of the SR 74 Comprehensive Corridor Study. He pointed out the presence of County Engineer Phil Mallon, County Commissioner Randy Ognio, chair of the County Transportation Committee, and Shayne Robinson, the City's representative on that committee.

Fangmann said he had just left a countywide transportation open house in Tyrone, and the overwhelming opinion from the citizens in attendance was the importance of maintaining traffic flow on SR 74. He explained that the Gateway Coalition was concerned with the SR 74 corridor from U.S. Highway 29 in Fairburn to SR 54 in Peachtree City, running through Fairburn, Tyrone and Peachtree City. The goals of the SR 74 Comprehensive Corridor Study were to establish a unified stakeholder vision, understand long-term transportation needs, address congestion and future growth needs, and provide capacity to maintain corridor mobility.

The study included data on travel patterns into and out of the City, showing that 15,500 people who live in Peachtree City travel to work outside the City each day, while about 16,600 people who were not City residents traveled to the City to work daily. There were around 2,600 who lived and worked in the City, according to the study's findings. Fangmann indicated that most of the trips for those who worked outside the City were to the north and east, towards Atlanta.

Fangmann said the travel patterns for workers commuting into the City were more evenly distributed, coming from all directions. He felt the number of people who lived and worked in the City was a little low, but that seemed to be the case for all the cities in the survey, as though the number of people who worked from home might be underreported.

Fangman showed figures that indicated about 32% of workers commuted fewer than 10 miles, while about 27% went 10-24 miles to work, 31% traveled 25-50 miles, and nearly 10% commuted for a distance of more than 50 miles. Fangmann pointed out that the distance most workers traveled would take them to the Airport, into Atlanta or on to the northern suburbs. A higher percentage of workers coming into the City were coming from shorter distances, up to 24 miles away, as opposed to the City residents who traveled farther for work. Fangmann said he believed this was because there were more service jobs in Peachtree City, while City residents held professional jobs that were found in the Atlanta area. He said workers in service jobs were more inclined to take work close to home.

Access management, accessibility, and mobility rated high among respondents to the survey used in the Corridor Study, Fangmann noted. He explained that access management was how entry points to the highway were managed and their locations. Accessibility meant increasing connectivity where needed, and mobility was how to get people through the corridor. He said these three topics were rated highest by respondents, with mobility recognized as most important or second most important by most respondents. Fangmann said studies in other areas often showed the opposite, focusing on appearance or biking lanes, for instance. Rorie noted that greater access and mobility were competitors, and it was a struggle to balance them. Fangmann said that was the role of access management. The more numerous the access points, Fangmann noted, the less mobility there was in the corridor. He said something like the SR 54 corridor would be referred to as a "challenged corridor" because it was trying to do all things, such as provide frequent access points for businesses as well as serve as a traffic corridor for longer trips.

Fangmann explained that the 2015 population of the SR 74 Corridor area was about 60,000 and was expected to grow to about 72,000 by 2040. The employment along the corridor was about 30,000 in 2015 and projected to be 41,000 in 2040. Employment would grow at a more rapid rate than population.

Right now, he said, there were about 36,000 cars a day on SR 74 and capacity would be, at the upper end, about 40,000. The coalition was looking at ways to accommodate the additional traffic, such as widening the road to six lanes or initiating intersection improvements. He mentioned the R-cut at Sandy Creek as an example of what could be done at other intersections. Fleisch clarified that there were 36,000 cars per day traveling the SR 74 corridor, the same figure as the number of cars that travel between SR 74 and MacDuff Parkway each day in a much tighter space. Fangmann said it was around the same volume, but access points were more spread out, pointing out that access management could deal with connections between businesses, keeping vehicles from having to get back on the highway.

Fangmann indicated alternative intersection options, such as the displaced left turn or continuous flow intersection, which could take the capacity to the next level. He showed examples such as the continuous green T intersection, which relieved traffic at the Overlook. He noted that it would be better if those were more spread out. The restricted crossing U-turn at Sandy Creek had mixed reviews, but he said adding other U-turns on a systematic basis might be a better approach.

Rorie noted that when the SR 54 West traffic study had been done in 2014, there had some improvements recommended for the SR 74 North corridor. The Westpark area was one of the considerations for improvement, including making Commerce Drive at Westpark a right-in/right-out at SR 54. The City had been informed there could be litigation, so they dropped the idea, but added it might be time to consider it again.

Rorie said he frequently received emails from citizens saying a traffic light was needed at SR 74 and South Kedron Drive, and the Police Department had monitored accident data there. Now there was a study showing a light was needed at Westpark Drive, plus the one at South Kedron, and another at Aberdeen Parkway. If access management and mobility were priorities, then putting traffic signals in to simply make everybody stop was not the answer. The purpose of traffic signals was to provide safe movement. Rorie said it was time to look at a right-in, right-out option for South Kedron, although that would not make everyone happy. From the South Kedron intersection, it was 1.2 miles on Kedron Drive to the signalized North Kedron intersection. Mobility must be the priority when making any changes, and that was why this conversation was so important. Not everyone would welcome the changes, but increased density and traffic demanded them.

Fangmann noted that now was a good time to consider the improvements because there was not an overload of traffic signals along SR 74 North. Fleisch said the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) had a $10 million project planned for SR 54/SR 74 in 2020 and was now beginning construction to expand the right hand turn lane by Longhorn. She asked if it would be better to wait until 2020.

Mayor Fleisch understood that GDOT was trying to restrict the use of signals, and Fangmann said that was the case, and they were trying to enhance traffic flow through other means. He said one of the reasons GDOT was pushing the R-cut median style was that, in addition to minimizing the need for traffic signals, it provided an improvement in safety by getting rid of left turns at signals and spacing out decision points. Fangmann mentioned the Sandy Creek Road/SR 74 intersection as an example. Someone who wanted to cross SR 74 [from Laurelmont Drive] to Sandy Creek would need to turn right onto 74 South, then make a U-turn then turn right onto Sandy Creek. Few drivers wanted to go straight across at that thoroughfare, and this pattern might not work at a more heavily-traveled intersection. He pointed out the decision points – right onto 74, then left to cross the northbound lanes and get on Sandy Creek. He said this was less dangerous than speeding straight across. Rorie said it was a common practice to make a right, then a U-turn, at many intersections.

Bernard commented that this had changed his mind about putting a traffic light at SR 74/Senoia Road/Lexington Pass. He said many drivers tried to go straight across and needed to be educated about the dangers, asking how to get the message out. Rorie said the City tried to communicate through the weekly **Updates** newsletter, as well as social media posts; however, they could not reach everyone. Ernst said he hoped people would spread the word about these Retreat meetings so there would be a bigger crowd at the next one.

Fangmann said it was important to note the ability to get more funding for the SR 74 Corridor. The state fuel tax provided revenue and freed up federal money. The City could partner with the ARC to ensure the projects being planned met everyone's needs. Mallon and the County were working on a comprehensive transportation plan, Fangmann noted, making sure that the City had input and communicating with ARC as well.

Rorie said planning for transportation improvements for SR 74 was a cooperative effort among the City, County, Gateway Coalition, and the ARC. He added that the City and County needed to apply the same concepts used for SR 74 North to the SR 54 East Corridor. It was not only about setbacks and aesthetics, but also access management and mobility along that corridor. Rorie noted again that what happened in surrounding communities impacted the City, pointing out that Tyrone had taken a leading role in determining how to manage access on SR 74. He said there was commercial development near Fairburn, but those businesses were set back from the road and were interconnected.

Peachtree City Senior Planner Robin Cailloux showed how the boundaries of nearby cities had grown since 2003, noting that their borders were approaching Peachtree City. Rorie said the City needed to join with these governments to help plan for growth instead of being a target for negative impacts. He pointed out that if the City were not sitting at the table, then it would feel all the pain that came with growth, with no gain. He understood not all the changes would be popular, but the growth had to be accommodated. Rorie said the City must plan to survive and maintain quality of life in the midst of change.

Economic Development

Rorie introduced Megan Baker, Business Retention and Expansion/Project Manager for the Fayette County Development Authority. He also presented FCDA President Joan Young and FCDA Representative Tom Fulton.

Baker defined economic development as the creation of jobs and wealth and the improvement of quality of life. She showed photos of recent groundbreakings for several businesses, noting that attracting businesses to a community allowed residents to work near their homes, thereby improving their quality of life.

Baker said having more industry strengthened and balanced a community's tax base, taking the tax burden off residents. She pointed out that residents paid 40 cents of every tax dollar they used, while businesses only used 40 cents of every tax dollar they paid. In Fayette County, 70% of taxes came from residential property, and 24% came from industrial and commercial. Baker noted that in the City, this number was probably more like 80/20.

Piedmont Fayette Hospital was the largest private employer in Fayette County, Baker noted, but the other largest employers were all in the City. She cited Panasonic, Eaton, Hoshizaki, Osmose, Ply Gem, and Gerresheimer as examples, pointing out that Peachtree City had 38 companies from 16 different countries. Silon from the Czech Republic would open on April 12. She said that it was a huge asset to be part of the global economy, enabling Fayette County to compete worldwide.

Aviation-related companies were a target for the FCDA, Baker continued, because they brought good jobs, were good corporate citizens, and complemented the existing industries or were suppliers or buyers. She highlighted Zodiac Aerospace, which was just acquired by Safron, and was now the third-largest aerospace provider in the world, except for aircraft manufacturers. Headquarters were another target sector, she said, noting that Fayette was a destination for small- and medium-sized business headquarters. Access to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport was a factor, as were quality of life issues, such as good schools. She said Osmose, Sany, Panasonic, Eaton, and Rinnai were examples.

While the City had many great companies and a great quality of life, there were challenges in attracting business to the County. Suitable land was in short supply, as were buildings to meet industrial and office space needs. Also a problem was the lack of mixed-used development that appealed to younger people. Another challenge was the aging workforce. Baker summed up what sustainable community development looked like, saying it was a long-term process that required a commitment of time and resources, sometimes without success. Leadership development, community development, and economic development were all part of the process, Baker noted.

Fleisch said she participated in an FCDA workshop years ago that mentioned publicity as being a factor. Baker said that, especially at the state-level, it was known if a community was easy to work with and eager to attract business. She said it was important to keep your name out there and try to have a fast turnaround on information requests. Rorie said the City and County must be careful in its actions so things were not playing out in the media in a negative fashion. He again pointed out that heavy traffic on the 74 Corridor could be a factor in a business deciding not to move to Fayette. Baker said landing a business was becoming more and more competitive, and the FCDA worked very hard to take advantage of the assets offered by the City and the County.

Future Land Use

After a short break, Cailloux referred to the findings of the 2016 Satisfaction survey that showed residents wanted City leaders to focus planning efforts on traffic congestion, and taxes, high-paying jobs, among other items. She showed the original 1957 plan for the City that projected the final population at 85,000. Cailloux pointed out SR 54 and SR 74 on the plan, noting the industrial park was in the same place on the plan and in the real world.
Cailloux read a quote she appreciated from urban planner Doug Allen: "*Real history is not made by preserving old buildings or freezing the present… Real history is made when each successive generation … can write their own story into a place.*"

Cailloux noted the City had recently updated its Comprehensive Plan, dividing it into four plan elements – Economic Development, Land Use, Community Services, and Transportation.

Economic Development meant maintaining a diversified economy that encouraged high paying, quality jobs, and maximum tax contribution while meeting the requirements of a healthy environment. Land Use covered appropriate land uses in areas suitable for development that would not endanger but protect the surrounding environment and aesthetics. Community Services dealt with quality of life issues and called for adequate levels of service in all areas as needed for the residents. Establishing and maintaining a comprehensive transportation system that provided safe and convenient circulation through and around the City, including roads, cart paths, and rideshare services was what the Transportation section described.

Cailloux presented a map showing existing land use, noting that 50% of the City's land was consumed by residential development, and 26% was open space, with 4% used for services that could include churches, public works buildings, or similar structures. This meant that about 80% of the developed physical land space was dedicated to residential uses, leaving 20% for retail, office, and industrial use.

Another slide showed where the City's revenue was generated, reiterating what Baker had touched on earlier. Cailloux pointed out that commercial development contributed much more revenue than it consumed in services, while residential use consumed a higher percentage of services. She presented 2017 data showing that 66% of the City's tax base came from residential land use, while 34% was from commercial. Fayette County got 74% of its tax money from residential, she said, while Coweta County's residential property brought in 70% of the taxes. Statewide, residential property accounted for just 51% of the tax base. This differential was common on a macro scale because big players like Atlanta skewed the numbers.

Cailloux reflected on how the tax burden could be shared with commercial and industrial users. She mentioned that the City could look at undeveloped land and try to understand why it was not in use. Another option was redevelopment of existing properties, but she said that would not be a topic covered that evening. Rorie would discuss annexation, another option, later in the meeting.

Cailloux showed a map of currently undeveloped properties already zoned for development. The City currently had 21 acres of undeveloped land for retail use, 22 acres for office, 286 acres for industrial, and 1,292 acres for residential use. Most of that residential acreage was in the Everton and Crosswind developments.

Cailloux said 1,185 residential lots were actively being developed, with 270 possible lots/units that were currently zoned for residential were not being developed at this time. These were mostly the mixed use in Lexington and some one-acre lots throughout the City. There were 191 new residential lots in the pipeline if the rezonings were approved. There was not a lot of room for new residential growth. Cailloux explained that, even though the City wanted new industrial and commercial developments, residents were needed to attract retail and office developments.

There was some undeveloped land zoned for retail uses, but Cailloux noted that it was just 2% of all the land in the City zoned for retail use. Currently there was a 3% retail vacancy rate, which was very low. There were 92 acres of office use in the City, with 22 remaining acres zoned for office. With density at the current rate, this would add 7% to the existing capacity. She said there was an 11% office vacancy rate, which was better than average.

Cailloux said there were more than 2,000 existing acres of industrial use land. Much of the remaining industrial land was encumbered or undevelopable, in wetlands or flood plains, so she pulled that land out to determine that there were 286 developable acres, which was about 13% of the total usable industrial land in the City. There were about 30 parcels available, but half of those were eight acres or smaller, and most companies needed more land than that. There were four lots that were 11-17 acres and three that were 35-45 acres. Cailloux said topography issues could hamper development on some lots. Proximity to the airport could also limit development. Fleisch asked if this included industrial property inside the airport fence. Cailloux said it did, but she had pulled most of that property out because it was encumbered by flood plain.

Cailloux reiterated there was some opportunity for infilling available property, and staff would be looking for guidance from Council regarding redevelopment or annexation. Bernard asked if there was a need to annex additional land to have available property for industrial growth. Cailloux said that was a usable tool, but not her place to decide.

Annexation

Rorie said annexation was a public policy question. The City needed to think what the coming growth in the region would look like and address the question head on. There were several questions, including if the City should expand to include urban fringe properties by annexing one property at a time. Another issue involved establishing natural growth boundaries for the purposes of enhancing long-range planning for police and fire stations, parks, and connections to the multi-use path system. He said the City had to be careful not to expand so much that expensive additional services were required. Annexation should be for cause, not "because."

He reflected on Cailloux's comments that many of the lots were too small for large industries or corporate headquarters. Perhaps they could be marketed to entrepreneurs who needed only a small lot, Rorie mused, noting that just such a business, a family-owned gym, had come before the Planning Commission the previous week.

Rorie said the goal was to balance what was desired with what was possible. A strategy was needed to consider every proposal. In 2014, the City came up with an analysis of growth boundaries. Several times in the past few years, the City had been approached about annexing the Dogwood Trail area, which comprised about 200 acres abutting both Tyrone and Peachtree City. He said it posed density and sewer questions, and he was sure it would come up again. The SR 85 South intersection with SR 74 was another piece of land that would be decided on in the future in regards to annexation. SR 54 East was also a corridor the City needed to look at, Rorie noted.

Rorie said he was sometimes asked why Peachtree City did not annex the Fisher's Crossing area in Coweta County, primarily because there could be a cart path to the movie theater. He said at first he laughed it off, but now had been thinking about the possibility of annexation and the additional tax money that commercial area would bring in. That corridor was zoned for commercial development and was the gateway to the SR 54/74 intersection. Peachtree City had an interest in how that corridor developed, but it would be 20 years or so out.

The north MacDuff area included the last remaining pieces of unincorporated Fayette County between Peachtree City and Fayette County, Rorie noted. He clarified with Police Chief Janet Moon that if law enforcement personnel were needed there, it would be the Fayette County Sheriff's Department that responded, even though the land was surrounded by Peachtree City and Tyrone. The same situation applied to fire and EMS service. Rorie said he was actively pursuing the owner of this property about applying for annexation to the City. He said it could be swept into the City with a limited use residential (LUR) zoning. He mentioned the Hardy-Kidd-Whitlock property as another bit of land that was currently zoned industrial, but should be residential.

The SR 54 East corridor was the perfect example of why a controlled corridor was needed. He said some parts of the country had extraterritorial jurisdictions for areas that bordered on a city limits. Rorie noted that could include overlay districts, repeating that it was sometimes necessary to annex for cause. SR 54 East used City police and fire on one side of the road, and County on the other. This was what led to intergovernmental agreements that enabled services to be provided in an efficient and effective manner and was a good argument for annexation. Some people along the corridor were leery of annexation due to the eventual need to comply with the City's regulations, Rorie reported.

Most of the City's tax base was supported by residential. In 2009, when property values dropped, tax revenues dropped, too, meaning services had to be cut or taxes raised. Sales tax revenues also went down during that recession. Services required revenue. Economic development required residential density, as did the ability to attract fine restaurants. Rorie said it was important to consider why there were office and retail vacancy rates. Redevelopment might be the answer, and state and federal grant money was often connected to population, so it was important to promote and maintain residential growth.

The down side to annexation included the high cost of increased services, such as building new fire stations, and the expansion of infrastructure, such as water and sewer lines, Rorie commented.

Another example of annexation for cause was the need for life-long communities and mixed-use development. The concept of huge developments of only single-family homes was going away. In the City, this was apparent in the lofts at Lexington Circle, which included residential lofts over retail establishments. Rorie felt millennials and older people wanted the same things in a community. He noted The Villages in Florida as an example of a mixed-use development for retirees. Neighborhood retail and services were a desired feature, Rorie said, describing a main street type area where you could walk to an ice cream shop, with larger homes on the outskirts. He said they had looked twice at an assisted living proposal in Lexington, as well as one near City Hall and another on the south side.

Rorie concluded the presentation with the fiscal year 2019 budget schedule, noting the next retreat workshop would be April 3, with Council Focus Topics as the subject. Service strategies would be the topic at the May 1 retreat meeting, including solid waste collection. He said it as it now stood, the City was resurfacing many roads, but then there were multiple huge garbage trucks coming down the new roads every day and damaging the surfaces. He gave dates for budget workshops as well, and asked for Council suggestions on topics for the April 3 retreat.

Fleisch asked Young and Baker how Coweta had gotten to a 70/30 split in residential and commercial tax revenues. Young said Coweta was actively recruiting commercial development by increasing their incentive offerings. Baker said attracting new business was getting more competitive and more customized, with the standard 10/10 tax deal not usually sufficient. Young said incentives were becoming more creative, such as offering health care packages. She said the FCDA is narrowing the focus to the target industries and seeing what drives them. The FCDA did not advocate giving away land, but it was worthwhile to see what a project was worth and negotiate incentives. Rorie clarified that the standard 10/10 was a 10% tax increase per year over a 10-year period, meaning full taxes were not paid until year 11.

Fleisch asked Warrix about Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) and how a CID might be used along SR 54. Warrix said CIDs were self-taxing districts, with the businesses and industries paying fees that were usually used for roadway improvements, but they could be used for sidewalks or paths. Cobb and Gwinnett counties had several CIDs, which could be useful along corridors such as SR 74 or SR 54. Fleisch asked if consumers paid the money as a type of sales tax. Cailloux said the fee was paid by the businesses owners, but, Prebor observed, they probably passed the cost on to their customers.

Bernard said residents of Lake Oconee had formed a CID to provide improvements the county would not fund. Rorie suggested that CIDs could be a topic at the April 3 retreat session, and asked Warrix and Cailloux to find examples of how they had been used in commercial corridors. Livable Centers Initiatives (LCIs) around City Hall would be discussed in the future as well.

The workshop concluded at 9 p.m.

Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary

Vanessa Fleisch, Mayor