



Meeting Report

An Envision 2030 vision meeting was held Tuesday, November 28, 2006 at the library at Northside Hospital's Forsyth County campus. The meeting was hosted by Grason's Gift. Approximately 12 people attended. In the course of one hour, participants worked in small groups of five or more on a series of questions that helped them think about the kind of community they would like Cumming-Forsyth County to be in 25 years.

Meeting Process

Participants were welcomed by Brett Berto, co-chair of Envision 2030, who also served as the meeting facilitator. Brett explained that participants would work in small groups or "circles" of five or more people and they would be asked to think about, discuss and come to consensus on several questions. Brett also covered a few suggested ground rules. Each group had a "moderator" who acted as recorder and group facilitator, and wrote the group's comments.

The first question Brett asked was part of a scenario. Its purpose was to help the groups imagine what an ideal Cumming-Forsyth County would look like. Here's the scenario:

It is 2030. Time magazine is sending a reporter to Cumming-Forsyth County to do a cover story on how this community came to be regarded as the "model" or "ideal" mid-sized community in the country – the community other mid-sized communities around the country want to be like.

Here's the question Brett posed to the groups:

What will Time magazine say in its 2030 article makes Cumming-Forsyth County such an ideal community?

Brett gave the groups 30 minutes to work on this question.

In the remainder of the meeting, Brett asked the groups to consider two other questions:

- *What do we need to preserve among things that already exist in Cumming-Forsyth County today for the Time magazine article (and our vision of the future) to come true?*

These things could include physical assets, organizations or institutions, public policies or decisions, or positive traits or skills of the people who live here now that will be needed if Cumming-Forsyth County were to become an ideal community.

- *What do we lack in Cumming-Forsyth County today that we would need for the Time magazine article (and our vision of the future) to come true?*

These things could include physical assets, organizations or institutions, public policies or decisions, or positive traits or skills of the people that are missing today but will be needed in the future, if Cumming-Forsyth County were to become an ideal community.

The results of these three group discussions (a general vision for Cumming-Forsyth County, the assets that should be preserved and those that should be developed) are in the following three sections of this report.

Small-Group Results: A Vision of Cumming-Forsyth County in 2030

Here are the vision ideas – the things that participants felt Time magazine would focus on, if it were writing about Cumming-Forsyth County as the ideal or model mid-size community in 2030.

Small group 1:

- Vouchers and private schools for kids with disabilities, with parents able to afford the schools
- Amphitheatres for the arts
- After school programs - can integrate kids with disabilities and typical kids
- Integrated play group - like the rec. center idea with typical kids and kids with disabilities
- Children's museums
- Saturday night social club
- Social and recreational park (center) for teens, etc. for kids to hang out, similar to Bogan Park
- More holiday and summer camps, outdoor adventures

Small Group 2:

- Add community center - education, performance, recreation, all-inclusive, all access, pool, gym, sauna
- Self-sufficiency in food, water and energy
- More parks and the lake - save 'em
- Expand the farmers market to a co-op, give it a permanent structure
- More light industry employers
- More artisanal local businesses, fewer big box retailers that export community dollars
- Restaurants on Lake Lanier

- Technical or vocational training for special needs
- Smaller schools, class sizes are fine, but more schools
- All schools within walking distance, bicycling
- School vouchers
- Follow Kyoto protocol for carbon neutral
- Building codes and air quality standards that are more stringent than the state
- Initialize special needs care / health care / elder care / respite care that sets the standard nation-wide
- The hospital needs adjunct professional special needs medical care, respite care, hospice in association with the hospital
- Geriatric care, pediatric care
- Build the hospital into a hub for all of above
- City power plant, or county
- Ubiquitous subsidized broadband-wireless
- No more overhead cables (bury 'em!)
- Focus on continuous improvement
- Open farmland - nothing else plowed over for residential development
- County or city run world-class golf course open to residents at price advantage to out-of-county players
- More pedestrian friendly
- All roads have sidewalks and bike paths and electric car lanes
- Connection between developments
- Minimize the need to commute
- Expand public transportation, MARTA, beltway
- Create and expand (continuously) a car-free zone

Consensus Ideas

Here are the ideas, from those listed above, that the groups felt reflected a consensus of their thinking:

- Self-sufficiency in food, water and energy
- Expand the farmers market to a co-op, give it a permanent structure
- Ubiquitous subsidized broadband-wireless
- Vouchers and private schools for kids with disabilities, with parents able to afford the schools
- Social and recreational park (center) for teens, etc. for kids to hang out, similar to Bogan Park

Small-Group Results: Existing assets that should be preserved

Here are existing community assets that participants felt should be preserved, if Cumming-Forsyth County is to become the ideal or model mid-size community in 2030. These things could include physical assets, organizations or institutions, public policies or decisions, or positive traits or skills of the people who live here now. (Note: Not all groups listed assets that participants felt should be preserved.)

Small Group 1:

- Trees

- YMCA, but need good to expand after school programs

Small-Group Results: Assets that will be needed

Here are community assets that participants felt are missing now and will be needed, if Cumming-Forsyth County is to become the ideal or model mid-size community in 2030. These things could include physical assets, organizations or institutions, public policies or decisions, or positive traits or skills of the people. (Note: Not all groups listed assets that participants felt are missing now.)

Small Group 1:

- More sensory issues programs
- Shade for parks
- No trees
- Sponsored parks such as Webb Bridge for kids with disabilities
- Community involvement in helping kids transition to the workplace

What Is Envision 2030?

Envision 2030 is a year-long, citizen-led community planning initiative to envision – and plan for – Cumming-Forsyth County’s development over the next 25 years.

It begins with eight vision meetings in fall 2006 and will continue as a strategic planning process in early 2007. At every stage, citizens will be invited to join Envision 2030 meetings and planning groups – and to critique its reports and work products. Every document will be available on the Envision 2030 web site, www.envision2030.com.

Envision 2030’s final report will be available in June 2007.