



## Meeting Report

An Envision 2030 vision meeting was held Friday, December 1, 2006 with a class of mostly Latino residents taking a course on English as a Second Language. Approximately 16 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:

- Multicultural children
- Multicultural center
- Businesses
- College - the best at this time
- Picture of central park
- Lake at summer time
- Recreation areas
- Train - transportation

Small Group 2:

- A city with walkways around the city - modernized - but not losing the rustic look
- A picture of a historic place that talks about history of Forsyth
- Pictures of different ethnic groups working together
- A city with no factories in town - must be away from the city
- Clean city
- The lake full of water
- A big picture showing everything - a collage of what Forsyth is all about

- A picture of Downtown Cumming
- Safe and quiet city

**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.

Small Group 1:

- Forest
- Lakes, Parks
- Peaceful community
- Fair
- Bilingual education at school

Small Group 2:

- Security and safety in town
- Cleanliness in town and the quality of supervision to keep it clean
- That this city is growing and the better job opportunities
- Less racism
- Schools - because we get lots of help with our children (ESOL)
- Pre-K and Headstart programs
- Adult English Classes
- Lake
- Parks
- The green areas
- Cumming Fair
- Christmas lights around town
- The fire department always on time to help
- Downtown Cumming
- All the new coming soon stores

**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:

- Street lights
- Sidewalks
- Medical assistance for non-citizen children

- Government hospitals
- Secure place for daylight laborers
- Latin bank
- Respect for immigrants / stop discrimination
- More information for children at school about violence
- School safety
- Bilingual staff in recreational organizations
- Public transportation - bus, train
- Bilingual staff in Forsyth County jails

Small Group 2:

- Transportation
- A safe place for daylight laborers to look for a job
- Recreational areas - with a walking distance (around downtown Cumming)
- Cultured areas - a Fernbank-like museum for our children to see and have locally (why go to another county?)
- Add more recreational things around the lake
- More side roads for bikes, walkways
- Maternity hospitals
- Pediatric clinics
- A Spanish guide to tell us about Cumming and what it offers - all services
- Spanish business become part of Chamber of Commerce
- University
- A multicultural center
- Deviate the traffic away from town - connectors
- Better services in restaurants
- Landlords to give better maintenance to their rental properties
- When we rent a property, that landlords have all services, such as heating and air conditioning
- More information about banks - better opportunities for us to save money
- Check cashing place
- A branch of the Mexican, Guatemalan consulates
- Take our participation more seriously in events, fairs and everything that involves the community
- Workshop for learning trades and tasks - cooking, flower arrangement, cosmetology
- Preventative programs for teens in Spanish

**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](http://www.envision2030.com).

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