

Group 2
Draft Action Steps
4/11/2007

Cumming-Forsyth County will become a community of lifelong learning.

Action Steps:

1. Establish a university in Cumming-Forsyth County that offers undergraduate and post-graduate courses with degree offerings based on local demands and community needs.
2. Cumming-Forsyth County's educational stakeholders will create a Learning Partners Collaborative that supports the life-long educational needs of the community.
 - The Learning Partners Collaborative will bring together leaders of Cumming city government, Forsyth County government, the Forsyth County School System, Lanier Technical College, the new university, the Forsyth County Library System, the Cumming-Forsyth Chamber of Commerce, private education providers, major employers, senior services agencies and others with responsibility for education of residents and workers of all ages.
 - The Learning Partners Collaborative will provide vision, action and potential funding for meeting the learning needs of Forsyth County.
3. Recognizing that learning organizations have different goals and are measured against different standards, the educational systems in Forsyth County should be recognized for excellence nationally and internationally.
 - The Learning Partners Collaborative will recommend which national and international standards for education learning organizations should seek to implement. An example of a national standard is the Malcolm Baldrige Award for Quality.
 - The Learning Partners Collaborative will build support among the business community, government agencies and the public for Cumming- Forsyth County learning organizations that pursue recognition for excellence.
4. The Learning Partnership Collaborative should develop a comprehensive plan for recruiting, educating, training, and retaining a future-oriented workforce – with the goal of repatriating the workforce in Forsyth County.
 - This plan should be called the Hiring Highway, and it should be Georgia's most comprehensive and innovative roadmap for developing and retaining a talented workforce.
 - Forsyth County School System, Lanier Technical College and the new university should take leadership roles in developing and implementing the Hiring Highway plan.
 - Business community and learning organizations should provide ongoing training and retraining of work force for work readiness.
 - The Learning Partners Collaborative should work with economic development organizations and large employers to regularly reestablish the learning needs of the community.
 - The Learning Partners Collaborative should provide a seamless curriculum from secondary to post-secondary to continuing education that prepares and supports the workforce needs of the future.
5. Cumming-Forsyth County should become a 100 percent literate community.

- To accomplish this, learning organizations should offer 24/7 access to educational opportunities, using traditional (classroom) methods, virtual (computer) instruction and a hybrid (classroom plus computer) methods.
 - By offering new methods of learning, learning organizations can lower the barriers to education and training and work together to assist all Cumming-Forsyth County citizens in attaining their educational goals.
- The Learning Partners Collaborative should work with governments, businesses and non-profit groups to transform all community centers and public gathering places into learning venues, thus creating a “communitywide open campus.”

Cumming-Forsyth County community will establish arts, cultural and other institutions that help residents explore the world around them.

Action Steps:

1. Establish a coalition or council with representatives from existing arts groups, the Forsyth County School System, the Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department, nearby colleges and universities, the Cumming-Forsyth County Chamber of Commerce, the Cumming city government and Forsyth County government to provide cultivation, collaboration, visibility and ownership of the arts. Among the specific tasks of this coalition:
 - Develop a directory of existing resources and support for cultural arts in Cumming-Forsyth County.
 - Identify strategic partnerships and existing and natural resources needed to facilitate support of the arts.
 - Seek financial support through grants as well as public/private support for funding arts programming.
 - Develop and implement a countywide plan for marketing and promotion of the arts.
 - Implement an annual arts festival with simultaneous art events throughout the county.
 - Establish a website that can serve as a central repository of information for community arts events and programming.
 - Host an annual “State of the Arts” town hall meeting.
 - Develop intergenerational arts programs.
 - Develop maps of local and regional arts venues and events.
2. Create a Lake Center-Lake Walk with an amphitheater, nature walk and facilities for hosting performing arts and arts-educational activities.
3. Stage an annual summer outdoor drama.
4. Cumming and Forsyth County Park and Recreation should expand to include the cultural arts.
5. Cumming-Forsyth County should be recognized locally and nationally as a center for cultural arts awareness.