



1. PLAN OVERVIEW

A. PURPOSE

The *Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning*, adopted by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) establishes the requirements of any comprehensive plan prepared in Georgia. The latest version of these standards and procedures can be found in O.C.G.A Chapter 110-12-1, effective January 1, 2013. This plan update meets and exceeds these Minimum Standards. In doing so, the city is able to maintain its Qualified Local Government Status, making it eligible to receive certain types of state funding.

The City of Norcross Comprehensive Plan is a living document that is continually updated and shaped by its leadership, staff, and citizens. It is a policy guide for making rezoning and capital investment decisions and sets policies for city officials and staff concerning the future development of the City. Prior to this planning effort, the last update of the plan was adopted in September 2008, and since then a number of events have occurred that created the need to once again revise and update its findings and recommendations. These events include the annexation of over 2.1 square miles of land area (Figure 1-2), a major downturn in the national economy, and the completion of several major planning studies. This update reassesses where Norcross stands today and how it intends to develop and/or preserve as result of these events. It presents an updated community vision, corresponding goals, and a work program designed to make that vision a reality.

B. SCOPE

In keeping with the requirements of the DCA standards and procedures, this plan is presented in three major components:

1. *Community Vision* – which lays out the future vision and goals that the community wants to achieve in text, maps and graphics;
2. *Needs and Opportunities* – which provides a list of the various needs and opportunities that the community will address;
3. *Community Work Program* – which provides a 5-year Short Term Work Program designed to address the needs and opportunities. This program includes activities, initiatives, programs, ordinances, and administrative systems to be put into place or maintained in order to implement the plan.

In addition, the plan incorporates six planning elements, as defined by the DCA Minimum Standards, that are important to shaping the future of the community. These elements are primarily addressed in plan’s assessment of needs and opportunities, and include the following:

1. Population
2. Economic Development
3. Land Use
4. Transportation
5. Housing
6. Community Facilities and Resources

A separate Appendix is also part of this plan, which includes detailed information collected as part of this planning effort organized by the six elements, a detailed description of the public involvement process utilized in preparing this plan, and a record of accomplishments highlighting the success of the previous Short Term Work Program adopted as part of the last plan.

The geographic area covered by this plan is that which is encompassed by the current incorporated boundaries of the City of Norcross. The city is located just 20 miles north Atlanta along I-85 in Gwinnett County, and covers approximately 5.16 square miles of area (Figure 1-1).

C. METHODOLOGY

This plan update is the product of the previous comprehensive plan, multiple planning efforts undertaken by the City since the previous plan’s adoption, and an eight-month long public outreach effort. The previous plan, the City of Norcross 2030 Comprehensive Plan, laid the foundation for this effort, and where relevant, the findings and recommendations of the previous plan were incorporated and updated. In addition, this plan incorporated and updated the recommendation of several planning studies, including:

1. *The City of Norcross Town Center Plan*, adopted in 2011
2. *Livable Centers Initiative Update*, adopted in August 2012
3. *The Norcross Activity Center Livable Centers Initiative*, adopted in December 2008
4. *The Indian Trail-Lilburn Road Livable Centers Initiative Corridor Study*, adopted in March 2007
5. *The Jimmy Carter Boulevard/Buford Highway Redevelopment Plan*, adopted in September 2007
6. *City of Norcross Parks Master Plan*, adopted January 2011
7. *Summerour Middle School Safe Routes to School Travel Plan*, adopted in February 2012

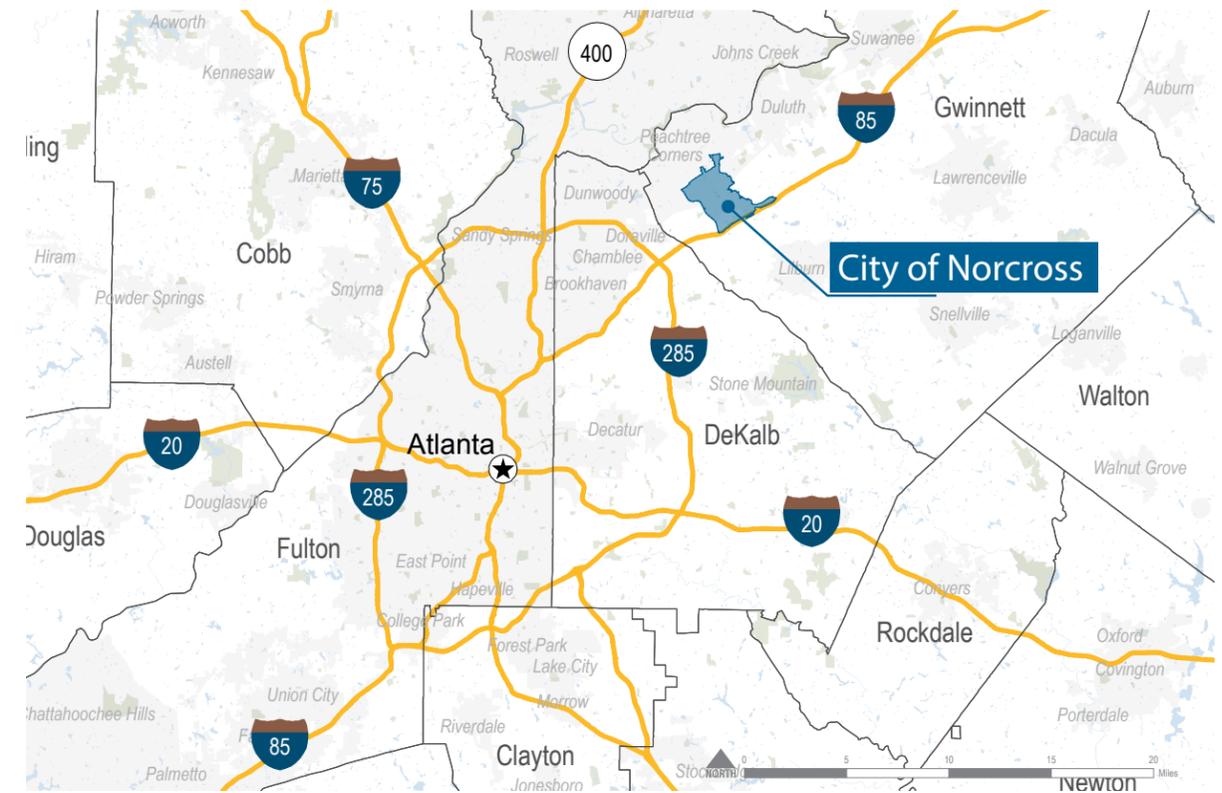


FIGURE 1-1: Regional Context Map

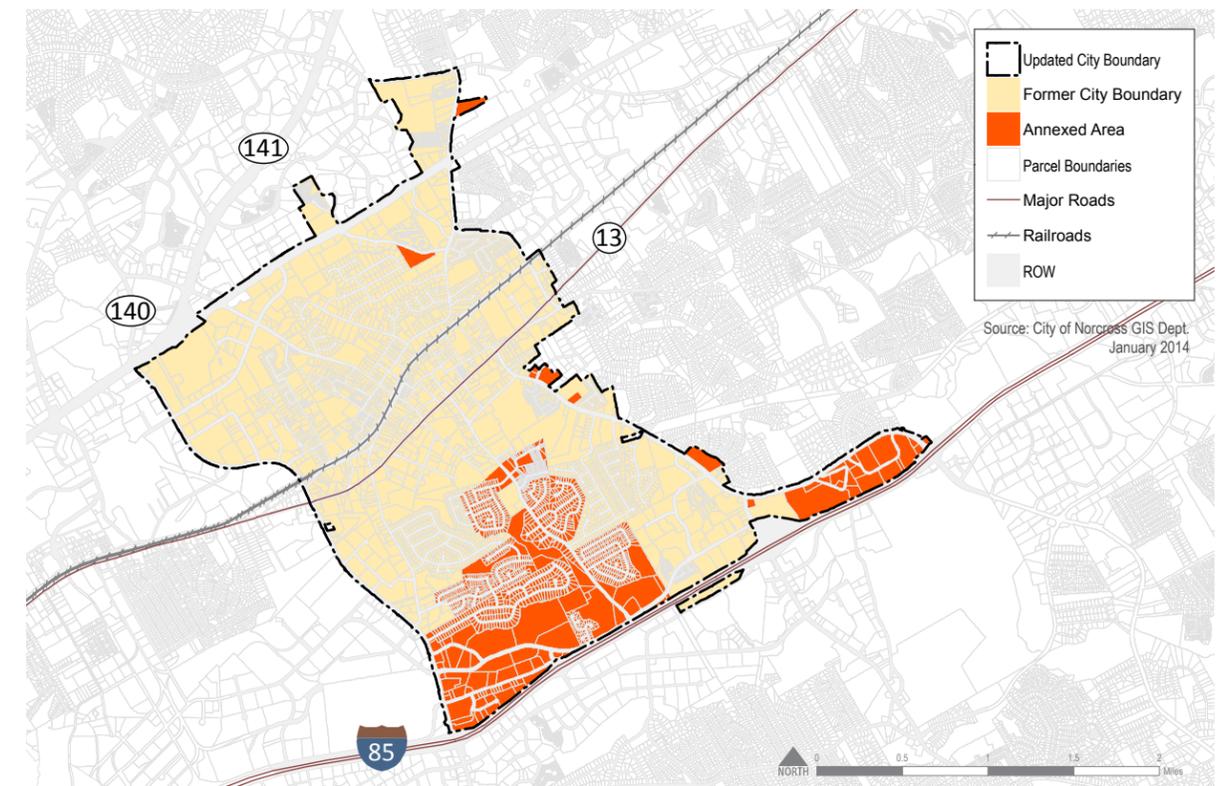


FIGURE 1-2: Annexation Map

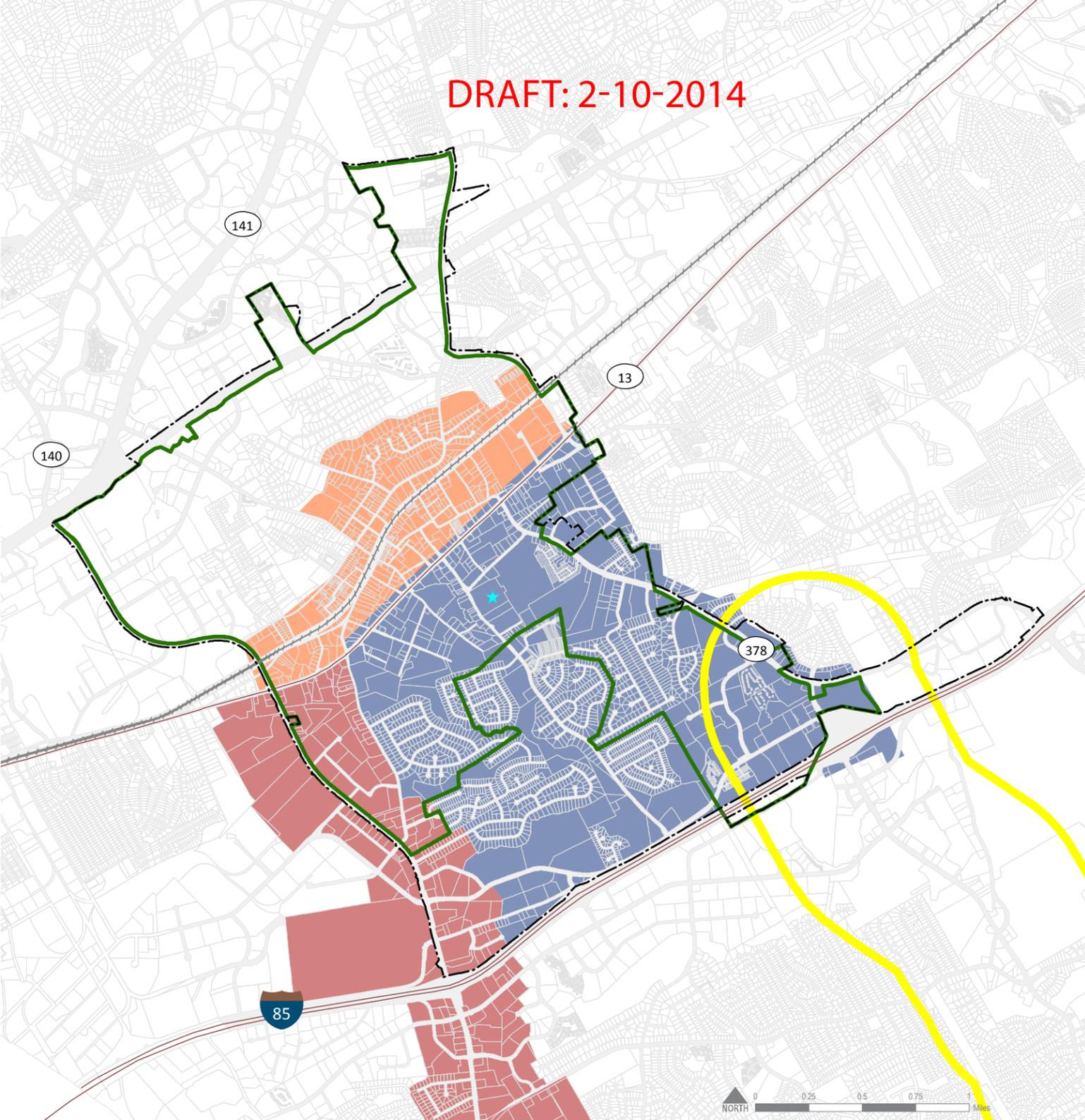


FIGURE 1-3: Previous Studies Map

Source: City of Norcross GIS Dept. January 2014

- ★ Summerour Middle School Safe Routes to School Travel Plan (2012)
- ▭ Parks Master Plan (2011)
- ▭ Indian Trail LCI (2007)
- ▭ Town Center LCI (2012)
- ▭ Norcross Activity Center LCI (2008)
- ▭ Jimmy Carter Blvd Corridor Study (2007)
- ▭ City Boundary
- ▭ Parcel Boundaries
- ▭ Major Roads
- ▭ Railroads
- ▭ ROW

Figure 1-3, Previous Studies Map, shows the boundaries of each of studies completed since the adoption of the last Comprehensive Plan, with the exception of the City of Norcross Parks Master Plan that covered the boundaries of the City before the 2011 Annexation.

The public outreach effort launched for this plan update included two public hearings, three community workshops, and an Open House. Announcements and notifications of these meetings were included on the City website, local newspapers, and flyers printed in both English and Spanish. In addition, an online community survey was posted providing those who could not make the public meetings an opportunity to have their ideas recorded and heard.

To help direct the formulation of the plan update, a Steering Committee was formed comprised of 29 members. These members represented a cross-section of the community including elected officials, local business interests, key staff, and residents.

The goals of the Steering Committee were to:¹

1. Seek agreement on key issues
2. Establish common vision for the future
3. Decide actions needed to achieve that vision
4. Set Priorities for continued planning efforts

1. A record of Steering Committee meetings can be found in the Appendix