



CELEBRATING 150 YEARS!

NEWSLETTER • JANUARY 2021

Happy New Year, Norcross!

After a couple months settling in, getting to know our team and those of our residents I've had the pleasure to meet, I wanted to take advantage of this opportunity to say hello and introduce my plans as City Manager for the city going forward.

It is unfortunate that a year in which our city celebrated its 150th birthday is one that will be remembered for fear, economic hardship and loss. Even weather presented challenges here that were unique.

Tough times present both challenges and opportunities. Frequent community events that have historically brought Norcross together have been replaced by virtual meetings and events. We had the opportunity to show our support for local merchants who give Norcross much of its downtown vitality. Please continue to show support for local merchants.

We look forward to 2021 being a year that offers hope, recovery and opportunity—including the opportunity to belatedly celebrate our birthday, in person, in Norcross style.

Despite the pandemic, we have developments underway that will grow our community and take advantage of the walkability. We have seen a library literally come out of the ground that will add to that sense of community and enhance how we use Lillian Webb Park.

We have a Buford Highway Master Plan in the works, and the team is currently taking your feedback and ideas from the public

input forums and preparing to enter the next phase of the planning process.

A Norcross Development Authority has been created that, along with our Downtown Development Authority, will leverage our ability to develop and redevelop on a citywide basis. While we value the city's heritage and historic charm, economic development remains critical to the sustainability of a city.

While I am new to Norcross, I have spent the past 35 years in local government service. Our role in city government is to serve the residents and businesses that call this home—and while I may direct day-to-day operations, policy direction flows from Mayor Newton and our City Council. That is how your values and concerns become part of city staff's operational plans.

Some of my self-assigned focus for this next year is to address some of the less visible aspects of city government: Assessing how to best prioritize infrastructure maintenance—our roads and stormwater system in particular; Identifying opportunities for greater efficiency in how we operate as your city government; and Assessing our financial future to ensure we address not only our immediate needs but our long-term needs as well.

From a more visible aspect, I am looking at how we can increase the community's insight into our finances. I think it



important that we take steps to make it easier for all of you to see how your taxes and fees are used.

We are about to embark on a great year in Norcross. Should you have any questions, ideas or items you wish to discuss, please don't hesitate to contact me, or—when we're not in the midst of a pandemic—just pop into City Hall for a quick hello! That goes for all our staff; we have a great team, and I encourage you to reach out to a department if you have any questions or concerns that would fall into their wheelhouse. (I'm always happy to help, but they really are the experts that get things done!) Contact information for all department heads, myself included, is available on our website.

I look forward to meeting each and every one of you during my tenure with the city. Until then, enjoy the new year!

Ever yours,
Eric Johnson

TREE TALK FALL/WINTER TREE TIPS

Fall and winter are special times for trees. The vibrant colors of fall along with cooler weather, pumpkins, festivals and holidays remind us of earlier times and home.

Some of our most colorful trees include maples, black gum, poplar, ginkgo, hickory and dogwood. The color change is caused by the loss of chlorophyll in the leaves as the cool weather slows growth and the trees enter their winter dormant period.

Now through early March is the best time to plant new trees. These young plants will have several months to set roots and acclimate to their new home before the hot, possibly dry months of summer. The survival rate of newly planted trees increases when planted this time of year. If you have mostly older, larger trees on your property, you might want to consider adding a few young trees. This gives you trees for the future as well as providing a mixed forest type for birds and other wildlife. A mix of tree sizes and species is recommended; diversity is the key.

This is also the best time of year for pruning trees. As trees enter dormancy, cutting limbs now through early March puts less stress on trees. Birds are not nesting right now either, so there is less chance of harming wildlife. In many cases, removal of limbs

is an alternative to complete removal of a tree, costing less and allowing you to keep the benefits of the tree. Speak with a Certified Arborist to determine the best approach to providing a safe environment for you and your family while retaining beneficial trees and other vegetation.

Keep a small portion of your yard natural for wildlife. Leaves and wood mulch, even in an area as small as 10 feet by 10 feet will provide cover for ground-nesting bees, fireflies and other beneficial insects. You can find more information at bringingnaturehome.net and at georgiaaudubon.org/wildlife-sanctuary-program.html.

“Today, we can see the beginning of a new way of thinking about the world—as sets of relationships rather than separated objects... We tend to think of a tree as the brown and green bit sticking up above the ground. Even if you include the roots, you are excluding most of the tree. The air that moves around it, the water that moves through it, the sunlight that animates it, the earth that supports it are all integral parts of the tree. What about the insects that fertilize it, the fungi that help it draw in nutrients, and all the rest of the life involved with that tree? Is the visible solidity the only ‘real’ part, or does it exist as process, relationship, connection as well? We know the answer very well.” —David Suzuki in “The Sacred Balance”

NORCROSS COMMUNITY MARKET SURVEY

Thank you for supporting Norcross Community Market during this most unusual year full of changes! In an effort to plan an even better local farmers market for 2021, please help the NCM team determine what aspects of the market should be continued, and what you'd like to see added, by completing a short survey.

If you signed up for the online

farmers market and never ordered, or only ordered 1 time, use this link: bit.ly/37Hm8bi

If you ordered from the online farmers market 2 or more times, use this link: bit.ly/3IY1k4m

If you are new to Norcross Community Market and/or their online farmers market, use this link: bit.ly/37Hmi2o

Your input is valued and will be helpful as we continue to create community around food. Volunteers, potential vendors, sponsors, and donors can contact norcrosscommunitymarket@gmail.com to learn how to become active participants in bringing farm, food and friends together.



SACRED THREADS ART EXHIBIT HERE THROUGH JANUARY 8 AT THE RECTORY

Themes of these artistic quilts provide thought-provoking insights, encouragement, inspiration and healing responses to grief and human hardships. This interactive quilt exhibit features recordings of the artists explaining their work. The Sacred Threads traveling exhibition has attracted a wide array of visitors across the nation and has proven appropriate for all ages. Following the opening reception, the exhibit will be available through January 8th by calling 678-421-2048 (or 2049/2025) for admittance. Social distancing is in place; masks are required.

*Learn more at
sacredthreadsquilts.com.*



CARRIAGE RIDES FEBRUARY 13TH DOWNTOWN NORCROSS



JOIN OUR TEAM

Looking for a way to better impact your city? Come work for us! Keep an eye on our website for all job opportunities; we have many immediate positions available.

norcrossga.net/Jobs.aspx

WELCOME TO THE TEAM

We are excited to welcome Arlene Beckles to Norcross' City Council! She will be sworn in on January 4th. A lot lies ahead for 2021, so stay tuned for updates and don't forget the public is always welcome to attend council meetings, held every first and third Monday at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom and Facebook Live.



SUSTAINABILITY



TIP OF THE MONTH

Tips to Help You Go Green in 2021!

Content courtesy of NeighborWorks of Western Vermont

Recycle:

Recycling is a simple act that can remove hundreds of pounds of waste deposited in landfills each year. You can recycle things like crayons, lightbulbs and even wine corks!

Compost:

Composting is also simple! Pick a spot where you can compost biodegradable foods or materials. Turning food waste (eggshells, coffee grounds, fruit/vegetable ends) into fertilizer is a great way to make sure what you buy or eat gets used completely.

Plant a Garden or Trees:

Gardening and planting trees can help in several ways. Gardening cuts down on the amount of food you need to purchase at stores and planting

trees helps regulate the Earth's temperature while providing habitat to different species.

Get a Reusable Water Bottle:

Over 50 billion water bottles are used in the United States alone each year. Most of these bottles are not recycled when people are done and end up in landfills and even in the ocean.

Go Outside:

Enjoy the Earth! Go for a hike, run, walk or go to a park. You can even just sit outside!

Be a Better Grocery Shopper:

Billions of plastic bags are used in the United States as well as all over the world. Use reusable bags, paper bags or reusable containers. Besides bags, try getting local fruits, vegetables or even meats!

Go Online:

Change your paper bills to online billing. You'll not only be saving trees and the fuel it takes to deliver your bills, but you will also be eliminating excess paper in your home.