PLANNING FOR MULTICULTURALISM:
A COMPARISON OF APPROACHES IN TWO METRO-ATLANTA CITIES

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PLANNING FOR MULTICULTURALISM:
A COMPARISON OF APPROACHES IN TWO METRO-ATLANTA CITIES

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SUMMARY

Over the past two decades, the Atlanta metropolitan region has seen a large

increase in its immigrant population, particularly in the city's northern suburbs situated in

Gwinnett County around the famously multi-ethnic Buford Highway corridor. The

suburbs of Norcross and Duluth have experienced a particularly large influx of

immigrants from Asia and Central and South America. Once predominantly white

bedroom communities, the cities' racial and ethnic make-up are now heavily defined by

their Asian and Hispanic populations. Many residents and business owners are foreign-

born or second-generation immigrants, and the number is growing. Despite this

significant demographic shift, little attention has been paid to how multiculturalism fits

into the planning process and how they are affected by local planning procedures and

priorities. The cultural and linguistic divides found in Atlanta's continuously-

diversifying social landscape remain largely unexplored and unaddressed in conventional

planning practices.

This research looks at demographic data and planning initiatives in Gwinnett

County, and the cities of Duluth and Norcross in particular, to determine the extent that

Asian and Hispanic populations are represented and involved in the planning process. An

examination of public participation and community involvement in issues relating to land

use, housing, and transportation is used to assess the degree of inclusion in planning and

measure the extent to which increased cultural diversity is addressed in the region and in

the two cities. I will argue that if the Asian and Hispanic populations are not engaged in

planning processes and if their needs are not accounted for in city plans, there could be a

resulting negative impact on those populations and the city in which they live.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since its founding, the United States has been home to an ever-changing array of national groups, races, and ethnicities. As a result, the United States contains what it's perhaps the most multicultural population in the world. The county can be seen as a melting pot of cultures, races, and ethnicities, and its rich cultural and social landscape is defined by its diversity. Globalization and changing immigration policies have been significant contributing factors to the ethnic changes many regions of the country. Over the past few decades, Atlanta Metropolitan Region, like other areas of the country, has experienced a surge in the growth of its immigrant population. This demographic shift has boosted the city's cultural diversity. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the city's northern suburbs where the majority of new residents from Asian and Central and South America choose to reside. Traditionally white bedroom communities, cities such as Duluth and Norcross have gradually become more cultural diverse as the widening spectrum of Hispanic and Asian immigrants have reinforced the growth of ethnic communities. The number of cultures represented in the urban fabric of the city is growing, resulting in an increasingly multicultural community.

Despite the country's history of cultural diversity and the significant demographic shifts that have occurred not only in Atlanta, by in cities around the country, the study of how multiculturalism incorporated into city planning has not received much attention in the United States. The social, cultural, and linguistic divides that separate conventional spatial planning practices from culturally diverse populations remains largely unexplored.

By looking at methods of planning for multiculturalism and examining how those methods are utilized in cities, planners can better understand how best to address multiculturalism in a way to serves all groups in the city and benefits the city's comprehensive plans, goals, and priorities.

This research paper endeavors to better understand how multiculturalism can be incorporated into planning practice. First, a review of planning literature will examine planning theories, topics related to multiculturalism, and case studies to understand successful methods of planning and how these methods can be applied to planning for multiculturalism. The paper will then describe the research design used, including the data collection process and methods of analysis. An overview of Gwinnett County will establish the physical setting in which the research is conducted. Gwinnett County's demographics and planning practices and priorities are explored to provide background information on the area of analysis. The two case studies highlighted in the paper, the cities of Duluth and Norcross, are then introduced. A chapter is dedicated to each city to describe their history, demographic makeup, current planning practices and priorities, and methods of planning for multiculturalism. In the following chapter, key findings will be evaluated to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the cities' methods of planning. Recommendations are given for public officials and planning practitioners and opportunities for future research are suggested. The paper ends with concluding remarks on the results of the research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to understand what multiculturalism is and how it fits into city planning, this literature review highlights key findings from planning literature and works from related fields. First, theories of planning are identified and analyzed in order to determine the methods of planning that would be best suited for application in multicultural planning. Following the review of planning theories, key findings on the roles of diversity, social inclusion, and justice in planning are applied to planning for multiculturalism. The meaning of multiculturalism, and why it matters in planning, is then examined. Spatial representations of multiculturalism are briefly explored to determine ways in which cultures and ethnicity are physically represented in space. Examples of how multiculturalism has been addressed American planning practices and findings from case studies on multicultural planning in other countries are examined. The literature review concludes with suggestions of planning methods that can be used in planning for multiculturalism.

An Analysis of Planning Theories

Traditionally, the planning profession was equated with state-centered planning managed by professional planners and other technical experts. The Rational Comprehensive Model was the first recognized theatrical model for modern planning. Based on positivist, objective planning, the model focuses on rationality in decision making and policy. Proponents of the model attempt to solve problems in the public

domain through scientific, formulaic evaluation (Friedman, 1987). Although the rational

comprehensive model had many followers in the early to mid-20th century, such as

American urbanist and founder of the New York Housing Authority, Charles Abrams, it

drew increasing criticism as the planning practice grew. Its focus on the technical aspects

of land use and development and neglect of personal values and social justice issues were

viewed by public interest groups as a means to legitimatize the status quo and

institutionalize unequal conditions.

Since the 1960's, the planning profession has broadened to include new theories

of planning, such as the advocacy, communicative, radical, and social-learning models.

These models move away from the rational-comprehensive model of planning to

incorporate different theoretical models based on decentralized planning. Beard et al.

(2008, p. 1) define decentralization as the "devolution of governmental responsibilities

from strong central governments to localities." The process of decentralization disperses

the decision-making process among the people and relies on lateral relationships, rather

than a hierarchy of authority. In decentralized planning, the planner's role is broadened

beyond technical expert to activist, facilitator, and manager (Beard et al., 2008).

Decentralized planning can positively affect a community or region in ways not possible

through traditional rational planning. Some examples of the potential beneficial

outcomes of decentralization are more democratic participation, government transparency

and accountability, leading to more responsive governance, increased efficiency

delivering public goods and services, and increased ability to identify and satisfy the

needs of marginalized populations. Decentralization can encourage a more inclusive

decision-making process among disenfranchised populations, such as ethnic minorities

who are far-removed from the decision-making power of the state (Beard et al., 2008). However, local leaders need to demonstrate their capacity to meet the population's needs.

In the 1960s, Paul Davidoff, a planning theorist who worked as an advocate for minority and lower-income communities, founded to the advocacy planning model as an alternative to rationalistic planning (Davidoff, 1965). In advocacy planning, the planners use their technical skills and experience to provide professional services to disadvantaged populations and foster community organization and togetherness (Sandercock, 1998, p. 97). Although this model was a step up from the rational-comprehensive model, advocacy planning models still relied heavily on the expertise of planners. Advocacy planning was soon criticized for assuming that planners, who were mainly white, middle class males, could serve as the voice of the poor and do so without bias. The equity planning model sought to alleviate this issue by redistributing power and resources from the elite class to the working poor, but the model retained the previously held belief that planners should remain the key decision makers in the planning process.

Social learning and communicative action models reflected the changing perception that the planning process was no longer viewed as a one-way street, but a continuous transitive relationship between the planner and community where ideas were continuously reflected upon and reassessed. The social learning theory, derived from the work of psychologist Albert Bandura, proposed that acquiring knowledge through "learning by doing," or observational learning, can best address the needs of multiple parties with competing values and interests (Thomas, 2008). The decision-making process came to be seen as more important than the decision itself, but despite the inclusivity of the theory, the role of the planner as central decision maker remained an

integral part of the process (Sandercock, 1998, p. 93). Additionally, social equity was viewed as philanthropic act, rather than a collaborative effort between planners and citizens, and the disadvantages were still provided minimal influence in any dialogue or collaboration that might occur (Thomas, 2008).

Radical planning practices attempted to correct systematic inequalities in the distribution of power, opportunity, and resources. From the 1960s to 1980s, class analysis of urban inequalities was the dominant radical critique, though it classified underrepresented populations as one unit. The model's adherents failed to grasp that the oppressed were not only the poor, but also women, people of color, homosexuals, and immigrants. Radical planners attempted to work out inequalities and social justice issues though urban social movements and community-based organizations. In his work, noted planning scholar John Friedman (1987) promoted a radical planning model based on decentralized, community-based planning. Bottom-up programs engaged the communities and helped gain their trust, something that was lacking in previous approaches. A far cry from rational planning, planners utilized contextual knowledge and interpersonal relationships when advising and managing group processes (Sandercock, 1998, p. 97).

All of these theories are useful within certain contexts and purposes, and most planners agree that there can never be one, all-inclusive theory that works for all instances. Even planners who aspire to plan for a specific purpose, such as social justice, do not agree on one correct theory to use to attain that goal. While advocacy and equity planning intend to plan for the underprivileged and underrepresented, some planners such as June Thomas (2008) find that these methods do not give enough consideration to the

social structures that underlie uneven distribution (Thomas, 2008). Others, such as

Friedman, uphold the merit of a radical model that focuses on theories of power, social

transformation, interpersonal relations, and group dynamics, in order to understand how

to identify and fight for the "public interest" amid social polarization and diverse cultures

(Sandercock, 1998). Still others, like urban scholar John Bollens, look towards methods

for planning policy-based models that support social mobilization and empowerment,

such as social learning and the advocacy model (Bollens, 2000, p. 14). But despite these

diverging viewpoints, most planners are in agreement that the rational-comprehensive

model is too methodical and cannot not adequate address the complicated problems,

contradictory viewpoints, and changing requirements that often occur in city planning.

Diversity, Social Inclusion, and Justice

As early as the 1960s, city planners and activists such as Jane Jacobs (1961) have

encouraged diversity in urban landscapes and promoted diversity as a key aspect of urban

policy. Diversity can induce economic activity and stimulate growth by attracting human

capital and encouraging innovation (Jacobs, 1961; Florida, 2002). Cities that boast

diversity in many ways hold a competitive advantage because diverse environments may

attract new business and boost production. However, social inclusion is also an integral

goal of diversity. Leonie Sandercock (1997) and Susan Feinstein (2005) point out that

diversity is closely tied to the promotion of social justice. Urban policy that is built on

the values of diversity can benefit social aspects by ensuring diverse groups are granted

equal rights and access to city space (Sandercock, 1997; Fainstein, 2005).

Some planners contend that to simply plan for diversity is not enough. Fainstein argues that the goal of city planning should not merely be to promote diversity, but to create a just city (Fainstein, 2005). Justice in planning has the dual purposes of both process and product, and a "just city" that values participation in decision making by the powerless and equity of outcomes. Apart from understanding the needs of the minority populations, planners need to recognize and analyze the behavior, actions, and goals of the people and organizations in power, in order to better understand what leads to certain outcomes (Thomas, 2008). Social diversity in itself does not necessarily contribute to equity and a broadly satisfying public realm. The goal of a just city requires a combination of equity, diversity, growth, and sustainability. Similarly, Sandercock states that diversity is part of the goal in urban, but community involvement and empowerment are also essential elements in city planning (Sandercock, 1998). She defines a just city as one in which people are treated with equal respect (Thomas, 2008).

Henri Lefebvre (1992), whose philosophical writings addressed the social production of space and people's "right to the city," proclaimed that acts of contestation and political action revolve around the meaning and appropriation of place and space. Places where everyday life occurs are an elemental source of social transformation and empowerment. Every empowering political strategy involves a spatial strategy, because the struggle is not just in a space, but for a space (Lefebvre, 1992). Edward Soja (1996) expounds upon this concept with the idea of "thirdspace," the lived, interstitial space that is simultaneously concrete and abstract. He proposes that cities are continuously evolving and expanding based on social and cultural factors, and city spaces can be used as a means to give rise to justice and empowerment. Spatial exclusivity is often built on

pre-existing unequal power to reinforce the dominant social group; therefore, the separation of the poor and wealthy into separate insulated enclaves is commonplace in most urban areas (Soja, 1996). Merrifield and Swyngedouw (1997) refer to manifestation of social control as the urbanization of injustice. Disempowered citizens face exploitation by corporate capital, domination and exclusion by state bureaucracies, and oppression by dominant social and cultural forces, resulting in the poor being driven into less desirable parts of the city, while the wealthy withdraw to gated communities (Merrifield and Swyngedouw, 1997, p. 1-13).

Multiculturalism in Planning

Planning for multiculturalism has gained less attention from urban theorists than planning for diversity, and though the two concepts are similar, they are based on two separate ideals. Diversity may refer to class, race, ethnicity, and other socio-economic variables, whereas multiculturalism relates specifically communities containing multiple ethnicities and cultures. Sandercock describes multiculturalism as the acknowledgement of the value of socio-cultural differences, recognition of and respect for all cultural groups in a society, and enabling their continued contribution within an inclusive cultural context which empowers all within the society (Sandercock, 1998). Cultural diversity is tied to ethnicity, which includes tribal, national, regional, and language groups, as well as other variations that can be difficult to differentiate (Thomas, 2008). In some discussions on diversity, race can be incorporated into the larger concept of multiculturalism, and many issues related to ethnicity and race are linked to social and economic factors. Integration into a society and economy can be a crucial component of promoting equality.

However, integration into the dominant culture may not necessarily reduce inequalities or induce cohesion. Development projects may not be evenly distributed between areas of high and low socio-economic status, or between the inner city and outer city. A lack of concern for minority groups and their ability to influence land control can negatively impact the sense of community felt by those groups (Bollens, 2005).

Neighborhood segregation is a common characteristic of cities, particularly in areas with a high ratio of ethnic minority populations. Ethnic groups come together in cities for two main reasons. First, spatial occupation is determined by intergroup competition for urban space. Second, groups may b4 compelled to situate together due to economic interdependencies inherent in urban living (Bollens, 2000). Ethnic separation can lead to a sense of security within a community. Segregated neighborhoods can result from feelings of security and self-sufficiency within the immediate community. Neighborhood segregation can promote community cohesion within micro-communities, as being around like-minded people can cultivate an attachment to the location. Ethnic neighborhoods can be perceived as a positive influence or solidifying the sense of communal identity (Griswold del Castillo and de Leon, 1996). The Latino neighborhood, referred to traditionally as the "barrio," serves as a place in which Latinos can to build social networks and stability in a community of people they can relate to and trust (Irazabal and Farhat, 2008, p. 209)

Local solidarity can also deter inclusion in greater community. Feelings of self-sufficiency within the immediate area can result in segregated population clusters and result in cultural territoriality that can constrict and divide urban spaces and isolate minority populations (Bollens, 2000).   A key challenge in multicultural communities is

to foster connectedness while recognizing difference. Community is built when people feel a sense of identity, "home," and belonging (Sandercock, 2005).   Areas with high migration rates and unstable populations are more likely to exhibit low social and civil cohesion and a lessened sense of community (Gaffikin and Morrissey, 2010). Community cohesion, the connection between micro-communities or neighborhoods and their integration into the greater community, is an integral part of community building. Urban policy that focuses on community building, rather than city building, promotes public services, economic development, and political action within a community can strengthen groups bonds with the greater community (Sandercock, 2005).

Traditional planning practices that discount alternative planning theories in favor of rationalistic planning can inhibit the promotion of a multicultural city. Planning for multi-cultural populations would perhaps best be approached by using people-centered, ground-up, community-based planning and empowerment. In order to achieve this, a multicultural literacy must be developed to access alternative means of knowledge. Planners must acknowledge there are multiple publics in public interest and community (Sandercock, 1998). The needs of minority communities can be overlooked by the host community, and this civil deprivation could damage community cohesion and induce urban inequality (Gaffikin and Morrissey, 2011).

Physical and Spatial Representations of Multiculturalism

The rights and entitlements of ethnic populations can be observed through planning processes, policies, and urban design.   Issues surrounding planning for diversity are also prevalent in the built environment. Changes in allowable land uses include

adjusting residential space requirements so that they better fit the preferences of different cultures, such as Spanish courtyard design. In commercial districts, the design areas for shopping and business depend on the culture represented. Generally, the styles and designs of streetscapes privilege the values of the dominant culture, and conservation policies aimed at protecting heritage can be inflexible in the face of changing cultural needs. The presence of different cultures is sometimes acknowledged through the use of ethnic symbols in parks and walkways, but these are usually only visual representations of culture. Superficial architectural design elements, such as Chinese arches marking the entrance to Chinatown in New York and San Francisco, symbolize the presence of a different culture, but do not address the everyday needs of the ethnic groups the design elements represent. Parks, walkways, and other public spaces are not generally designed for the daily and recreational habits of diverse cultures, although decorative architectural elements provide the image of a culturally-supportive space. A cultural style is often romanticized and incorporated into the architectural design of residential areas. It is not unusual for a suburban neighborhood to have Spanish-mission style houses and names such as "the Ponderosa" (Irazabal and Farhat, 2008).

Multiculturalism is present in the commercial structure of cities in the form of ethnic business enclaves formed through a combination of economic opportunity and ethnic solidarity. Ethnic neighborhoods and enclaves are the dominant physical manifestations of multiculturalism and give rise to the issue of where the balance should lie between segregation and integration (Qadeer, 1997, p. 482). Immigrant businesses are usually successful not only among their own ethnic group, but in mainstream culture. In ethnic business enclaves, Mohammad Qadeer (1997) found that planning has been

responsive to ethnically diverse business areas, but the response has been restrained by the planning commission's hesitance to move away from uniformity. Like residential neighborhoods, ethnic commercial centers are not planned for ethic populations, but incremental changes are made as deemed necessary to accommodate the needs of the areas (Qadeer, 1997). There are not guidelines for built forms that are both diverse to accommodate various group needs and harmonious to create a sense of communal cohesion.

Pader (1993) argues that the manner in which people use their space is influenced by their culture. The needs of occupants in residential and commercial areas depend largely on their social structure, and social and cultural norms influence building structure and design. Domestic spaces are intertwined with larger societal principles and practices. Mexican values center on familism, orientation toward the family, in contrast with typically American values of individualism and independence. Family and group-centric values are also predominant in other Hispanic cultures and the role of the family is also important in the identification of one's ethnic self in Asian cultures. These values are observed in domestic spatial surroundings and the daily negation of space in households (Pader, 1993). American homes tend to be organized around individualism and privacy, with distinct areas designated for family and guest, as well as for adults and children, while Mexican households embody a communal design with shared spaces at the center.

Pader's research on domestic spatiality in Mexican Americans suggested that housing can be used as a means of supporting inequality and cultural discrimination. Housing can be used as an avenue through with to instigate discrimination and inequality

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by embodying cultural superiority and prejudice in favor of the dominant culture. Mexican homes are less rigidly zoned than American ones, with rooms flowing into each other without doors and hallways. The sharing of rooms, including shared sleeping space, if a common practice in many Hispanic and Asian cultures but not in American homes. In the 1940s, around the time that familial spatial segregation was becoming the cultural norm in American households, the US government began legislating for public housing design that eliminated the practice of bedroom sharing. This regulation of domestic space subtly promotes of the values of the dominant culture while negating those of the ethnic minority. American home design also leaves out important elements of traditional Mexican homes, such as the outside patio, where much of the family socializing occurs, and the *zuguan*, it's inside equivalent. Though immigrants adapt to their surroundings and make do with the available domestic space, they are inevitably encouraged to conform to the dominant culture's material cultural and pressured into assimilation, rather than allowed the option of creating and using their preferred domestic space (Pader, 1993).

Multicultural Planning in the United States

Since the colonial period, the United States has been home to an array of distinct national groups, races, and ethnicities. From the mid-nineteenth century, the county has experienced several large influxes in immigrants, first from Europe and most recently from Asia and Latin America. Immigrant groups were often subject to prejudicial treatment by the ethnic majority. Discrimination occurred in the form of selectively stringent enforcement of zoning, building, and housing codes that targeted minorities and

effectively forced them into enclaves within the city. Cities came to be seen as dirty, undesirable places and fear over increasing minority populations resulted in much of the white majority migrating out of the city to more homogeneous suburban havens. In the mid-20th century, cities carried out massive urban renewal projects to tackle urban blight, and in many cases forcibly relocated poor minority residents. Low-income communities, typically occupied by racial and ethnic minorities, were prone to be bounded by freeways and isolated by urban renewal projects. Some projects resulted in the demolition of entire neighborhoods, such as Boston's Government Center redevelopment which destroyed much of the city's historic west end.

The rise of the automobile allowed residents to move further away from city centers, and housing affordability and job accessibility prompted new immigrants to move into inner suburbs previously occupied by white middle class households. Ethnic communities were established to serve as gateway communities for migrants who were new to the country, due to language and economic barriers, had difficulty establishing themselves in the city. The general neglect of minority group interests fostered a tradition of self-help leading to the development of local instructions that helped underserved populations persevere in their social and economic struggles. Activism and employment groups in the pursuit of economic justice further helped to reduce discrimination (Irazabal and Farhat, 2008).

Ethnic pride experienced resurgence in the 1960s and 1970s, when coordinated nationwide efforts and social movements contributed to the reinvigoration of communal pride and reclamation of rights. Communities celebrate of spatial or cultural rights in the midst of pressure to succumb to assimilation through changes in the built environment

and the social use of private and public space for community activities and celebrations. Ethnic groups instituted symbolic power though claiming and celebrating their heritage in their communities, and protested discrimination and segregation in their communities, school, and jobs. In the 1960's, federal legislative initiatives and programs such as Medicaid and Medicare, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and food stamp and youth employment programs delegitimized discrimination and promoted social support of the underprivileged. Federal desegregation efforts and legal organizations advanced civil rights, while local organizations, churches, and other institutions also contributed to social development by supporting social development through language classes and skill training. Grassroots and non-profits agencies engaged in economic activism flourished (Irazabal and Farhat, 2008).

The country is divided on the issue of how the country should welcome immigrants. Many believe that successful immigrant advancement can occur and immigrants can become settled, successful citizens, but there is still widespread concern about how immigration will affect the nature of the nation and local communities (Myers, 2007). People can fear difference and worry that diversity may affect their identity, belonging, and freedom. In hard times, such as an economic recession, those fears may become more pronounced. Insecurities over income and increased competition for jobs moved the issue of immigration to the forefront of national debate.

In his book *Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the US City*, Mike Davis (2000) chronicles the so-called "Latino boom" that occurred in American cities in the late 20th century. In six of the ten largest US cities, Latinos now outnumber blacks and in three of those cities Latinos outnumber whites. He credits the Latino boom with helping to keep

city sizes stable despite white flight and recent black out-migration towards the suburbs. In some areas, immigrants are replacing the aging "baby boomer" population in the workplace, which fuels the perception that these outsiders are encroaching on people's jobs and resources, and can even induce fears that this could signal the end of the American way of life (Myers, 2007). Evidence suggests that this process poses no economic challenges to the current demographic, since Latinos largely compensate for white flight and do not displace the native-born (Davis, 2000; Irazabal and Farhat, 2008). However, a lack of understanding continues to make people fearful about how immigration could negatively affect the economic and social state of the county.

International Case Studies in Multicultural Planning

Though the United States does not have a formal strategy for multicultural planning, similar countries with large immigrant populations, such as Australia and Canada, have worked to embrace their diversity and build a dynamic, heterogeneous identity. In his research, Qadeer addresses how multiculturalism has affected planning policies and strategies in Canada, an "acknowledged multicultural society" that is committed to sustaining the cultural heritage of minorities (Qadeer, 1997, p. 481). The Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988 acknowledges multiculturalism as a public philosophy and grants groups the right to practice and preserve their heritage. It also provides individual and community equality of rights and freedoms. The Canadian multicultural philosophy of maintaining cultural differences promotes diversity rather than the assimilation of cultures. Therefore, planning must equitably accommodate these groups' needs in order to successfully achieve a multicultural society.

A study conducted by Qadeer (1997) on Canadian cities found that planning and design guidelines inhibited ethnic communities from incorporating distinctive design elements into their neighborhoods. Even large immigrant communities that represent the majority in their communities have been greatly restricted in their use of space by design policies. Qadeer's study of multiculturalism in Canada reveals that the country has responded to pressures to diversify its urban forms through an incremental planning process that addresses small-scale design concerns. If a development project meets opposition, specific zoning and site plan issues are dealt with as they arise, in order to promote mutual adjustment to the space for both the ethnic and majority communities (Qadeer, 1997). Shahabad Faryadi (2008) conducts a similar study, but focuses his attention on the Iranian community in Toronto, which is one of the city's smallest cultural communities. Like Qadeer, he finds an absence of urban policies that are sensitive to cultural practices, resulting in urban form does not reflect the cultural values of the Iranian community. Due to the deficiency of cultural space, the Iranian community is made to feel less "at home" in the city than it would if the space was designed to suit their needs (Faryadi, 2008).

In 1997, Leonie Sandercock (2010a, 2010b) conducted research on three municipalities around Melbourne, Australia to explore the difference that cultural diversity makes to the landscape of planning theory and practice. In her study, she addresses how the current planning system has responded to cultural diversity, what cultural values are reflected in planning and urban design, and how has the planning system impacted cultural groups. She finds references to cultural diversity in policy documents, but cultural diversity is mainly depicted as being significant only insofar as it

contributes to business and development opportunities. Other policy documents place diversity in the context of planning for the needs of the community, but the term "community" is vaguely defined and suggests that community planning operates for the greatest good for the greatest number. In terms of urban design, state government policy recognizes the importance of designing for local cultural identity and enabling people to have an input in shaping their environment, but physical aspects of design are largely predetermined by planning professionals. Though the local government demonstrates its commitment to include different social groups in governance, planning policy ignores the relationship between cultural diversity and land use planning. The concept of cultural diversity is suggested, but specific implantation strategies are not proposed (Sandercock, 2010a).

Sandercock's study reveals a failure to plan for cultural diversity in commercial and religious space. One of the issues she found regarding the use of retail space involved the placement of food displays outside of stores. The city council restricted the amount of space to allow to street display in order to maintain a specific width for foot traffic, but complaints about the perceived health threat of displaying food outside prompted the council to consider banning outdoor displays outright. While these may be legitimate concerns, residents could be marking a deeper concern for the changing face of the neighborhood. Similarly, zoning in Australia and the United States has been used in some neighborhoods to prohibit houses from being used as places of worship, or to only allow them for use as places of worship if there are no social or recreational activities associated with it. Though these restrictions do not target any specific religious denomination, they are still discriminatory against cultures where religious practices are

indivisible from social and community activity, such as Buddhist and Muslim practices. There is a growing need for making the use of space more democratic and culturally inclusive. Because ethnic groups use space in different ways, Sandercock suggests the best way to incorporate this difference into urban design is through a participatory design approach. This can be accomplished by incorporating collaborative planning and alternative dispute resolution into the local planning process as part of the greater goal of establishing a multicultural vision for the city (Sandercock, 2010b).

Methods of Responding to Multiculturalism

The rational-comprehensive model of planning, with its reliance on pragmatic, process-oriented approaches focused on the technical aspects of land use and development, is not a valid method to use when planning for multiculturalism. Traditional planning attempts to identify and plan for the public interest, but this is not possible when there are multiple publics with divergent interests. Additionally, since traditional planning operates on a centralized planning system, it legitimizes the status quo and institutionalizes unequal conditions for those who are not in positions of power, while avoiding discussions that concern values and social justice (Bollens, 2005). Mohammad Qadeer (1997) argues that multiculturalism necessitates broadening the scope of pluralism in planning because ethnic minorities have different housing, neighborhood, and community needs than the majority population. A centralized planning model based on planning standards and criteria established by officials in power cannot expect to accommodate the non-English cultural community.

One issue regarding multiculturalism in planning is how to balance competing needs. Qadeer asserts that because place-centered approaches do not address the social needs of ethnic populations, a people-centered approach that promotes welfare and equity is required (Qadeer, 1997). Qadeer proposes that planners create guidelines for built forms that are both diverse to accommodate various group needs and harmonious to create a sense of communal cohesion (Qadeer, 1997, p. 484). Planning can also address multiculturalism as part of a larger framework of social justice and planning. Sandercock proposes to expand the framework of social justice to address difference in the city (Sandercock, 1998). Additionally, policy makers and planning practitioners can learn to address the social and ethnic differences and become more adept at working cross-culturally by institutionalizing anti-racism and diversity training.

Many researchers whose work focuses on community cohesion and social inclusion have found that the negative perceptions and deep-seated fears of what is different are one of the main reasons for hesitation to embrace multiculturalism. Similarly, immigrants and other foreigners sense this resistance and respond with a similar feeling of distrust. By promoting education and access to information among citizens, planners, and government officials, communities and cities would increase the level of understanding and awareness of issues involving multiculturalism and immigration (Sandercock, 1998; Myers, 2007). Planning is a continuous transitive relationship between the planner and community where ideas were continuously reflected upon and reassessed. Despite population changes, control of planning institutions remains with the business elites (Irazabal and Farhat, 2008). In order to understand the needs of the minority populations, planners need to recognize and analyze their behavior,

actions (Thomas, 2008). Political officials and planners are best able to respond to the needs of the people they are serving when they are able relate to them (Myers, 2007; Thomas, 2008).

City-wide Multicultural Planning Initiatives

In the 1980s and 1990s, Frankfurt, Germany actively constructed ways of living together by dealing with the emotional/symbolic as well as the material issues involved (Sandercock, 1998, p. 128). In 1989, the coalition government in Frankfurt established AMKA, the Municipal Department of Multicultural Affairs, to promote social integration of the foreign population, which at the time made up almost one third of the city (Sandercock, 1998, p. 139). Success was measured based on the reduction of violent acts against foreigners, increased participation of foreigners in public affairs, encouraged cultural activities, intercultural communication training, and increased public discussion on immigration. The overall objectives were to have a long-term response to foreigners that decreased fears, addressed issues in municipal bureaucracy, and promoted mutual learning and intercommunication. (Sandercock, 1998, p. 128-140).

Metropolitan regions in the United States have not untaken such a wide-encompassing effort; instead, specific urban issues are usually targeted and countered. For example, the Chicago metropolitan area has a Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities, an advocacy group that targets and challenges instances of discrimination in housing markets. Social issues are most commonly addressed at the community-level by grassroots organizations or local institutions, such as a community fire station in Birmingham that works alongside Asian and Afro-Caribbean groups on neighborhood regeneration and improvement projects. One notable exception is the city

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of Oak Park in Chicago's western suburb, which for the past fifty years has been a pioneer in promoting diversity. The mainly white, middle-class city initiated a policy in the 1960s at a time when white- light was occurring in surrounding cities in response to black urban expansion. Residents of Oak Park, rather than join to out migration chose to encourage inclusion and integration of different races into their community. To encourage diversity, the city has community-based organizations and social institutions that are supported by the city council to monitor and maintain diversity. The Oak Park Housing Center (OPHC), a non-profit institution, was a critical instrument employed by the city to manage residential change. The OPHC ensured that neighborhoods, residential blocks, and apartment buildings were not racially segregated, and city the hall was moved to the most diverse neighborhood to symbol the city's dedication to neighborhood diversity. The OPHC, with the support of the local city council, adopted and employed proactive integration policies that promoted diversity and equity. The city also started a diversity-integration outreach program incorporating 50 surrounding suburbs to continue promoting integration (Sandercock, 1998, p. 128).

American cities rarely target ethnic populations, particularly immigrants in their formal city plans. However, some cities have targeted ethnic, minority groups and turned them into a planning priority. City of Dayton, Ohio recently commissioned the report, "Welcome Dayton: Immigrant Friendly City," as an action plan to help the city reach its goal of becoming a nationally recognized "Immigrant Friendly City." The city's human relations council implemented community dialog on its diversifying population and found that the city has benefited from immigrants in a number of ways, resulting in their decision to intentionally welcome immigrants through an immigrant-centered city plan.

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The plan was developed by a task force under the human relations council that listened to the recommendations of over a hundred individuals from immigrant, public, and private groups throughout the city. The plan's focus on four areas: business and economic development; local government and the justice system; social and health services; community, culture, arts and education. The economic development portion of the plan proposes that a portion of the city, known as East Third Street, be intentionally developed to support immigrant business growth. The plan also promotes increased access to government services and increased involvement in policy making. Though the plan intends to be wide reaching and comprehensive, proposals involving housing, transportation, and urban design needs are not prevalent in the plan (Dayton, 2011).

Consensus Building

Judith Innes (1996) proposes a model of consensus building with stakeholders that improves on traditional comprehensive planning. She argues that consensus building, when properly designed, can produce decisions that approximate the public interest. On the whole, municipalities seldom use consensus building for comprehensive planning. State laws already mandate procedures for public involvement, with planning commissions and public hearings being that mostly commonly utilized means of public involvement. However, these involvement methods tend to be minimally inclusionary, with residents, businesses, and state and local agencies representing environmental or economic interests having little say in local decisions regarding policy, design, and land use. A lack of involvement can disenfranchise interested parties and make it hard to foster cooperation. When stakeholder groups are able to work in parallel with existing city processes and serve as advisors to the planning commission and city council, it can

be easier to accomplish planning goals. The planning process would become more issue-oriented and rooted in current tasks and problems, even while its goal is to develop general policies. Local consensus building could work more effectively if state, regions, and localities explicitly develop and coordinate their policies and priorities for allocation and regulatory decisions, with each taking into account the needs of others (Inness, 1996).

Advocacy Planning

San Francisco's Mission District, traditionally a gateway for Latino immigrants arriving in the Bay Area, has become a mobilized community that has seen substantial changes in urban, social, and cultural levels. The Mission suffered from urban decay in the 1950s, when white flight led to downward trends in public services and physical facilities. Community organizations mobilized to counter housing and facility dilapidation, as well as displacement by future development projects (Castells, 1983, p.131). The Mission Coalition Organization (MCO), though no longer active, brought about the formation of several grassroots organizations, social agencies, and neighborhood improvement projects that arose to meet the needs and social interests of the immigrant population and transformed the district into a vibrant, viral urban area (Castells, 1983, p.106). The organization was largely inspired by the Alinsky model of community action, which organizes people and brings together local neighborhood groups by appealing to their self-interests. The poor have the disadvantage of being underrepresented politically, so community organizers must help citizens engage in public processes (Stall and Stoecker, 1997). The Mission District, which is characterized by a large number of second generation Latinos as well as a continuous flow of new

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immigrants, has succeeded in maintaining it character as a neighborhood for immigrants and the poor in large part because of the success of a combination of grassroots organization and institutional social reform (Castells, 1983, p. 9).

The physical preservation of the urban environment and social protection of the poor minority population was largely achieved through a variety of social programs serving the Mission ethnic community. Self-organized, voluntary organizations actively promote activities and programs that foster community involvement and social contact (Castells, 1983). The goals of the organizations center on preserving ethnic identity or responding to poverty, workforce training, and other urban issues. The model of neighborhood-based collective action has been successful in serving the physical and social needs of the community. Public housing programs and planning initiatives appear to have been less influential than the network of community groups in the urban revival of the community. Planners have attempted to use incentives to attract jobs to urban areas and subsidized housing and transportation. However, these strategies failed to have as significant an effect as community building (Irazabal and Farhat, 2008).

One issue that the area confronted was determining public resource needs for each fraction of the community and evaluating the impact of mobilization on public policies and living conditions. Residential quality, cultural vitality, and economic dynamics have improved, but the ethnic minority remains segregated and deprived relative to the majority white population. Therefore, the support and involvement of the public sector is needed in conjunction with community-based organizations to allow communities better access municipal power in order to further grassroots efforts (Myers, 2003). More federal and state government programs supporting the integration of immigrants into their

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communities would help contribute to a national and region-wide goal of multicultural planning. Programs supporting immigrant homeownership can support the social transition from baby boomers to immigrants. Federal and state government-provided tax breaks and incentives could better promote homeownership among all residents, including immigrants (Myers, 2003).

Neighborhood-based Planning

A neighborhood-based planning method can help to ensure that no areas of a city are excluded from the planning process. Neighborhood planning Units (NPUs) act as citizen advisory councils that make recommendations to the mayor and City Council on planning issues such as zoning, land use, and other transportation. The City of Atlanta established the NPU system in 1974 to provide an opportunity for citizens to participate actively in the Comprehensive Development Plan, the city's planning vision for the next five, ten, and fifteen years. NPUs enable citizens to assist the city in developing plans that best meet the needs of their communities by providing them with a median to express ideas and comment on city plans and proposals. The City Council can also use NPUs to inform citizens on various government functions and processes (Atlanta, 2012).

Community Benefits Agreements

Although some cities do a good job of seeking and responding to community input, many do not. Low-income neighborhoods, particularly those where a language other than English is predominantly spoken, can have little voice in the development process. Community Benefits campaigns combine policy analysis, research, and organizing to ensure that inclusive economic development strategies. These campaigns can center on large-scale government sponsored economic development policies and

projects or on smaller scale development projects taking place in a specific neighborhood or community. The projects are shaped through extensive community input and measurable benefits to the residents impacted by the project. Community Benefits campaigns benefit the community, the local government, and the developer by promoting inclusiveness and coalition building, while facilitating the project approval process and providing a method of accountability to the community (Atlanta Beltline, 2012).

A Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) is a legally binding and enforceable contract that establishes a set of community benefits regarding a development project. A developer enters into a CBA with invested community group by signing an agreement which outlines a range of community benefits the developer agrees to provide as part of a development project. The CBA promotes accountability and inclusiveness by ensuring that a broad range of community concerns are heard and addressed prior to project approval. The CBA negotiation process provides a forum for many interests in an affected community to be addressed through substantive and detailed negotiations. During the negotiation process, community groups are able to publicly support or oppose a proposed project, or they may choose to support a project only under conditions that they feel are important (Gross, 2008).

The Atlanta Beltline project is an extensive redevelopment project in the Atlanta-metro region that has received considerable support and enthusiasm, but also faces major concerns about gentrification and the displacement of current residents. Gentrification in the Old Forth Ward neighborhood and around the beltline is happening at a fast pace, threatening to displace the predominantly minority residents. The city responded to these concerns by passing a resolution that recognizes the importance of balanced and equitable

development of the city and promotes equal participation by all residents. The Beltline CBA was created to ensure that capital projects receiving bond funding reflect certain community benefit principles, including prevailing wages for workers and a 'first source' hiring system targeting residents of impacted low income neighborhoods. The CBA is part of the broader community engagement framework, created by Atlanta Beltline Incorporated to keep residents informed and engaged throughout the Beltline's creation (Atlanta Beltline, 2012).

Summary

The literature review highlights the significance of multiculturalism, how it applies to planning, and the complexities planners face in trying to plan for it. Planning models that exemplify people-centered, communicative approaches are shown to be better suited for multicultural planning because they take into account the diverse needs of public and attempt to respond to those needs. The literature review also reveals that other counties, such as Canada and Australia, have taken more strides towards addressing multiculturalism and integrating it into the planning process than the United States. Examples of planning for multiculturalism in the United States are generally limited to grassroots efforts that focus more on alleviating poverty and marginalization than on promoting cultural diversity and acceptance. However, planning models centered on community development and public participation are shown to be good models of planning for multiculturalism. The analysis portion of this paper will look for these models in the two case study cities' planning practices to determine if they are utilized and how effective they have been in promoting multiculturalism.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study was carried out as a comparison of two cities' approaches to multiculturalism. The study will look at how cities plan and who they plan for, and examine how a city's planning techniques impact the ethnic population. The cities chosen for the case study were hand-picked based on their geographic location and demographic make-up. The cities of Duluth and Norcross were studied because they are characterized as being historically white towns that, within the past decade, have seen a large increase in their Asian and Hispanic populations. The two cities are of similar size and are in close proximity to each other, making them easily comparable. Plans are evaluated based on how involved ethnic groups are in the planning process and how processes have adjusted to fulfill the needs of the city's population. The study looks at how cities can effectively plan for multiculturalism and address planning issues related to urban transportation, housing, and land use.

In the study, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics website is the primary source used to compile demographic data on the Atlanta region, Gwinnett County, Duluth, and Norcross. Different planning and public participation techniques are identified in the literature review and assessed to see if and how they are being implemented in the case study cities. Online websites and news articles will provide background information on the cities and interviews with key city planning officials, program directors, and community groups will identify city planning priorities, determine what current practices are employed, and gauge the success of planning programs. Interviews and research will

specifically focus on how ethnic groups are involved in the planning process and how plans have been implemented to meet the needs most common among ethnic communities. The findings from the demographic data, website and news article review, and interviews will be used to determine what planning issues are specific to the ethnic groups and how best to address these issues. Following the analysis of the findings, certain planning techniques identified in the literature review will be recommended for the cities' future consideration.

Key informant interviews are a large component of this research study. The strategy used to select interviewees was to locate people who either influenced planning practices in Norcross or Gwinnett, or who could speak on how multicultural populations are influenced by local planning. Due to limited time and resources, sample size was limited to six interviewees, with three from the City of Duluth, one from the City of Norcross, one from the Gwinnett Village Community Improvement District (CID), and one from the Latin American Association. Although the sampling size was small, the interview responses provide valuable insight on how city officials, planners, and community group representatives perceive multiculturalism in their cities.

Public officials and local planners from the case study cities asked participate in the study and speak on their city's planning priorities and practices. They were then asked to elaborate on how cultural populations were addressed in local planning practices, whether they felt practices were successful addressing the needs of their cultural diverse population, and where the saw room for improvement. Community group leader questions were altered slightly to address how they felt the multicultural community related to the planning process, what the perceived issues are, and how

satisfied they are with the city in which they live. Appendixes A through E provide

copies of the interview protocol that was followed, the interview recruitment email that

was sent to perspective interviewees, the interview consent for interviewees to sign, a list

of the interviewees whose interviews were used in this research, and the approval forms

that were acquired from the Institutional Review Board (IRB).

CHAPTER 4

GWINNETT COUNTY OVERVIEW

Gwinnett County, named for Button Gwinnett, one of the three Georgia signers of the Declaration of Independence, is the second largest country by area in the State of Georgia and the most populous county in the state. Established in 1818 from land ceded by the Cherokee and Creek Indians, the county has total area of 436.72 square miles. The county was largely supported by the agriculture and cotton industries and in the1870's it benefited greatly from Georgia's railway expansion. The Georgia Air Line Railroad initially ran from Charlotte to Atlanta and stopped in several towns in Gwinnett County. At the county's founding the population was just over 4,000, but the completion of the Southern Railroad in 1871 and the Seaboard Air Line Railroad in 1892 saw the population swell to over 25,000 by 1900 (Panettiere, 2012).

The Great Depression and falling cotton prices in the late 1920 put Gwinnett County in danger of economic decline. However, an industry shift to dairy farming brought new jobs, and the opening of Lake Lanier in the 1950's established the county as the region's primary recreation destination (Panettiere, 2012). The subsequent increased demand for services and housing furthered the county's development. In the latter decades of the 20th century, Gwinnett County's proximity to downtown Atlanta and expansion of the city's economic and civic infrastructure resulted in a significant rise in population. The county now includes 16 municipalities, including the recently established city of Peachtree Corners, two major interstates, and numerous well-traversed highways (See Figure 1).
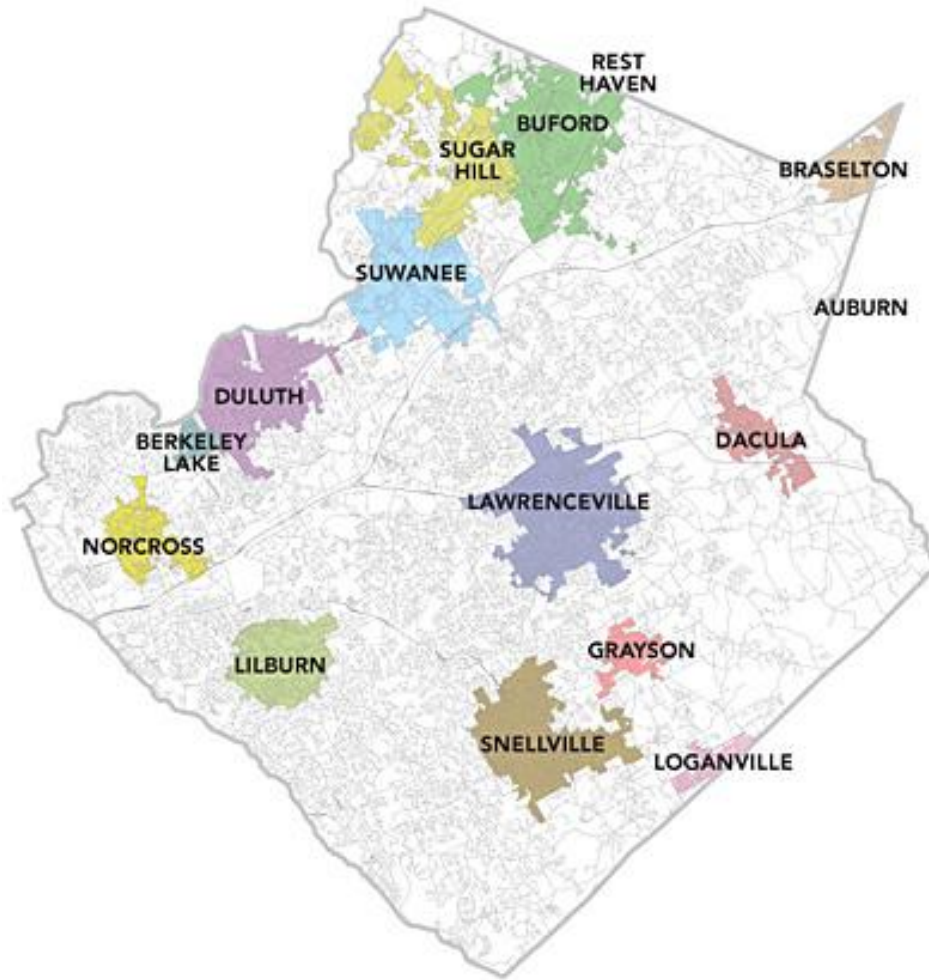
Figure 1: Map of Gwinnett County highways and municipalities (Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce, 2012)

Growth and Demographics in the Region and County

In the past 20 years, the Atlanta region experienced one of its longest and most impressive periods of growth. The 13-county region has seen a net increase in employment of 606,000 and in population of 1,045,066. The 28-county Atlanta metropolitan area was the third-fastest growing metropolitan region in the nation between 2000 and 2010, behind Houston and Dallas. Metro Atlanta added more than one million new residents between 2000 and 2010, by far the largest population gain in the Southeast and the third-largest in the nation. The one million new residents represent a growth rate of 24 percent, meaning that almost one in four residents in Atlanta today were not present in 2000. Until the recession hit in the early 2000s, the Atlanta region was adding nearly 100,000 residents annually, bringing the total population to 3.4 million and employment to nearly 2 million by 2000. The recession curtailed the region's dynamic growth, but the region has recovered and is adding population at a rate equal to or even greater than that experienced in the 1990s (Atlanta Regional Commission, 2011)

Gwinnett County has been one of the country's fastest growing counties since the 1970s. The 2010 U.S. census reports its population at 805,321, a significant increase from its 2000 population of 588,448. The total population has seen a 67 percent increase since 1990 and a 23 percent increase in five years between 2000 and 2005 alone. The county's population in 2007 was 4.6 times larger than in 1980 (Parsons Brinckerhoff, 2008, p. 1-1). According to the 2010 Census, Gwinnett County saw a population increase of 37.6 percent between 2000 and 2010, the 18th-largest population gain out of the 3,139 counties in the country. More than one-fifth of metro Atlanta's one million new residents were in Gwinnett County (Atlanta Regional Commission, 2011). The most populous age

cohort in the 20-county Atlanta region consists of people aged 16 to 29, known as the Millennials. However, the greatest population gains occurred in the oldest age cohorts – the 45-64 group known as the Baby Boomers and the 65 and older groups. The older population cohorts are most prominent around the city perimeter, while the Millennials are concentrated in areas near universities and in areas with heavy concentrations of non-white populations, including the Norcross area of Gwinnett County (Atlanta Regional Commission, 2011).

The Atlanta region is diversifying at a fast rate, with significant diversification occurring over the past decade. In the 20-county Atlanta Region, while the population in all racial and ethnic groups increased during the 2000s, the white population increased by only 85,000 people. Most of the region's growth, approximately one million new residents, came from non-white races and Hispanics. In the 20-county Atlanta metropolitan region, blacks accounted for the largest population increase among races and ethnicities, with an increase of almost 470,000 people, or 45 percent growth, in the last decade. Hispanics grew by almost 295,000, followed by Asians (115,000), and whites (85,100). The distribution of race and ethnic groups follow distinct patterns, with the white population largely concentrated in Atlanta's outer suburbs (See Figure 2).

In the 10-county Atlanta region, seven counties experienced a decrease in their white population between 2000 and 2010. The overall Hispanic population grew by 2.91 percent and the Asian population grew by 1.73 percent, while the white population decreased by 5.06 percent and the black population decreased by .24 percent. According to the 2010 Census, six counties (Clayton, DeKalb, Douglas, Fulton, Gwinnett and Rockdale) now have a majority non-white population. In the 10-county region, the

Census 2010: Percent White Population

Census_2010
% White

- 0.3% - 16.9%
- 17% - 38%
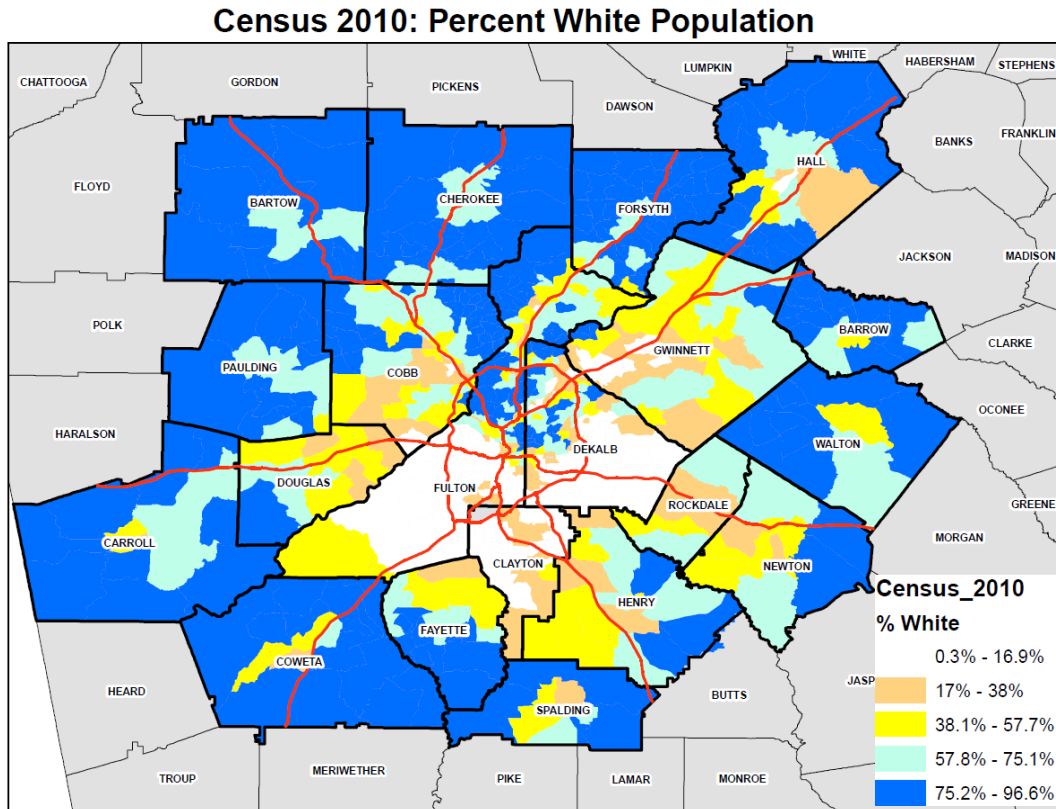- 38.1% - 57.7%
- 57.8% - 75.1%
- 75.2% - 96.6%

Figure 2: Concentration of whites in the Atlanta region by census tract (Atlanta Regional Commission, 2011).

combined black, Asian, and Hispanic populations now make up a larger population group

than the total white population (Atlanta Regional Commission, 2011). The Asian

population is concentrated in northeaster Fulton County and western Gwinnett County,

around the Duluth and Johns Creek municipal boundaries (See Figure 3). The Hispanic

population is most heavily concentrated in Hall County and in pockets in Cobb and

Gwinnett counties, specifically in the cities of Marietta and Norcross (See Figure 4).

Regional diversity is captured in the ARC's 2010 Diversity Index, which is based on

official 2010 Census race and ethnicity statistics. The index shows how heterogeneous or

homogeneous areas are throughout the region, with a higher index score indicating a

more diverse area. A score of one indicates a perfectly heterogeneous area with equal

representation of five different races or ethnicities, while a score of zero represents the

presence of only one race or ethnicity, indicating a perfectly homogeneous area.

Gwinnett County scores the highest on the Diversity Index, making it the most diverse

county in the region. Gwinnett County added the greatest number of Asian and Hispanic

residents out of the ten counties in last decade and Western Gwinnett experienced the

greatest loss in white population (Atlanta Regional Commission, 2011).

According to the American Community Survey, more than 200,000 of

Gwinnett county's current residents were born in a foreign country, which is greater than

the entire foreign-born population of 13 of the region's 20 counties. There are now

several jurisdictions in the Atlanta region that are "majority-minority," meaning that the

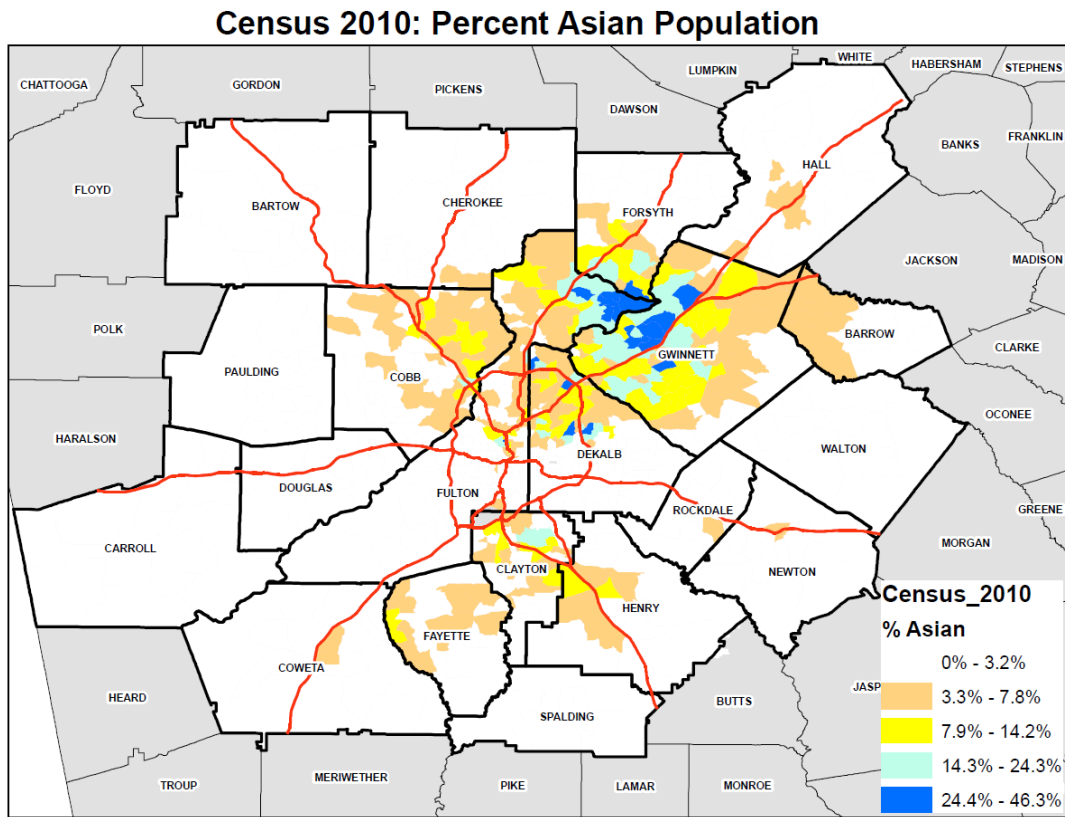white population is less than fifty percent of the total population. The Atlanta Regional

Figure 3: Concentration of Asians in the Atlanta Region by census tract (Atlanta Regional Commission, 2011).
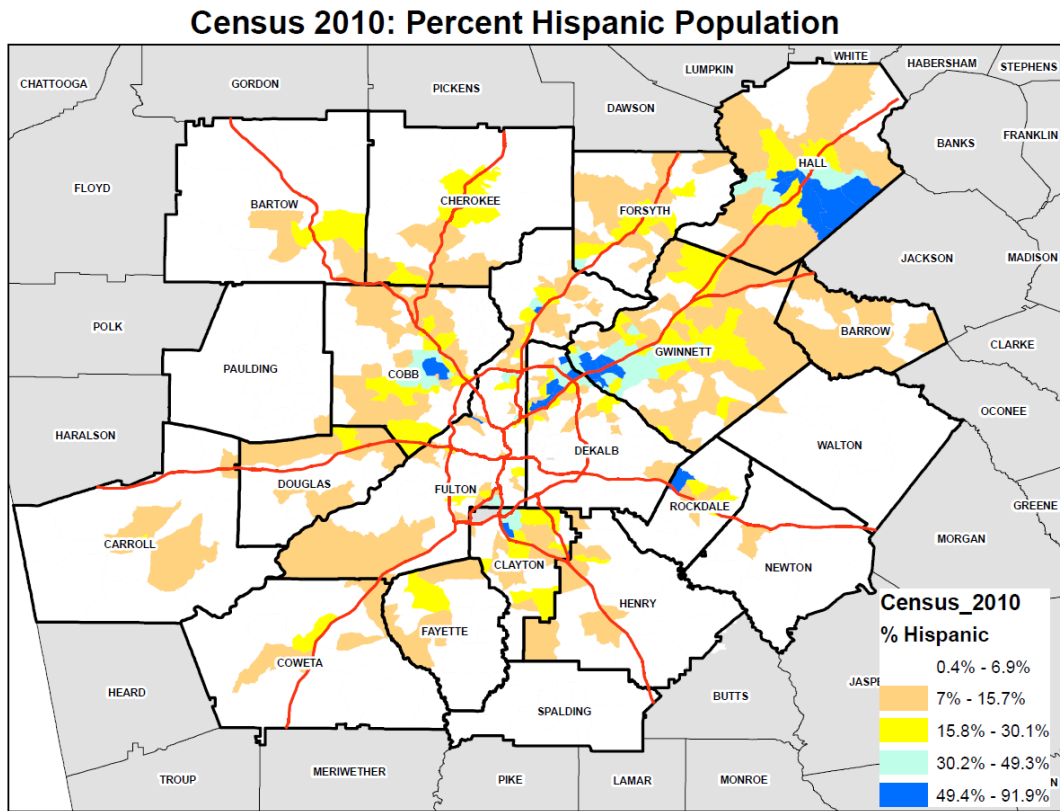
Figure 4: Concentration of Hispanics in the Atlanta Region by census tract (Atlanta Regional Commission, 2011).

Commission estimates that the majority of growth in the 20-county region between 2010 and 2040 within the 20-county region will occur primarily in areas with large percentages of non-white populations, in particular western Gwinnett County (Atlanta Regional Commission, 2011).

The 2010 Census reported that Gwinnett County's racial composition is 44 percent white, 20.1 percent Hispanic, 10.5 percent Asian, 22.9 percent black, and 2.5 percent other, while Georgia is 59.7 percent white, 8.8 percent Hispanic, 3.2 percent Asian, 30.5 percent black, and 4 percent other. Between 2000 and 2010, Gwinnett Country added more blacks, Hispanics, and Asians than any other county in Georgia, making it the most diverse county in the state (Atlanta Regional Commission, 2011).

Planning in Gwinnett County

Gwinnett County 2030 Unified Plan

Gwinnett County has implemented a number of county-wide plans, the most substantial and comprehensive of which is the Gwinnett County 2030 Unified Plan. The plan fulfills the requirement by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and Georgia State Law O.C.G.A. 50-8-1, which states that county and municipal governments are required to maintain an updated comprehensive plan in order to maintain qualified local government certification and remain eligible for several state funding and permitting programs. In accordance with planning requirements, the plan includes three components: 1) a Community Assessment; 2) a Community Participation Program; and 3) a Community Agenda. Economic development and fiscal health, increased mobility and accessibility, more housing choices, and the maintenance of Gwinnett's preferential

living status are the main organizing themes of the plan (Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners, 2012).

The Gwinnett Unified Plan evaluates three different growth scenarios based on various economic circumstances, land use and transportation scenarios, and levels of policy intervention by the Board of Commissioners. The first scenario, which is considered to be the "worst-case" scenario, assumes that Gwinnett's employment and population growth rates will decrease to below the current rate. The Middle-of-the Pack, or Trends-based, scenario assumes a continuation of existing trends, or a moderate rate of growth. It represents a 47 percent population growth and a job growth 53 percent job growth rate over the next thirty years. This scenario is viewed as the most likely to occur in the next five to ten years. The International Gateway scenario, which is the preferred outcome, forecasts higher intensity development in the I-85 corridor with an emphasis on redevelopment, mixed-use, and higher densities. This scenario would require a substantial shift in infrastructure and transportation investments to account for the increased growth (Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners, 2012). These scenarios and the resulting recommendations considered a full range of intermodal transportation improvements and strategies that would enhance the mobility, accessibility and safety performance of the County's transportation system (Parsons Brinckerhoff, 2008, p. 1-1). The plan recommends shifts in policy designed to revitalize declining areas and reenergize the county's economy based on the three alternative growth scenarios. (Gwinnett Unified Plan in a Nutshell, 2009, p. x).

Comprehensive Transportation Plan

The Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) was prepared by the Parsons Brinckerhoff Team for the Gwinnett County Department of Transportation (DOT) in 2008 to inform officials on the subject of future transportation needs, projects that address those needs, and the advantages, costs, and funding of those projects. The plan is intended to address the transportation challenges facing the region due to population growth, urban sprawl, and ridership habits. The CTP was produced in coordination with plans for supporting infrastructure in the county. It is paired with the Unified Plan's Comprehensive–Land Use Planning element to define the long term comprehensive vision for growth of the County (Parson Brinckerhoff, 2008, p. 1-1). Like the Gwinnett Unified Plan, the CTP examines a range of transportation options based on the alternative land use and transportation scenarios developed in the Gwinnett Unified Plan and supporting strategies to improve the regional transportation system. The goals of the Transit Planning Board and other agencies in the Atlanta region were also considered when developing the CTP. Due to the heavy use of vehicular transportation in Gwinnett County, the expansion of road capacity and improved traffic operations are the main priorities of the CTP. The plan also examines the need for improvements in pedestrian access and other modes of transportation, such as public transit and bicycling (Parsons Brinckerhoff, 2008, p. 1-1).

The transportation plan addresses Gwinnett County's rapidly growing population. Land use strategies, access management, and travel demand management were considered the key elements of the transportation system. Gwinnett County Transit, which provides express and local bus service within Gwinnett County and between the

county and downtown and midtown Atlanta, is identified as a significant component of the city's transportation substructure. According to the National Transit Database, in 2005, Gwinnett County Transit carried more than 1.6 million unlinked passenger trips on its fixed route buses. Gwinnett County Transit provides local bus service to much of the southern portion of the I-85 Corridor (Parsons Brinckerhoff, 2008, p. 2-20). In addition to local service, Gwinnett County Transit along with the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) provides commuter bus service in the County (Parsons Brinckerhoff, 2008, p. 2-21).

The CTP identifies several shortcomings in providing good pedestrian and bicycle access and alternative forms of transportation. Gwinnett County Transit provides patrons with park and ride facilities in five locations to serve express bus patrons. While each of these locations is adjacent to a major highway and has convenient automobile access, none of the locations are convenient for pedestrian access. Many Gwinnett County Transit local bus service patrons require pedestrian or bicycle access to transit. The CTP recommends that more projects be instated to identify and close gaps that exist in the existing network of pedestrian facilities, with priority assigned to those projects that provide safe and efficient access to transit (Parsons Brinckerhoff, 2008, p. 2-24).

Community Participation Program

The Gwinnett County Community Participation Program (CPP) fulfills the requirement as prescribed by the Georgia DCA and follows the intent of the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005. The plan states that citizen involvement and participation, apart from being important in the completion of the comprehensive plan, is necessary for the plan's success. The

program's purpose is to ensure that citizens and other stakeholders are aware of the planning process and have the opportunity to actively participate in the process. This includes having the ability to comment on the draft plan and defining the community's vision, values, goals, policies, priorities, and implementation strategies (Community Participation Program, 1). The involvement process involves a data collection and analysis component, a community visioning component, and a plan and policy development component. Alternative scenarios are used in community visioning to illustrate implications of various alternatives and policies. County commissioners are involved in briefings on project progress and key issues, community leaders are invited to participate in Policy Advisory Committees, and the general public is engaged through open houses, the project website, community television presentations, and focus groups (Community Participation Program, 3).

The Planning Advisory Committee (PAC), which is made up of 25 individuals representing interest groups throughout the county, was established by the Gwinnett County Commissioners to provide guidance and feedback throughout the planning process. PAC members represent various geographic subareas of the county and were selected based on their specific interests in the development of the community agenda. A special effort was made to ensure that this committee reflects the ethnic diversity of the county. The committee ethnic make-up is 8 percent African American, 8 percent Asian, 16 percent Hispanic, and 68 percent Caucasian. The committee meets on a roughly monthly basis to provide guidance and feedback to the project team throughout the planning process (Community Participation Program, 6). Two sets of four public information meetings were held to provide the general public an opportunity to

participate in the process. The meetings were advertised through on ads in the county newspaper and on the official county website and flyers were sent to homeowners associations and members of the Planning Commission and Advisory Committee. The CPP states that Spanish and Korean-speaking translators would be available at these meetings, as deemed necessary (Community Participation Program, 9).

The program also mandates that five focus group sessions will be conducted using a demographic profile to recruit a representative selection of Hispanic, African American, Chinese, and Korean residents of Gwinnett County. The participating individuals will be asked to react to the scenarios proposed in the comprehensive plan and provide input into their refinement. The focus groups are intended to capture the perceptions, needs and recommendations from the public about Gwinnett County related to economic growth, land use, transportation, and other issues or concerns. This information is intended to be used to help create a community vision for the future of Gwinnett that is reflective of the county's diverse citizenry (Community Participation Program, 9). Approximately 40 interviews were scheduled to help the consultant team understand how key members of the county view the area's future, including its positive attributes and areas of needed improvement. Those interviewed represented a variety of groups and communities, including members of the ethnic community organizations such as the Center for Pan Asian Community Services, the Korean Community Services Center, and the Latin American Association. (Community Participation Program, Appendix B).

Livable Centers Initiative

Apart from county government-driven plans, the county also participates in other programs and initiatives administered by public and private organizations. Seven areas in

Gwinnett County, five downtown areas and two corridors, have engaged in the Atlanta

Regional Commission's Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) program. The primary goals of

the LCI program are to encourage a diverse socioeconomic environment, provide access

to alternative modes of transportation, and provide a means to reach out to stakeholders.

The LCI studies developed suggestions and action plans for transportation, land use,

revitalization, and pedestrian improvements (Parsons Brinckerhoff, 2008, p. 2-31). The

seven LCI areas in Gwinnett are located along key transportation corridors and often

work in conjunction with regionally established Mixed-Use Development (MxD) District

to promote commercial and industrial development (See Figure 5).

Community Improvement Districts

When commercial property owners get together to address common concerns, they form

Community Improvement Districts (CIDs). CIDs work to increase their areas' economic

vitality. Their primary objectives are to promote district-wide improvements and increase

economic vitality in the area. CIDs seek to attract new businesses and raise property

values through road improvements, landscaping, and security transportation projects, and

work with other economic development initiatives and private sector groups to promote

business development in their districts. CIDs work with area chambers of commerce,

real estate investors, and broker-dealers to promote economic investment. Gwinnett

County has three CIDs: Evermore CID, Gwinnett Place CID, and Gwinnett Village CID.

Evermore CID, located in southern Gwinnett County, promotes business development

along Highway 78. The Gwinnett Place CID's primary focus is to relieve traffic

congestion in one of the county's business districts between the intersections of Pleasant

Hill Road and Interstate 85, and Pleasant Hill Road and Satellite Boulevard, two

important business district. The third CID, Gwinnett Village, focuses on Norcross and
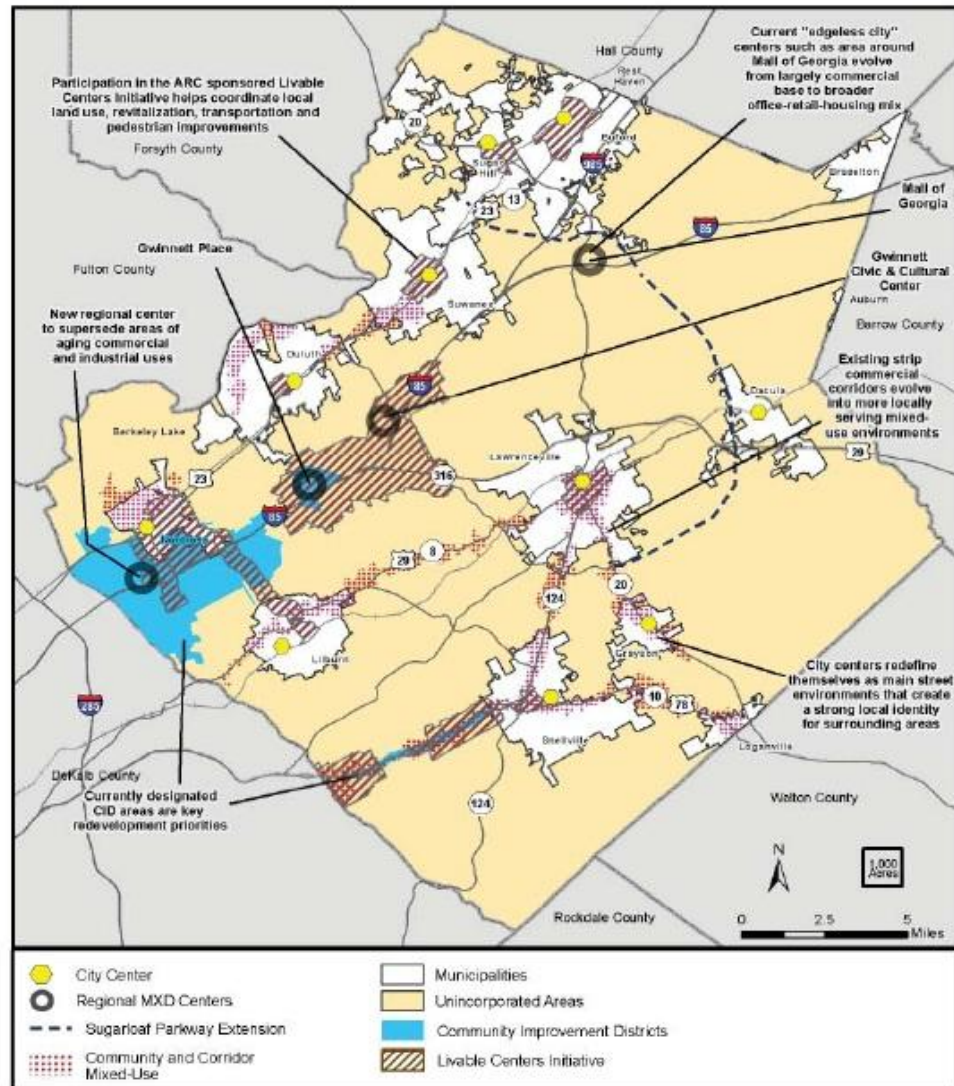
Figure 5: Map of Livable Centers Initiative Areas and Community Improvement Districts in Gwinnett County (Gwinnett Unified Plan in a Nutshell, 2009, p. xii).

the surrounding southwestern portion of the county (Gwinnett Village Community

Improvement District, 2012).

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF DULUTH, GEORGIA

While Gwinnett County as a whole addresses diversity in various degrees in its

plans, initiatives, and through community improvement districts, the majority of

municipalities in the county do not address the needs of ethnic populations in their local

planning initiatives. This may be partially due to Gwinnett's diversity being primarily

concentrated in the southwest, where the Hispanic and Asians populations now

outnumber the white population. Duluth, a city of around 26,600 residents, is located in

the southwestern portion of Gwinnett County, slightly northeast of the City of Norcross

(US Census Bureau, 2010a). Incorporated in 1876, Duluth started as a small, rural town

with large tracts of farmland. By the 1970s, Atlanta's metropolitan expansion reached

Duluth and incorporated the city into its sprawling suburban landscape. Bounded by the

cities of Berkeley Lake to the southwest, Johns Creek to the northwest, and Suwanee to

the northeast, the city benefits from close proximity to surrounding municipalities. But

perhaps the greatest contributing factor to the city's population growth has been its

convenient access to Interstate 85, which intersects the city on its eastern side, and leads

directly to downtown Atlanta.

Duluth parallels Norcross in several ways. Both started out as country towns until

they were eventually engulfed by urban sprawl caused by Atlanta's growth and expansion

and are now significant inner-ring suburbs. Similarly, both cities have seen significant

ethnic and racial change over the past several decades. While the entire county became

increasingly diverse, Duluth and Norcross have experienced the greatest population

shifts. These two cities carry the bulk of the county's first and second-generation immigrants, but even though the cities are alike in their diverse nature, their planning methods and priorities are quite different.

City Growth and Demographics

Between 2000 and 2010, the total population of Duluth rose by 20.2 percent, from 22,122 residents to 26,600 residents. During that period of growth, the Asian, Hispanic, and Black racial groups experienced overwhelming growth. Although two decades ago the majority of Duluth's residents were Caucasian, the city now has a minority-majority population. The White racial group was the majority population in 2000, when around 64 percent identified themselves as white. By 2010, that number dropped to over 41 percent. The largest increase occurred in the Asian population, which experienced a 107.8 percent increase over the ten percent period. The Black population grew by 101.6 percent and the Hispanic population increased by 86.4 percent. As of 2010, white residents make up 41.5 percent of the city's population. Asians are the largest racial group with 22.3 percent of the population, while blacks make up 20.2 percent and Hispanics are 14 percent (US Census Bureau, 2010a).

The city has a high percentage of foreign-born persons, with almost a third of citizens (30.4 percent) born outside the United States, compared to Georgia's average of 9.6 percent. Similarly over 37 percent of residents speak a language other than English at home. Despite the country's ongoing economic recession, Duluth's residents have been faring well economically. The city has a low poverty rate, with just over 7 percent of residents living below the poverty line. The homeownership rate is lower than the state

average, perhaps due to in part to immigrants who are new to the area and have not purchased a home. Still, the median household income is $10,000 higher than the Georgia average (US Census Bureau, 2010a).

Planning Priorities and Practices

Duluth's 2030 Comprehensive Plan echoes many of the same overarching goals as its neighboring municipalities in Gwinnett County. The plan proposes major redevelopment projects that welcome economic growth through business attraction and infrastructure development along primary transit corridors (See Figure 5). Along with commercial development, the plan aspires to maintain Duluth's distinctive and charming small town character.   The city government's perceived vision for the City of Duluth is to retain the "small town" feel of the city, and much of the plan is focused on how this will be accomplished. Land use issues center on the protection of neighborhoods and addressing neighborhood incompatibilities, particularly concerning infill development and incompatibilities between residential and commercial uses (Duluth, 2008, p. 10). Duluth recently spent a large portion of its redevelopment programming and funding on a town center redevelopment project called the Downtown Redevelopment Plan (Duluth, 2008, p. 5). The project received the Livable Centers Initiative Achievement Award from the Atlanta Regional Commission in 2006 for its town green and mixed-use developments.

In a community survey and visioning questionnaire administered by the city government, Duluth's citizens express an interest in more effective participation that relies on more than just public hearings. Detailed, formalized homeowner participation
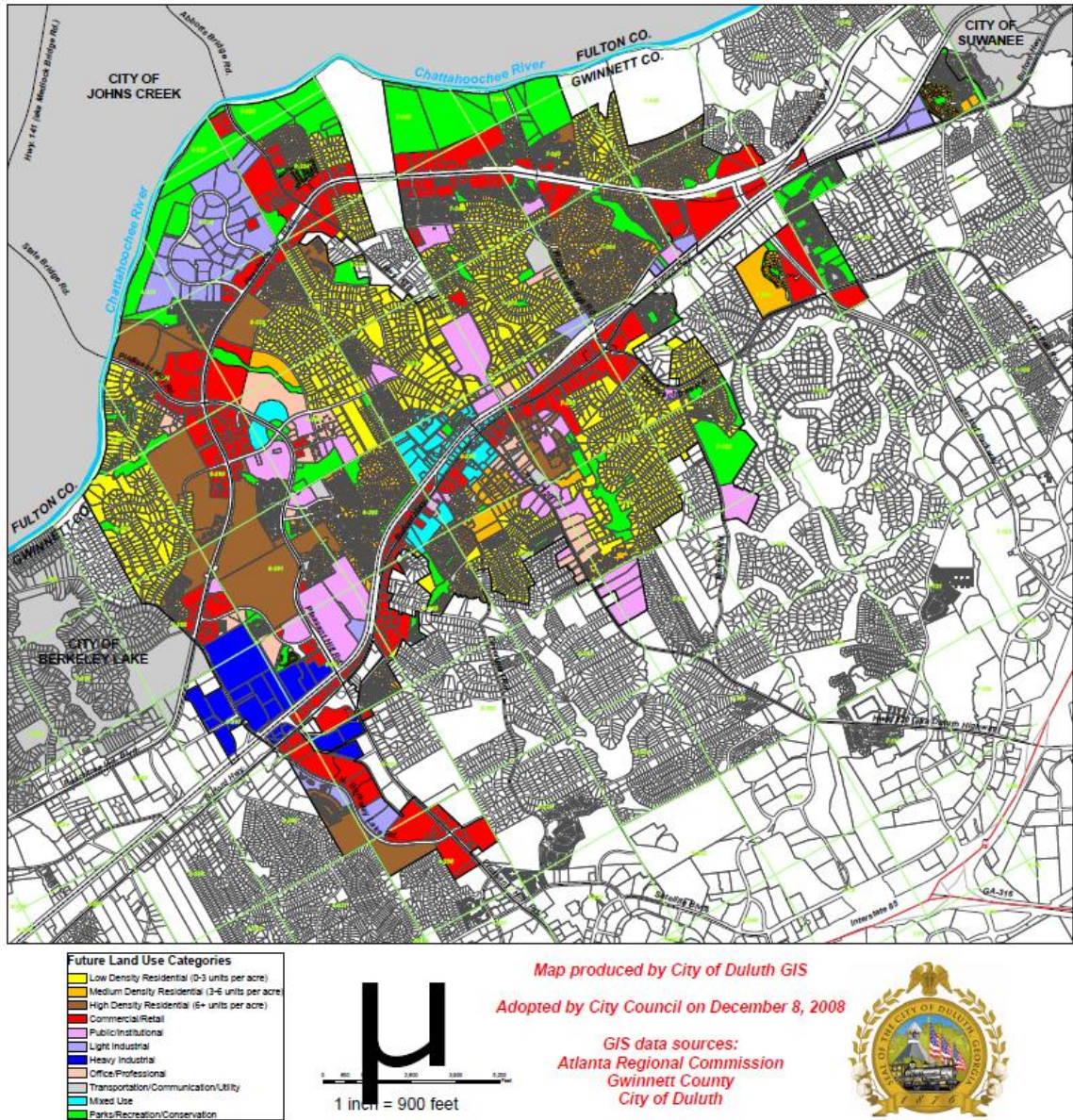
2030 Future Land Use Map - Duluth, GA

Figure 6: Duluth Future Land Use Map (Duluth, 2008).

was identified as a way to lessen confrontation between developers, neighborhood groups, and civic organizations. However, several of the results opinions from the questionnaire diverged from city's planning priorities. But despite the city's overwhelming focus on downtown redevelopment, respondents to the questionnaire pinpoint the redevelopment of South Buford Highway as the most significant economic development and redevelopment issue in the city. The Buford Highway Corridor was identified as Duluth's greatest weakness due to a combination of blight, auto-centric land uses, and poor pedestrian access. There is overwhelming support in the community to redevelop Buford Highway (Duluth, 2008).

While a massive redevelopment plan similar to the downtown plan has not been initiated, Duluth has taken a very positive step toward stimulating redevelopment by constructing its new public safety center in the corridor. Apart from increased safety, this also marks investment in civic buildings in the corridor, which can strategically leverage and enhance private reinvestment in redeveloping the area. Past efforts towards developing the Buford Highway Corridor have included both consultant and staff preparation of inventories, additional regulations, and program activities. A more comprehensive subarea plan, including redevelopment programs and infrastructure requirements and incentive zoning techniques, was identified as a priority for the area (Duluth, 2008, p. 46).

Respondents in the visioning questionnaire overwhelmingly agreed to emphasize pedestrian and bike improvements over traffic improvements, with improving the sidewalk network receiving top priority (Duluth, 2008, p. 12). A substantial majority of respondents also agreed with supporting transit service in Duluth, though there was an

even distribution of agreement and disagreement when it comes to paying for them through taxes or fees. Traffic congestion has become a major issue in the city due to the overall population growth and subsequent sprawl in the metro region, and the current car-dependent transportation system lacks good public transit options, particularly outside of the city center.

The decline in homeownership caused by the aging homeowner population is another issue identified as an increasing concern. As the number of citizens 65 years and older steadily increases in Duluth and the surrounding county, homeownership is decreasing due to the elderly population moving out and dying off, with not enough new buyers taking over their vacant properties. One of the plan's proposed solutions is to convert some apartments into condominiums (Duluth Comprehensive Plan, 2008, p. 5). This would serve the dual function of promoting homeownership and updating multi-family housing complexes so that they have a more desirable urban character. This proposed change would have a significant effect on the renting population, who are generally younger, lower-income families and transient workers, particularly ethnic workers who come to the city for employment but consider their home to be elsewhere. Even in rental properties, housing unit overcrowding is seen as a problem, with public health concerns and impacts on neighborhoods cited as the primary concerns. Converting rental units into condominiums could potentially displace or result in more overcrowding for low-income families and transient workers who cannot afford the high cost of condominiums.

The plan attempts to take into consideration the needs of low-income families by proposing that neighborhoods integrate more mixed income housing. Large sections of

Norcross and Duluth along the Buford Highway corridor have been identified as key

locations for mixed income housing. The corridor is heavily commercial and

characterized by strip malls with small, family-owned businesses and car dealerships.

The area is heavily concentrated with Hispanic and Asian businesses and residents, with

both apartment complexes and single-family houses. The transfer of development rights

from rural areas on the outskirts of the county to areas with identified growth and

business potential also supports the construction of more housing options along the

corridor (See Figure 6).

Despite the benefits of mixed housing propositions, the deliberate inclusion of

affordable housing in middle and high-income neighborhoods runs counter to the

neighborhood structuring that usually occurs under market conditions. Housing

developers and homeowners may be unreceptive to policies that require mixed-income

housing because it can deter potential buyers, decrease property values, and change the

character of the area. Additionally, the city is receiving very little support from the

public regarding a mixed-income housing proposal, with only a small portion of the

citizens surveyed supporting mixed-income housing in Duluth. As a result, identifying

appropriate locations for mixed-income housing and determining how to increase public

support have become leading issues.

Planning for Multiculturalism

Many of the issues identified in Duluth's comprehensive plan are related to

population and housing and directly impact the multicultural population. During the

planning process, some effort was made to engage the city's ethnic communities, though
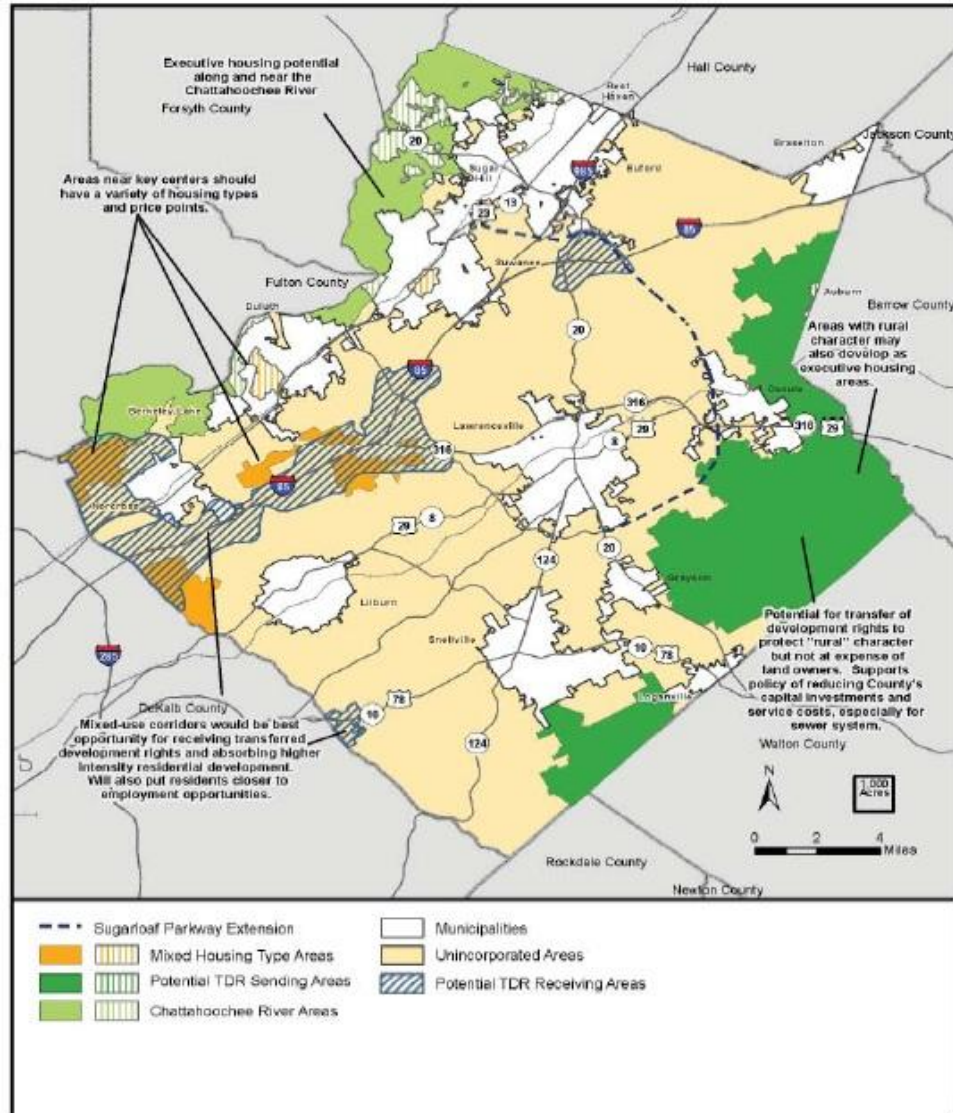
Figure 7: Map of Proposed Mixed Income Housing Areas in Gwinnett County (Gwinnett

Unified Plan in a Nutshell, 2009, p. xiv)

proposals to engage ethnic populations were not always successfully carried to fruition. There were proposals to translate the community visioning survey into different languages and hold special focus group sessions with ethnic groups. However, neither of these proposals was implemented. The city's comprehensive plan provides little information on why these community engagement propositions failed, but states that their lack of success was due in large part to a change in city staffing in the planning and development department, as well as some reluctance from the ethnic groups to participate (Duluth Comprehensive Plan, 107). A lack of effort, perhaps from both sides, has prevented significant outreach to ethnic groups and residential communities.

Though the city does not have a strong connection with its ethnic residents, it has recognized the need for specific outreach programs for ethnic business owners and workers. Workers from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, many of who are first generation immigrants, have moved into Duluth and started businesses, occupied commercial shopping centers, and contributed significantly to the city's economy. Duluth has a notably high percentage of Asian-owned businesses, with 27.3 percent of companies owned by Asians (US Census Bureau, 2010a). The majority of these businesses are Korean-owned, with Koreans constituting the dominant ethnic group in Duluth. Koreans businesses have a significant presence in the city, particularly in the dynamic retail and business area between Pleasant Hill Road and Interstate 85. One retail strip mall along Pleasant Hill road called Park Village houses more than fifty Korean businesses (KoreAm, 2012). However, a significant number of Korean businesses were being forced to close because they were not compliant with alcohol permitting. In 2009,

Mayor Nancy Harris started a widespread and largely successful effort to target and engage the Korean business owners in Duluth. The Korean Task Force was initially formed to address non-compliance with business standards. The Task Force established an alcohol permit training program. Second, the Task Force educated businesses on the importance of adding English to their signage. Signs that only displayed Korean were a public safety issue because they were difficult to identify in case of an emergency. The Task Force promoted interaction with the government and police force and developed economic ties with the Korean community. In 2011, the Georgia Municipal Association awarded Duluth with the Georgia Trendsetter Award for the creation of the Korean Task Force.

Mayor Harris' long-term goal is to expand the Korean Task Force so that it incorporates other ethnic groups. However, she noted some hesitation from the Task Force's current Korean members, who are happy with the organization's current structure and value their opportunity to directly interface with the mayor and city officials on business-related issues. Still, the mayor hopes to reach out more to other ethnic businesses. However, the city government does not have any plans to expand ethnic outreach from its current business-centric focus to incorporate more residential issues and embrace multiculturalism in other aspects of city life. The benefits of ethnic presence are largely perceived from a revenue perspective and the success of ethnic businesses promotes economic development in the city. Requests from ethnic groups to have city-wide multicultural celebrations in the newly developed town square have been denied, with the city firmly stating that such events are better suited for churches or private organizations. The city's stance suggests a hesitance to move too far from the tradition

small suburban town feel it had a century ago, despite the changing demographics and the resulting needs those demographics bring.

CHAPTER 6

ANALYSIS OF NORCROSS, GEORGIA

Like Duluth, the City of Norcross is an Atlanta suburb located in southwestern

Gwinnett County. Founded in 1870, Norcross is Gwinnett County's second oldest city

and historically a railroad town. In 1869, Atlanta entrepreneur J.J. Thrasher purchased

250 acres around the first stop north along the proposed Richmond-Danville rail line and

a year later the area was incorporated. Thrasher named the city after Jonathan Norcross, a

fellow entrepreneur and Atlanta's fourth mayor. Located about 29 miles northeast of

Atlanta, in Gwinnett County, Norcross became the first major stop for travelers heading

northeast out of Atlanta by rail. Economic growth was fueled by area farms and

mercantile business, while the railroad also helped Norcross to grow into a popular resort

town and vacation destination for Atlanta residents (Norcross History Center, 2009).

Norcross today remains largely blue-collar and industrial, with manufacturing and

construction as the town's primary industries. Large corporations headquartered in

Norcross and small, family-owned businesses also have a significant presence in the

Norcross economy.

Though the railway now plays a less prominent role as a transportation route in

the region, the city still maintains a strong connection to its historic railroad town roots.

Like many of Atlanta's older suburbs, the city aspires to appeal to new generations of

residents and businesses, while still maintaining its local charm. Norcross' motto, "a

place to imagine," invokes the city's desire to thrive with creative vision, while the vision

statement from the Norcross 2030 Comprehensive Plan, "Norcross: Respecting the Past.

Embracing the Future," reflects the city's aspiration to balance history with progress (Pond & Company, 2008). Early Victorian and craftsman cottages and the old brick buildings of downtown have been preserved to create the historic hub of the city, and the entire downtown area of Norcross is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Though Norcross is not the same retreat from Atlanta as it was in years past, it still provides a place to escape the hustle of the big city. Norcross offers a lifestyle that appeals to people who want to enjoy the time-honored values of family and community. At the same time, the city has proactively transformed into a place that also cultivates diversity.

City Growth and Demographics

Between 2000 and 2010, the total population of Norcross rose by 8.4 percent to 9,116 residents. Like Gwinnett, two decades ago, Norcross' residents were primarily Caucasian and African American. Norcross now has the largest percentage of minorities in the county has the largest Asian and Hispanic population in the state. For the total population of Norcross, 26.85 percent of people are white, 39.4 percent Hispanic, 12.7 percent Asian, 18.7 percent black, and 2.4 percent some other race (Atlanta Regional Commission, 2011). While the overall population of Norcross rose between 2000 and 2010, the white population decreased from 2,717 to 2,448, and the black population increased only slightly from 1,615 to 1,703. Asians experienced the largest percentage growth, with the populations rising from 512 to 1,703, an increase of over 125 percent in ten years (US Census Bureau, 2010b). Hispanics experienced a low growth percentage, but still make up the majority, with 3,591 residents. About 52 percent of total residents,

identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino. 32 percent of Norcross residents indicate that they speak Spanish as home, compared to 58 percent English and 10 percent some other language, indicating that majority of Hispanic residents are likely first or second generation immigrants (Southeastern Engineering, Inc. and Monteith Brown Planning Consultants, 2011, 15).

Some local planning agencies and governing staff have suggested that the growth in the Latin American population has significantly slowed over the last ten years due to severe losses of jobs in construction and development industries. The number of vacant housing units in Norcross increased by 7.7 percent between 2000 and 2010, from 3.9 percent to 11.6 percent. This is higher than the national average, where the number of vacant housing units increased by 4.4 percent, from 3.5 percent in 2000 to 7.9 percent in 2010 (US Census Bureau, 2010b). Still, Norcross' Hispanic percentage still remains much higher than the county's percentage, which is 17 percent. The rapid increase in the Hispanic population from ten years ago has waned and overall population growth has slowed in Norcross, leaving apartment complexes and previously occupied rental homes sitting vacant. The census of 2000 shows that Norcross' population is younger on average than the Gwinnett population, with an average age of 29.6. Per capita income and median household income are higher and the poverty rate is lower in Norcross compared to the rest of the state, showing that despite a high minority population, the city is not economically deprived (US Census Bureau, 2010b).

Planning Priorities and Practices

Norcorss' primary planning document is the Norcross 2030 Comprehensive Plan,

which was written by Pond & Company and adopted by the city in 2008. The three-part

plan serves as the primary roadmap to guide the city's growth and development.

According to the plan, by the year 2030 the city intends to capitalize on its current

location by drawing in corporate offices and education centers, while continuing to offer

a small town experience. The City of Norcross' Parks Master Plan states the following:

> Master Planning efforts coordinated with Gwinnett County, the Gwinnett Village
> CID and major property owners and investors along Buford Highway and Jimmy Carter
> Boulevard will have transformed the heavy commercial areas into more efficient and
> attractive corridors, and the City will have created Gateway areas which give Norcross
> visitors a distinct sense of arrival (Southeastern Engineering, Inc. and Monteith Brown
> Planning Consultants, 2011, p. 9).

The 2030 Norcross Future Development Map, which accompanies the plan,

divides the city into twelve zones based on current area attributes and desirable future

directions (See Figure 8). Development plans encourage high-density, mixed-use

development in target areas in accordance with the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. Zone 8,

the Buford Highway/Jimmy Carter Boulevard Reinvestment Area, contains a high

percentage of ethnic-minorities (Pond & Company, 2008). The area has been identified

as a strategic transportation corridor with two premier boulevards that should consist of

mixed use development with greenspace linkages (See Figure 9).

The Gwinnett Village CID is another major planning entity in the city. Most of

the CID is located in Norcross, one third of the CID is in unincorporated Gwinnett

County, and a small portion is in Peachtree Corners. Established in 2006, in the Gwinnett

Village CID center offers tax services, job search assistance, and legal resources to
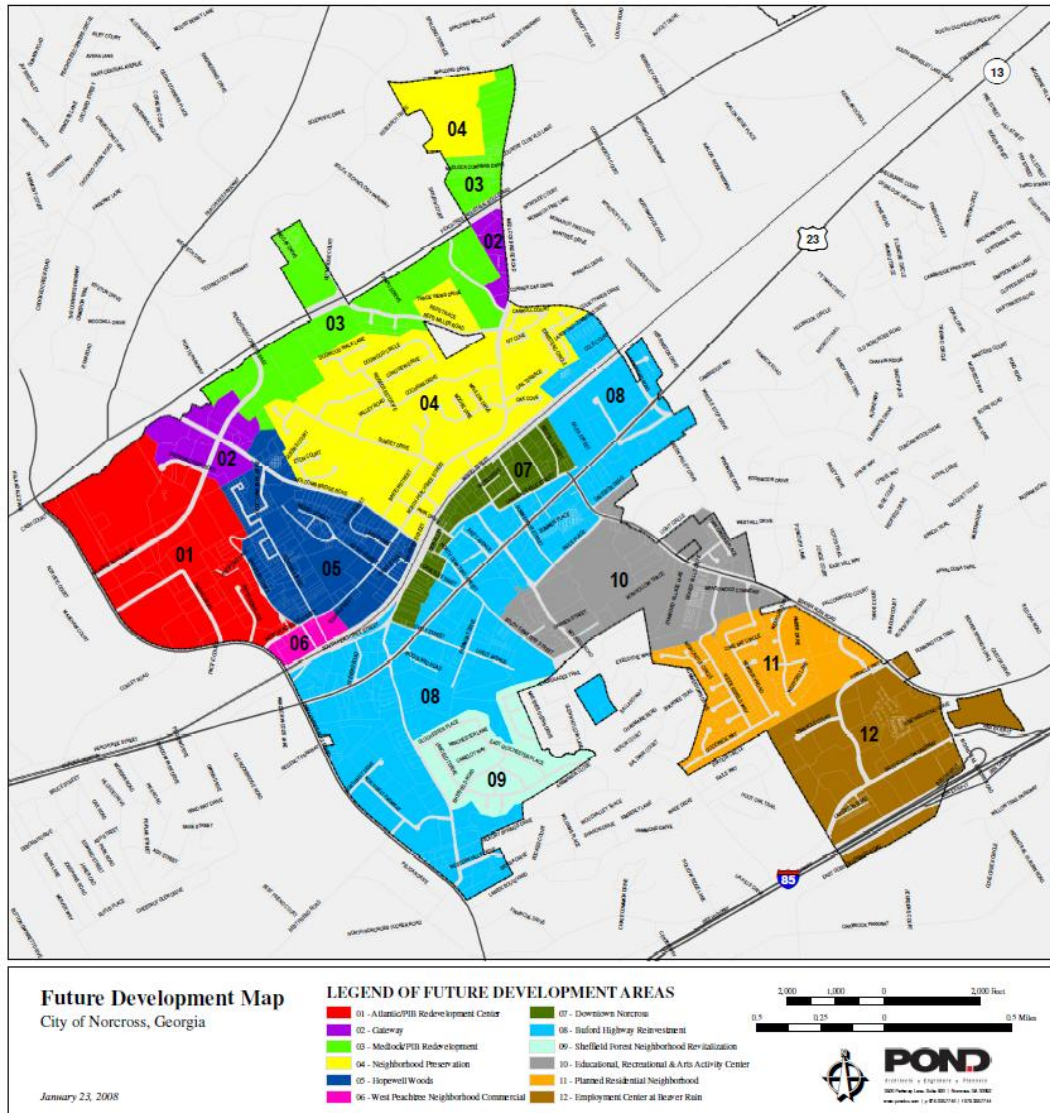
Figure 8. Norcross Future Development Map. (Pond & Company, 2008, p. 6).

Figure 9: Map of Buford Highway/Jimmy Carter Boulevard Corridor Pan (Pond & Company, 2008, pg. 18).

businesses and residents located in the CID.   The CID has a diverse board of property

owners, including the owner of the Global Mall, the first indoor South Asian Mall in

North America. Since its opening, the CID has acquired $2 million in additional tax

revenue from businesses in the CID. The Gwinnett Village CID's long-range goal is to

transform the southwest portion of Gwinnett into a thriving commerce center that will

attract new businesses and residents. Chuck Warbington, the Executive Director of the

Gwinnett Village CID, envisions the CID as a catalyst to spearhead the transformation of

the corridor into a vibrant commercial center, and says it is the logical choice for large-

scale redevelopment in Gwinnett (Gwinnett Village Community Improvement District,

2011).

For the Gwinnett Village CID, public safety has been a major investment. When

the CID was first established, the first priority of property owners was security. Property

owners were concerned about perceptions of decay and a lack of safety in the area. The

CID paid for the addition of two additional police officers and four private security

officers to patrol the area. In the past three years, the area has experienced double-digit

reductions in crime. The second priority was transportation, particularly the

beautification and increased efficiency of highways and interchanges. The CID has a

plan in place for a diverging diamond interchange over Interstate 85 that would improve

traffic flow and redesign the bridge to serve as a gateway to Gwinnett County. The next

large project for the CID focuses beautification, access management, and pedestrian

access on the Buford Highway Corridor. The addition of sidewalks and mid-block

crossings are intended to improve pedestrian access, but still allow the highway to

function as a through corridor for traffic. The CID supports increased foot traffic and

pedestrian access to transit stops through thee construction of new sidewalks throughout the district. The CID is also exploring the expansion of light rail service as a means to reduce congestion and increase travel efficiency. The light rail system is a joint project with Gwinnett Place CID and will increase public transit options for residents and employees in the county (Gwinnett Village Community Improvement District, 2011).

When asked what the city's main planning goals and priorities are, Norcross' Community Development Director, Chris McCrary, stated that transportation is one of the city's top priorities. Improvements to the Buford Highway corridor were of particular importance for the director. More highways crossings, sidewalks, and medians down the center of the corridor will improve pedestrian access, safety, and make the road more aesthetically appealing to both drivers and pedestrians. Crossing conditions on major highways such as Buford Highway and Beaver Ruin Road are challenging for pedestrians and create potential conflicts between pedestrians and drivers (See Figure 10). McCrary has also been working with Gwinnett transit officials to try to add a transfer station near Buford Highway with a park and ride to serve commuters. The idea for the station arose from local and county-wide transportation plans that were developed by public and private entities, but community input has been important for driving the effort as well. Public meetings and initiatives to reach out to different community groups were used to gather public input and get the word out about future transportation projects.

One planning initiative that that residents have taken a particular interest in is the Safe Routes to School program, a national initiative that encourages children to lead healthier lifestyles by walking or biking to school. A Safe Routes to School task force at Summerour Middle School in Norcross worked out a plan for improving routes within

Figure 10: Family crossing Beaver Ruin Road (Georgia Department of Transportation, 2012, pg. 40)

two miles of the school so that students can more easily walk to school. The school is located in a predominantly residential area just south of Buford Highway in the Buford Highway Reinvestment Area. The task force created a Travel Plan based on issues that were identified as top concerns when traveling to school. The task force is working with the local government to get funding from the Georgia Department of Transportation and Federal government to start making the recommended improvements around the school (Georgia Department of Transportation, 2012).

Planning for Multiculturalism

Physical and spatial representations of multiculturalism are prominent in Norcross, particularly along the Buford Highway and Beaver Ruin Road corridors, where the majority of commercial real estate is comprised of strip malls, which adorn miles of roadway along the primary roads. Although single-story strip malls are a more common commercial building type in the United States than in other countries, ethnic businesses have embraced these spaces and, through the use of signage and building adornments, turned them into easily recognizable multiethnic spaces (See Figure 11). Many of the shopping centers are grouped by ethnic majority, with one strip mall or block entirely Mexican businesses and the next having a largely of Korean presence. Still it is not uncommon to find a strip mall with three or four different ethnicities represented.

Ethnic presence is less physically noticeable in housing areas, which generally follow the American protocol of residential design, including gated apartment communities and single family homes with large front yards and no sidewalks. Despite

Figure 11: Retail signage along Buford Highway

this, the challenges faced by the ethnic communities living in American cities are perhaps most prominently revealed in residential neighborhoods. For example, Hispanic transient workers may share a small apartment with a number of other workers in what they see as a money-saving temporary living situation. This has been a reoccurring concern in several apartment complexes in Norcross. Another issue is the problem of communicating legal obligations to non-English speaking home owners regarding their properties, such as building permit requirements. The city has attempted to mitigate both of these problems by providing translation services and actively seeking to solve problems before they reach a point of legal contention.

City officials make a concerted effort to reach out to ethnic minorities in the city though surveys and town hall meetings that target ethnic groups. Translators are provided for Spanish-speakers and translations are also offered in Chinese and Vietnamese, which is spoken by the majority of the Asian population. Apart from translating services, the city works in close partnership with ethnic community groups. The city relies on these partnerships to ensure that ethnic populations, particularly those who are new to the area and don't speak English, understand what services the city has to offer. The city works with community groups, like the Latin American Association (LAA) and Pan-Asian Association to ensure that members of those organizations are able to disseminate important city planning and policy information to their members.

The LAA specializes in providing services for economic issues, employment, education, and family support services for the Hispanic population. The LAA aims to support members, but not to the extent that they are dependent. Their goal is self-sufficiency. The organization has been in Atlanta for 14 years and has had its Norcross

Outreach Center for six years. The center, which is open during normal business hours from Monday to Friday, is located across from the city hall in a small house owned by the city of Norcross. Due to an agreement with the city, the LAA leases the building from the city for $1 a month. The organization has partnerships with City Hall, local schools, and churches, and well as with other ethnic and cultural groups. The LAA is a part of the Gwinnett Cultural Coalition, an assembly of community groups that includes the LAA and Pan-Asian Association Representatives. Coalition members meet monthly and plan various events together, usually in celebration of one of the represented ethnicities. The coalition, which was founded and initially met in Lawrenceville 34 years ago, enables groups to interact, fosters communication, and builds multicultural community connections.

A staff member at the Norcross Outreach Center commented that Gwinnett County is seen as a great place to live by the Latin American community because people can get "anything they need." The LAA and local churches deliver services for their members and provide them with means to connect to others who have the same background, speak the same language, and have the same cultural values as they do. Norcross' large Latin American presence and the city's welcoming environment appeals to residents and business owners who are happy to participate in city activities and services. Downtown Norcross hosts fairs, movies, shows, and farmer's markets that have strong Latino attendance. Attendance at town hall meetings is modest but steady and draws a diverse crowd. Residents are provided plenty of opportunities to participate in city events and be a part of traditional "American" experiences, while at the same time maintain their own unique cultures and traditions.

CHAPTER 7

FINDINGS AND EVALUATION

When Duluth and Norcross were incorporated as towns in the 1800s, their founders likely did not envision the changes that they would eventually experience. Over the years the towns grew both in size and number of inhabitants, and are now bustling cities. The cities' physical layout has reflects this growth. But perhaps the most significant change that both cities encountered within the ethnic makeup of the workers and inhabitants. The increase in the Asian and Hispanic population has resulted in a truly multicultural social landscape. First and second generation immigrants are able to benefit from being in close proximity to ethnic group members who share a cultural community. While major corridors in the cities reflect the multicultural presence in the form of store signage, there are not many significant physical design features that allude to city's ethnic diversity. Similarly, ethnic residents so not seem out of place in the American landscape, but are able to adjust to the preexisting landscape to meet their needs. The only physical design features that are lacking in both cities, but are needed to largely by members of the ethnic community are sidewalks and crosswalks. Pedestrian access appears to be the most significant issue for the ethnic community, who are more prone to walk between destinations than the white majority.

Though similar geographically and demographically, Norcross and Duluth differ in planning policies and priorities and subsequently responded to ethnic changes in different ways. Duluth's plans are centered on creating a small-town, historic feel that is visually represented in the city's historic-looking downtown retail area. These plans

appeal to many members of the local population, particularly long-time residents, but some areas of town are largely ignored. One major shortcoming with Duluth's planning process is that ethnic minorities and cultural organizations have a limited role in the planning process. Public participation is a necessary component of planning, but efforts to reach out to those less likely to engage in public meetings, such as non-English speakers, have not been carried out to fruition. Semi-annual town hall meetings alone do not provide the best means by which this group can understand city plans and procedures. Language boundaries and cultural differences can make it particularly challenging for ethnic populations to feel connected to the city in which they live and work. Ethnic minorities often are left with no other option than to adjust to the city's pre-established plans. The city's transportation plan, for example, is largely vehicle-centric and acknowledges the mounting problem of traffic congestion, but overlooks prospects for public transit and pedestrian accessibility. Low-income neighborhoods, particularly those where a language other than English is predominantly spoken, are more likely to use public transit, but have little voice in the development process.

Duluth's primary method to address multiculturalism has been reactive and economically-driven. The city's immigrant-owned businesses were largely ignored until problems arose that needed to be addressed in order to maintain their economic viability. The city government interfaces with Korean businesses through the Korean Task Force for the primary purpose of code enforcement and meeting legal requirements. Ethnic groups and individuals are not targeted for input; rather, groups are largely disregarded. Duluth's method of city-wide planning results in no some areas of town being given

precedence over others, and without many opportunities for participation, residents have limited involvement in city processes.

Unlike Duluth, Norcross' city plans do indicate conscious efforts to support diverse transportation options that serve non-drivers. Norcross plans to incorporate more pedestrian-friendly design elements in its main traffic corridors, not just in its downtown area, and the current transportation plan addresses the need for more public transit alternatives. Pedestrian accessibility and other priorities were determined through collaborations between state officials and planners, with surveys and town hall meetings serving as the primary source of public input. Additionally, the city utilizes as neighborhood-based planning method, in which the city is divided into twelve zones based on the physical, social, and economic features of that area. This method allows different areas of town to have different planning focuses and can provide a clearer picture on what is occurring in each section of the city.

Rather than being reactive in responding to the growing ethnic presence, Norcross city officials have been proactive in reaching out to ethnic community groups to keep their members informed and aware of city practices and opportunities for involvement. The city actively pursues input from different populations through surveys and meetings. City officials use translators and written translations to communicate plans and policies with non-English-speakers, but the city by and large relies on partnerships with culturally- and ethnically-focused community groups to reach the ethnic minority demographic. Self-organized, voluntary organizations actively promote activities and programs that foster community involvement and social contact. Public officials' close

relationship with these groups ensures that ethnic groups feel connected to the city government.

Norcross city officials have been actively interfacing with the Gwinnett Cultural Coalition to serve the physical and social needs of the community. Similar to San Francisco's Mission Coalition Organization (MCO) from the 1950's, the Gwinnett Cultural Coalition promotes groups' mutual support of each other and helps foster community cohesion between groups. But as the MCO come to discover, planned government efforts to promote economic activity and provide affordable housing and transportation options were not enough. Norcross has been working to connect community group efforts and government programs to fulfill the needs of multiple populations and ensure the greater planning goals of the area are met.

CHAPTER 8

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for City Officials

In both Norcross and Duluth, more can be done to foster community involvement within neighborhoods and ensure that city government is accessible to the people. One recommendation is for the city to incorporate citizen advisory councils into the participation process, so citizens can make recommendations to the mayor and City Council on planning issues such as zoning, land use, and transportation. A community or neighborhood-based planning method would be useful for both Duluth and Norcross, where neighborhoods can be comprised of residents from a number of different ethnic backgrounds. Norcross already has distinct planning priorities for its twelve city zones, but it could improve this model by creating advisory groups based on residential neighborhoods, similar to Atlanta's Neighborhood Planning Units. Adopting an NPU strategy would enable residents to assist the city in developing plans that best meet the needs of their neighborhoods. Inness' model of consensus building, in which stakeholder groups work alongside planners and city officials, could be considered by both cites. Businesses and organizations might not serve as direct advisors to city officials, but closer collaboration could be beneficial on both sides.

Community Benefits Campaigns are another way that Duluth and Norcross can ensure that development projects produce measurable benefits that positively affect the community. In CBCs, the residents most impacted by the project can hold the developers to a standard for how the development will occur, building a coalition between the

community, government, and developer. In order to further advance inclusiveness, Community Benefits Agreements could, for example, be established for the projects along Buford Highway, Jimmy Carter Boulevard, and other corridors slotted for significant redevelopment to ensure any community concerns are heard and addressed prior to project approval. The negotiation process that accompanies CBAs provides the opportunity to address diverse group interests and identify what people consider important. CBAs recognize the importance of balanced and equitable development of the city and promote equal participation by all residents.

Opportunities for Further Research

While Norcross and Duluth have a similar size and geographic location, there is a significant demographic difference that should not be overlooked. Both cities have a shrinking number of white residents, but their majority minority populations are different. Duluth has a higher Asian population, whereas Norcross has a higher concentration of Hispanics. This difference in demographic distribution was not largely examined in this research, but it could prove to be significant. Norcross' Mayor Harris noted that the Korean population was reserved and preferred to keep to themselves. The business owners were pleased to work with the mayor regarding business issues, but residents may be as receptive to the city officials' efforts to reach out to them. Nolly Dyste, Manager of the LAA's Norcross Outreach Center, noted that Asians "stick together," while Hispanics were more likely to be independent, and perhaps more extroverted. These remarks are based on personal observations and are not conclusive, but it is worth noting that cultural differences in attitude and behaviors may have had some on how the Norcross and Duluth

interacted with the groups and how they responded to them. Further research should be conducted on how different ethnic groups interact with public officials and other citizens.

The issue of how ethnic groups are represented in the physical landscape of a city also garners further consideration. It could prove useful to pursue whether income and housing prices matters in ethnic group distribution. For example, the location of low-income housing may push ethnic groups to live and work in certain parts of the city. However, it is also possible that ethnic communities are prone to self-segregation by their own accord. Ethnic neighborhoods may make residents feel more comfortable because they cultivate a shared ethnic identity not present in the rest of the city. Tracking ethnic group migrations, either between cities or between areas of a city, could also be researched to determine how ethnic groups are manifested in the built environment and better understand what determines people's physical interactions with their city.

Research studies on multiculturalism in American cities are limited and further research beyond the scope of this study is needed. Researchers should continue adding to literature on planning for multiculturalism by applying this research to other cities to see if similar findings result. This research exposes some gaps where further research is needed to better understand multiculturalism in planning. Research should be conducted using a larger sampling of interviewees or a formal survey distributed to many respondents to reach more conclusive answers on what methods are successful and which are not. This would make the results more conclusive and could yield different results. But despite the limitations of this research, planners can use these findings to further their understanding of multicultural planning and how similar cities might yield different results depending on the their planning methods and priorities.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

Cultural vitality can greatly benefit a city socially and economically. Literature that multiculturalism cane significantly and positively impact the character of the community, promote economic viability, and make the city a more desirable place to live and work. Despite the benefits of multiculturalism, Duluth city officials are hesitant to engage the ethnic population for specific inclusion in city planning. Multiculturalism has the potential to be Duluth's greatest social and economic asset, but its current task force alone does not address the needs of the ethnic minority residents. The city will likely become increasingly diverse and it could prove highly beneficial for Duluth to adjust its current city-wide, reactive method of planning to one that encourages multiculturalism through proactive, neighborhood-based action.

Norcross is an example of how a city can embrace cultural diversity while still valuing its historic roots. The city implements a planning technique where different zones of town are identified and planned for differently based on the desired outcomes for that area. Using this method, the city is establishes different goals for different neighborhoods, including which areas to preserve, where to build, and where to make physical improvements. The city relies heavily on independent and self-sufficient community groups to support the needs of ethnic groups, while city officials have started to make a concerted effort to understand the needs of the multicultural community by communicating with pre-existing ethnic groups. Ethnic input is sought by Norcross officials for the shaping of the city's future plans. The support and involvement of the

public sector, in conjunction with community-based organizations, allows individuals better access to municipal power in order to further grassroots efforts. Community groups help to determine the public resource needs for a specific segment of the community, while larger state and local programs can focus on bigger-picture issues.

America's strength lies in its multiculturalism, and Atlanta's and Gwinnett's strengths lie in their response to diversity. There are many components that make up a successful multicultural city. Both Norcross and Duluth have begun efforts to consider the role of their ethnic populations and how they fit into their cities. But while Duluth has remained dependent on traditional planning methods that utilize minimum community involvement and react to issues as they arise, Norcross has pursued a more proactive approach in gathering input and ensuring that diverse groups have the same opportunities to engage in city programs as established residents. Working with community groups has proven successful for Norcross, and ethnic community group members have expressed their satisfaction with Norcross as their home. The Asian and Hispanic populations will likely continue to grow in greater metro Atlanta, increasing diversity and further requiring cities to re-evaluate whether current planning initiatives address the diversifying social landscape. Duluth and Norcross are poised to provide a high quality of life and social satisfaction by proactively including their total population in the planning process.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

School of City and Regional Planning

Georgia Institute of Technology

Multicultural Planning in Gwinnett County Georgia

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

<u>Respondent Information:</u>

Name

Organization/Company and position

Questions:

1. What are the city's main planning goals and priorities?

2. How have these planning priorities changed over the past decade?

3. Are there one or two current planning initiatives that people have expressed a particular interest in?

I am trying to understand different ways the city might reach out to ethnic groups.

4. Is there a city-wide multicultural planning initiative?

5. Are there any neighborhood-based planning initiatives?

6. Does the city engage in collaborative planning with any local advocacy or advisory groups?

7. How is public participation incorporated into the local planning process?

8. Do you feel that that ethnic and cultural groups are well-served? Can you give an example?

9. What have been the major planning issues or concerns that have arisen in the past decade pertaining to specific ethnic groups?

10. How did you respond to these concerns?

11. Are there other representatives from the community who you could recommend for me to follow up with?

12. Are there any questions you would like to ask me?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Subject: Graduate Student seeking information on local planning practices

Dear Mr/Ms _____,

I am a city and regional planning graduate student at Georgia Tech. For my master's research, I am looking at how Norcross and other municipalities within Gwinnett County are planning for diversity and multiculturalism. I would like to examine planning and public participation techniques that have been effective in addressing diverse populations.

If possible, I would like to arrange a short interview with you to ask a few questions regarding city planning practices in your municipality, particularly regarding strategies to plan for multicultural populations.

I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you in advance for any assistance you can provide.

Sincerely,

Alison Pienta
Graduate Student
School of City and Regional Planning
Georgia Institute of Technology

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

CONSENT DOCUMENT FOR ENROLLING
ADULT PARTICIPANTS IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Georgia Institute of Technology
Project Title: Multiculturalism in City Planning: Experience in Gwinnett County, Georgia
Investigators: Alison Pienta; Bruce Stiftel
Protocol and Consent Title: Elite Survey of Planning Officials

You are being asked to be a volunteer in a research study. The purpose of this study is to better understand how multiculturalism fits into local planning processes. If you decide to participate in this study, you will be asked to answer a series of interview questions pertaining to city planning in your locality. There are no known or anticipated risks or discomforts associated with participation in this study.

The total amount of time you will be interviewed is less than one hour. Remember, you may stop at any time. You are not likely to benefit in any way from joining this study. We hope that what we learn will help us to understand how multiculturalism is incorporated into planning. There is no compensation for participation.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You do not have to be in this study if you don't want to be. You have the right to change your mind and leave the study at any time without giving any reason and without penalty. If you decide not to finish the study, you have the right to withdraw any data collected about you. Should you decide to withdraw from the study, your questionnaires will be shredded. Any new information that may make you change your mind about being in this study will not be given to you.

You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep. You do not waive any of your legal rights by signing this consent form. You will have the opportunity to review the text in which their quotes or identity appear to ensure proper attribution. You may be quoted by name in this research once the study is complete. The Office of Human Research Protections may also look over study records during required reviews.

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Dr. Bruce Stiftel, Principal Investigator at telephone (404) 894-2350 or bruce.stiftel@gatech.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact Ms. Melanie Clark, Georgia Institute of Technology Office of Research Compliance, at (404) 894-6942.

If you sign below, it means that you have read (or have had read to you) the information given in this consent form, and you would like to be a volunteer in this study.

_____
Participant Name (printed)

_____   _____
Participant Signature   Date

_____   _____
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent   Date

APPENDIX D

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

List of Interviewees

Glenn Coyne

Department Director, Planning and Development, City of Duluth, Georgia

Christopher McGahee

Economic Development Director, City of Duluth, Georgia

Nancy Harris

Mayor, City of Duluth, Georgia

Chris McCrary

Community Development Director/Planner, City of Norcross, Georgia

Chuck Warbington, PE

Executive Director, Gwinnett Village Community Improvement District

Nolly Dyste

Manager, Norcross Outreach Center

APPENDIX E

IRB APPROVAL FORM

Protocol H12223

Title: Elite Survey for Planning Officials

Principal Investigator: Bruce S Stiftel

Admin Assigned: Kelly A. Winn

Committee Assigned: Central IRB Committee #1

Review Type: Expedited Review

Current Status: Approved

Last Activity: 06/14/2012 - Supplemental Document added by Administrator

Original Approval Start: 06/14/2012

Current Approval Period: 06/14/2012 - 06/13/2013

Protocol Summary

Protocol Description: In this research I hope to gain a better understanding of how multiculturalism fits into the local city planning processes of Norcross, Georgia and other municipalities in Gwinnett County, Georgia. I will attempt to identify how ethnic communities are involved in planning practices and what effects they have on planning outcomes. Data will be collected from published records (both national sources and county/city sources) and by interviewing key professionals and elected officials actively involved in planning in the county. Online sources will be used to better understand the area's history, demographic make-up, and economic structure. Professionals/officials interviews will be used to better understand methods of community involvement used in the County, what issues and conflicts are prevalent in their communities, and issues regarding the physical and social use of space, transportation, urban design, and other fields of planning. Interviewees are expected to include such officials as Chris McCrary, Planning Director of Norcross, and Glenn Coyne, Planning Director of Duluth. The results of the interviews and will provide an overview of what issues are perceived to be most prevalent in the community and show the extent to which multiculturalism is being addressed in planning practices and policies. My intent is to identify any disconnects that exist between current planning practices and multicultural community involvement in planning. The findings are intended to be exploratory rather than conclusive, but recommendations on how to remedy identified shortcomings will be explored for future consideration.

Protocol Department: City & Reg. Planning

Research Personnel: 2 personnel

Researcher Certifications: 2 researchers have active "Georgia Tech CITI Human Subjects Training Certification" certifications

certification details

Amendments: none

Continuing Reviews:	none
SAE's/Adverse Event's:	none
Safety Reports:	0 Safety Reports created »Submit Safety Report
Protocol Deviations:	0 Protocol Deviations created »Report Protocol Deviation
Study Closures:	0 Study Closures created »Report Study Closure
Research Funding:	none
Research Locations:	2 locations
Research Subjects:	6 subjects, Both genders
Vulnerable Populations:	none
Drugs:	none
Investigational Devices:	none
Radiation:	none
Key Words:	city planning, multiculturalism, community involvement
Documents:	4 documents, 2 supplemental documents
Investigator Brochures:	0 Investigator Brochures created »Submit Investigator Brochure

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Visit the Georgia Tech IRB Website

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