



September 2017

From the Mayor's Desk

A Look Ahead to Next 5 Years and Beyond

Five years ago our city was at the tipping point. Office vacancy rates in Technology Park were too high, empty strip malls were appearing on Holcomb Bridge Road, and the rights of way in this once resort-like community were beginning to look unkempt.

Home values were stable, due largely to great local schools, but housing choices, especially for empty nesters, retirees and millennials were nonexistent. Other communities were organized and focused on redevelopment to attract companies and citizens. Most significantly, as a community, we had no central gathering place. No downtown; no sense of place.

Today, it's a very different story.

There are big changes happening across our city. As you know, we broke ground on our 21-acre town center on June 30, 2017. It will have a movie theatre, restaurants, retail, office space, a 2-acre green space, a parking deck, a botanical garden, and over 70 townhomes. The mixed-use development is scheduled for completion in fall 2018.

In the past five years, 23 major companies have relocated to Peachtree Corners bringing 2,009 jobs, compared to only 14 companies bringing 713 jobs in the five years before we became a city. We partnered with Georgia Tech to open a business incubator, Prototype Prime, to help launch hardware and software startups.

Several townhome communities have been approved targeting empty nesters and retirees and a 290-unit millennial housing development broke ground in Tech Park to serve the young workers in our high-tech business community.

We are also beginning to work on the city's 11.4 mile multi-use trail for walkers, runners, and cyclists which will wind through the city connecting Tech Park and our residential neighborhoods. The first leg of the trail will connect the two lakes in the heart of Tech Park with the new town center and is also scheduled for completion in the fall of 2018.

We're actively addressing traffic problems working with the State, County, and surrounding Cities to improve transportation corridors. We're also focused on

pedestrian safety as we add trails, sidewalks and streetlights. A Pedestrian Safety Task Force of volunteer citizens is analyzing our community's streets and preparing recommendations to improve safety to complement the city's efforts to improve connectivity.

We now have a public works crew that keeps the roads paved, sidewalk construction moving, and the rights of way clean and well-trimmed. Most important, the concern that we are being bypassed in favor of newer communities bringing the inevitable slide in property values, more abandoned strip malls, and young people moving away, is all but gone. We're not at the tipping point anymore. Yes, today, it's a very different story. And there's even more tomorrow.

A look ahead.

In the next five years, and beyond, the community will be living, learning, working, and playing on the town center. Special events will bring residents to enjoy the town green, the restaurants, and the movie theatre. The multi-use trail will bring walkers, runners, and cyclist from Tech Park to the town center and around the loop in the city's downtown area. Sidewalks, streetlights, and a network of connecting trails will crisscross the entire city offering healthy transportation alternatives for local shopping and entertainment.

Residential communities aimed at empty nesters and retirees will be available completing the cycle of life as our city's older citizens leave their single-family homes in nice subdivisions within good school districts which, in turn, will be purchased by younger couples just starting their families.

A robust innovation hub will be underway in the downtown office market with high tech startups launching and expanding. Walkable millennial housing, high speed internet, a coding school, numerous incubator and accelerator spaces, boutique hotels, and craft restaurants will support the startup culture.

An autonomous vehicle route will shuttle workers around the downtown community. Redevelopment will have taken hold on the Holcomb Bridge and outer Peachtree Corners Circle corridor and aging apartments will be replaced with a variety of different housing options. The revitalization of vacant strip malls and empty office space will begin.

A branch campus of a major state educational institution will locate in the city offering two and four-year programs as well as opportunity for continuing professional education. An arts center will be developed with a black box theater as well as studio space for musicians, dancers, painters, and writers. The Chattahoochee River, long an underutilized city amenity, will be opened to greater recreational use while safeguarded as the treasure it is for future generations.

Don't be surprised if you start hearing more about Peachtree Corners. As all of us who live here know, it's a great place to live, learn, work, and play.

Mayor Mike Mason

###