

**Douglasville Mayor and City Council
Retreat
DRAFT Report**



**Courtyard Marriott
Lithia Springs, Georgia
895 Bob Arnold Boulevard
February 7 - 8, 2019**



**Carl Vinson
Institute of Government
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

Douglasville Retreat Report February 7 - 8, 2019

Thursday, February 7th

8:00 am – 9:00 am	<i>Breakfast</i>
9:00 am – 9:45 am	Douglasville /Douglas County Water Sewer Authority
9:45 am – 10:00 am	<i>Break</i>
10:00 am – 10:45 am	Douglas County Development Authority
11:00 am – 11:45 am	Atlanta Regional Commission
11:45 am – 12:15 pm	<i>Lunch</i>
12:15 pm – 1:15 pm	Finance
1:30 pm – 2:30 pm	Human Resources
2:30 pm – 2:45 pm	<i>Break</i>
2:45 pm – 3:45 pm	Parks and Recreation
3:45 pm – 5:15 pm	Maintenance and Sanitation
5:15 pm – 6:00 pm	City Manager’s Office
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	<i>Dinner</i>

Friday, February 8th

8:00 am – 9:00 am	<i>Breakfast</i>
9:00 am – 10:00 pm	Police
10:00 am – 11:30 am	Community Development
11:30 am – 12:00 pm	Project update
12:00 pm – 12:30 pm	<i>Lunch</i>
12:30 pm – 1:00 pm	City Manager’s Office
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Mayor – Council Topics
3:00 pm – 4:30 pm	Recap

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Facilitator Roles

- Keep the conversation focused
- Make sure everyone is heard
- Keep a written record (of consensus agreements)
- Help the group work towards consensus
- Answer questions
- Referee if needed

Ground Rules

- **Check your title** at the door, we're all **equal adults** here today
- The past is past, **focus on and talk about the Future**
- **Speak the truth** (as you know it)
- **Don't judge** other's comments
- Allow others in your group to talk, **Please don't dominate**
- **Trust** each other enough to speak and **Respect** each other enough to listen
- **Respect** each other's differences and perspectives
- **Talk to each other**.....not the media
- **Address challenges not people**, No personal assaults
- **"Don't beat a dead horse"** **dismount**
- **Agreement** on ground rules

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VISION

Douglasville is a unique blend of small-town charm coupled with metropolitan amenities. We offer the ideal environment for startups and small businesses, and provide high tech centers and fortune 500 companies the infrastructure for growth. The standard for southern living, Douglasville is the place where innovation meets opportunity. Dedicated to employees, pleasant and responsive to the community and committed to enhancing the quality of life for both visitors and residents alike, Douglasville is the premier city in the nation to live, work, play and raise a family.

MISSION

Through sound leadership, fiscal accountability and dedicated teamwork, Douglasville will provide exemplary municipal services while maintaining a standard of "excellence" in city government.

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Mayor and City Council Goals - Fiscal Year 2019

- *Complete the Fleet Maintenance Assessment Report and incorporate recommended operational components in the design and construction of the new Maintenance and Sanitation Facility - This goal is completed. Facility design and construction project is underway. Staff will continue to use the fleet study to incorporate vehicle needs into the capital improvement plan.*
- *Continue the implementation of the construction of projects identified in the Transportation Master Plan. Staff will present to the Mayor and City Council the next phase of projects identified in the plan that are ready for design in order to prioritize the projects based on funding availability - Multiple transportation projects have been planned and are under design, with several projects going to bid for construction this spring. Prioritize Highway 92 for improvements and postpone Douglas Boulevard until the sale of Arbor Place Mall is completed.*
- *Complete the necessary actions to reorganize the Community Development Department and finalize the transition of the Code Enforcement Officers into the department. Tasks to complete this goal include the recruitment and hiring of the new Community Development Director, and complete the hiring of other staff in the department - The Code Enforcement function has been transferred to the Community Development Department and the outsourced support has concluded. The department is now fully staffed and this goal is completed.*
- *Complete the new City of Douglasville brand project that is underway. Upon completion of the project, adopt the brand and policies to support consistent and successful implementation throughout all City department - This goal is completed and implementation is underway. Policies have been adopted and implemented throughout the City.*

- *Utilize the information presented in the comprehensive study of the Communications Department to finalize and approve the desired roles and responsibilities of the department. Identify and complete all tasks needed to support the redefined operational roles of the department - This goal is completed and now transferred to the Community Relations Department. Staffing is underway.*
- *Complete and adopt the new Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Work with the City Manager and staff to establish a project priority list to begin implementation of the plan based on available funding - Concept design phase underway for three parks. The City is about to conduct multiple interest meetings with the community leading to construction of several projects next year.*
- *Complete the analysis of the operational expenses of Municipal Court. Identify the specific tasks needed to provide a fully operational court and to standardize the annual costs of the Court - Completed the financial analysis of the court and now the court is operating in a more financially efficient manner.*
- *Complete all environmental testing for the Old Mill site and proceed with the Master Planning process for the site based on the results of the testing - City has completed all environmental testing that was required by the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) and staff projects that costs for clean-up of the site will be determined this summer. This information will be provided to the elected officials at that time to determine next steps for the site.*
- *Continue to operate the City in a fiscally responsible manner to support a continued increase in the reserve funds - The annual audit report was completed and presented recently to the elected officials. The City's reserve fund level was increased during the past year.*

I. Partner Organization Presentations:

Douglasville/Douglas County Water Sewer Authority – Gil Shearouse, Executive Director. Items reviewed: 1) Addressing new regulations and projects set forth in the Water Resource Management Plan; 2) Advanced Meter Reading (AMR) supported by the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) program for 43,000 meters; 3) Programs supporting water conservation and customer service; and 4) Storm water management. Additional information was provided on floodplain management for the community.

Douglas County Development Authority – Chris Pumphrey, Executive Director. Project updates included: 1) New community branding project and implementation of the project; 2) Hiring of new staff; 3) Property purchases; 4) Creation of a tax incentive plan compliance plan and process; 5) Initiated first small business and entrepreneurship program with Mercer; and 6) Held first the regional industry summit. Authority originated 19 projects, creating 5,892 jobs with an average salary of \$61,908, and had four wins with investments of \$104,000,000, creating 363 permanent jobs. They have also created an employer centric workforce development program.

Atlanta Regional Commission – Doug Hooker, Executive Director. Mr. Hooker reviewed information about the 100 metropolitan areas in the country and how that concept applies to the Atlanta region. He then reviewed the history of the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and he outlined the services that the ARC provides to the local governments within the region and the role of the ARC as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the ten counties in the designated region. The ARC has the regional commission charter, the transportation planning charter, and the organization serves as the entity to administer the services as the Area Agency on Aging. The ARC also oversees water management and regulatory functions in the region for eleven counties. They also serve some of the counties for workforce development through the Atlanta Regional Workforce Development Board. The ARC also serves as the coordinating entity for the Urban Area Security Initiative Program. A review of the composition of the 39 member board was outlined and how the Mayor of Douglasville must serve since it is the only City in Douglas County. Mr. Hooker provided an overview of the Atlanta Regions Plan, which contains three goals of world-class infrastructure, competitive economy, and healthy, livable communities. Douglas County has the second highest commuting population going in and out of the metropolitan area. He reviewed how they tie together community development planning and transportation planning. There is currently a Livable Communities Initiative (LCI) grant in place to fund the Highway 92 corridor and he is aware that there will be a new grant application for the Lee Road and Highway 92 project.

Transit Services Division/Connect Douglas – Gary Watson, Executive Director. The name of the organization comes from their mission of connecting the people in the county through transportation. Current services include the commuter vanpools, the

transportation voucher program for seniors and people with disabilities, SRTA Xpress bus service to Atlanta, trip planning, and the Park and Ride lots. The primary purpose of the presentation pertained to the fixed route services. There will be a third party operator for the bus service. The system will utilize cutaway vehicles that accommodate fifteen people: one driver, twelve passengers and two wheelchairs. Next was a presentation on the public input process and the engagement efforts to determine the routes. Transition Commute Solutions, the third party operator, presented specific information about the routes inside the city of Douglasville. The final portion of the presentation pertained to the ADA paratransit component of the system. The launch date for the service is spring 2019. All routes and times are subject to change based on continued analysis. Some of the citizens express concerned about safety around the bus stops and the appearance of the bus stops. There will be a six month to yearlong evaluation of the service. There were additional questions regarding property ownership issues impacting the location of stops, safety for riders while loading and unloading, and rider safety while they are on the buses. Also, there was a question as to who will be involved in the future when the grant funds are expended. Staff advised they do not know the impact of the ATL on the future of the system. The County Commissioners will need to make a decision later on as to how to continue to fund the program, once the grant expires. The third party operator will hire the drivers for the system. They will go through extensive background and safety checks. Their goal is to hire the drivers from the local community.

II. Departmental Presentations:

Finance Department: The budget calendar for the year was reviewed and the fund balance was highlighted, but it was stressed that there are many projects in the future that have unknown costs attached to them that would need to possibly come out of the fund balance. The millage rate analysis and other revenue sources were reviewed. The department will pursue the Government Finance Officers Association Budget award, which will require the adoption of some additional policies. The contract for tax collections will have to be renegotiated next year with the Tax Commissioner. The City Manager shared that the Finance Department was first so that the elected officials would have the baseline financial information prior to hearing all of the other departmental presentations.

Human Resources Department: A comprehensive review was provided of the current retirement plan for employees. Additional information was provided on employee health benefits and centralizing this function to one specialist position, voluntary benefits administration and meetings with employees and benefit carriers, and departmental staffing. The Benefits Specialist and Human Resources Generalist positions are now being advertised and interviews will take place in the coming weeks to complete the recruitment for these positions. An overview was provided of the duties of these two positions. Information on departmental technical concerns was provided pertaining to payroll discrepancies, software implementation, and designated duty increases. A summary of

ongoing and future efforts was presented. This also included a new system and policy of background checks on employees being developed in conjunction with the city attorney's office.

Parks and Recreation Department: An overview was provided of the certification process through the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA). The three pillars of NRPA are conservation, health and wellness, and social equity. Additional information was provided on program development and policy to include; recreation programming planning, goals and objectives, outreach to diverse underserved populations, volunteers, and a systematic evaluation process. A review of the advisory board membership and their duties was presented. The City's goal is to become the 11th accredited parks and recreation agency in Georgia. There are 151 standards in the accreditation process. The timeline planned for accreditation is to successfully complete the process by October 2020. Finally, information was presented on the parks design Request For Proposals (RFP). There will be a series of upcoming public input meetings about the proposed park projects. The elected officials will also be interviewed by the successful design firm, once selected. The director also announced a pending staff hire that will supervisor all facilities maintenance for the department.

Maintenance and Sanitation:

Facilities Assessment Survey – Eleven facilities are in excellent condition, five are in good condition, four are in fair condition, four are below average condition, one is in poor condition, and two are in need of replacement. Staff then reviewed various property renovation plans to include the work completed to date on City Hall.

Fleet Assessment Report – An overview was provided of the fleet maintenance system and the facilities. There needs to be a communication regarding the purchase of larger police vehicles and the impact on the bays at the police department maintenance facility. The cost of the larger vehicle is higher and impacts the physical size of that maintenance facility. Staff will seek guidance from the elected officials regarding the policy going forward with vehicle purchases, taking these factors into consideration.

SPLOST Transportation Update –Issues were highlighted regarding the quality of the projects completed to date by the current contractor for resurfacing and how to correct them with the contractor. The Mayor and Council asked for an updated list of the streets that have been completed and those that remain on the list to be completed. The direction of the elected officials is that no new business will be given to a contractor until they have successfully completed the projects they have underway with the City. There was discussion on the Douglas Boulevard project and the enhancements in the project. The City Manager recommended that the full project be placed on hold due to the proposed sale of the Mall and only conduct the resurfacing project needed at this point. The larger scale project could be revisited once the property is sold. It was the consensus of the elected officials to follow the recommendation of the City Manager on how to proceed with this project. Other projects reviewed included the Fairburn Road interchange project, Dallas Highway and Fairburn

Road gateways, Community Center parking lot, Cedar Mountain maintenance facility, and the west courthouse square building.

City Manager's Office:

Conference Center – Staff reviewed the catering sales and catering profits as it relates to the current catering contractor. The profit provided to the City over the past five years was presented in the detailed presentation. The elected officials were asked to notify the Conference Center Director when they observe problems with the catering contractor's performance or staff. The Conference Center staff can handle that immediately with the contractor. It is time to renegotiate with the catering contract with the vendor. There was also preliminary information provided pertaining to the need for upgrades and repairs to the facility to include carpet and the A/V system. There are also issues with the bathrooms.

Council Manual Presentation – Staff presented information on the newly elected officials' orientation manual to include various points regarding marketing materials, City social media efforts, information from ICMA, and ordinances.

Police Department – The Chief reviewed the core values of the department, the status of departmental manpower, and the recent recruiting efforts. The referral bonus of \$500 was also discussed. Next was a review of the 2018 crime trends. The rates are down on all Part I crimes, except for slight increases in motor vehicle thefts and arson. The department has been conducting proactive enforcement and citizen engagement activities around the city. Information was shared about the upcoming Town Hall meeting on March 5th and the presentation of the end of the year report. Information was provided about departmental employee health and wellness programs to include the mentoring programs, employee training, and the physical and mental wellness assistance programs. The upcoming budget request was reviewed. The main area of focus is the replacement of vehicles, with the departmental preference being the Chevy Tahoe. The total request is \$875,000 for eighteen new vehicles that are various makes and models. There was also a review of the other departmental requests for equipment for the officers. There will also be additional requests for personnel for a GCIC Clerk, a Crime Analyst, and an I.T. Technician.

Community Development: The presentation included information on the new Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and pending adoption. The major changes include; the zoning code and building code are now combined into one unified ordinance with similar terms, consolidated definitions and combined processes and procedures, the entire document was cleaned up to remove redundancy and incorrect reference, and graphics were included to provide better understanding of the regulations. The next portion of the presentation was pertaining to downtown development and the Downtown Master Planning process. Detailed information was provided on the downtown greenspace project, as well as a review of overall landscaping and lighting preferences, and elevations of the larger comprehensive process. It was the consensus of the elected officials for concept A proposed for the greenspace project to provide a capacity of approximately 3,000 participants. Information was provided on the Northside Redevelopment Plan. The key elements are code

enforcement, environmental design, housing reinvestment, rental registration, blight tax, tax abatements, historic preservation, and land banking. Partnership projects and organizations were identified in support of the effort. Finally, staff reviewed the various catalytic projects within the redevelopment plan. The final portion of this session was focused on the amphitheater. Staff proposes the Parks Department will maintain the greenspace park area, adjacent rights-of-way will be maintained by the Maintenance Department, and the management would fall under the Conference Center.

Project Update and SPLOST Project Update – Staff presented the SPLOST collections for the previous month, with a note that the increase has only been 3% and 4% the past two months. There was a review of the projects under the categories of resurfacing, parks and recreation, public safety, and facilities. There was also detailed information presented on the distribution of funds in each category to date. The elected officials approved taking additional funds out of the Sanitation Reserve Fund and the General Fund Reserve Fund for the Cedar Mountain and Courthouse Square projects.

The Jackson paving contract was next discussed with staff. The contractor has completed twenty-five streets and there are another thirty streets to be completed. There are issues impacting some of the completed projects related to poor workmanship and equipment. Staff needs guidance on whether or not the elected officials want to stay with the current contractor or move on to other options. There is a list of current streets and the streets on the Round 2 SPLOST project list and it will be emailed to the elected officials.

City Manager's Report – There was a presentation on the travel and training budgets. The current adopted ordinance guides this issue. There was a comparison of twenty cities in Georgia regarding the topic. It was the consensus of the elected officials that the current funding amounts were sufficient and should not be increased. Also, any additional training that is voted on by the elected officials, the official attending the conference will bring back the conference materials to share with the other elected officials. All officials should stay within the current annual budget amounts for travel. During the Fiscal Year 2020 budget process, the rollover issue will be presented and considered. The City Attorney clarified that the detailed information outlined in the ordinance is not required by law, but for them to support transparency with the citizens.

Fiscal Year 2020 Mayor and Council Goals:

Review the Basic Stormwater Management Facility Maintenance Policy, which was adopted in 2013. Analyze current storm water issues raised by private property owners and determine how best to address those issues in relation to the adopted policy and how stormwater is managed by the Douglasville/Douglas County Water Sewer Authority.

Work in partnership with the Douglas County Development Authority to develop and present a facilities use plan for the jail property for presentation and approval by the Mayor and Council.

Police Department will prepare a vehicle replacement capital improvement plan outlining the types of vehicles, annual budget impact, revenue sources, and number of years for conversion to the preferred vehicle type. Also, costs should be included for improvements needed at the vehicle maintenance facility for the Police Department and subsequent maintenance and operating costs.

Continue implementation steps to finalize the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) for adoption by the Mayor and City Council. Coordinate with partner agencies to address issues related to the completion and adoption of the UDO. Set up a committee meeting to discuss other issues that were identified to include materials that need to be addressed before adoption.

Develop an Entertainment District Ordinance based on review of peer cities related to public spaces, special events, the inclusion of public art, and overlay districts. Present new ordinance for review and adoption by the elected officials.

Conduct a preliminary analysis of repairs and upgrades needed at Conference Center. Develop a budget encompassing the cost of repairs and upgrades to determine the best method to approach the project.

Implement changes to the Wednesday Wind Down concert series to include locating the event back downtown, development of an event checklist for use and oversight by the Parks and Recreation Department, and providing

opportunities for multiple artists to participate in the event, who represent all varieties of music.

Continue to operate the City in a fiscally responsible manner to support a continued increase in the reserve funds.

Short term work issues:

- Discussion related to the two buildings in the Jesse Davis park – the old bank building and the building housing the daycare center. The consensus of the group is that both buildings should be demolished.
- Staff will develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) for naming of the amphitheater to be brought before the Mayor and Council for approval.
- Staff is to meet with the current paving contractor regarding the timing issues and quality of project completion. They will have a report and recommendation back to the elected officials by March 15th.



ABOUT YOUR FACILITATOR

MARA O. SHAW, MPA, CMSM

**Leadership Development Program Manager
Governmental Training, Education, and Development Division
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Mara Shaw is a faculty member with the training division at the Institute of Government. She has more than 27 years of experience in local government, primarily in the areas of administration, downtown and community development, code enforcement, and local government planning. Before coming to the Institute in 2013, Ms. Shaw served as the assistant to the city manager for the City of Valdosta, Georgia. Prior to her work in Valdosta, she was the community development director for the City of Kingsland, Georgia. She has also successfully completed the course of study as a Certified Main Street Manager through the National Trust Main Street Center in Washington, D.C. Mara was honored with the Candle in the Dark award in 2014 for her government and community service by the Valdosta-Lowndes County Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration Association. She was previously named the 2005 Senator Loyce Turner Outstanding Public Official by Valdosta State University and received the Department of Community Affairs Outstanding Leadership Award in 2006. Mara's areas of expertise include facilitation, local government administration, neighborhood and community development, downtown development, historic preservation, code enforcement, local government planning, public information and communication, land bank authority development and administration.

Education:

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