



## MEETING IN A BOX SUMMARY

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### OVERVIEW

The Meeting in a Box activity provided Forsyth County residents with an option to host their own mini workshops as part of community group meetings. Each box contained an explanation of the comprehensive planning process, information about future involvement opportunities, a set of discussion questions, directions for a mapping exercise, a large format map, stickers, and comment forms. The kits were made available for pick up at the Forsyth County Department of Planning and Community Development between June 1, 2016 and June 22, 2016.

### PARTICIPANTS

Eight boxes were picked up and six envelopes with comments were returned, as indicated below.

#### GROUP 1

**Organization Represented:** Biscuit Boyz

**Reason for Meeting:** Regular Thursday Mentor Training

**Location of Meeting:** Hearthstone Lodge Senior Center

**Number of Attendees:** 6/9/16 (16 attendees) 6/16/16 (19 attendees)

#### GROUP 2

**Organization Represented:** Aberdeen Homeowners (Not the HOA)

**Reason for Meeting:** Forsyth County Growth: Citizen Input

**Location of Meeting:** Aberdeen Clubhouse

**Number of Attendees:** 12 – Charlie Smith, Jessica Mercon

#### GROUP 3

**Organization Represented:** Age Well Forsyth

**Reason for Meeting:** Monthly Board Meeting

**Location of Meeting:** Home of Executive Director

**Number of Attendees:** 10

#### GROUP 4

**Organization Represented:** Democratic Women of Forsyth County

**Reason for Meeting:** Monthly Meeting

**Location of Meeting:** Rosati's Restaurant

**Number of Attendees:** 20 (8 people written on Discussion Question #2)

## GROUP 5

*(Did not return envelope, checked out by Bill Gunby for FCRG)*

## GROUP 6

**Organization Represented:** Forsyth County Democratic Party

**Reason for Meeting:** Monthly Meeting

**Location of Meeting:** McDonald 7 Son Funeral Home Community Room

**Number of Attendees:** 20 (only map given no comment sheet)

## GROUP 7

**Organization Represented:** Shiloh Farms HOA

**Reason for Meeting:** Comments on the Comprehensive Plan

**Location of Meeting:** Shiloh Farms Clubhouse

**Number of Attendees:** 8

## GROUP 8

*(Did not return envelope, checked out by Les Dobbins for neighborhood)*

## DISCUSSION QUESTION #1

**Imagine it is five years from now. What does Forsyth County have in 2021 that makes you an even happier member of the Forsyth community than you are today?**

### GROUP 1

- More greenway paths connecting areas, like Big Creek and Sawnee Mountain
- Manage growth
- Term limits on Commissioners
- Upgrade all state highways to 4 lanes or more to move out of county traffic through the county.
  - #400 8 lanes
  - #369 & #20 6 lanes
- Plan new business and shopping to be a destination away from major highways so the only traffic would be that seeking those areas.
- Circle those areas with perimeter roads for multiple entry points without having to drive thru the middle.

### GROUP 2

- Larger lots, fewer homes
- More attractive for business versus residential
- More coordination of infrastructure before development occurs
- Greenway more coordinated (i.e. connect to the parks)
- Independent restaurants –no chains

- More walk to restaurants
- Intake to the lake for the county

### GROUP 3

- Civic center/arts community support
- County-supported adult day care facilities
- Better transportation for seniors and disabled adults, expanded hours for Dial-A-Ride
- Memorial Day and Veterans Day, recognition of names on flags

### GROUP 4

- Train in county
- Water, roads improved
- Government-subsidized (low-income) housing for the elderly

### GROUP 7

In order to have a happier community, we believe that during the next five years Forsyth County should implement or have completed projects that address the following:

- More walkable areas
- Greenspace incorporated into new subdivisions
- Stronger overlay districts along GA Hwy 9 and GA Hwy 141
- Road and other infrastructure improvements
- A “downtown/main street” core area such as the City of Suwanee or City of Duluth
- Moratorium on school redistricting
- More conservation of property significant or historical to Forsyth County i.e. family farms, historic homes/tracts, scenic views, etc.
- Larger lot subdivisions
- Attracting new large scale business and sustainable jobs

### DISCUSSION QUESTION #2

**What is the number one action you would like to see Forsyth County accomplish in the next five years? This can be a policy, initiative, program, infrastructure investment, or other item.**

### GROUP 1

- Less traffic. Improved traffic lanes.
- Less apartments. Apartments draw an element that strains the school system.
- John’s Creek area seems to get more/better facilities than Cumming area.
- GA 400 4 lane highway need coordinated improvement to the remaining lesser grid of roads.

- This group is made up [of] senior citizens average age 75+; the concern of the group was that we have the facilities we want we just can't get to them easily.
- Planning should start with the transportation corridors; move new development away from these areas to allow traffic to flow.
- We all moved to this county to escape the development this plan promotes. At our ages, quality of life brought us here and loss of quality of life or live itself will move us from here.
- The younger people planning for more development will move when Forsyth County resemble[s] DeKalb and Gwinnett.

## GROUP 2

- Bicycle lanes
- Infrastructure –roads, fiber, utilities
  - Make sure in place before houses are built
- Economic director—specific to bringing/promoting business
- Attracting young workers/families
- Need a program/marketing to compete with John's Creek, Alpharetta with bringing high paying jobs to Forsyth County. We need to make Forsyth County more attractive to businesses relocating.
- Also have a technology park for businesses to relocate

## GROUP 3

- Public/private supported adult day care
- Expanded transportation for seniors

## GROUP 4

- Less people
- More transportation
- Stop mini-mansions
- Start-up industries
- Affordable housing – quality (starter homes)

## GROUP 7

- We would like to see moratorium on all residential rezoning applications and residential building permits until schools and infrastructure are at levels to support not just the existing population, but also the future population of Forsyth County.

## MAPPING EXERCISE

Each group was provided with a map and multicolored dot stickers, along with directions for completing the mapping exercise. The different colored dots represented different types of future development: two for town center/mixed-use (red); three for business and industry (blue); and four for residential (orange). Participants were given descriptions and reference images for each type of development. They were asked to place the corresponding dots in the locations they felt were most appropriate for future development of each type. The completed maps are shown in Figures 1-6 below.



Figure 1. Group 1 Map

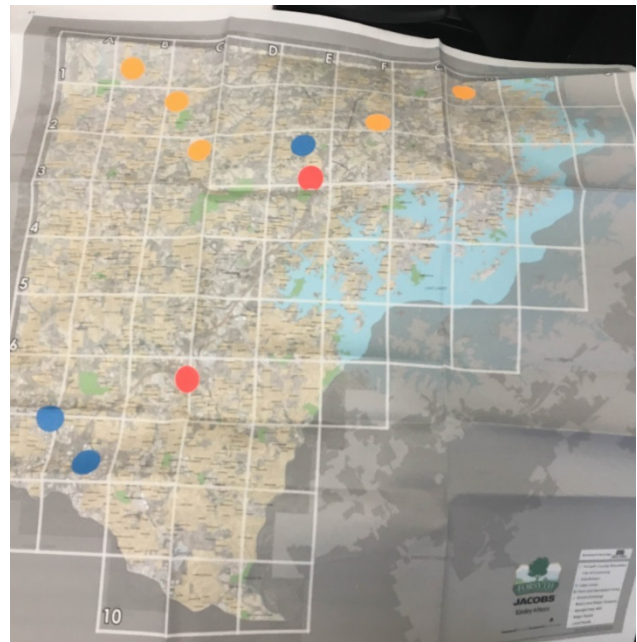


Figure 2. Group 2 Map



Figure 3. Group 3 Map

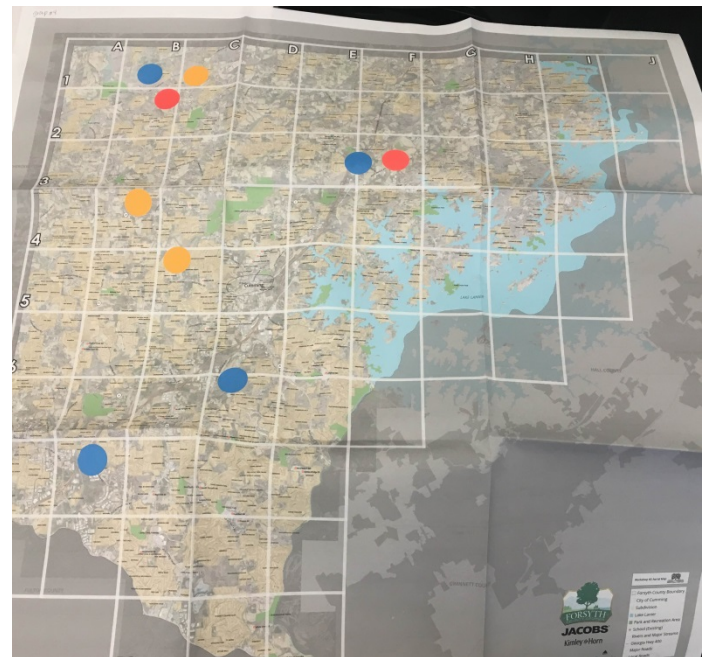


Figure 4. Group 4 Map



Figure 5. Group 6 Map



Figure 6. Group 7 Map