



Candidate Questions and Answers

Responses Submitted January 2012

1. How do you envision The City of Peachtree Corners in 20 years?

In a time where change is so rapid, 20 years is a very, very long time. If Gwinnett County continues to provide services at the level it does currently, I can see no need for the city to provide any services other than the three specified in our charter. If the city is implemented properly, the services we have chosen will allow our community to thrive. We will have a strong commercial and retail presence as well as safe, secure residential areas. As the economy picks up, I would expect to see areas where there are vacancies to be filled and those areas that are run down will have been brought back to a good standard. I see a community that people will want to live, shop and play in, where there is a strong sense of community spirit.

2. What is the biggest problem we have to solve to get there?

I don't see any problem, per se, that requires solving. I do see a need for the initial City Council to implement smart and consistent maintenance codes, and to take the time required to study our current land use with an eye to where we want to see development in the future. If these are done properly, there will be a viable framework set up for future councils to follow. Proper process and procedures will also need to be implemented.

3. What changes in zoning from the current County regulations would you propose? How do you propose to manage and enforce them?

Zoning and Code Compliance are two separate services. Zoning is determining what land use is appropriate for any given tract of land. Code Compliance is setting and enforcing basic property maintenance standards.

The only real zoning change I can see at first is careful evaluation of those areas where commercial and residential properties abut. The county does not really take into consideration the impact of commercial on residential and vice versa. Zoning changes are generally implemented at the point in time that the owner requests a change from the existing conditions. A long term land use plan will be needed to guide future development.

The initial change I would foresee in Code Compliance would be to actually enforce the codes currently on the books. Longer term, I would like to see citizen involvement in setting the standards for the community and ensure that the final standards were fully disclosed. I would also set up an appeals process to ensure that codes are being enforced properly.

4. What changes in permits and fees from the current County fee structure would you propose? How do you propose to manage and enforce them?

I would not make any changes in the current building permit and business license process. I do not believe the city, as proposed, requires these to be implemented by the city. I would let the county continue to handle these.



Jeanne Aulbach
At Large Post 5

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5. What changes in the garbage plan from the current County service would you propose? How do you propose to manage and enforce them?

I would allow property owners to contract directly with the hauler selected by the city. I would allow those who have valid options for waste disposal to exercise those options. I would ensure that services like recycling and “pick up at the door” service for seniors are maintained.

6. What office space do you think is appropriate for the City government?

There is an ample amount of office space available for lease in Peachtree Corners. The size of the space will be determined by how we implement our services. There are also meeting rooms available for City Council meetings. We will not need a courtroom as we can use the services of another municipal court for those very few Code Compliance issues that may require that. If a Code Compliance case results in the need for jail time, we can house prisoners in another municipal facility.

7. What do you think is the best use of the land across from the Forum?

The best use is one that provides a profit for the developer while hopefully matching the needs of the city. It is currently approved for apartments and the developer can build those at any time. I believe the city should work with the developer to encourage a more appropriate use for the property. My personal opinion is that the area would be great for a mixed use development; live, work and play.

8. How many full time employees do you foresee needing to manage city operations, Zoning, Permits, Fees, Enforcement, Fines, etc.?

At max we need a full time City Manager and City Clerk. It is possible the Clerk could be part-time. Most resources would be deployed for Code Enforcement, but that service can be contracted out. Dunwoody has only 5 full-time employees, and they are more of a full-service city. As I mentioned earlier, I do not see the need for the city to issue Business Licenses or Building Permits.

9. What is your position on taxes?

Taxes will be required to start. They would be significantly lower than the 1 mill allowed by the charter. Based on the Feasibility Study, a rate of no more than ½ mill should be sufficient to start, possibly less. The study showed about \$2.0 million in taxes based on the 1 mill rate to less than \$0.7 million in expenses. The rate will be determined once the actual costs to provide services are determined. When we begin to see the full impact of Franchise Fees and have built up the city reserves we hopefully will be able to roll the millage rate back to nothing or close to nothing.

10. How would you propose the issuance of City Bonds? When would you find it appropriate?

Under our current service structure, there is no need to issue any long term bonds. That would be required only if a service or use is added that requires the issuance of these bonds, in which case there would have to be a vote by the citizens of the city to approve it. If the bond service requires a tax increase beyond the 1 mill specified by the charter, the charter would have to be amended by the legislature.

That being said, there will be a gap between when the city “stands up” and provides services until we begin receiving benefits from Franchise Fees and taxes. We will need to issue Tax Anticipation Notes (TAN’s) to bridge that gap. These are short term, generally low interest rate notes secured by future tax revenue. Once these are paid off, we should not need to issue debt again unless the citizens approve a service or use that requires a bond issuance.

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11. How will you incorporate the views of the disparate communities that now make up Peachtree Corners? In particular, the communities that are very skeptical of the value a city government can bring?

Quite frankly, the only way to convince a skeptic is by actions not words. And that will work only if the skeptics are willing to look at what you do with an open mind.

That being said, I plan on open communications with the community. That means asking for ideas and listening to them as we implement the services. I would prefer to have citizens work with us to make any changes required to City Codes to ensure it is what the community wants. I would also listen to feedback on trash pickup and zoning when making decisions on these services.

I will hold town hall meetings in each district at least twice a year to listen to and talk with my constituents. And I will be available to take calls and e-mails as needed to address any issues people may have.

I am a consensus builder. As such, I would work with my fellow City Council members to ensure the city is implemented as promised.

