

# Gwinnett Place CID Steering Group Session Report: Retail



# Retail Steering Group work session

**Primary objective**—Prioritization of retail issues affecting perceptions and development of strategies to impact retail vitality

– In attendance: Joe Piccolo, Leo Wiener, Tim Hur, Joe Allen

- **General Discussion i.e. retail**

- “Current State” impression: Struggling mall, “brands” are leaving, Asian businesses predominate, crime is up and the area is declining
- Reality: A significant market shift in the area is occurring, and:
  - The mall is operating at a profit but significant retail shrinkage
  - Retail growth is occurring
    - Asian/ethnic businesses and ethnic/traditional retail hybrid (H-Mart, etc.)
    - Marginal traditional (food/QSR, C-Store, Big Box, car dealerships)
    - Some corporate/commercial, bio-medical industry growth
  - Community/businesses/visitors/shoppers still perceive crime as problem
  - Traditional shoppers are avoiding area due to cultural shifts but ethnic and “new” visitors are not



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## Negative retail perception—image factors

- Demographic/cultural changes
  - Language/signage creates cultural discomfort, “tension”
  - General area appearance i.e. “declining”, “vacant”, etc.
  - Negative mall shopping experiences from the “people like me” segment
    - Lack of “big brand stores”
    - Merchandising/inventory issues, lack of selection, etc.
  - Mall store vacancies
- Crime Reports, media coverage of decline, crime, etc.
- **Remedies to date**
  - Street and area landscaping to improve appearance
  - Increased law enforcement presence, CID security patrols, CID-logo vehicle “drive arounds”
  - Stabilize mall through tenant “remix”, shrinkage of retail core and repurpose of available space i.e. higher education, government (tag office, etc.)



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## Short term solutions

- General area appearance and accessibility
  - Continued/increased visible private patrols (CID)
  - Enhanced law enforcement presence (foot, bike patrols, etc.)
  - Continued trash/debris pickup, enhanced graffiti removal program
  - Signage and/or locator/translator app
- Mall appearance
  - Simon remix to fill up the space
    - Approach county, state, federal agencies for funding, support, grants
    - State: GDED, GMA, GCA
    - Federal: DEA, DOT
    - County: Law enforcement
- Retail revitalization
  - Tim Hur to work with Asian businesses to create more customer facing culture
  - Create/distribute CID “vision” graphic for POS, in store, media use
  - Enhanced media and social media outreach i.e. “retail report” on growth, new stores, changes, etc.



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## Longer term solutions

- Political/key influencer solutions
  - Work with chamber to prioritize retail and develop retail growth plan
  - Political leverage i.e. Partnership Gwinnett, county commission (mall/street level, freeway signage, redevelopment ordinance, etc.
  - Work with Simon re: mall remix/redux, new tenants/partners
- Promotional/marketing/event solutions
  - Series of singular events drawing retail, consumer/visitor audiences
    - Music/food event
    - “Fun Run” or charity event
    - Press releases i.e. “come out to GPCID/GP Mall for XYZ promotion”
  - Multicultural celebration event series
    - Daily cultural focus, media tour, social media, etc.
    - Weekend themed “International Gateway” type music/food/activities festival
    - Corporate/community/business coalition
      - Corporate (NCR, etc.) NGOs (chamber, etc.) embassies, state foreign trade, economic development divisions, etc.
      - Designation as international “crossroads” event and/or community

