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Posted: 6:28 p.m. Sunday, March 18, 2012

## Renewal ideas in store for Gwinnett Place Mall



**WINNETT COUNTY, Ga.** — Some people already have ideas for a redeveloped Gwinnett Place Mall.

Last week, Simon Malls said the company was giving up ownership in the Duluth Mall.

Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District Executive Director Joe Allen, said fearing this could happen, a couple of months ago his team gathered input from the community to help identify what changes residents would like to see.

"This is the central business district in Gwinnett County, I like to say as Gwinnett Place goes so does Gwinnett County. We can not allow Gwinnett Place, the center of our community to fail, so we need to be proactive and we need to be out of the box when it comes to thinking and make sure this area continues to thrive and succeed," Allen said.

Allen's team narrowed the suggestions from the public down to two options.

"One option does leave the mall intact but does upgrade it, does renovations, but it's still a traditionally mall and makes use of parking lots with structured parking, green space, class A office space and housing," he said.

The second option calls for peeling off the roof of the mall and giving the area more of a town center feel. Both options suggest a developer expand the retail, housing and office space well past the current boundaries of the mall.

Allen said some developers seem interested.

"We probably had three or four conversations already and there is probably like four to five more that we want to have," he said.

Ultimately, the new owner of the property would have to agree to any changes to the property. As of now, it is unclear who purchased Gwinnett Place Mall.

Despite giving up ownership of the property, Simon Malls has agreed to continue running the mall.

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