

# Appendix A

# Focus Group Transcripts



**Project:** Pond  
**Location:** Atlanta  
**Date:** 3/1/18  
**Time:** 8:00pm

00:00:00

**Good to see you. I'm Inga Kennedy. Thank you for coming tonight and participating in our focus group. We are doing some work in Gwinnett County for future growth and development. It's called planning. We're talking to you about some of your perceptions and opinions and interests tonight. We'll get right into it. Before we do, I'd like for you to go around the room and introduce yourselves and tell us a little bit about yourself. Married with children, and you see what – you'll understand after I start my questions why I'm asking you to do that. Go ahead – and where you live – go ahead.**

Amber: My name is Amber. I stay in Fulton County. I have no kids. I'm not married.

Malik: My name is Malik. I live in Gwinnett County. Not married. No kids either.

Russell: Hi, my name is Russell. I live in Fulton County, and I am single, or not married, and no children.

Melissa: My name is Melissa. I live in Gwinnett. I'm divorced but no kids.

Alexis: I'm Alexis, Fulton County. I'm not married, no kids.

Vick: I'm Vick, DeKalb County, no ball and chain, no babies.

Joshua: I'm Josh. I live in Marietta, and I'm single, don't have any babies.

Parsa: Parsa, Fulton County, not married, no kids.

Anna Leigh: Hi, my name is Anna Leigh. I live and work in DeKalb County. I'm not – I'm not married and have no kids.

Susanna: I'm Susanna, I live in Fulton County, and I feel like I'm in the wrong group because I'm married. [laughter] But no kids.

TJ: I'm TJ. I live in DeKalb County. I am also married, and I have a two-and-half-year-old, but he's a dog.

**I'm Inga, and I live in Fulton County, and I have two labs. Well good, that's good. Let's start out, – and we're talking about Gwinnett tonight, but then we'll shift too, and talk about communities in general, but it's all about Gwinnett tonight. Who lives in Gwinnett? Right, OK. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear Gwinnett? And so, let me ask that of the people who don't live in Gwinnett first. What is the first thing that you think of when you hear Gwinnett – you all live in the – sounds like the urban areas, for the most part.**

00:03:23

Vick: The Braves.

**Go ahead.**

Vick: I said the Braves. Gwinnett Braves.

TJ: Mall of Georgia, and the Gwinnett Braves.

Susanna: I think of the hockey team.

Anna Leigh: Traffic.

Parsa: I was going to say distance. [crosstalk 00:03:39]

Joshua: The Braves and distance.

Alexis: I'll say the traffic.

**Melissa?**

Melissa: Keep Gwinnett Beautiful, the whole keeping the county clean and planting flowers.

**Are you part of that?**

Melissa: Yes.

**That's a good organization. I've worked with a lot of those everywhere. That's a good organization. Yes?**

Russell: I say the same, distance, but then I'm also relatively new to the area, so I just know it's further away for me.

Malik: Definitely OTP and usually the high schools, or the schooling, is really more what's hopping in the state.

Amber: I would say distance and then expensive to live there.

**That's interesting that you think it's expensive. That's good – interesting and different answers, too. Some of the same, but interesting that you have the perceptions. On a scale of 1-10, what is your perception of Gwinnett with 1 being poor, and 10 being excellent?**

Vick: 8.

TJ: Yeah, I was about to say 8. [crosstalk 00:04:52]

Malik: To me, Gwinnett's huge. So, there's the Sugarloaf area, where you have country clubs and the Georgia area. And then you have other parts which are – you have million-dollar homes, and you have hundred-thousand-dollar homes. But I think overall, Gwinnett is about an 8.

**Who else said an 8?**

Vick: I did.

**Why did you say an 8?**

Vick: I mean it just seems like a clean area. You don't hear of crime and stuff going on. Just nice shopping areas and things.

**And why did you say an 8?**

TJ: I've only been to a handful of places in the county, but they are all – seem pretty nice.

**Any other numbers? Any other scale?**

Melissa: 10. It's way better than DeKalb and Fulton. I used to live in both of those places.

**You have a benchmarking of –**

Melissa: Yeah.

**You like Gwinnett.**

Melissa: I feel safer.

**That's good.**

Anna Leigh: I'm probably more like a 6 or a 7. Just because, like Russell, I'm fairly new to Atlanta – I mean, I've been here for two years, so I don't know, I just I drive out through Lilburn and Lawrenceville every once in a while to visit people I know out there, but I haven't lived there, or spent a lot of time in that area to really give it a solid score.

00:06:11

**Well then, let's talk about the next question. What have you heard about Gwinnett and does it fit your idea of a good place to live? What are – you said that you've gone out and – ventured out a little bit. But what have you – what do you hear about Gwinnett and do you think it's a – do you have an idea of the experiences?**

TJ: I hear it's about an 8 out of 10. [laughter]

**I mean, what do you hear? What do you –?**

Malik: I'm biased. I grew up in Gwinnett. I used to live in Snellville, and then Lawrenceville.

**But when people are out there talking and –**

Susanna: Can you list some cities in Gwinnett? I feel like just don't even know –

Malik: Snellville, Buford, Lawrenceville.

**Lawrenceville. Buford.**

Anna Leigh: Norcross.

Malik: Norcross. Snellville. Lilburn. I've heard, – so I've heard recently development. I heard there's two big development projects happening. One is in Gwinnett Place area, which used to be the big mall growing up, and then Mall of Georgia kind of took them out. And then also, currently I think where Infinite Arena is, I think they're trying to create something – the people of Avalon are creating something very similar there as well. Recently, I heard those two things.

**Other things that you've heard about Gwinnett?**

Melissa: Well, there's a lot of retirement communities, so I guess they're going to move all of the old people to Gwinnett. [laughter]

TJ: Any minute now.

**That's good. They're building a lot of retirement places, alright.**

Melissa: Big places, yeah.

Anna Leigh: I heard that taxes are lower. Property taxes like [inaudible 00:07:53]. I don't know if that's true or not, but that's kind of like –

**Well, just whatever you've heard about Gwinnett, and it could be – it could come from anywhere from any source – what do you hear?**

Anna Leigh: Good schools.

Malik: School, yeah.

Susanna: I heard very nice hospitals.

Parsa: Good transit. I've heard there's decent public transit, and with regards to schools specifically, I've heard that – I don't know exactly how accurate this is, – but I read a report that Gwinnett has – or transports more students daily than Delta carries out of Atlanta on its planes.

Malik: I could see that, I mean yeah.

[crosstalk 00:08:29]

**Those are good things to hear about Gwinnett. Compare – now, compare it to other metro-Atlanta counties, like Fulton and where you all live, Cherokee, Clayton, Fayette and others – do you consider**

**Gwinnett to be progressive county, a regressive county, or a stagnant, staying where it is from what you know, and what you experience. Go ahead.**

00:09:02

Malik: I say progressive. I think they're growing pretty quickly now I think. Now especially with all of the development coming in.

**You think the development –**

Malik: And they're trying to keep up with the Johns Creek area as well.

Amber: Have to. There's a lot of people there. You can't be boring. It's growing.

**Anybody else, in terms of progressive, regressive?**

Melissa: Progressive.

**Why do you say that?**

Melissa: I've lived there since I was five years old, and it used to be just out in the middle of the boonies. We had to drive all the way to Jimmy Carter to go to Cub Foods. Now there's just all of this development. There's townhomes being built left and right. Lots of people that weren't there before.

**Anybody else's perception or experience or idea about it?**

Alexis: Is that what you meant by progressive/regressive – the amount of development?

**No, just whatever progressive means to you in terms of development. Whatever that means. And it doesn't necessarily mean development, per se. It could be culture. It could be –**

Alexis: From my experience, I've found that it's not as progressive as other parts of metro-Atlanta, especially as you get further into the city.

Anna Leigh: I think that a lot of that too is just it's a lot of families and people who are middle-aged, and they're in Gwinnett because it's a good area to raise a family, and it's a good school systems, and so –

Alexis: I'm not putting them down –

Anna Leigh: No, no, I'm agreeing with you. Because I think that, especially with the transit situation. It's like, "Oh, we don't want that kind of thing." But at the same time, if you're going to continue to bring in new people, and to try to identify as a more metro area, I think they need to be a little bit more progressive.

Malik: MARTA needs to go up that way.

TJ: MARTA needs to do a lot of things.

Malik: They do. Living there and working downtown, you're looking at an hour and 15-minute drive, roughly from Lawrenceville where I live, unless you have Peach Pass, which you're still paying \$15 to go down one way during traffic time, so I think progressive in that perspective.

Anna Leigh: I think a lot of it is people who are looking for stability at this point in their life, because they're trying to –

Malik: My parents moved to there – Snellville because of school. Brookwood High School was one of the top – Brookwood High school so when I moved there from Buford Highway area, from Atlanta when – you know, elementary school.

**Let's talk a little bit about housing because that's what drives people to where they want to be. I have several questions about housing. What type of housing would you prefer to live in? Single family, townhomes, multi-family, condos?**

00:12:03

Vick: Condo.

Susanna: Right now, or in the future?

**And I'm here to let everybody – right now. What you'd prefer to live in. And you may be living in what you prefer to live in. But let's describe that, and I want everybody to answer that question. TJ?**

TJ: Single-family home with a big ole backyard.

Susanna: I live right now in a city apartment – like in the city, where I can walk to things.

Anna Leigh: Same. A multi-family condo/apartment, even townhome that's conveniently located.

Parsa: I say condo or a townhome. Townhome purely just for the space aspect, and maybe having a little more outdoor space incorporated, but condo or townhome.

Joshua: Currently I live in an apartment complex, but I think my preferred housing would be a single-family home if I had to pick.

Vick: I live in a single-family, and I hate the maintenance, so I would go with a condo.

Alexis: An apartment or a condo in a centrally located location.

Melissa: Single-family home with a big yard.

Russell: Currently a single-family home, but then also a condo would be good.

Malik: Yeah, a condo centrally located somewhere in Atlanta.

Amber: A single-family home with enough space in between – [inaudible 00:13:20] [laughter]

**OK [crosstalk 00:13:24]. Do you want to rent or own your primary residence? Do you like renting?  
Some of you – [crosstalk 00:13:36]**

TJ: Own – I'd like to own.

Malik: Own

Susanna: Own.

Joshua: No preference.

Amber: I like renting because I don't have to deal with the maintenance. Just call the landlord, "Fix this."

**You don't want to feel that responsibility.**

Amber: Not yet.

Malik: I want to own.

Russell: I mean, probably own in the future. I'm just nowhere being able to own, so it's rent for the foreseeable future.

Melissa: I own.

Alexis: I prefer to rent because I don't like to stay in one place for a very long time.

Vick: No preference. Each has its pros and cons.

Joshua: Currently I rent, I think that's the best thing for my life situation now, but eventually I'd like to own property.

Parsa: I'd like to own.

Anna Leigh: I would like to own, but it's kind of like [crosstalk 00:14:29] right now, I'm just not at that point.

Susanna: I'd like to own too. It's better financially, but financially I can't.

TJ: I would like to own as well.

**Sounds good. Outside of affordability, and cost, what are some of the main factors that help you decide where to live? Is it walkability? Is it shopping? Is it transit? Let's talk about what things make you decide Alexis. You're moving around a lot. Why – what kinds of places are you looking for when you decide where to live? I mean, what kinds of – what's attractive? What's important to you?**

00:15:17

Vick: Safe, clean.



Malik: Being close to work, and able to walk downstairs and go to a restaurant or a bar. Preferably a condo with a view, slightly on the skyline. [laughter]

Alexis: I think how stressful your commute is. You can be further from work, but it's a clear shot. If you're right down the street from work, but it's really stressful getting there, then it's still adding something to your day. The ease to get where you need to get.

**Anybody else? TJ?**

TJ: My wife's commute. That's why we live where we live now. [laughter]

**That's good. Susanna.**

Susanna: I think commute. Also, I would like to be able to walk places, or take – I'd like to not have to drive places – anywhere.

Anna Leigh: Just a commute and being able to feel safe walking down the street.

Parsa: I'd say walkability and bikeability. I enjoy doing both, and have lived in Atlanta my entire life, and am very tired of driving in traffic, just in general. Just getting anywhere in traffic is my worst nightmare.

Joshua: A close commute is nice, but I also like to walk places, so if there's hiking areas or anything nearby, that would be nice.

**Trails and –**

Joshua: Nature.

**Melissa?**

Melissa: Away from crime and having my own driveway. I used to parallel park where I used to live. I hated it.

**On the street?**

Melissa: On the street.

Russell: Currently, for me it's – I'm a freelancer, so I do stuff all over the place, so whichever place I can get to all points of the city within a certain amount of time. Like the best nexus area.

Amber: I like a balance between work and my friends. My friends have kids, and I need to be able to get to them like in emergencies. Not too far away.

**Is it a priority for you to live within a short drive of your workplace? And is it – or is it important for you to be able to walk there? Is it important to live close to where you work?**

[crosstalk 00:17:45]

Anna Leigh: For me, it's time. I live currently in Dunwoody, but I work in Tucker. But my commute's 13 minutes because I go opposite of traffic on 285. I don't really – I was really worried when I moved there because I was like, 'Oh, it's going to take me forever.' But –

00:18:02

Malik: You're going the right way.

Anna Leigh: I'm going the right way, so I don't care that I'm not close.

Malik: I think a 15/20-minute drive max I think would be fine. Walking would be great too, but I think that's great. I would like to do that.

Parsa: I think it's more access really than distance. If I live 15 miles from my work, but I can easily MARTA there, or have a clear shot driving, I prefer that over living 5 miles, and being stuck in traffic the entire way.

**Alexis?**

Alexis: The same – I agree that access is really important. You don't want to spend – even if you're only five miles away, you still don't want to spend an hour trying to get – it's just a nightmare, so yeah, access.

**Do you – Gwinnett, we'll talk to you, coming back to this affordability issue. Do you view Gwinnett as providing affordable housing? And what about housing for all income levels and stages of life. Let me describe the stages of life. Executives, managers, young professionals, single people, families, working class, senior citizens. And I'll start with the folks that live in Gwinnett. Do you think that there's affordable – affordability?**

Melissa: Oh, yes.

**For all levels of –**

Melissa: Yeah, because I've lived both in DeKalb and Fulton, and the property taxes alone were just killing me.

Malik: Like I was saying earlier, you've got houses from \$100,000 to millions in the country club, and Sugarloaf. So, for executives obviously that's probably where they want to live. And then, for single people, I mean, I guess there are apartment complexes and stuff of that sort as well if they don't want to buy. If they want to move around or rent. I think affordability is pretty good.

**And I look at you because you said your perception was expensive. OK.**

Amber: I thought it was expensive because there's a lot of things going on around it. Usually when there's a lot of – you know, when Braves Stadium was built, they built apartments around it, and the rent is ridiculous. So, once you build all these attractions for people to go see, I just felt like the prices are going to be [inaudible 00:20:20]. Because I've never actually went to look.

**What about anybody else’s perception of that affordability?**

Vick: Like in Snellville, like he was saying, you got low-end houses, probably \$100,000 or maybe even a little bit less. It goes all the way up to whatever.

**There’s something for everybody?**

Vick: Yes.

Malik: I’ll give one example. I’ve been looking at housing in the Lawrenceville area. Let's just say an average house of \$300,000. You're going to get about 3,000+ sq. ft. with a basement, where in Atlanta here, that \$300,000 is going to be about 1,500 sq. ft. It's going to be about half. The closer to the city, the more you pay.

00:21:08

**What are the most now, – and this doesn’t necessarily have – not necessarily focused on Gwinnett, but just a general question. What are the most important community amenities are assets to you? And do they need to be within a 10-minute walk? And I want everybody to answer that. So, community amenities, for example, you talked about MARTA, and you talked about biking and things like that – you talked about hiking. What kinds of community amenities are important, or were important as you started to look for the places that you live in now, or where you might aspire to live? What's important to be nearby?**

Amber: Possibly like a park, with the trails. And a gym or something.

Malik: Yeah, a park like the beltline is very accessible, so you can walk seven miles, and you have so many different things around that area. I think something like that would be great.

Russell: I don’t have any personal preference when it comes to things within a 10-minute walk. But generally, I’d like a shopping center or two within a 10/15-minute drive. It’s not as strict about those too.

Melissa: A public pool.

**It will be that time soon.**

Melissa: There’s an indoor one, I mean, so it’s year-round.

Alexis: I’m used to some type of nature, whether it’s an actual full park or just a trail that you can go on. Just something where you can go outside your house on a nice day and be able to do what you want. As well as walking distance, having at least a convenience store, or something close by, where if I need to run out and get something, I don’t need to go get in my car and drive off.

Vick: Definitely restaurants, places to get something good to eat. A package store. [laughter]

Joshua: I already said hiking I think. Having a grocery store nearby is also a good thing as well. And like she said, a convenience store or something that you can just walk to without having to drive.

Parsa: I'd say outdoor space, as I mentioned before I'd say is key. But also, a nightlife, and not in the sense of like a club or a bar necessarily, but just like restaurants and areas to – anywhere to go outside of work, you know what I mean? A social area.

**Social activities.**

Anna Leigh: I say access to public transportation. Preferably a train that can get me downtown or to the airport pretty quickly without having to drive.

Susanna: Agree with everything people have said, like gym, pool, restaurants.

00:23:54

TJ: I live much closer to the city now, but I grew up in [inaudible 00:23:57], and so I'm very much a suburban person, so I just – I like things that you might find in the suburbs. I like Walmarts and movie theaters and chain restaurants, the downtown theater is excellent, but I'm perfectly happy with a – my wife doesn't. That's why we live in Decatur. [laughter]

**But if you had your way, you would – but you like that.**

TJ: Move a little north, yeah.

**What do you think are the – what are some of the things that are missing from Gwinnett that would attract you to live there?**

Parsa: MARTA.

Malik: We have Gwinnett transit, which is the bus, right? But I know my brother's taken that to go from our house to Georgia State, but it's still a bus, and you still have to wait – it's still an hour regardless if you drive. You're just saving a parking space, basically. I think MARTA would be huge for us to get down there.

**What is missing from Gwinnett that would attract you to live there?**

Vick: Urban more than anything.

Susanna: I personally – oh, no.

Vick: Ladies first, go ahead.

Susanna: I just like the feel of a city. I like skyscrapers, and I like tall buildings, and I like feeling like I'm – I don't need the nature part that everybody is saying – I'm for not nature. I like the feel of tall buildings, I guess, and I wouldn't get that that far out of Atlanta.

**Vick, you were going to say?**

Vick: I was going say something similar to what she was saying. Urban nightlife, like the feel of stuff going on, you know what I'm saying? People walking around doing something, you know what I mean?

Malik: You don't go to Gwinnett to party or go out. You always go to Buckhead or midtown or somewhere downtown, usually to get out and go to –

**So, it's a social – [crosstalk 00:26:02]**

Susanna: I don't even go out that much.

Malik: Not even that.

TJ: Just in general.

Susanna: Yeah, I just like the feel of being near it. If I wanted to go out – I was just saying.

Alexis: It's accessibility, right? It's just like in the middle of the night, at 1 am, I know I can go out and get it.

Susanna: Right, I'm usually in bed, but I prefer –

Alexis: But if you need, for whatever reason, at 1 am, you're like, "I need to go get this," you know you can go x, y, z places and you'll be able to find it, and that's a little harder, the further you get out of a city center.

Malik: Everything closes so early in burbs, right?

TJ: Walmart

Malik: Except for Walmart. Walmart and Waffle House. We got that all night.

TJ: I'm moving for that. [laughter]

Malik: That's all you need sometimes, right?

Anna Leigh: I was going to Starbucks in Norcross the other night, and they closed at 8. And I was like, "8 o'clock, you're closed?" I thought they were joking almost.

Malik: No. Yeah, sometimes close a store earlier, and you're just like OK.

**The attraction is about accessibility to things that you want to obtain or do around the clock.**

00:27:05

Parsa: For me, it's accessibility to people. I'm sorry to extend this portion of the conversation, but –

**No, no, please.**

Parsa: it's less so about when and how I can get somewhere, rather than just being around a lot of people. To your point, like being in an urban environment, and being in a more pedestrian-friendly area with more amenities around just exposes you to the possibility of interacting with more people, as opposed to in your home, or in your car.

**Those are some of the things that would be important to you, relative to attracting you. So then, for – not necessarily about Gwinnett, but just about where you would identify a community – moving into a community, what would a deal-breaker for you? What would you say “uh-uh, not moving there?” What would be a total deal-breaker for you when you are deciding to move into a community? And I want everybody to answer this question.**

TJ: Not enough parking. I don't want to pay for it.

**A deal-breaker. Anything that would say – that you would go into that community and say, “No, that's not it.”**

Susanna: I don't really know. Feeling like I'm in the middle of nowhere, I guess. I don't know. In a rural area.

**Yeah, too rural. That's good.**

TJ: If it's a farm.

Susanna: Right. I don't want to live on a farm.

**You don't want to live out in a rural area.**

Susanna: Yeah.

**If that's a deal-breaker, that qualifies.**

Anna Leigh: I can't really think of anything – I mean, I don't know. When I first moved to Atlanta, I lived on – in an apartment complex that was on an access road to an interstate. That lasted about a month. That was terrible. Just because I couldn't get out and walk anywhere. I had to drive. That was a good experience – know the area and know that living on an access road's not a good idea.

**Was it noisy?**

Anna Leigh: No, it wasn't. It was just – it was rough. I lived in all the wrong areas since I've moved here.

Parsa: I think for me a deal-breaker absolutely would be a notably high rate of home burglary or auto theft. That's a no-go.

Joshua: I think if the price of rent is really high, or the price of property, in general, is really high, that's a deal-breaker for me. Because rent is usually your biggest expense per month, so if you can't afford that, then it's going to be a hardship, the whole thing.

**The general cost of living and the housing portion of that.**

Vick: Just any elements of the hood. Just people hanging out doing nothing during the day. Trash out – just hood elements.

00:29:58

Alexis: I'm going to be blunt and say honestly certain areas where – around Atlanta where there are – it's 100% white people and no people of color are really uncomfortable.

TJ: We don't have that in Georgia. [laughter]

Alexis: That would probably be it.

**You would like a little more diversity.**

Melissa: A lot of crime, and the hood element. I used to live in the hood, so it's wasn't fun.

Russell: Crime. If it's just too far from amenities or shopping centers.

Malik: Mine right now is the internet. I need good internet. Especially right now, like I mean with the fiber coming out, I mean – I've been around where my phone is so much faster than my home internet, it's like, "What's going on?" That makes no sense.

**That's good.**

Malik: No, it's not.

**It's very different. It's very different in certain parts.**

[crosstalk 00:30:59]

Amber: I think I said in the beginning, space in between the houses, and also, I don't want to live on a busy road.

**You don't want to live on a high-traveled road, alright. Interesting. Any other deal-breakers, as we've gone around the room. Any other deal-breakers?**

Malik: I think, as getting older when you have kids, you definitely want to be in an area with grade schools. You don't want to go into a place where – obviously Georgia, in general, is not great in education, in general – I think we're the 50<sup>th</sup> state or 49<sup>th</sup> state – sorry.

Anna Leigh: There's always Mississippi, so don't gripe. It's the saving grace.

Malik: Sorry, the 49<sup>th</sup> state. Our A's are like everyone's C's, right?

TJ: I'm studying to be a teacher, so I'm going to fix that. In about a year and a half, so don't worry.

Malik: Gwinnett actually has one of the top schools in the nation I think – G-M-S-T or whatever it is. But I think schools growing – when you have kids, I definitely think that’s huge.

**Let's talk a little bit about – OK, I want you to focus on the year 2040 because that's what we're planning for right now. We're planning for 2040.**

TJ: It’s bound to be better.

**Not necessarily right – this question is not necessarily about Gwinnett, I’m coming to some of those. But think about yourself in 2040. Describe what you think you will have accomplished by 2040. It could be anything. It could be that you’re – a lot of you are single, it could be that you’re married – not that everybody has to be married. Just homeownership, children, –**

Malik: Flying cars. I mean, they’ve already worked on it. Who needs MARTA when you have flying cars?

00:33:00

**I want everybody to answer this question, too.**

Malik: Where do you think we’ll be?

**No. Think about yourselves – yourself individually. And as you think about the future and 2040, what do you see yourself having accomplished? And it could be multiple things.**

Malik: God, I’m so rich.

**OK, Amber?**

Amber: I guess a family of course. I want to run a doggy daycare, and hopefully be in my career. I should be by then. [crosstalk 00:33:43]

Malik: Man, that’s hard. I guess, retired because I have so much money because crypto-currencies was real. Fingers crossed right? I do think virtual currency is the future. I don’t think they’ll be actual [inaudible 00:34:02] regardless if it’s Fiat or [inaudible 00:34:03]. But I mean, a few kids – I’m trying to think how old I’ll be in 2040. I’m assuming I’d have kids in middle school at that time. Have a few kids, and then hopefully just retired and then doing photographic work, basically.

Russell: Married. Kid or two. Probably paying off a house.

Melissa: House paid off. Going on vacations and travel.

Alexis: Um –

**You can’t see that far, right?**

Alexis: Because I – I don’t know, I’m not someone who likes to think about the future. I like to think about right now, and what I can do right now. And so, whenever I think about the future, I’m like it could be anything. It literally could look like anything. I have no idea.



TJ: Continuing living in the now.

Susanna: That's why you move around a lot.

Alexis: Well, I mean, yeah. I don't like to – I like to experience things in the now, and so I don't know. It could be anything. I probably will have kids, but that's as far as I – I don't know.

TJ: Don't push her. [laughter]

Vick: By 56, I don't know. Just living off the proceeds of my medical marijuana dispensary and enjoying retirement all alone.

Joshua: I think owning a property would be nice. A house that I own myself, and not paying off anymore. Maybe a family, preferably with more animals than humans in it. I think that's really it.

Parsa: I'd like to own my own business, and I'd like to be a published author.

Anna Leigh: Maybe married, or maybe still single and just traveling the world.

00:35:56

Susanna: I have 2.5 kids, and I [crosstalk 00:36:01].

Anna Leigh: White picket fence? But in a city.

Susanna: Yeah, yeah. But in a city, yeah.

Anna Leigh: So, you can still walk to things.

Susanna: Yeah.

TJ: I want that but in the suburbs, and get myself out of grad school and raise a couple of kids. And live relatively well, right?

**Keeping those things in mind now, what community characteristics do you desire at that time? Now you've talked about where you see yourselves, and what you see yourselves accomplishing. Are the – and you talked earlier about the community characteristics. Would they have changed? Will they have changed 20 years from now? Your thoughts, your characteristics from what you experience today?**

TJ: When he said the school systems, that made a lot of sense to me. I want kids, so I think especially having – by then I'll have some, I'd like to have a good school for them to go to. So, a good school system. I think it would be nice if Vick was operating his shop –

Malik: Right down the street. [laughter] Remember all of us. We need a deal.

**We'll talk about the business aspect too. I do want to talk about that. Susanne?**

Susanna: Something that's really important that my husband and I have talked about is living – when we have kids, we want to live in a diverse area. We don't want to live around people that just look like us. We want our kids to be raised in a place where they're going to get a lot of different cultures, and opinions, and viewpoints.

TJ: That's so important.

Susanna: Yeah, so that's the most important thing for where we settle down. Probably above schools, too.

Anna Leigh: If I'm married with a family, absolutely schools would be important, and having a good neighborhood for them to have friends to play with would be super important. But I mean, if I didn't get married, I would want a lot of the urban convenience and a small apartment somewhere.

Parsa: I would say still urban, still accessible, but with diversity of – socio-economic diversity, and thought diversity.

Joshua: I completely agree with what Susanna said. I think it would be really important, if I were to raise a family for them to grow up around people who are different, just so they can experience people from all different cultures. How they live and what they think, and what they believe. I think that's really important.

Vick: Probably still want to live in an urban-type area when I'm older too because I don't see myself getting married, so I'm going to be lonely and want to hear stuff.

**Oh, that's so sad. Same characteristics?**

00:39:00

Alexis: No, well if I do have kids, I probably wouldn't want to be in an apartment anymore. That might be a little rough – I was a handful as a child, so I would imagine my children will be a lot, and I'd want to kill them in a small space. But I think I still would want to be in an urban space. Somewhat larger, but still the same – somewhere I can still access the things that I can access now, and not have to drive so far. Maybe not places where you have to drive to get to places, and you have to work to have access to certain things.

Melissa: Just a clean environment, no crime, live near a hospital. [laughter] [crosstalk 00:39:56]

Russell: I don't think much would change for me, although with kids, schools would be a factor that would appear.

Malik: I think like now, I would want to live in a condo, but I think when I'm older in 2040, I'd want to bring the suburb to the urban area. I'd still want a house, but I don't want it in – so not make it not in Marietta because I think it's still too far away from the city, but there are really nice houses on Clairmont that you're not paying a million dollars for right now, so somewhere that kind of central, not too far from downtown, but still urban, where you can still walk, and there's obviously nice schools.

Amber: Just a home.

**Alright, but the characteristics. So, 2040, what are you seeing?**

Amber: I think the schools of course, but I want to have a lot of – something to do around – that's close that would keep my kid's minds going. Science experiments type things.

**Based on your perception of Gwinnett County, could you see yourself living there in 2040?**

TJ: Sure.

Malik: From the developments that I've heard for sure. Especially – Avalon is in Alpharetta, which is beautiful, right? But that is towards – living there is towards the executives, right? You're paying \$800,000 for a one-bedroom condo or townhome. I think it's like 1.2 for a two-bedroom. That's what they're going for, but I think futuristic, very tech savvy – the whole smart TVs with the smart windows, with the smart fridge because I think you want information always like that [snaps fingers]. Especially 23 years from now or whatever. 23 years from now, you'd want that as well.

**Anybody see themselves living in Gwinnett in 2040?**

00:41:56

Vick: Not if – where it stands right now I don't think. Because it seems a lot slower, you know what I mean? Quieter. Got to be in the urban areas I have in mind.

Melissa: What was the question? I kind of zoned out there.

**Do you see yourself – well, you're in Gwinnett –**

Melissa: Well, maybe.

**In 2040.**

Melissa: You never know what the time will bring. But, yeah it's comfortable. There's a lot a development, so I don't know where it's heading, but there's a lot of 24-hour places. They're trying to bring in all the younger people. A lot of stuff stays open later. We'll see how rowdy it gets. [laughter]

**You see yourself living in Gwinnett in 2040, anybody else?**

Anna Leigh: I mean if it is as it stands now. I feel like people move out towards Gwinnett and that area because it's like you either live close to work and pay a lot or money, or you move out, and you pay less. If you have a family and want a big house and yard, move to Gwinnett, and you just deal with the commute. If I have a family and want a nice house and – then yeah if it's more affordable.

**What would make you live there? What attractions or kinds of things would make you live there? You talked about the new developments that are coming that are very similar to places that you like, like Avalon and –**

Malik: Nice high-end, trendy restaurants, instead of the chains. They have great places at the Avalon, and so I think that's really big. But affordability of housing, getting a million-dollar house in Gwinnett is for \$300,000, so there's a big difference there. I'm going to get way more space, and I can upgrade it to the T's if I wanted to. That's a huge benefit, and that's why people go up there.

Alexis: Attractions is diversity of options. I think that's one of the hardest things for me about when I'm in the suburbs – places that I consider the suburbs – I want this, and it's "that's not really an option, you only have this option or this option," and while they might be nice –

Malik: It could be better.

Alexis: Yeah, but while they may be nice options and well thought out for the people of the community, sometimes it's like you want to have more options. You want to be able to – I want Ramen today. Well, no there are no Ramen places around here. You have to drive for another 45 minutes to get to a – so yeah. I think more diversity of attractions.

Parsa: I'm going to go back to accessibility. And I haven't mentioned it before, but my benchmark with where I'd want to live in the Atlanta area is can I get to the airport in under an hour? Not guaranteed, but generally almost every time, can I get to the airport in under an hour?

Malik: On Sundays. [laughter]

Anna Leigh: At 5:00 am, yeah. Accessibility you know? I don't want to sit in traffic for two or three hours a day. I mean that's – when you work all day, that's a good chunk of the time that you get to spend with your family or at home.

00:45:09

**Anything else that will attract you? We've gone through the questions, and we have a few more minutes but is there any else that you would like to add about your perceptions of Gwinnett County that we haven't discussed. Or anything else that you'd like to add about how you choose where you live, and how you – the things that you will be including as factors about where you live. And I want – I do want to come back to those of you who talk about businesses. Because we've talked about – we've focused on where we live, and families, and what that looks like, but what does your dispensary look like? And where – what kind of characteristics are you looking for to locate a business, just in general?**

Vick: What type of characteristics?

**Yes, community characteristics. Obviously, you'd have customers and so what kind of environment would –**

Vick: Just like I mentioned, clean, low crime.

**How about the physical characteristics, the location and that?**

Vick: I mean, I want to look modern and up-to-date, you know what I mean? Not nothing – all the structures need to be torn down, and nothing from the 70s or whatever. I would like to see new construction.

**New construction, alright.**

Malik: For his business, I would have it in the Sugarloaf area, because that's where people's average salary is six figures. I'd be able to price my weed higher. I mean, I would keep it there, and then maybe a shop in like Jimmy Carter area, and have it a little bit lower, because they're not making as much.

**Placing businesses where the income levels can support that.**

Alexis: And politics matter for your business as well, so if the people of Sugarloaf are like "marijuana's evil."

Malik: Everyone likes it.

Alexis: Then your business would fail there anyway.

Malik: Right, you would look at the demographics.

Vick: They'd have to be liberal and all.

Alexis: Maybe by 2040.

[crosstalk 00:47:26]

Alexis: Georgia has legalized medical marijuana, so for me, I think only for six different conditions, but it's still – they have made it legal here.

Susanna: We're going backward than everyone else is.

Alexis: No, no. We're going backward in a lot of things. I just mean – just I think that's an important – that's an important part of when you're setting up a business someplace, it's like knowing politically if it's even just going to work in that space.

[crosstalk 00:47:50]

**If the community is going to accept it.**

[crosstalk 00:47:55]

00:47:55

Malik: You were talking about you wanted to stay in your own package store. Lawrenceville, you can't have a package store. Surround Duluth and Lilburn and everything you can.

**So, there you go. Amber, where would you locate your doggy daycare? Remember you said that.**

Amber: I do. I don't know.

TJ: Maybe I'll take my dog to your daycare.

Amber: I don't know.

**What kind of community characteristics are important – would be important to locate your doggy daycare?**

Amber: I didn't think that far. [crosstalk 00:48:30] I just know I want it.

**You got to think about where you put it now. Location is everything.**

Amber: Location, location, location. I guess next to some type of pet area. Maybe [inaudible 00:48:42] by pet stores or like a veterinarian in the area, so it can be close to a hospital, just in case something happened.

**Parsa, you talked about a business. You didn't describe what you were talking about –**

Parsa: I have like a million ideas, but I think that income level does matter. To Malik's point, I think in an area which there is discretionary income to spend is important. And also, an area in which, to Alexis' point – that you don't have an overwhelming – you don't have an opportunity for the majority of the community to be able to shut you down. Socio-economic diversity to where you don't have a single kind of political mindset or a demographic, or whatever with the ability to shut something down, just based on small strata of preferences.

**Anybody else? Anything else about perceptions of Gwinnett County that we didn't discuss.**

Susanna: When we talked about politics – is it a red – I think of anything out OTP as being a red county, so I just assume that it's too conservative for me.

Melissa: Well, that's why we need you. I'm a Democrat. We need more.

TJ: Yeah. I lived in [inaudible 00:49:59] all my life – [crosstalk 00:50:01]

**And why does that matter?**

Susanna: Like I said, I want my kids raised around people that are open-minded and I said diverse ideas, but not republican ideas [laughter] Sorry.

**And then, how does that – well, since you're talking about politics, how does that translate into your deciding to live somewhere,**

Susanna: Yeah, why would you pick Georgia?

**and you're deciding to locate a business, and how – do you have perceptions about how that impacts growth and development?**

Anna Leigh: Georgia's a good place to do business. It's known across the country as that, so for me, and especially the industry that I work in, I mean Georgia's a good place to operate. [crosstalk 00:50:49]

Susanna: But it's getting in the way of like movies because [crosstalk 00:50:51]

00:50:51

Alexis: Politics is getting in the way of your operating a business. You have like showrunners who are talking about trying to pull filming out of Georgia. [crosstalk 00:51:03] because of politics. Because they're trying – because of this bill that's trying to stop queer parents from being able to adopt children, and it's also trying to stop – or allow adoption agencies to not place queer children, which is insane to think about. But

Anna Leigh: To some people. [crosstalk 00:51:23]

Alexis: OK. But it's messing with business, and so while we say it's a good place to do business, politics is important to talk about when you're talking about business because if it [inaudible 00:51:34] actively start screwing with Georgia's ability operate business like we have been operating so far, I don't know. People keep talking about Amazon coming here, but I don't know, with all of this trouble that's going on, I can't see Amazon wanting to have to deal with all of this, especially with activists who are actively writing and calling Amazon on a regular basis, saying like, "these are the laws that are passing. This is what you need to be – this is what you're in for if you come here, and this is what your employees will be in for."

Malik: Which, that's a huge amount of jobs. [crosstalk 00:52:06]

Anna Leigh: But you said affordability, as you look at housing affordability, maybe Amazon coming here for younger people looking for affordable housing may not be a good thing either.

Malik: Houses around here are cheap though, and Georgia's is like one of the cheaper places than – obviously if you go to –

Anna Leigh: Compared to like Boston. [crosstalk 00:52:21]

**So, things in the region can affect anywhere. Things that are happening regionally or statewide can affect development and growth and things that are going to be happening in Gwinnett, right?**

TJ: If Tom Hanks moves to Georgia, I think the houses around his house are going to [makes noise], I don't know. It's the example but –

Malik: I think where he's going to move, the houses are already upscale –

TJ: That's right.

**Interesting discussion. Anything else? I appreciate your time tonight. This was a good discussion, and it's –**

Malik: No one touched your snacks.

TJ: Are those for everyone? [crosstalk 00:52:58]

Malik: I was like they're viewing me, I don't want to be the only person grabbing it.

Joshua: Two-way mirror.

Malik: Exactly.

**I should have said that. Yes, you can take them with you.**

TJ: This reminded me of Statistics class. I thought we were going to do like a –

**Oh, a problem? No –**

TJ: Sort the M&Ms.

**We are just having a conversation tonight. And so, you can take them with you, yes. Anything else about our discussion tonight, and about how you see yourselves now, and twenty years from now?**

Vick: So, you all are – are we considered millennials along the way? Is that what you all are trying to attract millennials to Gwinnett?

**Everybody is trying to attract everybody to Gwinnett.**

Anna Leigh: It would be really interesting to hear the – I mean the differences between older – like what older people have had to say versus –

**And guess what? They feel the same way you do. They want to –**

Amber: Really?

**Well yeah. They want to –**

Susanna: They want things [inaudible 00:53:56] around us? [laughter] [crosstalk 00:53:58]

00:53:59

**They don't want to mow our lawn and have to clean a 10-bedroom home and have to get in their car and drive everywhere. They want to – see? They want to be just like – we're hearing – not from the focus groups, but we're hearing from some of the people we're talking with, so the seniors, they want the same things you want. They want to live just like you're living. In an urban area, where you can walk and get to things.**

Malik: It was the hotspot in the early 90s. That's where every family was moving, because of schools. And then came I think Alpharetta, and now I think it's Marietta Spring.



**Right. And theirs is for a different reason, but also for some of the same reasons. They were living in Gwinnett then, but I know people who've lived in the suburbs, and they're in their 70s, and they're moving downtown for that – because they want to be able to walk to the restaurants –**

TJ: It's a beautiful world. [laughter]

**That's right. So, you'll be living next to the – in the same areas as the seniors.**

Anna Leigh: I want to have neighbors who are older. If you have kids, it's nice to have neighbors –

Susanna: Yeah, they could babysit. [laughter]

Alexis: Their kids are gone. They're like no, not anymore.

Susanna: No, I'm sorry.

Anna Leigh: No, but yeah, you know to have – like where do I get my car fixed, or who's – it's nice to have people who are different ages and in different phases of life in your neighborhood. I think that's good to hear.

**It is.**

TJ: That's a part of – that's an aspect of diversity as well.

**Thank you so much. It was nice talking with you and thank you for taking the time and take some of those snacks with you. There's some napkins.**

[QA by JM]

**Project:** Pond  
**Location:** Atlanta  
**Date:** 3/1/18  
**Time:** 6:30pm

00:00:00

**Thanks for coming. How are you doing? I'm Inga Kennedy. I'm a consultant with Gwinnett County and we're doing some work out there and we're looking for some opinions and thoughts about issues in Gwinnett County. So, we'll jump right in, but before we do I'd like for you to introduce yourselves and tell us who you are.**

Tiffany: My name is Tiffany Jones.

Abigail: I'm Abigail Wilkerson.

Yajayra: My name is Yajayra. I go by Yaya [ph].

Asmaa: My name is Asmaa.

Tyler: Tyler.

Catherine: Catherine Willis.

**OK, and I'm going to stop you and tell us where you live.**

Jake: DeKalb County.

**OK, and your name?**

Jake: Jake McWhorter.

Josh: DeKalb County. My name is Josh Tykolis.

Dylan: [inaudible 00:01:02] and Dylan Cooper.

Jeremy: DeKalb County. Jeremy Ingram.

Maxx: Gwinnett County and my name is Maxx.

**And one more time, sorry. Where you live.**

Tiffany: Fulton County.

Abigail: Fulton.

Yajayra: Gwinnett.

Asmaa: Clayton.

Tyler: DeKalb.

Catherine: Fulton.

**And you look like kind of young, all of you. Do you have kids? Anybody have kids? OK. Alright. Good. Let's get right into it because a couple of questions I ask you will influence your answers, but I want to start by asking you some questions about your perceptions of Gwinnett County. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear "Gwinnett"?**

Male: Traffic.

**If I had a million dollars for every time I heard that. Anything else?**

Asmaa: Gwinnett is great.

Jake: Gwinnett Braves.

Josh: Huge schools. Huge high schools.

**They sure are.**

Catherine: Gwinnett Gladiators.

Abigail: I think a lot of people.

**A lot of people. Yes, that is definitely the case. Fast growing and it's come there fast. The population has grown really quick. That's good feedback because I never would have thought like the sports teams, the high schools. On a scale of one to ten, what is your perception of Gwinnett? With one being poor and ten being excellent.**

Maxx: I'd say an eight.

**Tell me why.**

Maxx: I think it's a fast growing area. I'm newer to Gwinnett and Georgia. We moved out here two years ago and as we travel Georgia and explore it, Gwinnett seems to be built up a lot more than some of the surrounding areas.

00:03:00

**That's good. So, you're relatively new. Anybody else? Who wants to share their general perception when you hear Gwinnett?**

Yajayra: The next real estate hot spot.

**And where is that on the scale of one to ten?**

Yajayra: I'd say about maybe like he said, like an eight.

**OK, next real estate hot spot. That's good. Anybody else?**

Tiffany: [inaudible 00:03:22].

**And why?**

Tiffany: I think just in preparation for all the people that are there, what's needed. They were ready for five million people to show up.

**They were planning fast. Anybody else? The perception?**

Asmaa: An eight. I think just because education-wise, everyone who goes to Gwinnett County ends up going to a really good school. Ivy League or Tech. They just have better preparation for education.

**Oh, good. That's good to know. Any other perceptions about Gwinnett?**

Jake: I'd say about a seven. I've known a couple of people from the high schools there and they're all pretty good people and they're smart.

**And doing well and everything. That's good because schools are important. What have you heard about Gwinnett for those of you who don't necessarily live there and does it fit your idea of a good place to live?**

Tyler: Yeah. My dad lives in Gwinnett right now in front of the Gwinnett Braves stadium, actually. Very close to it. Beautiful home, beautiful area, nice neighborhood. Nice area. A bit trafficky [ph] and everything because you've got the mall right down there, but still a great area.

**But a good area. So, your idea is that it's a good place to live. Anybody else? Yes?**

Dylan: It's as nice of a place for as cheap as you're going to get in Atlanta, but you have to deal with the traffic and it's very suburbish [ph]. It's not that different than a lot of other places. It's just cheaper for what you're going to get for the value.

**OK, for the value. That's interesting, the value for this region in other words, but you've got to have gives and takes, right?**

Abigail: I would definitely agree with that because I've got a bunch of friends with small children that are moving out to Gwinnett because the houses for the size that they're looking for are a lot cheaper than in town.

**Anybody else?**

Jeremy: Kind of like what she said. There's a lot more housing opportunities the further you get out towards that way, towards Gwinnett and in the inner city – the part of DeKalb I'm in – is apartment complexes and sky rises. It's closer to the city. At least that way there are a lot more houses. That's why people tend to move out there.

**They like that –**

Abigail: And they're a little bit farther apart, too. You're not so close to everybody.

00:06:00

**That's good. So, you like the housing selection and different value there. Let's talk about Gwinnett and compare it to other Atlanta metro counties; Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb, Cherokee, Clayton, Fayette. Do you consider Gwinnett to be a progressive, regressive, or a stagnant county?**

Progressive. [multiple]

Maxx: I'd say progressive.

Tiffany: Progressive.

Dylan: Definitely progressive.

Abigail: Progressive.

**Tell me why you would say that.**

Maxx: Specifically to where I live in Lawrenceville, downtown Lawrenceville to my understanding was at one time a hopping place and it's kind of regressed, but now it's starting to push forward. More restaurants, more boutique-style things. Definitely toward that progressive side of society.

Abigail: We're seeing more farm-to-table type restaurants almost like what you would see downtown.

**That's good. So, the variety of fresh things. Anybody else, your reason for progressive?**

Dylan: I think in comparison to other counties like Clayton and DeKalb, it's definitely more progressive.

**What about it do you think is more progressive in comparison to those counties?**

Dylan: Some of what she said, it's seems to be getting a little prettier and new stuff it getting built.

Tiffany: Culturally. You're getting more of a mix of people now.

Dylan: I've got to say Cobb right now – Fulton and Cobb are at the top of the list for most progressive counties and Gwinnett is kind of making their way up there.

**So, it's coming into its own. That's good. Anybody said regressive or stagnant?**

Asmaa: I'd say it's regressive in the area of South Gwinnett and in Lawrenceville where there's – where does he live? Pleasant Hill Road. Over there. Pleasant Hill Road is just – my brother lives there and every time I go over there it's the same. I don't see any development. I've heard other officemates who told me there was a high school there and they said that the high schools weren't any better and they were always just pretty low. I've seen restaurants close on Pleasant Hill Road and in that specific area I haven't seen any development or them growing. Or any new development of fancy buildings and that's the one area that lacks progressive.

**OK, so the southern part around Pleasant Hill. And you haven't seen any – like you've talked about – the shell –**

Maxx: I don't agree with what she said, but to honest –

Asmaa: There used to be a mall there. The mall is just withering away. There's all [inaudible 00:08:47] stores in there. There's nothing there. Everything is being moved to Discover Mills or to – what is it called – Sugarloaf Mills or Mall of Georgia. At that place, the mall, there's nothing there. All the stores are moving out of it. [inaudible 00:09:03]

00:09:05

**OK, that's good. Anybody else's opinions about regressive or stagnant? The way you described it could be –**

Jeremy: Yeah, I would also agree with her on that. Especially the Pleasant Hill/North Pleasant Hill area south – that part. I've been there for 15 years and that area has pretty much stayed the same.

**Whereas other parts of the county have progressed a lot quicker and have added nicer things?**

Jeremy: Yeah.

Dylan: Yeah, like Peachtree Corners I know is doing pretty well. That Forum [ph], the stuff in there is pretty progressive.

**Any other feedback on that question? Alright. Then let's talk a little bit about housing because a lot of things – because we've already talked a little bit about housing and why people gravitate, but specifically what kind of housing do you prefer to live in and do you want to rent or own? So, just – you want a –**

Tiffany: Single family.

Maxx: I agree.

[crosstalk 00:10:22]

Josh: It's always better to own.

Catherine: Yeah.

**Everybody is single family? Anybody apartment or town home or condo?**

Asmaa: Condo or townhome or apartment. Because I'm younger and I don't have a family.

Dylan: Yeah, I'm 19 so it probably wouldn't happen.

**But if you had a chance to –?**

Dylan: If I had money and a job and stuff would I? Actually probably not. I'd probably be around people in apartments or townhomes within walking distance to restaurants and bars and stuff like that.

Tyler: After you have kids, you're going to want the seclusion of your own home.

Asmaa: Later on.

Tyler: You've got people all around you and everything in apartments and condos.

Dylan: I've got five or six years before that.

Asmaa: I'd buy a condo.

**OK, any other people? Catherine, you're quiet. I'm going to call on you.**

Catherine: That single family home. I'd own it.

Maxx: I think a good mixture within an area is always good. Right across the street from our home, they just built beautiful new townhomes. It's always good to see that mixture, especially new building because that means where my home is now, eventually there may be more stuff built up in that area. So, the mixture I think is needed.

Tyler: Drives up the value of your home if you're an owner.

**What are some of the main factors that are important to you when you would choose in a home outside of affordability and cost? Let's take that off the table, the affordability and cost. What other factors are important to you in deciding where to live?**

00:12:09

Yajayra: I'd say the area.

**Be more specific.**

Yajayra: If you're close to the interstate – for many of us or some of us who work in the city – and if you're too far off the interstate then it makes it harder to get there. And just making it close and accessible to other things, like restaurants and shops.

Abigail: Schools and crime areas.

Catherine: What kind of parks might be nearby.

Josh: A roommate situation.

**Say again?**

Josh: A roommate situation.

**Interesting. Alright.**

Tyler: Traffic. If it's in a neighborhood or right off the road, if it's a home.

Tiffany: Land.

**Land in terms of –?**

Tiffany: If I have enough to grow food acreage-wise. You know, 0.25 may not be enough but I want some room on some land.

**The 0.2, but maybe the 0.5. Anything else?**



Asmaa: Diversity.

**Say that again?**

Asmaa: Diversity.

**Good. You talked about parks and trails and other recreation activity, anything active in that way. What made you decide to move?**

Maxx: To move to Georgia or specifically Gwinnett?

**Specifically Gwinnett.**

Maxx: Well, I'm actually a general contractor by trade and then I'm also a youth pastor at a church in Lawrenceville, Georgia. So, that it's there five minutes down the road. But to that, though, one thing Gwinnett – one thing I've noticed is – some people have mentioned parks and the park and rec is fairly good. I've come from Connecticut; that's where I was born and raised but parks are always bigger, nicer, well maintained. So, I thought that was interesting.

**So, you talked about traffic, but what about public transportation? Anybody want to be near public transportation? Is that –?**

Josh: That would be nice, too. I think the openness with public transportation where you can get to some of the major sports areas or major nightlife areas is a key thing.

**I think I've heard the answer to this question, but I will now ask it in a more specific way. Is it a priority for you to live within a short drive of your workplace? Now not everybody lives in the same – but you've made that decision based on your workplace?**

Maxx: Yeah, but I'm all over.

**But I mean, your pastoring job. Is it a priority?**

00:15:00

Yeah. [multiple]

**I mean generally. Is it a priority to not have a commute or to live within a short distance to your workplace?**

Yeah. [multiple]

**Is it important that you're able to walk to work?**

No. [multiple]

Abigail: It's too hot to walk. We need cool summers. It's too hot in the summers.

**OK. Anybody that would like to walk to work?**

Tiffany: I would. If it's close enough. If it's an option.

**So, if it's an option?**

Tiffany: I'm not going to move just so that I can.

**Alright, so you're not going to move so you can but if it presented itself you might.**

Tyler: If weather permitted.

Jake: I like to drive to work, have a little bit of car time and then – I feel like if I had to walk I would never really be leaving work because I'd be so close to it. So, I'd like a little bit of distance.

Asmaa: I agree with him. I don't want to be in the same place. I've done it before and I hated it.

**OK, you've been near where you work?**

Asmaa: Yeah, it's annoying. You never leave there and I always just wanted to go somewhere else outside of my area.

**So, you just want to get away from work. Interesting. Now – and we've had a little bit of this conversation – do you view Gwinnett as providing affordable housing, including housing for all income types and stages of life? So, let me describe the stages of life because that's important; executives, managers, young professionals, single people, families, working class, senior citizens. What do you think about the variety of housing that exists in Gwinnet or do you think that they provide that variety?**

Tiffany: I'm not real sure about that.

Abigail: I think there is. I've got two friends that are both married with children but very different economical standpoint and they both were able to find housing within their price range that suited their needs.

**That's good to know.**

Yajayra: There is a bit of everything out there, it's just depending on do you want to be closer to the Atlanta area or further out. So, for example, if you want a home with a large plot of land you're going to

have to go further north, like Lawrenceville, Suwanee, Greenville. If you're looking for townhomes, Lawrenceville is coming up. So, it just depends on the area.

Tyler: The further you go from Atlanta, the bigger the home you're going to get for your price.

**Right.**

Dylan: It's such a big county, there's really options for everyone. But in specific spots, there's a lot of low-income areas in Gwinnett County, for sure. But then you've got like Sugarloaf, which is like nice. But I personally wouldn't want to live there as a young professional because it's kind of far from the city. There's not that much nightlife stuff to do there.

00:18:15

**So, that will make a difference in terms of – and you think that the affordability is there, also? OK. Thank you.**

Asmaa: I think that it's to an extent. You can probably get a place for \$100,000 in South Gwinnett but it's not that nice; it's a really old 10-15 year old home when you can get a brand new home for \$100,000 in Gwinnett County.

Tyler: Is 10 or 15 old?

Asmaa: I just meant older. In 20 years, why would you get something pretty old? I think all those houses are 10 or 15 years – it's older than that and you'd pay \$100,000 for it or something like that.

**So, the affordability – it's interesting that you talk about the age of the house versus the affordability. So, you don't think that – so affordability, that \$100,000 is affordable but you can't buy anything new is what you're saying.**

Asmaa: Yeah.

Tyler: There's homes inside the perimeter in Decatur when I was home shopping a couple years ago that 1950s, 900/1100 square feet for \$200,000 plus, whereas my home is a mid-80s at \$200,000. I'd say 15 years, that's really new for a home.

Asmaa: It might be 15 years old, but it's not in that great of an area. It's in South Gwinnett when you're buying a home for the area of Gwinnett so you hope to send your kids to another place.

**But for someone who is in that price range, that's where it is.**

Asmaa: Yeah.

Dylan: I think that's as good as a value as you're going to get. It's a place where how you're going to live – again, just to live there and then drive out. So, it's obviously a place where people can find cheap housing.

**And is that OK? Cheap housing? That's an interesting term, but that's – meaning that the housing types or prices are available for a lot of different people.**

Tyler: It's great. If you don't mind the drive and the traffic at times, depending on the time of the day, getting to and from Atlanta if that's where you're heading to work. Like I said, my dad and step mom live right over near Gwinnett Braves Stadium. She works right off of North Druid with Emory and my dad works halfway down 85. And nice big house, decent price, and they don't mind the drive.

00:21:00

**Anything else about housing before I go into the next question? Let's talk a little bit about community amenities, because that's important, being near things. What are the most important community amenities and assets to you and do they need to be within a 10 minute walk? So, you all talked about parks. What community amenities are important to you?**

Maxx: I think the parks – my mom actually lives over in Dacula and Rabbit Hill is right there. Beautiful complex, multiple soccer fields, baseball, football. It doesn't necessarily have to be a walk away, but it's nice to drive 10 minutes and it's right there, you have all of that.

Tiffany: Activities for the youth. Having that in close proximity is really good.

**OK, activities for young people. Any other – and I'm not necessarily talking about Gwinnett. Just in general.**

Tyler: Restaurants, shopping. What types of stores they have around there.

Asmaa: A library. A rec center.

Tiffany: Gardens.

**They're becoming popular now, community gardens. So, yeah. Anything else that –?**

Josh: A school that's not too far away.

**A school that's not too far away, so not having to travel a long distance to get to and from school every day. Any other?**

Yajayra: Accessibility to shops and little hang out restaurants is always nice, especially like he said, recreational areas where you're not having to drive an hour to go to a hiking trail or going to through traffic to go to a nice restaurant near the beltline. That's always nice to have close by.

**And not necessarily in that 10 minute walk, but just being accessible to you? Right. OK. What amenities is Gwinnett County missing that you're aware of? To attract you and other young adults? You've mentioned earlier –**

Dylan: It's just not really a destination place. It's a place where you live there and then you drive out of there. Maybe deeper into the county, like Lawrenceville, which is further away and they have their own little towns and stuff, but I'm still close to it – actually, like the Forum is a good area and like that, but I don't really know of anything else that I would want to go to.

**What's missing that would cause you to –?**

00:24:00

Jeremy: I wouldn't necessarily say it's missing a lot of things. It isn't like the city. Things aren't so close knit, so you just want them to be accessible. You have to like drive around to a lot of places that are five or six miles out whereas in the city you could probably walk 30 seconds down the street and get to something else.

**Accessibility, time-wise.**

Asmaa: I agree with him. It's just really far. They have a lot of things – restaurants, cheaper food options – in the city. Nightlife, lounges. But it's just too far. I'm not going to go there from Atlanta.

**OK. Anything else that's missing that would attract you to Gwinnett? And what is a deal breaker – this is not specific to Gwinnett because I know all of you don't live in Gwinnett, but I want you to think about this in terms of where you are or what's desirable to you. What is a deal breaker that would prevent you from moving to any community? What's a deal breaker? And I want everybody to answer this question. I'm going to start with you. Go ahead.**

Maxx: Yeah, I'd say a high crime area would obviously deter anybody.

Jeremy: I would say the rate of how they actually take care of the city, because there's a lot of places around here don't necessarily do a lot of good upkeep on a lot of buildings depending on where you live and extended [crosstalk 00:25:43] .

**Oh, OK. So, she talked about things kind of – not regressing, but –**

Jeremy: Yeah, not regressing, but maybe stagnant. That's what I'm talking about.

**OK, so the infrastructure.**

Jeremy: Yeah, because I feel like if they keep up the city then they're going to keep up with everything as far as crime rates and schools and everything.

**What's a deal breaker for you?**

Dylan: I agree with him on crime rate and stuff is important. But then proximity to work and school is also important.

**How do you define proximity?**

Dylan: Not by the actual distance but like how long it takes to drive there.

**And what would that be? What would be a deal breaker for you?**

Dylan: Probably like 30 minutes.

Tiffany: Past 30 or at 30?

Dylan: I've never driven further than 15 minutes, so I really don't know. I would definitely start to get angry or something like that.

**That's good to know because a lot of people have long commutes one-way and so that's good. What would be a deal breaker for you?**

00:27:00

Josh: For my job, I would have put schools and community with more of their sports aspect. So, going to a school that has a good reputation and also has a good teacher foundation for what they want to do with the school and to have the parent and teacher involvement because that always goes hand in hand with the sports and the sports are usually what help a kid get back into the community.

Jake: I think the crime rate and how many people are living there, because if it's overcrowded I wouldn't want to live there. Like in Cobb County, I think it's starting to get overcrowded.

**OK, we call it density. That's the number of people who live in – we define it by acre a lot of times, but the number of people who live in a given area. OK, so you don't like high density.**

Jake: Yeah.

**Catherine?**

Catherine: I would probably agree with the crime rate as well as the schools, but geared more towards the music education. That definitely plays a big role in the community and keeping the kids out of trouble and that kind of stuff.

**So, the kinds of activities that are available in the schools are important. What would be a deal breaker for you, Tyler?**

Tyler: Crime and then schools around.

**More specifically what about schools?**

Tyler: Because having kids and everything – just how they rank and all that for the area and for the state. How nice they are; are they older or run down.

**Asmaa?**

Asmaa: I'd say crime. I have to be 20 minutes to the city. I hate driving past 10 minutes. It has to be – like what he said, community. So, the infrastructure development and density rate.

**You like sidewalks, good streets, and streetlights. OK, infrastructure.**

Asmaa: Bike lanes.

**Bike lanes, OK.**

Yajayra: Got to respect them.

**Go ahead.**

Yajayra: Definitely the crime rate. You don't want to live in an area where it's high crime, but also for me importantly is accessibility to work. I drive 15 minutes to work but my spouse drives an hour. Thankfully against traffic.

**One way?**

Yajayra: Yeah. He has a 52 mile drive. But because it's against traffic that definitely cuts it down.

Abigail: Crime ratings and schools. Not only for everything that everybody said, but because they maintain or increase property value.

00:30:00

**The things that affect property value. Yeah. Tiffany?**

Tiffany: I'm going to say access to food. It may seem simple, but if there's a grocery store and it's 10 miles away, what do you have around to have access to food? If your vehicle messes up, how can you get –? And also reliable transport – well, transportation in general and access to food.

**Any other deal breakers that would keep you from moving into a community? Now let's talk about – I want you to think ahead 20 years from now. And you're only young, so you have a lot of your years ahead of you and that's what we're looking at. Because remember you talked about the fast growth pace and getting ready and preparing for that continued growth because it sounds like if it's still a desirable place to live and to get to and to be in – describe what you think you will have accomplished by 2040. I'm not talking about Gwinnett. I want to talk about you all 20 years from now in 2040. Describe where you want to be and what you think you want to have accomplished. Will you be married? Will you be single? Some people don't want to get married. Children, home ownership, career types –**

Abigail: How about your kids being out of the house? Let's try that goal.

**So, you'd like to be an empty nester by 2040. There we go. And I want everybody to answer this question, too, because there's a reason why. Alright, Tiffany?**

Tiffany: 2040? I hope to own my own home with a lot of property and a few businesses on the property. Kids out of the home with their own place. Travel.

Yajayra: To have travelled the world more, seen different cultures more, experienced more.

Asmaa: That's hard. To be established, have a full time job working in something I love. Travelling more. Who knows? To own my own condo or a few properties.

**And Tyler, you're looking like "2040?"**

Tyler: I'm just trying to think of what I want to be doing at 50. Kids obviously at the point of being out of the house. My oldest is 10; currently youngest is three. And then taking care of – which I know financially they will be just – home currently sold and everything with a home further away from the city, away from traffic. I want more peace and quiet.

00:33:18

**Catherine?**

Catherine: Definitely a home owner as well. To be an accomplished musician and have a few homes and maybe rent them out as well.

Jake: Have a family, own a business possibly, have a house a little bit further outside the city so it's a little bit quieter and just be established.

Josh: I definitely want to be outside of the city and have some acreage. Be able to go hunting, fishing – do all that stuff I like.



**OK. My husband is fishing right now.**

Josh: Lucky him.

**Dylan?**

Dylan: Married, have kids, probably live in the suburbs somewhere outside the city, but not too far outside the city I guess.

**Still want to get to that activity?**

Dylan: Yeah. Just within 30 minutes. [laughter]

**Jeremy?**

Jeremy: Like I said, I would like to have a home and a couple businesses. Maybe have a franchise or something. I would love to see my daughter go away to college and have her [inaudible 00:34:34] or whatever. I would have some mortgages.

Maxx: 20 years? Well, definitely a business that's thriving or would continue to grow. Everybody mentioned having properties. Having a few more and have a savings and get ready for retirement early.

**Early retirement? That's good.**

Abigail: That passive income stream?

Maxx: Yeah.

**One of the reasons I ask this is seeing yourselves in 2040, what kind of community characteristics do you desire for where you envision yourself? Some of you talk about homeownership and businesses. Talk about the community characteristics that you see yourselves in at that time, in 2040. What's that vision like for you?**

Tiffany: I think people go on back to the basics, to some of the old school ways of living; getting to know your neighbor all over again, working together, building together. It seems perfect, but sometimes you got to go back to the basics to get where you want to go.

00:35:59

Maxx: Yeah, I would agree with that. I think everything we say even today I think in 20 years are things to continue to look for. In 20 years, I still want a nice park nearby. I'll still want nice restaurants. I'll still want a great infrastructure that's taken care of and a community that cares about what's happening within that community. So, that doesn't change in time.

**How do you see yourselves? We talked about what you'd like to be doing and what you'd like to accomplish, but where do you see yourselves being in terms of the community characteristics? Some people have single family life now and then they see themselves in a smaller place and vice versa. Where do you see yourselves? And for those of you who want businesses, what kind of business atmosphere and environment do you see?**

Maxx: If houses keep getting built, I'll have work forever. As long as there's houses that are still building, I still have work.

Asmaa: I just want to work in a place that actually values company culture and respects their employees and values their employees. I want to live in a place that's integrated and have a nice community. But I still want to live in a suburb in the city. So, I just hope that there's a still affordable housing options by the time it's 2040. There may not be.

**You have concerns about that based on what you see now?**

Asmaa: Yeah.

**You want to still see affordability there. I'm going to ask everybody to answer this question because it's kind of important. 20 years is not long from now and it will go by really quick. I remember when I was finishing graduate school and we were working on the plan for the year 2000 and it was the year 1980 and I thought, "Man, 2000? That is a long time from now." And now it's almost 2020. It comes really fast. So, Abigail, where do you see yourself?**

Abigail: Still on the community characteristics side?

**Yeah, but in 2040.**

Abigail: Right. Pretty much everything that Maxx said. Just that still being able to be accessible to things that you want to do and places that you want to go, but also like Asmaa said about having it be affordable and not pricing yourself out of the market.

**Out of the market. OK.**

00:38:57

Yajayra: I think definitely what they've all said is important, but also for me and my family, it would be important to be in a community that's diverse and welcoming. I love the community I'm in now because we all know each other as neighbors and we talk to each other and we help each other out, but I used to live in a neighborhood before throughout high school where we didn't know our neighbors and you would see them come and go, but it was a little sad to know that you couldn't go to your neighbor for help. So, at least for community that's welcoming where you do know each other is where I would love to see myself.

**Tyler?**

Tyler: Similar. Like I said, further out from the city, away from the traffic. Still good neighbors. I can only imagine how much the greater Atlanta area has grown over the last 20 years and how much bigger and more expensive things will be 20 years from now. Wondering how far out I have to go to be away from the traffic and still be close to stuff. Right now I could go to Conyers and still be in range of things and still be 30 or 40 minutes from the city without traffic, but who knows 20 years from now?

**So, you're going to be running away from the traffic? OK, that's good. Catherine?**

Catherine: I think knowing your neighbors, like a couple people said, is definitely important. I've lived in a basement apartment and had someone right above me and I didn't even know their name. But now I live in some apartments and the entire neighborhood – I could walk two doors down and ask for a cup of sugar if I needed. So, it's definitely good to know your neighbors and I think just a nice sense of community like that.

**I'm going to stop right here. I'm coming back. But for those of you who have already answered, because everybody says they want to know their neighbors and I think that's important, to know people who are living around you – what kind of development lends itself better to that? You talked about growing up and nobody knew each other and nobody spoke to each other and now it's different. Is it a different development?**

Yajayra: Yes. Right now I own a condo, so we all kind of know each other. But growing up it was a single home area, so it was more spread out and everyone kind of kept to their own, left their garage and went home.

Abigail: I think multi family living definitely lends itself to that. Just opening that door a little bit easier because you can't just close the garage and disappear. You live on top of these people and you can see through their windows.

**But Catherine said she lived beneath somebody and never knew them.**

Catherine: That was more of a single family home, but we had a separate entrance and everything. But definitely having those close quarters in apartments definitely forces you to say hey.

**So, Jake, the community characteristics and then – yeah.**

00:42:00

Jake: So, for a business I want to see people being highly motivated and wanting to develop the best work they can and then also with the neighbors, I think that's important because when I grew up, our whole neighborhood there was a lot of houses in there, but all the kids would go to the neighborhood pool party and we all play together and my parents wouldn't be afraid to just say, "Hey, go outside and play." I think that's important.

Josh: Originally I'm from rural Kansas life where we had miles and we weren't close to anybody, but you had the sense of community where there's a football game and you know all of the neighbors are going to be there and they want to see you there to play and do well. I don't see really as much of that here and I would love to see more of that in the community, where your neighbors don't have kids but it's fine because we're all going to the football game and have fun together. And what is part of the community? It's the high school.

**When I was growing up I had neighbors that didn't have kids and they went to the PTA. That was the entertainment for the – [laughter]. Dylan?**

Dylan: Yeah, I kind of agree with what everyone has said so far, especially what he just said with the small town feel and getting to know your neighbors and having a place to hang out like a pool or something.

**OK, like a gathering spot of the community?**

Dylan: Yeah.

**Jeremy?**

Jeremy: Same thing as well. Good community, good infrastructure, good schools because of my daughter and as well as a good amount of places of leisure because the way things are progressing in the future, anything that you want you can get it to your front door. So, just mostly everything entertainment-wise and work-wise, because like I said, everything going to be coming to your door. I'd love to live [inaudible 00:44:07] go door to door to have fun. You're going to get your car delivered to your door. [laughter]

**That's good. Maxx?**

Maxx: What was –?

**The community characteristics and then – go ahead. In 2040.**

Maxx: Oh yeah. Right. Again, same thing. I would want to say the same thing. Things within the community like what everyone has said here.

**Do you see yourselves living like you are now? Or no?**

Asmaa: To a certain degree.

**When I say – not like you are, but in the type of housing and the type of community that you live in, do you see yourselves living in that kind of place?**

00:45:00

Maxx: I see myself living in that same type of area that I live now – a single family home on an acre lot. I know my neighbor; to the right is Scott and my neighbor to the left is Keith. And they both are a little older, but yeah, I'm in a good area. A good spot; they're still close.

**So, based on your perception of Gwinnett County today, could you see yourself living there in 2040?**

Tiffany: There's a big question mark there. Because if Gwinnett County is expanding as fast as it is, it kind of reminds me of Atlanta and how Atlanta hit that boom and never stopped booming. So, I would kind of be concerned that since Gwinnett has hit that boom that the boom is going to keep expanding further out in the county. So, those things that I may want may not be available in 2040.

Tyler: Like you said how now in Buckhead just outside of Atlanta, you got more high rises and stuff out there and it's just so packed and crowded that with the way Gwinnett is expanding in some areas, it could very well be like that, like another little mini Atlanta or Buckhead.

**So, the kinds of things that are missing now in 2040 you would want to – what would they be?**

Maxx: There may be too much. I think that's what everybody is hoping they're going to have a cap. That is Atlanta – I don't think Atlanta will ever go away – but if Atlanta starts to spread into the other counties as far as that inner city lifestyle, Gwinnett for some people will start to diminish and not want to – maybe now you have to go out to Barrow County or one of those other counties where you get a little more rural or a little more suburb. But I think a mixture within Gwinnett County is good and if the movie industry, which I believe is beginning to boom here in Georgia because of the available land, I think that we'll see prices go up, unfortunately. So, it's something to keep an eye on with Gwinnett.

Dylan: I'd probably say the opposite of what everyone is saying. I feel like Cobb and North Fulton is a nicer area right now than Gwinnett to have a family and the drive into the city is a little bit nicer. I'd rather live there when I'm 30 or 40.

Catherine: It feels like it might start to grow more like Forsyth County did – sort of boomed and it's a whole lot of very family oriented – it's got lots of shopping over there, but it's not having all these high rises, so it's very low to the ground and spread out, but it's still highly developed.

00:48:00

**So, I've heard Barrow, I've heard Forsyth, I've heard North Fulton.**

Asmaa: I would agree with what he was saying about people wanting to move out to Barrow and she said Forsyth. It just depends on where Atlanta is at 20 years from now. Are we going to gentrify some more or are we going to have another case of urban sprawl? It depends on that. I don't know I'd actually live just in Gwinnet and that's probably even Atlanta.

**But what would make you move here? What amenities are not there now that could be? So, you talked about –**

Asmaa: A museum. Is there a museum?

Maxx: There's a historical museum.

**There are a couple of smaller ones.**

Asmaa: Gwinnet is kind of like a little city that has a big feel.

**I like that. Alright. Anything else where you would see yourself living in Gwinnett in 2040?**

Tiffany: Depends on what is offered for small business owners. If there's some good perks out there for small business owners I'd move there.

**And when you say business, what kind of business are you referring to?**

Tiffany: I have a lot in my head. That's the reality. I'm in to multiple things, but just business in general you always want a good environment where your local people can own a business in their own city or own county.

**I ask about that because we've talked about housing and how we live and things that are important for us to live in, but I've heard a couple of you talk about businesses and you talk about business that has come and gone and businesses that are expanding and you talked about Lawrenceville becoming more walkable and seeing more local types of businesses there and now you're seeing living on top of businesses. So, that's why I was asking about the characteristics of any kind of business environment that you'd like to have based on what you – you may not need a storefront.**

Maxx: Would be nice.

Asmaa: May be nice is if business squares – there are certain corporate offices in the area that already have a little square, those towers in Marquette. Typically when you have those towers versus the squares, it's easier for food trucks and other stands to come in there during lunch hour, so that would help with the more corporate and small business and office community. I know that Gwinnett already has companies there, but a lot of the companies are kind of moving out to Atlanta, but Atlanta is getting more expensive. So, just having more office square communities and having more events in those areas to keep the offices there so they don't have to leave.

00:51:06

Maxx: I would agree with that, too, because that helps with nightlife and food and cultural stuff. Even now what Lawrenceville has – it's called the Cornerstone – and it's an office suite where multiple companies can come in and use these multiple parts and because of that, right next door Strange Taco

just opened up [inaudible 00:51:31]. It's a nice little taco place, but that just came out of nowhere. But I guarantee you that the reason they chose that area is because you have offices here, you've got different work places within just right there in downtown Lawrenceville, which is so tiny.

Asmaa: I've seen a couple of restaurants. There's one restaurant called Old Fourth Ward Pizza. It used to be this big pizza shop in downtown and I feel like a lot of these restaurants are starting to move out to Gwinnett and offer Gwinnett things that they could get in Atlanta, but getting it in Gwinnett so you don't have to leave Gwinnett. So, having city services in Gwinnett to keep it its own community.

**So, you see the smaller, less of the chain type both of foods places – you talked about Strange Taco and Old Fourth Ward Pizza and those kinds of places that are normally concentrated in the urban area moving into the Gwinnett area. Anything else on things that would attract you out here? I keep saying out here. To Gwinnett?**

Dylan: I definitely agree with what those two said. If you look at Cobb County, it already has a lot of restaurants – like new, not a lot of chain restaurants. Or downtown Roswell, something like that. If they had a place like that, that's pretty nice and I think I'd consider living there in a few years.

**We're winding down a little bit. Is there anything else that you would like to add about your perception, your ideas of Gwinnett that we haven't discussed yet?**

Asmaa: I guess I could say in Fulton County, in North Fulton [inaudible 00:53:31] is they have the Avalon [ph] and also in Cobb County they also have the Battery [ph], so I think Gwinnett is missing a staple like that. So, that's what they're missing. I'm not saying that you have to build a stadium, but build something – because there's already just so many things there. You already have the Mall of Georgia there. You already have Sugarloaf Mills. I think maybe just in the area to attract people, but something monumental. Because you already know about the Battery. People love going to the Battery and families love going to the Avalon and couples who live up there do, too. So, something that –

00:54:11

**A destination.**

Asmaa: Yeah, a nice destination.

**Anybody else?**

Jeremy: I would agree. I think it needs some type of bigger local attraction or like some type of professional sport arena or something like that. Something to get people [inaudible 00:54:33], they move to Cobb and the [inaudible 00:54:38] is built south of them. They took a couple teams away from when [crosstalk 00:54:43].

**So, that would bring more people into the county.**

Asmaa: Isn't there a Braves Stadium in Gwinnett?

Tyler: Yeah, I would get [crosstalk 00:54:57].

Dylan: It was a very good idea to have the Braves Stadium and that, but for most people in Atlanta 45 minutes is too long.

Abigail: Isn't it just past the 985?

Tyler: Yeah, it's like three or four minutes from [crosstalk 00:55:16].

Dylan: If you built that closer to the city, I think that would be a Battery destination.

Asmaa: Instead of demolishing it and using the money to build something new, you could probably add to it. Like add some restaurants and some bars in there maybe. Just something to make it more of a destination so people can recognize the sports are actually there.

**Because guess what? When Gwinnett's first mall was built it was a regional destination. Everybody came from all over to Gwinnett Place Mall. And so it was a destination. But OK, you're saying to add to – not necessarily build anything new, but add to what is already there.**

Asmaa: Yeah, just add to what you already have.

Tyler: It's gotten kind of stagnant over the years and the bad thing about a lot of the malls, a lot of them are kind of closing down their stores because so many things you can get online and on Amazon, whatever you want honestly. People just aren't going to malls much. A lot of Cobb County malls are kind of getting run down.

Asmaa: Probably do something with Gwinnett Place since the majority of the stores are just closing in there. You could probably use that building or that space for something else, like if people want an amusement park or something along the recreational lines. Something like that just to bring residents, community, local [inaudible 00:56:39].

**So, here we go, see? Talking about the kinds of things.**

Dylan: I used to kind of like there and it was very edgy and like that, but it's basically identical to the Avalon, so it's the exact same kind of thing. It was just the very edge of Gwinnett, it's almost like the DeKalb and that but that's a destination that I drive to sometimes.

00:57:03

Jake: I don't know if Gwinnett has any of them, but I think in Cobb County they have The Avenues and I know people from all over come to those because they have such a variety and they're outdoors, so in the summer they're always packed because people can walk.



Asmaa: Or kind of like the market or something, you know in downtown and in Inman Park Ponds, we have these food halls and this market that's been a part of something I'd want too. Maybe Gwinnett – that's something that it needs. Maybe that's what they could do.

Tiffany: But they don't have a lot of them.

Asmaa: Maybe they could get more. You could do something with Gwinnett Place or something over there just to make it progress more because the area has just been stagnant for a while, so to have some progression in that area.

Dylan: I think that would be a really good idea, I think. To take a rundown mall and turn it into a city market or Krog Street Market like that, that would be really –

Asmaa: Or a food hall with shopping stores. Still affordable, though.

**And they have the infrastructure.**

Asmaa: Yeah. If you don't want [crosstalk 00:58:03].

**OK, anything else about Gwinnett? Our time is – I think we were maybe a couple of minutes starting late. Anything else you want to share? This has been good. This is good feedback for us and what we're doing with Gwinnett and that helps us form some strategy based on some of your feedback and some of things that you've shared with us and we really appreciate you participating tonight. Alright, there's nothing else? What were you going to say Catherine?**

Catherine: I was going to say, have something stand out about the shopping centers or anything, like over at Avalon, they have open container policy, so you can walk around the entire shopping area with a drink in your hand. So, just something that makes it unique.

Dylan: Same thing at the Battery.

Asmaa: Same thing at Ponce City Market – not Ponce City – Krog Street Market. All those markets, it's all open container.

Dylan: Is The Forum open container or do you know?

**Ask me again?**

Dylan: Is The Forum open container?

**I don't know. If I had to guess, I would say no. I don't think so. Thank you so much. This was good. I appreciate it. Thank you. Have a good evening.**

[QA by JM]