



RESPONSIBLE GROWTH FOR NORTHCROSS PRESS STATEMENT

For News Conference of March 5, 2007 at 4PM

Responsible Growth for Northcross, which represents thousands of residents and many business owners, is proud to be here today with leaders from our community. We stand united with the neighborhood associations from Allandale, Brentwood, Crestview, North Shoal Creek and Wooten. Also here with us are local business owners and community leaders from all over Austin.

Today Lincoln Property Company and Wal-Mart are showing the public a plan for Northcross Mall that they say addresses neighborhood concerns.

It does not.

They say their plan represents negotiation and compromise.

It does not.

A Supercenter, by virtue of its massive size, is the fundamental problem that will hurt our neighborhoods.

Lincoln and Wal-Mart have been clear from the beginning that they are not interested in addressing that fundamental problem and that they don't care how their plan will affect our neighborhoods.

Unfortunately, City management has also been clear from the beginning that the concerns and well-being of neighborhoods take a backseat to whatever developers want to do.

This fight is bigger than Northcross and should concern all Austinites, for two reasons.

First, Wal-Mart's growth strategy is to locate big box stores in central city areas - so what happens here today is certain to happen in another central Austin neighborhood soon.

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Second, City management's cozy relationship with the development community isn't confined to the Northcross situation. The City's deliberate failure to balance the concerns of residents with the rights of developers is damaging neighborhoods all over Austin and will continue for years to come if we don't speak out.

The City has admitted mistakes were made in approving this site plan. Yet, the City is paying a law firm at least a quarter million dollars in taxpayer money to ensure that a Wal-Mart Supercenter gets built in a central city neighborhood.

This is unacceptable.

Today we call upon citizens from all over Austin to join us and tell our city government that any further action to advance this current plan is intolerable. Real negotiation and compromise must occur or there will be corrective consequences.

It is time to right this wrong. It is time to move the conversation beyond details that don't address the core problems.

It is time to journey down the right path together and seize this moment to do something truly great for our neighborhoods, for the City of Austin, and for the developer.

We call upon the citizens of Austin to join us in telling Lincoln Property Company, Wal-Mart and the City that it is time to work in good faith to achieve a better vision for Northcross – a vision that will enhance rather than damage.

And we call upon Lincoln Property Company and Wal-Mart to do what is right by going back to the drawing board with us and building something much better, more neighborly and more responsible.

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