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3.1 Quality Community Objectives

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established statewide goals and associated Quality Community Objectives (QCO). Quality Community Objectives (QCOs) are "a statement of the development patterns and options that will help Georgia preserve its unique cultural, natural and historic resources while looking to the future and growing to its fullest potential". As required in the Minimum Planning Standards, the City of Atlanta evaluated how these QCOs are being met in order to determine the "progress to date" towards creating a sustainable and livable community. As part of the evaluation, issues that should be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan were identified. The State Planning goals are listed below.

Statewide Planning Goals

Economic Development Goal: To achieve a growing and balanced economy, consistent with the prudent management of the state's resources, that equitably benefits all segments of the population.

Natural and Cultural Resources Goal: To conserve and protect the environmental, natural and cultural resources of Georgia's communities, regions and the state.

Community Facilities and Services Goal: To ensure the provision of community facilities and services throughout the state to support efficient growth and development patterns that will protect and enhance the quality of life of Georgia's residents.

Housing Goal: To ensure that all residents of the state have access to adequate and affordable housing.

Land Use and Transportation Goal: To ensure the coordination of land use planning and transportation planning throughout the state in support of efficient growth and development patterns that will promote sustainable economic development, protection of natural resources and provision of adequate and affordable housing.

Intergovernmental Coordination: To ensure the coordination of local planning efforts with local service providers and authorities, with neighboring communities and with the state and regional plans and programs.

3.1.1 Development Patterns

3.1.1.1 Traditional Neighborhoods

Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.



Historic neighborhoods throughout the City of Atlanta, from West End and Inman Park that developed at the turn of the century to Morningside that developed before the 1950's, have a connected street pattern, small blocks, street lined streets, neighborhood serving commercial areas, community schools, sidewalks and streets that promote walking, biking and transit. All of these are characteristics of Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND). Currently, there is no comprehensive implementation of the concept within the city.

Development standards in the City of Atlanta's Zoning Resolution called for development patterns that were not compatible with the characteristics of these traditional neighborhoods. Moreover, neighborhood commercial uses such as grocers and retailers have long since given way to supermarkets, malls and "big box" retailers, which do not fit the character of these traditional neighborhoods. In response to concerns over incompatible infill development, the City of Atlanta adopted several mixed-use smart growth zoning districts (i.e. Mixed Residential Commercial (MRC), Live Work (LW), Multi-family Residential (MR), Neighborhood Commercial (NC), and Special Public Interest (SPI) districts) that require development patterns compatible with those of Atlanta's historic or traditional neighborhoods and also allow for a mix of uses built in a pedestrian oriented manner. Moreover, the Neighborhood Commercial Zoning district limits the size of commercial uses in order to maintain a neighborhood scale. These traditional neighborhood standards are by right and in some cases require an administrative approval.

Tree lined streets are integral to the character of many neighborhoods. Trees moderate the temperature, absorb stormwater, clean the air, provide habitat, provide shade in the summer, buffer pedestrians from moving traffic and beautify streets. The Tree Protection Ordinance establishes standards to promote the city's policy that "there shall be no net loss of trees" and that Atlanta "will continue to enjoy the benefits provided by its urban forest." Planting of street trees is required in certain Quality of Life zoning districts. Moreover, the Tree Protection Ordinance requires tree planting. The City of Atlanta Parks Department, in partnership with Trees Atlanta has a tree planting program. Trees Atlanta also plants and maintains trees in the public right-of-way. Some of the tree plantings are funded in part with the tree recompense fund. In commercial areas with Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) - Downtown DID, Midtown MID, and Buckhead BCID- the CIDs provide maintenance to the trees and streetscape.

Walkability is one of the key features of traditional neighborhoods. Many of the commercial areas in traditional neighborhoods, such as Little Five Points, Virginia Highlands, East Atlanta; the City's main business districts such as Midtown and Downtown, as well as the mixed-use smart growth zoning districts and the areas around public rail transit are walkable. In these areas errands can be made on foot. Although the City of Atlanta has an extensive sidewalk network, many are in poor condition and some areas lack sidewalks. Sidewalk maintenance is the responsibility of the property owner where the sidewalk is located. As a result, many are not well maintained. The City of Atlanta has installed several streetscapes funded by bonds and federal sources. Several of the streetscape projects are public/private partnerships with the CIDs. The Community Improvement Districts also have programs to maintain and clean public areas. The Atlanta Police Department actively works to keep public areas safe for citizens and visitors. Business Watch programs encourage business people to be alert to suspicious circumstances and to take crime prevention steps.

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Walking and biking to school are also attributes of traditional neighborhoods. In several neighborhoods throughout the City, students can walk safely to schools. However, lack of sidewalk connectivity, streets with heavy traffic volumes and long distance, are all obstacles students face while walking to school. Biking to school can be even more challenging. Limited bike lanes, traffic speed and volume are deterrents to biking to school. The Police Department posts School Crossing Guards at selected crossings to promote children's safety.

3.1.1.2 Sense of Place

Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers to serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These areas should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.

A community's "sense of place" is loosely defined as how a place identifies and distinguishes itself from other places. These places foster a sense of uniqueness about that community. A sense of place can be most easily created through patterns, including a community's historic buildings pattern, building and home styles, the street network, the relationship of buildings to the street, street angle and direction, the placement of railroads, and old trolley routes. In addition, the experience a place provides is defined by the interaction of the built environment with the natural environment such as trees, streams, physical topography, and even weather patterns. Finally, the people in the community itself and cultural patterns are also integral in shaping a community's sense of place. New York City's massive skyscrapers, San Francisco's Victorian homes that line its hilly streets, and Miami's busy waterfront and beaches are all features that create a sense of place for those cities.

Part of Atlanta's sense of place stems from its history. Unfortunately, some of Atlanta's landmark buildings such as Union and Terminus stations, the Peachtree Arcade and the Lowes Grand; early skyscrapers such as the Equitable; grand hotels, such as the Piedmont and the Henry Grady; as well as other commercial and residential buildings been demolished. In some cases they have been replaced with contemporary buildings that lack a pedestrian scale and don't address the street, in other cases they have been replaced with surface parking and vacant lots. This fragmented urban environment with a minimum of street level activity has led to a lack of "place" along with criticism by visitors that there is no "there there". Today, many historic buildings and districts are protected under the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance.

Vibrant in-town neighborhoods, commercial districts, community events, and parks give the city its distinct feel and identity. In an effort to create a more vibrant city, plans have been adopted for Downtown, Midtown and Buckhead. To implement these plans, developments are regulated by the quality of life zoning districts (NC, LW, MRC, MF, and 22 SPIs). They aim to improve the aesthetics of the built environment, maximize the pedestrian experience, and encourage a compatible mix of residential and commercial uses. The Quality of Life bond program is designed to encourage neighborhood livability, pedestrian mobility and generally improve the quality of life in Atlanta. The



bond issue complements the zoning, and allows the City to leverage funding with the Department of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and private funding to provide many improvements to the City's greenspace and all transportation modes.

3.1.1.3 Transportation Alternatives

Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.

Taking transit, walking and biking are all transportation modes that can be used in the City of Atlanta as an alternative to driving. However, the ability to use transit, walk or bike varies throughout the City. MARTA provides public transit within the City of Atlanta. MARTA offers a mix of buses (local, express and shuttle services such as the Braves Shuttle and Paratransit service) and train services. In addition, Cobb Community Transit, Gwinnett County Transit, Georgia Regional Transportation Authority express bus service and C-Tran provide bus service from surrounding counties to the City of Atlanta. However, additional modes, frequency, and coverage are needed. The Beltline and the Peachtree streetcar studies are proposing additional transit service.

The Mixed Residential Commercial (MRC) District regulations encourage new developments to provide a grid of connected streets to improve the street network and reduce congestion. An appropriate street grid creates small blocks that encourage walking and disperses traffic over the street network. Articulation of the street grid is not always required by the land development code. The subdivision ordinance in particular needs to be updated to require connecting streets. A connecting street network is pertinent for crime prevention in allowing police to have access to the communities.

The City of Atlanta currently has an extensive network of sidewalks that make walking an alternative to driving. Rough pavement, missing links, and non-compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) limit the effectiveness of the sidewalk network for many users. The sidewalk network is being expanded thru implementation of the smart growth zoning districts and as a requirement in new developments. Sidewalks are also being built with bond funding for streetscapes and with public/private partnerships with the CIDs.

The City's ordinance stipulates that, "Before any building permit shall be issued for the construction of any structure on property within any planned development-housing (PD-H) district or any zoning district which permits multifamily residential, commercial or industrial uses, the owner shall agree to construct or have constructed sidewalks...on all public streets within and abutting the property". The ordinance requires all new developments to install a minimum of 5' and up to 15 feet of sidewalks in designated zoning areas of the city. Sidewalks are also required on both sides of existing and proposed streets within subdivisions. All new sidewalks are required to connect to existing wherever possible. Some conventional zoning districts (e.g. C series) do not currently require sidewalks concurrent with new development. Unfilled network gaps that remain should be identified in a pedestrian master plan.

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In September 1995, after adoption by the City Council, the Atlanta Commuter On-Street Bike Plan was signed into law as a portion of the City's Comprehensive Development Plan. The On-Street Bike Plan established goals, policies and design criteria to create a network of safe and efficient bicycle routes throughout the City of Atlanta. Reducing traffic congestion, improving air quality and providing Atlantans with high quality transportation choices were priorities of the On-Street Bike Plan and remain critical policy objectives in Atlanta today. Initial design work was completed by the Department of Public Works in 2005 for the 1995 Commuter On-Street Bike Plan. Through an ongoing partnership with the Path Foundation, the City is building multi-use trails within communities.

The smart growth zoning ordinances allows shared parking arrangements. The City does not currently have a policy that addresses shared parking for commercial and retail developments but it is recommended wherever possible. Currently a special permit is required for shared-use parking to reduce requirements for new spaces. Streamlining requirements would allow more new development to make shared parking arrangements.

3.1.1.4 Regional Identity

Each region should promote and preserve a regional “identity”, or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or shared characteristics.

Transportation has been the engine of growth and development of the City of Atlanta and in turn the Atlanta Region. The railroads, interstate highways and Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta International Airport (HJAIA) are the threads that tie the economy of the region together. At the same time congestion, urban sprawl, poor air quality and loss of open space that has resulted due to the reliance of the automobile are some of the characteristics that are often used to describe the the City of Atlanta and the Atlanta Region.

The Chattahoochee River, the tree canopy, the gently rolling terrain are natural resources that define the character of the region. Architectural styles and types in main streets, along rail road corridors and in historic neighborhoods, early development patterns are common elements that many communities in the Atlanta Region share. Historical events, from settlement starting in the 1830s, the Civil War, cotton production and the bowl weevil, to the Great Depression and the Civil Rights Movement, shape the Region's collective history. Historic sites in Atlanta: the MLK birth home, the Herndon Home, Auburn Ave, the Atlanta Cyclorama, the Margaret Mitchell House, the Wrens Nest and the Swan House, tell the story of significant events in the City's history that draws visitors to the City. However, preserving the past has been a struggle. Historic buildings have been demolished and replaced by new ones and parking lots. As a result, Atlanta has lost some of its unique characteristics, leading some to describe the City as not having a strong sense of place. Nevertheless, in many parts of the City and Region, many residents have a preference to live in historic neighborhoods, commercial and industrial buildings that have a unique character.

Forward thinking, ambitious, business oriented, coalition building and boosterism are some of the intangible defining features shared by the business and political leaders of the City of Atlanta. This approach and attitude has been an important factor in the growth and success of the City of Atlanta.



3.1.1.5 Infill Development

Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.

Since 2000, approximately 39,000 net new residential building permits have been issued in the City of Atlanta. The location of many of these new residential units could be considered infill. The City of Atlanta has a very small amount of vacant and greenfield sites available for development. Most new development has occurred or will occur in underutilized parcels of land, such as greyfields and brownfields. The City of Atlanta has a brownfield redevelopment program that works to identify these sites.

To encourage infill development, numerous plans have been approved for areas throughout the City. Redevelopment will be a primary focus for spurring economic development in portions of the City that are either “built-out” or have experienced disinvestment and decline. The City of Atlanta’s New Century Economic Development Plan identified 14 separate areas within the City that have suffered social and economic decline. Further, the City has placed emphasis on five of the 14 areas as economic development priority areas: Simpson Road, Campbellton Road, Memorial Drive, Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway and the Jonesboro Road corridors.

The purpose of creating a redevelopment plan is to revitalize a neighborhood and establish a proactive framework for its future growth. This is accomplished by identifying existing challenges, ways to overcome them, and creating a long-term vision for positive change. In these plans, inventories are taken of the quality of properties in those study areas and the potential for those areas to support redevelopment. Future land use and zoning changes are recommended by parcel and projects are recommended that support these changes and facilitate redevelopment. The plan is then adopted into the City’s Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP)/ASAP and targeted actions consistent with the plan are taken by various parties to implement plan recommendations. As stand-alone documents, redevelopment plans serve as long-term guides to decision-making and investment.

As the City’s population has increased, demand for additional housing has followed. Demolition of existing homes and construction of new infill residential units has been a concern for many neighborhoods. At times these new houses are larger, taller and out of context with the neighboring homes and development pattern. In response to these issues, an amendment to the Zoning Resolution, known as the Residential Scale Ordinance, that address lot coverage and floor area ratios was adopted by City Council in August 2007.

3.1.2 Resource Conservation

3.1.2.1 Heritage Preservation

The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

The City of Atlanta's historic fabric is a diverse collection of buildings, structures, objects, sites, and district which reflect all decades of the City's past, embodies the wide variety of themes in the City's history, and has significance for all of the City's residents, workers, and visitors. These historic resources are essential in defining the City's traditional character. The City's traditional character is best described through inventories and designations of historic resources.

The City's Historic Preservation Zoning Ordinance of 1989 (Ordinance) establishes categories of protection: Landmark and Historic for districts and individual buildings/sites, and Conservation just for districts. Currently, 57 buildings are designated as Landmark or Historic and 15 districts are designated as Landmark, Historic or Conservation.

The Atlanta Urban Design Commission (AUDC) has the responsibility for the protection of the City's historic resources and most other historic resource and historic preservation-related issues in which the City is involved. Each designated Landmark and Historic District has a set of customized design regulations to ensure that alterations, additions, new construction, and site work are compatible with the existing historic resources in each district, while demolitions of contributing structures are reviewed using a standard set of criteria that are the same for each district. A standard set of design regulations that are based on the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards apply to the individual buildings/sites and the Conservation Districts. The demolition of individual Landmark Buildings/Sites are reviewed using the same standard criteria used for demolitions in Landmark and Historic Districts. The AUDC administers the Ordinance by issuing Certificates of Appropriateness as the first step in the building permits process for construction, renovation, or demolition. This review and approval process is only required for districts and buildings designated under the Ordinance, as well as in several Special Public Interest (SPI) districts. The AUDC also provides comment or regulation as required by individual ordinances, such as the Subdivision Ordinance, and zoning applications (rezoning, variances, special use permits, etc.).

There are several issues and concerns regarding the City's historic resources that could ultimately affect the City's traditional character. These issues and concerns fall into two categories: awareness/education and implementation/enforcement.

Regarding awareness/education, there is a lack of research and information regarding a wide variety of Atlanta's historic resources, such as the remnants of the City's rural past, remnants of the City's industrial past, sites associated with the Civil Rights Movement, post-WWII neighborhoods, and abandoned cemeteries. Master and/or management plans are needed for some of the historic resources open to the public and/or managed by the City (parks, community centers, etc.). There is no ongoing and active education program for the general public, elected officials, other government



agencies, developers, neighborhoods, etc. about historic resource protection and revitalization, preservation tools, or the role of historic preservation in the City's future. Not all development entities (public and private) are aware of historic preservation issues, potential historic resources and the support available to assist them.

Regarding implementation/enforcement, the number of neighborhoods and individual property owners seeking listing in the National Register of Historic Places and designation by the City is expected to increase due to: increased developmental pressures on historic intown neighborhoods, the recognition of designation as a revitalization tool; the various economic incentives which are available for designated properties; and the effect the Beltline will have on the awareness of historic resources along its corridor. However, even with this increased interest in listing and protection, the City has limited resources to respond to these requests, manage the subsequent processing of development-related applications for projects, enforce the regulations that come with designation under the Ordinance, and to directly assist with the improving or enhancing historic resources. Further, the City's current regulatory tools that protect designated historic resources do not address other problems that face non-designated historic areas and other areas with traditional character.

3.1.2.2 Open Space Preservation

New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.

The 1993 Parks Open Space and Greenways Plan; the 2000 Atlanta Community Greenspace Program; and the 2002 Parks and Greenspace Task Force Report have all proposed policies and actions to address greenspace issues. Atlanta's Project Greenspace, to be adopted in 2008, is building on prior planning initiatives by defining a comprehensive strategy and action plan that can be implemented to develop a world-class greenspace system for the future. All of these plans call for an increase in the amount of greenspace throughout the City. The Project Greenspace goal is to have 10.5 acres+ of parkland per 1,000 residents.

The City of Atlanta has been purchasing greenspace under the Greenways Acquisition Project. This project was undertaken as part of settlement of an enforcement action against the City of Atlanta for violations of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and the Georgia Water Quality Control Act. Specifically, the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Consent Decree signed in 1998 requires the City to implement a \$25 million program to acquire streamside buffers in the City of Atlanta and 14 counties in the Atlanta Region through March 2007. Under this program, the City of Atlanta's Department of Watershed purchased land and easements on 700 acres within the city limits and 1,187 acres outside of the city limits. Furthermore, the Parks Opportunity Bond has allocated \$35 million for park acquisitions.

The City of Atlanta has worked with conservation organizations such as the Trust for Public Land (TPL) the Arthur M. Blank Foundation's Inspiring Spaces Initiative and the Conservation Fund to preserve open space. The City of Atlanta has been working with TPL in the Chattahoochee River Land Protection Campaign. The City of Atlanta, BeltLine Inc and TPL are currently working to

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preserve land along the BeltLine. To date, almost 200 acres in the Westside Park (the former Bellwood Quarry), Four Corners Park in Peoplestown, and the new Boulevard Crossing Park, have been purchased. Redevelopment plans currently underway for the Lakewood Fairgrounds and Fort McPherson will most likely include greenspace.

Some SPI districts require open space in multifamily residential uses and public space in commercial uses. To further protect open space, the City of Atlanta will adopt a Conservation Subdivision Ordinance to comply with the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's Watershed Management Plan.

3.1.2.3 Environmental Protection

Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative imprints of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.

Natural resources provide important environmental benefits to the residents and visitors of the City of Atlanta and are essential to sustain plant and animal life. Project Greenspace identifies many of the City's natural resources and includes goals and strategies to protect them. Moreover, the City of Atlanta has regulations to protect natural resources from the adverse impacts of development and human activities.

Atlanta's tree canopy is consistently identified as an important key resource in the City's quality of life. Chapter 158 (Vegetation) of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances set standards for tree protection. The Tree Protection Ordinance requires a permit for the direct or indirect removal or destruction of any trees having a diameter at breast height (DBH) of six inches or greater. Applicants are required to minimize impacts to trees on the site (particularly mature trees) and to plant trees to replace those destroyed. The regulations provide for "recompense" to the tree trust fund based on the differences between the number and total DBH of the trees removed or destroyed and number and total DBH of the trees replaced on the site. This ordinance also includes minimum requirements for parking lot landscaping

Regulations to protect environmentally sensitive resources are set forth in Chapter 74 (Environment) of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances. The Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control article establishes standards to control erosion and sedimentation impacts caused by land-disturbing activities on surface waters and other environmental resources within the City. Applicants are required to submit soil erosion and sedimentation control plans that specify "best management practices" or measures to be used to control erosion and sedimentation pollution during all stages of the land-disturbing activity.

The Post Development Stormwater Management article sets standards to protect water resources from degradation caused by post-development stormwater runoff, including increases in stormwater rates and volumes, post-construction soil erosion and sedimentation, stream channel erosion, and nonpoint source pollution. Applicants are required to submit a stormwater management plan detailing how post-development stormwater runoff will be controlled and managed in accordance with the



requirements of the ordinance. Regulations require new development and redevelopment maintain a peak rate of stormwater discharge not more than 70 percent of the pre-development peak discharge at all times during and after the development of the property.

The Flood Area Ordinance regulates and restricts land disturbance and construction within floodways and floodplains. Atlanta's floodplain regulations are more restrictive than many other municipal ordinances in that they prohibit new construction within the 100-year floodplain. No fill or other encroachments that would impede the ability to convey and discharge the water resulting from the 100-year flood are permitted within the floodway. Earth-disturbing activities within the designated floodplain must result in "no net loss" of existing flood volume or expansion of a flood hazard area as determined by engineering calculations.

The Riparian Buffer Ordinance has requirements for the establishment, protection, and maintenance of natural vegetative buffers along the city's streams and rivers. Both perennial and intermittent streams are required to have a 75-foot buffer measured from the top of the stream bank. If a jurisdictional wetland is present, the buffer must include the wetland and extend at least 25 feet beyond the wetland edge.

Wetland Protection Regulations protect the environmental integrity of freshwater wetlands within the City of Atlanta. It does not impose any wetland protection requirements beyond the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) requirements under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

3.1.3 Social and Economic Development

3.1.3.1 Growth Preparedness

Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.

The City of Atlanta's Code of Ordinances calls for the development of a Comprehensive Development Plan to guide growth and development. Development and adoption of a comprehensive plan is also called for in the 1989 Georgia Planning Act and is necessary for the City to maintain its Qualified Local Government Status. Grant funding is often tied to this designation. The twenty year Comprehensive Plan, prepared every 3 to 5 years, contains comprehensive development goals, policies, and objectives for both the entire city and for individual geographic areas and communities within the city. The plan also incorporates information regarding transportation, parks and recreation, community facilities, housing, land use, policies and implementation strategies for a 15 year time frame. In addition, the plan is required to include a land use map to guide growth as well as goals and objectives based on the existing and projected demographic and socioeconomic data. Twenty year demographic projections are prepared by the City of Atlanta's Bureau of Planning and are used by other departments and agencies throughout the City. The Capital Improvements Program is based on population projections as well as other factors. In addition to the Comprehensive Development Plan, corridor studies, Livable Center's Initiative (LCI) studies and plans for specific

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geographic areas of the City have been adopted by the City of Atlanta. Moreover, as called for in the Georgia Planning Act, the City of Atlanta prepares every year a Short Term Work Program and a Capital Improvements Element that meets the Minimum Planning Standards.

The City of Atlanta adopted the “New Century Economic Development Plan for the City of Atlanta” (updated July 14, 2005) which outlines the three primary components of the economy: Healthy Neighborhoods and Quality of Life, Economic Opportunity, and Physical Infrastructure. As a result of this “umbrella” plan the City has been able to identify issues, opportunities and actions which will achieve the stated goals. The City’s strategy for growth is to achieve a balance in the preservation of existing single-family neighborhoods and sensitive areas as well as providing opportunities for new development to accommodate population and employment growth at major activity centers and along major corridors with appropriate density and mix of uses.

This plan also identified an action plan which includes Citywide focus on: target industries, business recruitment, retention, and expansion, the Beltline, the Downtown and Brand Atlanta Campaign, economic vitality in underserved areas, business climate, workforce housing, capital available for development, crime rate, public schools, and parks and greenspace. The City identified seven goals by 2009 based on the action plan. There are:

- Create 60,000 new jobs,
- Create 24,000 new metro jobs related to the airport growth and expansion,
- Grow property value in the City by \$26B,
- Add 10,000 new workforce housing units by use of City incentives,
- Decrease the city’s crime rate to 5,600 crimes per 100,000 residents,
- Increase the high school completion rate of Atlanta Public School students to 72% and
- Add 1,900 acres of dedicated parks and greenspace.

To this end, the City has undertaken a variety of plans for LCI designated areas and corridor studies to determine the best land use for underserved areas as well as to identify infrastructure projects to support the plans. These studies recommend implementing zoning changes such as the Quality of Life District, Neighborhood Commercial Zoning and SPI Zoning to create positive growth in the City. Each year the City updates the Capital Improvement Program to support current and future growth based on these priorities. These initiatives provide the framework to foster and manage development in the City.

3.1.3.2 Appropriate Businesses

The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skilled job opportunities.

The Atlanta Development Authority (ADA) is a public authority created by the City of Atlanta to promote the revitalization and growth of the City through a comprehensive and centralized program focusing on community development and redevelopment. It represents a consolidation of the City’s economic and community development efforts in real estate, finance, marketing and employment,



for the purpose of providing a focal point for improving Atlanta's neighborhoods and the quality of life for all its citizens. The ADA has a variety of incentives in place, including tax credits, tax abatements, Urban Enterprise Zones, and small business assistance to name a few, which encourage additional business in the City. The ADA works with a variety of economic development organizations to create development strategies for business development based on the City's strengths, assets, opportunities and weaknesses. Moreover, the Atlanta Development Authority is actively pursuing incentives for relocation and expansion, promoting Atlanta as a great place to live, supporting the growth of small business, and creating a comprehensive program to drive retention and expansion of existing business.

The City of Atlanta has a diverse employment base with no single industry and employer dominating the market. Based on an evaluation of existing business types in Atlanta, several target industries have been identified as the focus of business retention and expansion plan. These industries are compatible with the City of Atlanta's existing business patterns. The City of Atlanta has prioritized these criteria to evaluate target industries with the greatest potential for job creation: large cluster industries, significant near growth prospects and actions by the City that can make a positive impact. The following industries are targeted for growth:

- Transportation, logistics and distribution,
- Hotels, tourism, and entertainment,
- Health services and
- Higher education and bioscience.

Other target industries that are identified for expansion are: retail, high tech communications, construction, music, film, and video production and financial institutions.

3.1.3.3 Employment Options

A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.

The City of Atlanta has a diverse economy with no sector dominating it. Public Administration and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, the sectors with the largest share of jobs, have 12% and 11% of employment respectively. However there has been an overall decline in the number of manufacturing and warehousing jobs. These are generally good paying jobs for skilled workers without a college education. The employment information from the US Census economic data shows that there were approximately 425,000 jobs in the City of Atlanta in 2006. The variety of jobs available in the City requires a wide range of educational and skill set requirements. By focusing on many target industries, the City of Atlanta will be able to ensure that a wide range of jobs from transportation and logistics to FIRE and managerial are available. The City is working on expanding both high and low-skilled jobs in the City. The City of Atlanta's economic development program has an entrepreneur and small businesses support program to promote the development of a smaller retail and service business sectors. These businesses will provide job opportunities and will further diversify the local workforce.

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To enable City of Atlanta residents and businesses to participate in business development and make a positive impact on the greater picture of Atlanta as a prosperous city, the Atlanta Workforce Development Agency, which is a Bureau in the City of Atlanta government, administers employment and training programs under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Each local area has a Board of Directors and a physical location or a “One-Stop-Center” which provides workforce development services which train people for jobs in the target industries as well as other areas. They partner with the state, community colleges, public schools and faith based organizations to coordinate workforce development efforts across the city.

3.1.3.4 Housing Choices

A range of size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and a range of housing choice to meet market needs.

A range of housing choices from cost, size, age and type are available in the City of Atlanta. Approximately 57% housing units are single family homes (1-4 units) and 43% are multi-family homes (5+ units). The number of multi-family homes is increasing. Between 2000 and 2006, 80% of the homes permitted were multi-family homes. Most of these new multifamily units are located along major corridors and are located in the City’s major employment centers – Downtown, Midtown and Buckhead. These residential developments are supported by the land use policies to promote nodal development, to promote residential density near available infrastructure, to develop transit station areas and to minimize urban sprawl.

The Land Use Map and Zoning Ordinances include many residential districts that allow for a variety of housing types and densities. The Land Use Map includes Single Family Residential to Very High Density Residential land uses. The Zoning Resolution contains many residential zoning categories that allow for a range of densities from R-1 to RG-6 and MR-6. The minimum lot sizes range from 2 acres, allowed in R-1 to 2,800 square foot lots allowed in R-4B. Many homes were built in the early to mid 1900s, prior the City of Atlanta’s Zoning Ordinance of 1982; therefore the City recognizes many of these small lots as lots of record and are therefore buildable lots. The density ranges allowed in the residential zoning districts vary from one home per two acres in the R-1 district to 22 story high rise multi-family buildings with an FAR of 6.4 allowed in the RG-6 district and MR-6 Districts.

Residential developments are encouraged to be compatible with their surrounding community. Following the same street pattern and street design is required in neighborhoods designated historic and encouraged in other neighborhoods and in SPI districts. A Residential Scale Ordinance was recently adopted to ensure that new construction is compatible with the scale of existing houses.

Numerous zoning classifications allow for multi-family development such as: R-G (Residential General) Districts, MRC and Commercial Zoning Districts. Moreover, the MRC zoning districts, allow for the combination of live-work mixed use developments. Examples of this type of development include: Atlantic Station and Glenwood Park. Loft developments have proven to be an attractive house type in older industrial corridors of the City of Atlanta such as Castleberry Hill, along Marietta



Boulevard, and the Fairlie Poplar District downtown. To encourage a diversity of housing types, some multi-family and mixed-use zoning districts allow accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units. These types of accessory units are common in many of the older neighborhoods. Allowing these accessory units in certain single-family residential districts will be considered.

Most new housing, particularly multi-family development, will be located in land that will be redeveloped. For example, City Hall East, the former Sears distribution facility, will be redeveloped into a mixed use development with housing units. Plans are underway for the redevelopment of the land along the BeltLine, the Lakewood Fairgrounds, and Fort McPherson. All of these redevelopments will include a range of housing types. However, there is some vacant land in the City of Atlanta. In 2004, 12% of the land in the City of Atlanta was classified as vacant. The Fulton Atlanta Land-bank Authority is an agency that is able to make vacant land available for development.

While there is a range in the price of housing in the City of Atlanta, there is a need for an increased availability of workforce and affordable housing. Former housing developments operated by the Atlanta Housing Authority have been redeveloped into mixed income communities. This has resulted in a net loss of subsidized housing. Many of the new private housing units being built throughout the City are not affordable to those that work in the City. Moreover, the increase in population has led to an increase in demand for housing. As a result, the cost of the existing housing stock has also increased. These factors have resulted in housing that is increasingly out of reach for the workforce and residents of the City of Atlanta.

As housing costs increase citywide, providing affordable housing is a challenge. Recent studies also suggest a need for affordable, workforce, and low-income housing. For example, salaries for police employees generally do not sustain living in the City at the current prices of housing. There are several existing programs (through tax abatement programs, zoning bonus incentives, etc.) to address this issue. The Bureau of Housing is working on an Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance to provide density bonuses for the construction of workforce housing. Several of the Tax Allocation Districts, including the Beltline TAD, call for the construction of workforce housing units. Between 2004 and 2006, almost 4,000 affordable housing units were built.

The City of Atlanta is committed to the development of housing for all income levels. The City supports a number of Community Development Corporations (CDC) who build affordable and low-income housing through various subsidies. In 2004, Mayor Shirley Franklin established a goal of creating 10,000 units of affordable workforce housing by 2009. To assist in accomplishing this endeavor, the City of Atlanta, the Atlanta Housing Authority and the Atlanta Development Authority, have partnered together to implement a new \$75 million workforce housing initiative for persons and families who desire to reside in the City of Atlanta. The single family mortgage assistance program is the first initiative that will be implemented.

The City of Atlanta does not have programs for households with special needs; however, housing programs for rehabilitation of single-family homes for the elderly and housing for the homeless via the Gateway Center are available. Other housing programs for households in Atlanta with special needs are provided by Fulton County.

3.1.3.5 Educational Opportunities

Education and training opportunities should be readily available in each community to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt technological advances and pursue entrepreneurial ambition.

Approximately 45 accredited colleges and universities are located in the City of Atlanta and the Atlanta Region. Many top colleges and universities including Georgia State University, Georgia Institute of Technology, Spelman College, Morehouse College, Morehouse School of Medicine, Clark Atlanta, Morris Brown College, American Intercontinental University, and the Savannah College of Art and Design are located in the City of Atlanta. Georgia State University a public, four-year school offers a comprehensive selection of degrees and services. The colleges at the Atlanta University Center are a private, not-for profit four-year schools that offer a range of undergraduate and graduate programs. The Georgia Institute of Technology is a specialty/professional school with extensive facilities and technology focusing on science and engineering. The Savannah College of Art and Design, a recent addition to the City, is a private, four-year school which focuses on the arts. There are also a variety of two-year schools such as the Atlanta Technical College and Bauder College.

Atlanta's educational system has formed a consortium called ARCHE (Atlanta Consortium for Higher Education) which was created to expand opportunities, foster cultural diversity and provide students with access to a variety of programs within their school and through other participating schools. According to a study by ARCHE, Atlanta ranks second nationally in the production of engineering and related technology graduates and fourth in computer science degrees. With such a large concentration of colleges, universities and technical schools, and even private training programs, numerous resources are available for continuing education, executive employee training, and research and development opportunities.

The Atlanta Workforce Development Agency (AWDA), a Bureau of the City of Atlanta under the Executive Offices of the Mayor, offers a wide variety of training opportunities for youth and adults to foster their educational and professional development. The mission of the Atlanta Workforce Development Board (AWDB) is to promote a workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses, job seekers, and workers while ensuring that the City of Atlanta maintains a strong and vibrant economy.

The Atlanta One-Stop Center operated by AWDA seeks to provide quality workforce development services to Atlanta residents and the business community. The Atlanta One-Stop Center connects qualified job seekers to employers, provides comprehensive assessments for residents seeking training or jobs and offers its services and facility as "Your Only Stop" for continued workforce solutions. Workforce solutions are delivered by a consortium of training providers, One-Stop partners, educational, community and faith based organizations.



3.1.4 Governmental Relations

3.1.4.1 Local Self-determination

Communities should be allowed to develop and work toward achieving their own vision for the future. Where the state seeks to achieve particular objectives, state financial and technical assistance should be used as the incentive to encourage local government conformance to those objectives.

Community participation is integral to many of the activities undertaken by the City of Atlanta. The community participation process is formalized in the City of Atlanta Municipal code. It sets up a process for neighborhood planning by creating Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU) and spelling out their role. The Neighborhood Planning Units provide input into the development of the comprehensive plan and make recommendations to the City of Atlanta on a wide range of topics including land use, zoning, transportation, open space and parks, community facilities and environmental quality. The 25 Neighborhood Planning Units meet every month and provide recommendations to the City of Atlanta on rezoning, subdivision and variance applications, Zoning Resolution amendments, Comprehensive Plan amendments and other matters. Over the years, the NPUs have become very knowledgeable of the development process and regulations.

In addition, the Atlanta Planning Advisory Board, composed of a representative from each NPU, serves as an advisory board to the City of city-wide issues, goals and objectives relative to the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, advises the City on matters relating to citizen participation in the planning process and performs citizen participation requirements under federal law.

Community participation and community awareness are essential components to all of the planning efforts conducted by the City of Atlanta. Thru the community participation process, City of Atlanta staff reaches out to community members to ensure broad participation. Moreover, community members are involved in developing a vision, goals and recommendations for each of the plans by attending community meetings, participating advisory committees by submitting comments, among other methods. During the planning process, advisory boards are often created to allow for more extensive participation.

3.1.4.2 Regional Cooperation

Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.

Many of the challenges facing the City of Atlanta are regional in nature. To address these complex issues, the City of Atlanta has been at the forefront of regional cooperation and planning. In 1947, the City of Atlanta along the Fulton and Dekalb Counties created the Metropolitan Planning Commission, the predecessor of the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). The City of Atlanta is a member of the ARC, the 10 county regional planning and intergovernmental agency. The Mayor and a City Council member serve on the ARC Board. In addition, elected officials and city staff serve on the Environment and Land Use, Transportation and Air Quality, Land Use Coordinating

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and the Transportation Coordinating committees. The City of Atlanta participates in ARC's transportation planning process that results in the adoption of the Regional Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Plan as well as other studies and initiatives. Moreover, the City of Atlanta works cooperatively with sixteen counties in the region by participating in the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning. The City of Atlanta Mayor is a member of the District Governing Board. The District establishes policy, creates plans and promotes intergovernmental coordination of all water issues.

The City of Atlanta along with Fulton County and the other nine cities in the County adopted a Service Delivery Strategy (SDS) in 1999, in response to the 1997 Service Delivery Strategy Act. The SDS identifies service arrangements for 54 services. The agreements were re-evaluated and adopted in 2005 at the time that all local governments were required to adopt new 10 year Comprehensive Plans. The City of Atlanta is currently working with Dekalb County to update its Service Delivery Strategy.

Transportation has played a key role in the development of the City and region. The City of Atlanta has played a leadership role in the development of key transportation infrastructure crucial to the success of the Atlanta Region. In 1968, the residents of Atlanta, joined residents in Dekalb and Fulton Counties, in approving a referendum to designate a one cent sales tax to fund the Metropolitan Atlanta Regional Transit Authority (MARTA). Revenue from the one cent sales tax provides 67% of MARTA's annual budget. The City Council recently adopted legislation extending the one cent sales tax until 2047 to provide MARTA with the ability to expand its operations. It is the ninth largest transit system in the nation and the only one that doesn't receive state funding.

The City of Atlanta's Department of Aviation is responsible for the operation of the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport HJAIA. HJAIA is one of the key reasons many companies are located in the Atlanta Region. The Airport is the principal airport serving Georgia and the Southeastern US. It has been the world's busiest passenger airport for many years and it is gaining importance in the transportation of air cargo and freight. Currently it is one of the top 10 cargo airports in the US. The total annual, regional economic impact of the Airport is more than \$18.7 billion. In addition major railroad corridors and rail yards that move goods thru the Region and the State are located within the city limits.

The City of Atlanta is a leader in the arts. It provided funding for the Metro Atlanta Arts and Culture Coalition, a six county coalition to support arts and culture in the region. More recently, Mayor Shirley Franklin's Arts and Culture Task Force is proposing the creation of the Cultural Investment Fund. The Cultural Investment Fund will create a mechanism to provide funding to arts and cultural organization. Initially the fund will be benefit arts and cultural organization in the City of Atlanta. Task Force members hope that it will become a regional funding source.

Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin, working with the United Way, has taken a leadership role in developing a regional approach to eliminate and prevent homelessness. In 2003, the Commission on Homelessness presented the Blueprint to End Homelessness in Atlanta in Ten Years. The plan serves as the framework for the City of Atlanta, Clayton, Cobb, Dekalb, Douglas, Fulton, Gwinnett and Rockdale Counties to provide service and address issues facing the homeless population.



The Atlanta Police department cooperates actively with Fulton County, MARTA, and other police departments; county sheriff and district attorney; State GBI and State Patrol; city schools, court, detention center, and traffic engineers; Atlanta Fire and Rescue Department; Atlanta-Fulton County Emergency Management Agency; and emergency medical services in emergency management and law enforcement. The Atlanta Fire Department cooperates with local, state and federal agencies. This includes the APD, 911, Sheriff Departments in the Atlanta Region, EPD, Emergency Management, State Fire Marshall Office, State Fire Academy, EPA and FEMA.

