

2018 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY

(Draft Outline)

Required Elements

1. Community Goals

- A. **General Vision Statement** (Recommended)
 - A general statement of what the community desires to become, providing a complete description of the development patterns that are to be encouraged.
- B. **List of Community Goals** (Recommended)
 - What does the community seek to achieve?
 - Divide goals into three topics: People, Prosperity, Place (Suggested)
 - Example: “Athens should look the way it feels”
- C. **Community Policies** (Recommended)
 - Provide guidance and direction to local government officials for making decisions consistent with achieving the Community Goals.
 - Divide policies into three topics: People, Prosperity, Place (Suggested)
 - Example: “Athens will tailor development standards based on specific uses in an effort to both identify and provide uniqueness to individual sites”
- D. **Character Areas and Defining Narrative** (Not Recommended)
 - Of the four options within this element, staff is already recommending the completion of three options.

2. Need and Opportunities

- Locally agreed upon list the community intends to address. Must be developed by involving community stakeholders in carrying out SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats).
- Divide needs and opportunities into ten topics: Future Land Use, Economic Development, Health & Safety, Transportation & Infrastructure, Cultural Resources, Neighborhood & Civic Vitality, Environment & Agriculture, Education, Social Services, and Housing.
- Example: “Athens should embrace its unique culture with respect to the architecture of its buildings to ensure it is a visual destination for guests and citizens alike”

3. *Community Work Program*

- Specific activities the community plans to undertake during the next 5 years to address the Needs and Opportunities. Community Goals and Policies may also be achieved.
- Listed by the same ten topics identified in the Needs and Opportunities Element.
- Example: “Amend the zoning and development standards to provide specific design criteria for all facilities intended for senior housing. At a minimum, standards shall include increased accessibility, reduced parking ratios, two-bedroom maximum per unit, etc.”

Additional Required Elements

4. *Capital Improvement Element*

- Not Required (only for those who charge impact fees)
- Staff will likely identify some projects in the Community Work Program

5. *Economic Development Element*

- Not Required (only for those included in Georgia Job Tax Credit Tier 1)
- Staff will likely identify some goals, policies, needs and opportunities

6. *Land Use Element*

A. Character Areas Map and Defining Narrative (Not Recommended)

- Of the two options within this element, staff is already recommending the completion of one option.

B. Future Land Use Map and Narrative (Recommended)

- Comprehensive county-wide analysis and update of the Future Development Map and its categories.
- Although not required, staff suggests also submitting the existing Land Based Classification Standards (LBCS) already implemented by the Planning Department.

7. *Transportation Element*

- Will include a copy of the Metropolitan Planning Organization’s (MPO) transportation strategy.

- Staff will likely summarize a list of projects identified in the transportation strategy

8. Housing Element

- Will include a copy of the Consolidated Plan for the community as prepared by the Housing and Community Development Department.

Required Participation Documentation

1. Required Public Hearings

- a. First Required Public Hearing**
 - Inception of the local process
- b. Plan Development – Community Involvement**
 - Preparation of each required element
- c. Second Public Hearing**
 - Final draft for public review
- d. Submitted for Review**
 - Submit to the Regional Development Commission
- e. Notification of Interested Parties**
 - The RDC will make the plan available to specified parties
- f. Regional Development Commission Review**
 - Once all comment has been received, the RDC will conduct its own review
- g. Department of Community Affairs Review**
 - Submittal and review by the Department of Community Affairs
- h. Report of Findings and Recommendation**
 - The RDC will notify Athens-Clarke County of all findings from specified parties, the RDC, and/or the DCA.
- i. Plan Revisions**
 - Any required changes will be made and resubmitted to both the RDC and then the DCA.

j. Adoption of the Plan

- Once approved by the State, the document must then be formally adopted by the Mayor and Commission.

k. Notification of Local Adoption

- Proof of local government adoption is sent to the State.

Required Consideration

1. Regional Water Plan

- Review and determine if there is a need to adapt local implementation practices or development regulations to address protection of these important natural resources.
- <http://www.upperoconee.org/>

2. Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria

- Review and determine if there is a need to adapt local implementation practices or development regulations to address protection of these important natural resources.
- <http://www.dca.state.ga.us/development/planningqualitygrowth/programs/downloads/EPC.pdf>

References

- 1. 2008 Comprehensive Plan*
- 2. 2018 Service Delivery Strategy*
- 3. Envision Athens*