



## REQUIRED ELEMENTS

Per O.C.G.A, the following elements have been carefully researched, analyzed, and documented to meet not only the minimum requirements of the comprehensive planning process, but also form the foundation upon which the Athens-Clarke County community has built its future.

Each of the required elements have been strongly influenced by the intensive work conducted by the Envision Athens effort. It would be hard to ignore, and quite honestly, a disservice to separate the fine quality of research, analysis, and public input accomplished through Envision Athens from that of the Comprehensive Plan. Although two clearly distinct documents, Envision Athens was always meant to indirectly tie into the elements of the Comprehensive Plan, and so the following material consistently references that practice and highlights how the findings contribute to one another. Thus, the Comprehensive Plan should be considered an interactive guide between Envision Athens and the traditional elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

# Community Goals

## *Section I. Vision Statement*

Athens-Clarke County strives to be a premiere destination for those looking to experience a unique lifestyle within a historical setting that embraces community values and reflection. Through innovative planning and deliberate thought, Athens-Clarke County will continue to provide adequate high-quality public facilities and infrastructure that will support managed, diverse growth well into the future, all while respecting the culture upon which the city and county were founded. While increasing economic vitality, development will be carefully designed in consultation with the most appropriate latest best practices associated with rural, suburban, and urban philosophies, encouraging mixed-use structures that cater to all modes of transportation. Specific networks like the greenway will coordinate with identified neighborhood nodes that provide a balanced approach to residential and non-residential uses. Sustainability will be at the forefront of development decisions in an effort to preserve and improve the environmental quality of our water, air, and natural habitat. Scale will highlight the human experience so as to embrace the social aspects of the “classic” community.

# Community Goals

## *Section II. List of Community Goals*

Athens-Clarke County has identified the following list of goals it wishes to meet over the course of the next 20 years. This list is not in order of importance as all items should be seen as necessary for the continued success of the community. Goals have been divided by the three five common categories identified within the Community Assessment of the Envision Athens study. These categories include “People, Prosperity, Place, **Vitality, and Foundation**”.

The “People” category revolves around demographics, future projections, and the diversity of the citizenry. **This in turn has a direct impact on services provided to improve health, safety, and general welfare.** “Prosperity” examines common themes like economics, but also **the quality of life education.** Finally, “Place” refers to the built and natural environment, including **cultural and historic significance how land and structures are used.** “Vitality” highlights the **liveliness of the community, or how aspects can invigorate the daily outlook of citizens and visitors through culture and civic engagement.** Finally, “Foundation” touches upon the often overlooked basis from which a community is physically built. This may include infrastructure and transportation, but also the system of government.

Each of the three **five** categories includes a brief list of associated topics. These topics are broad in nature, but give indication as to the associated goals stated within each category. Additionally, each topic demonstrates how each goal will be addressed by the Needs and Opportunities of the community.

### **“People”**

#### Associated Topics:

- ✓ *Social Services*
- ✓ *Health*
- ✓ *Safety*
- ✓ *Cultural Resources*
- ✓ *Neighborhoods and Civic Vitality*

#### Goals:

- Encourage diversity Downtown.
- Accommodate population growth through various service delivery strategies.
- Establish a reputation for Athens-Clarke County as a place for all generations.
- ~~Various housing options that appropriately align with the types of households present within the community.~~

- While acknowledging the wide-range of ages within the community, particular focus should be directed to address issues pertaining to seniors and the student population.
- Continue to support historic, ethnic neighborhoods, including buildings and sites.
- Expand upon efforts by the Citizen's Police Academy, the Neighborhood Notification Initiative, Neighborhood Watch, and Citizen Emergency Response Team programs.

## “Prosperity”

### Associated Topics:

- ✓ *Education*
- ✓ *Health and Safety*
- ✓ *Economic Development*

### Goals:

- Drastically reduce poverty throughout the county.
- Reverse the downward trend in manufacturing jobs.
- See Athens-Clarke County more for its assets than deficits.
- Align job opportunities with citizens' capabilities and vice versa.
- Develop incentives to guide development growth in key areas.
- Dedicate sufficient funding toward local government initiatives.
- Expand upon efforts by the Citizen's Police Academy, the Neighborhood Notification Initiative, Neighborhood Watch, and Citizen Emergency Response Team programs.

## “Place”

### Associated Topics:

- ✓ *Housing*
- ✓ *Future Land Use*
- ✓ *Environment/Agriculture*
- ✓ *Agriculture*
- ✓ *Neighborhoods*
- ✓ *Transportation and Infrastructure*

### Goals:

- Accessibility for all
- Promote community pride.
- Establish a Downtown Riverfront
- Athens should look the way it feels.
- Maintain a small-town atmosphere
- Develop specific student housing design criteria

- Identify and clearly distinguish three, possibly four, planning transects (urban, suburban, residential-rural, and rural) within our small geographic area.
- Creation of major corridor master plans that accentuate gateways into the county.
- Instill visual vibrancy though maintained, clean areas that add aesthetic value.
- Allow opportunities to plan for development instead of just regulating for it.
- Identify and protect sensitive areas, both urban and rural, from inappropriate infill development.
- Creation of an atypical park system (pocket and linear parks; public squares)
- Various housing options that appropriately align with the types of households present within the community.
- Continue to support historic, ethnic neighborhoods, including buildings and sites.

## **“Vitality”**

Associated Topics:

- ✓ *Civic Engagement*
- ✓ *Cultural Resources*

Goals:

- ?

## **“Foundation”**

Associated Topics:

- ✓ *Government Operations*
- ✓ *Transportation*
- ✓ *Infrastructure*

Goals:

- ?

# **Community Goals**

## Section III. Community Policies

Community policies signal a commitment to achieving the goals put forth by the community. The following list of community policies were developed in association with the goals outlined in the previous section. Policies stated herein were written to directly address completion of the goals. Similar to the Community Goals section, all Community Policies have been classified by three **five** main categories (People, Place, Prosperity, **Vitality, and Foundation**) for clarity and consistency.

### “People”

#### Associated Topics:

- ✓ *Social Services*
- ✓ *Health*
- ✓ *Safety*
- ✓ *Cultural Resources*
- ✓ *Neighborhoods and Civic Vitality*

#### Policies:

- Encourage inclusive diversity throughout the community.
- Devote appropriate resources to the adequate enforcement of existing development, zoning, and quality of life codes.
- Continue to align the diverse interests of the community with various non-profits.
- Support the development of an economic impact study of the music industry
- Support the development of an economic impact study of the arts (visual, film, and performing arts)

### “Prosperity”

#### Associated Topics:

- ✓ *Education*
- ✓ *Health and Safety*
- ✓ *Economic Development*

#### Policies:

- Continuously review Athens Transit System routes to meet demand.
- Continue to support the trending growth in small businesses.

- Increase partnerships with institutions throughout the community by improving coordination and communication.
- Continue to align the diverse interests of the community with various non-profits.
- Devote appropriate resources to the adequate enforcement of existing development, zoning, and quality of life codes.

## “Place”

### Associated Topics:

- ✓ *Housing*
- ✓ *Future Land Use*
- ✓ *Environment/Agriculture*
- ✓ *Agriculture*
- ✓ *Neighborhoods*
- ✓ *Transportation and Infrastructure*

### Policies:

- Promote proactive planning.
- Restrict mass grading.
- Support a community-wide recycling ordinance.
- Continue to support alternative means of transportation.
- Continue to seek additional opportunities for Park and Ride lots.
- Support a permanent (year-round) household hazardous waste recycling center.
- Encourage existing local industries to install effective pollution abatement technology.
- Development regulations and review should focus on form, appearance, context, and use.
- Continue the preservation and development of Downtown Athens as a vibrant center for all ages.
- Encourage the protection of potentially historic plant materials and landscape structures surrounding historic properties by considering these elements when reviewing historic site plans.
- Encourage intra and inter-connectivity within and between neighborhoods while discouraging cul-de-sac development.
- Encourage the configuration of large, existing or proposed commercial centers into “blocks” that promote walkability.
- Interconnect streets and businesses by retrofitting parking lots to provide a network of sidewalk connections.
- Support the latest Greenway Network Master Plan through land use and transportation initiatives.

## “Vitality”

## Associated Topics:

- ✓ *Civic Engagement*
- ✓ *Cultural Resources*

## Goals:

- Support the development of an economic impact study of the music industry
- Support the development of an economic impact study of the arts (visual, film, and performing arts)

## **“Foundation”**

## Associated Topics:

- ✓ *Government Operations*
- ✓ *Transportation*
- ✓ *Infrastructure*

## Goals:

- Continuously review Athens Transit System routes to meet demand.
- Continue to support alternative means of transportation.
- Continue to seek additional opportunities for Park and Ride lots.
- Interconnect streets and businesses by retrofitting parking lots to provide a network of sidewalk connections.