

## **Historic Preservation and Cultural Resources Subcommittee**

### *Vision Statement:*

Athens Clarke County will be a county rich in cultural resources that not only enhance and maintain its unique character, but also increase its economic vitality.

In pursuit of this goal, Athens Clarke County will protect, support, improve & generate cultural resources in Athens-Clarke County that contribute to the character & quality of life that define & make Athens-Clarke County unique.

### *Proposed Issues and Opportunities:*

#### Cultural Resources, in general:

- ❖ The majority of ACC Citizens are unaware of cultural resources and their importance.
- ❖ Create opportunities for visitors and residents to learn more about Clarke County's history & other cultural resources through development of educational materials & programs.

#### Historic Preservation:

- ❖ ACC needs a comprehensive inventory of county-wide historic properties and to prioritize that list for preservation efforts.
- ❖ ACC needs to promote historic preservation as a tool for economic development.
- ❖ Underutilized property owned by ACC Government needs protection prior to offering for sale to private parties.
- ❖ Industrial historic sites need protection.
- ❖ Historic school buildings need protection- both those under the Board of Education or other governmental control and those under private ownership.

- ❖ Landlocked urban churches pressured for space often move to the suburbs leaving institutional buildings that are difficult to adapt.
- ❖ Preservation and adaptive reuse of existing structures offers benefits both financial and in conservation of materials. Historic structures offer heritage tourism benefits, as well. ACC needs to encourage the reuse and rehabilitation of historic structures.
- ❖ Discourage the demolition of unprotected buildings.
- ❖ Discourage construction or development that threatens archeological sites.
- ❖ Historic public documents are threatened and not easily accessible to the general public.
- ❖ There are abandoned or contaminated properties, many of which are historic, in our community that are threatened by demolition by neglect.
- ❖ Local protection of historic and cultural resources needs improvement.
- ❖ ACC needs to further encourage & support the efforts of the Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation, the Athens Historical Society, and any other organization whose mission is to promote & protect our historic & cultural heritage.
- ❖ Encourage property owners to take advantage of Federal & State investment tax credits for rehabilitation of historic property.
- ❖ Landscaping surrounding historic properties is not currently reviewed by the Historic Preservation Committee.
- ❖ Protection of architectural materials or “urban archeology” (granite curbing, cobbles, bricks, etc.) is needed when construction or street work is done.
- ❖ Additional ACC Planning Department staff is needed.
- ❖ Existing design guidelines for ACC properties are outdated & are not specific to individual districts.

#### Character & Gateways:

- ❖ Inappropriate infill development threatens the character of both urban and rural areas of ACC both in scale of the construction and through the creation of inappropriate parcels.
- ❖ Gateways into ACC are threatened with diminishing character and some have already lost all character-defining features.
- ❖ Visible utility lines mar ACC’s scenic qualities.
- ❖ There are many missed opportunities to create pockets of green space and character when new roadwork is done without incorporating planted medians, etc. as buffers.

- ❖ Encourage the city to create a comprehensive walking tour complete with maps & markers or even a distinguishable path/s.
- ❖ “Champion” or significant trees are being lost during construction and/or redevelopment of certain areas.

Public Art, Events & Amenities:

- ❖ Encourage the increase of public art throughout the city.
- ❖ Continue to encourage public amenities such as bike racks, benches, bus stop shelters, fountains, playground equipment etc. to be functional public works of art.
- ❖ A large portion of Athens-Clarke County’s population is unaware of services offered by the Leisure Services program.
- ❖ Continue to support Leisure Services to enhance and encourage growth.
- ❖ Cultural programs in public schools are often the first programs eliminated or reduced in scope when budgets are cut.
- ❖ Support & promote the growth of the “Arts Industry” in Athens-Clarke County.
- ❖ Additional support is needed for local artists & musicians that give so much to our community.
- ❖ Leisure Services is too “all-encompassing”. The “Arts” should be separated into their own department. Arts programs & recreation programs, while both are “cultural resources”, are too different to be managed directly by the same organization.

*Proposed Policies/ Work Program Projects:*

Cultural Resources, in general:

- ❖ A comprehensive survey of all cultural, natural, and historic resources (urban & rural) needs to be undertaken and updated on a 5 year cycle.  
Timeframe: every five years  
Responsible Party:  
Estimated Cost:  
Funding Source:
- ❖ Integrate planning for the protection of cultural resources with other protective measures such as environmental, open space, recreation, and

infill character areas through more comprehensive reviews of proposed development / construction.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

#### Historic Preservation:

- ❖ Inventory historic school buildings for listing as a non-contiguous district or other protective measure to be in place prior to development plans.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ The Board of Education commits to urban educational settings and re-use of sound historic structures.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ Designate historic properties owned by the ACC Government to have protection in place prior to any sales and private development plans.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ Create a revolving fund from profits of sales of underutilized ACC Government properties to allow stabilization of additional ACC properties to be sold or grants/loans to be granted to aid long-term property owners with maintenance costs of historic properties or rehabilitation.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ The ACC Government should create a committee of urban church representatives and officials in charge of public buildings and parking to create innovative ways to share space for uses that operate on different days/hours.  
 Timeframe:  
 Responsible Party:  
 Estimated Cost:  
 Funding Source:
  
- ❖ Sensitive areas, both urban and rural, need to be identified and protected from inappropriate infill development through the use of historic districts, conservation districts, or other measures.  
 Timeframe:  
 Responsible Party:  
 Estimated Cost:  
 Funding Source:
  
- ❖ Additional Preservation Planning staff is needed to increase efforts at surveying, designation, and community education.  
 Timeframe:  
 Responsible Party: ACC  
 Estimated Cost:  
 Funding Source:
  
- ❖ Encourage adaptive reuse and preservation of sound, existing non-residential structures through tax incentives or other means.  
 Timeframe:  
 Responsible Party:  
 Estimated Cost:  
 Funding Source:
  
- ❖ A Demolition Ordinance is needed to address “demolition by neglect” and prevent demolition of sound structures without plans for new use.  
 Timeframe:  
 Responsible Party:  
 Estimated Cost:  
 Funding Source:

- ❖ Identify and protect archeological resources through zoning overlays, community education, and staff knowledgeable and capable of enforcement  
 Timeframe:  
 Responsible Party:  
 Estimated Cost:  
 Funding Source:
  
- ❖ Develop an Athens History Museum or other archival program to protect documents, photos, etc. while cataloging them and offering some level of public viewing, research, etc.  
 Timeframe:  
 Responsible Party:  
 Estimated Cost:  
 Funding Source:
  
- ❖ Develop a “toolbox” complete with resource directory, funding options, etc. for property owners of historic, undesignated properties in an effort to facilitate and encourage adaptive reuse and historic designation of privately-owned properties.  
 Timeframe:  
 Responsible Party:  
 Estimated Cost:  
 Funding Source:
  
- ❖ Develop a public education and awareness program in order to further promote the value of historic preservation.  
 Timeframe:  
 Responsible Party:  
 Estimated Cost:  
 Funding Source:
  
- ❖ Develop an ordinance to protect historic architectural materials or “urban archeology”.  
 Timeframe:  
 Responsible Party:  
 Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ Recognize & promote the importance of historic ethnic neighborhoods and sites.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ Recognize that many historic rural areas are lost to new development due to lack of awareness. Promote & protect those areas through education and designation.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ Become proactive in recognizing both old and new buildings and structures that could reach significance in the future; and promote the preservation of such resources.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ Develop programs and events to coincide with “Georgia Historic Preservation Month” (May) that celebrates ACC’s historic heritage.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ Develop policy that protects against the removal of potentially historic plant materials & structures surrounding historic properties.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

Character & Gateways:

- ❖ Zoning regulations need to be developed/ revised to prevent subdivision of lots that are out of character with the neighborhood in which they are located.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ Scenic areas that were identified through the Landscape Assessment, and their viewsheds, need to be protected from development. Overlay zoning tools such as conservation districts or other measures need to insure this protection.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ Study open (green) space existing within ACC and track its use and development to insure a target per capita acreage is maintained as the ACC population grows and that these open spaces remain comprised of agricultural, recreational, and scenic areas.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ Gateways into ACC need to reflect the unique character and values of ACC rather than the suburban sprawl that could be any community. Develop conservation overlay districts with design and development criteria to maintain and restore distinctive character to these areas.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:



- ❖ Require all new utility lines to be underground and encourage/require that existing lines are converted to underground lines during road construction or other major construction.  
 Timeframe:  
 Responsible Party:  
 Estimated Cost:  
 Funding Source:
  
- ❖ Encourage the support of identifying & protecting “champion” or significant trees.  
 Timeframe:  
 Responsible Party:  
 Estimated Cost:  
 Funding Source:
  
- ❖ In the development of mixed-use neighborhoods, discourage building of all residential units first.  
 Timeframe:  
 Responsible Party:  
 Estimated Cost:  
 Funding Source:
  
- ❖ Continue to encourage the development of the Greenway, especially focusing on ways to connect and overlap it with other cultural resources throughout the city.  
 Timeframe:  
 Responsible Party:  
 Estimated Cost:  
 Funding Source:
  
- ❖ Continue to encourage and develop the connectivity of neighborhoods through paths, sidewalks, and bike lanes.  
 Timeframe:  
 Responsible Party:  
 Estimated Cost:  
 Funding Source:

Public Art, Events & Amenities:

- ❖ Develop a Leisure Services “open house” day where the community can “tour” the many facilities and learn more what this program has to offer.  
Timeframe:  
Responsible Party:  
Estimated Cost:  
Funding Source:
  
- ❖ Develop a Public Art Advisory Council in order to develop design guidelines for public art, review plans for proposed public art commissions as well as to encourage developers to incorporate public art in new construction.  
Timeframe:  
Responsible Party:  
Estimated Cost:  
Funding Source:
  
- ❖ Develop a spring or summer “Theater in the Park” series.  
Timeframe:  
Responsible Party:  
Estimated Cost:  
Funding Source:
  
- ❖ Encourage alternative transportation modes that also increase the uniqueness of Athens. (ex. express “trolley” service that makes a quick loop from Normaltown through Boulevard, to Downtown and the Multimodal Center in order to add character, honor Athens’ heritage, as well as offer an alternative to driving individual vehicles to those areas.)  
Timeframe:  
Responsible Party:  
Estimated Cost:  
Funding Source:
  
- ❖ Encourage the creation of a large farmer’s market by offering local farmers incentives for consolidating at one market in order to facilitate the

shopping process for consumers who wish to shop locally, but are often discouraged by the inconveniences involved.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ Develop events to celebrate Clarke County's archeological resources during "Georgia Archaeology Month".

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ Develop a once-a-month event wherein local business coordinate with one another in order to get the community out to meet one another and celebrate all the wonderful local businesses that Athens has to offer and to promote "local flavor". (ex. Macon, GA's "First Fridays")

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ Develop a Summer "Rooftop Movie" series on top of one of the parking decks or other tall building to celebrate the season & offer a unique experience to the community.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ Initiate and support opportunities that promote self sustainability for members of the local Arts and Music community.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source:

- ❖ Develop an ACC Arts Program that operates separate from the Leisure Services Program or is a separate division of that program. This program would include all of the arts divisions that currently operate under the Leisure Services Program as well as any that are developed in the future.

Timeframe:

Responsible Party:

Estimated Cost:

Funding Source: