

2016 Comprehensive Development Plan

Character Areas: Special Districts

Character Area: **Historic Area**

Definition: Designated historic district, area containing landmarks, civic or cultural resources.

Location: AUDC regulated Districts such as Cabbagetown, Druid Hills, Grant Park, Inman Park. Whittier Mill, West End, Adair Park, Oakland City etc.

Policies:

- Effect and accomplish the protection, enhancement and perpetuation of such buildings, sites and districts, which represent or reflect special elements of the City's cultural, social, economic and architectural history.
- Safeguard the City's historic aesthetic and cultural heritage, as embodied and reflected in such buildings, sites and districts.
- Stabilize and improve property values of such buildings, sites and districts.
- Foster civic pride in the beauty and noble accomplishments of the past.
- Protect and enhance the City's attractions to tourists and visitors and thereby support and stimulate business and industry.
- Strengthen the economy of the City.
- Promote the use of such buildings, sites and districts for the education, pleasure and general welfare of the people of the City.
- Promote attention to sound design principles in areas of new development and redevelopment.
- Raise the level of community understanding and expectation for quality in the built environment.

Implementation:

- The Commission staff is currently working with pertinent community representatives for many of the districts to revise and update their zoning regulations to better support the respective visions of the designated districts. These revisions are expected to increase the efficiency of the review of projects in the designated districts, address situations not anticipated by the original regulations, and eliminate confusing or contradictory requirements and language. There should also be an effort to promote economic development and job creation through the rehabilitation and redevelopment of historic buildings and districts particularly in non-residential historic districts such as Hotel Row and along Auburn Avenue.

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Character Area: **Industrial**

Definition: Area used in manufacturing, wholesale trade, distribution and construction that might generate truck and freight traffic, noise, vibration, fumes, odors etc.

Location: Industrial areas such as the Southside Industrial District, Chattahoochee Industrial District, Atlanta Industrial Park, South Moreland Ave, Armour-Ottley, and the rail yards.

Policies:

- Preserve, protect and enhance Downtown's role as the civic and economic center of the Atlanta region.
- Promote the adaptive reuse or redevelopment of vacant, underutilized, obsolete, or structurally-deteriorated industrial and commercial properties in order to increase the possibilities for introducing modern industrial uses to increase the compatibility of these areas with the surrounding land uses.
- Provide sufficient and attractive buffering, screening, landscaped or architectural buffers between existing and proposed industrial uses and outdoor storage and activity areas and residential areas and non-industrial areas.
- Encourage the redevelopment of underused industrial areas which have sufficient existing street and utility infrastructure rather than the expansion of development in areas that are undeserved by streets and utility connections.
- Promote the redevelopment of brownfield sites for new industrial uses.
- Maintain industrial land uses by discouraging encroachment of incompatible land uses in industrial areas, particularly residential uses, and encouraging redevelopment of obsolete industrial buildings to new industrial uses instead of a non-industrial uses.
- Discourage the conversion of industrial land uses to non industrial land uses

(except for buildings over 50 years old).

- Encourage light industrial and office parks uses in industrial areas in close proximity to residential uses
- Incorporate new “green” features to reduce environmental impacts and improve the appearance of industrial districts.

Implementation:

- Amend the Industrial Zoning District to eliminate some allowed uses not compatible with industrial uses.
- Develop a Mixed Use Industrial or Planned Manufacturing Employment District (PMED) land use category that allows for industrial and residential uses
- Re-evaluate previous changes to Future Land Use Map and Urban Enterprise Zones (UEZ). Consider changing to industrial the 2,133 acres of industrially zoned land not supported by the Future Land Use Map
- Review and update truck/freight routes
- Adopt design standards for industrial areas to address screening and buffering
- Create the Atlanta Industrial Council
- Work on Brownfield remediation
- Focus on retention and expansion of existing industrial businesses.
- Promote training and educational opportunities for city residents

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Character Area: **Other/Special**

Definition: A district or area that doesn't fit into the above categories. It is an area with singular characteristics, usually an institutional use, such as a military installation, university, or airport.

Location: Fort McPherson, Federal Penitentiary, Universities—AU Center & GA Tech, Large Cemeteries- Westview, Westside Reservoir and Park, Large State Facilities and Turner Field.

Policies:

- Preserve, protect and enhance Downtown's role as the civic and economic center of the Atlanta region.
- Minimize impact of facilities and expansion in surrounding neighborhoods
- In these areas, the highest densities should be at the center and transition to lower densities at the edges to protect and buffer surrounding neighborhoods. Surrounding neighborhoods should be buffered from noise and lights.
- Minimize the use of adjacent neighborhood streets for parking by establishing adequate parking requirements and encouraging shared parking arrangements. Encourage well designed public parking.

Implementation:

- Implement adopted plans.

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Character Area: Transit Oriented Development

Definition: Area $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from an existing or proposed transit (rail) station

Location: Existing MARTA stations, proposed BeltLine stations, Downtown streetcar route.

Policies:

- Support a complementary, well-integrated mix of land uses within $\frac{1}{2}$ -mile walking distance of the transit station.
- Provide a range of relatively higher intensity uses that are transit supportive.
- Encourage retail and service establishments that serve users daily needs.
 - Predominantly residential station areas should offer neighborhood commercial services such as dry cleaning, prepared dinners, grocery stores, and child care.
 - Predominantly employment station areas should offer daytime services such as coffee shops, restaurants, and business service establishments.
- Provide uses that attract and generate pedestrian activity, especially at the ground-floor level.
- Consider special traffic generators – such as educational, cultural, entertainment, and recreational uses.
- Encourage multi-use and mixed-use developments that include a mixture of uses on the same site or building.
- Encourage a mixture of transit-supportive housing types and prices.
- Encourage development and preservation of workforce and affordable housing and a mixture of income-levels within each station area.
- Protect existing, stable single family residential neighborhoods.
- Encourage retrofitting and improving existing uses to improve their pedestrian and transit orientation.
- Discourage automobile-dependent uses such as automobile sales lots, car washes, drive-through service windows
- Discourage low-density and land consumptive uses such as junkyards, telecommunications equipment storage centers, self- or mini-storage centers,

urban agriculture, and warehouse-distribution centers.

- Discourage new single-family or townhome developments on properties suitable for denser development.

Pedestrian and Bicycle System:

- Establish a thorough pedestrian system throughout the station area which will minimize the walking distance for pedestrians.
- Provide pedestrian and bicycle connections between the surrounding neighborhoods and the station areas.
- Primary and secondary pedestrian routes should be identified in the TOD station area.
- Group buildings together to allow for easy pedestrian access between buildings and to frame the pedestrian network.
- Eliminate gaps in the station area pedestrian networks, make sure the pedestrian network is short, continuous, and barrier free.
- Bring sidewalks up to the building line and prohibit parking between the sidewalk and the building.
- Provide an accessible and safe pedestrian system that is attractive for all users; make sure routes are easily navigable.
- Insure that the pedestrian network will be able to accommodate large groups.
- Require the provision of bicycle parking facilities, and other bicycle amenities.
- In developments with secure, structured parking, locate bicycle parking in a premium location in the secure area.
- Encourage the use of planting strips/street trees, on-street parking, and/or bicycle lanes to separate pedestrians from vehicles.

Street Network:

- Within a ½ mile radius of the station areas, design the streets to be multi-modal with an emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle circulation.
- Set vehicular levels of service to reflect an emphasis on pedestrian and bicyclists.
- Expand street connections by creating intervening streets to break up large blocks.
- Block faces should not exceed 600 feet in length.

Parking:

- Reduce parking requirements within the station area.
- Establish parking maximums.
- Parking facilities should accommodate retail or other active uses at the ground floor.
- Reduce large surface parking lots within ¼ mile of the station.
- Well-designed structured and subterranean parking is preferred over of surface parking lots.
- Encourage shared parking facilities where different uses require parking at different times of the day.
- Proximity to Park n' Ride sites which could possibly accommodate parking during off-peak hours.

Building and Site Design:

- Make each station area a “place” - Make each station a unique environment, with distinctive design features that can be easily identified.
- Design buildings to face open spaces or public streets, with minimal setbacks and with windows and doors at street level, avoid the use of expansive blank walls.
- Minimize the walking distance between the transit station and buildings, by locating building entrances on the street.
- Locate all surface parking, with the exception of on-street parking, to the back of buildings and where necessary, provide pedestrian paths through surface parking to the station.
- Locate the tallest and most intensely developed structures near the station, have buildings that are adjacent to established neighborhoods limited to low-rise structures.
- Screen and limit unsightly elements (i.e. dumpsters, service entrances, outdoor storage, loading docks) from the public streets.
- Take into account safety and security concerns during the design process.

Streetscape:

- Place utilities underground whenever possible.
- Design streetscape to encourage pedestrian activity.
- Include pedestrian scale lighting, benches, and street trees in streetscape design.

Open Space:

- Establish public open spaces that serve as focal points around transit stations as well as development catalysts.
- Develop open space to complement the transit stations.
- Design open spaces to be centers of activity that include items such as public art, benches, and fountains.
- Design buildings to open into the open spaces.

Implementation:

- Develop or complete master plans for all BeltLine and MARTA station areas.
- Prepare a TOD Strategic Plan.
- Focus sidewalk, bicycle, and connectivity improvements in station areas.
- Amend BeltLine Overlay district and improve zoning around the transit stations that do not have Quality of Life zoning districts in place.
- Work with MARTA to redevelop excess surface parking around MARTA stations.
- Improve ADA accessibility within a ½ mile of transit stations.
- Expand street network by private developers in conjunction with redevelopment projects.
- Utilize tax allocation district funds to finance transit supportive development and area infrastructure improvements.
- Target financial, economic development, and regulatory incentives.
- Support efforts to use land banking for affordable housing and transit oriented development.