FACT SHEET

ZONING ORDINANCE REFORM

What is Zoning Reform?
In 2015, the City of Atlanta's Department of City Planning commissioned a team of consultants to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the City's Zoning Ordinance. Upon completing the assessment, the team recommended improvements to the City's Zoning Ordnance. These recommendations and technical review of the ordinance are available in the Zoning Ordinance Diagnostic report at Atlanta's Department of City Planning's website.

The Diagnostic, performed over one year, resulted in the Atlanta Zoning Ordinance Assessment that made a series of recommendations for future changes to the Zoning Ordinance, including amendments to the regulations.

Through reform, the City sought to expand transportation options, ensure housing diversity, create user-friendly regulations, protect neighborhood character, and create vibrant corridors and districts

What are the two phases?
The Diagnostic categorized recommendations into "Quick Fixes" and "Medium Fixes", both of which could be completed in a relatively short period of time. It further recommended a comprehensive overhaul of the current Zoning Ordinance which would likely require a period of two to four years to complete.

Photo by Aaron Coury

The proposed recommendations sought to clarify and improve certain provisions of the Atlanta Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance and to provide consistency with Atlanta City Design. The updates would also be consistent with state and federal law, and advance the public health, safety and welfare of citizens. The recommendations and their topics were broken down into two Phases: Phase I - "Quick Fixes" and Phase II - "Medium Fixes."

What issues are addressed?
Phase 1 addressed these topics:

- Accessory structure heights
- Accessory structure size definition
- Accessory uses in R District
- Bicycle parking standards
- Unused zoning districts
- Independent driveways requirements
- Multi-family zoning, single-family minimum lot sizes
- MRC District building placement
- Master plan provisions
- Minimum building height non-conformity
- Replats of non-conforming lots
- Special Use Permit transfers
- Sidewalk standards
- Storefront streets curb cuts
- Storage pods on residential property
- Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) street standards

Phase 2 included topics such as:

- Accessory Dwellings
- Definitions
- I District Uses
- Loading Requirements
- MRC-2 Residential Density
- Missing Middle Housing
- Parking
- Neighborhood Design Standards

- Telecommunications
- Transitional Height Plane
- Quality of Life Variations

Where are we now?
City Council approved and adopted Phase I Quick Fixes in May 2018.

City Council approved and adopted Phase II Medium Fixes in January 2019.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) for updating or rewriting the City of Atlanta Zoning Ordinance went out on December 14, 2018. The City will evaluate responses in the coming months.

Who should I contact?
Contact Sushmita Arjyal by email at sarjyal@AtlantaGa.gov or call 404-330-6145.