

ACC POTENTIAL LAND USE VISION STATEMENTS

ACC land use policies will encourage and enable a balance and diversity in the projected land uses while respecting the importance of a clean and healthy environment.

ACC Issues and Opportunities: LAND USE

Regulations/Policies:

1. Athens-Clarke County zoning and development regulations encourage mixed-use, neo-traditional development patterns; however, new construction and redevelopment projects often fail to fully meet these standards for a variety of reasons. Conventional commercial and residential markets still pursue single-use land uses. Other local codes and regulations affecting new development also present challenges or obstacles to the attainment of mixed-use, neo-traditional developments.
2. Land uses and development regulations are often inconsistent or incompatible with natural environmental features like topography, mature forests, etc. These should be better integrated in both land use planning and review of new development.
3. Our development codes that determine the final product emphasize use over appearance (need for Form Based Code to address)
4. Zoning regulations are restrictive
5. Zoning processes are restrictive.
6. We do not have inclusionary zoning, i.e. regulations to require housing affordable for the workforce.
7. Agricultural Zone/buffers take value from properties affected.
8. Lack of education opportunities for land use issues.
9. Land use policies push development into surrounding counties.
10. Perceptions of school system push development into surrounding counties.

Development Patterns / Design:

11. New developments need to be more walkable.
12. Some infill development—both residential and non-residential--adversely impacts the character of existing neighborhoods.
13. The automobile has an adverse visual impact on both commercial and residential areas of our community.
14. Street design needs to be context-sensitive.
15. Sidewalks are needed at most levels of development within the old city limits and in commercial areas.
16. Development needs to be sustainable, and overall development should achieve a balance that satisfies the community's housing, commercial, and industrial needs.
17. Often there are not appropriate buffers between industrial and other uses.
18. Infill development can drive up property taxes/values and gentrify a neighborhood.
19. Sprawl is unsustainable; sprawl development patterns have destroyed our traditional development patterns.
20. Design of new development often detracts from our community's character and sense of security. (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design)
21. Can't foster good design for small buildings.
22. Connectivity and rational block/grid design of roads can replicate existing neighborhoods in greenfield development. Once infrastructure is in place, it is too late. Cul-de-sac and isolated developments should be discouraged.
23. We need to rethink our lot sizes—need smaller in more urban areas.

Rural/Environment:

24. No areas want to be a TDR receiving zone.
25. Rural areas of our community need to be maintained for environmental, economic and aesthetic reasons.
26. Urban sprawl causes increased local government costs and other problems such as air and water pollution.
27. Agricultural and forestry economic activities are threatened as vital parts of our community.
28. Recreation and greenspace are often not considered as vital facets of our community's land use.
29. Open greenspace should be considered part of the infrastructure.

Areas /Uses:

30. Too much zoned RM and too much re-zoned to RM.
31. Industrial areas being rezoned create inappropriate neighbors and reduce critical mass of land needed for industrial uses.
32. Declining commercial/industrial areas are not being redeveloped.
33. Corridors need to be Master Planned rather than rezoned one parcel at a time.
34. Our gateways and corridors do not lend a "sense of place" to our community.
35. Eligible historic sites and neighborhoods do not all have the protection of local historic designation.
36. Areas of urban-level densities often do not have an urban level of services.
37. We are not getting a housing mix.

Process / Coordination:

38. Neighborhoods are not able to plan proactively for themselves.
39. Lack of coordination of land use between ACC departments and other services (ie. GDOT, HED, etc.).
40. School board, hospitals, and other institutional decisions have major land use impacts and need better coordination.

ACC Land Use: POLICIES

- A. Our community will use land effectively to avoid the costs and problems associated with suburban and urban sprawl.
- B. We will preserve the rural character and the opportunity for agricultural and forestry activities to remain a vital part of our community.
- C. We will develop a recognizable transition from the urban to the rural areas of our community.
- D. We will support urban and suburban development where it can be adequately served by public facilities as designated in the Comprehensive Plan.
- E. A higher level of urban services (sewer, water, fire, police, recreation, greenspace, etc.) will be provided to areas of our community that we want to develop at urban-level densities.
- F. We will be committed to creating, redeveloping, and enhancing existing commercial and industrial areas located within our community.
- G. We will champion developments that provide a mix of shopping, housing, greenspace and jobs.
- H. We will support opportunities for residential and non-residential in-fill development that positively impacts the character of existing neighborhoods.
- I. Recreation and greenspace will become an integral facet of our community's land use and infrastructure.
- J. We will encourage redevelopment and in-fill over development of new property on the periphery of the urban area or in the agricultural zone.
- K. We will promote the proactive involvement of neighborhoods in planning their neighborhoods.
- L. We are committed to creating walkable, safe, and attractive neighborhoods throughout the community--in new and existing developments--where people have easy access to schools, parks, and necessary services (grocery store, drug store) without having to travel by car.
- M. We will support higher densities in urban areas.

- N. We will provide for integration of natural environmental features into the planning, development regulation and review processes.
- O. We will provide for a balanced focus on form and appearance in development regulation and review.
- P. We will encourage a friendly, customer service oriented, and transparent development process.
- Q. We will provide for development regulations that produce the development we want—development that fulfills the Community Vision as stated in the Comprehensive Plan.
- R. We will promote roads designed and re-designed for their purpose (context sensitive design).
- S. We will ensure that incompatible uses are not adjacent to each other and/or provide for ample buffering.
- T. We will preserve industrial areas in the county.
- U. We will champion traditional development patterns, including connectivity.
- V. We will proactively preserve, protect, and enhance scenic views, corridors and gateways to create a “sense of place” for our community.
- W. We will provide for a mix of housing types and affordability.
- X. We will promote and facilitate better coordination within ACC government regarding land use and development issues.
- Y. We will be proactive in coordinating with other agencies, services, and institutions in land use planning and development.
- Z. We will make a strong commitment to implementing the Community Vision as stated in the Comprehensive Plan.
- AA. We will identify the necessary financial resources to implement the Comprehensive Plan.
- BB. We will ensure that proposed zoning and development decisions are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

- CC. Appropriately design and integrate signage within all development.
- DD. We will encourage configuration of large commercial centers into "blocks" that promotes walkability and additional development or allows for redevelopment of the site for new tenants, uses, or ownership patterns.
- EE. We will make as a priority the development of mixed uses, redevelopment and revitalization of existing under-utilized commercial and industrial areas over development of new land for commercial purposes.
- FF. We will encourage downtown parking structures to incorporate retail opportunities.
- GG. We will encourage development of additional retail shopping and restaurants in the downtown area.
- HH. Encourage alternative transportation options
- II. We will encourage citizen participation