

Legend

Translated Future Land Use

Categories

Downtown

This is the densest and most unique neighborhood of the county. It is a regional center that offers a mix of uses, housing, civic or municipal functions and employment opportunities. Parking structures with commercial uses with street-level frontage are encouraged, however they should have strict design requirements to protect historic integrity and to ensure that new buildings develop in a form and architectural style compatible with existing downtown character. Auto-oriented uses, such as vehicle repair and maintenance, drive-through restaurants, and vehicle sales, are not included in this designation. Surface parking lots are not encouraged.

Education

This category is intended for educational institutions including public, private, state, or local school agencies. School campuses should be located and designed as anchors for the neighborhood so that the school grounds can be of benefit to the general public outside of school hours. These campuses should be designed for safe and convenient access on foot or bicycle to reduce congestion and allow greater freedom of movement—especially for children. Student housing and student-oriented uses are expected to locate on or adjacent to campus for ease of access. Campuses should also be designed with quality architecture that increases the value of adjacent properties and boosts civic pride.

Employment Center

These are areas of industry, office-warehouses, research parks, and flex-space mixed uses. Some employment uses can be located near residential areas if the size and scale of the building is compatible, and the potential for the nuisances like excessive noise, light, odor, or traffic is minimal. Small amounts of retail may be compatible in some areas. Design standards regulating building placement, landscaping, and buffering should apply to mitigate the impact of noise, light, odor, and truck traffic. While individual sites may be buffered, the street network and site access should be designed with multiple transportation modes in mind so that workers can access jobs via transit and bicycles. Residential uses are not compatible with this category.

General Business

These are commercial areas that serve a variety of needs for the residents of the region. It is intended for small- and large-scale retailing and service uses that are auto-oriented, such as Atlanta Highway, Lexington Road and US 29 North. Pedestrian-oriented design is particularly appropriate when these streets contain neighborhood-shopping areas or are adjacent to multifamily housing or residential neighborhoods. Pedestrian circulation in these centers is a primary concern, therefore, connectivity within and to surrounding areas should be encouraged. Internal pedestrian walkways should be provided from the public right-of-way to the principal customer entrance of all principal buildings on the site. Walkways should connect focal points of pedestrian activity such as, but not limited to, transit stops, street crossings, building, store entry points, and plaza space. Walkways shall feature adjoining landscaped areas that contribute to the establishment or enhancement of community and public spaces. The street level façade of these areas should have a scale and architectural elements that relate to pedestrians. Buildings should be oriented to the street and corridors should be lined with street-trees. Small and medium scale retail stores should frame the streets with large-scale retailers located behind with focus given to pedestrian circulation rather than automobiles. Parking lots should not be located at the street front and shared parking should be encouraged.

Government

This category is for federal, state, or local government agencies. Facilities on these properties should be located and designed with community access in mind to make sure that everyone has safe and convenient access to their government. These facilities should also be designed with quality architecture that increases the value of adjacent properties and boosts civic pride.

Major Corridor

These are primarily commercial or multi-family areas intended for small and large-scale retail and other commercial services. Residential uses are allowed—especially in mixed arrangements such as above the ground floor in multi-story buildings, horizontally mixed or as a buffer to surrounding residential neighborhoods. While some areas may be auto-oriented, pedestrian circulation and inter-parcel connectivity should be incorporated into the design. Main entrances should face the street and have direct pedestrian walkways to the street. Corridors should be served by public transit and have multi-modal opportunities. Parking lots should not be located at the street front and shared parking is encouraged.

Minor Corridor

These areas are intended to develop and redevelop secondary corridors, such as Prince Avenue and Baxter Street, with a mix of commercial and residential uses, and other compatible uses such as small-scale clean industry, schools, houses of worship, and daycares, that can also serve adjacent neighborhoods. Commercial uses should take the form of main street storefronts and multi-story buildings oriented towards the street are expected. These corridors should be designed to function as multi-modal boulevards, that are highly compatible with transit, rather than solely focusing on automobile throughput. These corridors should be comfortable to traverse on foot or sit alongside in café seating through the use of enhanced design elements (street trees, sidewalk furniture, lighting or traffic calming).

Mixed Density Residential

These are residential areas where higher density residential development is allowed and intended. Limited nonresidential uses designed at a neighborhood scale may be incorporated into these areas (e.g. churches, schools, daycare facilities, small businesses and offices). Buildings should be oriented towards the street and include streetscape enhancements. Their design should include connections between uses, good pedestrian connections, and compatibility with public transit. Auto-oriented uses, such as vehicle repair and maintenance, drive-through restaurants, and vehicle sales, are not included in this designation.

Neighborhood Center

These areas are envisioned to be areas that have a mix of uses including residential, commercial, office, and entertainment where people can live, work, and play. These centers will have the lower intensity of areas like Normaltown, based on the character of the surrounding neighborhood. These centers will provide access to daily needs that provide useful walks for residents of nearby neighborhoods. These nodes will be designed for walking, biking, and transit access. Parking will be handled at the district level, providing an environment where people can park once and access all of their destinations on foot. Multi-story buildings are expected; however, the edges of nodes should be designed to transition to the surrounding neighborhood. Nodes will be designed as compact, walkable spaces with small blocks. Nodes should have design standards to create and respect a cohesive character for each center. Auto-oriented uses are not included in this designation.

Neighborhood Residential

Neighborhood Residential Future Land Use: These residential areas include a variety of housing types including detached single-family houses, accessory dwellings units, townhouses, and multi-family buildings that are scaled like large houses (such as duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes). Well-connected street networks, street trees, and sidewalks are expected. Design standards should be implemented to ensure compatibility. Houses are encouraged to be located close to the street with functional front porches and a direct walkway connection to the street. Garages should be placed behind the porch and front façade. Limited commercial and other non-residential uses, designed at a neighborhood scale, are expected including home-based businesses, houses of worship, schools, daycare facilities, personal care homes, and corner stores. These neighborhoods should be characterized by incremental growth and gentle density increases as Athens' population grows.

Parks & Open Space

This designation is intended for parkland and greenspaces that are intended to serve the community as active and passive recreation areas. Preservation of natural areas is desired here. Parkland should be designed to fit into the context of its surroundings, such as creating pedestrian connections so that adjacent neighborhoods and properties would have easy access to parkland. Smaller park spaces should be incorporated near denser development to provide all residents some access to outdoor space.

Rural

Rural lands are intended to contain agricultural uses, very low residential density with a focus on open space. Agricultural functions are encouraged, as well as other compatible uses, including limited low-impact commercial and industrial uses such as production agriculture, equipment dealerships, lumber yards, self-storage facilities, and animal boarding uses. These areas lack infrastructure to support density. Clustering of dwellings may occur with common open spaces protected by conservation easements. If Athens grows to the point where it becomes necessary to consider additional development in the Rural district, the Future Land Use should be changed to support compact development that will make efficient use of land and preserve remaining rural areas.

This category is intended for relatively rural parts of the County that are not served by sewer but have already been developed—typically in a low-density suburban pattern. This designation is meant for existing residential neighborhoods that are not served by sewer, mobile home parks, and limited low-impact commercial uses such as country stores and event spaces. Agricultural uses, beyond what can be done at a backyard scale, are not intended for this area. These areas lack infrastructure, especially sewer service, to support density. If Athens grows to the point where it becomes necessary to consider additional development in the Rural Neighborhood district, the Future Land Use should be changed to support compact development that will make efficient use of land and infrastructure and preserve remaining rural areas.

Single Family Residential

These are residential areas with single-family detached housing. Limited non-residential uses designed at a neighborhood scale may be incorporated in these areas (e.g. churches, schools, personal care homes and daycare facilities).

Town Center

These areas are envisioned to be developed and re-developed centers that have a mix of uses including residential, commercial, office, and entertainment where people can live, work, and play. These centers will have the mid-level intensity of areas like Beechwood Shopping Center, based on the character of the surrounding neighborhood. These nodes will be designed for walking, biking, and transit access. Parking will be handled at the district level, providing an environment where people can park once and access all of their destinations on foot. Multi-story buildings are expected to be oriented towards the street; however, the edges of nodes should be designed to transition to the surrounding neighborhood. Nodes will be designed as compact, walkable spaces with dedicated open space, a functional grid system, and a prioritization on multi-modal transit. Nodes should have design standards to create and respect a cohesive character for each center. Auto-oriented uses are not included in this designation.

Urban Center

These areas are the second most dense districts of the county. They serve people from beyond the county by offering a mix of uses, housing, and employment opportunities. They should incorporate shared-use facilities such as Greens, plazas or other third spaces. Parking should be handled at the district level or in structures with commercial uses at street-level. These nodes should have mixed-use opportunities in a vertical arrangement at their core and step-down to lower scaled multi-family structures toward their edges. Auto-oriented uses, such as vehicle repair and maintenance, drive-through restaurants, and vehicle sales, are not included in this designation. Surface parking lots are not encouraged.