



In the Loop

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A Sign of the Times — The Metro Region's Municipalities Adopt New Zoning Ordinances

During the Great Recession, city and county planning departments didn't have many development applications to review and process. Instead, our region's city and county planners used the excess time to undertake various planning efforts such as comprehensive plans and planning studies for Atlanta Regional Commission Livable Centers Initiative (LCI)-funded small areas, downtowns or corridors. Every city and county in Georgia is required to have a comprehensive plan, which is a 20-year plan for the physical growth and development or redevelopment of a city or county. Comprehensive plans are required to have a major update with significant public involvement every ten years. LCI studies are more detailed, smaller area plans that also must undergo a major update every ten years. The primary tool for implementing the visions expressed in comprehensive plans are zoning ordinances. Although there is no requirement for zoning ordinance updates, zoning ordinance audits - which often lead to complete rewrites - are executed after a new comprehensive plan is put into place.



In the past five years in the Atlanta region, nine new zoning ordinances have been adopted in both large and small jurisdictions. In 2014, with the Council for Quality Growth's input, Gwinnett County adopted its new Unified Development

Ordinance. The County's zoning resolution, development regulations and other ordinances were combined into one coordinated code document: The Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). The City of Roswell's new Unified Development Ordinance was also adopted in 2014. DeKalb County's zoning ordinance rewrite has been underway for almost five years, with adoption anticipated in the next six months. Dunwoody's Zoning Ordinance rewrite started in 2010 and was adopted in 2013. The cities of Chamblee, Decatur, Fairburn, Palmetto, and Chattahoochee Hills

have also recently adopted new zoning ordinances. Two more new zoning ordinances are on the horizon in Coweta County and the City of College Park.



Most of the zoning ordinance rewrites focused on incorporating current best practices, streamlining processes, addressing newer development types (such as mixed-use), and addressing redevelopment.

Many of our region's zoning ordinances were written only to address greenfield development, so addressing redevelopment of brownfield sites was a key point for most communities in the region. Some jurisdictions, such as DeKalb County, chose to incorporate more design and architectural standards. Others, such as the City of Roswell, sought to simplify standards, including adding more graphics and making the zoning ordinance more user friendly.

In the City of Atlanta, the last revision of the zoning ordinance occurred in 1985, however, there have been incremental amendments in response to changes in practices and new policies. The current zoning ordinance is inadequate and difficult to understand and in order to address these issues and make the ordinance more user friendly, the City is doing a comprehensive review and update of the zoning regulations and the Council for Quality Growth is represented on the Stakeholders group advising the City and Council Member TSW, who is the consultant on the zoning update.

For the newly created cities, writing a new zoning ordinance was an important step in implementing their citizens' vision. When Dunwoody and Chattahoochee Hills were created, they both adopted their respective county's zoning ordinance as a stopgap

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President's Message

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The Council has had a very busy Spring with membership up over 32% from this time in 2014 and a full schedule of programs and activities, not to mention our work in the State Legislature and with our local governments.

Our seven State of the County events, which we hosted with our local Chamber of Commerce partners, were huge successes and set a very positive tone as we work daily with our local governments. Chairmen Ahrens (Cherokee), Turner (Clayton), Amos (Forsyth), Eaves (Fulton), Nash (Gwinnett), and Oden (Rockdale), as well as DeKalb's CEO, Lee May, all gave very positive outlooks for our Region in 2015. We greatly appreciate these Chairmen inviting the Council to host their State of the County addresses, and we look forward to further expanding our State of the County series next year to other jurisdictions.

On the policy front, we are very proud of our work at this year's State Legislature. I especially want to thank our Director of Government Affairs and Policy, James Touchton, for his commitment and hard work as part of the team with the Georgia Transportation Alliance, where we serve on the Executive Committee, seeing the passage of the Transportation Funding Act of 2015, HB 170. Most of all, I want to thank the members of the Senate and House who supported this historic funding initiative, including former House Transportation Chair Jay Roberts, Senate Transportation Chair Steve Gooch and, especially, Council Board Member, Senator Brandon Beach.

Much more is to come regarding how we expand transit options in the metro region, and the Council will be at the forefront of these discussions. Senator Beach is a leader in this effort, and I urge everyone to support Brandon and bring us your ideas and thoughts about how we as a state and a region grow and expand an efficient, well connected system.

As many know already, we are proud to honor Chick-fil-A President and CEO Dan T. Cathy with our 2015 Four Pillar Award. Please see the article in this newsletter for details on what promises to be a truly special Tribute event on Thursday, October 1st in the Georgia Ballroom at the Georgia World Congress Center. Much more is to come, and I urge everyone to sponsor and be a part. We look forward to seeing you all on October 1st!

Finally, it is a great pleasure to welcome Amanda Janaskie to the Council as our Director of Membership and Programs. Amanda comes to us with many years of professional experience in Chamber and Association work as well as private industry. If you haven't heard from her about your membership – you will soon!

And ... I want to remind everyone to remember to give a word of appreciation to Mallory Johnson, who keeps the office running, and our entire Council staff. Along with a great team of interns everyone is working hard every day for you. Please let us know how we can help and how we can serve you better. I hope you have a great summer!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Sponsorship Opportunities Available: Contact **Amanda Janaskie** for details **770-813-3381** or aj@councilforqualitygrowth.org.

To Register: Visit www.councilforqualitygrowth.org or contact **Mallory Johnson**, **770-813-3370** or mj@councilforqualitygrowth.org for assistance



UPCOMING EVENT

Cobb Redevelopment Forum
Rebuilding Cobb's Future

In Partnership With



THURSDAY, August 20

7:30 – 11:00 AM

Riverside Epicenter

In Partnership With





UPCOMING EVENT

North Fulton Opportunity Outlook
Developing Places. Making Community



Keynote by Russell Stell,
Executive Director of
Greenville Forward

Wednesday, September 23

7:30 – 11:00 AM

Regal Cinemas at Avalon

In Partnership With:





UPCOMING EVENT

Partnership Gwinnett Annual Redevelopment Forum

Thursday, September 15

7:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Studio Movie Grill, Duluth

Presented by:



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measure. After creating their own comprehensive plans and gaining a clearer picture of their citizenry's vision for the next 20 years and the necessary policy direction to make the vision come to life, both cities rewrote their respective zoning ordinance.

In most jurisdictions, the city and county planners sought input from the development community to assist in making the new zoning code easy to understand and user friendly. Through participation on stakeholder committees and monthly meetings with elected officials and staff, the Council for Quality Growth advised Gwinnett and DeKalb counties and the City of Roswell throughout the process of developing their respective new ordinance. With the other new ordinance, the Council routinely provided input and feedback to avoid unintended consequences on the development community.

Even though the average citizen does not regularly use the zoning ordinance, and may not even be aware of its existence, all of the communities sought out input from the public while rewriting their zoning ordinances. The City of Roswell mailed notices to every property owner in the city. In other communities, public meetings were held specifically for the zoning ordinance. Some communities held only the legal minimum number of public hearings and instead focused on working specifically with regular

users of the code including the Council and its members.



Since the adoption of the new zoning ordinances around the region, a number of additional tweaks to the codes have been necessary. In Roswell, the requirements for outdoor amenity space and landscaped

areas had to be rewritten. In Dunwoody, there have been a number of procedural refinements, changes to lot standards, and some general clarifications. Decatur has updated its floodplain rules, and Fairburn created a new apartment district.

The Council continues to monitor the ongoing evolution of zoning ordinances throughout the region. We expect zoning ordinances to continue to be drafted, adopted, and tweaked as cities grow and new cities are created, and the Council for Quality growth will continue to be engaged in the zoning process and play a vital role in shaping the long-term vision of these communities. As we've done in the past, the Council will work with communities and local governments to ensure that ordinances reflect the principles of quality growth.

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Dan T. Cathy to Receive 2015 Four Pillar Award



The Council for Quality Growth is pleased to announce that we will honor Dan T. Cathy, President & CEO of Chick-fil-A, Inc., with the 2015 Four Pillar Award.

Cathy is the 26th recipient of the annual leadership award, and he will be recognized at

the Four Pillar Tribute on Thursday, October 1 at the Georgia World Congress Center.

Cathy is a true servant leader and represents the next generation of leadership for Chick-fil-A, Inc., founded by his late father, S. Truett Cathy, in 1946. The Tribute theme is **Climb with Care and Confidence**, and it is one of many



FOUR PILLAR
QUALITY RESPONSIBILITY VISION INTEGRITY



lessons Cathy learned from his father. He continues to champion it as he leads nation's top quick-service chicken chain and its nearly 1,800 stores, including 131 right here in Atlanta.

Cathy is also committed to the prosperity of Atlanta. He has been a vocal proponent of investment and community improvement in Atlanta's most impoverished neighborhoods and has chosen to leverage his opportunity as the 2015 Four Pillar Award recipient to partner with the Council to shine a light on the challenges facing Atlanta's Westside neighborhoods, specifically the 30314 zip code.

Thanks the vision and leadership of Cathy and other community and business leaders, this historically significant area of Atlanta is experiencing reinvestment through current and planned projects, including the new

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Falcons stadium. To help further these efforts, the Council for Quality Growth will be making a gift in Cathy's honor to causes supporting Atlanta's Westside communities.

A who's who of Metro Atlanta and Georgia will assemble to honor Cathy at the October 1 Tribute for his demonstration of the "Four Pillars" of leadership - *Quality, Responsibility, Vision and Integrity*.

The Tribute Co-Chairs are **Frank Blake**, Former Chairman and CEO, The Home Depot, **Ted Blum**, Managing Shareholder-Atlanta, Greenberg Traurig, LLP, **Paul Bowers**, Chairman, President and CEO, Georgia Power Company, **Rodney Bullard**, Vice President, Community Affairs at Chick-fil-A, Inc., **Vince Dooley**, Former Head Coach and Athletic Director, University of Georgia, **Larry Gellerstedt**, President and CEO, Cousins Properties, **Jack Harris**, President and CEO, Junior Achievement of Georgia, **Virginia Hepner**, President and CEO, Woodruff Arts Center, **Muhtar Kent**, Chairman and CEO, The Coca-Cola Company, **The Honorable Kasim Reed**, Mayor, City of Atlanta, **H. Jerome Russell**, President, H.J. Russell & Company, **John Stephenson, Jr.**, President and CEO, College Football Hall of Fame, **Dr. Charles Wilmer, M.D.**, Chief of Patient Outreach, Piedmont Heart Institute



to Signature Sponsorships. Delta President Ed Bastian and Home Depot President & CEO Craig Menear join 75 other colleagues, business associates and personal friends who have been personally selected by Cathy to serve on the Four Pillar Host Committee.

The Council invites you to join us in celebrating Dan T. Cathy at the Four Pillar Tribute on October 1. Sponsorships are available, and you may contact Amanda Janaskie, aj@councilforqualitygrowth.org, for more information. Additional event details are also available at www.fourpillartribute.com.



The Council also wants to thank Delta Air Lines and The Home Depot for their early commitments

Thank You Premier Members!



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