

## ATLANTA – REINSTATES DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The City of Atlanta aims to raise its impact fees before FY 2021. The intent is to raise additional funds for transportation infrastructure projects, public safety facilities, and public parks.

### Development Impact Fee Advisory Committee

Members will recall that the City of Atlanta reinstated Development Impact Fee Advisory Committee in August. There are five committee members: Jim Brown, President of the Home Builders Association of Georgia; Kevin Green, President & CEO of the Midtown Alliance; Stacey McCoy, Consultant; and Malloy Peterson, Senior Vice President of Selig Enterprises; and Roderick Teachey, Chief Development Officer of Wingate Companies.

The purpose of the Development Impact Fee Advisory Committee is to (1) evaluate potential revisions to the city's impact fee program, (2) provide a recommendation to City Council on whether to endorse the 2020 impact fee study committee recommendations and (3) report on any perceived inequities in the expenditure of impact fees. The committee only has the authority to make a recommendation to City Council.

### 2017 Impact Fee Study Recommendations

The last impact fee study was conducted in 2017 by Duncan Associates. The 2017 impact fee study recommended increasing the impact fees by upwards of 300% for single-family developments, 400% for multi-family developments, and 200% for retail/commercial developments. Refer to the table below which provides a detailed summary of the 2017 impact fee study recommendations.

**Table 2. Detailed Impact Fee Summary**

			Park Fee by Service Area				Total Fee by Service Area			
Land Use Type	Unit	Road*	North	South	West	Fire	Police	North	South	West
Updated Fee										
Single-Family	Dwelling	\$4,046	\$1,526	\$1,324	\$2,319	\$248	\$147	\$5,967	\$5,765	\$6,760
Multi-Family	Dwelling	\$2,221	\$1,035	\$898	\$1,573	\$168	\$100	\$3,524	\$3,387	\$4,062
Hotel/Motel	Room	\$1,269	\$701	\$608	\$1,065	\$114	\$68	\$2,152	\$2,059	\$2,516
Retail/Commercial	1,000 sq ft	\$4,284	\$1,609	\$1,397	\$2,445	\$261	\$155	\$6,309	\$6,097	\$7,145
Office	1,000 sq ft	\$3,253	\$786	\$682	\$1,194	\$128	\$76	\$4,243	\$4,139	\$4,651
Public/Institutional	1,000 sq ft	\$1,190	\$473	\$411	\$719	\$77	\$46	\$1,786	\$1,724	\$2,032
Industrial	1,000 sq ft	\$2,856	\$293	\$254	\$445	\$48	\$28	\$3,225	\$3,186	\$3,377
Warehouse	1,000 sq ft	\$1,269	\$204	\$177	\$309	\$33	\$20	\$1,526	\$1,499	\$1,631
Mini-Warehouse	1,000 sq ft	\$1,031	\$96	\$83	\$145	\$16	\$9	\$1,152	\$1,139	\$1,201
Current Fee										
Single-Family	Dwelling	\$987	\$410	\$245	\$245	\$114	\$33	\$1,544	\$1,379	\$1,379
Multi-Family	Dwelling	\$470	\$285	\$171	\$171	\$79	\$23	\$857	\$743	\$743
Hotel/Motel	Room	\$793	\$183	\$110	\$110	\$51	\$15	\$1,042	\$969	\$969
Retail/Commercial	1,000 sq ft	\$1,304	\$584	\$350	\$350	\$199	\$57	\$2,144	\$1,910	\$1,910
Office	1,000 sq ft	\$1,977	\$241	\$145	\$145	\$71	\$20	\$2,309	\$2,213	\$2,213
Public/Institutional	1,000 sq ft	\$519	\$192	\$115	\$115	\$53	\$15	\$779	\$702	\$702
Industrial	1,000 sq ft	\$1,025	\$169	\$102	\$102	\$47	\$14	\$1,255	\$1,188	\$1,188
Warehouse	1,000 sq ft	\$748	\$94	\$56	\$56	\$26	\$8	\$876	\$838	\$838
Mini-Warehouse	1,000 sq ft	\$748	\$94	\$56	\$56	\$26	\$8	\$876	\$838	\$838
% Change										
Single-Family	Dwelling	310%	272%	440%	847%	118%	345%	286%	318%	390%
Multi-Family	Dwelling	373%	263%	425%	820%	113%	335%	311%	356%	447%
Hotel/Motel	Room	60%	283%	453%	868%	124%	353%	107%	112%	160%
Retail/Commercial	1,000 sq ft	229%	176%	299%	599%	31%	172%	194%	219%	274%
Office	1,000 sq ft	65%	226%	370%	723%	80%	280%	84%	87%	110%
Public/Institutional	1,000 sq ft	129%	146%	257%	525%	45%	207%	129%	146%	189%
Industrial	1,000 sq ft	179%	73%	149%	336%	2%	100%	157%	168%	184%
Warehouse	1,000 sq ft	70%	117%	216%	452%	27%	150%	74%	79%	95%
Mini-Warehouse	1,000 sq ft	38%	2%	48%	159%	-38%	13%	32%	36%	43%

\* fee reduced by 50% within 1,000 walking feet of a MARTA or light rail station

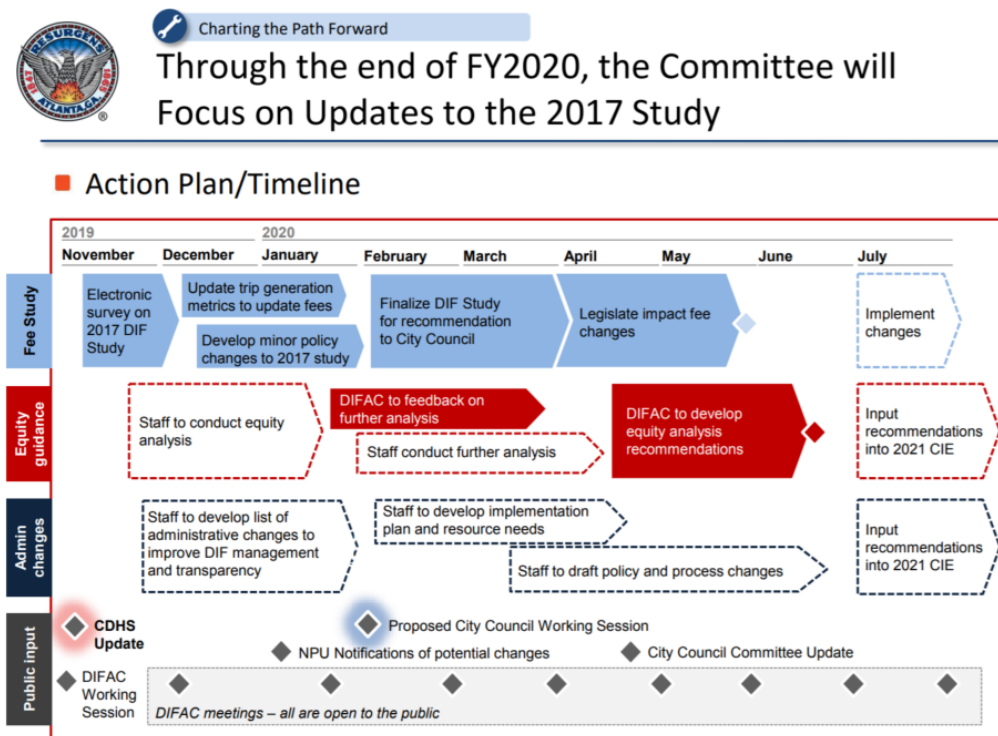
Source: Potential fees from Table 26 (transportation), Table 39 (parks), Table 50, (fire), and Table 60 (police); updated residential fees represent average (untiered) rates; current fees from City of Atlanta (commercial/office fees for 100,000 square foot development, public/institutional fees based on church)

### Commissioned-2020 Impact Fee Study Recommendation

The Development Impact Fee Advisory committee commissioned Duncan Associates to develop a 2020 impact fee study. The committee instructed the firm to make the following updates to the 2017 Impact Fee Study: (1) More precise look at proximity and equity-how close the collection is to the expenditure; (2) Update trip usage and land use by population; (3) Explore methods to expand the scope for eligible projects and (4) Expand eligibility for different modes of transportation.

### Timeline

Duncan Associates is scheduled to present the final 2020 impact fee study to the Development Impact Fee Advisory Committee in April. The goal is for The Development Impact Fee Advisory Committee to present their impact fee recommendations to City Council in April. The City Council hopes to legislative the impact fee changes in May for the new fee structure to be set for developing the FY 2021 budget which begins in July 1, 2020. Please refer to the diagram below to view the entire Impact Fee Program timeline.



### **Survey Deadline: February 14<sup>th</sup>**

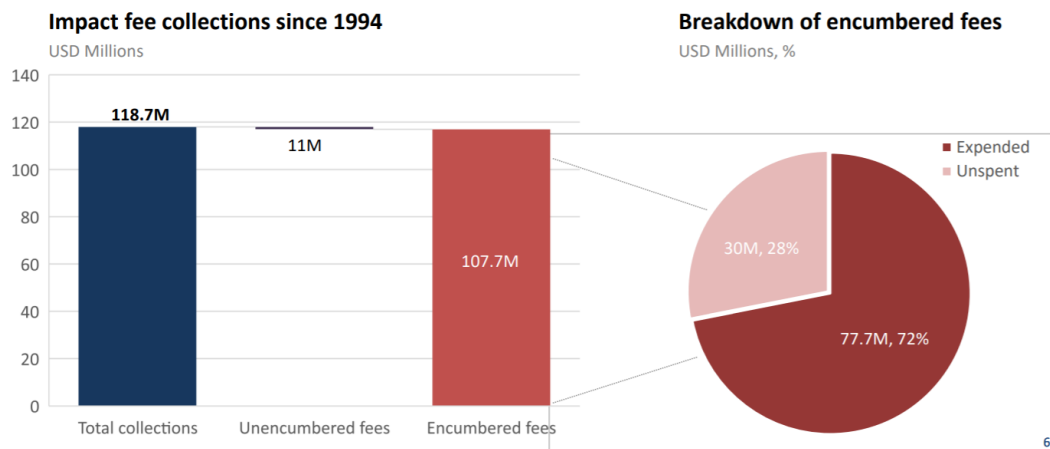
The City is asking for the development community to submit feedback. The Council for Quality Growth staff is asking our members to take the City of Atlanta's short survey: [2019 Development impact Fee Survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NJF7TSJ).

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NJF7TSJ>

If you would like to submit official comments on the proposed impact fee program change, please contact Council for Quality Growth's Policy Analyst, Kimberly Steele at [ks@councilforqualitygrowth.org](mailto:ks@councilforqualitygrowth.org). The Council for Quality Growth will continue to examine the implications of the proposed changes to the program.

### Impact Fee Current Balance- June 30, 2019

- \$118.7 million in impact fees have been collected since 1994;
- \$41 million of impact fees have not been spent;
- \$107.7 million in impact fees collected have been allocated to a project;
- \$77.7 million in impact fees that were allocated have been spent.



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### Impact Fee Program Financial Summary for Last Five-Year Period

Impact Fee Gross Collections & Expenditures Five Year Period							
Public Facility Type	Transportation	Police	Fire	Parks North	Parks South	Parks West	Total
Service Area	City-wide	City-wide	City-wide	North Parks Area	South Parks Area	West Parks Area	
<b>GROSS COLLECTIONS:</b>							
Collections in FYE 2015	3,405,920	235,183	716,776	1,881,019	303,105	35,955	6,577,958
Collections in FYE 2016	3,519,369	160,953	554,031	1,329,924	224,202	84,681	5,873,160
Collections in FYE 2017	5,385,221	215,373	746,172	1,775,777	431,296	92,759	8,646,598
Collections in FYE 2018	3,699,018	206,986	718,994	1,223,923	596,530	113,821	6,559,272
Collections in FYE 2019 Preliminary	4,841,980	174,359	602,126	1,349,855	259,593	163,814	7,391,727
<b>Total Gross Collections FYE 2015 - FYE 2019</b>	<b>\$ 20,851,508</b>	<b>\$ 992,854</b>	<b>\$ 3,338,099</b>	<b>\$ 7,560,498</b>	<b>\$ 1,814,726</b>	<b>\$ 491,030</b>	<b>\$ 35,048,715</b>
<b>PROJECT EXPENDITURES:</b>							
Expenditures in FYE 2015	(841,889)	-	(81,698)	(1,014,431)	(48,923)	-	(1,986,941)
Expenditures in FYE 2016	(459,168)	-	(608,832)	(13,571)	-	-	(1,081,571)
Expenditures in FYE 2017	(775,963)	(426,243)	-	(2,197,732)	-	(143,313)	(3,543,251)
Expenditures in FYE 2018	(2,785,971)	(406,614)	-	(5,624,130)	-	(311,811)	(9,128,526)
Expenditures in FYE 2019 Preliminary	(1,414,647)	(26,299)	(73,352)	(698,992)	(136,392)	(451,313)	(2,800,995)
<b>Total Project Expenditures FYE 2015 - FYE 2019</b>	<b>\$ (6,277,638)</b>	<b>\$ (859,157)</b>	<b>\$ (763,882)</b>	<b>\$ (9,548,856)</b>	<b>\$ (185,314)</b>	<b>\$ (906,437)</b>	<b>\$ (18,541,284)</b>

### ATLANTA-SOLICITING PROJECTS for CIE 2021-2025

The City of Atlanta is soliciting projects to be included in its 2021-2025 Capital Improvement Element (CIE). The Capital Improvement Element is a list of system improvement projects to be financed in whole or in part by impact fees during the upcoming five years. The City of Atlanta has four categories of impact fees: Transportation, Police, Fire and Parks. Consequently, only park, transportation and public safety improvements are eligible for consideration for the 2021-2025 CIE Update. Projects that include operations or maintenance of existing infrastructure are not eligible. Any individual or organization can submit projects for consideration. Projects that already vetted cost estimates and have a high degree of project deliverability will be given a higher priority. **This year the City has launched an interactive website for individuals to submit projects, click [here](#).** The deadline for submitting projects is March 13, 2020. Projects will be selected in April. The CIE must approve by the Atlanta Regional Commission, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, adopted by the Atlanta City Council and approved by Mayor Bottoms by law October 31st annually. If you have any questions or issues submitting proposed projects, please email Council for Quality Growth Policy Analyst, Kimberly Steele at [ks@councilforqualitygrowth.org](mailto:ks@councilforqualitygrowth.org)

To view the current CIE, (2020-2024), click [here](#).

### ATLANTA – ISSUES AD-HOC DESIGN CRITERIA REGULATIONS for MR-MU DISTRICTS

The City of Atlanta recently issued out additional regulations to its Multi-Unit (MU) category to its Multifamily Residential (MR) zoning district. Members will recall the Atlanta City Council incorporated the MU category to its Multifamily Residential zoning district as part of Atlanta’s Zoning Ordinance Update Phase II last year. The MR-MU zoning district provision allows 4-12 units on a single parcel and reduced parking requirements. The Planning Department issued out the following additional design criteria for the MR-MU zoning district:

- (1) the central entry must be front facing
- (2) front doors must face and be visible from the street
- (3) Window fenestration must be along the façade of the principal structure for a minimum of 10% along the front façade area of the principal.

The City recommends builders to develop 9 to 12 units in a medium-density residential (MDR) area with all units must be within a 300ft distance of a major arterial or collector. Also, the City recommends builders to develop 4 to 8 units in a low-density residential (LDR) area. These ad hoc regulations are not in the City’s zoning code. A few Council members have ongoing MU development projects within the City of Atlanta. If any of the new design requirements would be cost-prohibitive to your projects, please email Council for Quality Growth Policy Analyst, Kimberly Steele at [ks@councilforqualitygrowth.org](mailto:ks@councilforqualitygrowth.org)

To read about the initial MR-MU zoning district regulations from Zoning Ordinance Phase II update, click [here](#).

To read more about the additional ad-hoc design criteria regulations to the MR\_MU zoning district, click [here](#).

### ATLANTA – DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

On November 13<sup>th</sup>, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms appointed Josh Rowan as the inaugural Commissioner of the Atlanta Department of Transportation to lead the city’s first dedicated transportation department. The new department will serve as a “one-stop-shop” to combine the transportation planning and construction duties of three city departments: Public Works, Planning, and Renew Atlanta. The consolidated agency was established in June to accelerate the delivery

of projects to build a more connected and equitable transportation system. Josh Rowan is currently the General Manager for the City of Atlanta's Renew Atlanta TSPLOST program. He has over 25 years of experience managing capital and infrastructure projects throughout the metro Atlanta region.

Also, the City of Atlanta released its Strategic Transportation Plan, outlining 27 benchmark goals to be completed by the new agency by 2022. A few of the key goals include:

- Adopt a Vision Zero Program to reduce injuries on Atlanta's streets.
  - The City aims to have 100% traffic fatality reduction by 2022.
- The City aims to resurface 200 lane miles by 2022.
- The City will propose a stormwater utility fee to support ongoing maintenance needs by 2022.
- Reduce Damage to Sidewalks and Crosswalks During Private Construction and Maintenance.
  - The City will review and update city code granting sidewalk and crosswalk installation waivers for developers by end of 2020.
  - The ATL DOT will establish a formal utility permitting coordination procedure to reduce impacts on sidewalk network.
- Adopt a new micromobility regulatory framework to improve safety and operations by the end of 2020.
- Enact Legislation to reduce parking in Atlanta.
  - City Council will enact an ordinance to reduce parking minimums and enact legislation to incentive the development of shared parking facilities by 2020.
- Launch Citywide Transportation Demand Management program
- Work with MARTA and the ATL Authority Board to evaluate fare integration opportunities for the region.
- Work with CID partners to develop freight & curbside management strategies.
- Adopt legislation to allow for collecting streetlight fees by 2022.
- Create a Long-term Bridge Maintenance and Replacement Plan
  - The City has set a goal to replace 3 bridges in poor condition by 2022.
  - The City will develop a 20-year plan on the state of good repair of bridges by end of 2020.

The Council for Quality Growth looks forward to supporting the City's strategic vision to deliver a world-class multimodal transportation system in the metro Atlanta region.

### ATLANTA – REWRITE OF THE TREE PROTECTION ORDINANCE

*Listed below is the 2019 CFQG Analysis of the 2019 proposed Tree Protection Ordinance Rewrite Outline concepts. Council for Quality Growth staff will provide an analysis of the first draft of the tree protection ordinance rewrite draft once it is published in March.*

#### Background

The rewrite of the Tree Protection Ordinance is a result of the City of Atlanta's ecological study called the Urban Ecology Framework (UEF). The UEF is a comprehensive nature strategy to improve and accentuate Atlanta's ecological character. The key goal is to reach 50% tree canopy through strategic replanting and protection of high-value trees. The last official tree canopy analysis measured the city at 47.1% tree canopy in 2014. According to city officials, the canopy coverage decreased by .7% in 2018. Approximately 75% of the City's current tree canopy is in single-family residential areas.

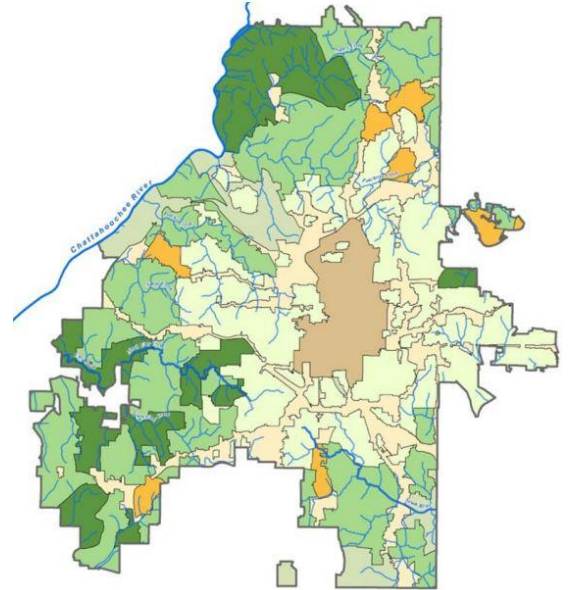
#### Operationalizing the Goal of Reaching 50% Tree Canopy

The City's revision of the Tree Protection Ordinance (TPO) will aim to (1) protect all high-value trees as possible, (2) protect a percentage of trees/tree value and (3) set minimum tree density standards by preservation or replanting. Given Atlanta's expanding population, the Planning Department recognizes that a revised tree protection ordinance



must be properly designed to accommodate for the city's projected population growth. Under the current proposal, the Planning department would divide the city into protection zone categories: Conservation areas and Growth areas. The designated conservation areas of the city would be the urban, suburban and rural areas (i.e., Westend, West of I-20 and I-85 Corridor between Midtown and Druid Hills). The designated growth areas of the city would be the core, clusters and corridors areas (Downtown/Midtown Atlanta).

To achieve the 50% tree canopy goal, the Planning Department is proposing a 3.7% average increase in tree canopy through the entire city. Specifically, the city is proposing a 4% increase in tree canopy in the designated Growth areas and a 5% increase in the designated Conservation areas. This would equate to planting approximately 3,600 new acres of trees.



Existing & Proposed Tree Canopy Coverage

	2014 Coverage	GOAL	Change Needed
<b>Core</b>	11%	15%	<b>+4%</b>
<b>Clusters</b>	26%	35%	<b>+9%</b>
<b>Corridors</b>	27%	30%	<b>+3%</b>
<b>Production Areas</b>	27%	27%	<b>0%</b>
<b>Urban</b>	50%	55%	<b>+5%</b>

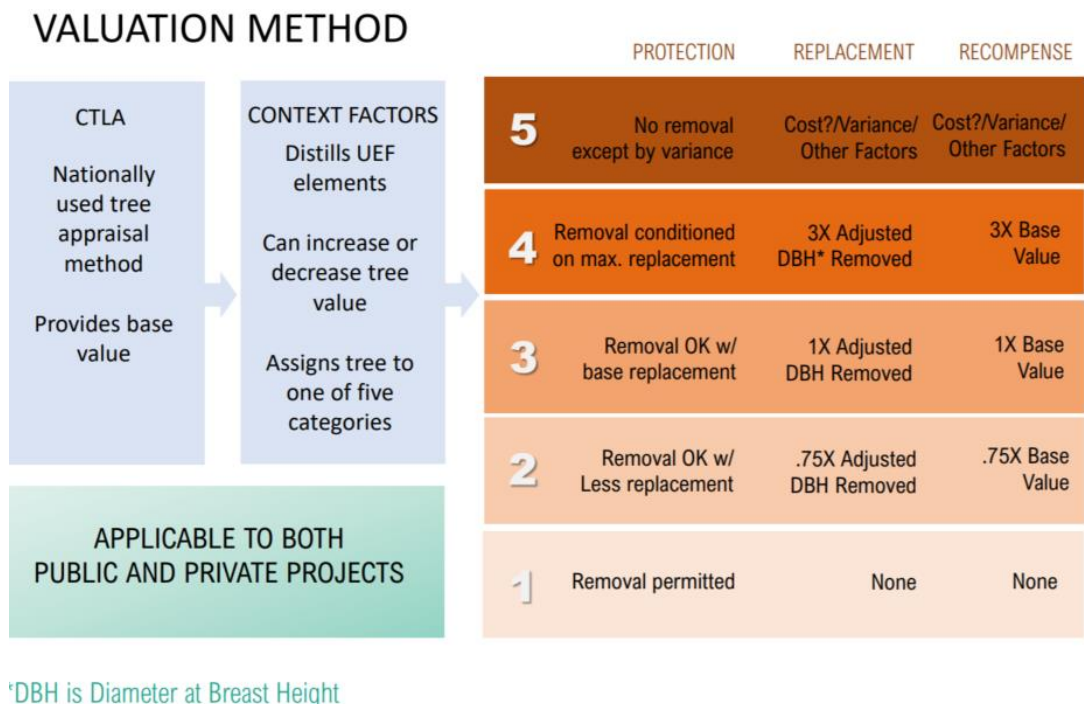
Suburban	58%	60%	+2%
Rural	65%	67%	+2%

### Proposed Tree Removal Regulations

Under the proposed TPO outline, construction and non-construction projects would have a slight variation to the procedural process for the removal of high-value trees. Depending upon the tree removal proposal, the city may permit homeowners to remove designated high-value trees from their property. However; both developers and homeowners could be required to receive approval from a Variance Review Board for the removal of designated high-value tree(s) on their sites. The current tree protection ordinance does not require developers or residents to obtain a variance for the removal of high-value trees. This proposed regulatory requirement could cause significant delays for the completion of a development project, thus increasing construction costs.

### Proposed New Tree Evaluation Method

The City is recommending that the revised tree protection ordinance utilize the Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers (CTLA) Tree Valuation Method to calculate the base value of a tree. In addition to the CTLA, the City of Atlanta will incorporate the city's specific ecological factors as a component of the TPO valuation. In the valuation method, trees will be placed in one out of five categories (refer to diagram below).



The Existing Tree Recompense Calculation is  $\$100 \times (\# \text{ trees removed} - \# \text{ trees replaced}) + \$30 \times (\text{total DBH removed} - \text{total DBH replaced}) = \text{Tree Value/Recompense Cost}$ .

The Proposed CTLA Method is Diameter x [Market Value Factor of new tree] x Species Value (%) x Condition Value (%) x Placement Value (%) = Base CTLA Tree Value

Example of a 30" oak being removed (good condition & placement). Let's look at scenarios with and without replacement.

### CURRENT TPO

$\$100 \times (\# \text{ trees removed} - \# \text{ trees replaced}) + \$30 \times (\text{total DBH inches removed} - \text{total DBH replaced})$

$$\$100(1) + \$30(30) = \$1,000 \text{ value}$$

### PROPOSED TPO CTLA VALUE

(Diameter x [Market Value Factor of New Tree] x Condition % x Placement %)

$$\$8,580 \times 60\% \text{ condition} \times 70\% \text{ placement} = \$3,600 \text{ value}$$

### Implications

There are serious economic and social implications on the proposed revised tree protection ordinance. The proposed changes could significantly stifle developer's ability to build affordable housing units. For example, if the revised TPO requires developers to preserve high-value trees for a site, this would constrict their ability to fully utilize the property. Developers would be forced to decrease the supply of units on the property; resulting in a higher per-unit price to make the residential development profitable. Also, the citywide goal of preserving trees would place a significant burden on homeowners' personal property rights. The new tree assessment methodology could hinder citizens' ability to design their property.

### Proposed Incentives

The City is considering incorporating a streamlined review process, flex zoning and tax fee credits into the development standards of the revised TPO. For example, if a project saves the greatest number of high-value trees and is within ½ a mile of a MARTA station and/or provides affordable housing units, the Planning department maybe flexible with other development regulations. These proposed incentives are still conceptual ideas. The foremost goal is to protect the city's tree canopy naturally. The Planning Department does not want the recompense policy for the illegal removal or destruction of trees to serve as an in-lieu fee tool to exempt a project from adhering to the TPO protection standards.

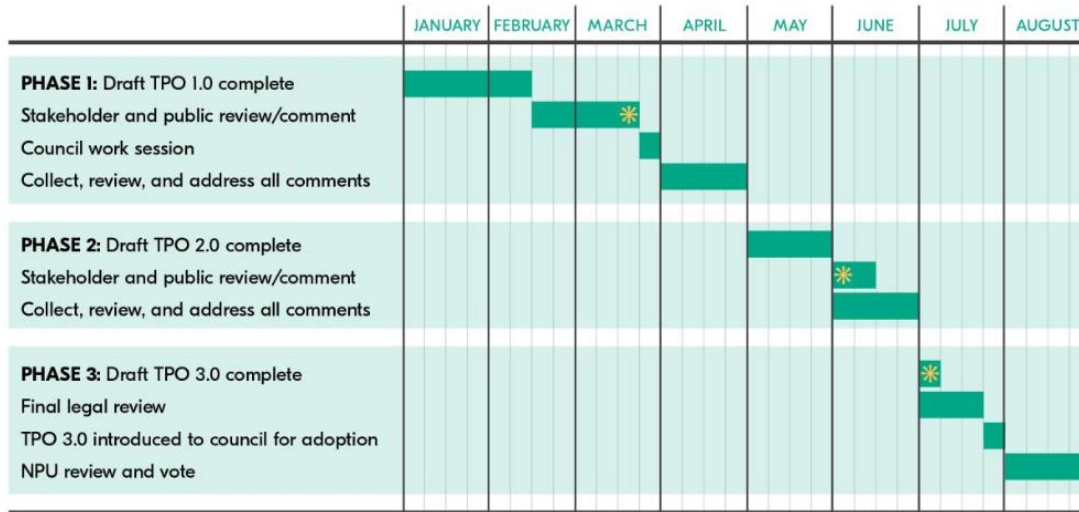
### Timeline

The City of Atlanta released its revised tree protection ordinance timeline. According the City Planning's website, the first draft will be published in March and the final draft will be adopted by City Council in July.



# TREE PROTECTION ORDINANCE

Revised Schedule, January 2020



## CHEROKEE COUNTY – COUNTYWIDE HOUSING MARKET STUDY

Cherokee County Board of Commissioners approved a contract for a county-wide housing study to analyze the current housing market and to identify future housing needs. Cherokee County hired the Bleakly Group to conduct the study. The consultant firm will analyze the gaps between the county's current housing supply and its' future housing demand within the county, municipalities of Ball Ground, Canton, Holly Springs, Waleska and Woodstock, and in unincorporated areas. On Thursday, January 9th, the Bleakly Group will host stakeholder focus group meetings to garner feedback on Cherokee's residential real estate development. The Bleakly Group invited the Council for Quality Growth to provide input and feedback on the current and future predictions of Cherokee's residential real estate development. The Council for Quality Growth aims to work collaboratively with local governments on land-use regulations that promote the construction and preservation of affordable housing developments. We will keep you informed on the final housing recommendations.

## COBB COUNTY – SHORT-TERM RENTAL REGULATIONS

Cobb County is considering adopting short-term rental regulations. The proposed regulations were published in the county's January code amendment package. Cobb County, like many local governments across the nation, are enacting short-term rental provisions to establish regulatory requirements (i.e., licensing, permitting, or taxation) as well as public safety guidelines to mitigate potential nuisances. Cobb's proposed ordinance would require that each short-term rental

property be registered as a business. This would be burdensome on Cobb residents and may violate State Law as it could be considered a residential rental registry, which is expressly prohibited under O.C.G.A. 36-74-30. The Council for Quality Growth recognizes and supports the establishment of reasonable and effective short-term rental regulations. Our staff submitted a letter to the Cobb Board Commissioner expressing our initial concerns. The Cobb Board of Commissioners took no action on the proposed short-term rental regulations at its last meeting on Tuesday, January 28th. The proposed ordinance will be eligible for consideration at the Cobb Board of Commissioners hearing on Tuesday, February 11th at 9 am. To view the proposed short-term rental regulation and the entire Code amendment package, click [here](#). If any members have any additional comments or feedback on the proposed ordinance, please email Council for Quality Growth's Policy Analyst, Kimberly Steele at [ks@councilforqualitygrowth.org](mailto:ks@councilforqualitygrowth.org)

## **FORSYTH COUNTY – TREE PROTECTION ORDINANCE REWRITE**

On Tuesday December 16th, the Forsyth Board of Commissioners will host a public work session to discuss the Council for Quality Growth and other industry groups concerns about the proposed changes to the tree and soil erosion ordinances. Commissioner Cindy Mills and Commissioner Molly Cooper will be leading the public work session.

Council Members will recall that the purpose of the rewrite is to focus on preserving contributing tree stands and specimen trees. Also, the County aims to limit clear-cutting particularly associated with residential subdivisions.

The proposed tree protection update will appear to have a significant impact on residential development within Forsyth county. County officials have simultaneously stated that it desires to minimize the effect that this Tree Protection Ordinance would have on commercial development. Amendments to the current tree ordinance include increased recompense additional buffer requirements and ongoing site design implications. Listed below are a few significant changes in the proposed tree protection ordinance revision.

There are three primary objectives to the proposed changes in Article 1. Based on public feedback, the consultant group updated definitions to improve consistency and clarity throughout the ordinance. For example, the definition of “significant trees” now includes “specimen,” “landmark,” and “historic” trees and any trees identified by the arborist that has significant value. Also, Article 1 contains a new definition for “Tree Grouping” – any set of ten trees deemed a significant stand of trees would be preserved by the County.

Article 2 underwent the most significant changes. Zoning applications and site plans needing Board of Commissioners approval must include tree information based on GIS data and identify proposed tree save areas. All tree protection and replacement plans must identify all significant trees and tree groupings. Significant Trees must be tagged in the field with identification information. It is the hope that the identification of significant trees would prevent the inadvertent removal of significant trees during the construction process. The proposed ordinance would increase the recompense fee for the unapproved removal of significant trees. Also, the proposed ordinance would increase the contribution to the tree replacement fund from \$400 per unit to \$750 per unit.

Also, the County aims to limit clear-cutting particularly associated with residential subdivisions. The County is proposing a significant change to its mass grading ordinance within in the county's Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance. The proposed change is listed below.

*For residential developments on property totaling 25 acres or more, no land disturbance permit shall be issued that would allow the disturbance of more than 20 acres in any single contiguous area and no more than two non-contiguous areas may be disturbed at any one time. Whenever two non-contiguous areas in a residential development are disturbed at the same time, no new disturbance may be undertaken in the development until at least one of the two non-*

*contiguous disturbed areas is stabilized, as determined by the Department of Engineering, prior to any additional land disturbance being undertaken.*

*In case of hardship based on topography, soil types, existing vegetation, streams or other physical characteristics of the land, as determined by the Department of Engineering based on evidence presented by the applicant for a land disturbance permit, separate areas of contiguous disturbance may be increased from 20 acres up to 25 acres.*

For an example, if a residential developer has a 80-90 acre subdivision, the developer would only be permitted to clear 2 sections of 20 acres at a time that would have already been cleared, stabilized, and approved by the Department of Engineering before disturbing any additional land. The proposed provision would limit the area of land that can be mass graded at a given time.

The Council for Quality Growth will continue to keep our members informed on the latest updates to the ordinance re-writes. If you have any comments on the proposed changes, please contact Policy Analyst, Kimberly Steele at [ks@councilforqualitygrowth.org](mailto:ks@councilforqualitygrowth.org). Please [CLICK HERE](#) to view the entire proposed Tree Protection Ordinance.

## **FORSYTH COUNTY – LDP PLAN REVIEW EXTENSIONS**

On September 5<sup>th</sup>, Forsyth Board of Commissioners unanimously approved a UDC amendment that eliminated its 12-month requirement to obtain a Land Disturbance Permit application. The county's Planning Director can now grant developers an extension of a project's plan review if it has not been approved within the allotted plan review period. Kimberly Steele with the Council for Quality Growth publicly voiced its support of the amendment as it will provide developers greater flexibility in the county's permitting process.

Also, the board increased the time period from 18 months to 5 years for a developer to build an industrial project according to the UDC at the time of the project's zoning application. Due to the ever-changing nature of Forsyth's code, developers are hesitant to build long-term phase projects (i.e. industrial parks) for fear that the project's site plan could be deemed unacceptable due to an unforeseen code change. County officials hope this provision will incentivize more large-scale industrial developments within Forsyth county.

The Council for Quality applauds the UCD modifications related to Land Disturbance Permit Review Periods and Industrial Project Vesting as it provides developers greater flexibility to process to produce quality development in Forsyth County.

To read the approved UDC modifications, click [here](#).

## **FORSYTH COUNTY – RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STANDARDS**

On Thursday, June 6, Forsyth County adopted the long-negotiated county-wide residential design standards. The Council for Quality Growth began working on this ordinance change nearly two years ago, and through the activation of a Stakeholders Committee comprised wholly of members of the Council for Quality Growth and the Metro Atlanta Home Builders Association, we have worked to assist the County in achieving quality residential development while mitigating many costly, arbitrary, and onerous regulations.

Through countless public work sessions, one-on-one and small group meetings, public Board of Commissioners meetings, letters, phone calls, and emails, we believe that Forsyth County's proposed Residential Architectural Design

Standards have been largely stripped of their development-stopping regulations while preserving a solution to ensure quality product continues to be delivered in the County.

Most importantly, the County has agreed to defer a significant provision regarding Open Space calculations until it reviews its Tree & Mass Grading Ordinance later in the year. As proposed, this provision would have significantly affected lot yield, both on land already purchased and future land, by eliminating certain land attributes from counting towards Open Space, including wetlands and steep slopes. As you know, un-buildable but still aesthetically pleasing land is often set aside to be used towards any open space requirements. This proposal would have made that land valueless and would have required builders to utilize buildable land to satisfy open space. Again, this provision will not be part of the Residential Architectural Design Standard ordinance at its final adoption expected June 6, but we will have to reckon with it during the Mass-Grading discussion later this year.

Over the years of working with the County on this issue, requirements relating to wall transparency (window volume), garage door offsets, retaining walls, decks, vinyl materials, and other key issues have been reduced or eliminated entirely at the direction of the Council, the Home Builders, and our stake holders.

We anticipate that a final version of the Residential Architectural Design Standards ordinance will be adopted on Tuesday, June 6 at the County's next BOC meeting.

The progress of our work on this issue can be most simply tracked by reviewing the County's [ORIGINAL RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS ORDINANCE HERE](#), and comparing it side-by-side with [the ordinance that we believe will pass on June 6](#).

We sincerely appreciate the diligence and willingness to work with us that all of the County Commissioners and staff demonstrated, and owe our gratitude to the group of builders that were actively involved in helping us navigate this ordinance to produce policy changes that would not hinder residential development in the County.

Please contact Kimberly Steele at [ks@councilforqualitygrowth.org](mailto:ks@councilforqualitygrowth.org) with any questions or comments.

### **GWINNETT COUNTY – TRANSIT REVIEW COMMITTEE**

On September 3rd, the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners unanimously adopted a resolution to create the Gwinnett County Transit Review Committee. The committee will develop a vision for transit services within Gwinnett county. Despite the short-term setback of the county's MARTA referendum in March, county officials are taking action to address the current and future mobility needs of Gwinnett's citizens, businesses and visitors.

The Transit Review Committee will evaluate the county's previously adopted Connect Transit Plan. At the end of the year, the committee will provide a proposed transit investment report aimed to address the county's mobility needs, bolster economic development activities, and enhance the quality of life within Gwinnett county. The Transit Review Committee will be comprised of 13 members:

- Five members appointed by each Commissioner of the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners
- One member appointed by the Gwinnett Council for Seniors
- One member appointed by the Georgia Gwinnett College Student Council
- One member appointed by the Gwinnett Transit Advisory Board

- One member appointed by the Coalition for Health & Human Services
- One member appointed by the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce
- One member appointed by the Gwinnett Young Professionals organization
- One member appointed by Leadership Gwinnett Alumni
- One member appointed by the Gwinnett Municipal Association

According to Gwinnett officials, the county could present another transit referendum before voters in 2020 under 2018's House Bill 930.

The Council for Quality Growth applauds the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners for continuing the momentum on transit expansion. Gwinnett County plays an integral role in the region's economic ecosystem. Transit investment will not only shape the future of growth and development in Gwinnett County but throughout the metro Atlanta region. The Council for Quality Growth will monitor the public proceedings of the Gwinnett County Transit Committee and will inform our members on the committee's transit investment plan in December.

### **SOUTH METRO- [HARTSFIELD-JACKSON SEEKS DEVELOPERS FOR LAND AROUND AIRPORT](#)**

**Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL)** is seeking developers and investors for long-term ground lease and development opportunities for land near the airport. Current opportunities include four properties spanning approximately 200 acres, all located outside of the secure area of the airport. The airport is looking to vet a myriad of concepts for the properties including retail, industrial, office and others.

As part of Aerotropolis Alliance and the Airport City, the development of the sites near the ATL will expand job creation, community revitalization, and economic growth for the region. As the busiest and most efficient airport in the world, Hartsfield-Jackson generates more than \$80 billion in revenue for the Piedmont Atlantic Megaregion consisting of six states across the southeast, supporting more than 200-thousand jobs.

The airport has issued requests for proposals for sites on Godby Road, Riverdale Road, Loop Road and Clark Howell Highway. Interested developers and investors [must register as a supplier with the City of Atlanta Procurement Department by clicking this link](#). **Pre-proposal conference for companies interested in the land to Jan. 14, 2020 at the airport technical campus at 1255 South Loop Road in College Park.**

**Proposals for the leases are due March 18, 2020 at 2 p.m.**

**Who:** ATL Commercial Ventures

**What:** Ground Lease and Development RFP Pre-proposal Conference

**When:** Tuesday, January 14, 2020, 2:30 p.m.

**Where:** Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport  
Tech Campus, 1255 South Loop Road, College Park, GA 30337