



The Pulse of Progress

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City of Atlanta Launches 2011 Comprehensive Planning Process

Setting the direction for major planning initiatives for land use, housing, economic development, community facilities and historic and natural resources is a primary purpose of the City of Atlanta's Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP). The Department of Planning and Community Development's Office of Planning has started the process of creating the new CDP, which will be completed in three phases.

"When the new CDP is complete, we anticipate that the City of Atlanta will have a redefined set of priorities for improving the quality of life for our citizens and businesses," said Mayor Kasim Reed. "This process helps us address current challenges and identify future opportunities. The city's population is expected to grow by 19.5 percent between 2010 and 2030, and the city needs to be ready to accommodate these new residents."

The Office of Planning has announced the Community Assessment and Community Participation components are now complete and a draft has been transmitted by City Council to the Atlanta Regional Commission. Input and comments from the public and private sectors are required to help formulate the City of Atlanta's new CDP.

"Our 2011 CDP will have more emphasis on sustainability, communities, and brownfields than our previous plans," said Department of Planning and Community Development Commissioner James Shelby. The City of Atlanta's current CDP was created in 2008. The plan will help the City of Atlanta outline opportunities for developable land, improved vehicle and pedestrian circulation, economic development, increased public services and additional infrastructure.

A public hearing for the first two phases was held in November. The final phase of the City of Atlanta 2011 CDP, the community agenda component, begins in January 2011. Creation of "character areas" and a future development map are new State of Georgia requirements for the CDP.

"We will be working with communities to identify their community character and incorporate it into the future development map," said Office of Planning Director Charletta Wilson Jacks.

The new CDP must be adopted by Atlanta City Council members by October 2011, as mandated by the State of Georgia. The CDP allows the City of Atlanta to be eligible for state and regional funding. The 1990 Georgia Planning Act requires all local governments to develop and adopt a comprehensive plan.

Walmart to Open in Historic Westside Community

Russell New Urban Development LLC, the development arm of H.J. Russell and Co., and the Atlanta Development Authority recently announced that they are working together with Walmart to open a new outpost of the retail giant to the Historic Westside Community. This is a triumph for the City of Atlanta, which has made significant investments in rebuilding the Atlanta University Center communities of Vine City and English Avenue.

"Walmart is bringing more than jobs, goods and services to the residents of the community and the 12,000 students of the Atlanta University Center," said Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed. "The company is providing the spark this community needs to continue its transformation and become a healthy, thriving place where people want to live and study."

The proposed site for the new Walmart formerly housed a grocery store, which closed in late 2009. Russell New Urban Development has been aggressively seeking a new anchor tenant that would improve the quality of life in the area.

"With Walmart's everyday low prices in general merchandise and groceries, the company is the ideal fit for the residents of this community and the broader Westside community," said H. Jerome Russell, president of H.J. Russell and Co. "We're thrilled about the partnership with the company."



Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed speaks at the December 13 press conference announcing the new Walmart store in Atlanta's Historic Westside community.

While the details are being finalized, plans for the Walmart store feature in-store services like a money center and a pharmacy as well as an exterior that blends with the design of the surrounding businesses. The company's most up-to-date environmentally sustainable elements, such as natural lighting and recycling programs, would be in place as well. The store will bring well-paying jobs with benefits to the community.

"We continue to seek ways we can serve our customers and communities so that people can save money and live better," said Greg Sullivan, senior vice president for South East Division Walmart stores. "We recognize an opportunity to make an impact in Vine City and metro Atlanta by bringing jobs, convenience, fresh options and everyday low prices to the community."

"I am elated that Walmart has chosen to locate one of its stores at 825 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive in Historic Westside Village," said Ivory Young, Atlanta city councilman for District 3. "The revitalization of this corridor remains a priority for the city and the surrounding neighborhoods."

Since 1990, the city, through its economic development agency, the Atlanta Development Authority, has provided significant capital to the area, including \$36 million in loans for major residential multifamily projects, \$15 million in grants to redevelopment projects, \$14.1 million in homeownership loans, \$2.3 million in grants for homeless housing construction, a \$1.7 million grant for the MLK/Ashby revitalization and \$1.6 million in small-business loans.

"Walmart is the anchor we've been hoping for at this transit-oriented development site," said Ernestine Garey, interim president of the Atlanta Development Authority. "Walmart is a pioneer with vision and commitment to sustainability to the communities they serve. This announcement will stabilize the investments we've already made on the site and in the surrounding community."

City of Atlanta Seeks Homes for Energy Efficiency Pilot Program

Would you like a more comfortable home during the winter months? Lower bills for cooling your home in the summer? A properly weatherized home will save you an average of \$437 annually on your utility bills and keep you comfortable year 'round.

The Sustainable Home Initiative in the New Economy (SHINE) is a residential weatherization rebate pilot program offering city of Atlanta homeowners the ability to receive a rebate of up to \$2,000 toward qualifying improvements. Improvements include but are not limited to: duct and air sealing; insulation improvement; caulking; weather-stripping; and the replacement of doors and windows that are the source of significant heating and cooling loss.

SHINE is seeking 100 homes to take advantage of the available rebates during the pilot program. Homeowners may also qualify for a \$1,500 federal income tax credit if they make certain home energy improvements during 2010, in addition to a \$1,900 rebate through Georgia Power. [Click here](#) for more information.

Criteria for the SHINE rebate:

- Home must be in the city of Atlanta
- Single-family homes may qualify (need not be owner-occupied)
- Home must undergo home energy efficiency assessment by Home Performance with Energy Star (HPwES) Professional
- Work must be performed by a SHINE qualified improvement contractor
- Work must be completed before rebate will be issued. Rebates will be paid directly to the homeowner.

The SHINE Program is also looking at introducing a rebate for installing high efficiency gas, electric and solar water heaters. Homeowners seeking to become a part of the pilot program should e-mail shine@atlantaga.gov or call (404) 588-5982 to have an information packet mailed to your home.

Atlanta Continues to Attract Young and Educated

According to ADA's most recent quarterly economic report, the city of Atlanta is continuing to attract young, educated people, despite the national recession. A review of annual estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau reveals that the city has consistently drawn this select demographic over the last five years. The data indicate that the city is well positioned to take advantage of a post-recession return to expansion and economic growth.

The report shows that, in 2008 and 2009, the numbers of new residents age 20-24 surged to more than 4,000 each year, consistently besting the age brackets of 25-29 and 30-34. In 2009, the number of new residents arriving with a graduate or professional degree hit a five-year high of 4,021.

On average, the city attracts 3,750 new residents age 25 and older with bachelor's degrees each year; 2,945 new residents bring a graduate or professional degree to the talent pool. Atlanta draws new residents not only from across the U.S., but from other countries as well: an average of 18,435 out-of-state Americans move to Atlanta each year, and 2,945 come from abroad.

For more from ADA's third-quarter economic report, [click here](#).

Upcoming Economic Development Events

December 27, **Atlanta Falcons “Rise Up” Game Day Pep Rally.** Noon, Atlanta City Hall atrium. Join Mayor Kasim Reed, Falcons owner Arthur Blank, Falcons President Rich McKay, Atlanta City Councilman Ivory Lee Young Jr., V-103's Elle Duncan, Freddie Falcon and the Falcons Cheerleaders and Drumline for a game day pep rally at Atlanta's City Hall.

December 31, **Chick-fil-A Bowl.** Florida State vs. South Carolina, 7:30 p.m. at the Georgia Dome. Gameday kicks off with the Chick-fil-A Bowl Parade at 12:30 p.m. The parade starts at the intersection of Peachtree Street and Baker Street and ends at the Georgia World Congress Center, leading all fans to the Chick-fil-A Bowl FanFest. For more information, visit www.chick-fil-abowl.com.

January 26, **Small Business Monthly Information Session.** 5 p.m. at the offices of the Atlanta Development Authority. To RSVP, send an e-mail to cbrackett@atlantada.com or call (404) 614-8295.

February 23, **Small Business Monthly Information Session.** 5 p.m. at the offices of the Atlanta Development Authority. To RSVP, send an e-mail to cbrackett@atlantada.com or call (404) 614-8295.

March 14-15, **Greenprints 2011.** Sheraton Atlanta Hotel. For more than a decade, Greenprints has been the Southeast's most thought-provoking forum on sustainability. Each year, industry practitioners, policy makers, building owners and citizens from many walks of life attend Greenprints to explore innovative measures for linking energy and water efficiency, urban planning and land use, architecture, construction and natural resource use. Co-hosted by the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority and Southface, Greenprints is the Southeast's premier green building conference and tradeshow. For more information, visit www.greenprints.org.

March 16, **Stepping up to Business.** Cobb Galleria Centre. Stepping up to Business is a conference targeting small business owners and entrepreneurs that will bring together banking, finance, economic, and accounting experts in one place to provide face-to-face mentoring on how to fund your path to success. The event is being organized by the Small Business Finance Institute, a non-profit business education enterprise based in Atlanta. For more information or to register online, visit www.sbf.org/registration.

March 24, **Atlanta BeltLine Presents: Organic Land Care Symposium.** 8 a.m.–5 p.m., Atlanta Botanical Gardens. Join keynote speaker K. Rashid Nuri of Truly Living Well Natural Urban Farms for the first annual Organic Land Care Symposium. Hear local and national experts describe the benefits and realities of utilizing an organic approach to the management of public and private open spaces and learn how you can get started down the path of sustainability. For more information, contact Kevin Burke at kburke@atlbeltline.org.

This newsletter published by the Atlanta Development Authority.

Editor: Sonya Moste, smoste@atlantada.com

Staff Writer: Kathleen Poe, kpoe@atlantada.com
