BACKGROUND

- Current zoning ordinance adopted in 1980
- The zoning ordinance has changed extensively since 1980, especially over the last 20 years
- Older zoning regulations do not match the built environment that much of the community desires
- Public processes have become lengthy and unpredictable
- Zoning code has contradictions, loop holes, and inconsistencies
- Zoning code has become voluminous making it hard to understand and to administer
ZONING CODE DIAGNOSTIC

Diagnostic Process

» May 2015 to May 2016

Areas of Focus

» Improve Urban Design
» Protect Neighborhood Character
» Create Vibrant Corridors + Districts
» Expand Transportation Options
» Ensure Housing Diversity
» Supporting Jobs + Innovation
» Create User-Friendly Regulations + Processes

Zoning Updates

» Quick Fixes (12 months)
» Future Code Changes (3 to 5 years)
ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATES

Quick Fixes Phase 1 (SEP 2017 to DEC 2017)

- MRC building placement
- Unified development plans
- Accessory uses in R-districts
- Accessory structure size
- Accessory structure height
- Independent driveways
- Storage pods in R-districts
- Bike parking standards
- Sidewalk requirements
- MR/RG single, two-family lot sizes
- Non-conforming minimum façade heights
- Deletion of unused districts
- SUP transfers
- Non-conforming plats

ATLANTA ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE

PROPOSED UPDATES » September 19, 2017
Quick Fixes Phase 1 (SEP 2017 to DEC 2017)

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ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATES

Quick Fixes Phase 2 (JAN 2018 to DEC 2018)

» Accessory dwellings
» Definitions update
» I districts uses
» I-Mix District
» Loading requirements
» MRC residential density increase
» Missing Middle zoning district
» Parking
» Neighborhood design standards
» Telecommunications updates
» Transitional height plane updates
ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATES

Quick Fixes Phase 2 (JAN 2018 to DEC 2018)

- Accessory dwellings
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- Missing Middle zoning district
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SIDEWALK REQUIREMENTS

What were we trying to solve?

» Conventional zoning districts did not have sidewalk requirements while newer zoning districts did

» The City is investing increased resources towards expanding the pedestrian inventory of all areas of Atlanta

» Districts that did not have sidewalk requirements are R, R-LC, O-I, I, and C districts
What was changed?

» Required the following new sidewalks to be installed with development in O-I, R-LC, RG, C, and I:
  » Minimum 5 ft amenity zone along the curb for streets trees and street furniture
  » Minimum 10 ft walk area on arterial and collector streets
  » Minimum 6 ft walk area on other streets
What was changed?

» Required the following in most R-4 and R5:
  » Repair existing sidewalk, or
  » Install to match abutting properties’, or
  » If no sidewalk exists on abutting properties, install to match the block, or
  » If no sidewalk exists on the block, install a minimum 2 ft amenity zone and minimum 5 ft walk area
  » Define when relief may be granted (e.g. trees, topo, etc.)
» INDEPENDENT DRIVEWAYS

What were we trying to solve?

» The Zoning Ordinance required conforming lots to have their own driveway entirely within their boundaries and that directly connects to a public street
» The old regulation did not allow private alleys or shared driveways
» The old regulation applied, even if the zoning district doesn’t require parking, and was a particular challenge in historic districts
» Relief required a variance through the Board of Zoning Appeals
**INDEPENDENT DRIVEWAYS**

What was changed?

» Eliminated the requirement for independent driveways, therefore allowing more creative design approaches
What were we trying to solve?

» There were 18 separate, often conflicting, sets of bike parking standards

» Many old standards:
  » Included requirements for residential uses
  » Allowed bike parking to be poorly located

» No old standards included premium/long-term bike parking requirements
What was changed?

» Created one consistent set of citywide bike parking standards
» Required bike parking for each building on a site
» Required bike parking for both non-residential and multifamily uses
» Established standards for exterior racks and interior enclosed bike parking
What were we trying to solve?

Parking requirements dated from 1982 and created concerns related to the environment, public health, quality of life, automobile dependence, affordability, and equity.

This was especially true around MARTA stations, where regulations discouraged the type of development that would take advantage of transit.

- 0.0% to 6.4% do not own a car
- 6.5% to 13.7% do not own a car
- 13.8% to 21.8% do not own a car
- 21.9% to 33.0% do not own a car
- 33.1% to 52.4% do not own a car
What was changed?

» Allowed adjacent on-street parking to count toward parking requirements citywide

» Eliminated all minimum parking requirements citywide for buildings built prior to 1965, except for individual businesses over 1,200 square feet that hold an alcohol beverage license

» Reduced minimum required parking for “elderly housing” to 0.5 parking spaces per residential unit

» Allowed shared parking between different uses by right

» Eliminated parking requirements and introduced parking within 1/2 mile of a “high capacity transit” station or stop
What were we trying to solve?

» Old loading requirements varied by zoning district but were, generally speaking, very high

What was changed?

» Reduced the required number of loading spaces
» Established a single citywide standard
» Allowed shared loading and the use of officially-designated and marked on-street loading zones citywide
» Exempted buildings and portions of buildings built before 1965 from loading requirements
ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

What were we trying to solve?

- “Guest houses” were currently allowed in all R-1 through R-5 zoning districts
- Installing a stove or allowing someone to live in one changed its classification to an “accessory dwelling unit,” which was only allowed in the R-5 district
- Accessory dwelling units were once legal citywide, and those that still exist can provide extra income for the homeowner, new housing options, and more affordable rents than are found in large apartments buildings
ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

What was changed?

» Allowed accessory dwellings in R-4 and R-4A zoning districts
» Created a consistent approach to accessory dwellings in districts that allowed them
» Did not require parking
» Required accessory dwellings to conform to all existing zoning and development regulations

DID YOU KNOW?
Decatur legalized accessory dwellings citywide in 2015.
Only 17 have been built since
A one-bedroom accessory dwelling costs between $100-150K to build in the Atlanta Area, depending on size (Source: Eric Kronberg)
MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

What were we trying to solve?

» Zoning did not support existing and future “Missing Middle” housing types, even though they are an established historic development pattern in many city neighborhoods
MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

What was changed?

» Created a new MR-MU zoning district with the following provisions:
   » Require a 5-foot side yard
   » Limit the number of units to a maximum of 12 per building, but do not limit floor area ratio (FAR)
   » Prohibit all non-residential uses
   » Prohibit parking decks
   » Set minimum parking requirements at 0.5 parking space per unit

» Created custom grandfather provisions for existing historic missing middle housing built prior to 1945

» Allowed renovations as long as square footage doesn’t increase
WHAT WERE WE TRYING TO SOLVE?

» The city had lost many industrially zoned areas to accommodate new housing and commercial development.

» The City had identified the need for a zoning district that can be used in transitioning industrial areas - a district that allowed residential uses while requiring the retention or integration of businesses and light manufacturing uses.
INDUSTRIAL MIXED-USE

What was changed?

» Created a new I-MIX zoning district to allow a mix of light industrial and non-industrial uses

» Required a least 30% of the development floor area to be industrial
   » Allowed buildings 50+ years old to count, too

» Required concurrency by prohibiting non-industrial uses from getting an occupancy permit before required industrial uses

» Incorporated design standards to ensure the district supported walking