



## **INTERIM DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES**

These guidelines are intended to state the position of the City Council of the City of Sandy Springs regarding requests for rezonings and use permits in the City Center, Perimeter Center, and portions of the Roswell Road Corridor. The purpose is to help Community Development Staff better understand the thinking of the Council as they meet with and advise developers. The guidelines are an interpretation of the goals of the Council as stated in the Comprehensive Plan for the City, the City Center Master Plan, and in numerous conversations of the City Council. While not law those projects that follow these guidelines will achieve the type and form of development desired by the City. All zoning actions must be in conformance with adopted plans and follow zoning enabling law. However zoning changes and modifications are legislative acts where the City Council has discretionary authority to determine whether projects meet the goals of the City and contribute in a positive manner to the overall welfare of the City. Projects that address the following issues will be seen to better achieve the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and Mayor and City Council.

### **INTERIM GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS IN THE CITY CENTER, PERIMETER CENTER AND ROSWELL ROAD CORRIDORS**

#### **GOALS**

- Ensuring the long term economic viability of this important market.
- Ensuring a high quality of life for existing and future residents, business community, stakeholders and visitors.
- Ensuring adequate infrastructure is in place for future development.
- Ensuring that development is context sensitive and adequately dense to support walking, biking, and transit use as appropriate.

#### **Guiding Principles**

- Development near MARTA Stations that is compact and dense relative to its surroundings and that transitions to lower heights and densities toward existing residential neighborhoods.
- A rich mix of land uses, with a combination of vertical and horizontal mixed-use. There is a desire for retail, employment and housing mixes in this area.



- A great public realm where sidewalks are wide, lighting is appropriate, there is public art, and all things are at a human scale.
- A new approach to parking where development in this area leads in innovative solutions to parking. It is desired that parking allocation be used to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips.
- A transportation system that leads to a significant (25% as a goal) reduction in single occupancy vehicle trips to, from and within the district.
- Evaluate all public investments in capital projects with an emphasis on return on investment that will result in an improved quality of life.

**Objectives**

The following objectives are intended to outline the specific characteristics of quality development that is desired by the City. When considering a project for rezoning or modification projects that most closely meet these standards will have a greater chance of approval.

**Compact and Dense Development**

- Use the MARTA Guidelines for densities in close proximity (up to 1/4 mile with appropriate access) and with good access to existing MARTA Stations.

Floor Area Ratio	Dwelling units/acre	Height(Stories)
8.0 – 30.0	75+	8 – 40

- In the City Center area densities and heights and a mix of uses consistent with those anticipated in the City Center Master Plan will be considered. Those densities are:
 

With Structured Parking	60 units/acre
Without structured parking	40 units/acre
- To achieve the above levels of density with a mixed use zoning the project must provide an alternate use of retail, hotel or office (not associated with leasing of the residential property or intended primarily for the use of residents of the property) at the following percentages:
 

Retail	5% of total floor area/ground floor frontage on primary street frontage
Office	20% of total floor area
Hotel	no minimum



- A transitional height plane should be established to guide building height moving away from stations toward established lower intensity development. This should apply whether a development is within a quarter mile distance of a Marta Station of a greater distance and is being developed under the Live Work Regional Comprehensive Plan designation. This transitional height plane should be lower from the quarter mile to the half-mile line, established in the Live Work Regional designation of the current Comprehensive Plan, from the Marta Station.
- Increased density might be approved for projects that provide affordable workforce housing and beyond minimum improvements to the public realm in the form of wide sidewalks, bike facilities such as lockers and showers and off road paths, connections or shuttles to transit, or a reduction in single occupancy vehicle trips.
- Greater density will be considered for those projects that use higher quality construction, exceptional architecture, and are constructed to Type I or Type II construction standards as defined in Chapter 6 of the 2012 International Building Code as amended by the State of Georgia (steel and concrete).

#### **Mix of Uses**

- Limit low-density automobile oriented uses through a mix of uses and higher densities of office, retail, and housing that provide alternatives to automobile use.
- Encourage vertical mixed-use but allow the ability to develop projects with horizontal mixing of uses.
- Limit stand-alone large format retail uses and encourage their location in vertical mixed-use or “main street” type retail blocks.
- Include work force housing in new development at approximately ten percent of the total unit count. Propose a way to guarantee the long term affordability of these units.
- Increase residential development proximate to employment opportunities.

#### **Great Public Realm**

- Development that emphasizes quality of the public space as well as the private development.
- Incorporate public art at every opportunity.
- Incorporate attractive and effective wayfinding.
- Sidewalk widths should be context sensitive and of width and materials to encourage walking. Wider sidewalks that permit and encourage greater pedestrian activity are more favorable than sidewalks that meet the minimum requirements.
- Incorporate green infrastructure to improve environmental quality but to also achieve a better aesthetic. Use of innovative techniques such as SILVA Cells is encouraged.
- Promote safety through appropriate design of public infrastructure (CPTED) to encourage an enlivened place that can be occupied all hours of the day and night.



### **A New Approach to Parking**

- Provide the minimum amount of parking necessary with numbers below the established parking minimums. For those projects within one-quarter mile of a MARTA Station parking equal to or less than the minimum required numbers of the zoning ordinance will be a target and for those between one-quarter and within one-half mile of a MARTA Station parking equal to or less than 101% of the minimum otherwise required is desirable. Should market analysis show that a lower number of spaces is desirable then that information will be considered.
- Decouple parking from the overall lease rate. Allow the lessee to rent their residential or commercial space independent of the payment for parking which should be an optional purchase.
- Provide shared parking.
- Provide fast charging stations.
- Provide priority parking for carpool and van pools.
- Provide parking for shared car service or other short term rental program.
- Provide bike parking and bike lockers to encourage the use of bicycles.
- Use pervious paving systems and materials where possible.

### **Improved Transportation System**

- Each project should develop an implementation plan for reducing total vehicle trips during peak periods through increased use of transportation modes: transit, bicycling, walking and sharing rides.
- Incorporate “Complete Streets” principles in all new and upgraded streets. Where possible every street should include planned accommodations for vehicles, transit, bike and pedestrians.
- Provide a local traffic circulator system.
- Provide layout of streets, paths and sidewalks that allow short, direct links to transit and other destinations.
- Allow for and enhance inter-parcel connectivity.
- Implement a traffic demand management program either within the development or in cooperation with neighboring developments. This is a plan to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips through ride share, transit passes, job share, flexible hours, shuttles, etc.