



CITY OF DECATUR UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

Decatur, Georgia

Client:
City of Decatur

Project Status:
Adopted in November 2014 and was made effective February 2015

Project Overview:

- Unified Development Code to support the vision of the 2010 Strategic Plan
- Issues & Analysis Memo examined and analyzes existing plans and ordinances and determined inconsistencies and potential policy changes
- Drafting process to include extensive community outreach

In 2010 Decatur completed a 10-year update to its Strategic Plan (led by TSW), which defined a community-based vision for its future and provided steps for the City to take to achieve it. During the planning process, discussion often focused on growth and development in context of a desire for the community to be environmentally, socially, and economically sustainability. As the City and its consultants looked at how to promote these ideas, it became clear that the regulations that guided growth in the City were often at odds with the Plan. For the Plan to be truly realized, it was determined that the City's development regulations must change. To align their regulations with the Strategic Plan in a progressive, user-friendly format, the City retained a team led by TSW to prepare a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) combining zoning, subdivision, environmental, and other regulations into a legally sound and enforceable document.

The first step in preparing the UDO was to understand which regulations needed to be updated and how to do so. The TSW Team first reviewed existing regulations for clarity, consistency, and content - particularly how well they supported the Strategic Plan - and developed a strategy for the UDO. Based on the direction provided by TSW and supported by public feedback, it was determined that 95% of the UDO would be a technical effort to reformat and clean up existing regulations, but would be 5% content changes requiring a public conversation in the following areas:

- Options for creating new zoning districts and amending existing ones to align with the Plan's housing and mixed-use goals;
- Options for significant revisions to post-development stormwater regulations;
- Options for how to preserve community character, including discussion on historic districts, expanded design standards, and demolition delay; and
- Options for integrating sustainability into all aspects of the UDO.

The team also developed an outline of the new UDO showing where the revised content would go, and how existing and new text would be seamlessly combined into a single user-friendly document. The UDO was adopted in November 2014 and was made effective February 2015.



ARTICLE 2. RULES OF INTERPRETATION | Sec. 2.2. Building Types
2.2.1. Rules Specific to Building Types

K. General Building

A building type designed to accommodate commercial, office or industrial activity. Not intended for retail sales or personal service uses.

Lot	Street-facing facade length	200' max
Height	Ground story height (floor to ceiling)	11' min
	Ground floor elevation	0' min / 2' max
Transparency	Ground story - primary/side street	40% / 20% min
	Upper story	20% min
	Blank wall area - primary/side street	40' / 60' max
Pedestrian Access	Entrance facing primary street	Required every 125'
Parking Location	No on-site parking is allowed between the building and the street.	

L. Civic Building

A building type designed to accommodate civic, institutional or public uses.

Lot	Dwelling units per building	n/a
Pedestrian Access	Entrance facing primary street	Required
Use	Only the following uses are allowed in a civic building type (see Sec. 2.2.2): 1. College, university, seminary; 2. Library, museum, public organization; 3. Office, governmental, civic or charitable organization; 4. Place of worship; 5. Police, fire or EMS station; 6. Post office; and 7. School, private or private (K-12).	

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2.2.2. Building Types Allowed by District

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Residential Buildings	R-8S	R-6S	R-3S	RS-1P	RM-18	RM-24	RM-4	LD	NMA	C-1	C-2	CMU	U
Detached House	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Carriage House	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Cottage Court	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Duplex	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Attached House	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Townhouse	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Walk Up Flat (3-6 units)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Stacked Flat (7+ units)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Key ■ = Building type allowed — = Building type not allowed

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