

CITY OF SMYRNA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and Council

From: Russell Martin, AICP, Community Development Director
Joey Staubes, AICP, Planner II

Date: January 26, 2023

CC: Joe Bennett, City Administrator

RE: Resolution for the Authorization of Adoption of the City of Smyrna 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update.

BACKGROUND

The Comprehensive Plan for Smyrna, Georgia is mandated by the Georgia Planning Act 634 (Georgia Law 1989, pp. 1317-1391). This act requires that each jurisdiction in the state prepare and implement a Comprehensive Plan, which is reviewed by the regional development center. For the City of Smyrna, the regional development center is the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). The rules and regulations of the Act “are intended to provide a framework to facilitate and encourage coordinated, comprehensive planning and development at the local, regional, and state government level”. Chapter 110-12-1 of the act sets minimum standards for each jurisdiction. This includes preparing the Community Assessment, Public Participation Program, and Community Agenda.

The standards are intended to provide a framework for preparation of local comprehensive plans that will; “involve all segments of the community in developing a vision for the community’s future; generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of the community; engage the interest of citizens in implementing the plan; and provide a guide to everyday decision-making for use by local government officials and other community leaders.” These standards help the community address critical issues and opportunities while moving toward realization of its vision for the future.

ANALYSIS

The Smyrna 2040 Comprehensive Plan is an update to the current Smyrna Comprehensive Plan. The 2040 plan update will build upon and enhance the vision created in the 2017 document. This will assist the community in preparing for the social, economic, and cultural changes that we are experiencing and providing a vision of what the community wants to be in the future.

The first part of the comprehensive plan is an objective and professional assessment of data and information about the community that is intended to be prepared without extensive direct public participation. The Community Assessment includes:

- A list of potential issues and opportunities the community may wish to take action to address;
- Analysis of existing development patterns;
- Evaluation of current community policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives; and
- Analysis of data and information to check the validity of the above evaluations and the potential issues and opportunities.

The result of the Community assessment is a concise and informative report to be used by stakeholders during development of the Community Agenda.

This Community Agenda covers the third and final section of the Smyrna 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The Community Agenda is the most important part of the comprehensive plan, for it includes the community's vision for the future as well as its strategy for achieving this vision. Since the Community Agenda provides guidance for future decision making in the community, it was prepared with input from stakeholders and the general public. The Community Agenda is composed of the three following components:

- A community vision for the future physical development of the community, expressed in the form of a map indicating unique character areas, each with its own strategy for guiding future development patterns.
- A list of issues and opportunities identified by the community for further action, and
- An implementation program for achieving the community's vision for the future and addressing the identified issues and opportunities.

The result of this agenda is a clear and concise vision for future development within the City of Smyrna. Also, within the agenda is an implementation program to achieve these development patterns. The Community Agenda is the document that will help guide Smyrna's future.

RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Community Development has completed the update to the City of Smyrna 2040 Comprehensive Plan per the standards set by the Department of Community Affairs. The state has set the minimum standards and procedures that each municipality must follow during the comprehensive planning process. Staff has completed the Community Assessment, the Community Participation Plan and the Community Agenda. With the public participation and comments from ARC and DCA, staff believes the City of Smyrna 2040 Comprehensive Plan update will be a useful tool to guide development in the City of Smyrna in the future. Staff recommends approval of the resolution authorizing the adoption of the update to the City of Smyrna 2040 Comprehensive Plan.