



Department of Economic Development
Planning & Zoning Division

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Chris Montesinos, Planning & Zoning Manager
SUBJECT: **Planning & Zoning Fee Structure Analysis and Recommendations**
DATE: Monday, July 31, 2006

Honorable Mayor and City Council,

We are all aware of the increasing costs facing cities in providing quality planning and zoning services, and that cost comes directly out of our city's budget, and from our taxpayers. Therefore it is important that the fees we take in are covering our cost of service delivery. As part of the Planning & Zoning 2006-2007 Work Program, I have recently concluded two weeks of research on planning and zoning applications fees. The data has been processed and a recommendation is forthcoming.

The analysis required data collection from twenty-three (23) municipalities throughout metropolitan Atlanta in order to get a representative sample of fees being charged by local jurisdictions. As of today, we have a 100% response rate. Our fee structure analysis was based on application submittal fees for the following planning and zoning services:

- **Plan Review** – Applications submitted for site plan approval by the Planning Commission
- **Variances** – Applications submitted to the Board of Appeals to make variations in zoning requirements based on unnecessary restrictions or undue hardship in the application of the zoning ordinance.
- **Rezoning** – Applications to rezone a particular piece of property, which may also require an amendment to the City's Land Use Map.
- **Special Exceptions or Conditional Use Permits** – These are required where special approval for a property use required by the Planning Commission.

- **Subdivision** – The legal separation of lots, including preliminary and final plats.
- **Design Review** – The review of an application by the Design Review Committee for compliance with the City’s design standards.
- **Zoning Verification Letter** – A service provided whereby zoning information is provided on official city letterhead and mailed to a person or company making the request.
- **Zoning Appeals** – An application for reconsideration of a decision made by the Zoning Administrator, Design Review Committee, or Planning Commission to the Board of Appeals.

The analysis is laid out in three spreadsheets for easy reading. The first spreadsheet shows the fees charged by individual municipalities included in the analysis. The second spreadsheet shows how Hapeville’s fees compare. The third shows the recommended changes to our current fee structure.

Results of the survey showed that the current Planning & Zoning fee structure is in need of an overhaul. About half of the service fees reviewed indicated that we are within the average of similar fees charged by other metro cities. On the other hand, the other half reflects our fees well below metro averages.

The final recommendation is outlined in the spreadsheet titled “Fee Structure Analysis Final Recommendation”, which show a need to increase our fees for plan review, rezoning, subdivisions, and zoning verification letters.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Montesinos", enclosed within a large, loopy, handwritten oval.

Chris Montesinos
Planning & Zoning Manager

Compiled list of Planning and Zoning Fees for Metropolitan Atlanta

Jurisdiction	Plan Review Fees	Variance Fees	Rezoning Fees	Special Exceptions or Conditional Use	Subdivision Fees	Design Review	Zoning Verification Letter Fees	Zoning Appeals
Acworth	\$500.00	\$400.00	SF Res - \$250-1,500+\$30/ac; MF Res - \$700-2,000+\$40/ac; Com - \$900-2,200+\$50/ac	\$400.00	Preliminary plat \$250.00; Final plat \$250.00	Included in plan review	\$5.00	\$0.00
Alpharetta	\$750.00 (less than 2 acres) or \$1,000.00 (greater than 2 acres)	\$250.00 single family; \$350.00 commercial & multi family	Sf - \$400.00 + \$10.00/Acre; MF \$750.00 + \$10.00/Acre; Com - \$750.00 + \$10.00/Acre; Ind \$500.00 + \$10.00/Acre	\$750.00	\$400.00 (minor subdivision); \$750.00 preliminary plat; \$750.00 final plat	\$200.00 (historic downtown exempt)	\$100.00	\$100.00
Atlanta	\$250.00 for Special Administrative Permit in all SPI zoning districts; \$100.00 for all other zoning districts	SFR - \$100.00; MF - \$500; Non-Res - \$625.00	SFR - \$500.00; MF - \$500- \$1,250 (based on acreage); Non-Res - \$1,000- \$6,000 (based on acreage)	SFR - \$100.00; MF - \$500; Non-Res - \$625.00	\$50.00 per lot, plus \$9.00 recording fee	Included in plan review	\$0.00	\$250.00
Austell	\$100.00	\$300.00	Res - \$300-1,200 (based on acreage); MF - \$360-1,440 (based on acreage); Com \$600-1,800 (based on acreage)	\$300.00; renewal fee of \$100.00 every two years	\$100.00 plus city engineer's review fee	\$0.00	\$0.00	N/A

Jurisdiction	Plan Review Fees	Variance Fees	Rezoning Fees	Special Exceptions or Conditional Use	Subdivision Fees	Design Review	Zoning Verification Letter Fees	Zoning Appeals
Canton	\$300.00 plus \$10.00 per disturbed acre	\$250.00 before LDP, and \$500.00 after LDP	\$500.00	\$500.00	Preliminary plat - \$300.00 plus \$10.00 per lot; Final plat - \$250.00 plus \$5.00 per lot	N/A	\$25.00	N/A
Chamblee	SF - \$1,000.00; Commercial \$2,000.00; MF and Mix \$3,000.00	Residential \$250.00; non-Res \$1,000.00 plus \$100.00 for each additional variance	\$2000.00, plus \$250.00 if Land Use Map is amended; PUD \$2,000.00	N/A	\$2,000	N/A	\$10.00 per parcel	N/A
College Park	\$50 - \$100	\$100.00 - \$200.00	SF - \$100-300; MF - \$100 - \$400; Com \$200-600	\$100.00 - \$200.00, plus permits fee of \$50-200	\$10.00 Filing Fee	Included in plan review	\$0.00	\$50.00
Decatur	\$0.00	\$50.00	\$200.00	\$100.00	\$50.00 plus \$10.00 per lot	Included in plan review	\$0.00 up to \$100.00 depending on extent of information requested	\$50.00
East Point	\$350.00 plus \$5.00 per acre, or \$5.00 per lot, or \$5.00 per unit (townhouse), which ever is greater	SF - \$400; MF and Commercial \$500; Ind - \$600	SFR - \$500-1,000 (based on acreage); MF and Commercial \$700-1,250; Ind - \$950-1,450 (based on acreage)	\$100.00	\$150.00 (preliminary plat) plus \$5.00 per lot; \$350.00 (final plat), plus \$5.00 per lot	Included in plan review	\$50.00	\$100.00
Doraville	\$650.00 plus \$5.00 per lot (Res) or \$5.00 per acre (Com)	Residential - \$100; Non-Residential \$700.00	\$700.00	\$0.00	\$350.00 plus \$5.00 per square foot	Included in plan review	\$50.00	N/A

Jurisdiction	Plan Review Fees	Variance Fees	Rezoning Fees	Special Exceptions or Conditional Use	Subdivision Fees	Design Review	Zoning Verification Letter Fees	Zoning Appeals
Fairburn	\$500, plus \$20.00 per acre	\$250.00	\$200.00 per acre, \$10,000 maximum	\$500.00	\$460.00 plus \$4.00 per lot	Included in plan review	\$0.00	\$250.00
Fayetteville	\$400.00	Res - \$250.00; Com \$400.00	\$750.00	\$400.00	Preliminary plat \$325.00 + \$15.00 per lot; Final plat \$250.00	Included in plan review	\$0.00	N/A
Forest Park	\$0.00	\$150.00	\$250.00 per lot	\$250.00	\$250.00	Included in plan review	\$0.00	\$150.00
Hapeville	\$100.00	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$100.00 (preliminary), and \$100.00 (final plat)	Included in plan review	\$0.00	\$350.00
Marietta	\$100.00 (state level review) or \$25.00 (local level review)	\$250.00	\$500.00	\$150.00	\$25.00	\$25.00 (local review)	\$10.00	\$250.00
Newnan	\$50.00	\$250.00	\$500.00	\$150.00	Preliminary plat \$2.00 per lot (minimum \$50.00); Final plat \$50.00	Included in plan review	\$25.00	\$250.00
Riverdale	\$100.00 minimum	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	Preliminary plat - \$500.00 or \$10.00 per lot, whichever is greater; Final plat - \$500.00 or \$10.00 per lot, whichever is greater	Included in plan review	\$25.00 per parcel	\$500.00

Jurisdiction	Plan Review Fees	Variance Fees	Rezoning Fees	Special Exceptions or Conditional Use	Subdivision Fees	Design Review	Zoning Verification Letter Fees	Zoning Appeals
Roswell	\$50.00 (less than 1 acre) or \$250.00 (greater than 1 acre)	Residential \$250 for first, plus \$50 for each additional; non-residential \$350 for first, plus \$50 for each additional	\$1,000 plus \$100.00 per acre over 5 acres; Max \$5,000	\$500.00	\$200.00 plus \$10 per lot (preliminary plat); \$100.00 for final plat	\$350.00 (for projects over \$50,000) and \$200.00 (for projects under \$50,000)	\$50.00	\$100.00
Sandy Springs	\$350 plus \$5.00 per acre or lot, whichever is greater	Res - \$250 plus \$50 for each additional variance; Non-Res - \$350 plus \$100 for each additional variance	Res - \$500-2,000 (based on acreage); Non-res \$750-\$2,500	\$500.00	\$350.00 plus \$5.00 per lot	Included in plan review	\$30.00	Res - \$250; Non-Res - \$350
Smyrna	Based on type and size of building	\$250.00 Commercial and \$50.00 for Residential	\$1,500.00	\$250.00	\$0.00	Included in plan review	\$0.00	N/A
Snellville	\$100 (average) residential, commercial and multi-family	\$200.00	\$500-\$1,900 (based on acreage)	\$500.00	\$500 - preliminary plat; \$500 - final plat	Included in plan review	\$0.00	\$200.00
Union City	\$200.00	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$25.00	\$150.00 plus \$5.00 per lot (preliminary plat); \$150.00 plus \$2.50 per lot (final plat)	Included in plan review	\$10.00	\$350.00

Jurisdiction	Plan Review Fees	Variance Fees	Rezoning Fees	Special Exceptions or Conditional Use	Subdivision Fees	Design Review	Zoning Verification Letter Fees	Zoning Appeals
Woodstock	Less than 5 acres \$300.00 + \$50.00 administrative fee; 5-20 acres \$600.00 + \$50.00 Admin fee; 20-50 acres \$1,000.00 + \$50.00 admin fee; 50+ acres \$2,050 +\$5.00/acre over	\$200.00 residential; \$300.00 non-residential	0-19 acres - \$750.00; 20-99 acres - \$850.00; 100+ acres \$1,000.00 plus \$10.00 per acre over 99 acres.	\$300.00	\$150.00	Included in plan review	\$15.00 per parcel	\$200.00 Residential; \$300.00 non-residential

N/A = No information available, or this item is included under a fee listed in another column, or the service is not provided.

Compiled list of Planning and Zoning Fees for Metropolitan Atlanta

Jurisdiction	Plan Review Fees	Variance Fees	Rezoning Fees	Special Exceptions or Conditional Use	Subdivision (preliminary and final plat)	Design Review	Zoning Verification Letter Fees	Zoning Appeals
Hapeville	\$100.00	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$100.00 (preliminary), and \$100.00 (final plat)	Included in plan review	\$0.00	\$350.00
Acworth	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	Same	Higher	Lower
Alpharetta	Higher	Lower for Residential; Same for Non-Residential	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	Lower
Atlanta	Higher	Lower for Residential; Higher for Non-Residential	Higher	Lower for Residential; Higher for Non-Residential	Lower	Same	Same	Lower
Austell	Same	Lower	Lower for Residential; Higher for Non-Residential	Lower	Same	Same	Same	N/A
Canton	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	Same	Higher	N/A
Chamblee	Higher	Lower for Residential; Higher for Non-Residential	Higher	N/A	Higher	N/A	Higher	N/A
College Park	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Same	Same	Lower
Decatur	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Same	Higher	Lower
Doraville	Higher	Lower for Residential; Higher for Non-Residential	Higher	N/A	Higher	Same	Higher	N/A
East Point	Higher	Higher	Higher	Lower	Higher	Same	Higher	Lower
Fairburn	Higher	Lower	Lower	Higher	Higher	Same	Same	Lower
Fayetteville	Higher	Lower for Residential; Higher for Non-Residential	Higher	Higher	Higher	Same	Same	N/A
Forest Park	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	Higher	Same	Same	Lower
Marietta	Lower	Lower	Higher	Lower	Lower	Higher	Higher	Lower

Compiled list of Planning and Zoning Fees for Metropolitan Atlanta

Jurisdiction	Plan Review Fees	Variance Fees	Rezoning Fees	Special Exceptions or Conditional Use	Subdivision (preliminary and final plat)	Design Review	Zoning Verification Letter Fees	Zoning Appeals
Hapeville	\$100.00	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$350.00	\$100.00 (preliminary), and \$100.00 (final plat)	Included in plan review	\$0.00	\$350.00
Newnan	Lower	Lower	Higher	Lower	Lower	Same	Higher	Lower
Riverdale	Same	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	Same	Higher	Higher
Roswell	Higher	Lower for Residential; Same for Non-Residential	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	Lower
Sandy Springs	Higher	Lower for Residential; Same for Non-Residential	Higher	Higher	Higher	Same	Higher	Lower for Residential; Same for Non-Residential
Smyrna	Same	Lower	Higher	Lower	Lower	Same	Same	N/A
Snellville	Same	Lower	Higher	Higher	Higher	Same	Same	Lower
Union City	Higher	Same	Same	Lower	Higher	Same	Higher	Same
Woodstock	Higher	Lower	Higher	Lower	Higher	Same	Higher	Lower

N/A = No information available, or this item is included under a fee listed in another column, or the service is not provided.

Fee Structure Analysis Final Recommendation

	Hapeville Compared to Other Cities			Recommendation	Existing Fee	New Fee Recommendation	Comments
	Lower	Same	Higher				
Plan Review Fees	5	4	13	Increase	\$100.00	\$350.00 plus \$25.00 per acre, \$25.00 per lot, or \$25.00 per unit (MF, T-House) whichever is greater	The proposed fee increase is competitive with other jurisdictions, and covers the expense of staff time, any advertising and posting requirements, and cost to hold public meetings. Other cities charge according to acreage or land use classification.
Variance Fees	10	8	4	Maintain	\$350.00	Add \$50.00 for each additional Variance in the same application	Other jurisdictions charge a flat rate and then additional fees apply when the applicant applies for numerous variances at one time. Other cities charge according to acreage or land use classification.
Rezoning	4	1	16	Increase	\$350.00	\$750.00	The proposed fee increase is competitive with other jurisdictions, and covers the expense of staff time, any advertising and posting requirements, and cost to hold public meetings.
Special or Conditional Use	10	0	9	Maintain	\$350.00	No Change	The fee we are charging is consistent with most municipalities in Metro Atlanta. It is recommended that the fee remain unchanged.

Fee Structure Analysis Final Recommendation

	Hapeville Compared to Other Cities			Recommendation	Existing Fee	New Fee Recommendation	Comments
	Lower	Same	Higher				
Subdivision	6	1	15	Increase	\$100.00 Preliminary Plat; \$100.00 Final Plat	Preliminary Plat - \$300 plus \$10.00 per lot; Final Plat - \$250.00 plus \$5.00 per lot	The proposed fee increase is competitive with other jurisdictions, and covers the expense of staff time, any advertising and posting requirements, and cost to hold public meetings.
Design Review	0	18	3	Maintain	Included in the Plan Review Fee	No Change	Our current Design Review fee is consistent with other municipalities. Most include the cost in with the Plan Review submittal fee.
Zoning Letters	0	8	14	Increase	\$0.00	\$25.00 - \$50.00 per parcel	\$25.00 is for a basic zoning certification letter. The \$50.00 letter also includes verification of Certificates of Occupancy, zoning conformity, code compliance, rebuild clause, and other information that may be requested.
Zoning Appeals	13	1	1	Lower	\$350.00	No Change	This number was originally skewed because most cities did not have an appeals process. The same board deals with Variances in Hapeville, and those fees are already in line with area averages.