

GEORGIA INITIATIVE FOR COMMUNITY HOUSING

SEPTEMBER 20 AND 21, 2016

Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County
Housing and Community Development Department
Rob Trevena, Director

Housing Challenges

Reverse the deterioration of multi-family housing, through defining the problem, inventory how and where it exists, and engage housing partners to develop possible solutions.

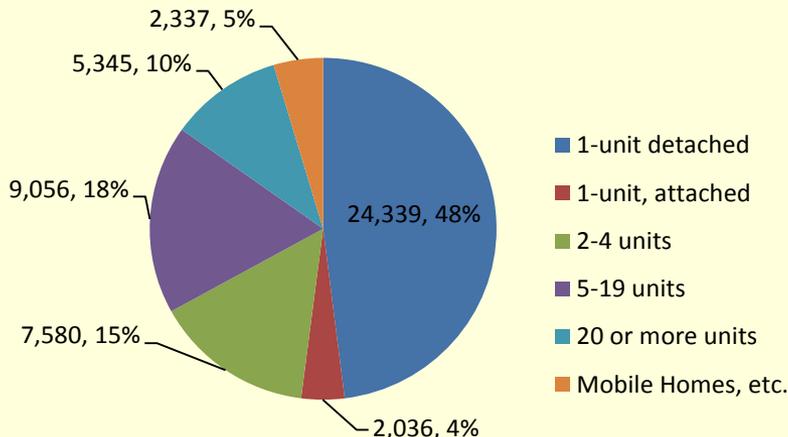
Integrate an improvement strategy into the land use planning process.



ACC Housing Market Snapshot

The American Community Survey (ACS) indicates there are 48,534 housing units in Clarke County. The majority living in households live in 1-2 and 3-5 person households with the average household size at 2.35. UGA reported their population in 2014 at 34,536 students which is approximately 30% of Athens-Clarke County's total population. The Office of Tax Assessor recorded 42,192 real estate parcels and 1,870 manufactured homes in 2010. The American Community Survey indicates that 45.2% of the housing units are owner-occupied and 54.8% are renter occupied. 4.8% of the owner units are vacant and 17% of the rental units are vacant according to estimates. About half of all owner units are valued between \$100,000 and \$150,000. Nearly 24% of the housing units were built prior to 1970 and over 75% were built since 1970. With over 42,000 housing units, and a median house value near \$150,711, Athens house prices are near the national average.

Number of Housing Units



Data Source: 2006-2010 ACS

| Demographic Segmentation Table | ACC | Georgia |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Living in same house 1 year & over | 75.6% | 83.6% |
| Mean travel time to work (minutes) | 19 | 27 |
| Housing units | 51,259 | 4,109,896 |
| Homeownership rate | 43.9% | 65.1% |
| Housing units in multi-unit structures | 44.1% | 20.5% |
| Median value of owner-occupied housing units | \$156,600 | \$151,300 |
| Households | 41,358 | 3,518,097 |
| Persons per household | 2.61 | 2.71 |
| Median household income | \$33,060 | \$49,179 |

Data Source: Nielsen Claritas; US Census Bureau.

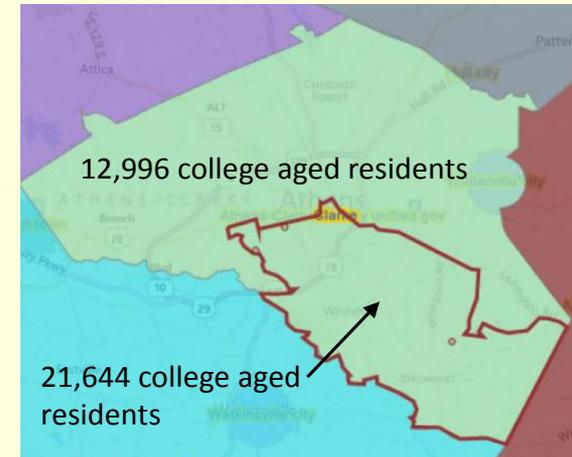
Unique Aspect of the Athens Housing Market

College Students Living Off Campus

In 2015 there were 36,130 students enrolled there. More than 1,000 are on UGA campuses in Tifton, Griffin, Gwinnett County and Atlanta's Buckhead neighborhood and 149 are enrolled online. That leaves approximately 34,981 students attending classes in Athens. 69% are undergraduates. In 2015 UGA is housing about 9,798 students. There are 7,370 living in social sorority or fraternity houses.*

According to 2015 Census estimates, there are 34,640 residents between the 18-24 years of age. **About 17,813 UGA students are living in Athens or commuting from another community.** Nearly 63% of the 18-24 year olds live in Southeast Athens-Clarke County.

39% (10,679) commute with only the driver in the vehicle (excluding motorcycles and scooters) as their primary method of transportation. 61% (16,702) use more sustainable commuting options.**



*UGA Fact Book <http://www.oir.uga.edu/eFactbook/FactBook2015.pdf>

** <https://stars.aashe.org/institutions/university-of-georgia-ga/report/2014-04-29/OP/transportation/OP-15/>

ACC GICH Data Review

Topics Discussed

- March:** General discussion of the housing market and determination of where to begin
- April:** Reviewed progress on the Partners for a Prosperous Athens and the OneAthens Housing Team Affordable Housing Strategies
- May:** Reviewed findings and maps from Inventory and Assessment of Multi-family Developments Composed of 24 or More Units
- June:** Reviewed Workforce Housing Needs Assessment and Analysis Market and Demographic Snapshot
- July:** Reviewed Demographic Summary by Zones
- August:** Reviewed strategies from OneAthens Housing Team and Workforce Housing Needs Assessment

Housing & Community Development Resources

July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017

\$2,621,949

| | |
|-------------|---|
| \$1,536,503 | CDBG – about half of this amount is allocated to housing partners |
| \$394,218 | HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) – 100% allocated to housing |
| \$322,943 | Continuum of Care Grants 2016-2017 – homeless assistance grants |
| \$50,000 | Demolition of dilapidated single-family structures |
| \$318,285 | ACC General Funds |

Housing Development Partners

Athens Housing Authority

Athens Land Trust

Athens Area Habitat for Humanity

Affordable Housing Sustainability (CDBG)

| Agency | Allocated | Summary |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|--|
| ACTION, Inc. | \$126,986 | Repair 23 homes owned by elderly or disabled people |
| Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation | \$39,042 | Repair, landscape, or paint 12 historic homes |
| Athens Housing Authority | \$195,815 | Acquire 3 vacant lots and demolish 3 dilapidated structures for single family housing construction |
| Athens Land Trust | \$180,815 | Construct or rehabilitate 12 single-family homes |
| Athens Habitat for Humanity | \$167,321 | 30 owner-occupied home repairs and accessibility improvements |
| Total | \$582,993 | |

Last fiscal year housing related CDBG funding directly assisted 236 residents.

456 residents benefited from various forms of CDBG public service funding through housing counseling.

Affordable Housing Development (HOME)

Athens Housing Authority – \$70M redevelopment of Jack R. Wells public housing complex
Columbia Brookside Phase I is 100 units of senior housing and is leased up.
Phase II is complete and leasing is underway and includes 132 multifamily and townhome residences. Construction of phase III is underway and will include 138 units.
There are 10 HOME subsidized units in phase I and phase III.
\$2,000,000 in HOME, \$1,500,000 in general funds

Athens Land Trust – Cottages at Cannontown and 2 single-family houses on Paris Street
ALT recently completed three new EarthCraft certified homes for phase III. ALT manages; a housing portfolio of 29 owner-occupied single-family homes, 15 single-family homes under lease-purchase contracts, a 6-unit HOME-assisted rental property.
\$673,348 in HOME funds plus other funds raised through various sources

Habitat for Humanity – Carpenters Circle, 7 Athens Habitat homes in one neighborhood
Habitat dedicated the Carpenters Circle neighborhood on September 29, 2016 and completed the construction of its 84th Habitat home built in the Athens area at 145 Carter Street. The agency recently acquired a 24 unit duplex development with \$239,823 in HOME Investment Partnership funds that is planned for renovation this year.

Completed Affordable Housing Strategies

1. Create Housing Trust Fund ✓
2. Develop a Comprehensive Housing Center to provide Housing, Financial, and Credit Counseling; marketing and referrals to existing services; and information about rental and homeownership opportunities
3. Reuse Abandoned, Vacant and Tax-delinquent Properties ✓
4. Assess Affordable Housing Needs ✓
5. Use Shared Equity Strategies ✓
6. Obtain Local Government Support ✓



ACC Housing Trust Fund

Accomplishments: Mayor and Commission established the fund in 2008 and the fund was operational as of December 2011.



\$700,000 for infrastructure support of Columbia Brookside Phase I - June 5, 2012

\$563,524 general funds for Columbia Brookside Phase III - May 5, 2015

\$1,263,524 total invested from Trust Fund

Sources of fund:

- a. Athens-Clarke County Special Programs and Initiative Fund for Affordable Housing
(AHA PILOT)
- b. SPLOST 2011 Project # 24, Infrastructure Improvements for Affordable Housing Programs
- c. Athens Housing Development Corporation Proceeds

Rules and implementation plan have not yet been established and a dedicated source of funds has not been identified.

Reuse Abandoned, Vacant and Tax-delinquent Properties

Athens-Clarke County staff developed a strategy to reclaim/reuse abandoned, vacant, and tax delinquent properties (single and multi-family). They researched a Land Bank Authority and built a business case for adaptive reuse and development. A Land Bank Authority is a mechanism for acquiring, holding, clearing title and transferring to viable affordable housing developer.

Accomplishments: Athens-Clarke County Land Bank Authority was created on July 7, 2009. ✓

The ACC LBA is developing policies and procedures and acquiring properties.

The Nuisance and Abatement program consists of two separate approaches to resolve blighting influences of dilapidated structures in Athens-Clarke County: the court-ordered demolition program and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funded program. Since the demolition program's inception, over 200 dangerous structures have been demolished through the court-ordered and CDBG-funded programs.

Accomplishments: Athens-Clarke County Demolition Program ✓

Assess Affordable Housing Needs

Accomplishments: The Mayor and Commission directed the Housing and Community Development Department to complete an assessment and inventory of multi-family properties in ACC and to assess and analyze workforce housing needs in the community. Both assessments were completed.

Multi-family Housing Inventory Assessment



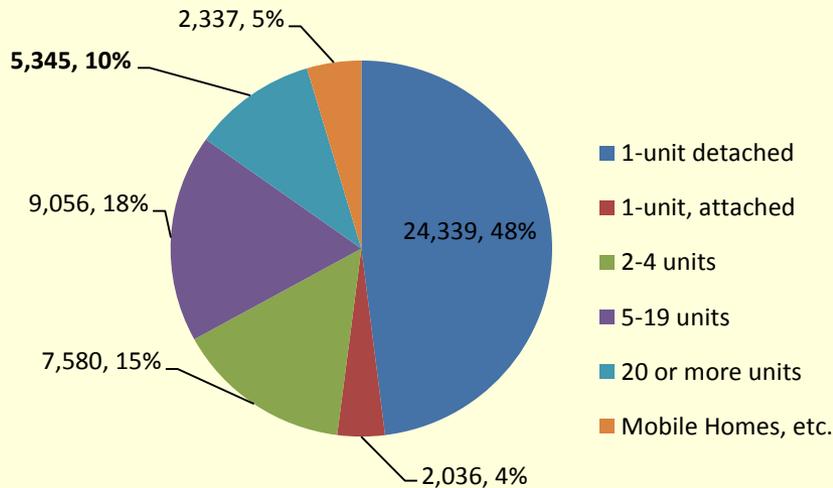
Workforce Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy



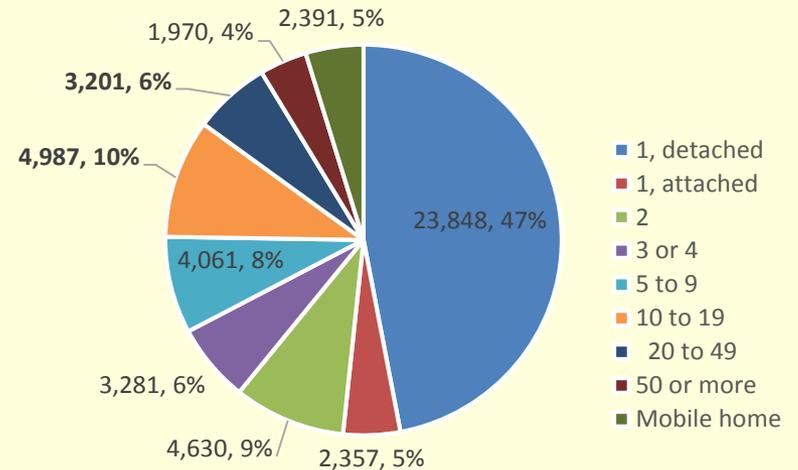
Multi-family Housing Inventory Assessment

In 2015 HCD and the Athens Housing Authority contracted with John Wall and Associates to survey and assess all of the multifamily developments in Athens-Clarke County with 24 or more apartments managed by a single entity. The GICH committee reviewed and discussed the Multi-family Housing Inventory and Survey to help determine if the proliferation of new student housing developments perpetuates a historic pattern of students gravitating to newer development, and the older complexes that are vacated begin a cycle of deterioration.

Number of Housing Units



Number of Housing Units



Inventory and Assessment Format

Project: Athens Greens (P/N: 14-09)



| | No. of Units | Baths | Vacant | Size (s.f.) | Rent |
|--------------------------|--------------|------------|----------|-------------|------|
| Efficiency/Studio | | | | | |
| One-Bedroom | 74 | 1 | 1 | 728 | 865 |
| 1 BR vacancy rate | 1.4% | | | | |
| Two-Bedroom | | | | | |
| Two-Bedroom | 50 | 1 | 0 | 925 | 880 |
| 2 BR vacancy rate | 2.2% | 128 | 2 | 1115 | 860 |
| Three-Bedroom | | | | | |
| Three-Bedroom | 52 | 2 | 2 | 1305 | 905 |
| 3 BR vacancy rate | 3.8% | | | | |
| Four-Bedroom | | | | | |
| Four-Bedroom | | | | | |
| 4 BR vacancy rate | | | | | |
| TOTALS | 2.3% | 304 | 7 | | |

Complex: Fairways at Jennings Mill
355 Jennings Mill Pkwy.
Athens
Battany (Dec 2014)706-552-1244

Map Number: 21 F

Year Built: 2003

Amenities

- Laundry Facility
- Tennis Court
- Swimming Pool
- Club House
- Gazebos
- Playground
- Access/Security Gate
- Fitness Center
- Other

Appliances

- Refrigerator
- Range/Oven
- Microwave Oven
- Dishwasher
- Garbage Disposal
- W/D Connection
- Washer/Dryer
- Ceiling Fan
- Other

Unit Features

- Fireplace
- Utilities Included
- Furnished
- Air Conditioning
- Drapes/Blinds
- Cable Pre-Wired
- Free Cable
- Free Internet
- Other

Last Rent Increase

Specials

Waiting List

WL=some
Subsidies
Conventional, Sec 8=not accepted

Comments: 304 Units; Likely less than 50% Students - management is adamant about not releasing demographic information. *Business center, picnic area w/gnls, theater, and car care center. **High-speed Internet access and private, covered patio.

Information includes:

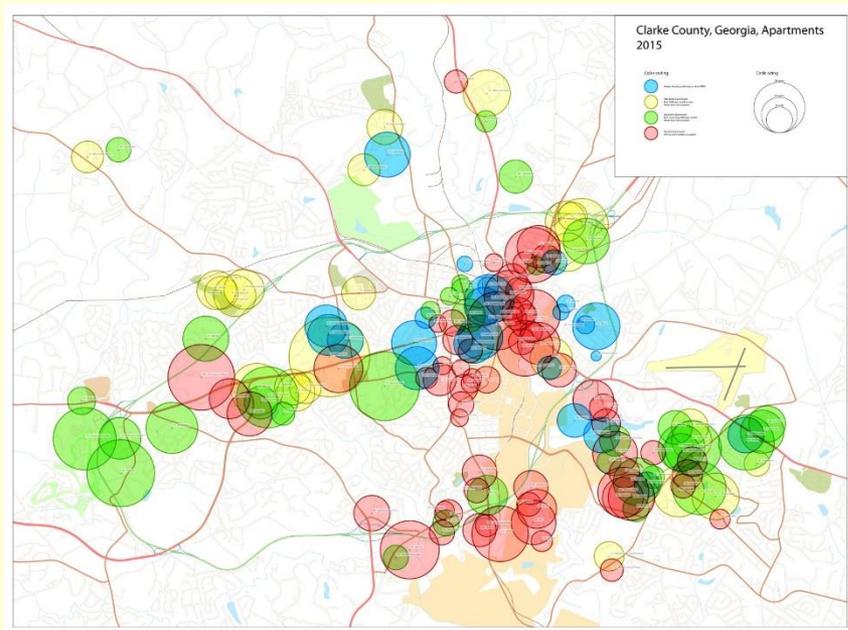
- ✓ Total number of units
- ✓ Number of 1, 2, 3, and 4 bedroom units
- ✓ Number of baths per unit
- ✓ Square footage of each floor plan
- ✓ Vacant units
- ✓ Rent
- ✓ Amenities
- ✓ Appliances
- ✓ Features
- ✓ Waiting list
- ✓ Conventional or Section 8 participant
- ✓ Assessment of whether 50% or more of the renters are students or not

13,827 units were surveyed in 154 complexes

All Apartments Inventoried and Surveyed

The inventory and assessment identified 119 traditional and publicly assisted apartment complexes and 17 student oriented apartment complexes. The student properties are defined as having student occupancy of 50% or more or a negotiated lease by bedroom versus apartment. Between 2005 and 2015, there were 19 complexes totaling 2,255 new apartments built. 67% of those were classified as student oriented. Only three complexes were targeted for working families.

Developers have only provided the workforce with 11% of the new units added to the market.



200 units

100 units

50 units

AHA and PBRA

\$600/month or > and fewer than 50% students

< \$600/month and fewer than 50% students

Student apartments (50% or more)

Each layer is mapped separately as well.

Workforce Housing

In the summer of 2015 HCD contracted with APD Solutions to complete a Workforce Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy. The study helped identify deficiencies within the housing stock and development strategies to encourage housing diversity.

Workforce housing is a term associated with housing affordability. HUD defines area median income for each metropolitan area; an indicator that is often used to determine relative housing affordability for different income ranges and household sizes but HUD does not distinguish between affordable housing and workforce housing.

Affordable housing is for households whose income is 60% of area median income or less. The definition does not imply that someone who is low income is not in the workforce.

Workforce households are those with earned income from 80 to 120% of the area's median income that may be insufficient to secure decent housing in reasonable proximity to major employment cores.

Components of the Study and Conclusions

1. Neighborhood Conditions field survey
2. Market Snapshot:
 - a. Labor Force Statistics
 - b. Employment Trends
 - c. Development Indicators
 - d. Home Purchase/Mortgage Data
3. Housing Preference survey

After extensive analysis of data regarding the Athens-Clarke County workforce, the housing marketplace and the demographics of households living in counties throughout the region, data indicates three challenging circumstances pertaining to workforce housing:

1. There is a growing loss of households with children.
2. There is an increasing gap between income and housing cost.
3. There is a severe deficit in new housing development that is most desired by the workforce.

Recommendations

Based on the analysis in the Workforce Housing Assessment, the consultant recommended the following tactics:

Tactic 1: Establish a targeted workforce or employer assisted housing initiative

Tactic 2: Create Adopt-A-School partnerships with local businesses

Tactic 3: Develop a lease-purchase option

Tactic 4: Provide a property tax abatement to incent investment and renovation

Tactic 5: Establish a workforce housing trust fund

Tactic 6: Evaluate inclusionary zoning

Tactic 7: Collaborate with builder/developers to remove workforce housing barriers

Tactic 8: Improve pedestrian mobility

Tactic 9: Create stronger identities for neighborhood areas

Tactic 10: Establish a Workforce Housing Advisory Council

Other Affordable Housing Strategies

1. Address Regulatory Obstacles
2. ACC In-kind Incentives: infrastructure improvements, sewer, water, streets, sidewalks, inspection, permit, plans review, variances, and water and sewer taps fee waivers
3. Reduce Taxes
4. Rehab/Reuse Existing Multi-Family ✓
5. Employer-assisted Housing
6. Apply for GICH status under the Department of Community Affairs' Georgia Initiative for Community Housing ✓
7. Add financial literacy to the High School curriculum throughout ACC
8. Complete an assessment of affordable housing demand with local employers. ✓
9. Revise Zoning Ordinance to provide density bonuses for affordable units

Next Steps

Determine which strategies, tactics, or activities should be recommended to the Mayor and Commission for consideration as an improvement strategy to be integrated into the land use planning process and which should be further researched.