

Procedure for Zoning and Rezoning

1. Zoning begins with the annexation of land and appropriate zoning at time of annexation.
2. Rezoning begins with (a) a rezoning request by a property owner/s or (b) a decision by the City to consider rezoning an area. A rezoning applicant is encouraged to meet with current ES&CD staff prior to submittal of a letter of request (letter from the property owner asking for the rezoning/any applicable plats of the property/copy of deed of the property) to ascertain whether the request as proposed has validity. Said request should be submitted to the Engineering Services and Community Development Department at City Hall.
3. Engineering Services and Community Development staffers review the request. The proposed zoning/rezoning is based on or analyzed according to an adopted land use plan, adjacent existing zoning, existing uses, owner's proposed future use of the property, any significant topographic features, major street plan, and any other pertinent adopted city policies or plans.
5. The request or proposal, all supporting documentation, and staff recommendation is compiled for submittal to the Planning Commission.
6. If a public hearing is set for the Planning Commission, ES&CD staff places a sign on or near the property alerting area residents that "THIS PROPERTY IS BEING CONSIDERED FOR REZONING, FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 233-2224". A legal notice of public hearing is also placed in the local newspaper the week before the meeting date.
7. Following the public hearing and upon receiving a recommendation from the ES&CD staff, the Planning Commission recommends approval or denial to the City Council by a majority vote.
8. If denied, the rezoning request is placed in the inactive file unless the applicant appeals to the City Council.
9. If approved, the request/recommendation is taken to the City Council and they set a date/time for a Public Hearing on the request.
10. The proposed ordinance is advertised twice, one week apart, with the second publication being at least 15 days in advance of the public hearing date.
11. Following the public hearing the city council adopts or denies the proposed zoning/rezoning.
12. If adopted, the ordinance is advertised once, and the ordinance takes effect on the date of publication.
13. Once all the fees for the Public Hearing Notices are received from the Athens News Courier, ES&CD will send an invoice for said notices to the applicable property owner/s who requested said zonings/rezonings. This fee shall then be remitted to the "City of Athens" by said property owner/s.
14. The planning staff updates the zoning maps and sends copies of the updated zoning maps to other departments, and puts the completed file in the zoning file drawer under "approved" zoning/rezoning.