LIVABLE CENTERS INITIATIVE
THE ATLANTA EXPERIENCE

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Atlanta Regional Commission

ARC is a multi-disciplinary regional planning agency with wide-ranging authority

- Metropolitan Area Planning and Development Commission
- Regional Planning Commission
- Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Area Agency on Aging
- Workforce Development Board
- North Georgia Water Planning District
Livable Centers Initiative (LCI)

LCI created by ARC Board in 1999.

Awards grants to local governments for plans and projects that aim to:

- Create compact, mixed-use, walkable, communities
- Reduce VMT & congestion
- Take advantage of transit and road network capacity & underutilized infrastructure
11 counties (unincorporated) & 53 cities with an LCI study

LCI Communities 2000 - 2012
11 counties (unincorporated) & 53 cities with an LCI study
LCI Authorization and Funding

• Funding provided in Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and programmed in Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

• Fund Source: Surface Transportation Program sub-allocation to MPOs with population >200,000 (STP-Urban) and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality funds (CMAQ)

**STUDIES:** $1 Million annually

**PROJECTS:** $500 million committed through 2040

$20 Million/year (approx.) in current TIP
LCI Application Process

- Competitive Process
- Internal & External Review Committees
- Ranking system (100-point scale)
LCI Studies

• Typical awards:
  • $120K for initial LCI Study
  • $25K - $80K for follow-up Supplement Studies

• 80% federal and 20% local match

• Study Components:
  • Mix of land uses & market analysis
  • Multiple transportation modes & increased street connectivity
  • Robust stakeholder involvement
  • 5-YR Implementation Action Plan
Woodstock LCI Plan
Woodstock – LCI Plan Implementation
Other Examples of LCI Plan Implementation
LCI Transportation Projects

Competitive application process:
• Must be an LCI “in good standing”
• **MUST DEMONSTRATE LCI PLAN IMPLEMENTATION** (e.g. adoption of overlay district zoning, design guidelines, etc)
• Must comply with Complete Streets policies and principles
• TOD priority
• Innovative and transformative scopes – cycle tracks, roundabouts, etc.

LCI Transportation Funding:
• $500 Million in RTP
• $217 Million allocated for 106 projects in 55 LCI communities to date
• Up to $4 Million grants
• Combination of STP-Urban and CMAQ funds
Emory Village in DeKalb County
Streetcar in Downtown Atlanta
• Mableton Town Center LCI & Lifelong Mableton
• Perimeter Center Lifelong Community Study
• Avondale Estates LCI & Lifelong Communities Project
• Tucker Town Center LCI & Tucker Lifelong Community
LCI & LLC Collaboration

• Walkability audits and “100 Day” Action Plans
• Community gardens & farmers’ markets
• Code Audits
• Transportation and housing policy recommendations
LCI Evaluation

- Implementation Report
- Breaking Ground Report
- Indicators and Benefits Study
- Equitable Target Areas
Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) Projects in Equitable Target Areas (ETA)

Approx. 76% of LCI Projects are within or adjacent to ETA Communities

Legend
- Expressways
- LCI AREAS 2000-2010
- Census Tract Level
- ETA Index
  - non-ETA
  - Medium ETA
  - High ETA
  - Very High ETA

No Data Available for the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport
## LCI Evaluation

### Comparison of Development in LCI Acres and the Region (2000-2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LCI Communities</th>
<th>13-County Region</th>
<th>LCI Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Area</td>
<td>113,104 Acres</td>
<td>2,451,000 Acres</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Development</td>
<td>18.8 Million sq ft</td>
<td>45.7 Million sq ft</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial Development</td>
<td>12.4 Million sq ft</td>
<td>59.8 Million sq ft</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Development</td>
<td>31,400 Units</td>
<td>390,500 Units</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Of 86 respondents to 2012 LCI Survey:**
- 66% adopted special LCI zoning districts
- 56% adopted policies that focus on building more senior, workforce, or special needs housing
- 83% adopted development and streetscape design guidelines
LCI Evaluation: Emissions from VMT

Source: LCI Indicators and Benefits Study, 2009, ARC
Lessons Learned

• Adopting land use and development regulations are equally or even more effective than multi-million dollar transportation projects in creating truly walkable communities with viable transportation alternatives.

• Federal transportation funds offer flexibility to create LCI-type programs that incorporate land use and transportation

• The “process” can sometimes be more important the project -- builds lasting partnerships, political and public will, and private developer interest which will keep implementation going long after you’ve cut the ribbon on a new sidewalk.

• Don’t underestimate the seemingly small, regionally insignificant projects -- they are often the most popular, transformative and high-impact projects in your TIP.
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www.atlantaregional.com/land-use/livable-centers-initiative