

2011 CPA- Staff Proposal Analysis

AMENDMENT NUMBER: SP-4

COMMISSIONER DISTRICT: 1, 2, 3, and 4

ACREAGE: Not applicable

PARCEL ID NUMBER: Not applicable

EXISTING FUTURE LAND USE: Industrial Compatible and Industrial

PROPOSED FUTURE LAND USE: Add a new Priority Industrial Area Future Land Use District with Text Amendments and Appendix Maps

GENERAL LOCATION: Industrial areas to the north and south of McCollum Field, along Flint Hill Rd. and Anderson Farm Rd., Lee Industrial and Mableton Parkway, and south of I-20.

BACKGROUND:

Intent of Proposed Amendment:

This proposal is to amend the Industrial Compatible and Industrial Future Land Use categories of the Comprehensive Plan with an additional designation and text that will assist in protecting identified priority industrial areas. The text and corresponding maps is an implementation effort to support the Industrial Land Inventory and Protection Policy which was a joint program supporting future job growth through a collaborative effort between the Office of Economic Development and the Community Development Agency.

Definitions:

The Industrial Land Inventory and Protection is a document developed in 2008 and updated in 2011 that provides an understanding of the characteristics, practicality and challenges for industrial properties in Cobb County. The inventory assists in ensuring that there is an adequate supply of development-ready and desirable lands to accommodate the needs for a growing industrial market. It will also be used as a marketing database for the county's industrial land and regularly updated. The assessment will further improve Cobb's competitive position for Economic Development, which will enhance and create more employment opportunities. This item will also support two major growth industries identified as part of the Economic Development Strategy called the "Competitive Edge". The new Priority Industrial Area Future Land Use District and accompanying text is the mechanism developed through best practice research on how best to protect the most valuable industrial lands to ensure we have readily available opportunities to support employment producing land uses.

Planning History:

In 2009, the Cobb County Community Development Agency and Office of Economic Development completed the Industrial Land Inventory and Protection Policy. The study was

conducted using market research and industry specific criteria used during the industrial site selection process. Each industrial area in Cobb County was analyzed based upon the criteria so we could understand and evaluate our competitive advantage regionally in regards to industrial site selection. Some areas in the county exhibited characteristics more desirable to industrial development while some may be more appropriate to continue as industrial or alternate use considerations. As a means to improve our competitive advantage with industrial users, the document contains some economic development, transportation, and land use policies and implementation items.

Since then, county staff has been working to provide more detailed parcel specific information as it relates to industrial site selection; as well as, working with each of the six cities in Cobb County to incorporate municipal data. The additional industrial site analysis was prepared to ensure that all of Cobb is working together to strengthen our industrial jobs base by marketing and protecting industrial job producing areas. Also, county staff is working with the Georgia Resource Center, an economic development entity consisting of public and private entities whose purpose is to bring new business and jobs into Georgia, to assist in prioritizing the sites to identify "priority" industrial areas to protect.

TEXT AMENDMENT:

Planning Division staff recommends the following language to be added to the Comprehensive Plan:

Priority Industrial Area

The purpose of the Priority Industrial Area (PIA) future land use category is to support the strategic protection of the most important Industrial and Industrial Compatible land areas in unincorporated Cobb County, the Board of Commissioners has identified specific priority industrial areas (PIA). The particular sites known as PIAs are identified in Appendix 25. These sites are the areas that, through research, evaluation, and industrial site selection best practices, are areas considered most important to provide future industrial type job producing sectors. Due to the urbanizing nature of Cobb County, the reduced quantity of undeveloped land, and the recent trends that have converted industrial lands to other productive land uses, it is imperative for us to evaluate land use policy in greater detail as it relates to important industrial areas. The overall intent of this policy is to establish more stringent criteria for decision making when trying to alter the land use.

The following professional evaluation and data analysis should be conducted when the Planning Commission and the Board of Commissioners are considering a land use change that alters a PIA property or areas adjacent to PIA properties from its existing Industrial or Industrial Compatible land use category to any other future land use category. In addition, the same professional evaluation and data analysis should be conducted, by the applicant, when the Planning Commission

and the Board of Commissioners are requested to consider a zoning change to a PIA property or areas adjacent to PIA properties that alters its zoning designation to one which is not compatible with its existing industrial future land use category (Industrial or Industrial Compatible). Finally, the policy relating to "Adjacency to viable industrial areas" should be considered by the Planning Commission and the Board of Commissioners when a zoning change occurs to a property adjacent to PIA properties:

- ◆ Job impacts: Consider the number of existing and future industrial jobs lost, existing and future job opportunities for residents with less than a four-year degree, and job density at the site.
- ◆ Tax Base Impacts: Evaluate and compare the tax base impacts between potential uses with the existing zoning and the proposed zoning; as well as, comparing tax base impacts to job impacts.
- ◆ Viability: Prioritize developments with immediate uses over potential uses without users lined up.
- ◆ Transition: Consider the cost of transitioning a property from one use to another through zoning. Properties made non-conforming may suffer years of deferred maintenance until a viable use surfaces.
- ◆ Adjacency to viable industrial areas: Consider negative impacts of residential users on adjacent and viable industrial sites, such as land price uncertainty and conflicts with residents. If a residential project is being considered adjacent to a PIA site, the Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners should consider requiring additional and enhanced buffering and screening requirements on the residential project in order to protect the residential land users as well as the viability of the adjacent industrial users.

Department of Community Affairs – Quality Community Objectives

- Appropriate Business: The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in Cobb should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities

- Employment Options: A range of job types should be provided in Cobb to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce
- Environmental Protection: Air quality and environmentally sensitive areas within Cobb should be protected from the negative impacts of development. Environmentally sensitive areas deserve special protection, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character and quality-of-life of the local area and/or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved

Appropriate Land Use

The purpose of the PIA is to provide protection for industrial areas that can support future job growth for industrial, manufacturing, office/ warehouse, technology, biomedical, and distribution uses. Typical uses are determined through the underlying future land use category. Allowable Zoning is determined by the underlying future land use category with the addition of zoning categories that would allow for the placement of technology and biomedical development and manufacturing centers.

ANALYSIS:

The Priority Industrial Area (PIA) is the land use policy implementation for the Industrial Land Inventory and Protection Policy. The intent of this amendment is to add language that would create a new Future Land Use category that can be placed in association with targeted Industrial (Ind) and Industrial Compatible (IC) areas with the intent of providing additional study and analysis if properties in the identified areas are proposed to be converted to an alternate land use or zoning category. Community Development and Economic Development staffs have been in the process of working with the Georgia Resource Center to identify the particular sites that the text will pertain to.

1) Applicable Goals from the Comp. Plan:

1. Cobb County is a business-friendly community that supports business development and entrepreneurship. This orientation along with other attributes, has established Cobb as one of the best places to start a new business, expand an existing business, or relocate a company.

2) Applicable Policies from the Comp. Plan:

1. Work with various organizations to market Cobb County's strengths and its quality of life, in order to attract new businesses and retain existing businesses.
2. Work toward diversifying the county's industrial and commercial base.
3. Support the growth of target industries.

3) Consistency with existing Corridor Studies and Other Plans:

The proposed new Future Land Use district, Priority Industrial Areas (PIA), text amendment, and Appendix map addition is a land use policy component in implementing the Industrial Land Inventory and Protection Policy.

4) Adherence to Nodal Development Pattern:

Not applicable

5) Consistency with Revitalization Goals:

Not applicable

6) Environment Impact:

At this level of analysis, staff is not able to identify any known environmental resources, restraints or concerns that may be affected by this application.



