

# ***GROWING SUSTAINABLY IN ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY:***

## ***Recommendations from Local Environmentally Concerned Citizens' Organizations***

**As Athens residents concerned about the state of our natural and built environment, we have compiled a list of the issues that most concern us, with our suggestions about what might be done by the Mayor and Commission to address them. Most of these suggested actions will help to solve more than one problem, and many of them are policy changes that should be relatively simple to implement.**

**We also offer our help. Our organizations are made up of dedicated community servants, including many nationally-recognized experts in the areas of natural and historic resource management, who are eager to share their knowledge and experience. We are hopeful that we can contribute to the future of Athens-Clarke County by helping to safeguard our irreplaceable natural and cultural treasures.**

***Athens Grow Green Coalition***

***Athens Land Trust***

***ACC Community Tree Council***

***Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation***

***BikeAthens***

***Keep Athens-Clarke County Beautiful***

***Oconee River Land Trust***

***Oconee Rivers Audubon Society***

***Oconee Rivers Greenway Commission***

***Sandy Creek Nature Center, Inc.***

***Sierra Club***

***S.E.E.D.S***

***Upper Oconee Watershed Network***

**January 14, 2003**

***GROWING SUSTAINABLY  
IN ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY:***

***Recommendations from Local  
Environmentally Concerned Citizens' Organizations***

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Introduction

Summary of Principal Environmental Issues

Recommended Priority Actions

Detailed Issues and Recommended Actions

Participating Organizations:

Mission and Points of Contact

# ***GROWING SUSTAINABLY IN ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY:***

## ***Recommendations from Local Environmentally Concerned Citizens' Organizations***

### **INTRODUCTION**

Athens is blessed with a beautiful natural environment, numerous historic homes and buildings, a vibrant cultural scene, and a thriving downtown. Athens is full of people who can choose to live anywhere they wish, yet choose to live here. But in a way, we are becoming the victims of our own success. The very attributes that make Athens such an attractive place to live are threatened by the rapid growth that they have inspired. If the pattern of growth continues on its present course, the high quality of life that we enjoy today will decline as we suffer further losses of our natural, cultural and historic resources.

*Natural Resources.* A significant decline in our air quality in recent years can be attributed almost solely to increased traffic congestion. With 4 "unhealthy" and 43 "moderate" days for ozone in 2002, Athens hovers just under the threshold for having an officially unhealthy environment, and is in danger of being designated a non-attainment area for this pollutant. Although our air quality ills have frequently been blamed on Atlanta, the past summer's weather patterns indicate that we are for the most part generating our own smog.

The long-term sustainability of local and regional water resources is questionable without careful planning now. Water supplies are threatened and water quality is negatively impacted by the increase in stormwater runoff associated with ongoing growth. A recent report released by American Rivers even cited sprawl as a contributor to drought conditions. The Georgia Environmental Protection Division, having tested only 20% of the streams and rivers in Athens-Clarke County, has documented impaired water quality along 57 miles of our waterways.

Meanwhile, open space is being converted to subdivisions at an unprecedented rate, resulting in degradation of wildlife habitat, tree canopy, and the beauty of our natural environment. In recent weeks, the ongoing issue of soil erosion and stream impairment resulting from development has repeatedly been front-page news.

*Cultural and Historic Resources.* Historic structures are frequently threatened with demolition, with the most notable recent example being the Adcock Building. Meanwhile, affordable housing units – and entire neighborhoods – are being lost to upscale developments targeted to UGA students, as with Garden Springs and more recently the Athens Arms Apartments.

There is no question that Athens will continue to grow in the coming years. Fortunately, continued growth and prosperity need not be at odds with the protection of our natural, historic and cultural resources. Rather, continued growth and prosperity *depend upon* the protection and careful management of these resources.

## SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The declining quality and quantity of Athens-Clarke County's natural and cultural resources threatens the community's high quality of life.

1. WATER QUALITY is degraded by erosion and sedimentation from land disturbing activities, urban stormwater, run-off, stream erosion, illegal commercial, industrial and residential dumping, and leaks/failures in private septic and public wastewater treatment and distribution systems.
2. WATER SUPPLY is threatened by poor water quality, waste, and the lack of an effective and fair system for allocating limited water resources.
3. AIR QUALITY is degraded by increased auto emissions due to more cars traveling longer distances and idling in more traffic jams, by minimal standards for commercial and industrial emissions, and by open burning.
4. NATURAL AREAS are degraded or eliminated by development, with a resulting reduction of tree canopy, diminishment of wildlife habitat, loss of natural beauty, and endangerment of environmental resources such as riparian areas and rare or endangered plants. Increased noise and light pollution contribute to natural area degradation and create a more stressful environment.
5. URBAN ENVIRONMENTS in Athens-Clarke County are deteriorating, reducing the health and safety of residents and creating a desire to move to undeveloped rural areas. Infrastructure improvement plans encourage sprawl rather than urban redevelopment. The appealing character of the old urban area is threatened by poor design of new development, the loss of historic structures, and nuisance issues. Abandoned commercial and industrial buildings blight many urban areas.
6. URBAN PARKS and OPEN SPACES are insufficient.
7. AFFORDABLE HOUSING near employment areas is in decline and contributes to environmentally unsound sprawl development.
8. The PUBLIC'S VISION is not being articulated and enforced by public policy.
9. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION in the government process is hampered by a need for public education and a lack of ready access to public information.
10. COORDINATED REGIONAL PLANNING is lacking and allows the actions of neighboring jurisdictions to undesirably impact Athens-Clarke County.

## RECOMMENDED PRIORITY ACTIONS

**Enforce all laws and ordinances.** Adopting a policy of strict enforcement of existing laws and ordinances (environmental, traffic, noise, lighting, etc.) would improve protection of natural resources, increase public safety, and promote the quality of life in Athens-Clarke County. Enforcement would also provide certainty for the regulated community, thus decreasing the likelihood of challenges to existing regulations.

**Amend, update, or create ordinances to protect sensitive natural resources.** Update the Environmental Areas map and ordinance to include all perennial streams. Amend stormwater ordinance to include provisions for water quality and channel protection. Adopt a tree ordinance to help preserve tree canopy in developing areas.

**Establish dedicated funding mechanisms for effective stormwater management.** A stormwater utility is an effective market-based solution that provides a source of funding to support stormwater management programs, which are vital to protecting streams and rivers.

**Amend ACC Zoning and Development Standards.** This ordinance should be amended to (1) improve conservation subdivision regulations to include essential elements such as permanent protection of open space, and to require that only buildable land be included in density calculations; (2) improve site design standards, especially to ensure that development will not result in unmanageable erosion; (3) reduce densities in rural areas except at commission-approved nodes; and (4) include provisions for inclusionary zoning that will improve the supply of affordable housing.

**Designate Downtown Athens as a Local Historic District.** Develop design guidelines for new construction, historic rehabilitations, demolition, and possible other areas.

**Adopt Transferable Development Rights (TDRs) as a part of ACC Zoning and Development Standards.** TDRs make it possible to encourage growth in the most appropriate areas, while protecting environmentally sensitive areas, through a market-based program that compensates landowners whose land use is restricted.

**Create a new position to coordinate all ACC environmental activities.** An ACC Environmental Coordinator would insure consistency and cooperation among the various departments that administer environmental regulations. The Environmental Coordinator would also serve as a central point of contact for the public, improving the distribution of information, simplifying the process for citizen reporting of potential violations, and organizing citizen monitoring activities.

## DETAILED ISSUES AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

<b>1.</b>	<b>WATER QUALITY is degraded by erosion and sedimentation from land-disturbing activities, urban stormwater, run-off, stream erosion, illegal commercial, industrial and residential dumping, and leaks/failures in private septic and public wastewater treatment and distribution systems.</b>	<i>Type of Action</i>
1-1	<p>Improve enforcement of erosion and sedimentation ordinance by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direction of staff</li> <li>• Education of the judiciary</li> <li>• Hiring of more enforcement personnel</li> <li>• Increasing use of stop work orders</li> <li>• Improving inter-departmental coordination to avoid issuance of certificate of occupancy until sites are stabilized</li> <li>• Encouraging public involvement by implementing programs to train and involve volunteer groups in monitoring efforts</li> </ul>	Policy Budget
1-2	<p>Amend erosion and sedimentation ordinance to include provisions for more effective enforcement actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase fines and bond forfeitures</li> <li>• Increase inspections and monitoring</li> </ul>	Policy Ordinance
1-3	<p>Improve site design standards to prevent erosion and sedimentation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimizing the allowable cut and fill by requiring that the natural contours of the site be maintained and by establishing a maximum slope that can be developed</li> <li>• Practice and support actions for improved stormwater management and increased stream buffer protection, particularly for smaller streams</li> <li>• Require minimization of site disturbance</li> </ul>	Ordinance
1-4	Resurrect citizen review board at conceptual planning phase	Policy
1-5	Develop a Citizen Soil Watch Program with local environmental groups	Policy
1-6	Support effective implementation of the new ACC Stormwater Management Plan, which deals with water quality issues as required by NPDES Phase II	Policy Ordinance Budget
1-7	Amend stormwater management ordinance to include provisions for improved water quality and channel protection	Ordinance
1-8	Amend stormwater management ordinance to include post-development stormwater management performance criteria and long-term maintenance and inspection provisions	Ordinance
<b>1.</b>	<b>WATER QUALITY (cont'd)</b>	<i>Type</i>
1-9	Create a Stormwater Utility or equivalent dedicated funding source for the ACC	Policy

	Stormwater Management Program	Ordinance Budget
1-10	Follow the “Better Site Design” standards promulgated by the Center for Watershed Protection to improve stormwater management	Policy Ordinance
1-11	Encourage the use of permeable surfaces in site development	Policy Ordinance
1-12	Curb improper use of storm drains by adopting an illicit discharge and illegal connection ordinance	Ordinance
1-13	Educate the public on the importance of keeping waste out of stormwater drains	Budget

<b>2.</b>	<b>WATER SUPPLY is threatened by poor water quality, waste, and the lack of an effective and fair system for allocating limited water resources.</b>	<i>Type</i>
2-1	Create a long-term comprehensive water management plan that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional water supply planning</li> <li>• A water billing structure that encourages conservation</li> <li>• Restrictions on commercial and residential water usage</li> <li>• Incentives to attract new businesses that provide quality jobs and have a low impact on natural resources</li> <li>• Public education for the conservation of water resources</li> </ul>	Policy Budget

<b>3.</b>	<b>AIR QUALITY is degraded by increased auto emissions due to more cars traveling longer distances and idling in more traffic jams, by minimal standards for commercial and industrial emissions, and by open burning.</b>	<i>Type</i>
3-1	Improve public safety by enforcing traffic laws and, where appropriate, reduce speed limits on main corridors and neighborhood thoroughfares	Policy Ordinance
3-2	Add red light cameras to major intersections	Ordinance
3-3	Improve transit infrastructure by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting proposals to increase operating revenues for Athens Transit</li> <li>• Seeking implementation of a Metropolitan Transit Authority that would allow (with voter approval through referendum) a sales tax of one-quarter of one cent in order to eliminate fare box on buses</li> <li>• Forming a Transit Advisory Board made up of user group representatives</li> <li>• Continuing work with UGA to increase ridership, and work on similar agreements with large employers to allow free ridership</li> </ul>	Policy Ordinance Budget
<b>3.</b>	<b>AIR QUALITY (cont'd)</b>	<i>Type</i>

3-4	<p>Improve pedestrian infrastructure by dedicating resources to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct more crosswalks</li> <li>• Construct more sidewalks, particularly where they would network existing sidewalks and provide access to transit destinations, shopping, schools, etc</li> </ul>	Ordinance Budget
3-5	<p>Improve biking infrastructure by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicating resources to the implementation of the ACC Bicycle Master Plan, including the setting aside of a portion of bike project funding to be dedicated to small projects involving restriping or minor construction</li> <li>• Re-integrating Prince Avenue into the Bicycle Master Plan</li> <li>• Encouraging the addition of bike parking facilities in commercial establishments</li> <li>• Attending to safety details such as positioning sewer grates perpendicular to traffic flow and lengthening the stripes that separate bike “areas” from the roadway</li> </ul>	Policy Ordinance Budget
3-6	Work with UGA to improve bike/pedestrian access to campus feeder streets including Lumpkin Street, Milledge Avenue, East Campus Road, College Station Road	Policy Budget
3-7	Develop public policies to apply stringent review to businesses that will contribute to air quality degradation	Policy Ordinance
3-8	Work with Economic Development Foundation and Chamber of Commerce to selectively attract businesses that provide quality jobs without depleting natural resources or reducing our quality of life	Policy
3-9	Establish and enforce a permanent ban on open burning	Ordinance
3-10	Participate in the Cities for Climate Protection program to help manage emissions	Policy

4.	<p><b>NATURAL AREAS are degraded or eliminated by development, with a resulting reduction of tree canopy, diminishment of wildlife habitat, loss of natural beauty, and endangerment of environmental resources such as riparian areas and rare or endangered plants. Increased noise and light pollution contribute to natural area degradation and create a more stressful environment.</b></p>	<i>Type</i>
4-1	Amend Site Design Standards to require identification <i>and</i> protection of all sensitive environmental areas (riparian buffers, springs, steep slopes, wetlands, etc.); include incentives for developers to protect to higher standards	Ordinance
4.	<b>NATURAL AREAS (cont'd)</b>	<i>Type</i>
4-2	Update Environmental Areas Map and Land Use Plan to include all perennial streams	Ordinance

4-3	Deny rezonings and variances when significant environmental degradation would occur	Policy
4-4	Amend erosion and sedimentation ordinances to require best management practices for properties adjacent to floodplains or other sensitive environmental areas	Ordinance
4-5	Improve site design standards to minimize site impact by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimizing allowable cut and fill (<i>see water quality issues, 1.a. above</i>)</li> <li>• Encourage tree retention and strict phasing of project development</li> </ul>	Ordinance
4-6	Amend conservation subdivision regulations to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require <i>permanent</i> protection of open space</li> <li>• Require site visit by staff and commission members before approval of subdivision</li> <li>• Require environmental assessment plan to determine areas to be permanently protected as open space <i>before</i> the buildable area of site is determined</li> <li>• Remove unbuildable areas (wetlands, steep slopes, etc.) from calculation of allowable density of the parcel</li> <li>• Require that most protected areas are kept intact in a contiguous parcel (establish edge/area ratio)</li> <li>• Require that protected open space connect to protected open space of adjacent parcels</li> <li>• Limit uses of protected areas to those that are not environmentally harmful (no swimming pools, playing fields, etc)</li> <li>• Allow flexibility to encourage: pervious surfaces, no road curbs, narrower road widths, no streetlights</li> <li>• Require (or encourage) clear-spanning of streams and prohibit (or discourage) use of culverts</li> <li>• Require undisturbed buffers between existing neighborhoods and the subdivision</li> <li>• Require use of native plants within 100 feet of protected areas and forbid use of certain exotic species throughout the site</li> <li>• Determine where conservation subdivisions should be permitted</li> </ul>	Ordinance
4-7	Purchase environmentally sensitive areas for the purpose of maintaining them as natural habitat through greenspace program and other grants	Policy Budget
4-8	Amend riparian buffer ordinance to provide better habitat protection by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including all perennial streams on the Environmental Areas Map</li> <li>• Developing clear and strict criteria for approving buffer variance requests</li> </ul>	Ordinance
<b>4.</b>	<b>NATURAL AREAS (<i>cont'd</i>)</b>	<b><i>Type</i></b>
4-9	Amend noise ordinance to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include ambient industrial noise (which negatively affects wildlife environments)</li> <li>• Include noise as factor in decisions about siting of industry</li> </ul>	Ordinance

4-10	Amend and enforce lighting ordinance	Ordinance Policy
4-11	Enforce dumping prohibition in riparian areas	Policy Ordinance Budget
4-12	Adopt TDR program as a part of ACC Zoning and Development Standards	Policy Ordinance
4-13	Encourage use of conservation easements	Policy
4-14	Amend erosion and sedimentation control ordinance ( <i>see Water Quality issues, above</i> )	Ordinance
4-15	Adopt and enforce tree protection ordinance	Ordinance
4-16	Strengthen existing ordinances' tree protection provisions (residential & commercial)	Ordinance
4-17	Educate public regarding the need to protect tree canopy	Policy Budget

5.	URBAN ENVIRONMENTS in Athens-Clarke County are deteriorating, reducing the health and safety of residents and creating a desire to move to undeveloped rural areas. Infrastructure improvement plans encourage sprawl rather than urban redevelopment. The appealing character of the old urban area is threatened by poor design of new development and the loss of historic structures, and abandoned commercial and industrial buildings blight many urban areas.	<i>Type</i>
5-1	Create a Baxter corridor revitalization plan by working with stakeholders, Planning Department, etc.	Policy Budget
5-2	Strengthen enforcement of “quality of life” ordinances (e.g. noise, single family, lighting, etc.)	Policy Budget
5-3	Promote appropriate infill development	Policy
5-4	Promote re-use of abandoned commercial areas and offer incentives for their development	Policy Ordinance
5-5	Designate downtown Athens as a Local Historic District and develop design guidelines for new construction, historic rehabilitations, demolition, and possible other areas.	Policy Ordinance
5.	URBAN ENVIRONMENTS ( <i>cont'd</i> )	<i>Type</i>
5-6	Develop a mechanism to give residents a more formal role in government decisions that affect their neighborhoods	Policy
5-7	Require that permit requests involving alterations to buildings older than 50 years include an historic preservation consultation with qualified planning staff	Policy Ordinance

5-8	Create a Master Plan for downtown Athens to balance development with historic preservation	Policy
5-9	Review existing zoning regulations for the downtown area, particularly height restrictions and parking requirements, to ensure their compatibility with historic preservation goals	Policy Ordinance

<b>6.</b>	<b>URBAN PARKS and OPEN SPACES are insufficient.</b>	<i>Type</i>
6-1	Encourage interdepartmental coordination to complete Greenway network	Policy Budget
6-2	Require new or re-developments to dedicate and construct greenway trails	Policy Ordinance
6-3	Require all new right of way acquisitions to include public access to trails (unless exempted by Leisure Services)	Policy
6-4	Leverage greenspace funds by seeking grants and other funding sources	Policy Budget
6-5	Acquire development rights for some properties rather than relying solely on fee simple acquisition	Policy Budget

<b>7.</b>	<b>AFFORDABLE HOUSING near employment areas is in decline and contributes to environmentally unsound sprawl development.</b>	<i>Type</i>
7-1	Create inclusionary zoning that requires a percentage of new residential construction to include homes affordable to those having low to moderate incomes	Ordinance
7-2	Consider effect on existing affordable housing when making decisions on rezonings	Policy
7-3	Extend transit to existing affordable housing, including mobile home parks	Policy Budget
<b>8.</b>	<b>The PUBLIC'S VISION is not being articulated and enforced by public policy.</b>	<i>Type</i>
8-1	Follow Guiding Principles of Land Use Plan in all land use decisions	Policy
8-2	Make all planning decisions regarding infrastructure (utilities, roadways, solid waste facilities, etc.) consistent with the Land Use Plan	Policy
8-3	Create position of ACC Environmental Coordinator, with responsibility throughout all departments, with advisory, planning, and enforcement roles (could be funded by grants and be revenue-generating)	Policy Budget

8-4	Maintain high priority for existing ACC environmental services and natural resources and protect from budget cuts	Policy Budget
8-5	Re-design enforcement processes to be less bureaucratic, more effective	Ordinance
8-6	Conduct environmental audit of all ACC departments	Policy Budget
8-7	Require environmental Best Management Practices of all departments	Policy Budget
8-8	Coordinate ACC/ UGA/ community in all areas/ all levels to improve efficiency and reduce negative impact on the environment; make better use of resources at UGA	Policy
8-9	Require ACC projects to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED™) standards for sustainable design by incorporating into all capital and SPLOST construction projects	Policy Budget

<b>9.</b>	<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION in the government process is hampered by a need for public education and a lack of ready access to public information.</b>	<i>Type</i>
9-1	Provide better access to public meetings and documents by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Videotaping Planning Commission meetings, Commission work sessions and public input sessions; archive tapes at ACC Library</li> <li>• Publishing documents in PDF format (detailed agenda items, proposed plans, roadway designs, etc.) on ACC website</li> <li>• Requiring public input forms to be published on the ACC website, and enable submission of input forms electronically</li> </ul>	Policy Budget
9-2	Educate public on important environmental issues and the benefits of conserving valuable natural resources	Policy Budget
<b>10.</b>	<b>COORDINATED REGIONAL PLANNING is lacking and allows the actions of neighboring jurisdictions to undesirably impact Athens-Clarke County.</b>	<i>Type</i>
10-1	Form citizen/government group to work with regional planning counterparts in neighboring counties	Policy
10-2	Participate more actively with Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center	Policy

## **PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS: MISSION & POINTS of CONTACT**

### *Athens Grow Green Coalition*

The mission of the Athens Grow Green Coalition is to promote responsible community development and growth management policies and practices that protect natural resources, prevent sprawl, maintain a healthy economy, and preserve a high quality of life for all in the Athens region. Specific objectives are to:

1. Protect environmental quality for all by maintaining clean air, clean water, and protected green space and green infrastructure.
2. Reduce sprawl and automobile dependence by encouraging: communities that are multi-use, walkable, bikeable and connected; and improved public transportation.
3. Promote a diverse and affordable housing supply for all income levels.
4. Promote efficient development patterns that keep taxes low.
5. Attract responsible businesses and industries by maintaining a beautiful, functional, diverse community with a high quality of life.
6. Ensure that policies balance the rights and needs of the community with the rights and needs of individual property owners.

*More Information:* [www.AthensGrowGreen.com](http://www.AthensGrowGreen.com)

#### *Contacts:*

Beth Gavrilles, 583-0463 (w), 227-0422 (h), [beth@wuplet.com](mailto:beth@wuplet.com)

Seth Wenger, 207-0440, [seth@trout.ecology.uga.edu](mailto:seth@trout.ecology.uga.edu)

### *Athens Land Trust*

The Athens Land Trust's mission is to promote quality of life through integration of community and the natural environment by preserving land, creating energy-efficient and affordable housing, and revitalizing neighborhoods.

ALT is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation established in 1994 with the dual goals of land preservation and affordable, energy efficient housing. ALT believes in a holistic approach to sustainable development which combines environmental, economic and community needs.

*More Information:* [www.AthensLandTrust.org](http://www.AthensLandTrust.org)

#### *Contacts:*

Nancy Stangle, President, 613-0122, [nancy@athenslandtrust.org](mailto:nancy@athenslandtrust.org)

Laura Hall-Gabriel, Conservation Coordinator, 613-0122, [laura@athenslandtrust.org](mailto:laura@athenslandtrust.org)

Alvina Gilham, Housing Outreach Coordinator, 613-0122, [alvina@athenslandtrust.org](mailto:alvina@athenslandtrust.org)

### *Athens-Clarke County Community Tree Council*

The Community Tree Council was established by ordinance on October 3, 2000. Its purpose is to “provide a vehicle for broad base community representation to interact with local Government, the private sector, and citizen groups; providing information, outreach, and education that promotes the responsible stewardship of trees and sustainability of community forest resources...” It is composed of 14 appointed citizens who volunteer their time, with support from the A-CC Community Forester and the Manager of the Landscape Division of A-CC Central Services.

*Contacts:*

Jere Bowden, 549-8687, [jereb6@juno.com](mailto:jereb6@juno.com)

David Kidd, 543-5195, [davidakidd@aol.com](mailto:davidakidd@aol.com)

Maureen O'Brien, 543-0594, [obnwrt@yahoo.com](mailto:obnwrt@yahoo.com)

### *Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation, Inc.*

The Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation is celebrating its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year as the leading advocate for the importance of historic preservation to the future of the Athens community. ACHF is a 700+ member organization served by a staff of three full-time employees and a twenty-five member Board of Trustees. The Foundation administers the Athens Welcome Center and also is responsible for the furnishings of the Ware-Lyndon House Museum and shares programming responsibilities with the staff of the Lyndon House Arts Center.

The Mission of the Foundation is to be a proactive force in developing community-wide understanding of the value of historic buildings, neighborhoods and heritage. The following four goals were adopted in July 2001 by the Foundation as part of its five-year plan.

- **Goal I.** Serve as the Athens area clearinghouse for historic preservation issues.
- **Goal II.** Effectively communicate the historic preservation message.
- **Goal III.** Maintain & involve existing members while actively recruiting new members in order to develop & maintain a diverse membership-based organization.
- **Goal IV.** Act as responsible stewards for private preservation resources.

*More Information:* <http://www.achfonline.org/>

*Contact:*

Amy Kissane, 353-1801, [achf@achfonline.org](mailto:achf@achfonline.org)

## ***BikeAthens***

BikeAthens is a local non-profit advocacy group promoting transportation and land use policies that improve accessibility to alternative modes of transport, including pedestrian, cycling and public transit options. The primary mission of the organization is to make alternative transportation a practical, convenient, and safe option for all citizens of Athens-Clarke County. That goal is particularly important for the large portion of our population that cannot afford to drive, that choose not to drive, or who are - for reasons of youth, age, physical disability, or by law – unable to drive.

BikeAthens seeks to address the inevitable future growth of Athens in a sensible, balanced, and practical way. Efficient, effective, and environmentally sound transportation policies must include multi-modal choices that offer the potential to mitigate the ecological damage to air and water quality and the detriment to our landscapes, built environments, and sense of community that are the result of decades of unbridled dependency on automobiles for transportation needs.

*More Information:* [www.BikeAthens.com](http://www.BikeAthens.com)

### *Contacts:*

Jason Henderson: 425-0868, [roma@negia.net](mailto:roma@negia.net)

Dorothy O’Niell: 208-8636, [doniell@arches.uga.edu](mailto:doniell@arches.uga.edu)

## ***Keep Athens-Clarke County Beautiful***

The Keep Athens-Clarke County Beautiful Commission works toward a cleaner, more beautiful community by improving attitudes and behaviors regarding the environment.

### *Our Goals are:*

- To promote beautification efforts in the community
- To promote the proper handling of solid waste
- To maintain sustained litter reduction
- To enhance environmental awareness through education

### *Our Objectives are:*

1. Identify and improve areas of general community concern for beautification projects.
2. Educate citizens about the proper handling of solid waste.
3. Increase community awareness of each individual’s role in sustaining litter reduction by focusing on the seven sources of litter.
4. Promote adequate maintenance of public and private property.
5. Expand citizen involvement in Keep Athens Beautiful sub-committees.

*More Information:* <http://www.keeppathensbeautiful.org/>

### *Contact:*

Andrew Pearson, 613-3501 x. 312, [kaccb@co.clarke.ga.us](mailto:kaccb@co.clarke.ga.us)

### ***Oconee River Land Trust***

The mission of the Oconee River Land Trust is to preserve open space in the Oconee River Watershed. We are committed to preserving many different types of land, including woods, stream corridors, wetlands, wildlife habitat, productive farms and forests, historic sites and scenic vistas. ORLT is a private, nonprofit organization, incorporated in 1993. We work in many different ways to preserve land; our most important method is protection through conservation easements.

*More Information:* [www.orlt.com](http://www.orlt.com)

*Contact:*

Sigrid Sanders, Executive Director: 552-3138, [sigrid@orlt.com](mailto:sigrid@orlt.com)

Dan Hope, Chair, 706-542-3350

### ***Oconee Rivers Audubon Society***

Founded in 1991, the mission of the Oconee Rivers Audubon Society (ORAS) is to promote the preservation and restoration of wildlife habitat through environmental activism and community education. ORAS publishes a newsletter nine times per year and holds monthly meetings that are open to the public. Educational efforts include outdoor activities such as birdwalks and fieldtrips.

*More Information:* <http://alpha.rmy.emory.edu/~ORAS/>

*Contacts:*

Maggie Nettles, President: 583-8823, [maggie\\_nettnes@charter.net](mailto:maggie_nettnes@charter.net)

Elizabeth Little, Conservation Chair: 795-5017, [elittle@uga.edu](mailto:elittle@uga.edu)

Gary Crider, Program Chair: [gcrider@charter.net](mailto:gcrider@charter.net)

### ***The Oconee Rivers Greenway Commission***

The Oconee Rivers Greenway Commission is a secondary agency of the Athens-Clarke County Unified Government (ACC), established by county ordinance in 1992. The Commission is advisory in nature. Since its inception it has guided the development of the Heritage Trail and North Oconee River Greenway as pilot projects in the creation of a countywide greenway plan. It successfully procured funding (mostly outside the ACC budget) for these projects and convinced ACC to establish the staff and programs to manage and maintain them. It continues to provide oversight for project construction, program management and the development of the countywide greenway network plan. It regularly makes recommendations and comments on proposed actions that affect the rivers and other environmental resources of the community. For example, it successfully lobbied for the 100-foot river and 75-foot perennial stream buffers in the county's environmental ordinance and the county adoption of a community greenspace program.

*Contacts:*

Dick Field, Chair: 542-6607, 549-8866, [Dick.Field@gactr.uga.edu](mailto:Dick.Field@gactr.uga.edu)

### ***Sandy Creek Nature Center, Inc.***

The Sandy Creek Nature Center is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that works in partnership with the Athens-Clarke County Department of Leisure Services to protect, promote and improve Sandy Creek Nature Center. Our goal is to help Sandy Creek Nature Center continue to be an exceptional facility for learning about the natural ecosystems of Piedmont Georgia and beyond, as well as our responsibility to be good stewards of our earth.

*More Information:* <http://www.sandycreeknaturecenter.com/scnc/index.shtml>

*Contact:*

Larry Dendy: 613-3615, [ldendy@uga.edu](mailto:ldendy@uga.edu)

### ***Sierra Club***

The mission of the Sierra Club is to:

- Explore, enjoy and protect the wild places of the earth.
- Practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources.
- Educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment.
- Use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.

*More Information:* <http://georgia.sierraclub.org/leconte/index.html>

*Contacts:*

Gene Weeks: [gene\\_weeks@hotmail.com](mailto:gene_weeks@hotmail.com)

Sara May: 552-1663, [Saramay615@yahoo.com](mailto:Saramay615@yahoo.com)

### ***Students and Educators for Ecological Design and Sustainability (S.E.E.D.S.)***

S.E.E.D.S. is a non-profit University of Georgia organization made up of students, faculty and other members of the campus community who are interested in applying principles of ecological design and sustainability to our campus and the surrounding community. S.E.E.D.S. was founded in February 2000 as a means for collaboration among future members of the new College of Environment and Design (students and faculty from the School of Environmental Design and the Institute of Ecology). The organization meets bimonthly to work on current projects as well as discuss important sustainability issues in the Athens area.

*More Information:* [www.uga.edu/seeds](http://www.uga.edu/seeds)

#### *Contacts:*

Emily Paterson, President: [elp@uga.edu](mailto:elp@uga.edu)

Nancy Aten: [nancyaten@earthlink.net](mailto:nancyaten@earthlink.net)

Stephanie Shelton: [sshelton@uga.edu](mailto:sshelton@uga.edu)

Zack Thomas: [zackt@uga.edu](mailto:zackt@uga.edu)

Sue Herbert: [Herbert@uga.edu](mailto:Herbert@uga.edu)

Vicki Collins: [vcollins@engr.uga.edu](mailto:vcollins@engr.uga.edu)

Hank Methvin (faculty): [hankm@uga.edu](mailto:hankm@uga.edu)

### ***Upper Oconee Watershed Network***

The Upper Oconee Watershed Network (UOWN) is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting and improving water quality in our watershed through community-based advocacy, monitoring, and education. UOWN provides a means of bringing together a diverse citizenry with a common interest in the protection of streams and rivers in the Upper Oconee Watershed, which drains all or part of eighteen counties in northeast Georgia. UOWN strives to achieve a greater level of public awareness about local water issues and to formulate interactive community solutions for long-term watershed protection.

*More Information:* [www.uown.org](http://www.uown.org)

#### *Contacts:*

Jeffrey Boring: 583-0463, [jeffreyuga@yahoo.com](mailto:jeffreyuga@yahoo.com)

Jennifer Patterson: 354-1590, [jpatters@reynoldsplantation.com](mailto:jpatters@reynoldsplantation.com)

Melanie Ruhlman: 549-8916, [mruhlman@pincongrp.com](mailto:mruhlman@pincongrp.com)