

# Neighborhood Planning Unit M Bylaws

Adopted: September 23, 2024

Effective: January 1, 2025

## ARTICLE I. Purpose, Functions, and Duties

In accordance with City of Atlanta ordinances:

- Neighborhood Planning Unit M (hereafter referred to as NPU M) is hereby established for the purpose of advising the City of Atlanta, including the Mayor, City Council, and any Department or Official of the City, on all matters affecting the environment, the well-being of the residents, and the general livability of the neighborhoods within NPU M. Such advice may cover, but is not limited to, land use, zoning, housing, community facilities, human resources, social and recreational programs, traffic and transportation, environmental quality, open space and parks, public safety, and other City services.
- NPU M will provide input into the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) for the City and will assist City agencies in determining priority needs of NPU M. Advice and recommendations may also be given to other public and private agencies on any matter affecting the general livability of NPU M.
- In general, NPU M will provide a means by which citizens' input can be provided to the City government and a means by which information concerning the operation of City government can be provided to the citizens.
- NPU M shall be construed to be both the Neighborhood Planning Committee made up of the members of NPU M, and the geographic area as defined by the City of Atlanta.

## ARTICLE II. Membership

### Section 1. Individuals

- Any person 18 years of age or older whose primary place of residence is within NPU M, or any corporation, organization, institution or agency which owns property or has a place of business or profession within NPU M is eligible for membership in NPU M.

### Section 2. Organizations

- Any corporation, organization, institution or agency who otherwise meets membership requirements (Section 1) shall be entitled to only one representative per meeting and shall designate that representative in writing to the Assistant Secretary.

## **ARTICLE III. General Body Meetings**

### **Section 1. Meetings**

- NPU M shall regularly meet on the fourth Monday of each month (January through November), or at the call of the Chairperson or a majority of the Executive Committee except when coinciding with a recognized state or federal holiday.
- The meeting location shall be indicated in the NPU M agenda sent to NPU M members by the Department of City Planning.
- In consultation with the Executive Committee, the Chairperson may cancel or reschedule a regular meeting when there is an Act of God, or any unavoidable circumstances that make it impossible to meet.
- Notice of meeting cancellation will be sent via email to Certified Civic Association representatives to notify their communities and posted on NPU M's website.

### **Section 2. Quorum**

- A quorum of NPU M shall consist of ten (10) members attending the meeting.

### **Section 3. Agenda**

- The agenda for the meeting shall be determined by the Chairperson in consultation with the Executive Committee and the Department of City Planning.
- The agenda shall be distributed by e-mail or other means to NPU M members in advance of each monthly meeting.
- The NPU M General Body Meeting Agenda will be closed to modification one week prior to the General Body Meeting. Should revisions be required, those changes will be tracked and will be announced by the chair at the beginning of the General Body Meeting.
- Once all revisions have been announced, the General Body will vote to approve the meeting agenda as revised by a majority vote.

## **ARTICLE IV. Voting**

### **Section 1. Criteria**

- Except as provided in Article IX, each member in attendance at a meeting of NPU M
  - who meets membership requirements (Article II),
  - signed in on the meeting registration form and
  - whose primary place of residence is within the NPU, or any person, corporation, organization, institution or agency which owns property or has a place of business or profession within the NPU,shall have one vote and shall have the right to exercise that vote on all issues which come before the NPU without attendance requirements, dues payments or any other limitation.

## **Section 2. Voting Challenge**

- Any member in good standing may challenge the vote of any other member on the basis of them not being eligible to vote.

## **Section 3. Limits**

- No person, corporation, organization, institution or agency who otherwise qualifies as a member on more than one basis as provided for herein shall have more than one (1) vote.
- Should any person hold more than one position within the NPU leadership, they shall have no more than one (1) vote.

## **Section 4. Methods**

- Except where these bylaws or our rules provide otherwise, all actions of NPU M shall be by a majority vote which shall be defined as more than half of the votes cast by persons legally entitled to vote at a regular or properly called meeting at which a quorum is present.
- Proxies shall not be accepted.

## **Section 5. Official Records**

- The attendance records maintained by the Assistant Secretary, in consultation with the Neighborhood Planning Coordinator, shall be the official basis for the determination of which members shall be eligible to vote or hold office in NPU M.

## **Section 6. Membership Requirement Amendments**

- Any changes to Article IV.1 (Criteria) shall become effective January 1st following adoption.

# **ARTICLE V. Executive Committee**

## **Section 1. Purpose**

- There is hereby created an Executive Committee which shall conduct the business of NPU M between meetings of the membership.
- Any such actions taken by the Executive Committee shall be reported to the membership at the next regularly scheduled meeting of NPU M.

## **Section 2. Structure**

- The Executive Committee shall consist of the elected Officers, the chairs of the standing committees, the representatives of Certified Civic Associations and the representative to Atlanta Planning Advisory Board (APAB).
- The Executive Committee shall determine which Certified Civic Associations shall be represented and the respective association shall determine their representative to the Executive Committee.

### **Section 3. Certified Civic Associations**

- To be recognized as a Certified Civic Association in NPU M, the organization must submit its bylaws, including membership provisions, to the Executive Committee for consideration.
- The Certified Civic Association should submit bylaws annually along with a list of their points of contact or representatives.
- A Certified Civic Association may be a neighborhood association, civic association, community development corporation, business association, or other similar organization.
- The list of Certified Civic Associations shall be made by public announcement at the beginning of each meeting and the introduction of their representative.
- The addition of a new Certified Civic Association shall be approved by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of the General Body, and shall go in effect the following meeting.

### **Section 4. Meetings**

- The Executive Committee shall meet the second Monday of each month at a time and location to be announced at the regular meeting of NPU M.
- However, the Chairperson or any three (3) members of the Executive Committee can call, with forty-eight (48) hours notice, with adequate written, electronic or telephone communication with the members of the Executive Committee, a special meeting of the Executive Committee to carry on the business of NPU M.

### **Section 5. Quorum**

- A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of a minimum of two (2) NPU M Officers and any five (5) other members.

## **ARTICLE VI. Officers**

### **Section 1. Officers**

- The elected officers of NPU M shall be:
  - Chairperson,
  - Vice-Chairperson,
  - Secretary, and
  - Assistant Secretary.
- No more than one officer may be elected from members of the same family, nor may any member hold more than one (1) office at any time.

### **Section 2. Chairperson**

- The duties of the Chairperson shall be the following:
  - To preside over all meetings of NPU M and all Executive Committee meetings.

- To set the agenda of Executive Committee and General Body Meetings in consultation with the City Planner.

### **Section 3. Vice-Chairperson**

- The duties of the Vice-Chairperson shall be:
  - To perform the duties of the Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson.

### **Section 4. Secretary**

- The duties of the Secretary shall be:
  - To ensure that actions and votes of all NPU M meetings and Executive Committee meetings are recorded and presented at the following NPU M meetings.
  - To make available a summary of NPU M meetings and Executive Committee meetings by the next such meeting
  - To file official NPU M actions and other documents with the Department of City of Planning, or appropriate department or agency, in a timely manner.
  - To perform the duties of the Assistant Secretary in the absence of the Assistant Secretary.
  - To keep NPU M's own records.
  - To ensure Certified Civic Associations have submitted required documentation.

### **Section 5. Assistant Secretary**

- The duties of the Assistant Secretary shall be:
  - To maintain accurate records of attendance and membership
  - To perform the duties of the Secretary in the absence of the Secretary.

### **Section 6. Parliamentarian**

- The Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the NPU Chairperson.
- The duties of the Parliamentarian shall be:
  - To be available to define any procedure or process related to and be authority on all issues involving the NPU M Bylaws.
  - To be the chairperson of the NPU Bylaws Committee during the time that they hold the position as Parliamentarian.

### **Section 7. Terms and Limits**

- The term of office for all elected officers shall be one (1) year with a maximum of four (4) consecutive terms.

## **ARTICLE VII. Elections**

### **Section 1. Officers**

- A Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and Assistant Secretary shall be elected by NPU M in November of each year.

- These Officers shall take office on January 1 following that election and shall serve through December 31, unless they are disqualified as Officers.
- The retiring and newly-elected Officers will meet at the December Executive Committee meeting to ensure an orderly transition.

## **Section 2. Nominations**

- Nominations of NPU M Officers shall be made in the October NPU Meeting.
- An eligible member must be present to be nominated, or shall have consented to serve in writing, and otherwise have qualified to serve.
- Nominations may be made by a nominating committee and from the floor.

## **Section 3. Disqualification and Vacancies**

- If any Officer ceases to be a member of NPU M, the person shall be disqualified and the position shall be declared vacant.
- Whenever any vacancy shall occur, the Executive Committee may select a person to fill such vacancy until an official election can be held at an NPU M General Body meeting.
- The person selected by the Executive Committee to fill the vacancy shall be considered a nominee for the position to be filled by election at the meeting when the vote occurs.
- Any Officer may be recalled and disqualified from office by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote at a General Body meeting.
- Notification of any election must be announced at least one meeting prior to the vote being held and placed on the agenda for that meeting.

## **Section 4. Eligibility**

- Only members who have attended any three (3) previous meetings during the previous twelve (12) calendar months shall be eligible to hold office, except that a member nominated, but not in attendance at the time of the election shall have attended any four (4) previous meetings during the previous twelve (12) calendar months.
- An eligible member must be present to be nominated, or shall have consented to serve in writing, and otherwise have qualified to serve.

# **ARTICLE VIII. Committees**

## **Section 1. Standing Committees**

- The Standing Committees for NPU M shall be:
  - Executive Committee
  - Land Use and Zoning Committee
  - Public Safety Committee
  - Transportation

## **Section 2. Ad Hoc Committees**

- The NPU Chairperson can create and the General Body can approve Ad Hoc Committees when necessary to meet the needs of NPU M.

### **Section 3. Areas of Responsibility of the Standing Committees**

The responsibilities of the committees include, but are not limited to:

- Land Use and Zoning Committee
  - Development and Land Use
  - Zoning Applications
  - Variance Requests
- Public Safety Committee
  - Criminal Activity and Public Safety
  - Alcohol License Review
  - Fire Prevention
  - Code Enforcement
- Transportation Committee
  - Transit
  - Parking

### **Section 4. Committee Composition and Chairs**

- Each Certified Civic Association may submit names of volunteers to serve on each of the Standing Committees.
- The NPU Chairperson will request volunteers for each of the Standing Committees at the General Body meeting(s).
- From the list of all volunteers, the NPU Chairperson will select a chairperson for each of the Standing Committees and those selections will be announced to and affirmed by a vote of the General Body and will be effective at the January meeting of that committee following affirmation by the General Body.
- Each chairperson will serve in that capacity for a term of one (1) year unless they resign or are no longer qualified to be a member of the NPU.

### **Section 5. Committee Voting**

- Anyone may attend any of the NPU M Standing Committee meetings, and anyone who has signed in on the meeting registration form/sign-in sheet and has met the membership requirements as described in Article II shall have the right to vote on any matters that come before the committee.

### **Section 6. Responsibility of Committees**

- Committees shall meet at regular intervals between NPU M monthly meetings.
- Each committee chairperson shall prepare written minutes for all committee meetings that will contain at minimum a list of all action items from the meeting and a list of members present.
- The meeting minutes and the sign-in sheet shall be submitted within two (2) business days after completion of the meeting to the NPU Secretary for posting on the NPU website, to the Executive Committee, and to the NPU Chairperson for inclusion on the following NPU General Body agenda.

- Committee chairpersons shall make brief reports to the General Body at the monthly meetings, shall make technical clarifications regarding agenda items to the General Body, recommendations to the General Body, work on policy recommendations for the city, inform the body of relevant legislation, and implement the will of the General Body.
- Committees shall make relevant information available to the General Body as appropriate.

## **Section 7. Sub-Committees**

- Sub-committees with specific mission and duration may be appointed by the chairperson of the committee or created by motion from the floor by the General Body by majority vote.

## **Section 8. Representation**

- The NPU M Chairperson shall nominate representatives to organizations not already named in these bylaws (e.g., Development Review Committee for SPI-1, Eastside Tax Allocation District Advisory Committee, Westside Tax Allocation District Advisory Committee, Atlanta Planning Advisory Board, etc.) which shall be approved by the NPU M General Body.
- Representatives shall inform the Executive Committee of the actions of these organizations, inform the General Body at monthly meetings and, when directed by the Executive Committee and/or General Body on motions of concern to NPU M, vote in accordance with that direction.

# **ARTICLE IX. Amendments and Annual Reviews**

## **Section 1. Amendments**

- Proposed amendments shall be introduced and discussed at one meeting of NPU M and shall be automatically tabled until the next meeting of NPU M.
- Amendments shall require a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of members present.
- Amendments shall become effective on January 1st of the following year.

## **Section 2. Annual NPU Review**

- These bylaws shall be approved annually by a majority of the Residents (as defined in Section 6-3012 of Atlanta City Code) of the NPU in attendance at the meeting where the bylaws are voted upon.
- At said meeting, there shall be no restrictions upon a Resident's right to vote on the approval or disapproval of the bylaws.

## **Section 3. Annual City Review**

- These bylaws shall be submitted by the Secretary to the Department of City Planning no later than September 30 of each year for compliance with city code requirements unless a specific extension or change in submission date has been requested and approved by the Department of City Planning.



## **ARTICLE X. POLICIES AND OPERATIONAL RULES**

- Policies and operational rules may be adopted by the NPU to facilitate the effectiveness of the NPU's operations and shall be attached to these bylaws as an addendum.

## **ARTICLE XI. RULES OF ORDER**

- The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the procedures of NPU M and all of the NPU M Standing Committees in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order NPU M may adopt.
- Rules may be suspended by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote.

## ***ARTICLE B. NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING***

### **Sec. 6-3011. Statement of policy and purpose.**

The council finds that it is in the public interest for the City of Atlanta to have an organized program of neighborhood planning. It is the purpose of this article to provide an opportunity both for the citizenry formally to provide input into the comprehensive development plan of the city and to provide a means by which information concerning the operation of city government can be provided to the citizens of Atlanta. Further, it is the policy of the city to coordinate the recommendations of neighborhood planning units with the formulation of the city's budget, both capital and operating, in order that the comprehensive development plan be an effective policy guide for the orderly development of the city.

(Code 1977, § 6-3011; Ord. No. 1999-81, § 1, 11-10-99)

### **Sec. 6-3012. Definitions.**

As used in this article:

- (1) *Neighborhood* means a geographic area either with distinguishing characteristics or in which the residents have a sense of identity and a commonality of perceived interest, or both. Factors that may contribute to neighborhood identity include shared development, history, architecture, social and economic relationships, physical boundaries and the existence of one or more broadly representative neighborhood organizations devoted to neighborhood preservation and improvement.
- (2) *Neighborhood planning unit*, hereinafter also referred to as N.P.U., means (1) a geographic area composed of one or more contiguous neighborhoods, which have been defined by the department of planning, and development and neighborhood conservation based on criteria previously established by the department and approved by the council for the purpose of developing neighborhood plans and (2) a body of residents of such geographic area organized for the purpose of engaging in comprehensive planning matters affecting the livability of neighborhoods.
- (3) *Resident* shall mean any person 18 years of age or older whose primary place of residence is within the neighborhood planning unit, or any corporation, organization, institution or agency which owns property or has a place of business or profession within the N.P.U. Each resident may hold office in only one N.P.U. Each resident, meaning any person who resides within the N.P.U., or any corporation, organization, institution or agency which owns property or has a place of business or profession, shall have one vote and shall have the right to exercise that vote on all issues which come before the N.P.U.; provided that an N.P.U. may adopt bylaws calling for representative voting, as long as the adoption and revision of such bylaws is by vote open to all such residents without attendance requirements, dues payments, or any other limitation.
- (4) *Council district planning committee* means a body of residents of a council district formed from representatives of the neighborhood planning units to coordinate council district plans. The council member for the district may initiate the organization of these committees, but may not hold any office in any of the committees. These committees may continue in existence from year to year.

(Code 1977, § 6-3012; Ord. No. 1999-78, § 1, 11-10-99; Ord. No. 1999-81, § 1, 11-10-99)

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## Sec. 6-3013. Neighborhood planning units.

- (a) *Designation.* The department of city planning shall recommend neighborhood planning units, as defined in section 6-3012(2) of this chapter, which shall include all areas of the city. N.P.U.'s may comprise as many, or as few neighborhoods as practicable and may cross council district boundaries. Such designation shall be approved by the Atlanta City Council. The designation of the N.P.U. shall be based on criteria previously established by the department of planning and development and approved by the council and shall include the consideration of existing citizens' organizations' boundaries which may exist at the time of designation, as well as provisions for the change of neighborhood boundaries when necessary.
- (b) *Preservation of information.* The bureau of planning shall make available to neighborhood units basic information, including but not limited to, the areas of land use, transportation, community facilities, programmed capital improvements, housing, human resources, social and recreational programs, environmental quality, open space and parks and citizen involvement in planning and zoning to assist them in neighborhood planning activities. This information shall be presented in such a manner as to be readily recognizable to the residents of each N.P.U. This information shall be presented graphically when practicable.
- (c) *Neighborhood planning units.* The neighborhood planning unit may recommend an action, a policy or a comprehensive plan to the city and to any city agency on any matter affecting the livability of the neighborhood, including, but not limited to, land use, zoning, housing, community facilities, human resources, social and recreational programs, traffic and transportation, environmental quality, open space and parks; assist city agencies in determining priority needs for the neighborhood; review items for inclusion in the city budget and make recommendations relating to budget items for neighborhood improvement; and advise the bureau of planning on the preparation of the 15 and five-year comprehensive development plans.
- (d) *Accountability.* Neighborhood planning units shall be accountable to the residents of the area they represent.

(Code 1977, § 6-3013; Ord. No. 1999-81, § 1, 11-10-99; Ord. No. 2004-08, § 8, 2-10-04; Ord. No. 2022-35(22-O-1747), § 1, 10-12-22)

## Sec. 6-3014. Public hearings.

- (a) *Manner in which hearings are to be held.* The bureau of planning shall hold hearings to focus on the six study areas as defined in the currently adopted comprehensive development plan. Said hearings shall be held in such a manner that there be not less than one public hearing for each study area prior to the preparation of any comprehensive development plan.
- (b) *Notice.* The city shall provide notice of the number of hearings and their dates, times and places. Such notice shall be provided through advertising in a newspaper of general circulation, included on the regular N.P.U. agenda mail-out and provided as a public service announcement.

(Code 1977, § 6-3014; Ord. No. 1999-81, § 1, 11-10-99; Ord. No. 2004-08, § 9, 2-10-04)

Charter reference(s)—Boards and commissions, § 3-401.

Code of ordinances reference—Boards, councils and commissions, § 2-1851 et seq.

Cross reference(s)—Zoning, § 16-01.001 et seq.

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**Sec. 6-3015. Schedule of citizen involvement.**

- (a) The mayor shall prepare a schedule of citizen involvement regarding the draft of the comprehensive development plan. This report shall be presented to the community development/human resources committee at a regularly scheduled meeting in January of the year in which the plan is to be updated.
- (b) The mayor shall coordinate citizen participation in planning, under provisions of this article and shall be responsible for advising the council on citizen plans.

(Code 1977, § 6-3015; Ord. No. 1999-81, § 1, 11-10-99; Ord. No. 2004-08, § 10, 2-10-04)

**Sec. 6-3016. Bylaws.**

- (a) (1) N.P.U. bylaws shall be submitted to the bureau of planning no later than September 30 of each year for compliance with city code requirements.
  - (2) Said bylaws shall become effective January 1st of the following year.
  - (3) This article (Code sections 6-3011 through 6-3019) shall be attached as an exhibit to the bylaws of each N.P.U. with each annual submission to the bureau of planning.
- (b) All neighborhood planning units shall have bylaws for their members to follow which shall be approved annually by a majority of the residents (as defined in section 6-3012(3)) of the N.P.U. in attendance at the meeting where the bylaws are voted upon. At said meeting there shall be no restrictions upon a resident's right to vote on the approval or disapproval of the bylaws. These bylaws shall be filed with the department of planning, development and neighborhood conservation. The bylaws shall be reviewed and approved annually by the bureau of planning and the neighborhood planning unit for clarity as to voting procedures, representativeness of all interested parties within the neighborhood planning unit, and a description of the duties of any subcommittees or officers.
- (c) Recommendations of an N.P.U shall not be accepted by the council until the N.P.U. has complied with subsection (a) above.

(Code 1977, § 6-3016; Ord. No. 1999-81, § 1, 11-10-99)

**Sec. 6-3017. Elections.**

- (a) Elections shall take place during October or November of every calendar year. If an election(s) has not been held by November 30. Said election(s) shall be conducted by the bureau of planning during the month of December.
- (b) Any person holding the office of chairperson or equivalent, which means presiding officer, must be a person 18 years of age or older whose primary place of residence is within the particular NPU.

(Code 1977, § 6-3017; Ord. No. 1995-68, § 1, 10-24-95; Ord. No. 1999-81, § 1, 11-10-99)

**Sec. 6-3018. Voting procedures.**

- (a) Voting procedures shall be established by each neighborhood planning unit. Although the procedure may vary among neighborhood planning units, bylaws describing the voting procedures shall contain provisions delineating the eligibility of voters within the neighborhood planning units and the voting process itself for issues as well as officer elections.

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(b) Each resident as defined in section 6-3012(3) shall represent one vote and may hold office in only one N.P.U.

(c) All NPU and committee meetings must be open to the public.

(Code 1977, § 6-3018; Ord. No. 1995-68, § 2, 10-24-95; Ord. No. 1999-81, § 1, 11-10-99)

**Sec. 6-3019. Prohibition of political forums.**

Neighborhood planning unit meetings shall not be used for political forums or campaigning for city, county, state, or federal elections.

(Code 1977, § 6-3019; Ord. No. 1999-81, § 1, 11-10-99)