



# Georgia Planning Officials Newsletter

August 2006

## You're Invited

*Please join us for the first ever Planning Official's track  
At the Georgia Planning Associations Annual Conference  
At Sea Palms Hotel and Resort on St. Simons Island  
Thursday, October 12 2006  
8:30 am – 4:00 pm*

Citizens elected to office or appointed to serve on city and county planning boards are called upon to make important decisions that affect a community's physical, social and economic development. While there are various professional development opportunities for practicing planners, the same is not available to "citizen" planners. To that end, GPA has developed a track at the annual conference devoted specifically to enhancing the knowledge and skills of city and county planning officials.

This special track will cover everything from the basic planning process to the legal framework and a roundtable discussion about hot topic issues and challenges faced by appointed planning officials across the state.

### **Planning 101**

**8:30 am – 9:30 am**

This session will provide an overview of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance, what they contain, their legal status, the process for development, evaluation, and amendment and how these tools work together. Additionally, planning commissioners will learn how to read construction drawings and site plans for development review.

### **Avoiding the Legal Pitfalls**

**9:45 am – 11:15 pm**

This session will provide an overview of the ethical, constitutional and legal basis for planning and zoning in Georgia including critical legal concepts and what they mean for the planning official including the "sunshine law," "public records," "ex parte communication," "quasijudicial" decisions, "substantial competent evidence," "property rights," "consistency," "conflicts of interest," and others.

### **Using Planning Services when you have no staff**

**11:30 pm- 12:30 pm**

The objective of this session is to provide an overview of the planning resources available to communities that have little or no planning staff. Participants will learn about the basic planning foundation communities need in order to thrive. Find out where to get services from consultants, state agencies, higher education assistance and more.

### **The Planning Commissioner – Making a Difference**

**1:45 – 2:45 pm**

This workshop will explore the roles and responsibilities of appointed and elected officials and discuss how to effectively work together and with planning staff. Planners and Planning Directors will understand how to get through to commissioners. Planning Commissioners will discover how to work effectively with colleagues to make informed decisions.

### **Hot Topics- Roundtable Discussion**

**3:00 pm – 4:00 pm**

This discussion will focus on the "hot topics," issues and challenges planning official in Georgia are addressing. Spend five to ten minutes in discussion of each one of many hot topics faced by planning officials around the state.

*The fee for the one day course is \$125.  
This includes all course materials and a ticket to the Planner's  
Award Lunch on Friday, October 12.  
A registration form is included with this brochure.  
For information about the hotel or to register for the entire  
GPA conference visit [www.georgiaplanning.org](http://www.georgiaplanning.org).*

We want to hear from you! Please send us your thoughts, experiences and advice on being a Planning Official. E-mail or fax your submissions to Robbie Hayes at [rhayes@atlantaregional.com](mailto:rhayes@atlantaregional.com) or 404.463.3105