



# Georgia Planning Officials Newsletter

February 2007

## Planning without Staff?

One of the most valuable resources available for any community is having staff on hand who can address the particular needs of that jurisdiction. However, some communities are placed in a difficult situation of trying to plan for the future, without the resources to do so.

This is a situation many growing communities in Georgia face. Fortunately there are resources available to assist with local planning efforts. The following are but a few of the opportunities available to local governments, ranging from regional assistance to support from national organizations such as the American Planning Association.

The sidebar located adjacent to this article highlights upcoming educational opportunities that are open to all planning officials within Georgia. The workshops alone may be enough to equip officials in their planning efforts.

## Regional Resources

One resource that every qualified local government has access to is their Regional Development Center (RDC). To locate your RDC, and inquire how their staff may assist you, contact the Georgia Association of Regional Development Centers.

[http://www.gardc.com/rdc\\_directory.htm](http://www.gardc.com/rdc_directory.htm)

## State Resources

Another valuable resource is the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). They offer local governments a number of opportunities ranging from Quality Growth Resource Teams to Advisory Clinics. To find out more information about DCA's services go to:

<http://www.dca.state.ga.us/development/PlanningQualityGrowth/programs/assistance.asp>

## National Resources

The American Planning Association offers Planning Assistance Teams (PAT), which consist of approximately five planners working on a pro-bono basis, to solve specific problems in communities facing planning challenges. <http://planning.org/cap/patprocess.htm>

## Other Resources

Not seeing anything that quite fits your needs? Perhaps a private consultant is what you are looking for. Consultants are equipped to handle a wide-range of issues that communities face. Interested in hiring a consultant but not sure where to look?

Go to <http://www.planning.org/consultant/conpart1.html> for advice on how to find and select a consulting firm.

Another option is to assemble a team from current staff within your local government. Through regular meetings and work sessions, the issues can be addressed by individuals with diverse backgrounds.

One final resource that could be of some benefit is the idea of using students as a resource. There are a number of colleges and universities within Georgia whose students may be willing to provide assistance on a part- or full- time basis. We encourage you to contact schools to further explore those possibilities.

## What are other jurisdictions doing to address this issue?

These are only a few of the abundant resources available to local governments. Should you have any other resources not listed in this newsletter, we would love to hear from you! Any suggestions will be submitted in the March issue.

## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

### Georgia Planning Association 2007 Spring Conference

Atlanta, Georgia

**March 8, 9 & 10, 2007**

Plan to join your fellow planners, designers, architects, elected officials and others at the annual GPA Spring Conference in Atlanta. This year's conference features the Collaborative Symposium on Growth & Design, concurrent sessions with the Georgia American Association of Landscape Architects, and mobile workshops.

### Community Planning Institute—Columbus, Georgia

**March 5&6, 2007**

This 2-day workshop sponsored by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and the Georgia Planning Association, provides planning concepts and procedures by prominent planning and legal professionals.

### Community Planning Academy—Atlanta, Georgia

**March 14, April 11 & May 16, 2007**

This 3-day workshop sponsored by the Atlanta Regional Commission is designed for newly appointed planning officials. *Training for Planning Officials* provides community leaders and others involved in the official planning process with the knowledge and tools needed to meet the challenges of planning in the 21st Century.

Visit: <http://www.georgiaplanning.org> for additional events.

**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**