



Georgia Planning Officials Newsletter

January 2008

Educational Resources for Planning Officials

Georgia Planning Association (www.georgiaplanning.org)

The Georgia Planning Association (GPA) serves as the official state chapter of the American Planning Association. GPA is a vital resource across Georgia, regardless of your role in the planning process. Stay current on issues through newsletters and training opportunities. The Spring & Fall conferences serve as a great opportunity to receive information and network.

Department of Community Affairs: Planning & Quality Growth (<http://www.georgiaplanning.com>)

The Office of Planning & Quality Growth (OPQG) works continually to educate and train Georgia's communities about the importance and mechanics of local and regional planning and the economic, social and environmental benefits of balanced growth.

The OPQG offers presentations, workshops, and trainings on all of their programs. In addition, they offer a toolkit of best practices for communities in Georgia and across the nation and provide technical information regarding such things as local planning requirements.

Georgia Institute of Technology: Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development (<http://www.cqgrd.gatech.edu/>)

The Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development

(QGRD) is an applied research center, studying solutions that communities can implement in order to foster quality growth and development. The Center serves communities—particularly those in the Southeast United States—through extensive public outreach efforts. Their vision is centered around helping society achieve a sustainable, equitable, superior quality of life through sound planning, policy and design. This is achieved through producing disseminating and helping to implement new ideas and technologies that improve the theory and practice of quality growth.

University of Georgia: Alliance for Quality Growth (<http://aqg.ecology.uga.edu/index.html>)

The Alliance for Quality Growth (AQG) offers the Smart Growth University, a comprehensive training on the tools and techniques of quality growth for elected officials, professional staff, developers and citizens. AQG works with the [Georgia Municipal Association](#) and [Association of County Commissioners of Georgia](#) to provide elective courses for their members at both voluntary and required training sessions. They also offer specialized trainings at the request of local governments. Funding sources and recommended readings are available on their website.

Atlanta Regional Commission (<http://www.atlantaregional.com>)

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) provides a broad range of tools, resources and technical assistance to help local governments design communities that work for them. Training is offered through the Community Planning Academy (CPA), which offers high-quality and cost effective training and workshops to appointed citizen planners, local elected officials and local government employees. CPA provides planners and decision makers with tools to make effective decisions regarding their community's future. CPA is open to planning officials across the state.

The Community Choices Online Resource Center is designed to assist in accessing timely, high-quality information about community planning and quality growth — quickly and easily. It can help enable elected officials, practitioners, appointed citizen planners and other community leaders to learn — both from each other and from communities across the country — about implementing innovative community planning concepts.

Georgia Conservancy (<http://www.gaconservancy.org/>)

The Georgia Conservancy serves as a great resource to planning officials through a variety of education programs that focus on air quality, water, quality growth, natural areas and coastal Georgia. One of the many resources available through the Georgia Conservancy is the Blueprints for Successful Communities program, an education and technical assistance program designed to facilitate community-based planning efforts across the state. Its mission is to teach Georgians to achieve successful communities by creating sound conservation and growth strategies and building consensus for action at the local, county, regional and state levels.

New Year's Resolution: Continuing Education

January marks a time for change.

A new calendar year begins and with it new goals are set and resolutions are made. Newly elected officials take office, agendas are drafted and work begins for a new year. This time also serves as an opportunity to reflect on the past year and decide on the necessary actions for the upcoming months.

Hopefully 2008 is seen as an opportunity to engage in additional education, so that you can better serve your community. With so many exciting things happening across the state in planning & development, there is no better time to begin than now.

While practicing planners begin the new Certification Maintenance (CM) requirements outlined by the American Planning Association, planning officials should also begin to think of ways they can further their education.

Fortunately, there are a number of educational opportunities available whether it is through workshops, exploring websites and periodicals or staying current on planning-related issues through e-mail lists. In addition to this newsletter, here are but a few of the resources available to planning officials across Georgia.