



# GEORGIA PLANNER

Newsletter of the Georgia Planning Association, A Chapter of the American Planning Association  
JANUARY 2005

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## Fall Conference Wrap-Up!

The GPA 2004 Fall Conference was held on October 13 to 15 at the Brasstown Valley Resort in Young Harris. This event drew an impressive 167 registered attendees for the conference and an additional 28 people registered for the Awards Lunch. The conference location highlighted the beauty of the North Georgia mountains in the Fall and the schedule provided ample opportunity to learn and network.

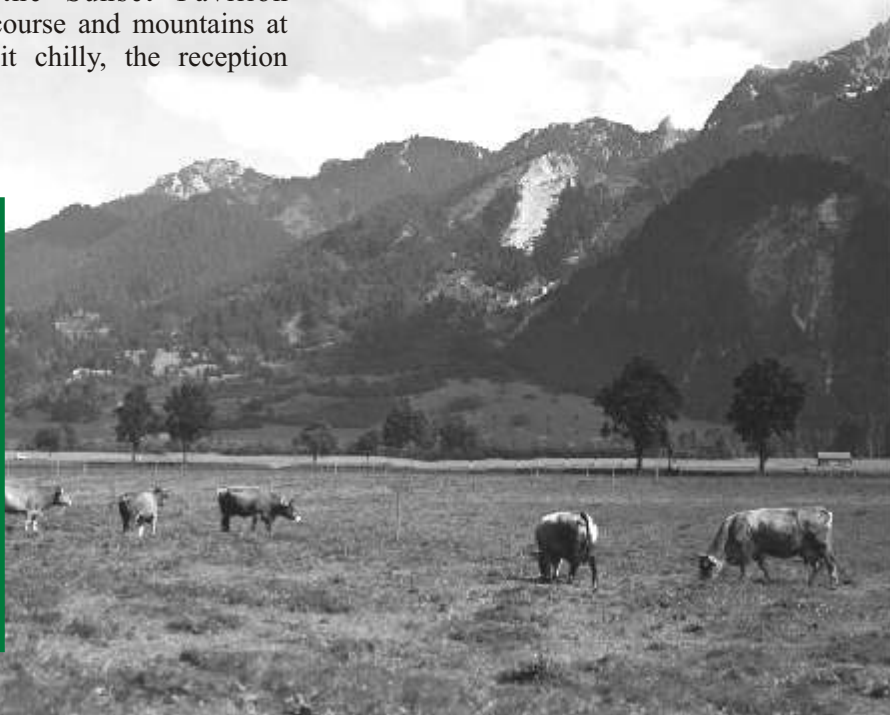
The conference featured 40 breakout sessions in five tracks Environmental Planning, Transportation Planning, Comprehensive Planning & Quality Growth, Zoning & Development, and Professional Development dispersed over three days. An opening presentation was provided by Leonard Ledbetter, Executive Vice President of MACTEC, and former Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and Director of Georgia Environmental Protection. Mr. Ledbetter provided a discussion on environmental issues and the role of planners and the environment in Georgia.

Special events included an opening dinner and reception on the Sunset Pavilion overlooking the golf course and mountains at sunset. Although a bit chilly, the reception

provided excellent food and drinks, with great entertainment from a local bluegrass band. The annual Awards Lunch was held on Thursday and provided an opportunity for planners to hear about the innovative and quality planning undertaken around the state over the last year. The annual GPA membership meeting was held on Thursday afternoon followed by a casual reception and dinner on your own.

The success of this conference was due to the efforts of many people. Special appreciation goes out to our sponsors Jordan Jones & Goulding, Robert & Company, Vinyl Siding Institute, Southern Brick Institute, ESRI, Sycamore Consulting, Reynolds Smith & Hills who provided financial support to help keep the conference economical for all attendees. Thanks also to the conference session organizers, programs committee, and numerous speakers that volunteered their time. Finally, thanks to all the conference attendees for supporting your Georgia Planning Association and advancing the interest of the planning profession by participating in the conference.

Do you have a SESSION idea for the 2005 Spring Conference in Decatur on April 28 & 29? Now is the time to make a session proposal for a 2005 Spring conference (due by January 21st). Contact Rob LeBeau at [rlebeau@atlantaregional.com](mailto:rlebeau@atlantaregional.com) or visit the GPA website to receive the necessary form and submit by the due date.



*From the President...*

There is much to report to the membership, so I ask that you pardon the length but please keep reading.

**Membership.** Our membership has continued to grow. We are now at 800 total membership, including 608 regular, 95 planning board, 36 student, 14 "new professional," and 33 chapter-only members. Some of the increase is due to natural growth of the planning profession in Georgia, but we've also received a spike of chapter-only members because we distributed our recent membership brochure. Our goal is to reach 850 members by next year.

**Conferences and Events.** We held one of our best fall conferences ever in October at Brasstown Valley Resort, with 167 registered and another 28 who attended the awards luncheon. There were so many good sessions that attendees had difficulty choosing which ones to attend. For a second year, we have sold shirts with the GPA logo on them. Efforts are already underway for our spring conference in April 28-29, 2005 in Decatur, and we will soon turn attention to our planning for the fall 2005 conference in Columbus. Our planners luncheons in Atlanta were very successful last year and we will plan and hold two more in 2005.

**Annual Membership Meeting.** At the fall conference we held our annual meeting of the membership, which was well attended. At that time, Dan Reuter, AICP, was installed as president-elect and we expressed our gratitude to past president, Gary Cornell, AICP, who has now rotated off the board. During the meeting Rob LeBeau, AICP, and Deborah Miness, AICP, received awards from the president for their outstanding service to the chapter during the calendar year. Rob has done outstanding work in planning and implementing our programs, raising the bar of excellence. Debbie has filled in like a basketball team's "sixth" person off the bench to fill gaps in terms of membership, website, and planning officials development. If you see these two dedicated hard workers, please congratulate them and thank them for their service to the chapter.

**Progress Report on 2004 Chapter Initiatives.** We established eight aggressive but attainable initiatives for the 2004, most of which we did not complete. We advanced membership services with our new brochure and membership directory, but we still have a way to go before formalizing a membership welcoming system. As noted above, president's awards were given for two outstanding members of the Board for their work. And we have instituted continuing professional development credits for chapter conference sessions. Our other initiatives have not achieved full success. The 150+ Volunteers Initiative, an effort to involve as many members as possible in chapter activities, has succeeded in expanding the realm of member involvement but has not been sustained. Our legislative advocacy pilot project with APA National is still ongoing, but we have not taken full advantage yet of those resources from APA. We had hoped to make our conferences a formal home for conferences serving planners working for Metropolitan Planning Organizations, but in the meantime we have maintained excellent transportation sessions at our conferences. We have sought greater involvement of minorities but have yet to achieve the kind of participation initially sought; we will continue that work next year. And finally, the highest priority for me has been to spearhead an inter-organizational collaborative to deliver planning commissioner training complete with credits, certification, and transcripts. With differing organizational objectives, full collaboration has eluded us. We continue to provide our own training of planning commissioners, and with a \$1000 grant from the APA Chapter Presidents Council we have critically reviewed and revised the curriculum, as well as held discussions with many of the groups that would form a collaborative. We held two training sessions in 2004 and plan to hold two more in 2005. We will continue our discussion with allied organizations in the hope that the inter-organizational collaborative will reach fruition.

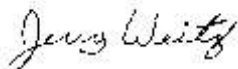
**Budget.** It has been a good year as our spring conference, fall conference, and last Community Planning Institute netted more revenues than costs. As of November 12th, we have spent \$67,228 while receiving revenues of \$74,208.

**Board Membership.** The 2004 Board recently confirmed the president's recommendations for appointments to the 2005 board, who are continuing their service to GPA in the same capacity as 2004: Glenn Coyne, AICP: Professional Development Officer; David Sutton, AICP: Planning Officials Development Officer; and Deborah Miness, AICP: Chair of the Legislative Committee (a board position). We also confirmed Pamela Thompson, AICP, who is Assistant County Administrator for Lee County, GA, to fill the AICP Director position vacated by the appointment of Debbie Miness to Chair the Legislative Committee, which in turn was vacated by Dan Reuter's ascendancy to President-Elect.

Although it is too early to fully reflect on how the chapter has fared during my presidency, after "turning the corner" on the first of two years, I'm proud of a lot of GPA's recent accomplishments, including the expansion of the board of directors to include planning commissioners, holding competitive elections for virtually all board positions, publishing a calendar of planning events, the increases in membership, and the elevated quality of our conference events, and the dedicated service from board members who continue to amaze me with their generous volunteer time. Perhaps most important, however, is the support from members, who continue to attend our conferences and luncheons and help us with committee activities. The board is working well as a team, and I'm optimistic that sharing leadership responsibilities and delegating functions to committees will continue to help us advance our causes.

As this column goes to print, work on another annual budget and chapter work program has begun. As always, we have many opportunities for participation by members. Feel free to contact me or the committee chairs listed in this newsletter (recently confirmed by the Board) if you are interested in serving on a committee. And let me know if there is interest in establishing additional committees such as housing and environment.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jerry Weitz, Ph.D., AICP  
President

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Professional Development Officer  
gcoyne@hdrinc.com**David Sutton, AICP**  
Planning Officials Development  
Officer  
dsutton@sgrdc.com

# GPA Membership Selects New President-Elect

Thanks to all of you who voted and thanks especially to two top-notch candidates: Dan Reuter and Deborah Minness!

Thanks also to our Nominations and Elections Committee comprised of Gary Cornell, Chair; Jerry Weitz, GPA President; Patti Cullen, Paul Forgey, Helen Stone, Tracy Dunnivant, Secretary; and Cheryl Contant.

Isn't it great to live in a democracy? We had a smooth election process with none of the problems of Afganistan, Ukraine or the state of Washington! The results are in, validated, and, in case you haven't heard, the new President Elect for GPA is Dan Reuter.

Congratulations, Dan!

## New AICP Members

The Georgia Planning Association is pleased to congratulate the following planners in successfully passing the certification examination and to welcome them as members of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP).

Christopher S. Anderson, Jackson  
Laura F. Beall, Atlanta  
Dana R. Johnson, Atlanta  
Whitney C. Kelly, Atlanta  
Costa Pappis, Augusta

Caleb Racicot, Atlanta  
Nancy C. Seegar, Hogansville  
William R. Toole, Augusta  
Thomas M. Vill, Atlanta  
Kofi Wakhisi, Atlanta  
E. Megan Will, Atlanta

## 2005 Committee Chairs And Appointments

Programs  
Planners' Luncheons  
Nominations and Elections  
Planning Officials Development  
Legislative Affairs  
Professional Development  
Awards  
Urban Design  
Transportation  
Historic Preservation  
Economic Development  
Chapter Services  
Website  
Newsletter  
Membership  
Diversity  
Student Support  
Ga. Tech Accreditation  
Ga. Conservancy Blueprints  
Bylaws

Rob LeBeau  
Kathleen Field and Diana Wheeler  
Dan Reuter  
David Sutton  
Deborah Minness  
Glenn Coyne  
Jerry Weitz  
Paul Soudi  
Mary Huffstetler and Tim Preece  
Paul Forgey  
Bill Bryant  
Alex Ikefuna  
Alex Ikefuna  
Bill Ross  
Alex Ikefuna  
Harmit Bedi  
Glenn Coyne  
Glenn Coyne  
Dan Reuter and Deborah Minness  
Jerry Weitz

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**John Ford, AICP**

**Lee Walton, AICP**

**Megan Will, AICP**

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## Georgia Planning Association

### 2005 SPRING CONFERENCE

April 28th & 29th, 2005

Holiday Inn Select & Conference Center  
Decatur, GA

# SAVE

# THE

# DATE

The **GPA 2005 Spring Conference** will feature two days of special topic training sessions in downtown Decatur. The City of Decatur offers a traditional small town atmosphere along with the benefits of being located in a major metropolitan area. The Holiday Inn Select is located in the heart of downtown Decatur, one block from the town square, the Old Courthouse and MARTA.

**Make hotel reservations now.** Rooms are \$89/night for single or double occupancy. Call the hotel directly at (404) 371-0204 and mention the Georgia Planning Association Spring Conference.



**This rate will be good through the weekend.**

Participants are encouraged to bring their families and stay the weekend to enjoy the City of Decatur and surrounding community.



## GMA

The Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) has begun a series of articles on planning strategies and issues with a focus on growth issues in Georgia. The articles will be authored by planners and consultants involved with projects in Georgia. To view the monthly articles or subscribe to the GMA e-newsletter go to [www.gmanet.com](http://www.gmanet.com)

# GEORGIA PLANNING ASSOCIATION 2004 AWARDS

## Outstanding Planning Document

Presented to

### Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District

for

#### District Watershed, Wastewater Facilities and Water Supply/Conservation Plans

The district, which consists of 16 counties in the Atlanta Metropolitan area was created in 2001 to establish policy, create plans, and promote intergovernmental coordination of all water issues in the district from a regional perspective. Three plans have been prepared: A District-wide Watershed Management Plan, a Long Term Wastewater Management Plan, and Water Supply and Water Conservation Management Plan. These plans represent an outstanding accomplishment as they signify consensus among the many participating governments on how best to meet future water supply and wastewater needs, while fully addressing sustainability of water resources in the region. They are innovative in that they are the first set of plans to integrate water supply needs, wastewater treatment demands, and watershed management comprehensively. The plans are also transferable to other regions of the state and can be used as a model of regional cooperation. This will become important as the State begins its statewide water planning efforts this year.

#### Accepting the Award:

Rick Brownlow, Community Resource Planner  
for the District



## Outstanding Planning Document

Presented to

### Jo Hickson, ASLA

for

#### The Coastal Georgia Alternative: Developing Heritage and Eco-tourism on the Coast

This plan addresses resources from a unique, regional perspective in that it proposes a 150-mile greenway corridor along Coastal Georgia. Currently, within this 150-mile corridor, there are 67 organizations that are working to promote a variety of heritage and eco-tourism opportunities, which often lead to duplicative and un-coordinated efforts. The plan instead proposes that these 67 organizations implement a more comprehensive, regional approach by adopting the 150-mile greenway trail as a unique means for tourists and local residents to travel through the region and experience the many natural and cultural heritage assets. The entire 150-mile corridor has been mapped and photographed in great detail. At each mile point along the route, the plan identifies water access points, waterfront parks, birding sites, wildlife refuges, museums, schools, historic sites, existing bike routes, existing restrooms, camping facilities, and similar features of interest. The plan successfully utilizes a straight forward planning process to identify, quantify and develop a rationale for both the need to build a 150-mile greenway trail, and how the trail will strengthen tourism as a means of economic development in coastal Georgia.

#### Accepting the Award:

Jo Hickson, ASLA



*Continued on next page*

## Outstanding Plan Implementation

presented to

### City of Suwanee

for

#### Suwanee New Town Center Plan Implementation

Implementation of the Suwanee Town Center Master Plan is the crowning achievement of a three-year planning process by the city to prepare for explosive growth while preserving the small town character. The resulting centerpiece is the development of a 20-acre new town center on Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road and Buford Highway that will accommodate a variety of mixed uses. Since the plan's adoption, a number of significant projects have been completed including: development of a 10 acre open space park that serves as a public gathering place; the sale of multiple tracts for mixed use development including offices, retail, and residential - all built to comply with town design guidelines; construction of a new branch library; a cooperative agreement to establish a Farmers Market at the new park - just to name a few. Suwanee's New Town Center is unique, but the ideas that guided the city are applicable to any other small town trying to get ahead of growth.

#### Accepting the award:

Marty Allen, Director of Planning and Community Development



## Outstanding Plan Implementation

presented to

### Augusta Canal Authority

for

#### Augusta Canal Master Plan Implementation

The Augusta Canal Master Plan, which was adopted in 1994 was acknowledged then as ambitious, yet achievable. The Plan was built around implementing the core themes of historic preservation, conserving open space, development of new recreation opportunities, education, and economic development along the Augusta Canal. Since then, nearly \$34 million in public and private investments have been put into the project area. Key implementation achievements include:

- Designation as a National Heritage Park in 1996;
- Creating a multi-use park of regional and statewide importance;
- \$17 million revitalization of the Enterprise Mill completed by a private investor in 1998;
- Developing the canal corridor as an accessible educational resource including opening a \$3.3 million Canal Interpretive Center in 2003, acquiring and launching tour boats in 2003 and 2004, and completion of a multi-use trail and canoe launch in 2004; and
- Renovation of canal head gates and locks and reconstruction of four head gate historic buildings in 2004.
- In addition, an \$8.1 million reconstruction of third level canal facilities is currently underway.

This project is an excellent example a well-developed plan, which has continually received implementation commitments over a long period of time.

#### Accepting the award:

Rebecca Rogers, Marketing Director for the Authority



*Continued on next page*



## Outstanding Student Project

presented to

John Bryan, Todd Cangelosi, Adam

Caskey, Todd Delk,

Wendy Dyson, and Adem Gusa

**Georgia Tech Graduates,**

**Spring, 2004**

for their project entitled

**"Siting a Sanitary Landfill in Fulton County"**

This group project effectively merged the disciplines of law and planning into an impressive, systematic approach to recommending the choice of a landfill site in Fulton County. The legal analysis, siting analysis and planning work is equal to the quality of a professional law or planning firm. The students effectively used GIS in their analysis and presentations; and thoroughly researched statutory requirements and environmental justice issues in arriving at their recommendation. Two sites were originally identified with the students ultimately selecting one for their recommendation.

Accepting the award:

Dr. Cheryl Contant, Georgia Tech Planning Program



## Outstanding Innovative and Effective Planning Process

presented to

**Central Atlanta Progress**

for its

**"Imagine Downtown" Project**

Over the past year, Downtown Atlanta undertook a precedent setting planning initiative to chart the course for future development - aptly named Imagine Downtown. The initiative, which concluded in August, 2004 embraced the unique perspectives of a variety of stakeholders in the development of a downtown master plan. The project employed a dual strategy of surveys and visioning workshops to solicit input. Over 1,900 residents, business owners, tenants, students, developers, and elected and appointed officials participated in an interactive, multi-media visual survey and questionnaire. The five workshops averaged over 100 participants and focused on five areas of development potential: the JSA-McGill Corridor, Eastside/Auburn Avenue, South CBD, Peachtree Street, and the new Multi-modal Passenger Terminal. The Downtown has already reaped tangible benefits from the initiative. More than \$36 million has been secured to implement ideas fostered by the Imagine Downtown initiative. Imagine Downtown offers a model for the future master planning for downtowns that is truly a public-private partnership. Significant features of the process were: a focused agenda, community partnerships, considerable use of web-based tools, and diverse sources of funding.

Accepting the Award:

Paul Kelman, Executive Vice President of Central Atlanta Progress; Jennifer Ball, Senior Project Manager; and Stan Harvey with Urban Collage



*Continued on next page*



**Outstanding Innovative and  
Effective Planning Process**  
presented to  
**City of Savannah and Savannah  
Development and Renewal  
Authority**  
for the  
**Martin Luther King - Montgomery Corridor  
Renaissance**

In 1999, the City of Savannah embarked on a multi-year planning process to ensure the revitalization of Martin Luther King - Montgomery Corridor. This process has resulted in a vision for redevelopment of the corridor; adoption of an Urban Redevelopment Plan and official designation as a redevelopment area; a comprehensive streetscape plan for the full length of the corridor; and a land use strategy for the redevelopment area. The process was completely citizen driven and employed the use of twenty-two public meetings, surveys, and multiple charettes where citizens and landowners could get hands-on involvement in development of the strategies. As a result of this effective process, the City has begun many implementation activities including: streetscape improvements with TEA-21 funding and \$3.4 million in SPLOST funds; development of six financial tools to aid with private property improvements such as: low interest loans to install fire suppression systems, make facade improvements, and to assist with rehabilitation of corner store buildings; and a city financed fund to acquire pivotal properties in the redevelopment area. The public commitment has generated excitement in the Corridor and has resulted in over \$121.6 million in private sector investment, a net gain of 110 new businesses, and creation of 390 new jobs since inception of the project.

Accepting the award:

Alex Ikefuna, Director of Community Planning



**Outstanding Educational Tool**  
Presented to  
**Atlanta Regional Commission  
Community Housing Resource  
Center**  
for its  
**Aging in Place Tool Kit**

The Aging in Place Tool Kit is designed to help localities meet one of the greatest challenges they are likely to face over the coming decades - the aging of the population. It provides information about key issues that are of value to both local planning departments and social service agencies of local government. Issues addressed include local planning and zoning practices to create more age-friendly communities, alternative transportation to support the needs of an older society, housing construction and rehabilitation practices that support lifecycle living environments, and the integration of aging support services into neighborhood based housing. The tool kit has been designed so that it can be used in any community in Georgia, and has also been looked to as a national example of a practical how-to-guide to aging in place.

Accepting the award:

Cathy Berger, Chief of ARC's Aging Service Division  
and Jeff Rader, Community Housing Resource Center



*Continued on next page*

# Outstanding Historic Preservation Project

presented to  
**City of Stone Mountain**  
for  
**Stone Mountain Village Livable Centers Initiative Study**

This Stone Mountain Village study is a redevelopment plan centered on the historic Main Street district. The Village is facing significant challenges including traffic congestion and associated impacts on pedestrian movements, demands for new development that may impact the Village's historic character, and the need to add and upgrade community facilities. Through an extensive public involvement process, the plan identifies a clear opportunity to improve Stone Mountain Village as a vibrant, mixed use town center. The Village's unique historic character is its strongest selling point for businesses and residents and needs to be preserved. Therefore, a central feature of the plan's recommendations is to pursue local designation of a downtown historic district and implementation of design guidelines. These guidelines will protect the integrity of existing

structures that contribute to the historic character and also assure that new development is also compatible. This project illustrates the successful collaboration of historic preservation, economic development and community planning interests.

## Accepting the award:

Marla Bexley-Lovell, Executive Director,  
Main Street Stone Mountain



*Continued on next page*

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## Distinguished Achievement In Planning Award

presented to

**Steven R. Cover, AICP**

**Director, Fulton County Department of Environment and Community Development**

Although his tenure at Fulton County has not been long, Steven Cover has worked hard to bring new and innovative planning tools to the County. These include completion and implementation of the County's Smart Growth initiative. This 18 month planning process set a new direction for planning in Fulton County and laid the groundwork for several new programs including the State's first Transfer Development Rights Ordinance, a Conservation Subdivision Ordinance, a new Tree Protection Ordinance, and an improved Public Participation Program. Steve also oversaw the development of the Chattahoochee Hill Country Master Plan. This community based planning effort has received both GPA and national recognition for its initiative to protect rural landscapes, while promoting the creation of pedestrian oriented villages. These achievements have not gone unnoticed, and under his leadership, Fulton County has received many awards and proclamations that are a direct result of his personal effort to improve planning in Fulton County.



## Distinguished Leadership Award for an Elected Official

presented to

**Emma I. Darnell, Commissioner**

**Fulton County, District 5**

Emma Darnell was first elected to the Fulton County Board of Commissioners in 1992 and was re-elected to serve three additional terms. She has established herself as a trailblazer for great public policy and best management practices in planning. Her special interests are focused on minorities, women, senior adults and the poor. She works passionately to ensure that these groups have a real voice in public involvement for planning projects and zoning, and that service delivery is equitable. At her direction, major initiatives were developed to implement the Environmental Justice Policy of the Board of Commissioners such as:

- established the Office of Environmental Affairs as the lead division to implement policies;
  - established a countywide Environmental Justice Committee;
  - established the Fulton County Citizens Commission of the Environment;
  - successfully amended the Zoning Resolution to incorporate the Environmental Justice Policy;
  - established the environmental review process for all capital improvement projects; and
  - established programs and events to educate the public and community regarding environmental justice issues.
- Her policies and actions have put her at the forefront as a public servant who cares about the well being of her constituents, and has fostered their participation in the County's planning process.

Accepting the award on behalf of Commissioner Darnell, who could not attend the conference, is Deloris J. Baskin, South Fulton District Representative, Fulton County Board of Commissioners, District 7.



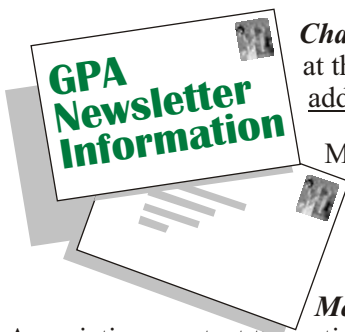




# GEORGIA PLANNER

Newsletter of the Georgia Planning Association, A Chapter of the American Planning Association  
2161 Peachtree Road, NE Suite 806 • Atlanta, Georgia 30309

## APA... Making Great Communities Happen



**Change of Address:** The Georgia Chapter does not maintain address lists. All lists are maintained at the national office and are mailed to the local chapters each month. If you have moved, e-mail: [addresschange@planning.org](mailto:addresschange@planning.org), go to Member Login at [www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org), or write to:

Membership Department  
APA National Headquarters  
122 South Michigan, Suite 1600  
Chicago, Illinois 60603-6107

**Membership Information:** If you are interested in joining GPA or the American Planning Association, contact the national headquarters at the address above or call (312) 431-9100.

**Contacts:** Direct financial inquiries and address payments to the Treasurer. Direct questions about chapter records to the Secretary. Direct matters for the Board of Directors to the President. See mailing and e-mail addresses inside.

**Submission:** The Georgia Planning Association welcomes articles, letters to the editor, photos of planning events or state happenings, calendar listings, job notices, planners on the move, etc. We are always interested in publishing items you think may be of interest to others throughout the state. Graphics are especially welcome. Articles may be edited for space. Articles printed in any issue of The Georgia Planner are not the expressed opinion of the Chapter.

**Deadline:** The deadline for the next issue is **February 28, 2005**.  
Send Items for the newsletter to:

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