



GEORGIA PLANNER

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

Image of Coastal Georgia

Growth Pressures on Georgia's Coast

by Matthew Heins

The coastal region's growth has certainly been impressive; it is regarded as the second-fastest growing part of the state (after the Atlanta metropolitan area). The region's population grew by 34% from 1980 to 2000, from 327,159 to 439,389. Some of the counties that had previously been rather sparsely populated achieved growth rates that were quite astonishing. Bryan County, for instance, had a population of 10,175 residents in 1980, and by 2000 the figure had reached 23,417, a gain of 130%. But the most explosive increase was for Camden County, the southernmost of the group, whose population numbered 13,371 in 1980 and had risen to 43,664 by 2000—a staggering rise of 227%. The exception to the trend was McIntosh County, which has had only modest growth and thus remains lightly populated. Based on the experience of the similar counties, however, McIntosh County may be due for a sharp rise in numbers soon.

The more heavily populated counties, in contrast, have had much slower growth. Chatham County, location of the City of Savannah, is of course far and away the most populous county, and its population only rose by 15% from 1980 to 2000—the slowest growth rate of the counties. Glynn County, location of the City of Brunswick, is second in population after Chatham, and its growth rate of 23% over the 20 year period was the second-slowest growth rate. Clearly the phenomenon of “sprawl”—a term which is unscientific yet quite descriptive—has been taking place in the region, as areas that are less expensive, or that offer more space and other amenities, grab the lion's share of growth, especially residential and commercial growth. This type of development poses significant problems for the environment and for traffic. It also leads to a diminishing sense of place, as distinctive communities with character, personality and “small-town” feel are engulfed in a sea of parking lots, strip malls, big box stores and generic subdivisions.

The coast's rise in population stems from several factors. Its climate and natural beauty are a definite plus—this is an area where people want to live, and such considerations are especially important for retirees. The “small-town” atmosphere that much of the coast still possesses is also appealing; crime is rare and traffic is moderate (though quickly getting worse). Savannah functions as an important urban center for the region, and Jacksonville (just 20 miles south of Camden County) in nearby Florida is also a factor. I-95 runs through all six counties, and

continued p. 4

JUNE 2006 – QUARTERLY

Georgia Planning Association
2161 Peachtree Road, NE
Suite 806
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

Inside this Issue

Georgia's Coast.....	1
President's Corner.....	2
Board of Directors.....	2
Livable Communities Coalition.....	3
Brain Train.....	4
Coastal Comprehensive Plan.....	5
Top 10 Tools for Local Planning.....	6
GDOT Design Manual Online.....	7
Save the Date.....	7
Winning Downtowns.....	8
Announcement.....	8
GPA Sponsors.....	10
Membership Information.....	11
Calendar of Events.....	11

2006 GPA AWARDS PROGRAM

deadline: July 30, 2006

The GPA awards program is intended to recognize individuals, studies, processes and projects that demonstrate an exceptional level of excellence, and to recognize persons who have made outstanding contributions to the field of planning. An unbiased jury of professional planners will be responsible for selecting award recipients. The following general criteria will be used to evaluate each project nominated and the work of individuals nominated.

- **Innovation** – Originality of concept or appreciable refinement of existing techniques or procedures.
- **Transferability** – Potential application in other areas or to other projects.
- **Quality** – Excellence of thought, analysis, writing, graphics and character of presentation.
- **Implementation** – Effectiveness: Proposals either carried out or show promise of doing so.
- **Comprehensiveness** – Planning principles observed, especially their effects on other public objectives.

Sign up today by filling out the application form found on the GPA website at www.GeorgiaPlanning.org. ■

President
 Dan Reuter, AICP
 dreuter@atlantaregional.com
 404-463-3305

Past President
 Jerry Weitz, AICP
 jerryweitz@aol.com
 770-751-1203

VP/Programs
 Rob LeBeau, AICP
 rlebeau@atlantaregional.com
 404-463-3308

VP/Chapter Services
 Stanford Harvey, AICP
 sharvey@urbancollage.com
 404-586-0277

Secretary
 Tracy Dunnivant, AICP
 tdunnivant@cityofnewnan.org
 770-254-2354

Treasurer
 Ellen Heath, AICP
 heathe@edaw.com
 404-870-5339

Professional Dev. Officer
 Gary Cornell, AICP
 gcornell@jjg.com
 678-333-0229

Planning Officials Dev. Officer
 Kellie Brownlow
 kbrownlow@atlantaregional.com
 404-463-3212

Chair - Legislative Committee
 Steven R. Cover, AICP
 scover@AtlantaGa.gov
 404-330-6037

AICP Director at Large
 Glenn Coyne, AICP
 gcoyne@comcast.net
 770-641-1233

AICP Director at Large
 Vacant

Non-AICP Director at Large
 Diana Wheeler
 dwheeler@alpharetta.ga.us
 678-297-6070

Non-AICP Director at Large
 Kathleen Field
 kfield@ci.roswell.ga.us
 770-594-6173

Non-AICP Director at Large
 Vacant

Green Georgia

Many U.S. cities, a few states, major corporations and individuals have embraced a more “Green” oriented growth and business strategy. More efficient use of energy and natural resources is the future. Not only will the business associated with green technologies continue to grow but communities and states that embrace green strategies will be more competitive in the future.

How can Georgia get a piece of the green business during the next 10 years? Georgia governments and business should embrace energy efficient building construction, energy conservation strategies, new sources for green energy, more transportation choices, recycling, production waste reuse and natural resource protection. A bold green strategy will ensure that Georgia is economically successful for decades to come

To indicate the extent of national interest in green technology in the U.S. consider that in April 2006, the cover stories of both “Urban Land”, the monthly magazine of the Urban Land Institute, a private development organization and “Vanity Fair”, a pop culture magazine, both focused on the environment and economic success of green technology. The price of gasoline is partly responsible for renewed interest in energy conservation but accompanying this issue is renewed discussion on issues from waste reuse to global warming.

The motive for focusing on green technology, energy efficient construction, green energy, recycling and other strategies can be entirely profit driven. Rather than seeing a threat from good environmental stewardship and green technology, public and private entities in Georgia should seek economic and marketing advantages associated with more innovation and sustainability. This bold green strategy seems radical until you consider the world in 2006. Georgia is competing in a global economy for not only new jobs but resources and educated professionals. Green strategies are quickly becoming mainstream.

Southface Energy Institute in Atlanta provides resources for implementing energy efficient building construction. The Earthcraft Home Program implemented by Southface and the Greater Atlanta Homebuilders is a national model. A gas station in Athens now provides the option of filling up with Biodiesel. Many Georgians have purchased hybrid or dual fuel cars and many more would make green choices with the right incentives. Georgia DCA has determined that much of the paper waste headed to landfills can be directed to existing Georgia businesses to create products. Planners across the country are working on green strategies. Now is a good time for Georgia to take a few more steps.

Dan Reuter, AICP
 President



Planners Taking Leadership in Quality Growth: GPA and the Livable Communities Coalition in Metro Atlanta

by John Maximuk, AICP, Livable Communities Coalition

In the President's Corner of the March issue, Dan Reuter called on members in the metro Atlanta area to consider providing technical services to the Livable Communities Coalition. Three months later, the Livable Communities Coalition would like GPA members to know that your response was excellent!

The Livable Communities Coalition was established last year in order to provide an ongoing, coordinated framework for working together to achieve principles of quality growth. As a member of the Coalition, the GPA is one of many regional resources aligned to help address the opportunities and challenges of growth and development for the Atlanta region. The GPA has already become one of our most valuable resources.

The Coalition called on its member organizations for volunteers to implement quality growth projects. GPA members came forward in a big way as more than 15 members volunteered for Coalition projects. The GPA representatives that are currently volunteering are Robin Bechtel, Arla Bernstein, Joe Coolley, Kalanos Johnson, Ikroop Kaur, Carolynn Segers, Marty Sewell, Lee Walton, and Jennifer Zhan. Overall, more than 30 volunteers from our member organizations have participated in five different projects and these 15 GPA members are making strong contributions.

The Coalition would like to thank the GPA for encouraging this participation. We would also like to return the favor. If you are involved with growth issues in the Atlanta area, the Coalition would like to examine opportunities to provide assistance, at no cost, in the communities where you live or work. The Coalition lends the combined resources of its members to engage communities to implement quality growth projects, support quality growth for public policy, and educate the public on quality growth. If you would like support for quality growth in any of these three areas, the Coalition can help. For quality growth resources and contact information, see our web site at LivableCommunitiesCoalition.org. ■

District 1 Director

Larry Vanden Bosch, AICP
dceds@ngrdc.org
706-272-2300

District 2 Director

Kip Padgett
kpaddgett@gainesville.org
770-531-6809

District 3 Director

David C. Kirk, AICP
david.kirk@troutmansanders.com
404-885-3415

District 4 Director

Frederick Gardiner, AICP
gardiner@cityofgriffin.com
770.233.4130

District 5 Director

Phil Clark
pclark@mgrdc.org
478-751-6160

District 6 Director

Paul DeCamp, AICP
pdecamp@augustaga.gov
706-821-1796

District 7 Director

Patti Cullen
pcullen@lcrdc.org
706-256-2910

District 8 Director

Paul Forgey, AICP
pforgey@swgrdc.org
229-522-3552

District 9 Director

Sharon Caton
scaton@waycrossga.com
912-287-2944

District 10 Director

Mark Wilkes, AICP
wilkesm@thempc.org
912-651-1451

Planning Official

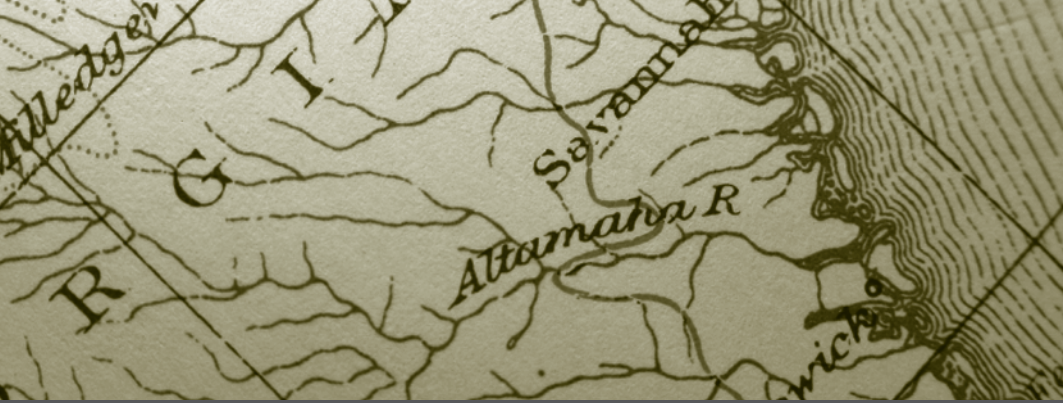
Fred Boykin
fboykin@bicyclesouth.com
404-636-4444

Planning Official

Eric Clarkson
ecent@mindspring.com
770-452-3000

Student Representative

Elizabeth Keysar
elizabeth.keysar@coa.gatech.edu
770-631-0137



GROWTH PRESSURES ON GEORGIA'S COAST *(continued from p. 1)*

it is a valuable economic engine that should not be underestimated. The military presence, of Fort Stewart in Bryan and Liberty counties and the Kings Bay Submarine Base in Camden County, has also been vital to the local economies. Tourism is important to much of the area, especially Savannah and the islands. As globalization continues and international trade booms, the ports of Savannah and Brunswick are flourishing.

All this growth imposes a heavy burden on the environment. The natural areas of the coastal region tend to be especially sensitive because of the shoreline areas, wetlands and soil conditions. Septic tanks, widely used in more rural parts of the coast, are often unsuitable due to the soil. Several timber companies are gradually selling off certain portions of their lands, which are then cleared for development. There is constant pressure to develop the islands, although most of them are fairly safe in the short-term as they are government-owned. The dredging operations of the ports, and the construction of docks and marinas, have a negative effect on the shoreline. Saltwater intrusion in the Floridan Aquifer is a major concern; the region may need new strategies to ensure a plentiful water supply.

The region's growth has also put pressure on the housing market, with the result that some longtime residents are gradually moving further inland from the coast to find more affordable housing. Mobile homes are also an issue, particularly in Liberty County. Middle-class "bedroom communities" are springing up in previously rural areas; this has taken place in parts of Bryan County, especially in and around Richmond Hill, with many of the residents working in Chatham County. Real estate on the islands is, not surprisingly, extremely expensive.

The transportation links of the ports and I-95 have been critical to the region's economic growth, and will remain so. (There are also important rail systems, both for freight and Amtrak, that run in the coastal counties and slightly inland.) The military bases also provide well-paying jobs, but their impact may fluctuate significantly due to national and international factors. Therefore several local governments, in Liberty County especially, have sought to diversify their economies, reducing their dependence on the military presence. Retirees living in the region are also an economic boost, especially as most are fairly well-off. Tourism is important as well; however, most jobs in the tourist industry tend to be low-paying and lack traditional fringe benefits. Manufacturing is clearly on the decline, as in so many other parts of the United States. ■

BRAIN TRAIN

Poll shows 79% want 'Brain Train'

by Paul Donsky

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Published on: 05/26/06

Residents in Athens-Clarke, Barrow and Oconee counties strongly support the concept of a commuter rail line running between their communities and downtown Atlanta, a poll commissioned by rail proponents found.

Poll results, released Thursday, showed that 79 percent favored the proposed commuter rail project, dubbed the "Brain Train" because it would link several college campuses, including the University of Georgia in Athens; Emory University in DeKalb County; and Georgia Tech and Georgia State University in Atlanta.

Support fell slightly, to 68 percent, when poll respondents were given a series of arguments for and against commuter rail. The results closely resemble those from a poll taken last month of Gwinnett County residents, to the delight of Gwinnett developer Emory Morsberger, chairman of a group trying to build public support for the 72-mile rail line. "The desire for this to happen is as strong in the exurbs as it is in the immediate suburbs," he said. "People want this to happen, and they want it to happen fast."

The Brain Train group doesn't have the resources to fund the project, estimated to cost at least \$378 million to build. Their goal is to put the

continued p. 6

by Matthew Heins,
Office of Planning and Quality Growth, DCA

The Georgia coast is one of the fastest-growing parts of the state, but it is also a region rich in history and culture that contains many treasured resources. Balancing various competing interests, in the face of this growth, has become a significant challenge, and the problem is compounded by the lack of a truly regional vision for the area. In light of this, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has been charged by Governor Sonny Perdue with the task of developing a Coastal Comprehensive Plan for the six coastal counties, which are Chatham, Bryan, Liberty, McIntosh, Glynn and Camden. This task will primarily be carried out by the Office of Planning and Quality Growth at DCA, working in coordination with other state departments and agencies, as well as with local governments, nonprofits and business leaders. The final document is to be completed by September of 2007. The primary web page that has been created for ongoing work on the plan is <http://www.georgiaplanning.com/coastal.htm>, which has links to various documents and several other web pages.

The Coastal Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CCPAC), chaired by DCA Commissioner Mike Beatty, was created in the summer of 2005. CCPAC is monitoring, guiding and advising OPQG during the development of the Coastal Comprehensive Plan. The committee contains 35 members, of whom 31 are from the six coastal counties, and represents a broad spectrum of government, business and environmental interests. The committee has met in August of 2005, November of 2005, January of 2006 and March of 2006, and its next meeting will be on July 26th.

The plan will build upon the Coastal Zone Management Plan, done in June of 2003 by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, but it will be broader in scope, and its conclusions may differ. The experiences of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District will also be relevant, as water is a growing concern for coastal Georgia. In addition, the Coastal Sound Science Initiative could be a factor.

One objective of the plan will be to balance various interests that often appear to be in conflict, such as economic development versus the environment, new subdivisions versus affordable housing, and longtime residents versus newcomers. The plan will also try to find a more holistic and regional approach to problems. As the region becomes increasingly tightly-knit together, local governments (and other local institutions or organizations) need to cooperate with each other, crafting regional solutions to the larger problems that they all face. These problems, because of their broad scope and regional nature, cannot really be solved by local governments or institutions

acting entirely on their own; coordination and cooperation are needed.

The plan will focus especially on certain issues that are particularly urgent. The preservation of natural resources, including the barrier islands, marshlands, forested areas, wildlife, the aquifer, and greenspace in general, is perhaps the most important. It is a goal that, aside from being worthy in its own right, provides many ancillary benefits: improving public health, promoting tourism, ensuring future water supplies, and creating a general sense of well-being. Infrastructure is another concern. There is a need for more east-west transportation corridors, for better public transit, and for the continued expansion of the ports. "Quality growth" (sometimes known as "smart growth") will be emphasized as a possible solution to many issues, as it is clear that the current development pattern of "sprawl" causes traffic congestion, restricts affordable housing, harms the environment, fails to provide parks and greenspace, and uses up wastefully excessive amounts of land.

Stakeholders from the coastal region will be involved as much as possible in developing the Coastal Comprehensive Plan, for incorporating local knowledge is always critical to a successful plan. Stakeholders to be consulted (among others) include local governments, school boards, development authorities, property owners, commercial fishers, and the military, as well as residents and businesses in general. Some of the techniques being considered to encourage input from stakeholders are public meetings, visual preference surveys, emails, websites, and press releases. The role of local governments in creating the plan will be especially important, as they possess the best knowledge of local trends and of development projects "in the pipeline." Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, one of the goals of the plan is to encourage better coordination between local governments, and this cannot be done successfully unless those local governments have genuine input into the planning process.

In the next few months planners intend to gain a better understanding of the problems, trends and opportunities that exist in the coastal region, and in particular the types of growth that are encouraged or discouraged by the policies and regulations of local governments or by the standard practices of developers. There is also the option of creating some temporary guidance tools to promote better development in the near future, during the period while the planning process is underway. In the upcoming summer a draft of recommended "best practices" for development, drawing on various sources, will be introduced. In the fall events will be held to bring in

continued p. 7

by Dan Reuter, AICP

What are the top 10 tools that every local government in Georgia should be using to manage growth? This is a very debatable list, but probably worthy of discussion. The tools available and commonly used in 2006 have changed from where we were in 1996. So here is a first try. If you think a better tool that should be on the list, post your comment at the new GPA website online Forum.

1. Conservation Subdivisions – Many new subdivisions will be built in Georgia over the next 10 years. If all subdivisions protected water quality and habitat with a minimum 40% conservation area, we would be in better shape.
2. Small Area Plans – DCA Character areas, urban centers and corridors often require small area plans to get the detail needed to change development regulations and get community buy-in.
3. TND regulations – Forget the suburban designed neighborhoods. Being the predominant development pattern of the last 30 years, Georgia has enough suburban subdivisions to last us for along time. Walkable, safe and more engaging traditionally designed neighborhoods are a better option.
4. Bike/Pedestrian Plans – Linking existing neighborhoods to schools, parks and commercial districts will only occur with local government support and resources. Get a plan and start building.
5. Strategic Comprehensive Plans – Your comprehensive plan must guide public investment decisions to be effective. If public works, water and sewer, schools and land use are going in different directions, God help ya.
6. Redevelopment Incentives – Development is easier where vacant land is cheap and plentiful. If you want redevelopment to occur, local governments must provide incentives and often improve existing infrastructure.
7. Mixed-Use Zoning - Toss the single use commercial districts. All commercial districts should allow some mix of uses (preferably residential) by right.
8. Real Forecasts – Does you forecast match your land use/zoning maps and current permit activity? Make sure your forecasts are rational and housing development is supporting the population ages and incomes you can expect in the future.
9. School System MOU – Georgia needs a law that mandates close coordination of school construction with local planning. Until than get to know your school system planners really well. Encourage schools in existing communities and when necessary build communities at schools.
10. Greenspace Plan – Figure out where your community wants rural land or protect greenspace and don't build infrastructure there. Purchase or transfer development rights, encourage large lot development (5 acre or greater) and buy greenspace. ■

BRAIN TRAIN *continued from p. 4*

Athens commuter rail line on the political agenda for the upcoming election cycle in hopes of securing state and federal funds in the near future.

"We feel [the poll results] should be a guide for people running for office this year," Morsberger said. "We're trying to educate the different political candidates about the benefits of commuter rail." Morsberger and other commuter rail advocates say the region's explosive growth cannot be accommodated by highways alone. Rail offers an environmentally friendly way of addressing the area's traffic and air-quality woes.

But opponents say commuter rail costs too much and won't do enough to ease traffic congestion.

The Athens line is one of two in metro Atlanta being pursued by the state Department of Transportation. As proposed, it would run on existing freight rail corridors and serve 8,000 riders a day. No funding has been identified.

The other project, a 26-mile line to Lovejoy in south Clayton County, is much further along. Designs are complete, and \$106 million in federal and state funds is in hand. But with a projected daily ridership of just 3,000, the project has proved controversial. It has stalled over questions about whether the DOT must go back to the state Legislature before spending any money in Georgia. This confusion is often abused as leverage in property zoning applications and hearings. ■

The Georgia Coastal Comprehensive Plan

continued from p. 5

stakeholder input, and an example of a “future development concept map,” covering one sub-area, will be created. This map will be enhanced and expanded in the winter of 2007, and the recommended “best practices” will be made more specific, so as to apply to particular areas. More stakeholder events will take place in the spring of 2007, and suggested implementation strategies will be formulated. The final plan will be written up and finalized during the summer of 2007. At various points in time along the way, consultants will be utilized to provide expertise and additional perspective.

The final document of the plan, expected to be completed in September of 2007, will consist of several sections. The two most important will be Vision and Implementation. The Vision will enumerate various sub-areas and areas requiring special attention, and will recommend development strategies that are appropriate for these areas. Such strategies may be specific regarding land use, or they may be more general in that regard but more specific about the forms and patterns of development. The Implementation will specify activities and measures needed to realize particular goals, will suggest guidance for state investment, and will recommend consistency provisions for local governments and state agencies.

For additional information about the plan, please contact Jim Frederick (404-679-3105) or Annaka Woodruff (706-542-9967) at the Office of Planning and Quality Growth. The Georgia coastal region is a vibrant and fascinating area, with a proud past and an exciting future. The Coastal Comprehensive Plan seeks to navigate a path to a future that it is as bright as possible. ■

GDOT Context Sensitive Design Manual Online

by Keith Melton

Urban Planning Engineer, GDOT

The GDOT Context Sensitive Design (CSD) Online Manual is a new online tool to help develop transportation solutions. The manual provides a comprehensive source of information and links to GDOT policies and other manuals.

The purpose of this Online Manual is to provide GDOT management, staff, consultants, and other practitioners with the latest research and development information regarding CSD/CSS “best practices” in Georgia and throughout the country. It sets out policy guidelines and procedures for communication strategies, design flexibility, environmental sensitivity, and stakeholder involvement which GDOT project managers and design engineers can use to achieve successful context-sensitive solutions (CSS).

The Online Manual also offers project examples in Georgia and in other states that demonstrate good CSS practices. These examples offer lessons learned to further the work GDOT will do in promoting excellence in transportation planning and design. Please visit the online manual at <http://www.dot.state.ga.us/csd/index.html>.

Instructions to download:

If you wish to download a copy, there is a link on the website to a PDF version that anyone can print for themselves. If you look at the left side menu on the home page you'll see the link to “Download Manual”. There are PDF files for the entire manual as well as files for individual chapters. ■

SAVE THE DATE

GPA 2006 FALL CONFERENCE

The upcoming GPA 2006 Fall Conference will be held at the Sea Palms Golf & Tennis Resort on St. Simon's Island, GA. The conference is October 11th – 13th and includes 35+ breakout sessions, mobile workshops, awards lunch, and the new Planning Commissioner's Track.

Visit the GPA website and download a Save the Date Card and a Hotel Reservation Form at www.GeorgiaPlanning.org

Do you have a SESSION idea? Now is the time to make a session proposal for the 2006 Fall Conference. Fill out a separate downloadable form for each session proposed from the GPA website or call Rob LeBeau, AICP, at 404.463.3308 if you have any questions.

Proposal Deadline: June 28th

Winning Downtowns Stack Their Decks: The age of attractive parking structures has arrived.

Keith Schneider, Deputy Director, Michigan Land Use Institute

Three years ago, elected leaders in Traverse City, Mich., won a tough public fight to replace acres of surface parking with a distinctive parking deck designed to blend into this handsome lake city's thriving downtown.

They never anticipated that the architect would do such a good job that people driving into Traverse City regularly missed the new \$8.3 million, four-level deck entirely, mistaking its dark brick facade, big window-like openings and first-floor retail spaces for a new office building. That problem was solved the old-fashioned way: By hanging white and blue banners on city streetlights, urging visitors to "hit the deck."

"It's kind of a balancing act," said Bryan Crough, the executive director of the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority, a city government agency that oversees the two-year-old parking deck, which was named for a former city commissioner. "We didn't want it to stand out, but we still need people to know it's there."

Indeed, the 540-space Larry C. Hardy Parking Deck represents a new value - handsome architectural design - added to the lengthy list of utilitarian considerations, like size, lighting, ease of access, safety, durability, efficiency and cost, which have long guided parking deck construction in America. So many cities, universities, hospitals, airports, train stations, corporate parks and housing developments are building upscale parking decks that they now represent a mainstream movement in civic design.

Reclaiming Civic Energy

Parking, as most people know, has long been at the very top of the list of America's civic priorities. The more the merrier, it was once thought. But every new surface lot meant an office building, restaurant, store, or home came down, diminishing downtown vitality.

Cities looked at the situation and came to a collective, "Aha!" Let's stack the cars, use less space, and rebuild the structures that people use.

It works. The new parking deck in Traverse City reflects the increasing civic energy that is coming to influence the downtown of this small Great Lakes city, and countless others across the country. Dale F. Denda, the research director at PMRC, a parking market and operations research firm in McLean, Va., said that 355 new parking decks were built across the country last year. They averaged 860 spaces at an average \$12,000 a space. Do the math, and parking decks added about 305,000 new spaces in America. Builders spent \$4.2 billion to put them up. A third to half of all new decks were designed to blend in, costing \$1,000 to \$2,000 a space more than a conventional, unadorned parking deck.

Much has changed since the first self-park deck was built in Detroit in the 1930's. Inside modern decks, ceilings are higher, lights are brighter, colors are more soothing, and traffic engineers have made driving in and out easier, faster, and safer. But the most visible changes have come on the outside, Mr. Denda said, because builders are now asking architects to help them make parking decks more compatible with their community.

"People are much more sensitive to how these decks look than they used to be, and there's a reason for that," Mr. Denda said. "In a lot of cases, the parking deck dwarfs the buildings that generate the traffic. Take a 150,000-square-foot office building. The typical parking ratio is three spaces per thousand. You're talking about a garage that is as large as the office building. So builders and architects are trying to reduce the mass from an architectural standpoint. They use architectural treatments to seemingly scale down the garage, hide it, make it fit in."

Good Design Tricks

Architects use two principal design tools to accomplish this feat. The first is updating the exteriors with facades of brick and molded concrete, installing aluminum screens and other window treatments, incorporating plantings and, in some cases, limiting the structure's size. The second trick is to try to hide the deck behind other buildings.

In combination, the effect can be striking. For example, Princeton, N.J., built a 500-space parking deck that is almost indistinguishable from a new public library, new housing and a retail, restaurant and office complex under development downtown. The project also includes a new public park.

continued p. 9

APA PLANNING AND WOMEN DIVISION

The APA Planning and Women Division is seeking new members and chapter liaison to the division.

If you are interested, feel free to view the division web site for in depth information www.urban.uiuc.edu/apa-pw. For further information, please contact Division Chair Pattsi Petrie at pattsi@uiuc.edu

In Boca Raton, Fla., MBNA America, the big credit-card company that is now a subsidiary of the Bank of America, built a 499-space parking deck in the late 1990s as part of its new Southern regional headquarters. The deck incorporates a tile parapet wall along the entire roof of the building, aluminum grillwork on the windows and a white decor that makes it look like a corporate office building.

One of the best examples of parking structure design and construction was completed along the Christina River in Wilmington in 2003, where the Delaware Department of Transportation built a two-level, 422-space deck with grapevine joints, cast-stone keystones, flame-finish granite, cornices, column caps and Victorian scrollwork grilles. The design and flourishes of the Riverfront Parking Deck pay homage to the Philadelphia architect Frank Furness, who designed three buildings in the city's Train Station District.

The \$8.5 million parking deck, designed by John Hynes, a Wilmington architect with Tevebaugh Associates, also serves the Amtrak station, built on a 20-foot viaduct and one of the busiest railroad stations in the country. But the deck is low enough for passengers and those waiting for trains to see the new landscaped riverside park, which Wilmington now regards as its gateway.

"The state spent a lot of extra money for that facade because they wanted the aesthetics to match the nearby train station and the park next to the river," said E. James Ebert, executive vice president of Tim Haahs & Associates, an architectural and engineering firm in Blue Bell, Pa., and in Miramar near Miami that specializes in parking decks, and helped design the Wilmington deck. "Builders want the nice architectural finishes."

It's a Hit

The flourishes and extra costs of high-minded parking decks, however, have not been appreciated in every locale. When the University of Akron in Ohio included retail shops in its new parking deck close to the campus, *The Buchtelite*, the student newspaper, wrote an editorial criticizing it in January. "Students searching for a credible institution of higher learning look for scholarship opportunities, exceptional professors and strong academic departments," wrote the editorial staff. "The university should not resort to promoting shopping."

Almost two years ago, when Waynesville, N.C., opened its \$4 million, 376-space deck downtown, residents were unimpressed. The five-level structure, which leaders said would not look like a parking garage, looked exactly like that. "Masking the bottom seven feet of the front of a five-level parking deck with a strip of stonework won't change the way it looks from a distance

or the way it looks when approaching it by vehicle from the side," wrote Becky Johnson, a writer for *The Smoky Mountain News*.

Traverse City's deck, however, is a hit with residents, visitors and the city. It is among the tallest buildings in this city of 14,500. The entrances are embellished by ironwork, and the stairways and elevators are housed in a lighthouse-style tower with huge glass windows. The first floor on State Street houses offices, Bart's Texas-Style BBQ restaurant, and is across from the Park Place Hotel, the city's oldest and grandest.

At more than \$15,000 a space, the Larry Hardy deck represents an investment that is roughly double what an unadorned concrete parking deck costs. But city figures show it is generating higher than expected parking revenue; 18,000 vehicles used the deck in July, the city said. It has proved to be such an asset that there has been no argument about building a second deck on the city's west side.

"Our plan for downtown is to make it more walkable, more dense," said Mr. Crough. "We want to make it look and feel much more like downtown did in the 1930s and 1940s. Taking cars off the surface lots and putting them in great looking parking decks helps." ■





To enhance the built and natural environments, creating exceptional value for our clients, shareholders, employees and communities.

Environment Transportation
Land Resources Water Resources

2849 Paces Ferry Road, Suite 400
Atlanta, GA 30339
(p)770.431.8666 • (t)770.435.2666 • www.arcadis-us.com



PHONE (404) 841-6364
FAX (404) 841-0978
E-MAIL: receptionist@broncleland.com
www.broncleland.com

BRON CLEVELAND ASSOCIATES, INC.
PLANNERS • ENGINEERS • CONSULTANTS • PROGRAM MANAGERS

16-B LENOX POINTE, N.E.
ATLANTA, GA 30324



The Collaborative Firm, LLC

Real Estate Development, Strategic Planning & Governmental Services

1514 East Cleveland Avenue, Suite 82
East Point, Georgia 30344
404-684-7031 Tel
404-684-7033 Fax
www.thecollaborativefirm.com



**Transportation Planning
Traffic Engineering
Parking Studies
Transit and Bicycle Planning
Design Services**

1718 Peachtree Street NW, Suite 461
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

Phone: (404) 249-7550
Fax: (404) 249-7705
www.daywilburn.com

**DESIGN, PLANNING AND
ENVIRONMENTS WORLDWIDE**

Master Planning
Landscape Architecture
Urban Design
Economic Development
Environmental Analysis

817 West Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 770
Atlanta, Georgia 30308
404.376.5339 • 404.870.6592 fax
www.edaw.com



Traffic and Transportation Consultants

John J. Funny
Principal

Grice & Associates, Inc.
Two Midtown Plaza
1349 West Peachtree Street, N.E.
Suite 1290
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

404.577.6300 x101
404.577.6310 fax
jfunny@griceinc.com

**Engineers
Planners
Surveyors**

301 Perimeter Center North
Suite 400
Atlanta, GA 30346
PH: 678-775-4800
FX: 678-775-4848
www.hdrinc.com



ONE COMPANY | Many Solutions™



**Comprehensive
Planning &
Engineering
Services**



6801 Governors Lake Parkway
Building 200
Norcross, Georgia 30071
t 770.455.8555 • f 770.455.7391
www.jjg.com

LORD • AECK • SARGENT
ARCHITECTURE

Ann Arbor • Atlanta • Chapel Hill
www.LordAeckSargent.com

**m_{arket}
+m_{ain}**
where design and economics meet

Enhancing Communities.

Neighborhood Solutions.

PLANNING
ENVIRONMENTAL
CIVIL ENGINEERING
TRANSPORTATION
CONSTRUCTION

Partner with PBS&J...



We Make It Happen.

Offices throughout the USA • pbsj.com • 800-826-4284



**Robert and Company
Robert International**

Engineers • Architects • Planners
96 Poplar Street NW
Atlanta, Georgia 30335-6001

Contact: John Ford, AICP, Director of Planning
Telephone: 404.577.4000 • Fax 404.577.7119
www.robertandcompany.com



Urban planning and plan
Implementation

Comprehensive Plans
Zoning and Land
Development Codes
Implementation Programs
Capital Improvements
Financing and Impact Fees

ROSS+associates

2161 Peachtree Road, NE
Suite 806
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

Phones: 404-355-4505
Fax: 404-352-5926
Mobile: 404-626-7600
Email: bill@planross.com



1389 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30309-3091
404.873.6730
404.574.6471 fax
www.jumpan.com



community design and architecture



URS Corporation
400 Northpark Town Center
1000 Abernathy Road, NE
Suite 900
Atlanta, GA 30328
Tel: 678-808-8800
Fax: 678-808-8400
www.urscorp.com

Transportation/Transit Planning
Environmental Planning
Traffic Engineering
Road & Bridge Design
Civil Engineering
Environmental Engineering



URBAN DESIGN

buildings & sites
schools & campuses
neighborhoods & districts
corridors & centers
cities & towns

84 Peachtree St. NW, Suite 300
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
P 404.586.0277
F 404.586.0079
E sharvey@urbancollage.com

principal

STANFORD HARVEY, AICP

VINYL SIDING INSTITUTE
**America
Sides with
Vinyl**

thank you to our sponsors!

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, go to Member Login at 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 email 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 **August 31, 2006**.

Send items for the newsletter to:

William F. Ross
ROSS+associates
2161 Peachtree Road, NE Suite 806
Atlanta, Georgia 30309
Bill@planross.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - visit the website for the current events listing

June 16th – 17th	Growing Green, Achieving Sustainability Tax Policies & Techniques that Support Planning	Chicago	www.planning.org
June 20th – 22nd	Wild About Georgia Educator Workshop	Waleska, GA	www.georgiaconservancy.org
June 24th	Georgia's Native Waters & Leopold Education	Kennesaw, GA	www.georgiaconservancy.org
June 24th – 27th	GMA Annual Convention	Savannah, GA	Janice Eidson (678-686-6256)
June 24th – 30th	Paddle Georgia	Dawsonville, GA	www.georgiaconservancy.org
June 29th	Sapelo Island and Its Reserve: Reflections of Coastal Georgia	Darien, GA	www.georgiaconservancy.org
July 8th	Annual Chattahoochee Moonlight Rafting	Atlanta, GA	www.georgiaconservancy.org
July 21st	GPA Board Meeting	TBA	dunnavant@cityofnewnan.org
August 31st	Quarterly Newsletter Deadline		rossatcr@cs.com
October 11th – 13th	GPA Fall Conference	St. Simons, GA	rlebeau@atlantaregional.com
September 20th – 22nd	GEDA Annual Conference	Savannah, GA	www.geda.org
November 30th	Newsletter Deadline		rossatcr@cs.com
December 8th	GPA Board Meeting	TBA	dunnavant@cityofnewnan.org



GEORGIA PLANNER – June 2006 Newsletter of the Georgia Planning Association, A Chapter of the American Planning Association



Georgia Planning Association
2161 Peachtree Road, NE
Suite 806
Atlanta, Georgia 30309