



## GEORGIA PLANNER

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

Sapelo Island, Georgia

### New Math Needed for Fixing Congestion

by Dan Reuter, GPA President

Much discussion has occurred in metro Atlanta recently with the release of the Congestion Mitigation Task Force (CMTF) report. The CMTF was appointed by Governor Perdue and included members of Georgia DOT, Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), Georgia Regional Transportation Authority and the Tollway Authority. Much of the discussion involves the possibility of increased partiality for roadway construction to relieve traffic congestion.

Georgia is generally representative of the U.S. in our love for automobiles. Right or wrong, the existing development patterns of America are largely built and subsidized for the use of cars. While many current and future Georgia residents are arguably dependent on transit, considering future population growth and auto ownership rates, we very likely will have many more drivers and cars on the roads in Georgia in the year 2030.

American society sends many cues that cars are the intended national mode of transportation. It would be difficult to alter this established trend without a substantial rise in fuel costs and federal, state and local policy changes. Considering our history on issues that influence car ownership in the U.S., a change in the dominance of the automobile is difficult to foresee. Thankfully, housing markets seem to increasingly value urban places that provide the ability to drive less.

While many alternative transportation advocates desire a future of less automobile dependence, a rational forecast points to more cars and owners in Georgia. Considering the U.S. and Georgia have been economically successful with a strategy of relying upon automobiles it is easy to understand why many believe this continued course is appropriate in the future. However, the primary concern may not be which transportation projects or modes will better move future residents and our economy. More importantly we should question the basis of anticipating resources and conditions adequate to improve roads and highways enough to even maintain current levels of traffic congestion during the next 25 or more years.

We have an excellent network of existing roads and highways. Georgia DOT, many local governments and private contractors are among the best road planning and building

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MARCH 2006 – QUARTERLY

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#### WE NEED YOUR NOMINATIONS for President-Elect

In accordance with the GPA By-Laws, the Nominations and Elections Committee will soon start the process of preparing for the election of a President-Elect prior to the Fall Conference. The Nominations and Elections Committee is chaired by the Past President, Jerry Weitz.

Here's where you come in:

We need your suggestions for nominees for President-Elect. The President-Elect will be elected late this summer, will be installed at the Fall Conference and will begin serving on the GPA Board for one year thereafter. The President-Elect would then automatically serve as GPA's next President beginning in October 2007 for a two-year term, and then finishes with a one-year term as Past President.

If you want to be considered for this office, or you want to nominate someone, contact Jerry Weitz at [jerryweitz@aol.com](mailto:jerryweitz@aol.com) or call him at 770-751-1203. The person nominated must be a member in good standing of both APA and the Georgia Chapter. Nominations will be open until June 15, 2006. The committee will review the list of applicants and select a slate of nominees for a ballot that will be published in August. ■

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**MARCH – PRESIDENT’S CORNER**

Remember when GPA was on its own in Georgia? To be honest, I am not that old either. But GPA has been a registered non-profit since 1968. So there was a time when GPA was one of the few such organizations in Georgia. Now we have many organizations, partnerships, developers, consultants, government and quasi-public agencies promoting, funding and building “smart growth” development or redevelopment in many areas of Georgia. You can find links to these partner organizations at the new GPA website!

While GPA is no longer the only game in town, we are still the backbone. While some organizations or professionals want to believe they can sidestep traditional planning, when the cards are all played, it is the community process with comprehensive plans and development regulations that have legitimacy and sustainability. That is local government and GPAs territory.

However, GPA should embrace the diversity of partners that are now seeking to make a difference in Georgia planning. Our members should be represented in Georgia DCA managed Quality Growth Resource Teams. We should participate in Georgia Conservancy Blueprints for Successful Communities charrettes. We should contribute our experience and knowledge to Livable Communities Coalition projects. We should find new ways to partner with Georgia ASLA, Georgia ITE, the new CNU chapter, GAZA and ULI. Engagement is one of the few ways planning has ever evolved. I consider it a major success that many organizations in Georgia now recognize the need for good community planning.

During the past month, GPA has been working with Georgia ASLA to plan an event commemorating the birthday of Frederick Law Olmsted. The event will be held Thursday, April 27 at 11:30 a.m. at Druid Hills Golf Club. Contact Becky Kirk at 770.819.7777 or bkirk@southernae.com to RSVP. The featured speaker is Lucy Lawliss, ASLA, co-chair of the National Association for Olmsted Parks.

GPA recently received a request to participate in community planning with other members of the newly formed Livable Communities Coalition. I hope if you live in metro Atlanta you will consider providing some pro-bono technical assistance through this request. Let’s find many ways to “make the pie higher”. A commitment to GPA does not mean we cannot partner with other professionals.

GPA membership will exceed 1,000 members during 2006. This is a major milestone for our organization. If you happen to be the lucky #1000, remind me to buy you a beer or cup of coffee!

**Dan Rueter, AICP**

President



## AICP Names Three Fellows from Georgia

The American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), the professional institute of the American Planning Association, is pleased to announce the 2006 class of Fellows of AICP. Election to Fellow in AICP is one of the highest honors that the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) bestows upon a member. This honor is a recognition of the achievements of the planner as an individual, elevating the Fellow before the public and the profession as a model planner who has made significant contributions to planning and society.

Fellowship is granted to planners who have been members of AICP and have achieved excellence in professional practice, teaching and mentoring, research, public/community service, and leadership. Those chosen become members of the College of Fellows. The following individuals will be officially inducted into the College of Fellows on April 22, 2006 at the APA National Planning Conference in San Antonio.

Three professionals from the State of Georgia have been included in the 2006 class of Fellows. These persons are **Professor Steven P. French, Ph.D** of the Center for Geographic Information Systems at Georgia Institute of Technology; **Professor Larry Keating, Ph.D**, Graduate Program in City and Regional Planning, Georgia Institute of Technology and **Richard Rothman, FAIA**, an architect-planner offering consulting services.

Professor French has a Master of Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Colorado – Denver and a Ph.D. (City and Regional Planning) from the University of North Carolina. French has been instrumental in Geographic Information System Applications, Land Use Planning and Management, Earthquake and Flood Hazard Analysis and Mitigation and Urban Infrastructure Management.

Professor Keating has a Ph.D. Urban and Regional Planning, University of Wisconsin – Madison and a Master of Architecture - Urban Design, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. In addition to educating over 900 graduate city planners, Professor Keating co-founded the Community Design Center of Atlanta. The CDCA is the vehicle that connects planning students with clients in low income and minority communities, the medium through which students are educated to the realities of life in disadvantaged

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# What's New on GeorgiaPlanning.org?

## GPA FORUM

The GPA Forum is a great way for all members and non-members to post information, announcements, comments, and questions in the Georgia planning community. Registration is free and required to post topics and replies in any of the sections including GPA News, Legislative News, Announcements, General Discussions, plus more. Also, any time someone posts to a topic you are part of you can automatically receive an email notice. So stop by the GPA website today and join the forum community.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The GPA Calendar of Events can now be found online on the GPA website under the "Events" menu. Come see what's happening in the planning community. Also available under the same menu are links to the GPA Conference updates and Related Events occurring around the state, as well as, the country.

## SUBSCRIBE TO THE GPA eNEWSLETTER

Both members and non-members are welcome to sign-up for the new GPA eNewsletter. This up-to-date monthly newsletter will come to you via email providing current news, reports, and announcements. To subscribe simply click on the "Subscribe eNewsletter" link on the GPA website homepage.

## GPA JOB POSTINGS

The GPA will post job ads for any position in Georgia at no cost as a service to our members. For out-of-state positions, a \$50 fee will be assessed and an invoice will be sent for payment. Listings are updated daily as new information is available. All listings with deadlines will be deleted the next day after the deadline date. All listings with no specified deadline date are listed for sixty days after the posting date and then are deleted, unless otherwise specified.

*[www.georgiaplanning.org](http://www.georgiaplanning.org)*

## TE PROJECT SELECTIONS for FY 2006 & FY 2007

State Transportation Board Members have made their selections for the Transportation Enhancement (TE) projects for the FY 06 and 07 funding. A call for applications was held last July statewide. The deadline for submitting applications was September 23, 2005. GDOT received 275 applications statewide requesting over \$220 million in TE Funds. There was only \$54.6 million available statewide for TE projects giving each Board Member \$4.2 million in their congressional district.

Once applications were received, there were technical reviews done by the Department to ensure the applications met the criteria and federal guidelines. Once the technical review was completed, the TE Advisory Panel was sent applications to review, rank, and make recommendations to the Transportation Board Members. The Transportation Board Members then had the difficult task of selecting projects based on the technical reviews and TE Advisory Panel recommendations. Projects are selected by Congressional District and done individually by the Transportation Board Member representing the Congressional District.

As a result, there are 151 new projects added to the program statewide. The list of new projects is available at [www.dot.state.ga.us/dot/plan-prog/planning/projects/te](http://www.dot.state.ga.us/dot/plan-prog/planning/projects/te) sorted by Congressional District. ■



GEORGIA PLANNING ASSOCIATION  
**Planning Today for Georgia's Future**

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**2006 SPRING CONFERENCE**  
Register Now for the Spring Conference in Athens on March 23 and 24, 2006

**A BLUEPRINTS FIRST—**  
Two Community Design Workshops Kickoff at Once

**GPA JOB POSTINGS**  
A listing of jobs posted by both members and non-members across the Southeast.

**GEORGIA PLANNING ASSOCIATION**  
GPA is a 950-plus member organization of professional planners and planning officials who serve Georgia's communities in many ways, at all levels of government, the private sector and not-for-profit organizations. [read more...](#)

**LEGISLATION – SR 1040\*\***  
New legislation regarding a proposed Georgia Constitutional Amendment that could lead to a roll back of local government power to provide planning and zoning... [read more...](#)

**POD – 2006 STRATEGY**  
The Georgia Planning Association (GPA) has the responsibility to improve planning decision-making across the state through the provision of professional development for elected and appointed planning officials in Georgia. [read more...](#)

**CONGRATULATIONS TO THREE GEORGIANS!**  
Three of the Forty-five distinguished planners who will be inducted into the FAICP on April 22, 2006, at the APA National Planning are members of the Georgia Chapter of APA. They are...

# A BLUEPRINT FIRST—Two Community Design Workshops Kickoff at Once

by Crystal Jackson & Carolyn Rader, Georgia Conservancy Staff

For the first time in the ten-year history of Blueprints for Successful Communities, two community design workshops will be conducted simultaneously. In January, the Georgia Conservancy's Blueprints staff will begin work with the Pittsburgh community in southwest Atlanta and several neighborhoods along LaVista Road in DeKalb County.

Technical analysis for these workshops will be provided by Georgia Tech City and Regional Planning graduate students, guided by Mike Dobbins and Randy Roark, longtime supporters of Blueprints. In addition, the workshops will give Blueprints Partner organizations opportunities to share their professional expertise.

## PITTSBURGH

Pittsburgh is one of Atlanta's oldest in-town neighborhoods and, like many communities, has undergone many changes over the years that have left the community in decline. Although problems began much earlier, the development that Atlanta experienced from 1970 to 1990 created the most dramatic loss in Pittsburgh's population, employment opportunities, affordable housing and quality of housing. The overall environment has improved since the neighborhood's beginnings in 1883, but the neighborhood continues to have more than its fair share of environmental pollution.

For those who live in the neighborhood, and whose families have grown up there, it is a community very much worth saving. With the building boom spreading through more of the city's in-town neighborhoods, Pittsburgh residents want to ensure that the vision they have for improving their community is not overlooked. Through the efforts of the Pittsburgh Community Improvement Association (PICA), together with the Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership (ANDP), residents are coming closer than ever to having a guiding hand in what that vision should be. In a unique partnership, PICA and ANDP have asked the Blueprints program to assist in developing this vision and taking it to the implementation stage. Building on several on-going initiatives, including ANDP's Mixed-Income Communities Initiative and the recently completed Pittsburgh Redevelopment Plan, the PICA board sees the Blueprints process as a new horizon for their community.

## LIVABLE LAVISTA

The Georgia Conservancy, working in partnership with the Alliance for a Livable LaVista (ALL), will provide technical assistance to the residents of the neighborhoods, businesses, and institutions surrounding the "main street" of LaVista Road between its intersections with Clairmont Road and Briarlake Road in DeKalb County. The residents of this area have been addressing multiple issues of planning, design, and quality of

life for a number of years. Most recently, ALL developed a "wish list" of issues critical to the neighborhoods. They have also been dealing directly with re-zonings and the design of infill housing, both on LaVista and within their neighborhoods.

Through the Blueprints program, ALL can focus on one aspect of planning which overarches many issues on its "wish list": connections to and from destinations within the planning area. Specifically, Blueprints will work with ALL to conduct a process that could lead to recommendations for:

Improved automobile, pedestrian, and bicycle mobility along LaVista, particularly at major intersections;

- Improved pedestrian and bicycle access to institutions (churches, schools, library, etc.), open spaces, and commercial areas, including connected trails and paths within all neighborhoods;
- Designated open spaces, existing and proposed, including both passive and active green spaces;
- Future land uses and design parameters in critical locations, particularly at major intersections; and
- General design recommendations for infill development along LaVista, particularly with respect to height, scale, orientation and access.

## YOU CAN HELP

Funding for these workshops is made possible through the Building a Foundation for Blueprints Campaign. Money raised through the two-year campaign will enable the Georgia Conservancy to provide Blueprints assistance to more communities throughout Georgia. If you or your organization is interested in contributing to the campaign, please contact Samantha Lampert at 404.876.2900 ext. 116. ■



## 2006 Planning and Zoning Workshop

The 2006 Planning and Zoning Workshop held on January 11, 2006 at the Georgia Agricenter and Fairgrounds in Perry was an outstanding success in terms of attendance, location, and speaker presentations.

There were a total of 48 attendees that were from seven cities and eight counties in the Middle Georgia region. Among the attendees, there were Planning and Zoning staff members, planning commissioners, DCA staff, county commissioners, city/county officials, city council members, citizens, appeal board members, and even attorneys.

The agenda included a morning session presented by Jerry Weitz on the Model Codes. During lunch the City Manager from Perry, Lee Gilmour, and his staff discussed “Public/Private Partnerships Utilized in Greenspace Preservation.” Our afternoon session included zoning-related legal topics presented by Frank Jenkins. We concluded the workshop with a tour of the Agricenter by a staff member in the Marketing Department.

The RDC developed an evaluation tool that was handed out before Mr. Jenkins’ presentation so that participants could complete them prior to the afternoon’s scheduled tour. The evaluation was devised to measure each session individually for its educational value, relevance to the individual’s needs, and the effectiveness of the presenter, and finally a five-question rating for overall review of the workshop. We asked that each of the criteria be measured based on a 1 through 10 scale with 1 being low and 10 the highest rating. We also attached a page asking what participants liked, didn’t like, and any recommendations for future topics.

Our staff and management held a “post” workshop meeting to critique the event for next year and to review the evaluations for possible changes or recommendations to the program. Overall ratings were 9s (out of 10) for the session. We received positive feedback from the evaluations – the location, speakers, food, and subject content. We found we generated a great deal of discussion centering on manufactured homes and related ordinances/regulations, which we may need to expound on in future sessions. We received three suggestions for future topics: stormwater education; comprehensive planning – getting your local politicians involved; and constitutional basis for P&Z – allowable criteria (basis) for zoning decisions.

The RDC would like to put together a workshop next year on innovative developments in Georgia presented by local developers utilizing site plans as visuals and invite the local governments to provide insight on drawbacks and lessons learned. Another topic we are considering is a legal aspect governing manufactured homes, and perhaps zoning appeals.

The RDC appreciates the support from the Georgia Planning Association and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for helping to sponsor this event.

GPA District 5 wants to congratulate and recognize Michael Whipple on his outstanding achievement in passing the AICP exam and becoming a member of AICP. ■

WAY TO GO MICHAEL!

## ACIP FELLOWS *continued from p. 3*

communities and the catalyst for teaching participation, mutual respect and the development of effective planning policies.

Between 1970 and 1997 Richard Rothman completed plans for about 100 downtowns and neighborhoods as well as campuses, institutions and planned communities. Among these were plans for the City of Atlanta’s major pedestrian “corridors” for the 1996 Olympics; downtown plans for Georgia cities such as Decatur, Gainesville, Athens and Atlanta; neighborhood business district plans including Little Five Points in Atlanta and Oakhurst in Decatur; redevelopment plans for Underground Atlanta; and numerous plans for Atlanta University Center institutions and their surrounding neighborhoods. Architectural projects included a wide range of new and renovated in-town civic, commercial and residential buildings. Among these are the streetscaping of Capitol Avenue, Rialto Center for the Performing Arts, Biltmore Suites, Peachtree-North Apartments, Ponce de Leon branch library and St. Thomas More Parish Hall.

Georgia Planning Association is very excited that APA has added these individuals to the existing Fellows from the State of Georgia. Existing Fellow include: Myles Smith, FAICP; Paul Kelman, FAICP; Leon Eplan, FAICP; Carl Patton, FAICP; Jack Crowley, FAICP; Randy Roark, FAICP; and David Sawicki, FAICP. ■



continued organizations in the U.S. While we have traffic congestion, particularly at peak driving periods, we also have unparalleled mobility. However, for many reasons it will not be enough to put more money in a business as usual approach in the future.

First, there will not be enough money. Most existing roads and highways in metro Atlanta and Georgia had a large share of federal funding for construction. Georgia DOT estimates \$86 billion of future funding largely based on historical federal revenues. Considering our federal budgetary condition, it does not seem prudent to expect the same level of funding for transportation infrastructure as occurred in the past 40 or more years. In addition, our current state and local funding sources (and low tolerance for taxes) are unlikely to come close to the levels of funds needed for maintaining the existing transportation system much less expanding to meet all urban, suburban and rural needs in Georgia. The demand for funds to provide existing system maintenance and improvements plus the needs for future populations and development are too large.

Estimates for new roadway construction are continuously increasing. Proximity to urban areas increases the complexity of projects and costs of right-of-way. The amount of funds compared to the expanding need plus growing costs just does not balance. New transportation projects and solutions are identified without new funding sources to match. Our state population is growing quickly and often in dispersed locations that are very challenging to construct infrastructure to meet.

Fortunately, Georgia and metro Atlanta have a large and diverse economy built around an existing transportation network. We can expect continuous and rapid growth of jobs and population for the long term future. But rather than looking further outward, expect the vast majority of future jobs, population and industry in the year 2030 to be located exactly where they are today.

The existing communities and urban areas in Georgia that have benefited from infrastructure expansion in the past will maintain their dominance and receive the largest share of growth in the future. Some lower density residential development and jobs will move further out of existing developed areas and inevitable traffic congestion will follow them.

Continued growth in existing developed areas in Georgia is the most likely future scenario. The reasons are not social engineering or politics but limited personal discretionary time, location of our existing economy and infrastructure plus available entertainment/attractions are good determinants of where people will live in the future.

While technology may allow many citizens to work from home, increasingly we will choose homes in locations where we can drive in the shortest time possible or use transit to get to jobs or places we want to be. The predominant areas in the future where most Georgians will live or work will be the areas that have infrastructure today. Nine million Georgians live in existing communities. A majority of the 3 million more residents that will live in Georgia in 2030, about half of which will occur from births, will live in those same existing communities.

No matter how much we want to invest in road construction, we will not keep pace with the growth in population and car ownership. We will have more traffic congestion but we will find ways to live with it. We will drive less; make alternative housing or job choices; carpool more; use transit more; buy more goods on the internet. We will not have the same household characteristics and likely not the same lifestyles or preferences in the future. The global economy of 6.5 billion people (and growing) will have profound impacts on our state of 9 million and country of 298 million. Whether your perception of growth is good or bad, the issues Georgia citizens and policy makers should be thinking about are much greater and more diverse than the CMTF report. ■

### Planning and Zoning Luncheon

May 17, 2006; 12:00 Noon

Milledgeville Country Club

3700 Sinclair Dam Road

Milledgeville, GA

The Georgia Planning Association-Middle Georgia District and the Middle Georgia RDC invites you to attend a luncheon for Planning and Zoning officials in the Middle Georgia region. The featured speaker is Ms. Beverly McElroy, Director of the Georgia Land Conservation Program. Ms. McElroy will speak on the State of Georgia's new program to permanently protect land and water resources. In addition, Ms. Jan Nichols, Executive Director of the Oconee River Greenway Authority will provide an update on the efforts to establish a greenway along the Oconee River.

**Please make reservations now.** The cost of the luncheon is \$15.00. It includes the buffet, dessert, drink, tax, gratuity, and the program. You will pay the Middle Georgia RDC during registration. RSVPs are required. Please call or e-mailing Phil Clark, RDC Senior Planner and GPA District Director at (478) 751-6160 or e-mail [pclark@mrgdc.org](mailto:pclark@mrgdc.org) no later than Friday May 12. For directions to the Milledgeville Country Club, contact their website at [www.mccga.com](http://www.mccga.com).

### We invite all interested parties to attend.

Planning and Zoning Administrators ~ Regional and Community Planners ~ Planning Commissioners ~ Land and Water Conservation Interests  
Elected Officials ~ Citizen Planners

## Design Manual for Urban Thoroughfares Ready for Release

A five-year collaboration between ITE and the Congress for the New Urbanism produces a new recommended practice.

by Robert Steuteville

What has been described as a seminal publication, one that represents a paradigmatic shift in thoroughfare design in the US, is nearing completion. The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) is hoping in March to publish a draft of Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities, which will then be subjected to professional review. The forthcoming document has so far received both praise and criticism — several prominent new urbanist street designers say it calls for streets that are too wide, with speeds that are unpleasant and potentially dangerous for pedestrians.

ITE's proposed recommended practice is the result of a five-year collaboration with the Congress for the New Urbanism. The Federal Highway Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency funded the book. After publication, which may occur in time for a March 19 ITE gathering in San Antonio, a comment period will ensue, ending Dec. 31, followed by the drafting of a revised manual that will be submitted for final ITE approval.

In dealing with major urban thoroughfares — including arterial and collector streets — the book covers a particularly challenging problem for new urbanists. Although taming streets is not always easy, there are hundreds of examples of recent projects containing narrow and walkable local streets. These projects tend to be islands of urbanism bounded by wide, relatively high-speed thoroughfares. In some instances, large new urban projects are plagued by internal collectors and arterials that discourage pedestrian activity. Plans that deal with sizable areas in the suburbs, and even urban infill projects, tend to falter when it comes to taming major thoroughfares.

Many of those who helped put the document together told New Urban News that it represents a radical departure in many

respects from existing street manuals like the so-called Green Book published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. The Green Book focuses on three factors — capacity, speed, and topography — in the design of thoroughfares, according to Brian Bochner, a senior research engineer at the Texas Transportation Institute who was a member of the project management team. The new manual views a host of other considerations — including pedestrians, transit, and placement of adjacent buildings and businesses — as central to the design of urban thoroughfares. “It goes into very great detail on roadside design and building design, aspects of thoroughfare design that we have no guidelines for anywhere,” says Norman Garrick, an associate professor of civil and environmental engineering at the University of Connecticut, a member of the review committee, and cochair of the CNU transportation task force.

Very importantly, the concept of the Transect — called context zones in this book — is used throughout the manual. The context zone must be identified prior to designing a “context-sensitive” thoroughfare, according to the book. “It gives designers a way of dealing with these concepts through the context zones — which we didn’t have before; all we had was [the designation] urban and rural,” Garrick says.

The book represents a leap forward in context-sensitive design thinking, says Ellen Greenberg, a principal with Freedman Tung & Bottomley, who led the effort on behalf of CNU along with Heather Smith, planning coordinator. Context-sensitive design previously recognized the importance of historic structures, but not typical buildings and public spaces, Greenberg says. “It’s not just about ‘don’t blow up a historic bridge,’ it’s about responding to the typical elements that make up the urban fabric,” she says.

### SmartCode & Manual Now in Print

The SmartCode & Manual, which is having such a significant impact on redevelopment of the Gulf Coast, is now in hard copy print for the first time — published by New Urban Publications, publisher of New Urban News.

The SmartCode & Manual is a seminal work of the New Urbanism by Andres Duany, William Wright, and Sandy Sorlien. It includes the complete SmartCode version 8.0, plus detailed notes explaining and amplifying each section along with highly useful supporting materials and tips on implementation. It is the culmination of years of work by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) and other firms building on the Lexicon of the New Urbanism and the Transect.

To order the full-color, printed version of the SmartCode & Manual, go to [www.newurbannews.com](http://www.newurbannews.com). Version 8.0 is also available as a free download at [www.placemakers.com](http://www.placemakers.com).



The book offers substantially new thinking on street networks. It recommends high levels of network connectivity with small block sizes — preferably 200 to 300 feet in urban cores and 200 to 400 feet in less dense urban areas. The approach to curb return radii is also substantially different from conventional practice, notes transportation engineer Walter Kulash of Glatting Jackson, who reviewed only that section in advance. The book acknowledges the legitimacy of occasional encroachment of large vehicles in the opposing lane, a reform that he says is “badly needed.”

## AREAS OF CONTENTION

For all of the positive aspects of this manual from a new urbanist perspective, significant areas of contention remain — in design speed and lane width, both of which are critical to walkable streets. The book contains no thoroughfares with design speeds of less than 30 miles per hour, notes Rick Hall of Hall Planning & Engineering, the only member of the review committee to vote against the draft. Hall, Rick Chellman of TND Engineering, and Peter Swift of Swift and Associates, three of the best-known street design engineers involved in New Urbanism, were all critical of the book’s approach to setting the design speed five miles per hour higher than the “target speed.” This thinking, which Chellman says originates in highway design, is inappropriate for urban thoroughfares, he contends. “When streets are designed for faster-moving vehicles, then we encourage faster operating speeds,” Swift told New Urban News. “The justification for providing a ‘factor of safety’ for speeding vehicles is bogus.” Swift, who is currently working in Kurdish Iraq, reviewed an advance draft of the manual.

Related to design speed is lane width, and on this issue the document offers no significant change, but a shift in emphasis. Lanes of 10 to 12 feet wide are recommended for collectors and arterials. These are the same dimensions given in the Green Book, says Bochner, although the Green Book shows a clear preference for the higher end of the range, and the ITE-CNU manual does not. New urbanists like Swift and Hall continue to push for 9-foot lanes, but this dimension is not included in the text. Even the Green Book allows 9-foot lanes in unusual circumstances, Bochner notes.

Swift notes further that gutters are excluded from lane widths in the new document. “This is a fatal flaw in cross-section design,” he says. Gutter pans are up to 2 feet wide, which makes a 10-foot lane seem like 12 feet, he says. “The controlling factor in reducing vehicle speeds is the curb face width because a curb is seen to be a barrier, not a gutter pan,” he says. Garrick, who voted in favor of the draft, acknowledges that street widths are a serious problem. Greenberg, a member of the project management team, notes that when all of the recommended and optional elements are put together “you end up with a really big street, which didn’t get a lot of attention,” she says.

Most of those involved with the project that New Urban News interviewed acknowledged flaws in the document. Bochner says the recommended practice is “80 to 85 percent there.” Greenberg believes the comment period represents a genuine opportunity to make constructive improvements in the recommended practice. She hopes that a significant number of comments will be made, because ITE is highly responsive to practical comments, she says, and a large number of comments show a high level of interest in the recommended practice, which tends to keep the process moving forward.

A reviewer need not be a transportation planner or engineer to be taken seriously, Greenberg says, noting that the technical sophistication of the comment is more important than the credentials of the source. Greenberg also urges new urbanists to “comment on what you like about it, not just what’s wrong with it.” To submit comments, go to [www.ite.org](http://www.ite.org).

## COMPROMISES

Some of the difficulties with the document, Hall says, stem from what he calls a significant compromise made early in the development process — retaining the use of the terms “arterial” and “collector” rather than the new urbanist street lexicon of “boulevard,” “avenue,” “main street,” and “street.” The document tries to reconcile these two descriptive systems, with mixed results. Although arterials and collectors are defined in the manual, it is not entirely clear when a street that new urbanists would call a “boulevard” or a “main street” becomes a “major urban thoroughfare,” for example, and would thus be subject to these standards. The question is not without consequence, the prevailing view among new urbanists is that main streets should not be designed for speeds higher than 25 miles per hour, while standards in this book start at 30 miles per hour.

Another compromise was the inclusion of high-speed thoroughfares in what the book calls “vehicle mobility priority areas.” New urbanists felt they should not be in the book at all, expressing the view that there are plenty of good manuals for high-speed thoroughfares, but the proposed manual is for walkable communities. Partly because of the collaborative process and writing by committee, Greenberg says the document is not as “sharply focused” as she would like.

Flawed or not, most agree that the book represents significant progress. “Just the fact that ITE is lending its name to it and supporting it is a big step forward,” says Kulash, who was eagerly awaiting the chance to read the proposed practice in its entirety. “Can you imagine something like this happening five years ago? The answer is no.” ■



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## 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 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 **March 31, 2005**.

Send items for the newsletter to:

William F. Ross  
ROSS+associates  
2161 Peachtree Road, NE Suite 806  
Atlanta, Georgia 30309  
[Bill@planross.com](mailto:Bill@planross.com)

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

April 13th	Brown Bag Seminar	Macon	<a href="mailto:pclark@mgrdc.org">pclark@mgrdc.org</a>
April 22nd – 26th	APA National Planning Conference	San Antonio	<a href="http://www.planning.org">www.planning.org</a>
April 22nd – 25th	ACCG Annual Meeting	Savannah	<a href="http://www.accg.org">www.accg.org</a>
May 4th – 5th	Conservation Development Symposium	Pine Mountain	<a href="http://www.edaw.com">www.edaw.com</a>
May 16th – 18th	NARRP Recreation Planning Conference	Nashville, TN	<a href="http://www.narrp.org">www.narrp.org</a>
May 17th	Middle Georgia P&Z Luncheon	Milledgeville	<a href="mailto:pclark@mgrdc.org">pclark@mgrdc.org</a>
May 31st	Newsletter Deadline		<a href="mailto:rossatcr@cs.com">rossatcr@cs.com</a>
June 14th – 15th	Land Use Law After the Four Supreme Court Decisions of 2005 Paying for Economic Development	Chicago	<a href="http://www.planning.org">www.planning.org</a>
June 16th – 17th	Growing Green, Achieving Sustainability Tax Policies & Techniques that Support Planning	Chicago	<a href="http://www.planning.org">www.planning.org</a>
June 24th – 27th	GMA Annual Convention	Savannah	Janice Eidson (678-686-6256)
July 21st	GPA Board Meeting	TBA	<a href="mailto:dunnavant@cityofnewnan.org">dunnavant@cityofnewnan.org</a>
August 31st	Newsletter Deadline		<a href="mailto:rossatcr@cs.com">rossatcr@cs.com</a>
October 11th – 13th	GPA Fall Conference	St. Simons	<a href="mailto:rlebeau@atlantaregional.com">rlebeau@atlantaregional.com</a>
September 20th – 22nd	GEDA Annual Conference	Savannah	<a href="http://www.geda.org">www.geda.org</a>
November 30th	Newsletter Deadline		<a href="mailto:rossatcr@cs.com">rossatcr@cs.com</a>
December 8th	GPA Board Meeting	TBA	<a href="mailto:dunnavant@cityofnewnan.org">dunnavant@cityofnewnan.org</a>





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