

GEORGIA PLANNER

Newsletter of the Georgia Chapter of the American Planning Association
SEPTEMBER 2008



American Planning Association
Georgia Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen



CONSTITUTIONAL LIMITATIONS ON ZONING AND LAND USE ACTIONS

by Peter R. Olson, Jenkins and Olson, P.C.

This article discusses the three most common constitutional attacks on zoning actions: takings without just compensation, due process challenges, and equal protection attacks.

TAKINGS

In a zoning case, the most common challenge is to the constitutionality of the existing zoning classification under a takings analysis. The government has the benefit of the doubt – the zoning ordinance is presumptively valid. If the validity of a zoning ordinance is “fairly debatable,” the governmental judgment will control.

The Georgia Supreme Court has ruled that, “The presumption that a governmental zoning decision is valid can be overcome only by a plaintiff landowner’s showing by clear and convincing evidence that the zoning classification is a significant detriment to him, and is insubstantially related to the public health, safety, morality and welfare. Only after both of these showings are made is a governing authority required to come forward with evidence to justify a zoning ordinance as reasonably related to the public interest. If a plaintiff landowner fails to make a showing by clear and convincing evidence of a significant detriment and an insubstantial relationship to the public welfare, the landowner’s challenge to the zoning ordinance fails.”

(continued p. 4)

VOTE TODAY BALLOT ENCLOSED!

For GPA President-Elect!

PRESIDENT’S CORNER PAGE TWO

*Message from Ellen Heath, AICP,
President of the GA Chapter*

CANDIDATES ANNOUNCED PAGE SIX

*Positions Statements for GPA
President-Elect Candidates*



MEMORIAL FOUNDATION PAGE SEVEN

*Denise Abboud Memorial Fund
moves ahead under the auspices of
the new Georgia Planning
Memorial Foundation.*

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL PAGE EIGHT

*Things I Wish Someone Had
Told Me When I Was...*

PLANNING & QUALITY GROWTH PAGE NINE

*Revealing a New Approach to
Regional Planning*

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Hope everyone had a great summer and is ready to jump into GPA activities!

You should have received an email regarding the upcoming lecture co-sponsored by GPA; it will feature Christopher Leinberger – nationally recognized metropolitan land strategist and developer – discussing the ideas in his new book, *The Option of Urbanism: Investing in a New American Dream*. He is currently a Visiting Fellow at the Brookings Institution and director of the Graduate Real Estate Program at the University of Michigan. *The Option of Urbanism* shows how the American Dream is shifting to include cities – walkable urbanism – as well as suburbs and how the financial and real estate communities need to respond to build communities that are more environmentally, socially and financially sustainable. The program be hosted by the Livable Communities Initiative at the Inforum Theater in Downtown Atlanta. (For more details, see their website at www.livablecommunitiescoalition.org.) We are applying for AICP CM credit for the session, so hope to see you there.

Of course the other must-attend event of the autumn is our annual conference, which will be held in Augusta October 1-3. Conference sessions will be organized in five tracks: Comprehensive Planning and Quality Growth, Environmental Planning and Sustainability, Data and Technology, Professional Development, and Planning Officials Training Sessions. The sessions will cover a wide variety of topics, including:

- Trucks Are Our Friends
- Reducing The Carbon Footprint Through Land Use And Transportation Planning
- Taking Your Zoning Ordinance To The Next Level
- The Ordinary Iconic Ranch House
- Building Green Infrastructure
- Incentivizing Development
- Form-Based Codes on the Ground
- Growing Older And Growing Smarter
- The City In The Forest: Atlanta's National-Award Winning Proposal For 2108
- A Tale Of Two Counties: Henry And Columbia
- And many more

And as if that weren't enough, we will have the usual AICP prep, ethics, and law training, as well as an assortment of fun-filled activities, including what we hope will be the first annual silent auction to benefit the Georgia Planning Memorial Foundation. Mobile workshops will include tours of the Augusta Canal, Phinizy Swamp, Augusta Canal and Museum, and a greenway bike ride. The conference will conclude with our annual awards luncheon; I'm pleased to announce that our special guest and featured speaker will be Paul Farmer, FAICP, APA and AICP Executive Director and CEO.

As always, GPA needs your help to continue offering this kind of programming, along with our other activities. Please consider volunteering to help on one of GPA's committees. It's fun and rewarding. Thanks to Dan Cohen, who is serving as GPA liaison to the Livable Communities Initiative, and to John Skach, who will represent us on this year's jury for ARC's Developments of Excellence awards.

Finally, a hello and goodbye. We bid bon voyage and happy retirement to GPA member Steve Logan, who has been a GPA member since 1993; he has served as the director of the Planning Division in Gwinnett's Department of Planning and Development since 1996. I'm sure Steve will remain as committed as the rest of us to fostering smart growth in Georgia; fortunately for him, however, he'll be doing it from the North Carolina coast.



And a big welcome to Dr. Bruce Stiffl, FAICP, who recently moved to Georgia to take over as Director of the City and Regional Planning Program at Georgia Tech, after 25 years on the faculty of Florida State University. Among his other initiatives has been the establishment of the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium; and stints as editor of the Journal of Planning Education and Research, chairperson of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at Florida State, universities liaison to the Florida Chapter of APA, president of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP), and the founding chairperson of the Global Planning Education Association Network. We're looking forward to getting to know Dr. Stiffl and hearing some of his great ideas for planning in Georgia.

Ellen Heath, AICP

President, Georgia Chapter of the American Planning Association

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - please visit our website for event listings

September 10, 2008 Training for Planning Officials	Atlanta, GA www.atlantaregional.com/commerce
September 19, 2008 GPA Planners' Luncheon	Atlanta, GA www.georgiaplanning.org/events
October 1 – 3, 2008 GPA Fall Conference	Augusta, GA www.georgiaplanning.org
October 1 – 3, 2008 Georgia Downtown Conference	Douglasville, GA www.georgiadowntownassociation.org
October 3, 2008 Southface – Confronting Atlanta's Sprawl	Atlanta, GA www.southface.org
October 7 – 8, 2008 Community Planning Institute	Washington, GA lstumpff@dca.state.ga.us
October 14, 2008 Land Use Law: Issues in Subdivision, Annexation & Zoning	Atlanta, GA www.nbi-sems.com
October 22, 2008 Design Guidelines in Georgia Communities	Atlanta, GA www.atlantaregional.com/commerce
October 29 – 30, 2008 Board of Zoning Appeals	Atlanta, GA www.atlantaregional.com/commerce

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That is a tough burden for the landowner plaintiff to overcome. In fact, many cases have fallen because the landowner could not even show a significant detriment. If a significant detriment cannot be shown, the analysis goes no further. If the plaintiff cannot show a significant detriment, the analysis need go no further.

To show a significant detriment requires more than just showing that the property would be more valuable if rezoned or it would be difficult to develop as zoned: “a significant detriment to the landowner is not shown by the fact that the property would be more valuable if rezoned, or by the fact that it would be more difficult to develop the property as zoned than if rezoned.” *DeKalb v. Dobson* (1990). “[E]vidence only that it would be difficult to develop the property under its existing zoning or that the owner will suffer an economic loss unless the property is rezoned is not sufficient to support the legal conclusion that the owner suffers a significant detriment.” *Gwinnett Co. v. Davis* (1987).

The Courts recognize that increasing density always increases value, but that does not prove that the current zoning is unconstitutional. “[I]n zoning challenges, the pertinent question is not whether rezoning would increase the value of property, but rather whether the existing zoning classification serves to deprive a landowner of property rights without due process of law. Hence, the evidence that the subject property would be more valuable if rezoned border on being irrelevant.” The notion that a property is not zoned for its “highest and best use,” a concept appraisers like to use, does not show that the existing zoning imposes a significant detriment. Furthermore, “the fact that the property currently has no economic return to the owners is immaterial; by definition, undeveloped property never offers owners any economic return.” *DeKalb Co. v. Chamblee Dunwoody Hotel Partnership* (1981).

After a plaintiff shows significant detriment, he still needs to prove that the current zoning is insubstantially related to the public health, safety, morality and welfare. This requires proof that there is no logic to the existing zoning classification. It can be shown by pointing to the incompatibility of the subject zoning with the neighborhood, or the changing character of the neighborhood. However, it can be difficult to prove if the property is simply on the boundary of the zoning district. That is what is known as a “fringe area”: right on the boundary between two different classifications. In such circumstances, the local government gets even more deference. As the Supreme Court held in *Holy Cross Lutheran Church v. Clayton County* (1987), “We are increasing[ly] called to review controversies regarding ‘fringe areas’ such as the property in question here – residential

property bordering commercial property, with the economic value of the property for residential use lessening with encroaching commercial development. We take this opportunity to reiterate that the local governing body is the more appropriate one to shape and control the local environment according to the best interests of the locality and its citizens. The local government has drawn the line as to these encroachments, and in our review of the evidence under the clearly erroneous standard, Holy Cross has not demonstrated by clear and convincing evidence that denial of their rezoning request was so unreasonable as to constitute an unconstitutional taking of their property.”

Furthermore, the Supreme Court has recently given greater strength to a local government’s comprehensive plan. In *City of Atlanta v. TAP Associates* (2001), the Court placed great emphasis on the fact that the existing zoning was consistent with the land use plan of Atlanta: “[T]he city’s zoning decision is consistent with the policies and long-range planning goals for the area as adopted in the comprehensive development plans and the Buckhead transit station report.... The fact that TAP presented evidence that its proposed mixed-use development would also protect the single-family neighborhood is irrelevant. The issue is not whether the city could have made a different decision or better designation in zoning TAP’s property, but whether the choice that it did make benefits the public in a substantial way.” Thus, if an existing zoning classification is consistent with the comprehensive plan, it is more likely to be upheld. The question is never whether the proposed classification has some benefit or value, but whether the existing zoning benefits the public.

Hence, a takings challenge is very difficult to prove. The Federal test is much tougher. It requires a showing that the property owner has been deprived of all economic use prior to a taking being found. Federal takings claim is not ripe unless the state has failed to provide a remedy. A Federal claim cannot ripen if the state provides a method of redress for a taking without just compensation (as Georgia does). A Federal takings claim also cannot ripen if a final decision has not been reached. The federal court cannot determine if there has been a taking if it cannot determine what use can be made of the property. If a variance can be applied for, or the property owner has not sought to develop his property under the current zoning, his claim is not ripe.

DUE PROCESS

The vast majority of rezoning challenges are takings challenges. Due process encompasses a more limited challenge, mainly in the

context of procedural due process. Substantive due process has been held to be subsumed into takings, and so does not typically constitute a separate challenge to a rezoning decision.

However, procedural due process is an avenue to challenge a rezoning. Basic procedural due process requires notice and a hearing. The procedures required in conducting a rezoning hearing have been codified in the Zoning Procedures Law. The basis requirements are published and posted notice, and sufficient equal time at the hearing for all parties to speak (at least ten minutes per side). Failure to comply with the Zoning Procedures Law voids the zoning ordinance. In *McClure v. Davidson* (1988), the defendant county did not give proper notice under O.C.G.A. § 36-66-4(a) of a rezoning hearing, and the Court ruled that the rezoning was therefore void for failure to comply with the ZPL. The Court held, “the General Assembly intended noncompliance with the procedures to invalidate any zoning decision...we therefore conclude that the trial court properly ruled that the county’s failure to comply with O.C.G.A. § 36-66-4(a) invalidates the subject zoning action.”

Tilley Properties, Inc. v. Bartow County (1991) involved the notice and hearing requirements of O.C.G.A. § 36-66-5(c). This Section of the ZPL requires notice and a hearing both for the adoption of standards and for the adoption of policies and procedures governing the conduct of zoning hearings – the two are handled identically by the ZPL. *Tilley Properties* dealt with Bartow County’s failure to provide notice or a separate hearing when it adopted its policies and procedures. This failure invalidated the entire zoning ordinance of the county. The Court held, “Prior to the adoption of the policies and procedures, O.C.G.A. § 36-66-5(c), a local government must publish within a newspaper of general circulation a notice of the public hearing, O.C.G.A. § 36-66-4, and a public hearing must be held on the proposed action.... The trial court erred in failing to hold that the

County did not comply with the statute and that the ordinance is void.”

This is a dangerous result, because a void ordinance imposes no restrictions on property without restriction from the Zoning Ordinance.

EQUAL PROTECTION

A final challenge to zoning ordinances is under the equal protection clause of the Georgia Constitution. This is mainly an “as applied” attack, meaning it is a challenge to how the zoning ordinance is being applied. Zoning ordinances must be enforced in a reasonable and nondiscriminatory manner in order to satisfy equal protection requirements, and whether they are so uniformly enforced is a question of fact. However, just finding some places where the property owner is treated differently will likely not be sufficient, as the Supreme Court has held, that because a county zoning department cannot reasonably be expected to be aware of all possible zoning violations within the jurisdiction, the mere existence of a similar improper use does not establish discriminatory enforcement. *Cobb Co. v. Peavy* (1982).

This article has been edited and reprinted from ARC's Land Matters (July, 2008). For a copy of the original paper with cites to the court cases, contact Mr. Peter R. Olson, Jenkins and Olson, P.C., 15 South Public Square, Cartersville, Georgia 30120 Phone: (770) 387-1373 <http://www.jnlaw.com/>. ■

VOTE TODAY
BALLOT ENCLOSED!

For GPA President-Elect!



CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT-ELECT ANNOUNCED

The Nominations and Elections Committee (James Shelby, Adam Hazell, Tracy Dunnivant, Gary Cornell, Patti Cullen and myself as chair) have completed our process for nominations for the office of GPA President-Elect. We narrowed the group this week to four candidates all of whom were qualified to lead GPA. We held two conference calls and received bios as well as draft position statements from the four potential nominees.

The two candidates who were selected to run for the GPA President-Elect office are Kathy Field and Jeff Watkins. We were fortunate to have four excellent final candidates and I want to stress that this was a difficult decision.

Thank you to everyone who contributed and good luck to our two candidates!

Dan Reuter, AICP
Past President

Kathleen Field

Nominee for President-Elect

As co-chair for the past several years of the Planners' Luncheons, I have found that there is a significant demand for more events that provide AICP CM credits as well as increased networking opportunities. Although our conferences have grown significantly in attendance, more activities throughout the State need to be organized on a regular basis. Additionally, working to increase the availability of AICP CM credits through other organizations/educational institutions programs will provide greater opportunity for accessing these required credits.

I would like to promote a "peer review" program whereby a formal mechanism is provided in which planners from various communities within the State can visit each other to benchmark. Planners could learn how similar problems or future issues are being addressed. We have much information to share and by formalizing a list of participants as well as cataloging issues of interest, we can build the planning network while enhancing our communities with some cutting edge solutions.

We need to expand our training programs for our "volunteer" planners, i.e. those that serve on the various boards and commissions within our communities. These members are a valuable resource and to the extent that we can encourage them to attend training sessions as well as our conferences (with special sessions offered), the quality of decisions and hence future development patterns, will benefit us all.

Finally, we must enhance our participation in the ongoing dialogue on the two most important issues affecting Georgia: transportation and water. As the professional planning association for the State, we must responsibly advocate for good planning practices relating to these critical topics. ■

Jeff Watkins, AICP

Nominee for President-Elect

I am grateful to have been nominated for the office of President-Elect for the Georgia Planning Association. I would consider it a tremendous honor to serve the 1,100+ men and women who serve the citizens of Georgia in our mission to create great communities across our great state.

For more than 15 years, I have been involved in Planning in Georgia as a member of GPA and APA. I earned my AICP certification in 1999. Currently, I am the Community Development Agency Director for Cherokee County. I have served on various committees with the Atlanta Regional Commission, the Association County Commissioners of Georgia and with Georgia Planning Association on topics ranging from Land Use, Zoning Reform, Regional Plans and Development Finance.

I support the Mission Statement and Chapter Development Plan of GPA. I have come to appreciate the many and varied aspects of our profession through the numerous relationships I have formed throughout my career. I want to see our profession grow. I want GPA to be seen as the preeminent organization Georgians trust to lead the way making their community a great place to live and I want to help to make it happen.

In order to secure our place as the leading organization in Georgia for Community Planning, we need to capitalize on every opportunity to raise the awareness of GPA with our legislators, the media and most importantly with citizens across the state. A professional media kit available to GPA members and concerted efforts to promote National Community Planning Month across the state represent two ways to raise the specter of GPA.

Every year I visit Elementary and Middle schools in my community to speak about the planning profession as a part of their career day. It has given me the opportunity to plant the seeds with our children about the role planners' play in the way we live our lives. It is my hope GPA can work with the educators in our state to develop a curriculum for our elementary and middle schools introducing our children to the concepts of community development.

I appreciate the opportunity to serve Georgia Planning Association. I look forward to working with the leadership in our organization to make GPA the recognized leader our communities turn to for great solutions. I ask for your support but I encourage you to use every opportunity to promote Georgia Planning Association in your community. ■

VOTE TODAY
BALLOT ENCLOSED!

For GPA President-Elect!

Support Our Sponsors!!

The Georgia Planning Association is excited to recognize our 2008 Annual Sponsors. GPA has a number of renewing sponsors from 2007 and many new sponsors in 2008.

An annual sponsorship with GPA provides a company with a logo and link to the company website on the GPA website and an advertisement in the GPA quarterly newsletters. Please take time to visit the GPA website and click on the links for the sites of our sponsors, and review the ads in our newsletters.

Our annual sponsors are instrumental in helping the organization expand popular support for planning in Georgia, assisting GPA with informative Planner's Luncheons, bringing quality speakers to the spring and fall conferences, and monitoring legislation that affects planning in Georgia. The 2008 sponsors are listed below:

- ARCADIS
- A&R Engineering
- Clark Patterson Associates
- Croy Engineering
- EDAW, Inc.
- Foresite Group
- Georgia Power Company
- Gresham Smith and Partners
- HDR
- HNTB
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- Keck and Wood
- Lemongrass Consulting, Inc.
- Lord, Aeck & Sargent
- Ocmulgee Site & Environmental Services, Inc.
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- RS&H
- Street Smarts
- The HOK Planning Group
- Tunnell-Spangler-Walsh & Associates
- Urban Collage
- URS
- Vinyl Siding Institute - National Housing Center

We appreciate your support in 2008!

Laura Keyes, VP Chapter Services

Georgia Planning Memorial Foundation

The Georgia Planning Memorial Foundation is up and running, thanks to the pro bono efforts of David Kirk and his colleagues at Troutman Sanders. The Foundation is now incorporated and the steps to final IRS recognition as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit are progressing.

The Foundation grew out of GPA's creation of the Denise Abboud Memorial Fund last year, following Denise's tragic and sudden death. The outpouring of love for Denise from planners across the state, and recognition of her contributions to the planning profession and her ideals, strongly encouraged the Board to respond. This is the first time such a fund, based on donations from friends and associates, has ever been set up by GPA!

The Denise Abboud Fund is dedicated to helping communities that otherwise could not afford it expand the skills and knowledge of their professional and citizen planners. This is particularly something Denise would have been interested in pursuing -- she strongly supported GPA reaching out to include everyone in its programs and offerings, and she made sure that practical, useful programs were always included in the many conferences she put together as GPA Vice President.

The Denise Abboud Fund is now included within the umbrella of the Foundation. Incorporated earlier this year through the support of GPA, its founding Board of Directors (and officers) are: Bill Ross (President), Marsha Anderson Bomar (Vice President), Glenn Coyne (Secretary), Eric Bosman (Treasurer), Dan Reuter and Steve Logan. The primary purpose of the Foundation, adopted in its by-laws, is:

To help with the education and ongoing professional development of those who work in or serve rural or poorer communities that would otherwise not be able to obtain such opportunities.

As a first step, the Foundation has adopted criteria to define eligible "rural or poorer" communities and to guide the selection process of recipients. Coming up: watch for fund-raising activities to support and sustain grants from the Abboud Fund, and creation of a web page with further information.

Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me When I Was a YOUNG PROFESSIONAL

By Jamie Cochran, AICP

Around this time of year as college graduation ceremonies are underway and students prepare for their first big jobs, as a university instructor, I always get questions from young people who want to know what to expect as they enter the working world. These questions always tend to make me reflect on my own experiences a hundred years ago as a young professional myself. I offer these insights as a starting point in the hope they might help you, your kids, or your friends, or colleagues.

1. All any of us keep with us forever is our professional reputation, which includes our personal integrity. Think very hard before you do anything to jeopardize it.
2. Your career is a marathon, not a sprint. Watching your friends or colleagues pull ahead of you from time to time will undoubtedly happen – often more than once. Don't get discouraged – learn from others. Keep your focus on your own personal and professional development and compete with yourself to reach your own personal best.
3. Sometimes you will have to choose whether to be respected or liked. Be prepared to choose.
4. Pay attention to how people perceive you – Be the authentic you, not a version you think other people want you to be. Most people are very good at recognizing fakes.
5. Read – Read – Read – all types of publications, even those not pertaining to your field. Be as well-rounded a person as you can be. You never know where your next big idea will come from.
6. Make sure you have a circle of professional friends as your support system – people who root for you and cheer you on when things go well and help you bounce back when things don't go your way. Reciprocate when others need you, too.
7. Minimize time spent with negative people. Negativism squashes enthusiasm, creativity, and initiative.
8. Make a list of people you admire and why you admire them. Revise and lengthen your list over time.
9. Don't be overly concerned about making mistakes – Making mistakes when you're starting out is how we learn. Just don't make the same ones over and over again. Someone once said, "...anyone who hasn't made a mistake, hasn't learned anything."
10. Bad bosses (and good ones) come and go – Learn as much as you can from both kinds. Nothing lasts forever.
11. Don't be in a hurry to move to a new job, unless it benefits you both in the short-term and long-term. Think through the pros and cons of each opportunity and how it will help advance you to your ultimate career objective, not just the benefits it brings now.
12. If you're brain can't tell you which choice to make, trust your gut – it seldom is wrong.

13. It's good to explore opportunities that come out of the blue and aren't part of your "Five-Year Plan". You will have many more career opportunities to choose from than you think and some of them won't resemble anything you anticipated. Don't be tied to a strict plan.

14. You can learn something from everyone if you pay attention.

15. Treat people around you at all levels of your organization with the same respect you want to receive. You never know who your boss will be someday.

16. Smile when you meet someone.

17. Find something in common with your colleagues and clients that is not work-related. It helps forge good, long-standing work relationships and gives you something besides work to talk about.

18. Be known as a reliable person – Doing what you say you'll do is a critical part of personal and professional success.

19. Try to see the humor in things at work – it relieves stress. Keep a few of your favorite cartoons nearby to give you a smile when you need one.

20. Make a list of what you want to accomplish as a professional. Revise your list and add to it over time. Check things off when you accomplish them.

21. Work on being the best communicator you can be – both in writing and verbally. In the electronic age, it's not as easy as you think. E-mail and texting will never be as effective as one-on-one talks or phone calls for certain types of communications. Know when to talk with someone in person, when to use the phone, and when to use e-mail or texting. Don't dismiss the importance of writing well – it will make you stand out as a professional.

22. Take a time management class, even if you have to pay for it yourself. It will reap benefits many times over during your career.

23. Work on learning how to explain complex ideas to people outside your field. This is a very valuable trait to have in the workplace. It is said that you don't really understand something until you can explain it well to someone else.

24. Find at least one mentor who will help you learn the ropes. Having more than one is even better.

25. Help the people around you when you can - random acts of kindness always come back to you – sometimes in wonderful, unexpected ways.

The most important thing I wish someone had told me early on was creating a balance between your work life, your family life, and your personal interests is really the biggest challenge we'll face as professionals. Don't shortchange any of these parts of your life!

Jamie Cochran, AICP, is the Planning Service Group Leader at RS&H. She can be reached at jamie.cochran@rsandh.com or (678) 528-7218. ■

DCA's Planning and Quality Growth Office (PQG) has revealed a new approach to regional planning. In a recent presentation to the Department of Community Affairs Board, the PQG Regional Programs Unit highlighted plans that will provide local governments with an even more solid regional planning process.

Regional planning is a aspect of land use planning that deals with the efficient placement of land use activities, infrastructure and settlement growth across a significantly larger area of land than an individual city or town. One community may not have adequate resources to completely address an issue, be it greenspace, water and sewer infrastructure, educational needs, or resource sharing, but several communities in the same region may benefit from a collective solution. Particularly in the case of shared resources such as water or green space, a regional approach enables economies of scale in shared solutions.

"Regions are regarded as something in between city and state, something that exists relative to existing structures and institutions," said Jim Frederick, Office Director, Planning and Quality Growth. "There seems to be more confidence among local leaders about strengthening regions and regarding them as evolving places. This all pointed to our decision to develop a new approach to regional planning."

In essence, PQG staff strives to provide a Regional Work Program that will yield results – results that can make a region a better or more effective place. Effective FY09, the new approach will include the following components:

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) offers local governments options for reconciling differences on planning or growth management issues between neighboring jurisdictions.

ADR includes the following options:

- Facilitation
- Mediation
- Arbitration

Regionally Important Resources are those valuable natural and cultural resources that should be identified and protected. To do this, RDCs will develop *Regional Resource Plans* that involve stakeholders in a comprehensive effort to identify these important resources in the region. *Regional Resource Plans* will include the following components:

- *Regionally Important Resource Map* showing a regional greenspace network.
- *Guidance for Appropriate Development Practices* that should be utilized in developments to be located near RIRs.

- *General Policies and Protection Measures* to be utilized by local governments in making decisions that affect RIRs.

Developments of Regional Impact are those new developments within a community that have the potential to impact positively or negatively on the resources of a neighboring jurisdiction, affecting such things as transportation systems, or water quantity and quality, or delivery of services to the populace. These developments must be of sufficient size to exceed thresholds established for both metropolitan and non-metropolitan parts of the State. The proposed new DRI rules are generating comments and feedback via the DCA website and stakeholders' meetings. When they take effect in July 2009, the DRI program will emphasize streamlining the review process for quality growth developments.

Regional Planning

An entirely new process for regional plans, produced by Regional Development Centers, is being developed and will take effect July 1, 2009, also. The new approach is modeled on Georgia's Local Planning Requirements, with such similar components as:

- *Regional Assessment*, which includes a Projected Development Patterns Map, with Conservation category matching RIR map;
- *Stakeholder Involvement Program*; and
- *Regional Agenda*, which includes:
 - Regional Vision
 - Implementation Program; Guiding Principles; Performance Standards
 - Evaluation and Monitoring activities

Moreover, *Regional Plans* will be supplemented by innovative State Planning Recommendations. Completed *Regional Agendas* and *Regional Resource Plans* must be actively publicized by the RDC in an effort to coordinate all local, state and regional activities to achieve the desired regional development patterns. Coordination with local governments, other important regional stakeholders (developers, chambers of commerce, environmental protection groups, etc.), and state agencies will help insure successful implementation of a regional plan to the benefit of all.

Frederick said, "Whether it is educating citizenry, providing training and technical assistance for decision makers, or deliberately advancing the thinking of all, improving the quality of life in the state of Georgia is of primary concern."

Adriane Wood serves as Regional Programs Unit Manager. For more information on Regional Programs call 404-679-5279 or log on to www.dca.state.ga.us. ■

Get Ready for COMMUNITY PLANNING INSTITUTE!

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs Office of Planning and Quality Growth, in conjunction with the Georgia Planning Association will host the next Community Planning Institute ("CPI") on October 7-8 in Washington, Georgia at the Fitzpatrick Hotel.

Conducted by planning and legal professionals, the Community Planning Institute is a two-day program designed to educate and empower attendees in planning practices that can improve the quality of life in Georgia communities.

The program targets the training needs of Planning Commissioners, Zoning Board of Appeals members, local government staff members responsible for planning functions, planning professionals new to Georgia, elected officials and citizen planners. Participants completing the training receive a "Certificate of Achievement". Scheduled topics include: Community Vision & Planning; Getting the Most out of Your Local Plan; The Good, The Bad and the Legal, and Doing the Right Thing in Planning and Zoning.

Registration is \$150.00 per person. Advance registration is required as class size is limited. For more information regarding the Community Planning Institute, please call 404-679-5279 or log on to www.dca.state.ga.us: Community Planning Institute.

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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, go to Member Login at www.planning.org, or write to: American Planning Association, 97774 Eagle Way, Chicago, IL 60678-9770

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 or visit their website at www.planning.org.

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 **November 30, 2008**.

Send items for the newsletter to: William F. Ross, ROSS+associates, 2161 Peachtree Road, NE Suite 806, Atlanta, Georgia 30309, Bill@planross.com

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