

Nine Georgia communities recognized for successful planning *“PlanFirst” designation brings funding, visibility benefits*

Atlanta, GA (October 5, 2017) – During its annual Fall Conference in Savannah, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) announced that nine Georgia communities have received statewide distinction in the PlanFirst program, which recognizes excellence in community planning. Crawford County, along with the cities of Adel, Byron, Forsyth, Griffin, Jesup, Perry, Thomasville and Tifton, each achieved the “PlanFirst” designation, a commendation given to communities with a proven track record of strong development and implementation of their comprehensive plan. In addition, four communities renewed their PlanFirst designation: Jones County and the cities of Braselton, Vienna and Woodstock.

“Good planning sets the stage for economic growth,” said Commissioner Christopher Nunn. “PlanFirst communities should serve as role models for cities and counties around the state – showing strategic and bold vision for the future, and how to turn this vision into a solid, practical plan.”

To apply for PlanFirst, communities are required to address four primary program criteria: goals, leadership, community participation and implementation. The focus is on achieving a successful plan implementation. The designation is for three years – beginning January 1, 2018 – and enables these communities to take advantage of various incentives that include public recognition, the eligibility to apply for certain state grants, and reduced rates in certain state loan programs.

The next deadline for applications is May 15, 2018. More information about the program is available on DCA’s [PlanFirst website](#). The Department of Community Affairs developed the program with a steering committee comprised of partners including the Georgia Municipal Association, Association County Commissioner of Georgia, the Georgia Planning Association, the Regional Commissions, and the University of Georgia Archways program, and other state agencies including the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority, the Historic Preservation Division and Environmental Protection Division.

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About the Georgia Department of Community Affairs

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) partners with communities to create a climate of success for Georgia’s families and businesses through community and economic development, local government assistance, and safe and affordable housing. Using state and federal resources, DCA helps communities spur private job creation, implement planning, develop downtowns, generate affordable housing solutions, and promote volunteerism. DCA also helps qualified low- and moderate-income Georgians buy homes, rent housing, and prevent foreclosure and homelessness. For more information, visit www.dca.ga.gov.