

May 25, 2011

Honorable Jimmy Brown  
Chair, Ware County Commission  
Post Office Box 1069  
Waycross, GA 31502-1069

Dear Chair Brown:

Congratulations on the recent adoption of your Comprehensive Plan Update! In recognition of Ware County's impressive achievement, the Department of Community Affairs is honored to award Qualified Local Government (QLG) status to your community.

Now begins the challenging work of implementing this plan. A community's plan is its clearly articulated vision for the future. We therefore believe that the plan should provide a framework for making sound decisions regarding Ware County's long-term growth and development. We hope that you and other decision makers will refer to it as a management and policy tool in the day-to-day decisions you make concerning the community, and we expect that, if you do, all of your community's residents will enjoy an improved quality of life.

Please note that this award has no effect upon you community's compliance with the Service Delivery Strategy Act (O.C.G.A. 36-70-20). Please visit our website at [www.georgiaplanning.com/planners/qlgdeadlines/](http://www.georgiaplanning.com/planners/qlgdeadlines/) to keep abreast of upcoming planning deadlines for your community.

A number of assistance resources are available to help you with implementing your plan. These are listed in the attachment. Please don't hesitate to contact DCA's Office of Planning and Quality Growth or your Regional Commission with any questions or assistance needs you may have. Best wishes for the successful implementation of your plan!

Sincerely,



Mike Beatty  
Commissioner

MB/nah

Attachment

cc: John L. Leonard, Southern Georgia RC Executive Director  
Julia Shewchuk, Southern Georgia RC Planning Director

## RESOURCES FOR LOCAL PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION, AND QUALITY GROWTH

### Guidebooks, Tools, etc.

- Office of Planning and Quality Growth (OPQG) offers several guidebooks on various aspects of plan development and implementation, including:
  - "Selecting a Plan Preparer," explains how best to go about selecting someone to help your community develop their comprehensive plan.
  - "Why Do We Plan?" provides an overview of planning, its benefits, and why it is important.
  - "Planning for Community Involvement" focuses on tools, techniques and best practices for effectively involving stakeholders and the general public in your local planning process.
  - "Discovering and Planning Your Community Character" describes character areas, provides tools and techniques for identifying character areas, and discusses the processes for developing a vision for your community.These guidebooks are available at [www.georgiaplanning.com](http://www.georgiaplanning.com) or by calling (404) 679-5279.
- DCA's Office of Planning and Quality Growth (OPQG) and its partner organizations offer periodic Community Planning Institute (CPI) workshops on how to prepare, implement, and get the most out of your comprehensive plan. Call (404) 679-5279 or visit [www.georgiaplanning.com](http://www.georgiaplanning.com) for details and schedule of upcoming training events.
- If you're looking for help with selling your community on planning and quality growth ideas, visit our "Selling Planning and Quality Growth" webpage at [www.dca.state.ga.us/development/PlanningQualityGrowth/programs/selling.asp](http://www.dca.state.ga.us/development/PlanningQualityGrowth/programs/selling.asp)
- Digital data and maps specific to your community are provided for download and use at [www.georgiaplanning.com](http://www.georgiaplanning.com).
- A *Quality Community Objectives Assessment* tool is available to assist with evaluating the community's current policies, activities and development patterns for consistency with DCA's Quality Community Objectives. It can be accessed at [www.georgiaplanning.com](http://www.georgiaplanning.com).
- The Model Development Code provides a number of viable alternatives to conventional zoning. The code is presented as a relatively simple, modular, set of land use management techniques that can be pieced together to create unique regulations tailored to fit local circumstances. The Model Code may be accessed at [www.georgiaplanning.com](http://www.georgiaplanning.com).

### Getting good ideas

- The *State Planning Recommendations* are intended to give you good ideas for all aspects of your planning and plan implementation process. They include lists of issues and opportunities; recommended character areas and development strategies for each; suggested stakeholders and public participation techniques; recommended development patterns to encourage; implementation best practices; and suggested policies. They are available on our website at: <http://www.dca.state.ga.us/development/PlanningQualityGrowth/index.asp>
- OFFICE OF PLANNING AND QUALITY GROWTH provides examples of good local plans that we've previously reviewed on the Georgia Planning website at [www.georgiaplanning.com](http://www.georgiaplanning.com).

- Peruse the Quality Growth Resource Team Reports to see recommendations made by our team of experts on visits to various communities around the state. These can be accessed by choosing the "Resource Teams" link on our Georgia Quality Growth website at [www.georgiqualitygrowth.com](http://www.georgiqualitygrowth.com).

#### **The requirements, plain and simple**

- Office of Planning and Quality Growth's (OPQG) requirements for content and process of developing the required plan updates are found on the web at [www.georgiaplanning.com](http://www.georgiaplanning.com). These include:
  - *Local Planning Requirements* – Qualified Local Government (QLG) designation is linked to the successful completion of the update of your Comprehensive Plan in accordance with these requirements. QLG designation enables your local government to maintain its eligibility for grants and loans from DCA, the Department of Natural Resources and the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority as well as other state agency assistance.
  - *Minimum Planning Standards for Solid Waste Planning*. Eligibility for solid waste grants, loans and permits from the State, depends upon your local government's Solid Waste Management Plan, which must be prepared in accordance with these standards.
  - *Revising an Existing Service Delivery Strategy* – provides details about reviewing and/or revising your existing Service Delivery Strategy.
  - *Capital Improvements Element* – in order to legally charge impact fees, a local government must include a Capital Improvements Element (CIE) in its Comprehensive Plan. A local government that does not currently include a CIE in its plan can amend the Comprehensive Plan to include a CIE at any time if it wishes to initiate an impact fee program.