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History – The Beginning

- Distinct characteristics of urban planning from remains of ancient cities in the Indus Valley Civilization (in modern day northwestern India and Pakistan) lead archeologists to conclude that they are the earliest examples of deliberately planned and managed cities. The streets of many of these early cities were paved and laid out at right angles in a grid pattern, with a hierarchy of streets from major boulevards to residential alleys. Archaeological evidence suggests that many houses were laid out to protect from noise and enhance residential privacy; many also had their own water wells, probably for both sanitary and ritual purposes. These ancient cities were unique in that they often had drainage systems, seemingly tied to a well-developed ideal of urban sanitation.

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History – The Beginning

- Many Central American civilizations also planned their cities, including sewage systems and running water.
Traditionally, the Greek philosopher Hippodamus (5th century BC) is regarded as the first town planner and "inventor" of the orthogonal urban layout. Aristotle called him "the father of city planning," and until well into the 20th century, he was indeed regarded as such.

The Hippodamian plan called for a neatly arranged, ordered, organized city, of lined up wide streets. Public space was to be clustered together in the center of the city, shrine, theater, government buildings, market space, and the agora (a central space where political, artistic, athletic, and spiritual activity took place). Sites for public space were allotted in advance, whereas prior to the Hippodamian plan, site allotment seemed to be done at random. What remained of the city, after the placement of sites dedicated to public life and sacred space, was to be used for housing. Hippodamus is credited with creating this division of public, sacred, and private land and it is the earliest example of the practice we now know as zoning.

Aristotle's ridicule of Hippodamus, which appears in his Politics 2.8, is perhaps the first known example of a criticism of urban planning.
History

“Fall Line” Cities
- Augusta
- Macon
- Milledgeville
- Columbus

Atlanta
- Terminus and the railroads
- Civil War and reconstruction
- Cotton States Exposition (1895)


History

Two Georgias
- Agricultural origins
- Urban cities
  - Growth was sudden and later than other states and regions
  - Pattern of suburban sprawl

Home Rule State
- Strong private property rights perspective and law
1989 Georgia Planning Act
(O.C.G.A. 45-12-200, et seq., and 50-8-1, et seq.)

Legal foundation for community and regional planning in Georgia

“Coordinated and comprehensive planning by all levels of government within the State of Georgia is of vital importance to the state and its citizens. The state has an essential public interest in promoting, developing, sustaining and assisting coordinated and comprehensive planning by all levels of government. This article is intended to provide for the coordination of planning, at the direction of the Governor, by departments, agencies, commissions, and other institutions of the state, and this article shall be liberally construed to achieve that end.”

Followed upon similar legislation in Florida

- Required local, comprehensive planning under rules managed by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA)
- Intended as a “bottom up” planning approach (local to regional to state)
- Plans must be updated every 10 years

Establishes minimum procedures for zoning decisions in the State of Georgia

- Defines and outlines the following:
  - Adoption of zoning ordinance
  - Rezoning of property
  - Zoning hearing procedures
  - Zoning proposal review procedures
Community Planning
“A process that seeks to engage all members of the community to create a more prosperous, convenient, equitable, healthy, and attractive places for present and future generations”
-American Planning Association

One of the fundamental responsibilities of local government is planning for land use and the future growth and development of the community.

Why Plan?
Effective planning ensures that future development will occur where, when, and how the community and local governments want. Planning should:
- Help to preserve and improve quality of life
- Give a vision, clearly stated and shared, that describes the desired future of the community
- Protect private property rights
- Strategically address and support community needs such as economic development, land use, and the environment through collective action
- Coordinate local, regional, and state decision-making and allocation of resources

The Plan Belongs to the Community
- Planning is all about balance among competing interests and almost always involves difficult trade-offs.
- The challenge is to capture in words, maps, and illustrations the future envisioned by the community’s citizens, as well as make those difficult trade-offs along the way.
- Every day citizens as well as elected and appointed officials and the development community must be a part of the process to create the plan.
Three Questions Guide the Planning Process

- What do you have?
- What do you want?
- How will you get it?

Why Plan?

“He who fails to plan is planning to fail.”

-Winston Churchill

Why Plan?

“If you don’t know where you are going, you’ll end up someplace else.”

-Yogi Berra
Why Plan?

“Everybody has plan until they get punched in the face.”

- Mike Tyson

What happens if we don’t Plan? - Sprawl

- Disjointed, sprawling development patterns - sprawl is an uncontrolled expansion of auto-oriented, low density development resulting in:
  1. Traffic - an abundance of low-density housing puts a tremendous strain on our roads and highways because most people in these communities drive their own personal vehicle to work due to longer commute distances and lack of public transportation. Road congestion resulting in longer commutes and increased stress due to traffic.
  2. Cost of Living - home ownership and maintenance, transportation costs, and higher utility costs.
  3. Health - urban areas are generally pedestrian-friendly and have access to basic amenities within walking distance, unlike suburban areas.
  4. Environmental Issues: Sprawl can also cause certain environmental issues of which you may want to be aware.

What happens if we don’t Plan? Incompatible Land Use

There are two primary purposes for zoning:

1. to facilitate planning and land development on a community-wide basis; and
2. to reduce disputes between landowners by keeping conflicting land uses separate. By ensuring predictability in land use, zoning helps maintain property values. No zoning of land, and more general land use policies, such as allowing a tattoo parlor or luxury apartments next to junk yards. Perhaps an all night convenience store next to single family residential and schools next to manufacturing plants.

In summary, planning and zoning are crucial for maintaining a sustainable and livable environment.
What happens if we don’t Plan?

• “Quality of Life” may occur within single developments, but not likely to occur across multiple properties or districts
• Poor provision and utilization of infrastructure (cities chasing development through inefficient means)
• Traffic
• Harm to environmentally sensitive areas and resources
• Inefficient, more costly allocation of resources
Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA)

“Promotes and implements community and economic development, local government assistance, and safe and affordable housing programs.”

- DCA oversees local government planning
- Administers local planning requirements
- Provides plan reviews and assistance in coordination with regional commissions
- Oversees Qualified Local Government (QLG) status
- Recently modified state planning regulations (resulting from SB 86 in 2011-12)

Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA)

Minimum standards for Local Comprehensive Planning

- Three required elements
  - Community Goals
  - Needs and Opportunities
  - Community Work Program
- Other potential elements (based on tiers or needs)
  - Capital Improvements
  - Economic Development
  - Land Use
  - Transportation
  - Housing

Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA)

Coordinated Service Delivery Act (HB 489)

- Adopted by General Assembly in 1995
- Each county and its cities must coordinate delivery of public services
- Avoids duplication
- Increases coordination
- Gwinnett County lawsuit, settled in 2012
Regional Commissions (RC)

- Originally Area Planning and Development Commissions (APDCs) in the 1960s
- Became Regional Development Centers (RDCs) in 1989 Georgia Planning Act
- Renamed in 2009 to Regional Commissions as regions were redrawn and reduced from 16 to 12 regions
- Provide local assistance and coordinate regional planning initiatives within their area
- MPO - Metropolitan Planning Organization administers allotted federal transportation funds

Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC)

“Regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency for the 10-county area including Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, and Rockdale counties”

70 cities, 10 counties, 1 region
Guided by ARC Board and ARC Strategic Plan
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Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC)

- Provides regional data and forecasts
- Plan 2040 Regional Plan
- Livable Centers Initiative (LCI)
- Community Choices
- Environmental resource information/Green Communities
- Local government training and resources
- Workforce Solutions
- Lifelong Communities and Aging in Place Programs

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Georgia Regional Transit Authority (GRTA)

- Created by the Georgia General Assembly in 1999
- Addresses mobility and air quality "as the Governor's voice for strategic direction in transportation planning for Georgia's most populous region."
- 13 county-area for federal Clean Air Act non-attainment: Cherokee, Clayton, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Paulding, and Rockdale
- Operates Regional Commuter Transit service
- Manages Development of Regional Impact (DRI) Program
- Bonds and High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes

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Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District (MNGWPD)

- Created by the Georgia General Assembly in 2001
- Establishes policy, creates plans, and promotes intergovernmental coordination of all water issues from a regional perspective
- Includes 15 counties and 92 cities
- Watershed Management Plan
- Stream and stream
Georgia Planning Association (GPA)

Mission Statement
- The purpose of the Chapter shall be to encourage, promote and assist professional, governmental, educational, and private sector organizations and individuals in the accomplishment of the following:
  - To provide for the exchange of ideas and to disseminate information to public officials and private sector planners through seminars, workshops, and other methods.
  - To foster conferences, meetings, and educational programs relating to planning and development.
  - To promote and support research and publications relating to planning and development.
  - To develop programs for the examination and continuing education of professional planners.
  - To otherwise promote understanding, cooperation, coordination, and support necessary for progressive planning and development throughout the State of Georgia.

Georgia Planning Association (GPA)

- The Georgia Planning Association (GPA) is an official Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA).
- A 1,100-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.
- The GPA provides a place where planners can share their expertise and ideas with policymakers and the general public for the benefit of Georgia and its citizens.
- GPA has provided resources and services to planners and communities for more than three decades.
- Georgia is among the more progressive states in the U.S., given its state mandate to develop local and regional comprehensive plans. The Georgia Planning Act of 1989 has served the state well to establish a basis of community planning.

American Planning Association (APA)

- APA is an independent, not-for-profit educational organization that provides leadership in the development of vital communities by advocating excellence in planning, promoting education and citizen empowerment, and providing the tools and support necessary to meet the challenges of growth and change. They are the leaders of the planning movement. APA champions planning excellence that addresses economic, environmental, and equity issues, and provides technical support for the Chapters, Divisions, and members and the communities they serve. The American Planning Association was created in 1978 by the consolidation of two organizations, the American Institute of Plans, founded in 1909 and the First National Conference on City Planning in Washington, D.C. The association has approximately 40,000 members.
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With all these folks involved how do we get anything done?

Let’s talk about implementation!

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Elected Officials

- State - General Assembly
- County - Board of Commissioners
- City - Mayor and City Council

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Elected Officials

**Legislative Actions:**
- Adoption of Comprehensive Plans
- Adoption of ordinances
- Zoning amendments
- Special permits, uses, and exceptions
- Budgetary authority

**Responsibilities:**
- Policymaking
- Appoint citizens to planning boards and commissions
- Final line of local planning decision making (except for zoning variances and administrative appeals)
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**Appointed Boards & Commissions**

**Planning Commission**

- Appointed by elected officials in an advisory role
- Review, hear, and deliberate upon local zoning applications
- Conduct public hearings and makes recommendations
- Review policy (zoning and comprehensive plan) changes
- Advocate for planning, the local comprehensive plan, and consistent decision-making

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**Appointed Boards & Commissions**

**Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA, BZA, ZRB, Etc.)**

- Appointed by elected officials
- Decision-making body for variances and administrative appeals
- Quasi-judicial actions
- Appeals are to Georgia Superior Court

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**Appointed Boards & Commissions**

**Design Review Boards (DRB) or Historic Preservation Board**

- Typically advisory boards appointed by elected officials
- Usually for a defined geographic area
- Should be provided a clear set of guidelines and standards to follow and administer
- Some may require special qualifications or training (architecture, engineering, historic preservation, etc.)
- Often provide a “certificate of appropriateness” or recommendation for approval or denial to City Council or County Commission
### Appointed Boards & Commissions

**Community Councils or Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU)**
- Somewhat unique terminology to Georgia and the Atlanta region
- Neighborhood or geographic based citizen advisory boards
- Provide an opportunity to review and provide recommendations to boards or commissions
- Mechanism for citizen involvement and grass roots participation

### Role of Local Staff
- Administer and enforce the code
- Provide full and accurate information to landowners, developers, boards, and commissions
- Recommendations based on fact
- Administrative Permits

### American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP)
- Certified planning professionals
- Must meet education and experience requirements
- Pass a written test and maintain certification through "continuing education credits"
- Are held to a higher professional standard through the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct
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**The Bottom Line**
- Plans are a guide, codes are the law
- Staff, Boards and Commissions must be:
  - objective
  - consistent
  - rely upon plans, codes, and the facts
- Work Sessions vs. Hearings
- Plans and Codes are living, evolving documents and must adjust to changing conditions
- Implementation and Enforcement are vital

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**PLANNING 101 - Planning in Georgia and the Region**
- Discussion
- Questions

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**PLANNING 101 - A Georgia and Atlanta Region Overview**

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