

## HINTS FOR PLANFIRST APPLICATION COMPLETION

### PRE-REQUISITES- be sure you can answer YES to all components of these 2 questions:

**A. (1)** We have a good track record of maintaining our Qualified Local Government status **and** submitting required reports to DCA, including the current Report of Local Government Finances. (To check status, please visit <http://www.georgiaplanning.com/planners/planreview/default.asp>).

**A. (2)** We have attained the Minimum Standard for performance as called for in our regional commission's regional comprehensive plan.

Then, for the rest of the application--

- Proof-read for spelling, grammatical and other mistakes
- Don't just give yes or no answers- explain, be verbose but truthful
- We do not look up additional information on things you tell us in the application
- Tell the story; reviewers won't be asking you questions as they review
- If in Excel or other tabular format, be sure that the blocks are big enough to contain all the text before you turn them into PDFs
- Use exhibits and photos
- support letters are fine but only if add to the story
  - consider using one letter that all the support organizations sign (petition-like)
- This is about plan preparation process and implementation. It is nice that the local government has a good relationship with its development authority, chamber, historical society, whatever, but they aren't the ones responsible for making sure that the community's vision is realized, they are just parts of the whole.
- Integrate any support exhibits into the document, don't send as a separate document
- Make sure photos and exhibits are in focus and are clearly identified
- DO NOT send us the entire plan/work program- we have it
- Don't send copy of the plan or the STWP/CWP- just reference them, with correct section, date of the plan and page number
- Signature- we prefer the CEO, or at least the manager/administrator
- TELL A COMPLETE STORY, WITH PICTURES, if they contribute to the story
- Know what the program is about- it is not JUST the local government's planning department, but the local government itself-- how the plan is used for decision making and how it is implemented by all departments and staff- to address the community's vision as stated in their comp plan
- This is about the GA Planning Act comprehensive plan, NOT about a strategic plan resulting from the comp plan or a small area plan for a downtown or neighborhood, or other plans that have come out of the comp plan- they are only part of the implementation of the larger (bird's-eye) comp plan; however, including them in the application to show implementation is good
- Make sure it is signed and submitted by the deadline, May 15.
- You have 20 pages, use them