February 2015

New Executive Team Members

L-R: Seth Coker, Jana Wiggins, Brian Dill.

DCA welcomes three new members to Commissioner Knowles’ Executive Team.

Seth Coker is Director of Governmental Relations and comes to the Department from Senator Saxby Chambliss’ office. In his more than four years with Senator Chambliss, Seth served in four different roles, and was most recently the State Director.

Jana Wiggins, our new Director of Marketing and Communications, joins us from Moultrie Technical College, where she served as the Marketing Director for 12 years. In her role there, she helped the college attain the status as the only one of Georgia’s technical schools to achieve growth for 13 consecutive years.

NEWS AND EVENTS

Georgia Celebrates 25 Years of Planning, Honors PlanFirst Communities

In January, DCA designated ten local governments as the inaugural members of DCA’s PlanFirst: Athens-Clarke County, the Town of Braselton, Coweta County, the City of Gainesville, Johnson County, Jones County, the City of Madison, the City of Suwanee, the City of Vienna and the City of Woodstock in a ceremony at the State Capitol. These governments have shown a long and sustained commitment to excellence in developing and implementing local plans to achieve their communities’ visions.

Since 1990, Georgia law has required local governments and their citizens to create comprehensive plans to help guide the decision-making process.
years.

Brian Dill is our Chief Operating Officer. He joins DCA from his most recent post at Carroll Tomorrow, where he served for four years as Senior Vice-President for Economic Development and Global Commerce.

Welcome, Seth, Jana and Brian!

Congratulations to Georgia’s New Main Street Cities

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On January 26, DCA recognized seventeen cities at the Annual Georgia Main Street Luncheon.

These communities successfully completed the Georgia Main Street Start-up Program and will receive the national designation of Classic Main Street Community from the National Main Street Center. Since Fall 2013 these cities have worked closely with DCA to prepare local government staff, downtown business owners, volunteers and elected officials for the prestige of joining the Main Street program.

“Georgia’s Main Street cities provide vibrant opportunities for families and businesses to succeed, and we’re proud of the work these 17 communities have done to meet their goals,” said Commissioner Camila Knowles.

for communities. The Capitol ceremony included a celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Georgia Planning Act, with both chambers of the General Assembly adopting resolutions in honor of the PlanFirst communities and the anniversary.

In the 25 years since the Planning Act was first adopted, communities across Georgia have planned for community and economic development. The ten communities honored by PlanFirst are among the highest performers in Georgia and have consistently used their plans to guide decisions and investments to create places that have an economic impact beyond the borders of their jurisdictions.

“Planning, and then following that plan, can be a long process, and sometimes it seems like progress is slow. But when we look at the communities here today, we see how their hard work has paid off,” said Commissioner Camila Knowles.

For more information on PlanFirst, contact Brian Johnson at brian.johnson@dca.ga.gov.

First Lady Sandra Deal and Governor Deal listen as Commissioner Camila Knowles welcomes guests to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration at the Capitol.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Advisory Council hosted Georgia’s 30th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration at the Capitol Friday, January 16. Governor Nathan Deal, Commissioner Camila Knowles and Mrs. Christine King Farris (the Reverend King’s sister) provided comments. More than 300 people attended the ceremony, and the Atlanta Boy Choir provided music, as it has done for all thirty of Georgia’s annual celebrations.

New Building Codes Effective January 1, 2015

At its November 2014 meeting, the DCA Board adopted the following:
"We look forward to working with all our Main Street cities as we continue to bring out the best that Georgia’s downtowns have to offer," she continued.

For more information about the Main Street program, contact Billy Peppers at billy.peppers@dca.ga.gov.

### Homelessness Prevention Assistance

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded $14.6 million in funding to DCA to provide homelessness prevention services to jurisdictions throughout Georgia. DCA manages the “Balance of State” continuum of care, meaning that the Department manages HUD funding for areas outside of Georgia’s main metropolitan areas. These funds will provide:

- Housing and services for 1,020 persons with permanent disabilities
- Transitional housing and assistance for 200 families
- Assistance to four new Rapid Re-housing programs
- Assistance to the Homeless Management Information System, the Coordinated Assessment program, and Continuum of Care planning.

For more information about the Balance of State Continuum of Care, contact Don Watt at don.watt@dca.ga.gov.

### UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

**Community Planning Institute in Richmond Hill:**
**February 27-28**

In partnership with the Georgia Planning Association, DCA will offer two workshops in Richmond Hill:

- **Managing Your Water Resources** - Feb. 27: a one-day workshop taught by water management professionals around Georgia. **Registration is $25 and available here.**
- **Preparing and Implementing Your Comprehensive Plan** - Feb. 27-28: **Registration is $60/day and available here.**

Registration is free for all WaterFirst and PlanFirst communities. For more information, contact Adriane Wood at adriane.wood@dca.ga.gov.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCING

**January Financial Awards**

**Region Three**

**Development Authority of Alpharetta**

- $1.25 million in Regional Economic Business Assistance (REBA)
HomeSafe Georgia on Twitter
Georgia Main Street on Facebook

- Will spur $41 million in private investment
- Will retain 1,693 jobs
- Will create 500 jobs
- REBA funds will assist in the relocation and expansion of FiServ, a financial services technology company.

Equal Housing Opportunity

Previous issues of The DCA Newsletter

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