

**Georgia PlanFirst Community Program
Application**

Introduction: *The Department of Community Affairs' PlanFirst Community Program rewards local governments that clearly demonstrate success with implementing their local comprehensive plan. To apply for PlanFirst Community designation, a local government must have Qualified Local Government certification and be current on required reporting to DCA (to check status for both, please visit <http://www.georgiaplanning.com/planners/planreview/default.asp>). To be selected for PlanFirst Community designation, a multi-agency review panel will evaluate a number of indicators of community success with plan implementation. All of these indicators are equally important, but size of the community is taken into consideration in the evaluation so that communities of various sizes are equally competitive for PlanFirst designation.*

Instructions: *Please answer all the following questions, attaching additional pages where necessary. Attach letters of support or other evidence of local commitment to successfully participate in this program if selected. Total application length, including support letters, must not exceed 20 pages.*

1. Applicant Government City of Vienna
2. Address 203 West Cotton Street, P. O. Box 436, Vienna, GA 31092
3. Contact Person Janet Joiner
4. Telephone 229-268-4920
5. E-mail jjoiner@sowega.net
6. Application prepared by Janet Joiner

I, the undersigned authorized representative of the applicant, certify that to the best of my knowledge the information in this application is true and correct.

7. Official Signature 
8. Date 04-28-2014
9. Name (please print) Eddie Daniels
10. Title Mayor

11. For each of the following indicators, briefly explain how your community addresses this indicator and identify specific examples and resulting local successes. (Each indicator will be scored 1 – does not meet, 3 – meets, or 5 – exceeds, except indicators 11 j. and 11 t. which may score up to 10 points)

Indicator	Explanation
a. We have a good track record with maintaining our Qualified Local Government status and submitting required reports to DCA.	The City of Vienna has met DCA planning requirements and has historically maintained its QLG status. The comprehensive plan and updates have been submitted in a timely fashion. The last short term work plan update was submitted in 2012 for the years 2013-2017 and the next update is due in October, 2017.
Goals	
b. The Goals (or Vision) section of our comprehensive plan are supported by the community and its leadership	In 2006, the City of Vienna participated in the development of the "Greater Dooly Comprehensive Plan". This is a joint county-wide plan for Dooly County and its 6 municipalities which includes Vienna. The planning process was initiated when Georgia DCA conducted a special training workshop in Vienna entitled "Planning for Quality Growth in Dooly County." Local staff and community participants were invited as local stakeholders to participate in this 4-day workshop. (continued..)
c. The Goals are both ambitious and achievable for the community	Many of our goals are quite ambitious being the small community we are. However, it is our belief that you have to think big to achieve big. Doing large projects in phases is one way that has worked for us.
d. The Goals steer local decision-making on a continuous basis	Local decisions are driven by the goals set forth in the City's Comprehensive and Master Plans. Character areas and land use maps are used as guidelines in all new development and redevelopment projects to ensure sustainable (continued. . .)
e. Consistent progress is being made at achieving the Goals	The City of Vienna is satisfied with the progress that has been made. Some of the goals set in 2006 have been achieved, others are in process, and yet others are still in the schedule for future development as funds become available.
Leadership	
f. We have effective planning staff or another suitable arrangement for handling community planning matters	The City's Community Development Department staff works with other city departments such as Public Works and the City Administrator to handle community planning matters. Also various commissions and authorities, such as the Planning & Zoning Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, both Development Authorities, and Vienna Main Street are included as needed.
g. We have an active planning commission or similar body to steer local planning decisions	The Community Development Department of the City steers local planning decisions using the Planning & Zoning Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, and the City's Development Authorities. Recommendations are then presented to City Council for final approval.
h. We have a regular local plan effectiveness evaluation process (such as annual planning retreats of elected leadership)	The Community Development Department gives regular updates and reports to the Mayor and City Council as well as an annual review that includes the status of comprehensive plan goals. Out of town planning retreats are held as needed. At these retreats, City officials evaluate progress made in the City's Comprehensive Plan, Master Plan, and Urban Redevelopment Plan and discuss future growth and needs requirements to be incorporated into the existing plan.
i. All local officials (both elected and appointed) involved in local planning	All elected officials & staff attend training sessions throughout the year offered by GMA & DCA. Many are graduates of the GA Academy where planning is part of the training. Two City Councilmen are currently enrolled in the Academy. The Com-

Indicator	Explanation
processes have recently attended training in how to use the plan effectively	munity Development Director is an active member of the GA Planners Association and GEDA. The Director also serves on the River Valley Regional Commission CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy) Committee and (continued. .)
j. Provide up to ten of your best recent examples where the plan steered a key local decision	(1) Looking for ways to fund the plan projects led City Council to work with County Officials to develop a SPLOST referendum. (2) The plan led to the re-evaluation of the local planning and zoning regulations. Updates were made, a few errors were found and corrected with amendments, and some new ordinances were adopted as result. An example is a timely new ordinance that provides for the (continued. .)
Participation	
k. Our comprehensive plan was prepared with multiple community input opportunities	Our comprehensive plan was developed with much community input. In addition to the 4 day workshop mentioned in item (b), other planning activities included Town Hall meetings and strategic planning sessions held in the development of the City's Urban Redevelopment Plan. This URP, adopted in 2013 has won (continued..)
l. The community input received during plan preparation influenced the content of the plan	Yes, see item b. and k. above. Example: One thing that was consistently brought up in all community planning sessions and Town Hall meetings was the need for a venue to hold large functions. Due to the lack of a large facility, these functions where being held out of the county which is not only an inconvenience (continued..)
m. Our steering committee that guided development of the plan included local leaders and elected officials	The steering committee that guided the Greater Dooly Comprehensive Plan development was made up of Dooly County Commissioners & staff, as well as Mayors, City Councilmen, and staff from each of the municipalities within the county.
n. We have an active, ongoing, outreach process for soliciting input on planning matters from a broad spectrum of the community, including non-traditional populations, and the resulting input is listened to by community leaders	The City solicits input from its citizens in a variety of ways: monthly City newsletter, social media Facebook Page, Twitter, the City's web site, mass e-mail, regular mail, and also the use of surveys from time to time. The results and comments from these sources are shared with the elected officials in written form and verbally. Volunteers are solicited and opportunities to serve on City Boards and Committees are posted through the above methods. However, we have only achieved little success in reaching the non-traditional populations in the community. This is one area where we could use some assistance.
o. We have active advocates for plan implementation (such as activist citizens, organizations or neighborhood groups) that are listened to by community leaders	The City is fortunate to have active community advocates among our citizens and business owners. These advocates do not hesitate to personally contact the Mayor, Council, and/or City Staff to discuss their ideas and issues. They also attend the Town Hall Meetings to engage in open discussion. We also have a variety of organizations who are wonderful community activists. Examples are the Dooly County Chamber of Commerce, Vienna Main Street, the Vienna Woman's Club, and the Vienna Garden Club. They all are active in community projects and events and have a lot of credibility among our city officials. The City appreciates (continued. .)
Implementation	
p. The Work Program section of our comprehensive plan consists primarily of specific action items that	Yes, our Short Term Work Program action items are very specific to the overall plan goals and spell out the steps we need to take to achieve our long-term goals.

Indicator	Explanation
make it clear exactly what we intend to do to implement the plan	
q. Our Work Program action items clearly address local needs or Goals identified in the plan	Yes, the Work Program is very specific to the needs of the City of Vienna and the implementation goals identified in the plan. (See example in item l. above)
r. We have a good track record of accomplishing most of the action items included in past plan Work Programs	Yes, as an example, in the 2002-2006 Work Plan out of 57 items, 51 were completed, 1 was partially completed, and 5 were postponed for various reasons. Several goals included in the newest work plan version (2013-2017) have already been accomplished. (See attached 2002-2006 work plan)
s. Our local capital budget is consistent with, and is designed to implement, the comprehensive plan	Yes, our capital improvements budget also includes the SPLOST budget that is designated for certain capital projects that are listed in the City's comprehensive plan. The budget is reviewed and adjusted each fiscal year.
t. Provide up to ten best of your best recent examples of important projects carried out as a result of the plan	(1) The City invested over \$2M in 2013 in water and sewer improvements projects and equipment. Examples are: installation of 1,356 radio read water meters, the rehabilitation of 5 city wells and related appurtenances, and the replacement of sewer lines in some neighborhoods. (2) Purchased a Vigilant Solution Law Enforcement Camera system, which is a license plate recognition (continued)

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Submit by Email

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11. Goals b. (continued)

Attendance and participation was very good and there was much discussion about local planning issues, future vision, and real goals for the communities. The goals and community vision identified at this workshop were incorporated into the final version of the Greater Dooly Comprehensive Plan.

The City of Vienna has a history of planning that goes beyond the required comprehensive plan. In 2003, the City was awarded a Quality Growth Grant through DCA that enabled the City to commission The Jaeger Company to develop a Master Plan. The purpose of the plan was to provide guidance in the protection of historic and cultural resources, as well as a planning tool for smart growth development. This plan was pulled together with much stakeholder input and is still used in developing projects. Several planning retreats involving key stakeholders have been held over the years to revisit and update the Plan. In an effort to marry the 2 plans, many of the Master Plan goals have been incorporated into the City's comprehensive plan.

Another proof of community support for the City's goals was shown when voters approved a 6 year SPLOST to fund capital projects such as wastewater treatment facility improvements, a new city administration building, and the community center. The SPLOST was renewed by voters in 2012.

11. Goals d. (continued)

quality growth and protection of our natural resources. An example is the recent construction of 2 new buildings in our historic downtown - a Commercial Speculative Building and a Family Dollar Store. Because one of our plan goals is to protect the character of our local historic district, specific guidelines and a commission were put in place to oversee new construction. As a result, these new buildings are very compatible with our existing historic environment.

11. Leadership i. (continued)

the SWGA United Housing Oversight Committee.

11. Leadership j. (continued)

regulation and permitted location of Photovoltaic Solar Energy Production Facilities within the city limits.

(3) The plan led to the formation of a Historic Preservation Commission to provide oversight and guidance in the City's Local Historic District in order to protect and promote the City's historic resources. This led to a Certified Local Government, designation. As a CLG, the City was awarded an Historic Preservation Grant to assist the County Commission with needed roof repairs to the historic Dooly County Courthouse. As a result of the City's input and funding assistance, the roof was replaced with a slate roof (because the original roof was slate) rather than the proposed architectural shingles.

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- (4) The plan to develop strategies to encourage new residential development led to the City's application and designation as a GICH Community. The Vienna GICH Team discovered there was a great need to educate homeowners and potential home buyers about resources available to help them with their housing needs. As a result, the Dooly County Housing Information Expo was held. 15 exhibitors participated and the event was very well attended.
- (5) The plan to eliminate substandard housing led to the requirement of building permits and inspections in the City of Vienna. This was accomplished through a City/County intergovernmental agreement for the County Building Inspector to provide these services to the City.
- (6) The plan to repurpose a former school building as a multi-faceted community center led to the abatement of environmentally hazardous materials in the building prior to any renovations taking place, making this a safe and healthy environment for workers, residents in the neighborhood, and future users of the facility. The abatement was funded with an EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant and the abatement project was completed in January 2014.
- (7) The plan to revitalize downtown led to the City's pursuit of a Better Hometown (now Main Street) designation. Vienna Main Street has been in force for 11 years and many improvements in the downtown area have been made. The Main Street program also helped City Officials see the need for a Community Development Department which was established in 2006.
- (8) The plan to actively promote tourism led to the reopening of the Georgia Cotton Museum and the City making the decision to take over ownership and operations of the facility. The Museum serves to attract visitors from Interstate 75 and encourages them to visit Historic Downtown Vienna. Vienna Main Street has also taken an active role in the designation of U. S. Highway 41 as a "Georgia Grown Trail". This trail will offer I-75 travelers an alternate, more leisurely route while promoting Georgia's agricultural products and small town businesses. Downtown Vienna is bisected by U. S. Highway 41.
- (9) The plan led to the hiring of a consulting engineer to evaluate all the City's water and sewer services and prepare a long-term improvement plan and schedule.
- (10) The goal to develop other festivals and/or community-wide events in addition to the Big Pig Jig led to the Chamber of Commerce's establishment of a Tourism Opportunity Committee to explore other community events and uses for the Big Pig Jig site. As a result the 2nd Annual MarchArt Show in the Park was held in March 2014, and the City has become a participant in the 100+ Mile Peanut Pickin' Yard Sale held in the fall. Both of these events serve to attract visitors to downtown Vienna.

11. Participation k. (continued)

2 planning awards for communicating results and public engagement: the 2013 Outstanding Planning Process for a Small Community from the Georgia Planner's Association, and a 2013 Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations. During this process citizens participated in several Pattern and Place Charrettes to create a redevelopment plan tailored specifically to the city. The URP was developed with assistance from the River Valley Regional Commission and DCA. The City's comprehensive plan was used as a reference in the development of the URP.

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11. Participation l. (continued)

but has a negative impact on the local economy. This need was included in the City's Comprehensive Plan and the project is in process today, to convert a 55K square foot former school building into a multi-faceted community center. Phase I of the project, which is the environmental abatement and reroofing of the facility, should be completed in June 2014. Phase II is to complete the needed renovations of the lunchroom/assembly hall building of the 3 building complex so that the community can begin using that facility while the remainder of the buildings undergo renovations.

11. Participation o. (continued)

these community advocates and recognizes them each year at a volunteer appreciation event.

11. Implementation t. (continued)

system with a 4 camera mobility kit.

(3) Expand Water Services: In February 2013, the City entered into an agreement with Georgia Environmental Finance Authority to acquire land and construct a 750 GPM groundwater portable water supply well with associated well house/control building/treatment facility and a 200,000 gallon elevated water storage tank and all related appurtenances. This is part of the Governors Water Program. The project is in process and on schedule to be completed in 2014.

(4) Upgrade/Install New Sidewalks: Phase I of a new downtown streetscape that included new sidewalks, landscaping, and amenities has been completed. This led to Phase II which is on schedule for 2015. Sidewalks and landscaping were also added to the West Union Street corridor where none previously existed. This project provides safe connectivity to downtown for the west side neighborhoods and also enhances one of the main gateways into the City.

(5) Convert Former School to Community Center: Phase I of the project to repurpose a former school building into a multi-faceted community center was recently started and is on schedule to be completed this year. Phase I includes the abatement of environmentally hazardous materials such as lead-based paint and asbestos, and reroofing of the entire complex. Once Phase I is completed, the City will complete Phase II as funds become available.

(6) Housing Improvements: The City of Vienna has been awarded 3 CHIP grants for 2011, 2012, and 2013 totaling \$918,000. To date, 10 substandard houses have been brought up to code and 2 have been totally reconstructed. It is estimated that another 7 or 8 houses can be rehabilitated with the remaining funds.

(7) Urban Redevelopment Plan: With the assistance of River Valley Regional Commission and DCA, the City developed and adopted an Urban Redevelopment Plan in 2013.

(8) Highway 215 Corridor Improvement Plan: The State Route 215 Corridor that connects downtown Vienna to Interstate 75 underwent major landscaping improvements using a GDOT Gateway Grant. This project serves to draw and attract visitors to our downtown.

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(9) Seek Additional National Register Nominations: 2 properties have more recently been added to the City's roster of National Register Listings. The former Vienna High & Industrial School, site of the City's future community center, was listed for significance as one of the largest examples of an "Equalization School" in the state. The property was also recently awarded a Georgia Historical Marker and installation is planned for late summer 2014. The other listing is Vienna's Rosenwald School.

(10) Construct New Public Administration Building: A former bank was renovated as the new Vienna City Hall. Renovating an existing building, rather than building new, made it possible to keep City Hall in downtown Vienna.

D•O•O•L•Y COUNTY

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



110 EAST UNION STREET ♦ P.O. BOX 308 ♦ VIENNA, GEORGIA 31092-0308
PHONE (229) 268-8275 ♦ FAX (229) 268-8200 ♦ www.doolychamber.com

March 18, 2014

Georgia Department of Community Affairs
60 Executive Park South, N.E.
Atlanta, Georgia 30329-2231

Re: City of Vienna PlanFirst program application

To Whom It May Concern:

The Dooly County Chamber of Commerce believes the City of Vienna is very deserving of a PlanFirst Community designation. The City has always included the Chamber in community-wide planning activities such as retreats and charettes. We participated in the development of the Greater Dooly Comprehensive Plan and its updates.

Throughout the years, the Chamber has had a great deal of input on the development and implementation of the various goals set forth in the plan. An example is the goal to repurpose the former Vienna Elementary School building as a multi-faceted community center. The Chamber was involved in the original concept planning and continues to be involved in each phase of implementation.

The Chamber is very supportive of the City's application to be designated as a PlanFirst Community.

Sincerely,

Rhonda Lamb-Heath, Executive Director
Dooly County Chamber of Commerce

City of Vienna



P.O. BOX 436 VIENNA, GEORGIA 31092

April 14, 2014

Georgia Department of Community Affairs
60 Executive Park South, N.E.
Atlanta, Georgia 30329-2231

Re: City of Vienna PlanFirst program application

To Whom It May Concern:

The Mayor and Council of the City of Vienna fully support the City's application to participate in the Department of Community Affairs' PlanFirst program. The City of Vienna's Comprehensive Plan is part of a greater city-county joint plan. Vienna is a Qualified Local Government and is up-to-date with its mandated reporting. Our Short Term Work Plan was last updated in 2012 with next updates due in October, 2017.

As governing officials of the City of Vienna, we recognize the City's comprehensive plan as the basic tool for all planning efforts in the community. We believe our plan is built upon consensus and reflects the collective will of the residents; therefore, it is our duty to see that the plan's objectives are implemented in an efficient and timely manner.

If selected to participate in the PlanFirst program, the City of Vienna commits to actively participate in the program requirements.

Sincerely,

Eddie Daniels, Mayor

Beth English, Mayor Pro Tem

Randall Almond, Councilman

Walter Brown, Councilman

Henry Johnson, Councilman

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An Equal Opportunity Employer



*P. O. Box 436
Vienna, Georgia 31092
(229) 268-4921*

March 18, 2014

Georgia Department of Community Affairs
60 Executive Park South, N. E.
Atlanta, Georgia 30329-2231

Re: City of Vienna Plan First program application

To Whom It May Concern:

As Executive Director of the Vienna Main Street program, I understand the importance of good, quality planning. I am also confident that City of Vienna officials and staff recognize the importance of planning as well.

Vienna Main Street and its community volunteers took the lead in developing the recently adopted Urban Redevelopment Plan on behalf of the City. Adopting an URP was one of the goals of the Greater Dooly Comprehensive Plan which has now been accomplished. The URP, the Greater Dooly Comprehensive Plan, and the City of Vienna Master Plan all serve as guides to Vienna Main Street's downtown projects and activities.

The City of Vienna has included Vienna Main Street in both the planning and implementation phases of its long range planning programs. Because of all the reasons stated above, Vienna Main Street fully supports the City's application for designation as a PlanFirst Community.

Sincerely,

Larista F. Thompson
Executive Director

City of Vienna

STWP Report of Accomplishments (2002 - 2006)

Prior STWP Item	Year(s)	Status
Pursue funding for bypass around Vienna	2001 – 2005	<u>Postponed</u> . City will coordinate with County to prepare RFP and hire consulting traffic engineer during the next 2 years to conduct a feasibility study for the bypass.
Street resurfacing (LARP)	2001 – 2005	Completed
Rotate fully-equipped police car via new purchases	2001 – 2005	Completed
City Park rehabilitation	2001 – 2005	Completed
Sidewalk rehabilitation	2001 – 2005	Completed
Review Service Delivery Strategy for utility extension and annexation	2001	Completed
Preliminary design for water/sewer extension across I-75	2001	Completed
Rehabilitation/replacement of water and sewer lines	2001 – 2005	Completed
Complete wastewater treatment plant upgrade & expansion of irrigation field (Tyson plant)	2001	Completed
Purchase 2 pipe locators	2001	Completed
Purchase trenchers and boring rig	2001	Completed
Replace utility truck	2001	Completed
Purchase utility truck and Jaws-of-life for fire department	2001	Completed
Replace dump truck	2001	Completed
Replace tractor	2001	Completed
Network the police department with GCIC	2001	Completed
Renovate old City Hall	2001 – 2002	Completed
Pursue Better Hometown designation	2001	Completed
Identify vacant residential lots for infill development	2001	<i>Partially Completed</i>
Implement CHIP initiatives	2001- 2002	Completed
Support job retention and creation	2001 – 2005	Completed
Investigate feasibility of developing compost site	2002	Completed

Prior STWP Item	Year(s)	Status
Adopt environmental ordinances	2002	<u>Postponed</u> . An update to all the City's development regulations is planned for years 2008-2009; action on environmental protection ordinances suspended pending state revision to Part V criteria.
Purchase 2 trash trailers	2002	Completed
Network City Hall, Police Dept, and Maintenance Dept computers	2002	Completed
Install security system in City Hall	2002	Completed
Replace/rehabilitate sewer pumps at old oxidation pond	2002	Completed
Acquire vacant residential lots for infill development	2002	Completed
Replace oldest pickup truck	2002	Completed
Construct fire department substation	2002	<u>Postponed</u> . City will construct a new public safety complex for both fire and police protection services during 2008.
Purchase mower	2002	Completed
Introduce downtown façade improvement incentive program	2002	Completed
Extend water and sewer service across I-75	2002	Completed
Remove and replace wooden playground equipment	2002	Completed
Purchase mower and small tools for Parks & Cemetery upkeep	2002	Completed
Purchase 5 additional sets of firefighter safety equipment	2002	Completed
Construct new Senior Citizens Center	2002	Completed
Purchase second hay baler	2002	Completed
Drainage improvements between Still Quarters and US 41	2003	Completed
Complete computerization of water/sewer/gas systems	2003	Completed
Engineering study for repair/replacement of defective sewer lines – Union St vicinity	2003	Completed
Replace oldest backhoe	2003	Completed
Replace sewer machine	2003	Completed
Clean sludge from old sewer ponds	2003	
Rehabilitate old municipal well in Industrial Park	2003	Completed
Build larger/combined space for wastewater-sewer-gas departments	2003	Completed
New sidewalk construction	2003	Completed

Prior STWP Item	Year(s)	Status
Repair/replace defective sewer lines – Union Street vicinity	2004 - 2005	Completed
Replace pickup truck	2004	Completed
Rehabilitate lift station pumps on Old Americus Road	2004	Completed
Replace truck #4 with Knuckleboom truck	2004	Completed
Replace bulldozer	2004	Completed
Upgrade City Hall office equipment	2004	Completed
Replace communication equipment in water-sewer maintenance departments	2004	Completed
Construct combined public safety building for fire and police departments	2005	Postponed. This project is now scheduled for 2008.
Begin preparations for update to Comprehensive Plan	2005	Postponed to 2007 due to changes in State recertification schedule
Assist Head Start with provision of necessary facilities	2005	Completed