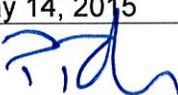


PlanFirst Program Application - May 15, 2015

Introduction: The Department of Community Affairs' PlanFirst Program rewards local governments that clearly demonstrate success with implementing their local comprehensive plan. To apply for PlanFirst designation, a local government must have Qualified Local Government certification and be current on required reporting to DCA. (To check status of both, please visit <http://www.georgiaplanning.com/planners/planreview/default.asp>).

A multi-agency review panel will evaluate a number of indicators of community success with plan implementation to select communities for this designation. 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 thoroughly, attaching additional pages where necessary, so that the reviewers have sufficient information to measure the success of your comprehensive plan implementation. Supporting documents might include: news articles, legal ads, lists of attendees, letters of support or other evidence of local involvement and commitment to successful plan implementation activities in your community. *Total application length, including supporting information and support letters, must not exceed 20 pages. Text areas will expand as needed.*

Applicant government	CITY OF DUBLIN
Mailing address	Post Office Box 690; Dublin, GA 31040
Telephone	(478) 296-1010
Email	stanleyd@dlcga.com
Contact person; title	Deborah J. Stanley, Community Development Coordinator
Application prepared by	Deborah J. Stanley
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.	
Name of authorized official signing; title	Phil Best, Sr., Mayor
Date	May 14, 2015
Signature	

PRE-REQUISITES

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>).

QLG status:	<u>yes</u>	no
Local government reports:	<u>yes</u>	no

All required reports are have been submitted in accordance with stated deadlines. The next updates are due 10/31/2019.

A. (2) We have attained the Minimum Standard for performance as called for in our regional commission's regional comprehensive plan. yes no

The Laurens County Joint Comprehensive Plan is a joint plan for Laurens County and its municipalities – the Town of Cadwell, the Town of Dexter, the City of Dublin, the City of Dudley, the City of East Dublin, the Town of Montrose, and the Town of Rentz. and was prepared under the new Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 adopted by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) first with an effective date of January 1, 2013, and after minor changes, an effective date of March 1, 2014.

For each of the following indicators, fully explain how your community addresses this indicator; identifying specific examples and resulting local successes. (Each indicator will be scored 1, 3 or 5 points, except indicators j. and t. which may score up to 10 points.) Add exhibits and examples as needed to tell your story.

INDICATOR: GOALS

B. The Goals (or Vision) section of our comprehensive plan is supported by the community and its leadership.

This Laurens County (Dublin) Joint Comprehensive Plan is a locally driven plan principally addressing local needs and cultivating widespread community interest, support, and buy-in, while meeting state standards. The title of the Plan “Green and Growing Jewel: Regional Hub of Commerce, Home, Heritage and Health” was chosen carefully to stimulate and encourage interests and implementation. The City of Dublin is the aspiring centerpiece of the “Green and Growing Jewel”. The community Leadership continually seeks to improve its infrastructure; attract new residents and retirees; locate even more businesses and compatible jobs; nurture its existing businesses and services; utilize and celebrate its natural resources and heritage; and grow tourism, among its guiding aims and principles. Dublin has been, and remains, “*ahead of the curve*” in a nine county area in the heart of Georgia. As a regional hub, Dublin provides employment, medical, educational, cultural, recreational, recycling, shopping and entertainment opportunities for the entire region. The community’s success is attributed largely to its Leadership and great working relationships. This is evidenced most by our expanding industrial base and award winning downtown revitalization. For the past several years, Dublin and

Laurens County have enjoyed tremendous success in landing national and international manufacturers, including Valmiera Glass, a Latvia-based fiberglass company that recently announced plans to invest \$20 million in a fiberglass plant that's expected to create 150 jobs, and Erdrich Umformtechnik, which recently completed a \$39 million metal-stamping facility in the I-16 industrial park and is expected to create 180 jobs at full capacity. Downtown Dublin's amazing revitalization stems from over 30 years of public-private partnerships mixed with sound planning principles. Over 25 million dollars have been invested in the Dublin downtown area over the last several years. The City of Dublin, its Main Street Program, and its Downtown Development Authority are collaborating in major revitalization and improvement efforts to enhance downtown Dublin's appearance and economic and social vibrancy. Among these accomplishments are the construction of a farmers market (Market on Madison), a pedestrian plaza connecting the market to a principal downtown hub and street, the rehabilitation of its historic theater and Carnegie library to performing arts use, and renovation of major downtown landmark buildings, such as the Fred Roberts Hotel, the Old Post Office, and the renowned "Skyscraper," the seven-story former First National Bank currently under construction to become the Georgia Military College Dublin satellite campus. We have been fortunate to achieve these successes, in accordance with our Comprehensive Plan goals and community objectives.

C. The Goals are both ambitious and achievable for the community.

Yes. As indicated and described above, the Community has been fortunate to achieve numerous successes, in accordance with our Comprehensive Plan goals and community objectives. Our Laurens County (Dublin) Joint Comprehensive Plan outlines practical steps and actions that can be accomplished through incremental implementation to move the community forward. The City of Dublin has a good track record of successfully completing projects that are identified in our Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program. (Please see attached Report of Accomplishments)

D. The Goals steer local decision-making on a continuous basis.

The City of Dublin utilizes its Comprehensive Plan as a guide for making sound planning decisions that impacts the community's growth. The Plan is utilized consistently throughout the annual budgeting process, capital project prioritizations, land use decision-making, community development grant and loan projects, and many others. City Staff members are required, as part of the budget process, to submit five year plans and capital outlay requests. Status updates regarding various projects, programs and goals are also discussed during bi-weekly staff meetings and later forwarded to the Mayor and City Council, via the City Manager for their knowledge and discussion during bi-weekly Pre-council meetings. The goals and vision section of the Comprehensive Plan is used on a continuous basis in every analysis of a zoning action. Zoning Map amendments are required to adhere to the Future Development Map. Character areas and land use maps are used as guidelines in all new development and redevelopment projects to ensure sustainable growth and protection of our natural resources. Because one of the Plan's goals is "*to protect the character of our local historic district,*" during a recent construction and renovation of two bank buildings and a funeral home in our historic downtown district, specific guidelines and a Commission were in place to oversee the renovations. As a result, these new buildings are very compatible with our existing historic environment.

E. Consistent progress is being made at achieving the Goals.

The 2014 Laurens County Joint Comprehensive Plan is the third within the County prepared under the auspices of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. The first was adopted in 1993, while the second was adopted in 2008. Of the 40 items outlined in the 2008 STWP, 23 have been completed, 13 are in process, 3 were re-scheduled for future development as funding becomes available, and 1 was dropped due to lack of need. Great strides have and are being made to achieve goals identified in the recently adopted 2014 Joint Comprehensive Plan STWP. It is evident by the recent number of accomplishments and on-going projects that consistent progress is being achieved to implement goals. (Please see the attached Report of Accomplishments)

INDICATOR: LEADERSHIP

F. We have effective planning staff or another suitable arrangement for handling community planning matters.

The City's planning staff consists mainly of the City Manager, City Engineers, Building Inspector, City Attorney, Utilities Director, Community Development Coordinator and other departmental staff as applicable. The City Manager provides oversight for comprehensive planning and community development. The planning staff works closely with the City Manager and City Council to implement goals and steer local planning decisions. The City Engineer advises and assists the City Manager in all engineering matters, including developing and managing capital improvement projects for safe, efficient operation of the city. The Engineering staff regularly attend trainings and workshops sponsored by the GDOT, Federal Highway Administration, American Society of Civil Engineers, NPDES, etc. Recent trainings in Plan Development Processes were taken in April 2015. The Building Inspector oversees the City's Code Enforcement, Planning and Zoning Board, Board of Appeals and Historic Review Commission. To enhance their knowledge and enforcement of best management practices when dealing with code enforcement issues, the Enforcement staff regularly attends trainings and seminars presented by the Georgia Association Zoning Administrators, Georgia Association of Code Enforcement and International Association of Electrical Inspectors. Recent trainings in Code Enforcement were taken February 2015. The Utilities Director advises and assists the City Manager in all utility matters including coordinating utilities capital projects with the City Engineer. Utilities staff regularly attend monthly utility meetings sponsored by GDOT. A recent training in developing, growing and optimizing the City's gas distribution system was taken May 2015. The Community Development Coordinator (CDC) is responsible for securing and managing funds from public grant and loan sources to help facilitate the strategic goals of the City. The CDC serves as city liaison with a variety of local, state and federal agencies and works with neighborhood, community and non-profit groups to help achieve community goals. The CDC works closely with the Historic Review Commission and City Inspector to ensure compliance with program and training requirements per the City's Certified Local Government (CLG) designation. Recent training include annual workshops presented by DCA, Preservation Training (6/2014), Historic Commission Training (4/2013), Community Planning Institute (2/2011), Plan Development Process (5/2006), Georgia Academy for Regional Economic - Leadership Development (2004). In addition, City staff regularly utilizes the professional services of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission to provide technical assistance

in comprehensive planning in areas of community development, historic preservation, mapping and geographic information systems and many other services.

G. We have an active planning commission or similar body to steer local planning decisions. The City has four active Commissions:

- The Planning and Zoning Commission is a seven-member board made up of residents who have an interest and/or background in planning and development. The Board meets on a monthly basis and hears items such as rezoning requests, special use permit requests and amendments to the zoning ordinance. The Board is involved in the consideration of all future development map amendments, zoning map amendments, and zoning and development code amendments. The Board makes recommendations to the Mayor and Council on matters concerning final plat approval, annexation of property into the city limits and rezoning requests.
- In similar fashion, the Zoning Board of Appeals is a five-member board that meets on a monthly basis to consider variance requests and hears appeals to administrative decisions.
- The Historic Review Commission is a seven-member board made up of residents who have a demonstrated interest, competence or knowledge of historic preservation. This Board oversees the preservation of the City Bellevue and Downtown Historical Districts. The Board makes determinations to demolish or relocate a historic structure as well as approve or deny new construction within the districts. Any exterior changes to existing buildings must be approved by the Board. The Board also makes recommendations to the Mayor and Council to help guide the decision-making process.
- The Tree Board is a fifteen-member board that meets quarterly and is made up of citizens, foresters, arborists, city staff and an elected official. The Board is responsible for the care of all trees on city-owned property. The Board assists in disseminating news and information regarding the selection, planting, establishment, and maintenance of trees, and advising the Mayor and Council on desirable legislation concerning the City's Tree Program.

The City provides training on a regular basis to ensure that Board members are kept up-to-date on the latest legal, ethical and planning trends.

H. We have a regular local plan effectiveness evaluation process (such as annual planning retreats of elected leadership).

The City Manager, City Clerk, City Attorney, City Engineer and Consulting Engineers participate with the Mayor and Council in a two-day goal planning retreat that is held annually and is mediated by professionals from the University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education, to evaluate and discuss the progress of the previous year's goals outlined in the Plan, as well as set new goals and specify the necessary steps towards their achievement. Prior to the retreat, City staff members are required to prepare power point presentations and submit five year plans, capital outlay requests, departmental goals and project updates, which are used to present to and receive input from the Mayor and Council. In addition, the Dublin-Laurens Chamber of Commerce sponsors an annual community retreat where 60 invited leaders of the community focus on the future growth of Dublin-Laurens County. It is at these retreats where major planning decisions are made that spur the community's direction in the years to come.

I. All local officials (both elected and appointed) involved in local planning processes have recently attended training in how to use the plan effectively. Please indicate what trainings and the date(s) attended.

The Mayor and Council frequently attend trainings offered through the Georgia Municipal Association. These training sessions are designed to give municipal officials a firm grasp on

planning and policy issues and how to develop, implement and evaluate them to benefit their communities.

- Councilwoman Julie Driger was inducted into the Municipal Government Hall of Fame in 2013. The GMA Municipal Government Hall of Fame recognizes officials with least fifteen years of municipal service who have actively participated in the Association and who have made extraordinary contributions to their communities. Councilwoman Driger has earned over 200 hours of training in Municipal Training Institute. She is past president of the Twelfth District, and served also on the Executive Board of GMA for five years, and chairman of the Training Board for two years. She was awarded the Leadership Institute for Municipal Elected Officials (1992), Municipal Training Institute for Elected Officials (1993), Certificate of Achievement (1995), and Certificate of Excellence (1999).
- Councilman Gerald Smith has taken several courses in goal setting, ethics, law, communication, negotiation techniques and many others. He serves as 1st VP of the GMA and will be the District 9 President in June. He also served as an employee trainer for Syngenta Crop Protection for 12 years.
- Lance Jones, City Attorney (and interim City Manager) has taken courses and training sessions involving Planning and Zoning, Revitalizing Neighborhoods, Critical Issues Human Resources, Risk Management, Water Management, Excellence in Utilities, Finance, Open Meetings and Open Records, and will attend the Georgia Association of Zoning Administrators Conference (6/2015).

J. Provide up to ten of your best recent examples where the plan steered a key local decision, with pertinent plan references (attach additional sheets as needed).

1. Redevelopment of the Old First Bank Building (2015)
2. Development of a River walk and SBR 40 Multi-use Trail Plan (2015)
3. Expansion of the Historic District to include the downtown district (2014)
4. Implementation of Quality Growth Recommendation: Bicentennial Plaza (2014)
5. Certified Local Government status (2013) **Dublin is the only city within the Region so designated*
6. Completion of Phase I Historic Resource Survey (2013)
7. Converted to a Single Stream Recycling process (2010)
8. Received Signature Community designation (2007)
9. Initiated Southside Revitalization Project (2002)
10. Adopted Uniform Construction Code (2000)

INDICATOR: PARTICIPATION

K. Our comprehensive plan was prepared with multiple community input opportunities.

The City of Dublin clearly wanted to take advantage of the new DCA planning standards to develop a broad-based community plan which would involve and excite all concerned, both public and private, with the future growth and development of Laurens County and all its municipalities. To accomplish this, a steering committee (the Dublin-Laurens County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee) was created of all local stakeholders who could be envisioned to help guide this plan's development, and make the community a better place to live, work, recreate, and learn. This committee included members from the governing authorities, local economic development practitioners, and local government staff, as well as others concerned with community and economic development within the entire community. This

Coordination Committee was actively involved in the development of all facets of this comprehensive plan, and had numerous opportunities to both help develop, review, and revise all components. The first orders of business at any Coordination Committee meeting were review of any revisions to previous elements based on committee input, and chances to return to and modify earlier elements, if desired. The initial meeting of the Local Plan Coordination Committee included a formal identification of strengths and weaknesses of the community, including opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis). There was much discussion about local planning issues, future vision and goals for the communities. The goals and community vision identified during the meetings were incorporated into the final version of the Plan. The general public was offered the chance to participate at the two required public hearings (and with the Coordination Committee, if desired, after the initial public hearing). These hearings were advertised through unique wording to specifically generate interest and participation. The initial public hearing was held near the beginning of the plan development process to explain the process, offer opportunity for further participation, and solicit input on an improved community vision and local issues/opportunities. The final public hearing was held after a plan draft was developed and reviewed by the Coordination Committee to allow citizen review, solicit any final input, and inform of pending submittal. The City of Dublin recognizes that ongoing public involvement is essential to development and successful implementation of the comprehensive planning process, and endeavors to inform and involve its citizens in decisions and activities that affect growth of the community.

L. The community input received during plan preparation influenced the content of the plan.

Input received through the participation program influenced the content of the Community Agenda portion of the plan, and more specifically, served as the basis for developing the vision of the City and individual character areas. There was much input and discussion regarding DSL/fiber optic/wireless availability, economic development, cultural and historic preservation and important occurrences and community events. For example, it was noted that Dr. Martin Luther King, at the age of 15, made his first public speech at the First African Baptist Church in Dublin. One of the Plan's goals for Natural and Cultural Resources states that *"the community will seek to enhance heritage and cultural tourism through...recognition and promotion of First African Baptist Church (site of Martin Luther King's first public speech)"*. The community input was incorporated into the Plan and led to a document that truly represents the diverse interests of the community.

M. Our steering committee that guided development of the plan included local leaders and elected officials.

The Coordination (Steering) Committee that guided the Dublin-Laurens County Joint Comprehensive Plan development was made up of local leaders, elected officials, Authorities and community groups throughout the community. The involvement of these individuals is vital since they/we are ultimately responsible for implementing the Plan's recommendations.

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 of Dublin recognizes that ongoing public involvement is essential to development and successful implementation of the comprehensive planning process, and endeavors to inform and involve its citizens in decisions and activities that affect growth of the community. The Mayor and Council provide for public input and citizen comments at City Council meetings, which are held every 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month. Space is given during the meetings to hear from citizens and address any complaints or issues. From time to time, the Mayor and

Council will appoint “Blue Ribbon Committees” in order to ensure public participation and discussions on issues that impact the community. Volunteers are solicited opportunities to serve on city boards and committees. Citizens are encouraged to attend Zoning and Preservation meetings and hearing. In addition, the Mayor and Council have provided avenues for public comment on the City’s web page, as well as other social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter. The City’s web page includes a daily updated calendar of events and phone numbers and e-mail contacts for Mayor, City Council and staff. The results and comments from these sources are forwarded in writing to the appropriate staff for feedback or assistance. Council meeting agenda and minutes from previous meetings are also available on line. Notification of public meetings and events are also provided through the use of our Public Access Television Station and local courier. Public notices, surveys and hearings are conducted for many grant related projects. Newsletters, email blasts and regular mail are as well for notification of events. Town Hall meetings and Charrettes are also held from time to time to promote public input on important community issues. A team of trails professionals took up residence in Dublin for five days during the week of April 28, 2015 to begin the first phase of planning for a proposed bike trail and river walk. Two public input sessions allowed the community to offer suggestions regarding their ideas, concerns, and suggestions.

O. We have active advocates for plan implementation (such as activist citizens, organizations or neighborhood groups) that are listened to by community leaders.

A number of residential and nonresidential stakeholders are actively engaged in the continual implementation of our Comprehensive Plan. These advocates do not hesitate to personally contact the Mayor, Council and/or City Staff to discuss their ideas and issues. They are all active in community projects and events and have a lot of credibility among our city officials. We have a very active Main Street and Downtown Development Authority that has been involved in every major planning effort that the City has undertaken recently. The DDA assists the City Officials in achieving the goal *“to grow, strengthen, and promote the economic health and vitality of Downtown Dublin”*. The Dublin Chamber of Commerce continuously strives to promote the community objective of *“Keeping Dublin-Laurens County Green and Growing”* and to make our community a better place to *“live, work, play and retire”*. Keep Dublin Laurens Beautiful (KDLB) is a nonprofit group organized to focus on litter prevention, beautification, and environmental education. KDLB makes regular reports and recommendations to City and County Officials regarding recycling, gateway and beautification improvements. The Southside Community Association assists City Officials with input that will improve the Southside Community to enable it to become a vital part of Dublin- Laurens County. Civic groups, such as the local Rotary Club are very active and involved in assisting the community and City Officials in various developmental projects. Many of our staff and officials serve are members. As a whole, the entire community works well jointly on initiatives and implementation of community goals and plans.

INDICATOR: IMPLEMENTATION

P. The Work Program section of our comprehensive plan consists primarily of specific action items that make it clear exactly what we intend to do to implement the plan.

The City’s Work Program identifies various operational and capital projects intended to implement the Plan. The Work Program section of the Comprehensive Plan was developed with specific implementation action items as a focus. For example, one of the action items initiated for 2013 was to construct a Bicentennial Plaza. This goal was accomplished in February 2014.

Another action item was to explore possible Certified Local Government designation (2011). The City received CLG designation in 2013. (Please see attached Report of Accomplishments)

Q. Our Work Program action items clearly address local needs or goals identified in the plan.

The City's Work Program is specifically designed to address the issues, goals and objectives expressed in the 2014 Dublin Laurens Comprehensive Plan. The Plan includes a range of action items aligned with the vision, goals, and defining narratives of the character areas and identifies each community goal as an issue for improvement. One example of this is a 2012 Economic/Land Use Action Item: *"to Pursue funding as needed to further develop the county's industrial parks and sites, including expansion and additional infrastructure, as appropriate"*. This is reflected throughout our Comprehensive Plan in the community goals, character areas and long term policy section as *"The community will to work to develop and maintain the necessary infrastructure to facilitate and accommodate future development."* Although this action item and goal is ongoing, it was recently achieved in the development of the Dublin-Laurens County I-16 Industrial Park. The City provided the 250-acre site with an onsite elevated tank and extended water, sewer, gas and internet services. The recent success of landing Valmiera Glass USA Corp and Erdrich USA, Inc. has nearly filled the Park and contributed to the need to secure our newest location, the Plum Creek Heart of Ga Mega Site.

R. We have a good track record of accomplishing most of the action items included in past plan Work Programs.

The City of Dublin places emphasis on planning and have used our STWP as a guide to accomplish many of our goals. We believe that the planning process is not complete until the vision becomes a reality. Of the 40 items outlined in the 2008 STWP, 23 have been completed, 13 are in process, 3 were re-scheduled for future development as funding becomes available, and 1 was dropped due to lack of need. Great strides have and are being made to achieve goals identified in the recently adopted 2014 Joint Comprehensive Plan STWP. It is evident by the recent number of accomplishments and on-going projects that consistent progress is being achieved to implement goals. (Please see the attached Report of Accomplishments)

S. Our local capital budget is consistent with, and is designed to implement, the comprehensive plan.

Capital budget and SPLOST funds are designated for certain capital improvement projects identified in our Comprehensive Plan's Short-Term and Long-Term Work Programs. The City's capital budget process provides the primary mechanism through which visions and goals are realized. The capital budget is reviewed and adjusted each fiscal year to provide the necessary funds and toward completion of capital goals and projects. In addition, the City aggressively seeks and utilizes grants and loans to help implement these projects. For example, the goal to "Construct more sidewalks to improve pedestrian walkability" is currently the focus of an ongoing Sidewalk Improvement Project. Phase I of this project was successfully completed at a cost of \$202,000 utilizing funding appropriated in our 2014 capital budget and assisted by a GDOT Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG), along with local capital funds. \$180,000 was appropriated in our 2015 capital budget for Phase two, which is currently underway. The City will continue these appropriations as necessary and as funding is made available to ensure the vision of a "walkable community".

T. Provide up to ten of your best recent examples of important projects carried out as a result of the plan, with the specific plan references (attach additional sheets as needed).

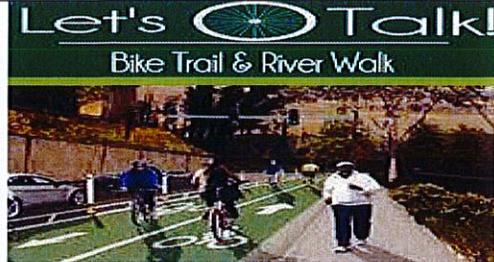
Dublin's First National Bank Building

Built in 1913, this historic landmark will become home to Georgia Military College's new Dublin campus. In partnership with the Dublin Downtown Development Authority, Walters Management Company, and Georgia Military College. "Dublin's Skyscraper" is undergoing a \$3.5 million restoration and is expected to open in the fall 2015.



Multiuse Recreational Trail Master Plan

On March 3, 2015, City officials unanimously approved funding for the development of a master plan detailing the eventual development of a State Bicycle Route 40 and a multiuse recreational trail connecting Downtown Dublin to the Oconee River, with loops through downtown connecting Market on Madison, First African Baptist Church, and First National Bank Building.



441S/Smith St. Gateway Landscape Project

In partnership with Keep Dublin Laurens Beautiful, City officials have launched a concerted effort to make entrances into Dublin more attractive. This eye catching landscape was completed in March 2015 and has made an immediate impact upon the surrounding area while supplying a beautiful entrance into our historic downtown district.



Dublin's Bicentennial Plaza

As part of our Bicentennial Year activities, the City and the DDA constructed a Bicentennial Plaza in front of the Fred Roberts and Theater Dublin. A pedestrian zone with fountain and promenade in the heart of downtown, the Plaza was completed February 2014 and has become a favorite spot for prom photos and people wanting to show off their town.



Dublin's Carnegie Library

In 2013, Dublin's prestigious historic 1904 Carnegie Library underwent a massive renovation and has been reimagined for the 21st century as an art gallery and downtown visitor's center. A focal point of downtown Dublin's Bicentennial Plaza, Dublin Carnegie hosts a vibrant schedule of nationally acclaimed exhibits with spotlights on local and regional works.



Historic Theatre Dublin

Built in 1934, the former Martin movie theater was impeccably renovated by City Officials in 1996 as a performing arts center for local and surrounding areas. In 2013, the Theatre underwent a major stage and lobby renovation as part of the Bicentennial Plaza. This historic venue plays host to many live productions, concerts, etc.



Historic Fred Roberts Hotel

Built in 1926, The Fred Roberts sits at the heart of downtown Dublin, next to the historic Theatre Dublin and surrounded by the new Bicentennial Plaza. In 2011, a \$3 million restoration project transformed the Fred Roberts into a mixed-use building with retail and professional space on the bottom two floors and residential space on the top two floors.



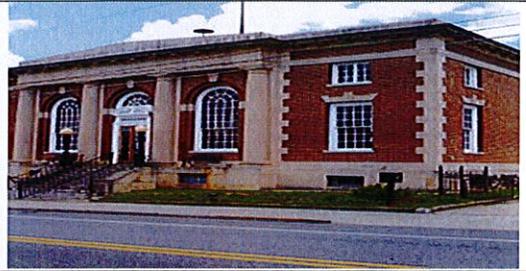
Market on Madison

Located behind Theatre Dublin and the Fred Roberts in downtown Dublin, this premier open-air venue offers local and organic grown produce, a variety of handmade crafts and original art, and plays hosts to a variety of public and private events. The facility was constructed in 2008 with SPLOST funds and includes 3 acres of lush landscape, a bridge and fountain.



The Old Post Office

Winner of the 2013 Marguerite Williams Award for Excellence in Restoration, Dublin's Old Post Office is located on Madison Street and has been meticulously restored. Built in 1912, the grand neoclassical building offers a glimpse into the next century, blending century-old architecture with 21st century technology.



Dublin Laurens County I-16 Industrial Park

The Park has been a great example of City and County participation. The recent success in locating Erdrich USA, Inc. and Valmiera Glass USA Corp. has contributed to the need to secure our newest gem (the Plum Creek Heart of Ga Mega Site). The City assisted the I16 site with an onsite elevated tank and extended water, sewer, gas and internet services.



Please attach additional sheets as needed to tell your story. Application should not exceed 20 pages. Application may be electronically transmitted or printed, scanned and emailed to adriane.wood@dca.ga.gov. For more information, contact Adriane Wood.

CITY OF DUBLIN Comprehensive Plan Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	
CFS, ED, NCR	2015	Seek funding to improve and enhance landscaping along community gateways and other areas as appropriate	Y		Y	ongoing	Completed landscape project at the gateway intersection of 441S and Smith Street into historic downtown district March 2015 using \$48,227 GDOT Gateway Grant.
NCR	2015	Pursue National Register Nomination for First African Baptist Church			Y	2015	Currently in process.
CFS NCR	2015	Establish an Artists in Residence program	Y		Y	ongoing	The DDA has begun commissioning artists (Performing Arts Center) to paint murals on the side and back walls of several downtown structures.
CFS, ED	2014	Assist in the remodeling and repurposing of the Old First National Bank	Y		Y	2015	Completed infrastructure improvements for Skyscraper currently undergoing \$3.5 million renovation to become GMC's Dublin Satellite campus.
ED, NCR	2014	Develop a Master plan for Development of SBR 40 through Dublin and along the Oconee River			Y	2015	Council approved funding for a Master Plan detailing the eventual development of a State Bicycle Route 40 and a Multiuse Recreational Trail and River walk along the Oconee River in March 2015. Plan completion expected by June 2015.
CFS, NCR	2014	Make improvements to Historic Cross Creek Cemetery			Y	2015	Construction of road and minor sidewalk and storm drainage improvements are currently being implemented for this historic slave cemetery.
ED	2014	Seek to maintain designations as a Georgia Signature Community and a Community of Excellence, and pursue other designations as appropriate	Y		Y	ongoing	Currently seeking 2015 PlanFirst designation, certified as a Work Ready Community and a Retirement Friendly Community in 2012; obtained Signature Community designation in 2007 and City of Excellence in 2000.
CFS, NCR	2014	Relocate the public safety monument to Railroad Park	Y	2015			Relocated from Carnegie February 2015 w/addition of a flag and eternal flame.
CFS, NCR	2013	Remodel the Historic Carnegie Library	Y		Y	2017	Phase I (hardwood floors and painting) was completed in 2013. Additional phases pending and will be completed using SPLOST funds.
CFS	2013	Expand the Historic District to include the downtown area	Y	2014			The Bellevue historic district ordinance was amended to expand the boundaries throughout the downtown district in September 2014.
CFS, NCR	2013	Construct more sidewalks to improve pedestrian walkability	Y		Y	ongoing	Sidewalks completed along Susie Dasher and Saxon Heights schools; Bellevue and Academy Avenue; implementing Phase 2 of sidewalk improvements along Hwy 19.

CITY OF DUBLIN Comprehensive Plan Report of Accomplishments

CFS, ED	2013	Improve/expand downtown parking areas		Y	2016	The City and DDA purchased a parcel of land on Madison Street and added 54 parking spaces in 2013. A recent acquisition in 2015 will add 100 more spaces.	
CFS, ED	2013	Construct Bicentennial Plaza	Y	2014		The City and DDA constructed a "Bicentennial Plaza" with a new granite fountain and brick paved walkway in front of the Fred Roberts building and Theater Dublin.	
NCR	2013	Complete Phase one of a citywide Historic Resource Inventory	Y			A Phase One Project for the Bellevue and Downtown historic districts was completed September 2014 using a \$10,800 Historic Preservation Fund Grant.	
CFS, NCR	2012	Make improvements to Northview Cemetery	Y	2013		The City and Dublin Rotary Club renovated the main entrance, three secondary entrances, and fencing along North Franklin Street.	
ED, LU	2012	Pursue funding as needed to further develop the county's industrial parks and sites, including expansion and additional infrastructure, as appropriate	Y	Y	ongoing	The City extended water, sewer, gas and internet services to the 250 acre I-16 Industrial site, the new 441 South Bypass, the airport industrial site, along Highway 257, etc.	
ED, LU, IC	2012	Pursue funding as appropriate to maintain spec buildings and pad ready sites at all industrial sites	Y	2013	ongoing	Funds have been allocated for such projects via the City's SPLOST account. Spec buildings and pad ready sites are available and maintained by the City.	
LU	2011	Explore possible Certified Local Government (CLG) designation for Dublin to enhance local historic preservation program and eligibility for project funding	Y	2011	Y	2014	The City achieved CLG designation in 2013.
ED, NCR, HO, LU, IC	2010	Seek to update zoning and other land use regulations as appropriate to ensure compatibility with growth management and other supportive land use regulations	Y	2011	Y	ongoing	Zoning and land use maps are updated 2-3 times per year. The City is working to complete a comprehensive zoning ordinance.
CFS	2010	Seek to improve major gateways with signage and ornamental plantings	Y	2015	Y	ongoing	The City was awarded a \$50,000 grant from the GDOT in 2014 to improve the gateway intersection at 441 S & Smith St. The project was completed in 2015.
ED, HO	2009	Seek the development of loft apartments and other residential uses in downtown Dublin	Y	2013	Y	2015	The City currently has downtown loft apartments utilized by several members of the local government and are constructing new loft apartments that will be complete in 2015.

CITY OF DUBLIN Comprehensive Plan Report of Accomplishments

ED, CFS	2009	Seek funding as needed to further develop single stream recycling and other recycling activities countywide	Y	2010			The City of Dublin converted to a single stream recycling process in 2010, in which all recyclable materials are disposed of by SP Fibers.
CFS	2009	Construct a new police department facility	Y	2012			The City purchased the old Mindis Recycling site and constructed a new \$2.7 million Police Department and Courtroom facility as part of the MLK, Jr. URP.
HO, IC	2009	Coordinate with the county and the other municipalities as feasible for the adoption and enforcement of Georgia's Uniform Construction Codes countywide	Y	2010			The City adopted the Georgia Uniform Construction Codes over 10 years ago. The County adopted the codes in 2010, allowing for easier enforcement within the City of Dublin and Laurens County.
ED, IC	2009	Finalize, maintain and promote Certified Work Read Community designation	Y	2012			Designation was obtained in 2012 and has been maintained since then.
ED, IC	2009	Finalize formal designation as a "Certified Retirement Friendly" Community	Y	2012			The City was awarded this designation in 2012.
ED, CFS	2009	Complete the construction of U.S. Hwy 441 Bypass	Y	2012			The U.S. 441 West Bypass was completed in 2012. The installation of new infrastructure along the US 441 bypass was completed in 2013.
ED, CFS	2005	Construct Farmers Market with additional downtown parking	Y	2005			The Farmers Market was constructed with SPL/OST funds in 2005.
ED, CFS	2003	Pursue a study of the Southside community to identify areas of needed improvement and develop a guide on how to implement positive changes resulting in revitalization	Y	2003	ongoing		The City initiated a revitalization study in 2002, adopted a MLK, Jr. Urban Redevelopment Plan in 2006, welcomed the establishment of a Piglet grocery store in 2007, received \$500,000 CDBG to improve waterlines in 2007, a new Police facility in 2009, and a new Dollar General in 2014, completed Susie Dasher and Riverview Heights Sidewalk Improvements in 2014, received a \$400,000 SAFETELU Grant to make gateway and corridor Improvements in 2012
NCR	2003	Complete a Tree Inventory and Community Forestry Plan	Y	2003			Accomplished in 2003.
NCR, LU	2003	Amend development ordinance to mandate preservation of greenspace	Y	2003			Accomplished in 2003.
ED, CFS	2003	Evaluate other improvements and implementations for downtown recommended by the Quality Growth Team	Y	2003	ongoing		Accomplished in 2003.
Ed	2002	Complete Emerald Pathways Project	Y	2002	ongoing		A Transportation Enhancement Grant assisted improvements in the downtown area consisting of sidewalks, crosswalks, landscaping, benches, receptacles, bicycle racks, fountain, street clock and appropriate signage. Additional phases are planned.

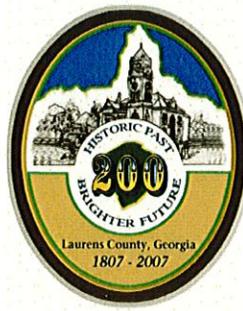
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Roscoe Brower

Jon Martin



Bryan Rogers
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Billy Kight
COUNTY ATTORNEY

Laurens County Board of Commissioners

April 23, 2015

Georgia Department of Community Affairs
PlanFirst Program
Attn: Ms. Adrian Wood
60 Executive Park South, N.E.
Atlanta, Georgia 30329-2231

Dear Ms. Wood:

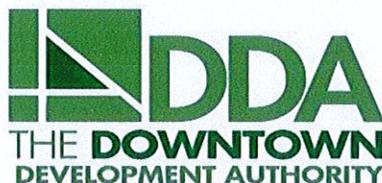
I am writing to express my support for the City of Dublin's application to be designated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs as a PlanFirst Community. We have consistently enjoyed the benefits of following through with our Comprehensive Plan and the items listed on our Short Term Work Program.

Our Comprehensive Plan envisions a walkable, sustainable community of neighborhoods where people can live, work, and play. In the years since the adoption of the plan, the City is becoming just that. Our award-winning downtown developments are thriving. Our downtown has become a sought after location for businesses, residents and visitors alike, and we owe the way in which it has developed to the follow-through with our long range plans.

Thank you for your consideration of our application materials, and we hope you will select Dublin as a PlanFirst Community.

Sincerely,

Bryan Rogers
County Administrator



April 27, 2015

Georgia Department of Community Affairs
PlanFirst Program
Attn: Ms. Adrian Wood
60 Executive Park South, NE
Atlanta, GA 40329-2231

Re: City of Dublin, PlanFirst Program

Ms. Wood:

On behalf of The Dublin Downtown Development Authority please accept this letter of support for the City of Dublin's designation as a PlanFirst Community. At the Dublin DDA we have been on the front lines of implementing the community's 2014 Joint Comprehensive Plan to foster cultural and economic activity within downtown Dublin and beyond.

Through cooperation of the county and city governments, and innovative use of private-public partnerships, we have been fortunate to achieve numerous successes, including:

- Restoration of the historic 1904 Carnegie Library into a multi-use arts center;
- Creation of the Bicentennial Plaza, a pedestrian zone with fountain and promenade in the heart of downtown;
- Renovation of the historic Theatre Dublin and implementation of a comprehensive arts program; and
- Support for the five million dollar conversion of the "Dublin Skyscraper" from abandoned monolith to the new home of the Georgia Military College – Dublin Campus.

The City's well-deserved designation as a PlanFirst community will allow us to leverage additional tools to continue the exciting growth of our vibrant small town.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joshua Kight".

Joshua Kight
Director, Dublin Downtown Development Authority



Making Dublin-Laurens County a better place to
Live, Work, Play & Retire.

April 27, 2015

Ms. Adrian Wood
Georgia Department of Community Affairs
PlanFirst Program
60 Executive Park South, N.E.
Atlanta, Georgia 40329-2231

Dear Ms. Wood:

The Dublin-Laurens County Chamber of Commerce is proud to submit this letter of support for the City of Dublin's application for "PlanFirst Program" designation.

"Successful Planning" has always been a goal of the City of Dublin. The Mayor/City Council and all of the Department Heads and Staff have worked so well together to plan and carry out their annual goals. Over the past ten years a more concentrated effort has been given to the revitalization of downtown and the results are amazing. Through the City's leadership public-private partnerships have been formed resulting in new retail businesses, as well as, the location of Georgia Military College Dublin Extension Campus located in a six story "skyscraper" that has sat vacant for 30 plus years. Throughout the downtown there are new renovated buildings for retail or service related businesses along with new eating establishments, that blend the old in with the new.

The City works tirelessly for its citizens and through their leadership and partnerships with other governmental agencies, and business organizations, they are able to provide an outstanding quality of life for all. Dublin was given a 52 "livability index", the highest rating in the Middle Georgia, by the AARP Public Policy Institute. This rating was based on everything from housing to water quality.

The City of Dublin would be a great model for the PlanFirst Program. They have a proven record of leadership, planning and implementing the plan.

I respectfully request that you give the City of Dublin's application for PlanFirst Program designation every favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

(Ms.) Willie Paulk
President





DUBLIN LAURENS COUNTY

THE BUSINESS HEART OF GEORGIA

April 16, 2015

Ms. Adrian Wood
Georgia Department of Community Affairs, PlanFirst Program
60 Executive Park South, N.E., Atlanta, GA 40329-2231.

Dear Ms. Wood:

Please accept this letter as my enthusiastic support for the City of Dublin's PlanFirst application. Our community is a pace setter in Georgia when it comes to planning, revitalization, historic preservation and economic development. These things do not occur in a vacuum and are the result of a progressive leadership base here that has a strong desire to help Middle Georgia continue to grow and thrive.

Despite a county-wide population of 49,000 people, we are the regional transportation, employment, healthcare and retail hub for ten counties, and we have one of the largest VA hospitals in the Southeast. Over 300,000 people depend on Dublin's ability to continue creating regional jobs, housing, transportation and quality of life amenities. It is critically important that our team partners with DCA and the state of Georgia to explore any and all resources to be effective.

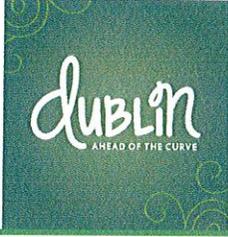
This community has worked hard not only to develop long-term plans but also on the plan implantation. The proof is in the pudding, and the pudding consists of a transformed and fully renovated downtown, the current restoration of the First National Bank Building that will soon house Georgia Military College, a new master plan for a bike trail and river walk, one of the first municipalities in Georgia to develop a full circle sonic fiber ring, solar power arrays throughout the community, and job creation success that has been featured in national, state and regional media.

Because of our success, and in 2014 alone, we have had three visits from the leadership of the Georgia Department of Economic Development who chose Dublin to highlight as a statewide success story and a community that gets it right! Please help us continue that trend, and on behalf of my board of directors, thank you for all you do for our great state.

Sincerely,

Brad Lofton, President

Dublin-Laurens Co Development Authority



Visit Dublin GA
Dublin-Laurens Tourism Council, Inc.
102 Travel Center Blvd.
Dublin, GA 31021
VisitDublinGA.com

April 23, 2015

Ms. Adrian Wood
Georgia Department of Community Affairs
PlanFirst Program
60 Executive Park South, N.E.
Atlanta, GA 40329-2231

Re: PlanFirst Program

Dear Ms. Wood;

As the director of tourism in Dublin-Laurens County, I offer my full support of the City of Dublin's PlanFirst application. As a relative newcomer to Dublin, I have experienced firsthand the planning, leadership, partnership, volunteerism, and devotion to building a strong, economically diverse present and future for all citizens in Dublin. Over the course of the past eighteen months I have resided in Dublin, I have witnessed the strength of Dublin's leadership, planning, and partnerships through projects like the restoration of the First National Bank Building, the revitalization of Cross the Creek Cemetery, and the development of a master plan for a bike trail and river walk. Community involvement and volunteerism with events such as our annual St. Patrick's Festival, which is over a month long, includes over 40 different events, and is entirely organized by volunteers, sets Dublin apart.

Dublin is a place of action, where leaders are encouraged to plan, partner, and act, as evidenced by the revitalization of our historic downtown. Over the past 10 years, millions of private and public dollars and volunteer hours have flowed into projects like the restoration of Dublin's Carnegie Library, refurbishment of Theatre Dublin's stage and lobby, and other historic renovations of buildings like The Fred Roberts and The Old Post Office.

On behalf of Visit Dublin, I request your support of the City of Dublin's application for designation as a PlanFirst community. Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to contact me if I can assist further.

Best,

Rebecca F. McWilliam

Director of Tourism
Visit Dublin GA

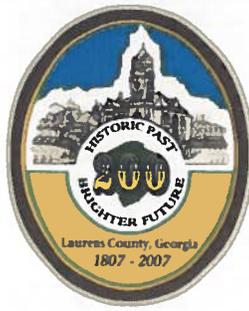
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Laurens County Board of Commissioners

April 23, 2015

REC'D APR 28 2015

Georgia Department of Community Affairs
PlanFirst Program
Attn: Ms. Adrian Wood
60 Executive Park South, N.E.
Atlanta, Georgia 30329-2231

Dear Ms. Wood:

I am writing to express my support for the City of Dublin's application to be designated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs as a PlanFirst Community. We have consistently enjoyed the benefits of following through with our Comprehensive Plan and the items listed on our Short Term Work Program.

Our Comprehensive Plan envisions a walkable, sustainable community of neighborhoods where people can live, work, and play. In the years since the adoption of the plan, the City is becoming just that. Our award-winning downtown developments are thriving. Our downtown has become a sought after location for businesses, residents and visitors alike, and we owe the way in which it has developed to the follow-through with our long range plans.

Thank you for your consideration of our application materials, and we hope you will select Dublin as a PlanFirst Community.

Sincerely,

Bryan Rogers
County Administrator



House of Representatives

MATT HATCHETT
REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 150
100 CANTERBURY ROAD
DUBLIN, GEORGIA 31021

E-MAIL: matt.hatchett@house.ga.gov

MAJORITY CAUCUS CHAIRMAN

415 STATE CAPITOL
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334
(404) 656-5025
(404) 657-8278 (FAX)

STANDING COMMITTEES:

APPROPRIATIONS-PUBLIC SAFETY
ENERGY, UTILITIES & TELECOMMUNICATIONS
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

May 13, 2015

REC'D MAY 15 2015

Ms. Adrian Wood
Georgia Department of Community Affairs
PlanFirst Program
60 Executive Park South, NE
Atlanta, GA 30329

Dear Ms. Wood:

I respectfully request your consideration of the City of Dublin's PlanFirst Community application.

As a life-long resident of Dublin, current State Representative for Laurens, Johnson and Treutlen Counties and former Dublin City Council member, I have seen the strong revitalization and growth of our community. While serving on City Council, we met each February to discuss our plans for the next year, 5 year and 10 year periods. Planning and partnerships have resulted in millions of private/public dollars invested in revitalizing our historic downtown, restoration of Dublin's Carnegie Library, Theatre Dublin and other buildings such as the Old Post Office.

Dublin has a proven record of planning, restoration, utilizing its resources through partnerships, community involvement and volunteerism.

I fully support the City of Dublin's designation as a PlanFirst community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Matt Hatchett".

Matt Hatchett

MH/cb