

PlanFirst Program Application - May 15, 2015

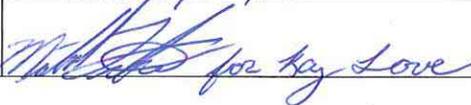
Introduction: The Department of Community Affairs' PlanFirst Program rewards local governments that clearly demonstrate success with implementing their local comprehensive plan. To apply for PlanFirst designation, a local government must have Qualified Local Government certification and be current on 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 Roswell
Mailing address	38 Hill Street
Telephone	770-594-6173
Email	afwakefield@roswellgov.com
Contact person; title	Alice Wakefield, Community Development Director
Application prepared by	Alice Wakefield

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	Kay Love, City Administrator
Date	5/15/15
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:	yes X	no
Local government reports:	yes X	no

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

Yes **X** no

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.

The vision for Roswell in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan is *"A family oriented, safe and attractive community that respects the natural environment protects its historic character and celebrates its cultural. We are Roswell...The best place to live in Georgia."* This vision is supported by the Mayor and City Council as demonstrated by the approval of funds to develop the Strategic Economic Development Plan, the Unified Development Code (UDC) and the UDC Design Guidelines. These documents are all action items in the Comprehensive Plan. Also, to implement the Plan's goal to enhance economic development, the City Council created Roswell Inc. and re-activated the Downtown Development Authority. The success of these entities is evident by the approval of the Opportunity Zone, the attraction of major industries such as the GM Technology Center, and the City Green project which will activate the City Hall campus as a gathering place.

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

The City of Roswell believes in being innovated and setting goals that are ambitious, achievable, and bold. Also, our goals are strategic to achieve the desired vision such as a calling for a well-designed community, sustaining and protecting the City resources, the delivery of quality services and celebrating our history, culture, heritage, and character. One of the most ambitious goals was the comprehensive re-write of the City's Zoning Ordinance. This goal was perhaps the most significant goal in the Comprehensive Plan. The intent of the rewrite was to modernize the regulations to address current land use trends and promote sustainable development. The City took that goal one step further by developing the UDC which not only replaced an obsolete Zoning Ordinance, but consolidated and updated all the development regulations into a single document. The UDC involving over 65 public meetings, workshops and public hearings and was approved February 2014. Many of the goals related to land use, housing, community facilities, economic development were accomplished with the development of the UDC. The UDC opens the door for more variety of housing types such as cottage housing

and housing on small lots which often translate into affordable housing. In addition it allows for mixed use and multi-family development which was not allowed in the old Zoning Ordinance. Furthermore, the Plan goal which called for a well design community resulted in the UDC Design Guidelines which was approved May 2014. So, not only are there new modern zoning regulations, but guidelines that set forth the desired esthetics.

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

By adhering to the Comprehensive Plan, the City allows for predictability and sets expectations for both the applicant and the community. The Plan's Future Development (Character Area) Map and policies set forth the desired future development with the purpose of implements of the community's vision. For every zoning application received, the staff, Planning Commission and City Council is required to evaluate the project to insure consistency with the Plan and the map. In addition this requirement is repeated in the UDC by linking the Character Area designations to which building type is appropriate in a particular area.

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

The City continues to strive to implement the Comprehensive Plan by the annual updates to the Short Term Work Program which shows progress by the list of achievements. Some significant achievements include:

- Update to the Impact Fee Ordinance
- Ongoing implementation of the Complete Street Program
- Completed Holcomb Bridge Master Plan and Design Pattern Book,
- Participation in the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing Program
- Continue support protection of historic façades, resources, and buildings
- Strategic Economic Development Plan
- Creation of Roswell Inc.
- Re-activated Downtown Development Authority
- Unified Development Code and Unified Development Code Design Guidelines
- Updated the Comprehensive Transportation Master Plan
- Development Guide which is used to educated citizens and developers on the permitting process
- Completion of Gateway Master Plan and LCI Supplemental Gateway Master Plan
- Encourage walkable developments and provide for a mixture of uses and housing types.
- Developed Economic Development Incentive Program.

INDICATOR: LEADERSHIP

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

The City of Roswell has a very effective planning staff. With five (5) planners there is a combine experience exceeding 50 years. Two of the planners are AICP certified. The planning staff is responsible for current planning involving processing rezoning, conditional uses and variances, maintenance of the City's UDC and Design Guidelines including text amendments and amendments to development related provisions in the City's Code of Ordinances. Outside of these typical planning duties, our planning staff is engaged in many other special projects and activities to serve the community. This includes extensive public outreach efforts working with the Community Relation Department to provide planning updates via social media engagement as needed, special projects such as the Historic Gateway LCI Supplemental Plan, and speaking to local groups (HOAs, DDA, Historic Roswell Alliance, Roswell Inc., Rotary, Roswell NEXT, etc.) about planning-related matters. The planning staff works proactively with citizens, property

owners, business owners, elected officials, special interest groups, and developers on all planning projects and issues.

G. We have an active planning commission or similar body to steer local planning decisions.

The City of Roswell has a 7 member Planning Commission. The Planning Commission is appointed by the Mayor and approved by City Council. Each member is required to have some interest, background and education related to planning and/or development. The Planning Commission meets on the third Tuesday of each month or more often if needed. The Planning Commission is an active board that considers zoning cases, subdivision plats and text changes to the code. They take all input from the community, applicants, developers and city staff serious and make recommendations to City Council after listening to all parties. The Planning Commission consistently uses Comprehensive Plan as the basis for decisions and to either supporting or denying a proposal.

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

The City has regular off site retreats and trips for the elected officials where they discuss the vision for the city, issues and opportunities, challenges, service expectations, growth, the organization and operations and any changes that may be needed. Also, there is focus on being more efficient to better serve the changing demographics. In addition, the City has leadership trips involving the Mayor, City Council, Boards and Commission (such as the Planning Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, Recreation and Parks Commission, etc.), community leaders, business owners and key staff. The leadership trips involved visiting other like cities such as Greenville, SC and Asheville, NC to learn best practices.

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.

- **March 19 - 21, 2010** – Mayor, Council and Department Heads Retreat - Chattanooga, TN – This retreat was the “beginning” of our focus on economic development and trying to see how other cities leveraged investment.
- **March 22-24, 2012** - Community Building Trip- Greenville, SC
- **June 2012** - Congress for New Urbanism Conference – Atlanta, GA (Staff and some Council members attended)
- **January 31 - February 2, 2013** – Council Retreat-Lake Oconee, GA
- **April, 2013** - American Planning Association Conference – Chicago, IL (Staff)
- **March 11-13, 2014** – Roswell Leadership Forum Trip- Asheville, NC
- **April 2014** - American Planning Association Conference – Atlanta, GA (Staff)
- **April 2015** - American Planning Association Conference – Seattle, WA (Staff)

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).

<p>1. Unified Development Code</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY 2012 mid-year budget amendment to allocate \$300,000 for the comprehensive re-writes of the Zoning Ordinance which implemented a major goal of the Comprehensive Plan. • Approved in 2014, the UDC is a rewrite of the zoning ordinance and inclusion of all development related regulations into a singular document • The UDC includes regulations that allow for the development of a diversity in housing types to meet 	<p>CP Goals – P3, LU/D1, LU/D2, LU/D7, H2, H3</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the needs of a changing population Include regulations to encourage mixed use walkable communities which are all goals of the Plan 	
2. Strategic Economic Development Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FY 2012 the City approved \$150,00 to develop an economic strategy for the City Purpose is to improve the City competitive position Called for the creation of new economic development entities 	CP Goals – ED-1, ED-7
3. Unified Development Code Design Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FY 2013, the City approved \$80,000 to develop design guidelines as a companion to UDC Facilitates the goal of a well design community Establish framework that promotes sustainable practices 	CP Goals - LU/D3, LU/D5
4. Georgia Initiative for Community Housing Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 3 year program to facilitate housing opportunities and choices Provide a strategy to encourage and address future housing demands 	CP Goals - P3, LU/D1, LU/D3, H1
5. Low Impact Development (LID)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being more mindful of green infrastructure, the City approved the LID ordinance in 2013. Developed and approved the to allow for more green building practices related to stormwater management 	CP Goal – NCR 1,
6. North Fulton Radio System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2013, the North Fulton Regional Radio System Authority (NFRRSA) was created with the participating cities of Roswell, Sandy Springs, Alpharetta and Milton To design, construct and operate a \$15M public safety radio system that replaces the system currently operated by Fulton County. The public safety radio system became operational in April 2015. 	CP Goals - IC6, IC3
7. Roswell Inc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2011 the City recognized that a more focus approach to economic development was imperative for the City to grow a diversified tax base and continue to support a high quality of life Roswell Inc was created in December 2012 based on the findings of the SEDP 	CP Goals – ED-1, ED7, ED-8
8. City Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City earmarked funds in 2014 for the design and engineering of the City Green Project. Facilitated by the Roswell Downtown Development Authority, this project is the reprogramming of the City Hall campus as a gathering place and to provide a pedestrian link between two of the City’s oldest neighborhoods. 	CP Goals – P4, LU/D7, ED5, CF5
9. Holcomb Bridge Road Corridor Study and HBR Pattern Book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holcomb Bridge Road and GA 400 is the gateway to the City. The focus of this study was on exploring the innovation solutions and context-sensitive system impact Supports improvements that facilitate economic development but encourage multi-modal opportunities 2013 – Completion of two of the five 2012 bond projects 	CP Goals – P3,ED9, T4, T5, T6
10. Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice Plan (AI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AI was adopted on June 22, 2013. This included an “Affordable Housing Snapshot” and a “Fair Housing Action Plan” which says that the City will continue to support the Opportunity Zone Job Tax Credits, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, and the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) program. 	CP Goals – P2,LU/D1, H2,H2

INDICATOR: PARTICIPATION

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

The Community Participation Program was adopted to help steer the Comprehensive Plan outreach process. To enhance public participation, the City created a Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC). The purpose of CPAC was to provide feedback, advise the planning team (staff and consultant), and help shape the overall process. The following public participation tools were used during this process to gain input and feedback:

- City wide kick-off meeting
- CPAC Meetings – open to the public (11)
- Four (4) Community Workshops
- Two (2) Open House Style Meetings
- Focus Area Charrette –3 days period
- Mayor and City Council work sessions (5)
- Planning Commission work sessions (2)
- DCA required public hearings (2)
- Citizen surveys and comment sheets, email blasts, direct mailings, print media and web notifications utilized to reach as many citizens and businesses
- Educational video (2- at the beginning of the process and mid-way)
- Utility Inserts advertising the various meetings
- “Meeting in a Box” – allowed for individuals and groups to participate in the process and provide input by following the instructions inside the box.
- “Imagine Roswell” Youth Poster Contest on what Roswell would look like in 2030.
- Some schools distributed meeting notices in students’ weekly folders
- Staff and CPAC members attended several HOA and special interest groups meetings such as Roswell Rotary, Kiwanis, Historic Roswell Alliance, etc. to get feedback

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

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan is the community’s plan. There was community involvement throughout the planning process starting with the kickoff meeting up to and including the final public hearing before City Council. During the planning process, many assumptions and ideals were adjusted based not only on the analysis of data, but input from the community. For example, the Holcomb Bridge Node Character Area was a main topic of discussion during most of the meetings. It was also the subject of the Focus Area Charrette. The staff and the consultant saw this area developing in a more intense manner. The final language regarding the future redevelopment of this area was changed significantly to address the concerns and comments provided by the community. The openness of the process and the variety of ways to participate led to a Plan that was built on consensus from a diversity of stakeholders and interest. The 2030 Comprehensive Plan was shaped by the community.

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

The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) was an 18 member board. The CPAC was made up of residents that were diverse (gender and race); has some previous or current experience on similar committee or boards, such as Roswell Housing Authority; Planning Commission Chair; Historic Preservation Chair; represent unique interest or have some

technical expertise (e.g. planning, economic development, developer, builder, cultural art, housing, transportation, property owner, business owners, resident, etc.); several HOA representatives; and Business Owners. The main requirement was that each member needed to have a desire to participate.

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.

In order to have the broadest outreach, the City's outreach process for planning matters involves the use of many different means of communication includes community meetings, social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter, email blasts for notification of upcoming events, and planning staff speaking and appearing at local events, such as the "Alive after Five" events. For zoning cases, the property is posted, the request is advertised in the local paper, and notices are mailed to property owners within 300 feet of the subject property. When the community provides input (emails, letters, petitions, phone calls) on zoning cases, staff will include this input along with the other pertinent documents for the case for the Planning Commission and City Council to consider. Frequently, conditions are added to zoning cases based on community feedback.

For public outreach during the Comprehensive Plan update, the city website was used to post videos, meeting notices, meeting summaries, solicit comments through the comment page surveys, and drafts of the Plan. Also, social media was used extensively. Articles were written in the paper, news released on upcoming meetings were issued, there were inserts in the utility bills, flyers were posted at all the parks, and there was a Comprehensive Plan display in the City Hall Rotunda. Throughout the process there were opportunities to sign up for future notification related to the Comprehensive Plan. CPAC volunteered to contact the presidents of the HOA's asking them to notify their residents of the Comprehensive Plan meetings and how to get involved. The input received from anyone during the process was cataloged and labeled so that the elected officials had documentation related to the different topics that were listed in the Plan.

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

There are many groups who actively advocate for a wide variety of plan goals and many of them keep in close contact with staff and appear at the Planning Commission and City Council meetings to speak during public comment advocating planning and implementation. We have strong relationships with the following area groups, organizations, and individuals:

- **Roswell Inc** – the City's economic development entity responsible for promoting businesses (maintaining and attracting new), job creation and quality development where appropriate
- **Roswell NEXT** – a non-profit organization who represent the next generation of leaders in the City. They promote quality growth and walkable communities.
- **Roswell Downtown Development Authority** – promote sustainable developments and programs in the downtown area
- **Mr. David Schmit**, a resident and developer, was heavily involved in planning processes related to the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. He served as a very active Chairman of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, attending every CPAC meeting. Mr. Schmit also participated on the Strategic Economic Development Plan Advisory Committee and now serves on the Downtown Development Authority
- **Planning Commission** which is comprised of leaders and includes experts in architecture and local government.

- **Historic Preservation Commission** which is comprised of leaders who support the preservation of the City's Historic District and historic resources and include experts in architect and design

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 work program is updated annually and consists of a list of action items needed to implement the goals and vision of the Comprehensive Plan. A few examples from our current work program are as follows:

- Periodically review and update the impact fee ordinance
- Implement priority based budgeting
- Complete Unified Development Code
- Implement Enterprise Resource Planning process for to increase efficiency and productivity
- Complete Gateway Master Plan
- Complete Strategic Economic Development Plan
- Enhance the City's ISO rating from 3 to 2
- Continue to prioritize road resurfacing project and sidewalk repair project
- Design and construct new Water Treatment Plant
- Promote and market the Roswell Opportunity Zone to all existing and prospective businesses
- Complete Adult Recreation Center Pool
- Complete Eves Road – Complete Street
- Complete SR 9 Lane Diet
- Update Design Guidelines - all design guidelines were combined in the UDC Design Guidelines
- Initiated update of the City's Park and Recreation Master Plan as needed
- Periodically update Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan as needed

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

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

It is clear, particularly in the transportation section, that our action items address local needs. The action items that are related to design, such as the streetscape and corridor standards, address the goals in the Plan related to walkability and mobility. Many of the economic development-related action items, such as the design and character, relate directly to the goals of sustaining a unique community identity and creating a wide range of economic development opportunities

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

We also have a good track record of completing items on the work plans, such as:

- The Midtown LCI and the Midtown gap project – *completed in 2013*
- Reconstitute Downtown Development Authority – *completed in 2012*
- Implement recommendations of revitalization and plan for the Holcomb Bridge corridor east of GA 400 – *Underway due to 2013 Bond projects approval (construction of 2*

projects underway) and Atlanta Regional Commission's decision to "grandfather" the Holcomb Bridge Road/ Georgia 400 area as an LCI

- Inform applicants of the applicable design/development guidelines – *Completion of UDC Design guidelines.*
- Pursue policy-based budgeting to accomplish redevelopment target areas – *FY15 Budget Process introduced priority-based budgeting. – Complete 2014.*
- Maintain the City's current Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating of 3 – *Rating improved to 2 in 2015.*
- Periodically review and update the development impact fee program, including fees – *Completed 2015*
- Partner with the Atlanta-Fulton County Library System to expand library space in Roswell – *Completed in Feb 2015.*

Throughout the years, action items have been completed and removed from the list while new items are placed onto the list. There are some items which remain; since these items are ongoing to help the city reach their goals and the vision that was created for the City.

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

The City has a track record of dedicating the necessary capital in order to facilitate plan implementation. It is strategic for achieving the City's vision through priority-based budgeting which was a goal of the Comprehensive Plan. Three specific examples of recent the expenditure include budgeting the funds to re-write the Zoning Ordinance, to update the Impact Fee Program, and to complete the "complete street" multi-purpose along Etris Road. Furthermore the City is using the revenues generated through impact fees to construct a new fire station and make certain transportation improvements such as at the Holcomb Bridge Road/GA 400 intersection. Each of these projects was identified as action items through the planning process.

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).

<p>1. Downtown Development Authority <i>STWP 2011 – Redevelopment #5 – reconstitute the Downtown Development Authority)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved in 2013, the Mayor and City Council reactivated the Downtown Development Authority as one of the tools to facilitate economic development in the downtown areas.
<p>2. Maintain ISO Rating <i>2013 STWP (Community Facility #10 – maintain current Insurance Services Office rating of 3)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2015 after an ISO evaluation of the City emergency rating the rating was upgraded to 2.
<p>3. Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) <i>2011 STWP (Community Facilities #3 – update and review technology needs of the City for efficiency and increase productivity)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2012 the City allocated \$4,950,000 for the development and implementation of an ERP program to utilize technology to better facilitate the various processes and services
<p>4. Branch Library <i>STWP 2011 (Community Facilities #21 – Partner with the Atlanta-Fulton County Library System to expand the library Space in Roswell)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through library bond, the Library board allocated \$6.1M for the construction of a new branch Library in Roswell • February 2015, the East Roswell Branch Library was open.
<p>5. Development Guide <i>2013 STWP (Economic Development</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2015 the City developed and published the Development Guide as a resource to facilitate and

<p>#9/continue to effectively communicate the development process)</p>	<p>successful and quality projects in 2013.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Guide serves as an introduction to the process of reviews and approvals for land use, land development and permitting
<p>6. Priority-Based Budgeting 2014 STWP (Redevelopment #1 – Pursue policy-based budgeting to accomplish redevelopment goals)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2013, the City of Roswell introduced the concept of priority based budgeting. The process allows the City to be more strategic in the allocation of public dollars related to projects and services provided
<p>7. Impact Fee Ordinance 2014 STWP (Development Impact Fee #1 – review and update the development impact fee program including fees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In FY 2014 the City approved \$50,000 to update the impact fee ordinance to be consistent with the State regulations and to update the fees. The amendment to the Impact Fee Ordinance and increase fees is pending approval of second and final reading on June 8, 2015.
<p>8. Veranda at Groveway 2011 STWP (Housing #4 – Maintain the City’s public housing program and determine appropriate future activities/program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2013 the City committed \$1.9M in investments (off-site improvements and in-kind) of which \$177,587 of HOME and CDBG funds to support the Veranda of Groveway project. The Veranda at Groveway is the first phase of a comprehensive development plan for the Roswell Housing Authority. This phase is a 100 unit independent senior housing complex. Also in 2013 and 2015 the City actively supported the RHA’s application for tax credit through the Department of Community Affairs.
<p>9. Holcomb Bridge Road Corridor Study 2012 STWP (Redevelopment #4 – implement recommendations of study)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holcomb Bridge Road/ GA 400 is the gateway to the City. The focus of this study was on exploring the innovation solutions and context-sensitive system impact Supports improvements that facilitate economic development but encourage multi-modal opportunities The study also resulted in a “pattern book” to help guide the look of the hardscape. 2013 – Completion of two of the five 2012 bond projects
<p>10. Grimes Bridge Round-About STWP 2011 – (Transportation #1 – Implement transportation system improvements as described in the Comprehensive Transportation Plan)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considered a traffic calming and traffic congestion project, located at the intersection of Grimes Bridge Road and Norcross Road, was completed in 2012.

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.



MAYOR JERE WOOD

ROBYN KENNER, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT - 770-594-6288
mayorwood@roswellgov.com

May 15, 2015

Georgia Department of Community Affairs
PlanFirst Program
60 Executive Park South, N.E.
Atlanta, GA 30329-223

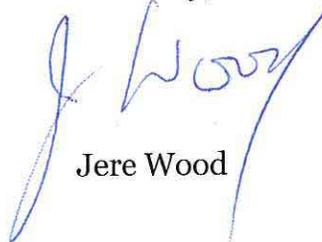
Dear Commissioner Knowles:

In the City of Roswell, we advocate for not only good planning, but planning that inspires. The City of Roswell takes practicing good stewardship of resources and providing quality customer service to all residents, property owners and stakeholders very seriously. We are strategic in our decisions that impact the future growth and stability of the City.

The City recognizes the importance of planning for the future and the role that good planning plays in maintaining the trust of its citizens. Investment in infrastructure is closely aligned with the Short Term Work Program which makes the community vision a reality. The City values the purpose and the role that the Comprehensive Plan plays in preparing the City for the future. Our commitment to implement the Comprehensive Plan is evident with the approval of the Unified Development Code and the Unified Development Code Design Guidelines, two documents that guide decisions on making the vision a reality.

Therefore, I support the City's application for designation as a PlanFirst Community by the Department of Community Affairs.

Sincerely,



Jere Wood



May 15, 2015

Georgia Department of Community Affairs
PlanFirst Program
60 Executive Park South, N.E.
Atlanta, GA 30329-223

Dear Commissioner Knowles:

I am writing this letter in support of the City of Roswell's application for designation as a PlanFirst Community. Roswell is very proud of the Comprehensive Plan and the vision set forth within. We see the benefit of the Plan and the action items listed in the Short Term Work Program.

Roswell's Comprehensive Plan envisions a well-designed community, protection of City Resources, providing quality services and celebrating our history, culture, heritage, and character. The City strives to make the vision of the plan a reality through strategic implementation. As a result, the City has become a very attractive place for residents, businesses and visitors.

I want to thank you in advance for your consideration of the City's PlanFirst application.

Sincerely,

Kay G. Love,
City Administrator

May 15, 2015

Georgia Department of Community Affairs

PlanFirst Application

60 Executive Park South, N.E.

Atlanta, GA 30329-223

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of the City's application for designation as a PlanFirst Community by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. I am a lifelong citizen of Roswell and an active participant in the community. I serve as the Executive Director of Roswell Inc. Roswell Inc, through a public private partnership, guides the economic development initiatives for the City of Roswell. The City implementation of the Comprehensive Plan resulted in the development and approval of the Strategic Economic Development Plan which resulted in the creation Roswell Inc. Roswell Inc utilizes the 2030 Comprehensive Plan as our guide to facilitate the location of new businesses. Planning is vital in the City of Roswell; it allows the elected official and decision makers to be strategic. More importantly, it provides the citizens, property owners, business owners and stakeholders with clear expectation for the future growth of Roswell.

Working with the City, I have personally seen the City continuous support for quality planning and forethought about its future. It is standard practice for all citizens to be encouraged to participate in the planning process with assurance that their input is incorporated in the efforts. Transparency in the planning process is the hallmark in the City of Roswell.

Thank you for your consideration of the City of Roswell as a PlanFirst Community.

Please contact me if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Steve Stroud

Executive Director
Economic & Community Development
Roswell Inc

617 Atlanta Street, Suite 100, Roswell, GA 30075
p: 770.640.3253 | p: 800.776.7935 | f: 770.640.3252
www.roswellinc.org

MACAULEY + SCHMIT

May 15, 2015

Georgia Department of Community Affairs
60 Executive Park South, N.E.
Atlanta, GA 30329-223

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of the City's application for designation as a PlanFirst Community by the Department of Community Affairs.

I am a citizen of Roswell and have resided in the City for more than 20 years. I served as the Chairman of the Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC) which worked with City staff to facilitate the development and approval of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. Following my role on CPAC, I served as a member of the Strategic Economic Development Plan Advisory Committee, advisor to the Groveway Form-Based Code, and I am currently a member of the City's Downtown Development Authority. I am also an active developer in the city, with projects ranging from single-family neighborhoods, mixed-use buildings and the development of the Veranda at Groveway, a tax credit project awarded by DCA in 2014. So, I have personally seen the City as a City that supports quality planning and forethought about its future.

The Comprehensive plan was a community driven plan, as is all planning efforts in the City. All citizens are encouraged to participate in the planning process with confidence that their input is incorporated in the efforts. Transparency in the planning process is the hallmark in the City of Roswell.

Thank you for your consideration of the City of Roswell as a PlanFirst Community. Please feel free to contact me at (678) 300-4877 if you have questions.

Sincerely,



David J. Schmit
Principal



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Roswell seeks citizen input on comprehensive plan

By Ralph Ellis
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

5:29 p.m. Wednesday, October 13, 2010

A series of public meetings will be held in coming months so Roswell residents can offer opinions on the city's new comprehensive plan, called "Imagine Roswell 2030."

The kickoff meeting is at 6:30 p.m. Nov. 3 at Roswell City Hall. Community meetings will be at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 19 at East Roswell Park and 6:30 p.m. Jan. 27 at World Harvest Church. Before each community meeting, an informal open house will be held so city employees can distribute information and answer questions.

A workshop will be held Feb. 22-24 at Hembree Park at a time to be determined. An open house will be held from 9 a.m. to noon March 12 at city hall.

Residents will be asked to discuss what kind of city they want in 2030. The comprehensive plan will provide Roswell with a vision to grow and mature in a way that reflects residents' shared values.

The city has hired a consulting firm to help draft the plan. For more information about the Imagine Roswell 2030 process and plan, visit www.roswellgov.com/imagineroswell2030 or e-mail Imagineroswell2030@roswellgov.com.

Find this article at:

<http://www.ajc.com/news/north-fulton/roswell-seeks-citizen-input-681703.html>

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Use Your Imagination



By Tripp Liles

The City of Roswell has many initiatives taking place from identifying its brand to assisting local businesses through the Find It All campaign. The largest of these, however, is the city's Comprehensive Plan that will have an impact on every department within the city government.

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan is being called Imagine Roswell 2030. Municipalities use comprehensive plans as a way to provide guidance into the future. Roswell's plan will dictate how the community grows. Ultimately, it gives the long-term goals for the city.

In developing the plan, Roswell officials are strongly encouraging community involvement. Michael Gould, Roswell resident and business owner, has been involved with the project through a citizen's commission.

"Becky Wynn (Roswell City Council member) approached me about joining the commission. As a member of the Brookfield Country Club HOA, I had been communicating with her and several other council members regarding local zoning and transportation issues. She recognized that I cared about these kind of issues and asked me to participate," said Gould.

Alice Wakefield, Director of Community Development, stresses the importance of citizens to be involved in the process.

"The state has always required public input. However, the old regulations required at a minimum one public hearing. The current regulations require us to develop and execute a detail plan of how the city is

going to engage the public throughout the process. We are using a variety of public outreach methods," said Wakefield.

Gould sees hurdles on the horizon for Roswell.

"Roswell faces many changes in the future as our population increases and changes demographically. Thankfully, the city has the foresight to recognize this, and wants to be prepared. City administrators are genuinely interested in everyone's opinion. Like any good governing body, they recognize that these decisions are ours to make. Citizen involvement is crucial to making CPAC's (Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee) recommendations something everyone can agree with and move forward on together," said Gould.

Once the outreach has been completed, CPAC, along with staff and consultants, will develop a plan that reflects the vision for the city in 2030. The plan ultimately has an approval process that includes a review and recommendation by the Planning Commission and approval by the City Council. The final plan will be presented for approval to the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia department of Community Affairs in June 2011. Those entities have 120 days to review and approve the plan by Oct. 31, 2011.

Gould sees the process as a positive experience.

"I foresee the city of Roswell making wise decisions in the future because they have facilitated this dialogue today," stated Gould.

For more information on how to be involved visit www.roswellgov.com.

Roswell asks residents for vision

By Joan Durbin
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It's a scenario that plays out again and again. When residents discover something they find objectionable is being planned close to their neighborhood, Roswell city hall will be inundated with residential comments and complaints.

It's an example of citizen involvement. Dave Schmit and his colleagues on the city's Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee are hoping to tap into that civic interest and get residents thinking about the big picture.

"When there is something being considered that's going to detract from their neighborhood, that's when most people will come out. They won't necessarily come out for an area that's low income or underserved," Schmit said.

With Roswell almost entirely built out, those older, economically challenged areas are where the biggest changes can be made. "The Northwest Quadrant, the Holcomb Bridge corridor, areas around Highway 9, those are the opportunities for Roswell's future," Schmit said.

The city is in the process of developing its 2030 Comprehensive Plan,

which will serve as a road map for the next 20 years in policymaking in land use, housing, transportation, economic development, public facilities and recreational and cultural resources.

The 2030 update to the plan will be very different from the one done just a few years earlier, said Roswell Community Development Director Alice Wakefield, whose department prepares the update.

"The new plan will be much more of a visioning plan than those that came before, which were mostly data and documentations," she said. "This will truly be a plan that sets forth the vision of the community for their city."

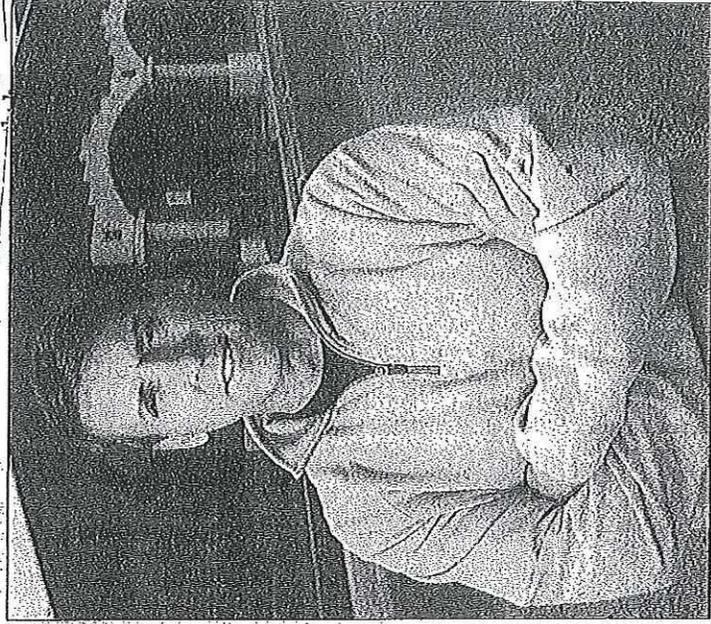
Meaningful citizen input from the Imagine Roswell 2030 program is a key element of the process. Schmit, a veteran developer whose company specializes in community revitalization, chairs the 18-member plan advisory committee soliciting that input.

Consultants from POND and Company and Kilmer-Horn Associates, Inc. are to working with the committee, elected officials, staff and the public to draft the plan.

"We start with what is good about Roswell. We want to protect that. Then we look at what we want to change," Schmit said.

A closer look

The next Imagine Roswell 2030 community meetings are Jan. 19, 6:30 p.m. at East Roswell Park, and Jan. 27, 6:30 p.m. at World Harvest Church. Other ways to participate in the process as well as more information can be found at www.roswellgov.com/imagineroswell2030.



Dave Schmit, chairman of Comprehensive Plan A 2030 for the city of Roswell, stands in front of a vacant lot at Old Alabama and Holcomb Bridge roads that could

Residents envision the future Roswell

Mixed-use, 10-story buildings, gateways imagined

By JONATHAN COPSEY
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ROSSELL — Roswell may have settled on a clear vision for improving the primary gateway into the city, Ga. 400. Concepts and plans were outlined at the recent "Imagine Roswell 2030" series of workshops.

The intent of the workshops was to figure out how Roswell's exit on Ga. 400 should look in 20 years and to gear city policy to make it happen. The three day-long workshops at Hembree Park Feb. 22-24 concentrated on the interchange of Holcomb Bridge Road and Ga. 400 and the surrounding neighborhoods. Citizens were invited to give their comments and suggestions on what did and did not work in that area, as well as what they would like to see in the future.

Dave Schmit, of Roswell's Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC), said the whole area was "a complex situation," but that, as the gateway into Roswell, something had to be done.



JONATHAN COPSEY/STAFF
Steve Bender, Stacy Chambliss and Ruth-Kenyan look at a map of the area around Ga. 400 exit 7 - Holcomb Bridge Road - and the suggested changes citizens have made for how it should look in 20 years.

much more and there is no new land to build on, the alternative is to build up. Alexander and her team envisioned buildings 6 stories to 10 stories tall along Holcomb Bridge, enclosing shops and parks as well as residential areas, in a mixed-use manner.

"Mixed-use" involves a mixture of residential and commercial buildings in the same area, along with the sidewalks, bike trails and parks that would accompany a residential area. The idea is to give people a reason to live near where they work or shop, cutting down on traffic and improving their quality of life.

All the ideas struck resident Sandy Passman as good.

"Roswell needs a gateway. It needs something," Passman said. "It's a stroke of luck people find us. Holcomb Bridge is not the best entranceway."

Passman said she liked the idea of mixed-use buildings, imagining something akin to a New York City or Philadelphia, or even Atlantic Station, with people living above or near where they shop.

Debi Keck agreed.

"Redevelopment of use will be very positive for this area," she said. "The concepts encourage more businesses and enterprise to come in."

"We need to do something on Holcomb Bridge to make it more in line with Roswell's core," Keck added.

The company hired to hold the meetings and create the plan, said Roswell is in a tough situation, being completely built-out, meaning nearly all of the empty land has been developed.

Instead, she said the city must look toward redeveloping what it has.

"The only way you're going to change is to redevelop," Alexander said. "You can't build your way out of congestion."

Since roads cannot be widened,

Michelle Alexander, of Pond and Co.,



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GOVERNMENT

Final Plans for Imagine Roswell 2030 Presented

The ideas and suggestions for Imagine Roswell 2030 were presented in an open house event on Saturday.

By Tedra DeSue 10:00am

Fourth Grader Corey Braun summed up Imagine Roswell 2030 this way: "In 2030 I think a couple of things are going to be different. More people will carpool or ride the bus. We will also pick up trash. I think we will have more houses and buildings. I think we will plant seeds that will grow into trees. That's how I imagine Roswell."

Corey was not only recognized for his drawing and thoughts reflecting how he envisions his city in 20 years, but his ideas also hit the nail on the head; they are largely incorporated in the comprehensive plan that the city has developed to address transportation and development issues.

On Saturday morning, some residents attended an open house to see the final plans that will make most of the ideas for Imagine Roswell 2030 a reality. The comprehensive plan is the most aggressive effort by the city in decades.

A major focal point is Holcomb Bridge Road (<http://roswell.patch.com/articles/priority-should-be-redevelopment-for-holcomb-bridge-roadga-400-area>), near the Georgia 400 exit. Despite being the entry point for Roswell off of Georgia 400, the area is drab with vacant buildings and little streetscape designs that reflect Roswell's rich history and charm. The final plans presented Saturday show that Imagine Roswell 2030 will drastically change that. Some of the proposed projects would center on the King's Market shopping center, which is anchored by Publix Supermarket.

The area would include a bus rapid transit system that would incorporate light rail.

To ease the flow of traffic off of Georgia 400, plans call for a tunnel to be built that would run under Holcomb Bridge Road. A secondary ramp could also be built to address traffic congestion.

Roswell is in need of a central gathering facility, such as a civic center, according to many of the suggestions for Imagine Roswell 2030. So the final plan includes a civic center to be located in the Holcomb Bridge Road and Georgia 400 area. It could also be the site for a senior center or a sports complex. A hotel that could host conferences is also proposed.

Many Roswell residents have taken issue with the lack of walking trails in the Holcomb Bridge Road/Georgia 400 area. Planners have included a five-minute walking trail that would circle the area around Publix.

As lofty as these projects may seem, organizers and residents are confident that the early planning of them aid in helping them come to fruition.

One resident said he could clearly see how the plans have evolved since the first public meeting was held last year.

Alice Wakefield, the director of community development for Roswell, said input from the residents who've shared their ideas are assuring.

"We're getting the assurance that we are headed in the right direction," Wakefield said, noting that she naturally had wished more people turned out for Saturday's meeting. However, considering the hundreds of people who have sent e-mails, called and attended meetings, she said she is content that the final plans accurately represent the needs and wants of most of the community.

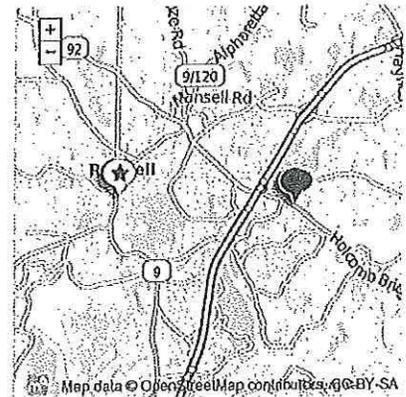
Attendance for the open house was much lighter than at previous meetings, with only about 25 people turning out. Beautiful weather, not apathy, was to blame, according to those who did attend.

The city has had a series of meetings since last year so that residents could have input on Imagine Roswell 2030. One of the next steps is presenting the plan to the Roswell City Council. It must then be presented to the Atlanta Regional Commission in October.

What do you think about the proposed plans within Imagine Roswell 2030? Tell us in the comments.



PHOTOS (23)



Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, CC-BY-SA

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Former Roswell Council member David Tolleson (standing) explains proposed plans for Roswell to Bill Nelms, the president of the Martin's Landing Foundation (left), as well as Dave Smith and Frank Padula.



Martin's Landing resident Lisa DeCarbo goes over a map of Roswell as part of the workshop.

Residents turn out for future plan

Final meeting for Imagine Roswell 2030

By JONATHAN COPSEY
jcopsey@northfulton.com

ROSWELL, Ga. - More than 200 residents of east Roswell turned out April 27 for the final meeting of the Imagine Roswell 2030 comprehensive plan.

The plan looks at how the city is to grow in the next 20 years and what residents would like to see in 2030, particularly at the intersection of Ga. 400 and Holcomb Bridge Road. Wider roads, taller buildings and mixed-use community nodes were all on the drawing board.

"Twenty years is hard to imagine," said Michelle Alexander, of Pond and Co., the consultants leading the plan. "Decisions made in the next five years will affect what will

happen 20 years from now."

The elected officials of Roswell must vote on the document before it is sent to the state for final approval.

"You need to spread the people out," said resident Tom Cangelosi. "They can't all be at this intersection [of Ga. 400 and Holcomb Bridge Road]. We're not getting MARTA up here, so what's going to solve all that traffic?"

"I'm not opposed to mixed-use as long as it works," said resident Steve Lavinder, echoing the opinions of many others in the room. "This is a great opportunity for residents to come out and participate in the planning process."

Before this meeting, there were several others held throughout Roswell to gath-

er community input on the interchange area. This final meeting was actually a post-final meeting. It was hastily scheduled after a three-day-long workshop at Hembree Park that was supposed to be the last chance for input, when community protests rose in east Roswell over the recommendations. These recommendations included buildings as high as 14 stories tall and zoning the entire length of Holcomb Bridge as commercial.

"The early meetings were not well attended," explained David Tolleson, a former Roswell council member. "People think this is not an immediate issue, but it goes into effect when it is passed."

He added, "It's important that the vision and architec-

ture [of the plan] match the community's expectations."

Tolleson said the Hembree meeting, while well attended, gave false results to Pond and Co.

"People came in to the last meeting from out of town

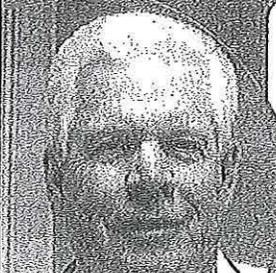
to skew the results," he explained. "They can only put in the plan what people tell them."

For more on the Imagine Roswell 2030 plans, visit www.roswellgov.com/imagineroswell2030.

The entire staff of

ALPHARETTA ANIMAL HOSPITAL

is pleased to welcome Dr. R. B. Garrett III. He will be seeing patients on Tuesdays. Please call to confirm.



Dr. Garrett is a native of Atlanta and graduated from Marist High School. He attended Emory University and the University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine receiving his D.V.M. in May 1967. Dr. Garrett and his brother, Dr. Gary Garrett operated Roswell Animal Hospital for forty years before retiring.