



PLANNING ESSENTIALS



TO PLAN OR NOT TO PLAN...

- WHAT is it?
- WHY do we do it?
- WHO does it?
- HOW do you do it?
- WHAT do you do with it when you've got it?





TO PLAN OR NOT TO PLAN...

□ Plan - *Verb*

□ Definition:

- to arrange the parts of
- to devise or project the realization or achievement of
- To think in advance about a method

□ Plan - *Noun*

□ Definition:

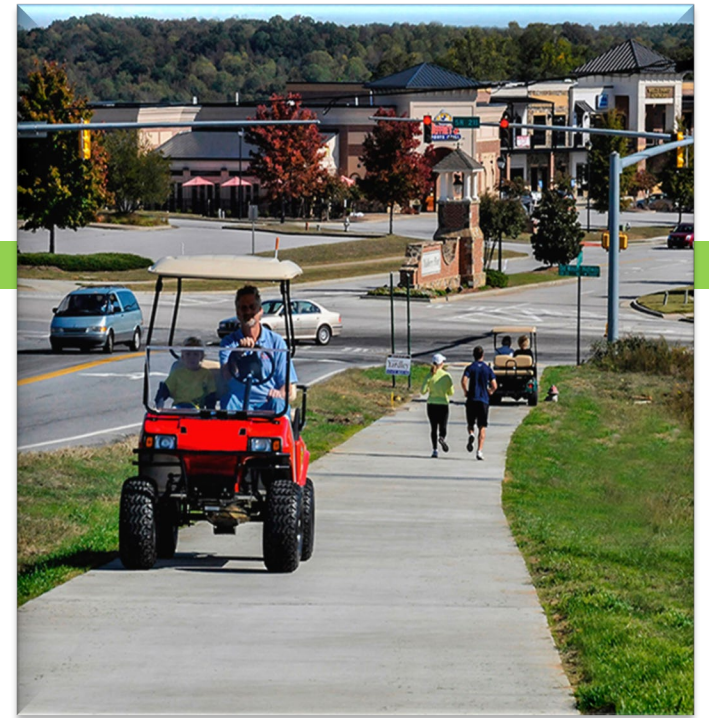
- a detailed formulation of a program of action;
- a method devised for doing something or achieving an end, involving a series of actions

WHAT IS PLANNING?



WHY PLAN?

- Planning for YOUR Community:
 - Helps protect property rights/values
 - Certainty is good for economic development
 - Helps maintain and improve your quality of life
 - Protect public investments: It's your money, after all
 - Provides a forum to reach consensus





WHY PLAN? Social Benefits





WHY PLAN? Economic Benefits





WHY PLAN? Environmental Benefits

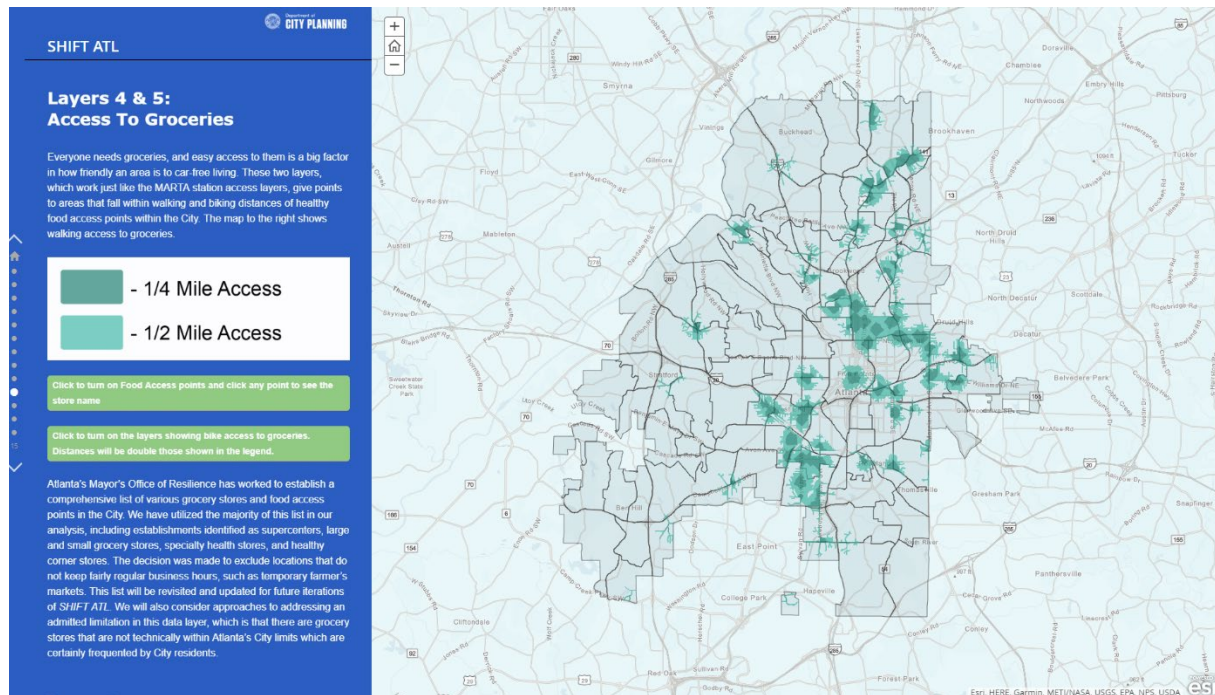


WHO PLANS?

- EVERYONE – the plan should involve the entire community
- Elected Officials
- Local Government Staff
- Consultants, Developers
- Appointed Officials
- Regional Commissions
- State of Georgia



PLAN MAKING





WHAT COMMUNITY PLANS DO

Predict future population, housing, and employment trends

Don't you want to know how many houses you will need? New jobs?

Protect and preserve future land needs

Don't you want to make sure you have enough land available to grow?

Assure adequate public facilities and services

Don't you want to have enough water for the community?

Protect existing and future public investment

Don't you want to save money by continuing to use what you already have paid for?

Protect environment

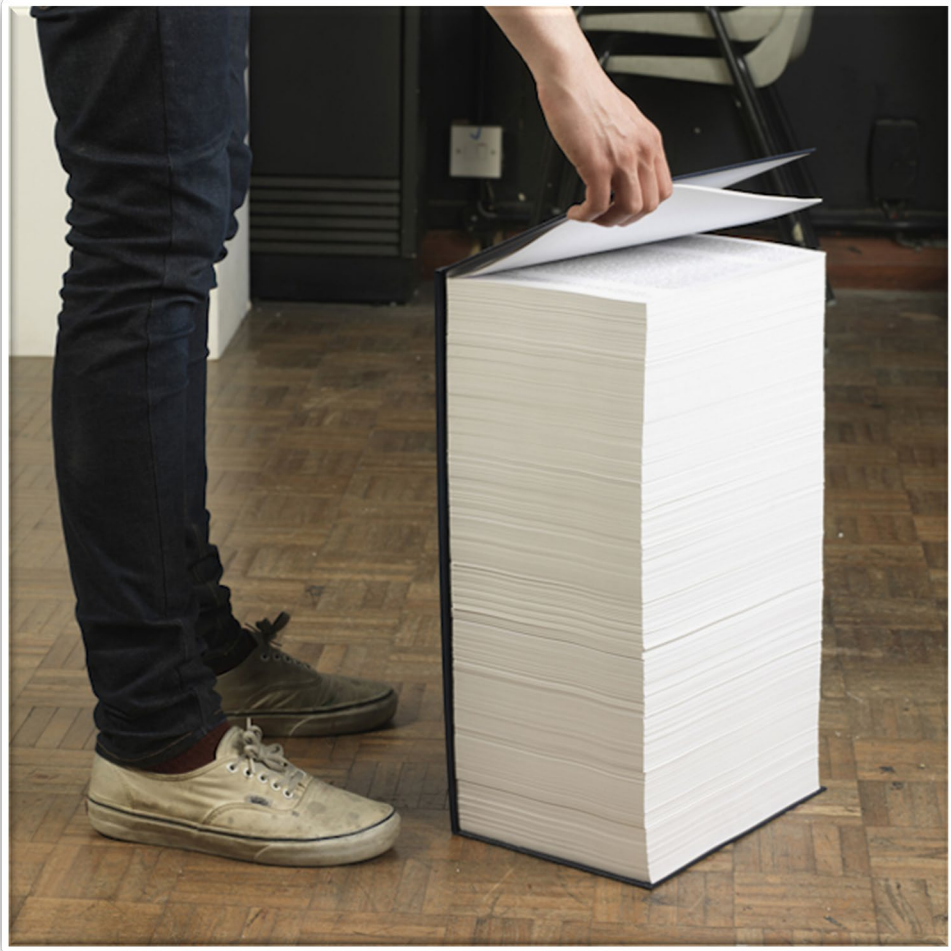
Don't you want to make sure your natural and historic resources are protected?

Reflect community values

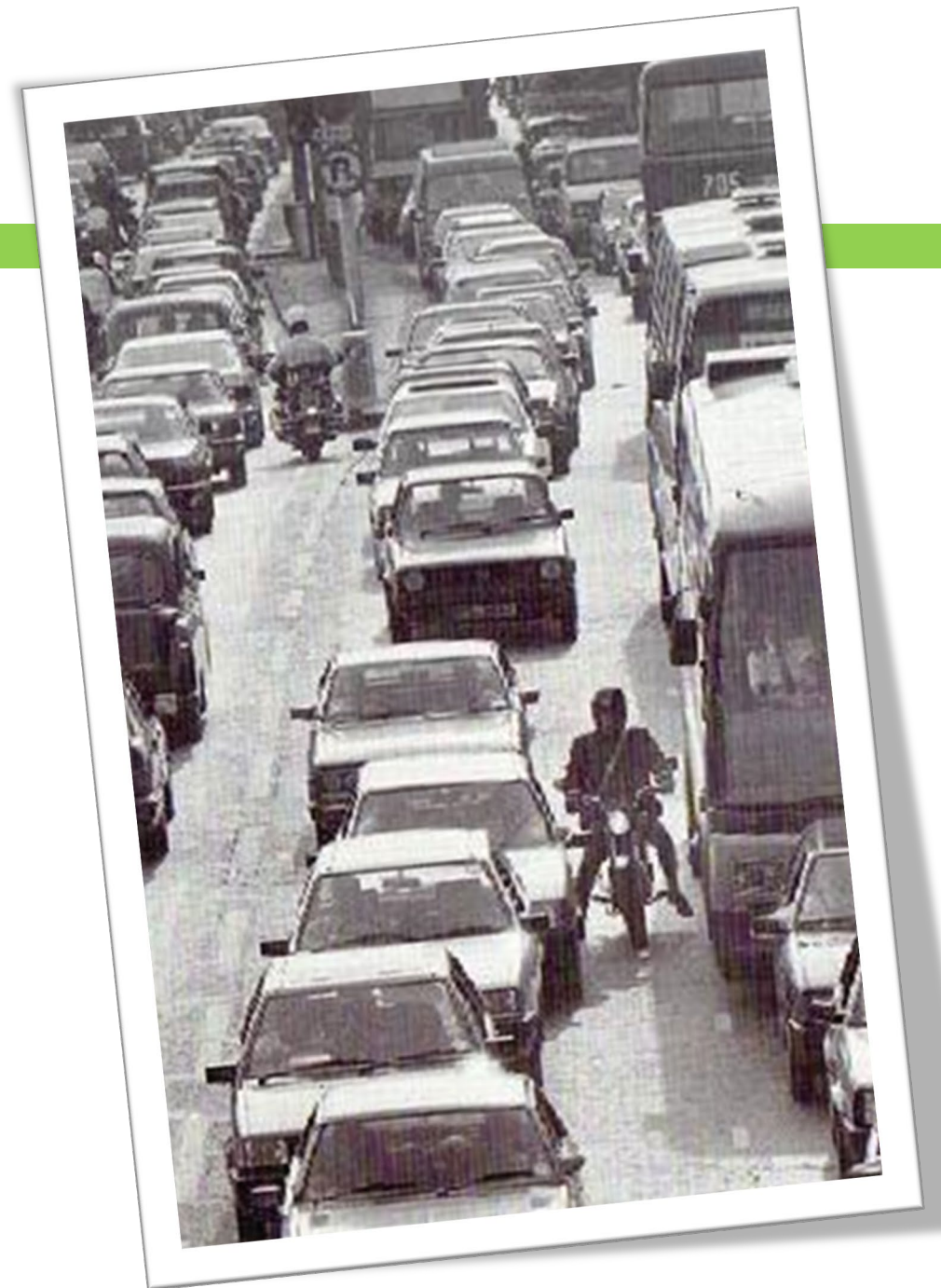
Don't you want your community to be what YOU want it to be?



DO PLANS MATTER?



IF WE DON'T PLAN!



IT ISN'T JUST DCA



USDA
Natural Resources Conservation Service
United States Department of Agriculture

[Topics](#) [Programs](#) [Newsroom](#) [Blog](#) [Contact Us](#)



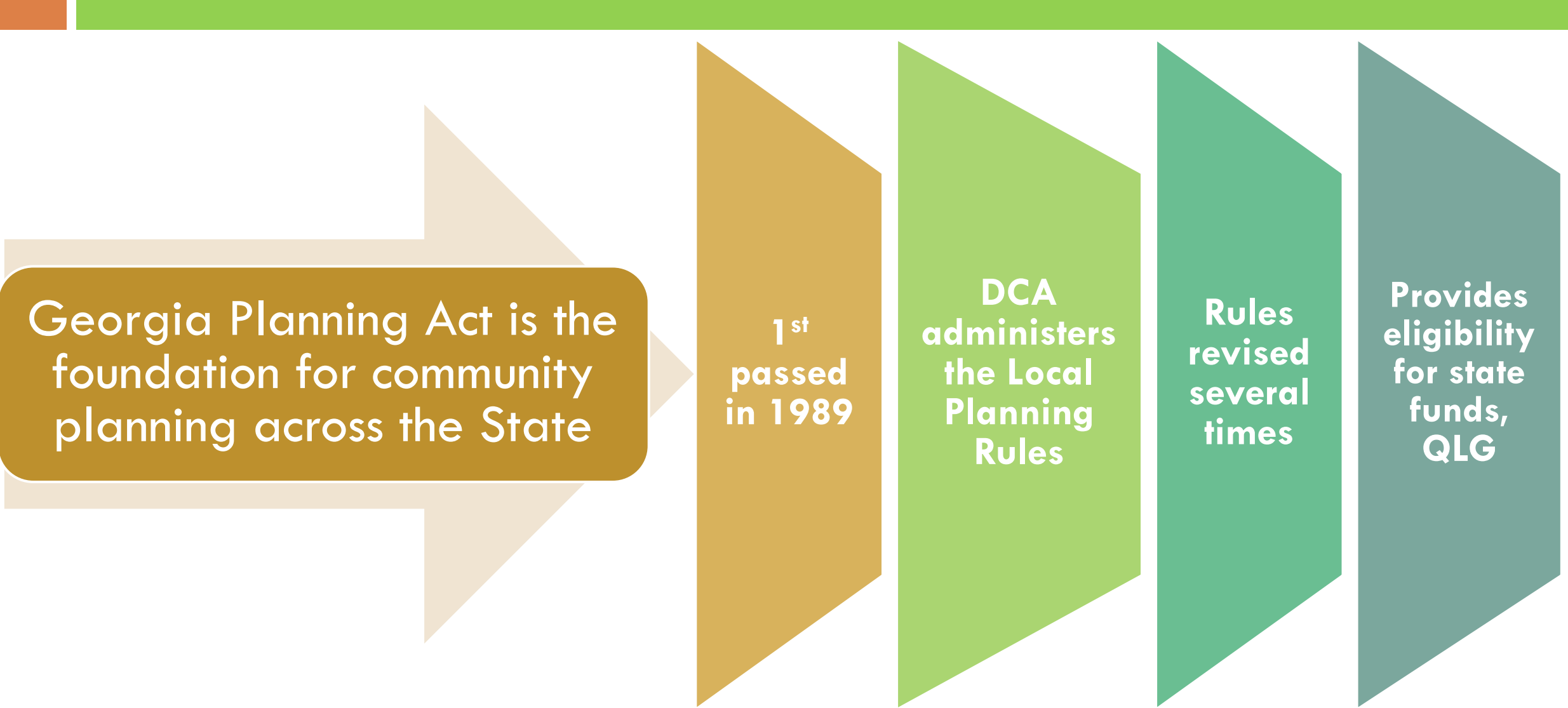
5 Steps to Assistance

How to Get Assistance from NRCS for Farms, Ranches and Forests

- 1 PLANNING**
Visit your local NRCS field office to discuss your goals and work with staff on a conservation plan.
- 2 APPLICATION**
With the help of NRCS, complete an application for financial assistance programs.
- 3 ELIGIBILITY**
As part of applying, we'll file paperwork to ensure you're eligible for assistance.
- 4 RANKING**
NRCS ranks applications according to local resource concerns.
- 5 IMPLEMENTING**
Put conservation to work by signing a contract and implementing conservation practices.



HOW WE DO IT IN GEORGIA





LOCAL COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

- Help develop & support policies
- Direct capital improvements
- Help set the budget
- Evaluate future development
- See the future
- Set the future
- Guide economic growth
- Guide land development
- Celebrate the community
- Improve community health
- Address housing issues
- Upgrade local infrastructure
- Gives the public a voice
- Represents everybody
- See opportunities not just issues
- Provide solutions



LOCAL PLANNING TOOLS

- Future Development Map in the comp plan
- Zoning Ordinance and Map
- Unified Development Code
- Special ordinances for trees, signs, etc.
- Design Guidelines (historic districts, etc.)
- Others specific to your local government



ZONING DEFINED

- Zoning is the government's ability to regulate private property through use of the police powers – the public health, safety, morals and general welfare- the local government's ability to regulate what goes where.
- It's really important to remember that your zoning ordinance must include an accurate map. If you don't have a zoning map then you don't have a valid ordinance. The map has to be a part of your zoning code.



ZONING ORDINANCE

Zoning Map

Administrative
Procedure

District
Requirements

Site Design

WHO'S INVOLVED?

□ On the local level:

Elected Officials:
State, County,
City

Appointed
Boards and
Commissions

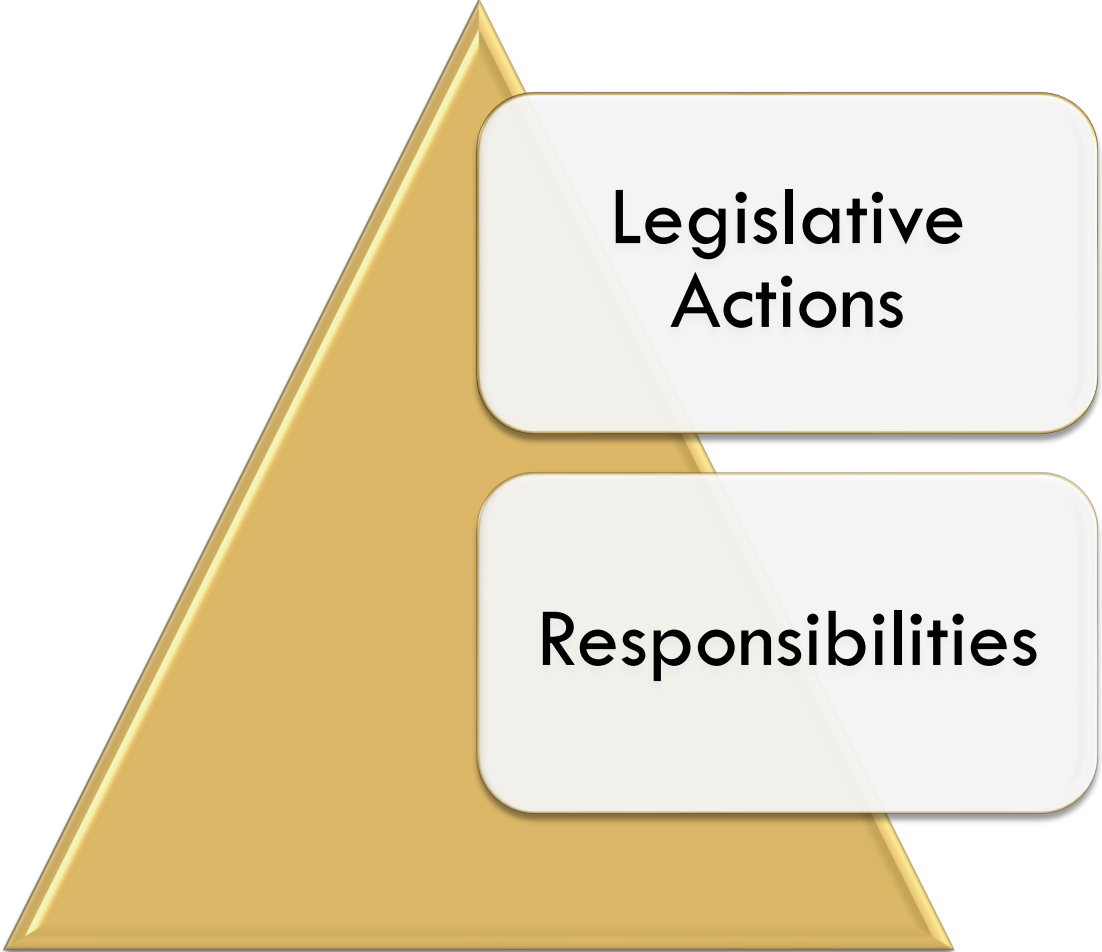
Planning Staff

Development
Community

Public



ELECTED OFFICIALS





ACTIONS

□ Legislative (elected officials)

■ Such things as:

- Adopting the zoning ordinance
- Adoption of amendments to the ordinance that change the text
- Rezoning of property
- Special use permits

□ Administrative

- Anything else



LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Set plan in motion

Create a capable board

Establish policy

Change policies/ordinances

Give sense of direction

Make final decisions



PLANNING COMMISSION AUTHORIZATION

Contained in your ordinance - Administration (the commission as well as the elected body and staff)

- Planning Commission
 - Creation, Appointment, Terms
 - Organization, Rules, Staff
 - Functions and Duties
- Role and responsibilities of the elected body
- All procedures and standards



PLANNING COMMISSION

FIVE GOALS OF PLANNING COMMISSION

Remember what the purpose of “zoning” really is

Carry out development review process within the legal framework and requirements of state and local law

Effectively deal with the local political will

Act as an arbiter between government staff, applicant, citizens, land owners, and other parties

Review projects in view of standards and technical criteria which are applicable



PLANNING COMMISSION

QUALIFICATIONS

Be a resident

Willingness and dedication

Interest in community planning

Desire to assist in implementation

Willingness to encourage and accept input

Ability to maintain an objective approach



PLANNING COMMISSION

ROLES

- Prepare comprehensive plan
- Implement plan with local government
- Advise on planning
- Work within established policies/codes
- Recommend changes to policies/codes



PLANNING COMMISSION: TIPS

FOLLOWING THE LAW - ASK THESE QUESTIONS

- Is the proposal consistent with the Comp Plan?
- Does it meet all applicable zoning and subdivision requirements?
- Are environmental impacts reduced or eliminated by conditions or are there overriding considerations?
- Is decision supported by findings of fact based on substantial evidence in the record?
- Anything else?



PLANNING COMMISSION: MEMBERS

Learn meeting procedures (Robert's Rules of Order)

Stay informed

Keep communication open

Be an effective leader

Follow the law

BEING EFFECTIVE

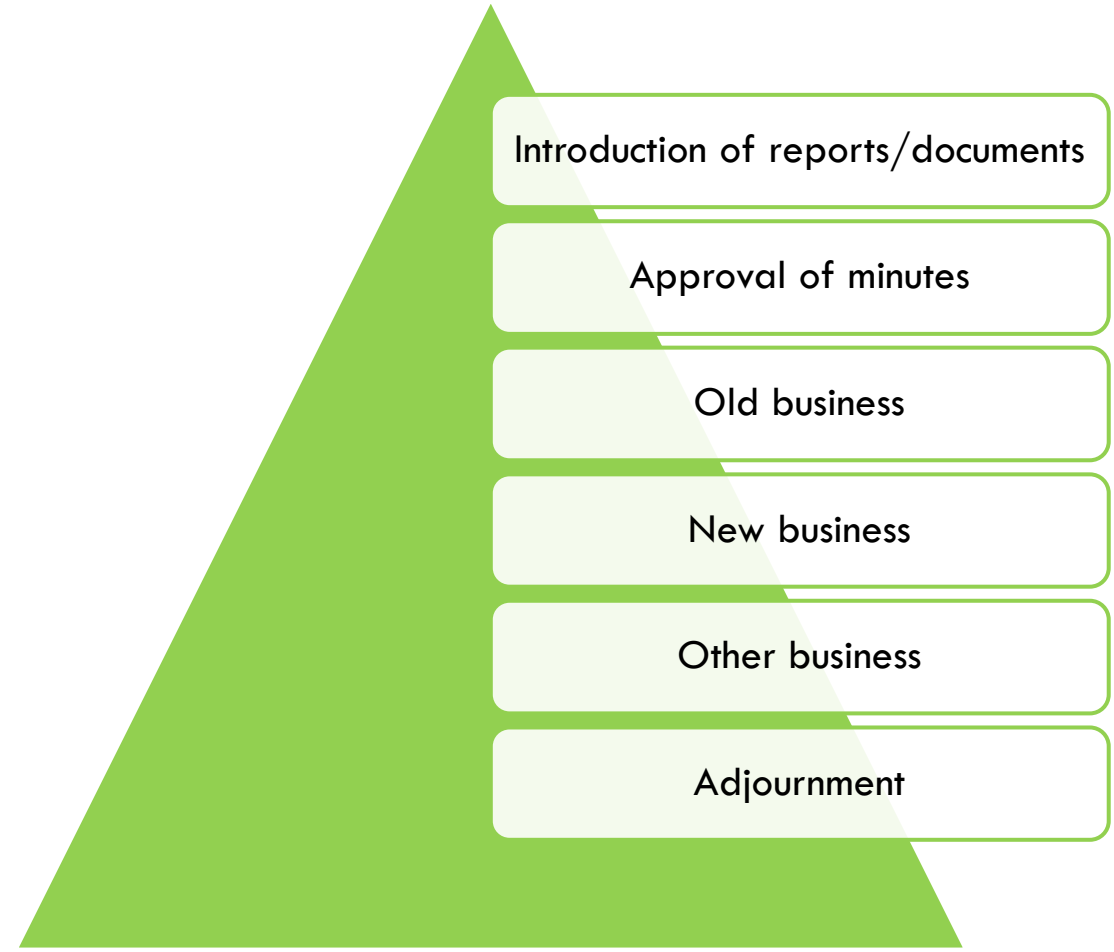


PLANNING COMMISSION: MEETING BASICS

- ❑ Will of majority of commissioners must be carried out
- ❑ No voice counts more than another
- ❑ Only one topic will be considered at a time
- ❑ Follow adopted procedures
- ❑ Follow your adopted agenda
- ❑ Comments always directed to the chair
- ❑ All deliberations done in the open
- ❑ All decisions given in the open



AGENDA





ACTIONS: What are your choices?





LOCAL STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Administer code

Provide full and accurate information and background to applicant, developers, boards, commissions, and landowners

Reports/recommendations based on fact (plan/code)

Administrative permits



DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

Acts as agents for property owners or neighborhood

Professional wisdom and experience



WHO IS THE DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY?



Real estate agents/brokers

Land developers/speculators

Residential and commercial builders

Apartment developers and landlords

Lawyers

Engineers, architects, surveyors

Bankers

Consultants

Trade groups/special interest groups



THE PUBLIC



Plans belong to the community



Publishing hearing agenda in various media outlets is good tool



Handouts and visuals can help individuals understand in process





FINAL WORDS

Plans are a guide. Codes and ordinances are law.

Staff, boards, and commissions must be: objective, consistent, rely on laws, codes, plans, and facts.

Plans (and codes and laws) are living documents and must evolve with change in conditions.

Implementation and enforcement are important.

Focus must be sustained by staff and elected officials.



Georgia[®] Department of
Community Affairs