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Three Georgia cities recognized for effective comprehensive planning

Seven additional communities renew PlanFirst designation

ATLANTA (October 8, 2020) – Several Georgia communities, ranging from metro Atlanta to rural Georgia, have received statewide distinction in the [PlanFirst](#) program, which recognizes excellence in community planning. PlanFirst, a Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) program, recognizes and rewards communities that clearly demonstrate an established pattern of successfully implementing their Local Comprehensive Plan.

Bainbridge, Cornelia, and Sandy Springs have each achieved “PlanFirst” designation for 2021-2023. In addition, the following seven communities renewed their PlanFirst designation for 2021-2022: Adel, Perry, Thomasville, Tifton, Vienna, Woodstock, and Jones County. Designated communities are eligible for technical assistance, as well as bonus points and enhanced eligibility for certain DCA funding opportunities.

“DCA applauds local leadership in these PlanFirst communities and is pleased to recognize those who have sustained quality, long-range planning and plan execution,” said Commissioner Christopher Nunn.

To apply for PlanFirst, communities are required to address four primary program criteria focused on having a proven record of plan implementation success: goals, leadership, community participation and implementation. The designation is for three years – beginning January 1, 2021 – and enables these communities to take advantage of various incentives that include public recognition, eligibility for specified grant opportunities, and certain reduced interest loans.

The next deadline for applications is May 15, 2021. The Department of Community Affairs developed the program with a steering committee comprised of partners including the [Georgia Municipal Association](#), [Association County Commissioners of Georgia](#), [Georgia Planning Association](#), [Regional Commissions](#), [University of Georgia Archways program](#), and other state agencies including the [Georgia Environmental Finance Authority](#), [Historic Preservation Division](#), and [Environmental Protection Division](#).

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About the Department of Community Affairs

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) partners with communities to build strong and vibrant neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas through community and economic development, local government assistance, and safe and affordable housing. Using state and federal resources, DCA helps communities spur private job creation, implement planning, develop downtowns, generate affordable housing solutions and promote volunteerism. DCA also helps qualified Georgians with low and moderate incomes buy homes, rent housing and prevent foreclosure and homelessness. For more information, visit www.dca.ga.gov.

