**PlanFirst Program RENEWAL Application - Due May 15, 2019**

**Introduction:** The Department of Community Affairs’ PlanFirst program recognizes local governments that clearly demonstrate success with implementing their Local Comprehensive Plan. In order to apply for PlanFirst designation, a local government must have participated in at least two Local Comprehensive Plan update cycles and they must also have Qualified Local Government certification and be current on required reporting to DCA. *(To check status, please visit* [*http://www.georgiaplanning.com/planners/planreview/default.asp*](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 Local 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 17 pages. Text areas will expand as needed.* Please send your application as one document, not to exceed 17 pages. Please do not send separate files.

*Note: This application should only be used by governments applying for re-designation. Those jurisdictions applying for PlanFirst designation for the first time should use the application available at* [*www.dca.ga.gov*](http://www.dca.ga.gov)*.*

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| --- | --- |
| Applicant government |  |
| Mailing address |  |
| Telephone |  |
| Email |  |
| Contact person; title |  |
| Application prepared by |  |
| 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 of authorized official signing |  |
| Date |  |
| Signature |  |

**PRE-REQUISITES (to be filled out by DCA staff only)**

1. Applicant has participated in at least two Local Comprehensive Plan Update cycles.

Yes No

1. Applicant has a consistent record of maintaining their Qualified Local Government status **and** submitting required reports to DCA, including the current Report of Local Government Finances. *(Within ten years, applicant cannot lose status more than twice and not more than four weeks collectively).*

Yes No

1. The Applicant has attained the Minimum Standard for performance as called for in their regional commission's regional Comprehensive Plan.

Yes No

1. The Work Programs included in the Local Comprehensive Plans consist primarily of specific action items that make it clear exactly what the community intends to do to implement their Local Comprehensive Plan.

Yes No

1. The Applicant is consistently among the top performing local governments within the state for implementation of projects listed in your Local Comprehensive Plan’s Community Work Program.

Yes No

**Additional instructions for filling out application:** There are five major indicators listed in the application. They are:

1. **Goals:** The Goals Element details the over-arching concepts envisioned in the Local Comprehensive Plan and carried out in the action and implementation elements of the Plan.
2. **Leadership:** Leadership guides the Local Comprehensive Planning process and they also ensure that the plan is implemented by guiding day-to-day decision making.
3. **Participation:** Each element of the Local Comprehensive Plan must be prepared with opportunity for involvement and input from stakeholders and the general public, ensuring that the plan reflects community needs and values.
4. **Implementation:** Your Local Comprehensive Plan should lay out specific activities that the community plans to undertake following adoption.
5. **Impact:** In accordance with the PlanFirst Memorandum of Agreement, the PlanFirst designation should positively impact your community, educate your leaders and citizens as well as further assist with implementing your comprehensive plan as you strive for excellence.

Fully explain how your community addresses each indicator by identifying specific examples and resulting local successes. (Each indicator will be scored based on a scale from 0-5 points, except indicator G, which may score up to 10 points.) Add exhibits, examples, and photographs as needed to tell your story. Do not exceed 17 pages.

**INDICATOR: GOALS**

**A.** Since your initial PlanFirst designation, demonstrate how your Goals and Vision Element continues to push your community to strive for planning excellence. In particular, focus your response on your local leaderships work towards ambitious goals. For example, how goals continue to influence decisions made by local leadership, how community organizations and other partners continue to support goals stated in your Local Comprehensive Plan. Give examples of how your local leadership and your community supports and endorses your goals.

**INDICATOR: LEADERSHIP**

**B.** Since your initial PlanFirst designation, explain any changes to staffing arrangements (local staff or contracted relationship) regarding those that devote time to community planning issues.

**C.** Since your initial PlanFirst designation, demonstrate how your planning commission or similar body has steered local planning decisions. Include examples of decisions or actions by the planning commission or similar body that were driven primarily by the Local Comprehensive Plan.

**D.** Within the table below, list local officials (both elected and appointed) involved in local planning processes, that have recently (within the last 3 years) attended training on how to use the Local Comprehensive Plan effectively since your PlanFirst designation. These trainings may include those from DCA’s Community Planning Institute, the Georgia Academy, the Carl Vinson Institute of Government, GAZA, GMA or ACCG land use or planning classes, and other similar courses. Add more rows if necessary.

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| Elected/Appointed Official | Course Name | Agency Sponsoring the Event | Dates |
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**E**. Since your initial PlanFirst designation, discuss ongoing or new collaborative efforts to achieve shared Goals, Needs and Opportunities, and/or projects listed in your Community Work Program that have been identified in your Local Comprehensive Plan. Partners may include, but are not limited to: The Chamber of Commerce, Regional Commission, or Development Authority. Include references and page numbers from your current or previous Local Comprehensive Plan. You may also attach letters of support from your partnering organizations, providing specific examples of collaborative efforts.

**INDICATOR: PARTICIPATION**

**F.** Describe your work to continue to actively involve your community in the effort to implement and, if applicable, update your Local Comprehensive Plan. You may provide information and/or documentation that illustrates your community involvement. Examples include: photos, agendas, sign-in sheets, survey results, and other meeting materials.

**INDICATOR: IMPLEMENTATION**

**G.** Provide several examples of projects you have implemented since your initial PlanFirst designation that are moving your community towards effectively achieving its Goals and addressing it’s Needs and Opportunities. You may include Success Stories you’ve submitted to DCA. You may also include photographs, newspaper articles or other exhibits to elaborate on these examples.

**INDICATOR: IMPACT**

**H.** How many times has a representative in your community participated in a PlanFirst application review and/or site visit review? Specify the communities you’ve visited and the year of the site visit review. Have you ever acted as a presenter for a workshop or training where you represented the PlanFirst program? If so, which event, where was the event held, and what year?

**I.** Has anyone in your community taken advantage of the two free registration opportunities to attend the Community Planning Institute (CPI)? If so who, when, and where? What was gained from attending CPI?

**J.** Since your initial PlanFirst designation, has your community applied for any of the PlanFirst incentives? Those incentives include: the HUD Community Block Grant program (CDBG), the Employment Incentive Program (EIP), the Redevelopment Fund Program (RDF), the Downtown Development Fund Program (DDRLF), and/or the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) state loans. Please list within the table below. Add more rows if necessary.

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| **Program** | **Project** | **Year Applied** | **Comprehensive Plan Reference** | **Did you receive the award? Y/N** |
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**K.** Since your initial PlanFirst designation, describe how you and your leadership have promulgated the Local Comprehensive Plan fostering local access to the Plan by making it generally available to your community. If your Local Comprehensive Plan is on your community’s website, please provide the website URL.

**L.** Describe the efforts/successes you’ve achieved in meeting the excellence standards in your regional commission’s regional plan.

Please attach additional sheets as needed to tell your story. Your application must not exceed 17 pages. Your application should be saved/scanned as a PDF document and emailed to [ebony.simpson@dca.ga.gov](mailto:ebony.simpson@dca.ga.gov) no later than May 15, 2019. For more information, contact Ebony Simpson at [ebony.simpson@dca.ga.gov](mailto:ebony.simpson@dca.ga.gov) or 912-663-9865.