



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Acworth, Alma, Augusta, Camilla, Monroe, and Warner Robins Receive PlanFirst Designations

Atlanta, GA (October 7, 2024) – The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) announced today that six communities have been awarded the PlanFirst designation. The cities of Acworth, Alma, Augusta, Camilla, Monroe, and Warner Robins are the newest PlanFirst communities for the 2025-2027 program cycle. These cities join an esteemed group of local governments recognized for their outstanding efforts in community engagement and successful implementation of their Local Comprehensive Plans. The PlanFirst designation brings significant recognition and rewards, including eligibility for a package of incentives.

The cities of Toccoa and Griffin are also recognized for renewing their PlanFirst designations, both of which renewed the designation for a third time. These communities join only 11 other communities in the state to have done so.

“PlanFirst designation incentivizes local governments to undertake high-quality community planning and excel in putting those plans to action,” said Jon West, director of DCA’s Community Development Division. “DCA is excited to welcome these six exemplary communities into the PlanFirst family, and we are proud of the accomplishments that brought them to this point. It is our hope that the benefits that come along with this designation spur them to even greater achievements.”

Communities are only eligible for this designation if they have Qualified Local Government status; have an approved, adopted Service Delivery Strategy; are current on all required reports to DCA, including Government Management Indicators and the Report of Local Government Finances; and have met the Minimum Performance Standards for their region as set by their regional commission.

To apply for PlanFirst, communities are required to address four primary program criteria focused on planning success:

- Goals
- Leadership



- Community engagement
- Implementation

The PlanFirst designation lasts for three years, beginning January 1, 2025, and enables these communities to take advantage of various incentives such as statewide recognition, three bonus points on Housing Tax Credits applications, reduced interest loans, annual eligibility for Community Development Block Grants, and bonus points on DCA programs, such as the Redevelopment Fund, Community HOME Investment Program (CHIP), Employee Incentive Program, and the Downtown Revolving Loan Fund.

To learn more about PlanFirst, click [here](#).

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, rental housing and prevent foreclosure and homelessness. For more information, visit www.dca.ga.gov.