

# SMART GROWTH IN ACTION

## Ga. Quality Growth Program

### GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Since 2000, the Office of Quality Growth (OQG) in the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has helped communities learn about and implement smart growth principles. Its approach includes focusing assistance efforts on the communities that are ready to implement smart growth principles and educating communities about smart growth success stories in Georgia to foster peer-to-peer interaction and support among local officials.

OQG offers impressive services to Georgia communities, including a Web-based toolkit of ways to put smart growth principles into practice at the local level (e.g., improving strip commercial corridors, creating infill development, preserving open space), model ordinances, examples of quality growth projects in Georgia, on-site visits by resource teams, and direct technical assistance. OQG partners with close to 40 organizations through the Georgia Quality Growth Partnership to provide many of these services.

OQG has a wide range of programs to help communities. Its Advisory Clinics are expert panels at major in-state conferences available for one-on-one consultation and advice about local development projects. The office convenes Special Issue Retreats with key local officials for hands-on work with a recognized expert in a particular approach. Quality Growth Assessments provide a comprehensive review of a local government's regulations, plans, policies, and development patterns to identify barriers to implementing smart growth principles. The Consultants' Bureau offers professional facilitators to lead local planning and visioning meetings while bringing smart growth principles into the discussion. The office has developed over 80 tools, from broad assessment and visioning tools like quality growth audits and visual preference surveys, to more narrowly focused strategies such as agricultural zoning or shared parking.

Many communities follow up by applying for grants to implement the ideas put forward by OQG experts. Grants have included new projects, such as a detailed master plan for a South Rome neighborhood and infill design guidelines and development regulations for Dalton, both of which resulted from Resource Team recommendations. Other projects have included corridor studies, demonstration projects, ordinance development, and review of regulatory barriers to smart growth. The program won the 2003 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement in the Community Outreach and Education category (see [www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/sg\\_awards\\_publication\\_final\\_10\\_17.htm](http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/sg_awards_publication_final_10_17.htm)).

*"Without the help we got from the Office of Quality Growth, we might still be struggling with how to develop housing close to the workplace that our workers can afford to purchase. But now, we are working on an infill program in Dalton, and Whitfield County is looking at Traditional Neighborhood Developments and Planned Unit Developments, which were recommended by the Resource Team."*

— Butch Sanders, Dalton City Administrator

### QUICK FACTS

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Location: State of Georgia  
Website: [www.georgiaqualitygrowth.com/](http://www.georgiaqualitygrowth.com/)  
Implemented: 2000



### SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES GEORGIA QUALITY GROWTH PROGRAM

#1	Includes Mixed Land Uses	
#2	Exhibits Compact Building Design	✓
#3	Provides Range of Housing Types	
#4	Promotes Walkable Neighborhoods	✓
#5	Exhibits a Distinct Sense of Place	
#6	Preserves Open Space	✓
#7	Utilizes Existing Development	
#8	Provides Transportation Choices	
#9	Practices Fair Decision-making	★
#10	Promotes Stakeholder Participation	★