

Tools for Guiding Growth and Development along Georgia's Coast

DCA staff has researched tools that may be used to assist local governments, landowners and developers in guiding conservation and development decisions prior to the adoption of the Coastal Comprehensive Plan. This list of resources will be expanded as new ones are identified or become available. Please check back if you do not see what you need right now.

- Alternatives to Conventional Development Choices Website.** The Office of Planning and Quality Growth worked with EPA to identify alternatives to conventional development practices and resources to explain their environmental, economic/fiscal and social benefits to local governments and citizens. OPQG staff has developed a website to disseminate this information to a wide audience. For each alternative choice the site provides the drawbacks of the conventional approach and the benefits of the alternative, illustrative examples of successful implementation, and links to “best practices” and implementation tools. The website is <http://www.dca.state.ga.us/qgp/>.
- Green Growth Guidelines and “Upland Rules”.** A current planning initiative particularly relevant to the growth and development of Georgia’s coastal counties is the Coastal Resource Division’s *Green Growth Guidelines*, which provide site-specific guidelines for greenfield development in environmentally sensitive areas. The guidelines are available at the following link www.crd.dnr.state.ga.us/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=969. The guidelines cover site fingerprinting using GIS and GPS technologies, designing with the landform, low impact development and stormwater management, and stream bank stabilization (preliminaries attached). Another initiative of CRD to develop rules applicable to “upland” areas of the coast (narrowly defined) is in the early stages and may be included in the final Plan.
- Development Review Scorecard.** A point system is used by some communities in an attempt to make the development review process less subjective. This approach requires careful analysis of the relative value of specific practices as well as of the priority of different policy objectives. A regional example from Georgia is the scorecard approach being developed by the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority for DRI review. GRTA policy focuses on transportation, but this example shows how relative point values can be assigned and the priority of policy objectives can be reflected through weighting. A scorecard is also used by organizations that certify developments employing best practices, such as the EarthCraft Communities program. For the full guidelines, see www.southface.org/web/earthcraft_house/ech_guidelines/1ech%20communities-guidelines013106.pdf. The draft criteria for coastal areas are available now but will not be finalized until tested through an actual development project now being selected.
- Recommendations from Quality Growth Resource Team reports.** Resource Team Reports for Hinesville, Tybee Island, and Camden County are **available now** at: www.dca.state.ga.us/development/PlanningQualityGrowth/programs/QGResourceTeams.asp Each report presents an overall development concept, including character areas and strategies for implementing them, and a wide variety of both short and long term recommendations on topics ranging from appropriate economic development to protection of natural resources. Many report recommendations are generally applicable to the coastal counties and municipalities.