

Town of Brooks Comprehensive Plan

First Public Hearing
November 16, 2026

ONE great REGION

Agenda

- Why plan?
- State requirements
- Key plan elements
- ARC approach and roles
- Milestones
- Early discussion/action items

Why plan?

- Develop and refine community vision
- Promote understanding of local issues
- Preserve and improve quality of life
- Protect private property rights
- Strategically support community needs
- Coordinate decision-making and resource allocation
- Look beyond day-to-day services
- Guide growth and development



…and in Georgia…

- Because the state requires it
  - Compliance with DCA Local Planning Rules → Qualified Local Government (QLG) Status
  - QLG Status → Access to certain Funding and Assistance Programs

Why plan?

Key programs and funding are tied to QLG status

https://dca.georgia.gov/document/fact-sheets/factsheet-programs-linked-qlg-status/download

Updated. 02/13/2023

PROGRAMS LINKED TO QUALIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT (QLG) STATUS

Local governments must meet the statutory definition of "Qualified Local Government"[1] to be eligible for the programs listed, below. Local governments which do not fulfill the requirements articulated by statute are, by definition, *dis*qualified from participating in these programs. Locally created authorities are likewise disqualified from participation when their creating governments are disqualified.

- AmeriCorps Program
- Appalachian Regional Commission Economic Development Grant Program
- Bond Allocation Program
- CDBG Loan Guarantee Program (Section 108 Program)
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- Continuum of Care
- Downtown Development Revolving Loan Fund (DDRLF)
- Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)
- Employment Incentive Program (EIP)
- Georgia Heritage Grant
- Historic Preservation Fund Grant
- Home Investments Partnership Programs (HOME)
- Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)
- Immediate Threat and Danger Grant (ITAD)
- OneGeorgia Programs (EDGE, Equity and Rural Innovation)
- Redevelopment Fund Program (RDF)
- Regional Economic Business Assistance (REBA) Program
- State Housing Trust Fund
- State Re-Entry Partnership Housing Grants

These are examples of loan and grant programs operated by partner agencies that are withheld from disqualified Local Governments (and locally created authorities). Contact other state agencies, directly, to determine if any specific program is linked to QLG status.

- Georgia Environmental Finance Authority
  - All funding/financial programs
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources:
  - Coastal Incentives Grant
  - Land and Water Conservation Programs

NOTE: QLG STATUS IS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH COMPLIANCE WITH GEORGIA'S SERVICE DELIVERY ACT (OCGA 36-70-20). NONCOMPLIANCE WITH THE SERVICE DELIVERY ACT ADVERSELY AFFECTS ELIGIBILITY FOR ALL GRANTS/LOANS/PERMITS PROVIDED BY ALL STATE AGENCIES, INCLUDING AND BEYOND THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH "QLG" STATUS.

[1] O.C.G.A. § 50-8-2 and elsewhere

Required Plan Elements

Required for all plans

- VISION & GOALS
- NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES
- COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM
- BROADBAND

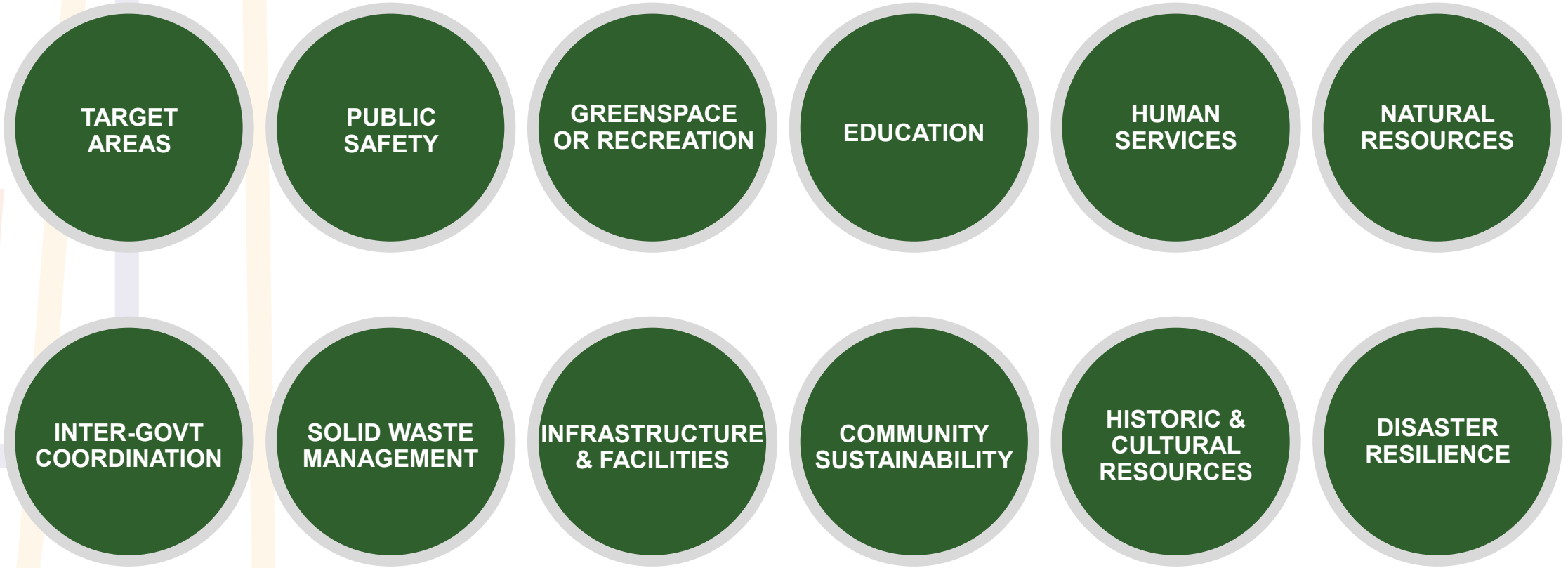
Required for some plans

- CIE
- LAND USE
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- TRANSPORTATION
- HOUSING

***Underlined** = Required to be revisited/updated every 5 years*

(see pp.7-12 of DCA rules at Chapter 110-12-1-.03)

Optional Plan Elements



Key Elements

- Needs & Opportunities
  - Needs – Challenges or issues to be addressed
  - Opportunities – Assets or strengths to build upon
- Goals
  - Long-term actions to address the Needs & Opportunities
  - High level guide for decision-making
- Community Work Program
  - Specific activities the community will undertake to achieve its Goals
  - Short-term projects, initiatives, studies, programs, etc. over the next **5 years**
- Future Land Use
  - Outline for how the community intends to grow, change, develop, and adapt
  - Should be a desired, realistic image of future

Regional Commission Involvement – Then vs. Now

ARC Roles

- Coordinate regional and state reviews
- Intergovernmental coordination

Updates

- Every 10 years (minor at 5 years)

Local planning rules

- Data-heavy, challenging, expensive
- One-size fits all
- 3 deliverables

2012
Rules Revised

ARC Roles

- Coordinate regional and state reviews
- Intergovernmental coordination
- **Provide assistance on request**

Updates:

- Every 5 years

Local planning rules

- Required elements, plus…
- Menu of optional elements
- 1 deliverable

BEFORE ***AFTER***

Elements ARC is Required to Assist With*

- Needs and Opportunities
- Broadband
- Vision/Goals
- Report of Accomplishments (ROA)
- Community Work Program (CWP)

**Per p.6 of DCA rules at Chapter 110-12-1-.03(7)(b)*

**These items are required of the RC, but ARC's scope of work includes more*

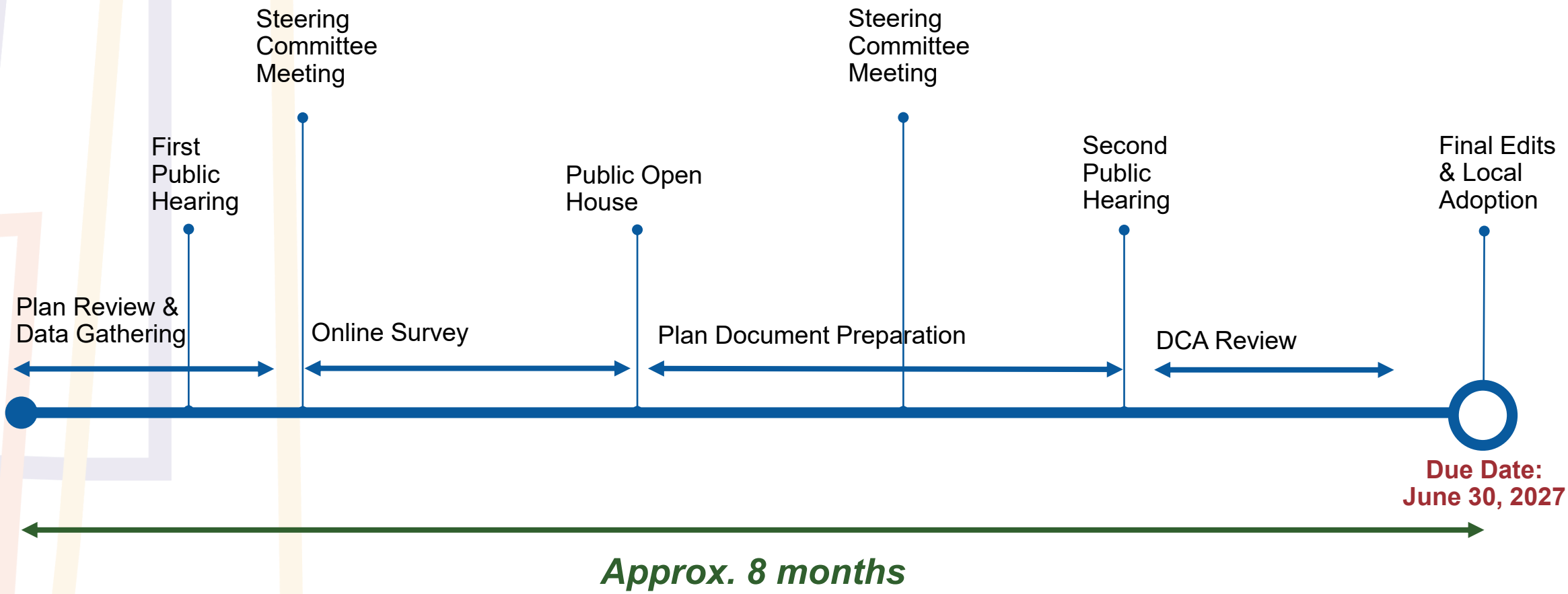
Approach – ARC Roles

- Support DCA-required public hearings
- Develop/manage online public engagement portal and survey
- Facilitate two Steering Committee meetings
- Facilitate one general public engagement event
- Use input gather to update key elements and produce draft plan
- Implement any revisions required by DCA following state review
- Provide final plan and other documents

Approach – Local Government Roles

- Host ARC on site visit/tour in community
- Provide key information for plan development
- Manage Steering Committee
- Manage public awareness for events and meetings
- Provide locations and assistance for in-person meetings
- Conduct additional engagement beyond ARC scope, if desired

Milestones


Steering Committee Meeting
Steering Committee Meeting
First Public Hearing
Public Open House
Second Public Hearing
Final Edits & Local Adoption
Plan Review & Data Gathering
Online Survey
Plan Document Preparation
DCA Review
Due Date: June 30, 2027
Approx. 8 months

Early Discussion/Action Items

- Existing Conditions
  - What does current data tell us? Trends? Forecasts?
  - Demographics, labor/employment, transportation, housing, land use and development, etc.
- Highlights from previous plan
  - What still resonates? What's less relevant now?
  - What projects are continuing? What projects are completed?
- Recent/relevant planning efforts
  - Efforts the community has undertaken in last 5 years?
  - Planning and community issues that have continued or arisen in last 5 years?
- Community engagement
  - Who are you typically able and unable to engage with?
  - How do you typically reach your community? How engaged are they?
  - Are there any community orgs/non-profits we can invite in? Local artists or cultural groups we can tap into?

Helpful Resources for Local Planning

DCA Coordinated Planning Page

https://dca.georgia.gov/community-assistance/coordinated-planning/local-planning

DCA Governing Statutes and Regulations (including Local Planning Rules)

https://dca.georgia.gov/community-assistance/coordinated-planning/governing-statutes-regulations-and-guidance

DCA Due Dates, Status, and Other Resources

https://apps.dca.ga.gov/dcacommunity/default.aspx/default.aspx



Questions?

Andrew Smith, Planning Coordinator
ASmith@AtlantaRegional.org

Antemil Jorkey, Town of Brooks Comp Plan Project Manager
AJorkey@AtlantaRegional.org

ONE great REGION