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**PRESS RELEASE: October 5, 2009**

**Georgia Planning Association Honors City's Master Plan  
'Oakwood 2030' receives 1<sup>st</sup> place statewide award**

Oakwood 2030, the City's master plan for the future, has been recognized statewide by the Georgia Planning Association (GPA) with a first-place award for "Outstanding Planning Document."

The award was officially announced on Oct. 2 at GPA's fall conference at the Classic Center in Athens. Oakwood 2030 was selected for the distinction from among 30 nominations statewide.

"On behalf of the City of Oakwood, I first would like to credit our City Council for their vision, inspiration, and heart for Oakwood's future," said City Manager Stan Brown. "I also want to recognize the fine work of our public-private team for executing the Council's directive."

The GPA award was based upon numerous criteria, some of which included:

- Innovation of concept;
- Transferability to other areas or projects;
- Quality of thought, analysis and character;
- Strong effort to solicit public participation;
- Use of technology in planning processes;
- Integration of sustainable practices to mitigate adverse impacts from development and everyday living.

Laura Keyes, chair of the GPA awards committee, said the judges were impressed with Oakwood's visioning process. "The City used a lot of tools and technology to develop the plan and communicate with the public. The master plan also was well thought out and easy to understand, making implementation very feasible, particularly with the timing of a successful SPLOST referendum."

Oakwood's first-place award was judged within the small-community category. Gwinnett County won the same award for its planning efforts in the large-community division.

Oakwood's city staff worked with a team of consultants to craft Oakwood 2030, a long-term master plan for the City's downtown and commercial center. The plan will be carried out in phases over the next two decades, culminating in the year 2030. Currently, the Thurmon Tanner Parkway, the commercial centerpiece of the master plan's Corporate Greenway, is being extended from Mundy Mill Road in Oakwood to Spout Springs Road in Flowery Branch.

The overall vision for the City is for creating a healthy outdoor environment that promotes community wellness. Green space is a key component of the plan that features several pocket parks, walking and bike trails, an outdoor amphitheatre, gardens, and attractive streetscape.