

SPECIAL SECTION

FOUR PILLAR AWARD

Council honors leaders in balanced growth

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Contributing Writer

For a quarter of a century, the **Council for Quality Growth** has honored Atlanta leaders who fulfill its mission of promoting balanced and responsible growth through advocacy, information and education.

This year, the honor goes to Atlanta real estate legend **Steve Selig**.

"I am extremely humbled by this award," Selig said. "I told the people that wanted me to do it that I don't think I deserve it. I looked at some of the other people who have received it, and I really don't feel like I measure up to those folks. They must have a higher opinion of me than I have of myself, I guess."

A not-for-profit trade organization that promotes economic development through fair and sound policy, the Council for Quality Growth created the Four Pillar Tribute 25 years ago as the Button Gwinnett Award. The first 14 recipients of the award were Gwinnett County leaders. In 2005, the award was renamed and the organization began to cast a wider net for potential recipients – coinciding with its decision to address

PAST AWARD RECIPIENTS

1990 Steve Reynolds	1998 J.D. Caswell	2006 John Wieland
1991 Wayne Shackelford	1999 A. Ray Weeks Jr.	2007 John A. Williams
1992 J.W. Benefield	2000 Louise Radloff	2008 Tom Cousins
1993 D. Scott Hudgens	2001 F. Wayne Hill	2009 Mayor Shirley Franklin
1994 Wayne H. Mason	2002 Gov. George Busbee	2010 Arthur M. Blank
1995 Virgil R. Williams	2003 Richard L. Tucker	2011 R. Charles Loudermilk Sr.
1996 Paul A. Duke	2004 Charlie Brown	2012 Mayor Sam Massell
1997 Jim Cowart	2005 U.S. Sen. Johnny Isakson	2013 John C. Portman

concerns in the entire Atlanta region. The four pillars of leadership and success are quality, responsibility, vision and integrity.

Although all of the attributes the pillars represent are important, vision may be the most important, Council President and CEO **Michael Paris** said.

"A lot of what we do is about our vision of the future for this region," he said. "Every one of our honorees has a vision

for how this region should work and have very thoughtfully proceeded with what the Atlanta area should look like in the future. The Council honors these visionaries to inspire others to follow their lead."

Selecting an honoree is a yearlong process that builds up to the award recipient announcement and culminates with a gala tribute event that runs similar to a "This is Your Life" format,

according to Paris. Throughout the year, names of individuals who leaders think are worthy of consideration are compiled. The leadership also reaches out to its broad cross-section of board of directors members, from whom they solicit nominations before ultimately selecting that year's honoree.

"There are just so many qualified folks that it's hard choosing one every year," Paris said. "It's a very difficult process because so many people rise to the top every year."

The first recipient of the award after it was renamed in 2005 was U.S. Sen. **Johnny Isakson**.

"I am as proud today as I was when I was first honored by the Council for Quality Growth with this prestigious award," Isakson said. "Throughout my career of public service and as a businessman, I have had the unique opportunity to experience firsthand the positive impact quality economic development has on our communities."

Last year's recipient was **John C. Portman Jr.**

This year's Four Pillar Tribute will be Thursday, Oct. 2, at the Georgia Ballroom of the **Georgia World Congress Center**.

INFLUENCE & ADVOCACY

Council works at local, regional, state levels

Members of the **Council for Quality Growth's** seven advisory committees say they are passionate about collaborating with local government to realize more vibrant, prosperous and livable communities. The work of these committees across the region isn't sexy. It doesn't (usually) grab headlines. But members of the development community and local government and agency leaders alike say it is the hard work at the heart of how good development happens.

"In the city of Atlanta alone, the Atlanta Advisory Committee has successfully altered legislation and advocated on issues such as permit reform, storm water, water quality, sustainable building and vacant property registration just to name a few," said **Scott Selig**, vice president of acquisitions and development at **Selig Enterprises Inc.** and member of the council's board of directors. "We are best at helping to ensure that legislation that is put forth is economically feasible and achieves the intent of what the city is looking for."

There are currently seven advisory committees, one each for Cherokee County, the city of Atlanta, Cobb County, DeKalb County, Forsyth County, Gwinnett County and North Fulton. Each committee features an elected official, such as a county chairman, commissioner, mayor or councilman,

who present their issue of the day and seek council members feedback from the development community's point of view. Many times, they use these committees to gauge the pros and cons of a future ordinance or development change.

"Our business is influenced by the policy decisions of every local municipality," **Mark McCord**, a civil engineer for Winder-based **Southeast Culvert Inc.** who has attended multiple meetings of six of the seven advisory committees. "The advisory committee meetings benefit Southeast Culvert by giving us a forum where we can keep tabs on an ever-shifting field. They also give us a platform with local leaders that amplifies our voice and allows us to network with peers on a more personal level." Advisory committee members and local public policymakers alike credit the committees' open dialogue across a range of topics with solving issues in a productive way. Members, Community Development and Economic Development staff alike sit in a roundtable format for a breakfast or lunch and have "informal but informative" conversations about the local issues of the day.

Political leaders and department staff members say it is invaluable to be able to hear directly from the development community. The public- and private-sector leaders say they work together to balance economic progress with quality growth.

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