



Northeast Georgia Plan 2035

Stakeholder Involvement Program

June 2011

The Stakeholder Involvement Program is the second major part of the Regional Plan, as per the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) “Regional Planning Requirements.” Its purpose is to ensure that Plan 2035’s Regional Agenda (the third component of the Plan) accurately reflects regional values and desires by soliciting participation from a diverse and qualified group of stakeholders. A successful SIP, among other factors, will contribute to successful adoption of the Regional Plan.

Overview

The Stakeholder Involvement Program consists of three sections. The Identification of Stakeholders component provides a list of stakeholders who will have a voice in the development of the Regional Agenda. Next, the Identification of Participation Techniques outlines the approaches that may be used during the process of developing the Regional Agenda. Finally, the Schedule for Completion of the Regional Agenda serves as a project outline that assigns dates to each of the major tasks.

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission’s Planning Advisory Committee, a working group formed of NEGRC Councilmembers, has identified the following parties as essential stakeholders whose input must be represented in the planning process. Stakeholders represent a variety of disciplines and affiliations, and will be asked to help guide the development of the Regional Agenda as key elements are addressed.

Stakeholders are identified based on their role as regional decision-makers, their ability to affect or be affected by the regional plan, and/or their potential to serve as resources during the planning process; stakeholders will likely have unique roles and may be asked to participate in different ways. Following is an initial list of organizations and disciplines from which stakeholder participation may be solicited:

Regional Agencies & Organizations

- Council of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission
- Planning Advisory Committee of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission
- Northeast Georgia Area Agency on Aging
- Northeast Georgia Workforce Investment Board
- Northeast Georgia Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force
- Northeast Georgia Health District
- Northeast Georgia Regional Solid Waste Management Authority
- Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority
- Madison Athens-Clarke Oconee Regional Transportation Study

State & Local Partners

- Northeast Georgia’s 12 County and 54 Municipal Governments, and Residents
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Georgia Department of Economic Development
- Georgia Department of Transportation
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- Georgia Emergency Management Agency
- Georgia Forestry Commission
- Main Street and Better Hometown Programs
- Development Authorities and Chambers of Commerce
- Transportation and Infrastructure Authorities
- Convention and Visitors Bureaus

Fields & Disciplines

To complement the specific stakeholder groups identified above, representatives from the following fields and disciplines may offer significant opportunities for input:

- Agriculture & Forestry
- Community & Economic Development
- Community & Regional Planning
- Education
- Historic Preservation
- Housing
- Human Services
- Natural & Cultural Resources
- Public Safety & Emergency Management
- Recreation
- Tourism
- Transportation
- Utilities

This section presents and describes various approaches that may be used during the creation of the Regional Agenda. Some are intended to disseminate information to stakeholders, while others will generate stakeholder input to be used in developing critical forward-looking plan elements. As the Regional Agenda process evolves, techniques may be added, abandoned, or modified to achieve optimal participation.

Steering Committee

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission's Planning Advisory Committee, a working group of the NEGRC's Council, serves as the Steering Committee for Plan 2035.

Technical Advisory Committee

The staff of the NEGRC's Planning and Government Services Division provides assistance to the Steering Committee, serving as the regional plan's Technical Advisory Committee.

Informational Displays

The gallery (atrium) of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission headquarters, located at 305 Research Drive in Athens, will feature a display on Plan 2035, and Regional Commission staff will develop similar materials for display in individual county offices. Topics may include general planning information, data and maps from the Regional Assessment, details on the planning process, and opportunities for input and comment. This offers visitors to the NEGRC offices the opportunity to learn about and affect plan development at their leisure.

Public Hearing(s)

A formal public hearing (possibly multiple) will be held to present important information related to the Regional Agenda to stakeholders, including the general public. NEGRC staff will be on hand to review plan elements and receive input from attendees.

Visioning Meetings

Planners will facilitate visioning meetings with key stakeholders to determine the general direction of the Regional Agenda. The Regional Assessment answers the questions, "Where are we now?" and "Where are we going?" – these visioning meetings will play a major role in answering the core questions of the Regional Plan: "Where do we want to be?" and "How do we get there?" In addition to a general vision for the region over the course of the planning horizon, these meetings will help evince specific goals and objectives.

Stakeholder Meetings

In addition to visioning meetings and the public hearing process, various meetings with stakeholders will be conducted, and will likely vary in purpose and format.

Website Information

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission's website (NEGRC.org) will serve as the online conduit of Plan 2035-related information. The site will be a clearinghouse for official planning events and data, and will also offer opportunities for stakeholder input. In addition, an online survey may be made available to the general public and/or targeted stakeholders.

Media Strategies

Staff will work with press outlets to disseminate critical news items.

Email Blasts

The Regional Commission maintains a broad database of regional email addresses, including local government elected officials and staff, state and federal agency personnel, non-governmental organization representatives, and others. This will be used to communicate with stakeholders.

Schedule for Completion of the Regional Agenda

	Mar 2011	Apr 2011	May 2011	June 2011	July 2011	Aug 2011	Sep 2011	Oct 2011	Nov 2011	Dec 2011	Jan 2012
Procedural (Assessment & Involvement Program)											
Transmit to DCA											
DCA Review											
Regional Agenda Development											
Refine participation techniques and implement											
<i>Regional Vision</i>											
Vision Statement											
Regional Development Map											
Defining Narrative											
<i>Regional Issues and Opportunities</i>											
<i>Implementation Program</i>											
Guiding Principles											
Performance Standards											
Strategies											
Regional Work Program											
<i>Evaluation and Monitoring</i>											
<i>Document Development</i>											
Procedural (Agenda)											
Regional Hearing											
Transmit Agenda to DCA											
DCA Review of Agenda											
Adopt Agenda and notify DCA											