

2/23/2008

The City of Arcade

2008-2030 Comprehensive Plan Update: Community Participation Program



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Introduction

Experience in public involvement has shown that lasting solutions are best identified when all segments of a community – individuals, elected officials, the business community, and civic organizations – are brought together in a spirit of cooperation. A collaborative approach to community engagement is not an opportunity, but a necessity. Community engagement and involvement is done for three reasons:

- To educate and increase public awareness
- To capture the knowledge and preferences of the people who live in and support the communities
- To mobilize support and acceptance of the plan

Communities that prosper do so because people work together to improve the quality of life that they want to sustain. The measure of effectiveness of a public involvement program is not that the public has been informed, but that public input has contributed to making a decision that is feasible and is supported by a large segment of the community.

Public comment and sentiment are a rich source of information about peoples' values and philosophies. These values and philosophies must be interpreted into meaningful information to guide the project. It is essential to know the community's values to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts as well as narrow the field of alternative solutions. This process is designed to accomplish the following:

- Improve the quality of decisions
- Increase ease of implementation
- Provide greater public understanding of community goals and objectives
- Provide tangible evidence that the community created its own identity

A successful comprehensive plan begins with a process of thinking about and visualizing the future. This Community Participation Program was crafted with these principles in mind and establishes a two-way communication between local citizens and their government officials, with the overall goal of better decisions supported by the public.

Identification of Stakeholders

The City Administrator and consultants have worked together to identify those individuals and groups that have a special interest in the development of the community agenda for the City of Arcade. The key Stakeholders are typically representatives from the general public, residents, professionals, business and industry leaders, church and civic leaders, media representatives, special interest groups, City staff and elected officials. It is important that the Stakeholder group consist of a diverse assortment of local representatives with different perspectives on the issue.

Mayor & Arcade City Council

Doug Haynie, Mayor

Ron Smith, Mayor Pro Tem

Dean Bentley, Council Member

Polly Davis, Council Member
Tom Hays, Council Member
Cindy Bone, Council Member

City of Arcade Staff

Chief Dennis Bell, Arcade Police
Chris Quigley, City Engineer
Richard Wingate, City Attorney
Barbara Kesler, City Administrator
Randy Williams, Arcade Police

Residents of Arcade

Randy Williams, Partial Comp. Plan Contributor
Jane and John Segars, Partial Comp. Plan Contributor
Albert Walker, Partial Comp. Plan Contributor

Developers

Brand Morgan, Morgan Partners, LLP

Quad Cities Planning Commission

John Swain
Larry Largent

Business Owners

Chris Chapman, Chapman Fence Company
BB Rody, Hummingbird Soap & Candle Company
Carole Hunter, Silken Lather
Teresa Swaim, Swaim & Swaim, Inc.
Brandon Mitchell, Brandon Mitchell United Repair

Other

Eric Clark, Jackson County Water and Sewer Authority

Participation Techniques

Kickoff Meeting

The Consultants responsible for preparing the 2028 Comprehensive Plan will present the planning process to the City Council and Public at the regularly scheduled City Council meeting on October 8, 2007. The presentation will emphasize the Local Planning Requirements from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), effective May 1, 2005. Additionally, the purpose and approach of the 2030 plan will be covered and the questions and concerns of the City Council and the public will be addressed.

Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #1

A steering committee of residents, civic leaders, City staff and officials, and other stakeholders will be created. The committee will meet before transmittal of the

Community Participation Program and Community Assessment on February 11, 2008. An overview of the Community Assessment and Community Participation Program will be presented to them and they will have the opportunity to read each document and provide input before transmittal to RDC.

Community Survey

Residents will have the opportunity to complete a written survey to provide their input into the Comprehensive Plan. Respondents will prioritize issues and opportunities and express their vision for the City. Surveys will be available at the Public Safety Building, City Hall, churches, and local businesses. Members of the Planning Advisory Committee will also be asked to distribute the surveys to their civic organizations and other, appropriate locations. Surveys will also be available at public meetings.

Required Public Hearing

As required under the State of Georgia Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, a public hearing before the Arcade City Council will take place on March 10, 2008. The purpose of this hearing is to brief the community on the potential issues and opportunities identified through the Community Assessment, obtain input on the proposed Community Participation Program, and notify the community of when these plan components will be transmitted to the regional development center. The public will be informed of the plan's project schedule, the Visioning Meetings, Surveys, and how they can get involved. The public will also be given the opportunity to comment on the process, the two draft documents, and their vision for the future of the City. After the public comments have been addressed, the Community Assessment and Community Participation Program will be transmitted to the regional development center by resolution of the City Council.

First Visioning Meeting

The Community Visioning Workshop is scheduled for May 2008. The date will be set closer to the event so as to avoid conflicts and maximize attendance. The participants will be lead through a series of exercises that will help them create a vision for the City of Arcade. Participants will discuss the issues and opportunities facing the City. The meeting will have three goals:

- 1) Identify what the community wants to Preserve, Change, Create, or Connect;
- 2) Establish a Vision; and
- 3) Refine Character Areas through a Cognitive Mapping Exercise.

Second Visioning Meeting

The Second Community Meeting will refine the vision developed in the First Visioning Meeting. It is scheduled for June. Again, the exact date will be determined later. Findings from the Community Assessment and results from the First Community Meeting will be presented. Participants will provide input through mapping exercises, small group discussions, and other methods. The details of how this meeting will be facilitated are dependant on what information the City needs following the First Community Meeting. It

is expected that a Visual Preference Exercise and facilitated small group discussions will be needed to further refine the City's vision.

Planning Advisory Committee Meeting #2

A second Advisory Committee Meeting is scheduled for July 14, 2008. This meeting will be an opportunity for participants to review and comment on the Draft Community Agenda. The PAC Meeting will focus on how to realize the community's vision and possible solutions to the community's issues and opportunities. The PAC Meeting will serve to ensure that all development and land use issues have been identified and that the input received during the planning process has been reflected in the draft Community Agenda.

Final Public Hearings

The Community Agenda will be presented during a regular City Council meeting after a period of public review. The hearing is scheduled for September 8, 2008, before transmittal to the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (RDC) for regional and state review. The purpose of this hearing is to brief the community on the contents of the Community Agenda, provide an opportunity for residents to make final suggestions, additions or revisions, and notify the community of when the Community Agenda will be submitted to the RDC for review. After public comments have been addressed, the Community Agenda will be transmitted to the RDC by resolution of the governing body by December 2008.

After the RDC and DCA review the Community Agenda, the final draft will be presented to the City Council and the public for adoption at a regular City Council meeting.

Schedule For Community Agenda

The following is the schedule for completion of the Community Agenda.

October 8, 2007	KICKOFF MEETING
January 21, 2008	PAC #1
February 11, 2008	ASSESSMENT TRANSMITTAL PUBLIC HEARING
May, 2008	FIRST VISIONING WORKSHOP
June, 2008	SECOND VISIONING WORKSHOP
July 14, 2008	PAC #2
September 8, 2008	COMMUNITY AGENDA PRESENTATION/PUBLIC HEARING
TBD	FINAL ADOPTION HEARING

Getting the Word Out

The City of Arcade will encourage broad participation in the planning process by:

- 1) Articles in Jackson Herald;
- 2) Utilizing the Jefferson Radio Station for announcing purpose and time/location of visioning workshops;
- 3) Advertising in the Jackson Herald; and
- 4) Word of mouth through the PAC participants.