

Community Participation Program



Community
Participation
Program

CATOOSA COUNTY
Joint Comprehensive Plan 2011-2031

**Community Participation
Program**

Prepared for:

Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Rome, Georgia

By:



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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	I
Purpose.....	I
Scope.....	I
IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDERS.....	3
Elected Officials	3
Project Management Team.....	4
Joint Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee	4
Specific Groups Targeted for Outreach.....	5
PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES	7
Joint Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee	7
General Public Meetings	7
Additional Information Gathering Techniques.....	9
Public Relations Strategies.....	10
SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION OF THE COMMUNITY AGENDA.....	13

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Community Participation Program for Catoosa County and the municipalities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold

PURPOSE

The purpose of the *Community Participation Program* is to ensure that the Catoosa County Comprehensive Plan, for Catoosa County and the municipalities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold, reflects the full range of the community's values and desires, by involving a diverse spectrum of stakeholders in development of the plan. This broad-based participation will help ensure that the plan is implemented because many are involved in its development and thereby become committed to seeing it through.

SCOPE

The *Community Participation Program* provides a concise schedule to guide the development of the *Community Agenda*, including planned community participation events or meetings at key points during the process. This document includes three required steps described in the sections below:

- Identification of Stakeholders
- Identification of Participation Techniques
- Schedule for Completion of the Final Plan

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CHAPTER

2

IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

Outline of the Joint Comprehensive Plan's diverse group of community stakeholders set to be involved in the development of the Community Agenda

Coordination and oversight are very important parts of the overall work effort for this project. This approach, to ensure proper management of the process, includes oversight by the Catoosa County Board of Commissioners (BOC), the mayors and city councils in Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold, the Planning Commission, Joint Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and city and county staff.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Catoosa County Board of Commissioners

- Keith Greene, Chairman
- Ken Marks
- Bobby Winters
- Jim Cutler
- Dewayne Hill

City of Fort Oglethorpe City Council

- Mayor Ronnie Cobb
- Charles Sharrock
- Louis H. Hamm
- Johnnie Smith
- Steve Brandon
- Harold Silcox

City of Ringgold City Council

- Mayor Joe Barger
- Vice-Mayor Terry Crawford
- O.C. Adcock
- G. Larry Black
- Bill McMillon
- Randall Franks

PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM

- Barnett Chitwood, Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
- David Howerin, Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
- Davis Kenemer Jr., Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
- Lee Walton – MACTEC Project Manager
- Marty Sewell – MACTEC Project Coordinator
- Paige Hatley – MACTEC
- Brad Davis - MACTEC

JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

- Mike Helton (Chattooga County)
- Chris Casey (Bec-Don Ringgold, Inc.)
- Louis H. Hamm (Fort Oglethorpe Council Member)
- Kevin Thornton (Fort Oglethorpe GIS)
- Charles Jones (NWGRC)
- Barnett Chitwood (NWGRC)
- David Kenemer (NWGRC)
- Christal Thomas (Catoosa County)
- Raymond Clark
- David Howerin (NWGRC)
- Buster Brown (Catoosa County Zoning Administrator)
- Chuck Taylor
- Melissa Hannah (Catoosa County – County Clerk and GIS)
- Roger Bowman
- Damon Raines (Catoosa County Public Schools)
- Dan Wright (City of Ringgold)
- Jason Hall (City of Ringgold GIS)
- Martha Eaker (Catoosa County Chamber of Commerce)
- David Baird (Chattanooga-Hamilton County-North Georgia Transportation Planning Organization)

SPECIFIC GROUPS TARGETED FOR OUTREACH

Developing a shared vision for the community requires input from all segments of the population. As recommended by DCA, the planning process will incorporate techniques (described in Chapter 3 of this document) that target outreach to the following diverse range of stakeholders/stakeholder groups in order to provide each with the opportunity to participate:

- Agricultural and forestry interests
- Banks
- Bicycle, hiking clubs
- Business owners, managers
- Churches, ecumenical councils
- Community development corporations
- Community residents representing a diverse range of backgrounds and interests
- Community service organizations
- Convention and Visitors Bureaus or other local/regional tourism officials
- Developers (profit and non-profit) and related planning and design consultants
- Downtown or area business people
- Entrepreneurs
- Environmental organizations
- Ethnic and minority groups
- Federal, state, regional agencies with local jurisdiction
- High school/college student representatives
- Immigrant groups
- Insurance companies
- Land trusts
- Library boards
- Local Family Connection Collaborative
- Local/regional news media
- Local/regional tourism officials
- Low income groups
- Major employers
- Municipal agencies and authorizes
- Neighborhood organizations
- Other interested community parties not included in this list
- Planning commission, preservation commission, zoning boards, variance and appeals boards and key staff
- Preservation organization and historical societies
- Property owners, including major land holders
- Public and private schools systems and colleges and universities
- Public and private Utility Boards/Directors
- Public Community Health Officials
- Public safety officials
- Real estate professionals
- Regional office of the Georgia EPD
- School boards
- State agencies with substantial local facilities in the area
- Trade associations (home builders, etc)
- Under-represented, marginalized groups
- Universities, private higher education

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CHAPTER

3

PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES

Identification of the specific techniques to be used during the Comprehensive Plan planning process that will help develop the Community Agenda

Catoosa County will rely heavily on public input during the preparation of the *Community Agenda*. Techniques described below will include stakeholder interviews, steering committee meetings, presentations to elected officials, interviews, workshops, web site, press releases, an open house, and public hearings.

JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

The Joint Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (JCPSC) is charged with providing feedback, advising the MACTEC Team, and providing assistance in shaping the overall planning process. The Steering Committee will be selected by the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission (NWGRC) with assistance from elected officials in each jurisdiction. Members include a mix of elected or appointed city and county officials, key property owners, neighborhood leaders, chamber of commerce and other economic development professionals, community service providers, areas residents, and others with some stake in the future development of the county and region (see list on page 2-1). The JCPSC will hold regularly-scheduled meetings, perhaps every other month or quarterly. Commonly meeting in advance of major public meetings, the JCPSC has the ability to assist with keeping the project on schedule, review the preliminary data and findings, provide a “reality check” to the staff and planning team, and to serve as a political barometer for plan recommendations.

GENERAL PUBLIC MEETINGS

Kickoff Meeting

The purpose of the Kickoff Meeting is to announce the beginning of the planning process to the citizens and other stakeholders and provide opportunity to view a presentation covering the project purpose and general plan approach. Initial opinion surveys and volunteer sign up forms are available at this meeting.

Community Workshops

Catoosa County will conduct two phases of community workshops during the development of the plan. Visioning workshops will make up phase one. A Framework workshop makes up phase two. Each phase is briefly described below.

Visioning Workshops

The visioning workshops are facilitated meetings designed to discover the community vision and address the three key planning questions – “What do you have?” “What do you want?” and “How will you get it?” These are highly interactive meetings where attendees work in groups to draw maps, develop goals and policies, and design their community. The MACTEC Team will use the input from the workshops to finalize the issues and opportunities, character areas and to define a community vision. An evaluation of a series of visual images categorized by housing types and styles, streetscape appearance, open space, commercial areas, and other design or use types. Participants are asked to state a preference as images showing alternative designs are displayed side by side. Results are tabulated by the planning team for presentation in later meetings.

Framework Workshop

A framework workshop will take place following the visioning workshop. The workshop will include a presentation of the information gathered during the visioning workshop, including recommendations for addressing the issues and opportunities. The MACTEC Team will facilitate exercises with the participants intended to fine tune the community vision, including a discussion of the draft Future Development Map. The framework workshop provides the opportunity to specifically discuss key areas of Catoosa County where more specific implementation plans are warranted to ensure implementation of the community vision. The MACTEC Team will use the input from the workshop to prepare a final draft of the issues and opportunities, character areas and community vision and to begin exploring specific strategies designed to implement the community vision.

Open House

The open house will take place following the framework workshop in advance of the Transmittal Public Hearings for the *Community Agenda*. Participants will view the *Community Agenda*, including the Future Development Map and implementation plan, and will also have the opportunity to offer comments that may result in changes to the plan. The open house format allows participants to drop in at their convenience and stay as little or as long as they wish.

Public Hearing

Public hearings will be held in two rounds during the planning process at the Catoosa County BOC and at city council of the municipalities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold. The first round of public hearings, the Transmittal Resolution for the *Community Assessment* and *Community Participation Program*, will announce to the public that the planning process for updating the comprehensive plan is underway. The second round of public hearings, the Transmittal Resolution for the *Community Agenda*, will brief the community on the contents of the *Community Agenda*. The following paragraphs describe the two public meetings in greater detail.

Public Hearing I: Transmittal of *Community Assessment/Community Participation Program*

Public hearings will take place at regularly scheduled meetings of the BOC and at the city councils for each municipality. The public hearings will inform the public of the *Community Participation Program*, including the project schedule and how the community can get involved as outlined in this document. The public hearing also provides the community an opportunity to comment on the draft *Community Assessment*. The *Community Assessment* highlights the issues and opportunities that will be taken into consideration in developing the *Community Agenda*. Following the public hearings, and based on input from the public and city and County officials, the *Community Assessment*, *Analysis of Supporting Data*, and *Community Participation Program* documents will be transmitted to the NWGRC for review and comment.

Public Hearing 2: Transmittal of the *Community Agenda*

Public hearings will take place at regularly scheduled meetings of the BOC and at the city councils for each municipality. The MACTEC team will present the *Community Agenda* before the BOC following an Open House. The hearings provide an opportunity for residents to make final suggestions, additions, or revisions and to be informed of when the *Community Agenda* will be submitted to the NWGRC for review. Following the public hearings, and based on input from the public and County and city officials, the *Community Agenda* will be transmitted to the NWGRC for review and comment.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION GATHERING TECHNIQUES

Stakeholder Interviews

During the development of the plan, the MACTEC Team will conduct one-on-one interviews with key community leaders using a standardized series of questions designed to gather detailed information about the community's future. Interviews will take place in person and by telephone. The interviews, usually between 30 minutes to an hour in duration, are designed to gather more detailed information about a particular area of expertise.

The stakeholders are representatives of the various organizations, such as representatives from fire and police departments, neighborhood homeowners' associations, faith-based organizations, civic associations, advocacy groups, realtors, conservationists, housing, hospital and transportation authorities and others. The information collected during the stakeholder interview assists in the development of the goals, objectives, and strategies for the comprehensive planning process.

Community Survey

Community survey will be distributed to those who attended the Kickoff meeting in order to solicit comments, seek opinions, and begin to identify community goals. The MACTEC Team and county and city staff will meet with the local newspaper and request that each include in multiple editions a copy of a printed the survey that residents can clip, complete and submit for consideration in the planning process. The survey provides an opportunity for stakeholders to provide the MACTEC Team input related to the issues and opportunities facing Catoosa County. Surveys will also be made available for distribution at key area properties.

In addition, the survey will be made available online on the project website and directly from the following link: www.surveymonkey.com/s/catoosaplan. Surveys may also be made available at an information table in Catoosa County Courthouse/Administration Building, city halls and at other locations..

PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES

Press Releases

Press releases will be prepared and distributed to the newspaper and radio stations that serve the Catoosa County area. The press releases will be used to announce public meetings and the posting of documents for public review. Press releases will include contact information for the MACTEC Team, as well as the Catoosa County Administration office.

Cable TV Information

Catoosa County and the cities of Fort Oglethorpe and Ringgold will work with the local cable television provider, to include on the government information channels announcements of the public meetings and locations to view posted documents for public review.

Web Site

The county administrative offices will post the various parts of the plan as it progresses on their official government websites for public review at appropriate points throughout the planning process. The county will create a special webpage for the planning project. Browsers will be able to download the documents in PDF format and will be provided with contact information in order to submit comments by traditional mail, by e-mail, or by telephone. The community survey will also be available on the project website. The website address is: <http://www.catoosa.com>

Email “blast” Database

Periodic mass mailings by email to provide important notices and other information are also a tool for distributing information. At public meetings, attendees can provide their e-mail addresses on the sign in sheet. Periodic progress e-mails and future meeting announcements can then be sent to the distribution list. In addition, the Catoosa County Public Schools plans to assist in notification by sending meeting emails to their 5,000-plus list of parents (those registered with the school system’s *Parental Portal*).

Other Methods

Beyond the use of newspapers and the Internet for notification, there are many other alternatives for getting the word out.

Newsletter

Newsletters of community groups and neighborhood associations are a great way to target information of interest in a particular geographic area or to specific interest groups.

Flyers

Announcement flyers could be printed and then posted – with permission – in high traffic areas such as libraries, shopping areas, schools, and colleges.

Information Display

Information Display can be set up in the lobby of Courthouse/Administration Building that includes a display of photographs, maps, and planning features for all visitors to the building to visit.

Online Social Media

The planning team will incorporate social media to further inform the public and provide opportunities for input. The team will set up a Facebook page and a Twitter account.

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SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION OF THE COMMUNITY AGENDA

Outline of the schedule proposed for preparation, review and adoption of the Joint Comprehensive Plan

The full proposed schedule for completion of the Plan is shown below.

Community Assessment (CA)/Community Participation Program (CPP) Transmittal Resolution Public Hearings

- Catoosa County Board of Commissioners (BOC) – February 16, 2010
- Fort Oglethorpe City Council – February 22, 2010
- Ringgold City Council – February 22, 2010

Countywide Kickoff Meeting

- Countywide – March 4, 2010

Visioning Workshops

- East Catoosa County Area – March 15, 2010
- Graysville/North Catoosa County Area – March 15, 2010
- South Catoosa County Area – March 18, 2010
- Boynton/Central Catoosa County Area – March 18, 2010
- Ringgold Area – March 25, 2010
- Fort Oglethorpe Area – March 29, 2010

Countywide Framework Workshop

- Countywide – May 13, 2010

JCPSC Meetings

- Meetings to take place throughout the planning process

Countywide Open House and Final Plan Draft Review

- Countywide – July 29, 2010

Community Agenda Transmittal Resolution Public Hearings

- Catoosa County BOC – September 21, 2010
- Fort Oglethorpe City Council – September 27, 2010
- Ringgold City Council – September 27, 2010

Adoption

- Catoosa County BOC – Date TBD
- Fort Oglethorpe City Council – Date TBD
- Ringgold City Council – Date TBD

MACTEC Engineering and Consulting, Inc.



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