

# **2006 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update for Baldwin County and the City of Milledgeville**



## **Community Participation Program**



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# COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

The purpose of the community participation program is to insure that the local comprehensive plan reflects the full range of community values and desires, by involving a diverse spectrum of stakeholders in development of the community agenda. This meaningful participation by the community will also help insure that it will be implemented because many in the community are involved in its development and thereby become committed to seeing it through. The community participation program is intended to supplement, not replace, the two required public hearings.

## Identification of Stakeholders

Stakeholders in the community are those people that are most affected by the revisions to the comprehensive plan. This group of people will have a large part in developing the community agenda. The following list of stakeholders for the development of the joint Baldwin County and City of Milledgeville community agenda was compiled through public input and research completed by Middle Georgia Regional Development Center staff.

<b>Baldwin County Board of Commissioners</b>	<b>Baldwin County Board of Education</b>
<b>Baldwin County Fire Chief</b>	<b>Baldwin County Health Department</b>
<b>Baldwin County Parks and Recreation Department of Family and Children's Services</b>	<b>Baldwin County Sheriff's Department</b>
<b>Central State Hospital</b>	<b>Central Georgia Technical College/ Department of Technical and Adult Education</b>
<b>Milledgeville Convention and Visitors Bureau</b>	<b>City of Milledgeville</b>
<b>Georgia Military College</b>	<b>Georgia College and State University</b>
<b>Milledgeville/Baldwin County Development Authority</b>	<b>John Milledge Academy</b>
<b>Milledgeville Police Department</b>	<b>Milledgeville Main Street-The Downtown Development Authority</b>
<b>Oconee River Greenway Authority</b>	<b>Oconee Regional Medical Center</b>
<b>Scott State Prison</b>	<b>Rivers State Prison</b>
<b>T&amp;S Hardwoods</b>	<b>Shaw Industries</b>
<b>Vought Aircraft Industries, Inc.</b>	<b>The Baldwin Bulletin</b>
<b>Local Developers</b>	<b>The Union Recorder</b>
<b>Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Oconee</b>	<b>Baldwin State Prison</b>
<b>Georgia Power</b>	<b>Georgia Antebellum Capitol Society, Inc.</b>
<b>Milledgeville/Baldwin County Emergency Management Agency</b>	<b>Lockerly Arboretum</b>
<b>Northrim Office Park</b>	<b>Milledgeville Mall</b>
<b>Men's State Prison</b>	<b>Habitat for Humanity</b>
<b>Baldwin Inmate Boot Camp</b>	<b>Baldwin County Churches</b>
<b>Oconee Center</b>	<b>Bostick State Prison</b>
<b>Ocmulgee Center</b>	<b>Oconee Regional Healthcare Foundation</b>
<b>Georgia State Patrol</b>	<b>Georgia Bureau of Investigation</b>
	<b>Hospice of Baldwin County</b>

# Identification of Participation Techniques

The follow are the methods of public participation that were decided upon by citizens of Baldwin County and the City of Milledgeville. These methods were selected because they were felt to be the most comprehensive way of collecting public input from a diverse spectrum of community citizens.

<b>Method</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Focus Groups</b>	One time discussion of a particular topic. One time face-to-face meeting structured to be informal to encourage open discussion among participants. Involves 6-12 individuals selected to meet specific criteria in order to broadly represent a particular segment of society.
<b>Public Hearings</b>	A form of public meeting limited in size. Tends to involve only interested citizens. Usually experts and interested citizens. Presentations are made.
<b>Notification, Distribution, &amp; Solicitation of Comments</b>	Simplest form of consultation. Can involve the sending out of reports. May also involve other methods.

# Schedule for Completion of the Community Agenda

Public hearings have been used in combination with focus groups to obtain public input not only on the agenda portion of the comprehensive plan, but on the community assessment and public participation plan as well.

A public hearing was held on January 25, 2005 to kick off the process. This hearing was used to introduce the public to the process and notify them of the next step. An additional public hearing was held on February 24, 2005 to discuss community participation methods. At this meeting the above methods were approved by those in attendance and citizens were given the opportunity to sign up to participate in the first set of focus groups. A third public meeting was held on April 4, 2005 to present the Middle Georgia Regional Development Center’s Staff analysis of the Community Assessment and Community Participation Program. The land use portion of the Community Assessment was not presented at this time due to the lack of the completion of the land use map. The Middle Georgia Regional Development Center received the data from the University of Georgia required to complete the existing land use map in April of 2005. The second public hearing to present the land use portion of the Community Assessment was held on October 20, 2005.

Focus groups were used to discuss the findings of the community assessment including: lists of issues and opportunities, character areas, and areas requiring special attention. The first set of focus groups was modeled after the community assessment sections. All meetings were held in the Baldwin County Courthouse and were open to the public. Citizens were given an opportunity

to sign up for the focus groups at the public hearing held on February 24, 2005. The following is the schedule of when these focus group meetings were held.

<b>Focus Group</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>
<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>April 11, 2005</b>
<b>Community Facilities &amp; Services</b>	<b>April 21, 2005</b>
<b>Housing</b>	<b>April 28, 2005</b>
<b>Natural &amp; Cultural Resources</b>	<b>May 12, 2005</b>
<b>Land Use</b>	<b>May 17, 2005</b>

A public hearing was held on June 2, 2005 to present the results of the above focus groups. The public was given a chance to comment on the findings of the focus groups and sign up to participate in focus groups for the preliminary character areas derived from these first focus groups.

The second set of focus groups was then held for each of the preliminary character areas. These focus groups were used to create a development plan and short-term work program for each of the character areas to complete the community agenda portion of the comprehensive plan. Once again all meetings were held in the Baldwin County Courthouse and were open to the public. The following is the schedule of when these focus group meetings were held.

<b>Focus Group</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>
<b>Highway 441 Corridor</b>	<b>June 16, 2005</b>
<b>Downtown Milledgeville</b>	<b>June 29, 2005</b>
<b>Oconee River Corridor</b>	<b>July 12, 2005</b>
<b>Existing Industrial Park</b>	<b>July 26, 2005</b>
<b>Educational Infrastructure</b>	<b>August 11, 2005</b>

A public hearing was held on August 25, 2005 to present the findings of these focus groups. Upon further study, citizens and Middle Georgia Regional Development Center staff concluded that an additional character area was needed to fully represent the remaining sections of the community. At the public hearing on August 25, 2005 it was decided that a sixth character area would be included in the comprehensive plan and it would be named the Rural Baldwin County Character Area. The focus group for this area was held on September 15, 2005. The findings of this focus group were presented at the public hearing held on October 20, 2005.

A final round of focus groups was held to finalize items for the short-term work programs for each character area. These were held in the Baldwin County Courthouse and were open to the public. Those who had signed up for the previous set of focus groups were invited back as well as any other interested parties. The results of these focus groups will be incorporated into the final version of the Community Agenda.

The following is a schedule of when these focus groups were held.

<b>Focus Group</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>
<b>Highway 441</b>	<b>November 16, 2005</b>
<b>Downtown Milledgeville</b>	<b>November 22, 2005</b>
<b>Oconee River Area</b>	<b>November 29, 2005</b>
<b>Industrial Park</b>	<b>December 8, 2005</b>
<b>Educational Infrastructure</b>	<b>December 21, 2005</b>
<b>Rural Baldwin County</b>	<b>January 19, 2006</b>

Once the Middle Georgia Regional Development Center staff has completed the completeness checklist for the Community Assessment and Community Participation Program, these portions will be displayed for public review both in hard copy and electronic form. Hard copies will be distributed to local government offices, libraries, and other public areas as determined by the comprehensive plan committee. An electronic copies will be posted on the Middle Georgia Regional Development Center's website with links to the site available on the local governments' websites.

An additional public hearing will be held in late June or early July of 2006 to present the draft Community Agenda. After undergoing a completeness review by the Middle Georgia Regional Development Center staff, this portion will also be available for public review through document distribution and links to an electronic copy via the Middle Georgia Regional Development Center's and local governments' websites.