

FINAL
FOR ARC AND DCA REVIEW

UNION CITY
Comprehensive Plan
2010-2030

Community
Participation
Program

Prepared for:

City of Union City
Union City, Georgia

By:



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In association with:

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Union City, Georgia

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Community Participation Program for Union City

PURPOSE

The purpose of the *Community Participation Program* is to ensure that the *Union City Comprehensive Plan* 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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IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

Outline of the 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 Union City Mayor and City Council, the Planning Commission, Steering Committee and City Staff.

CITY COUNCIL

- Ralph Moore, Mayor
- Shirley Jackson
- Brian K. Jones, Mayor Pro Tem
- Angelette Mealing
- Vince R. Williams

STEERING COMMITTEE/PLANNING COMMISSION

- Edward Allen
- Jo Croom
- Linda Johnson, Vice Chairperson
- Marilyn McCain, Chairperson
- Dwight Tucker

PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM

- Steven Rapson, City Manager
- Ann Lippmann, Community Development Director
- Shayla Harris, Senior City Planner
- Sonja Fillingame, Operations Director
- Lee Walton – MACTEC
- Marty Sewell – MACTEC
- Paige Hatley – MACTEC
- Brad Davis – MACTEC
- Inga Kennedy, PEQ

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
- Beautification/community cleanup organizations
- Bicycle, hiking clubs
- Business owners, managers
- Chambers of commerce
- 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 (including HOAs)
- 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
- South Fulton CID
- State agencies with substantial local facilities in the area
- Trade associations (home builders, etc)
- Under-represented, marginalized groups
- Universities, private higher education

PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES

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

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

STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee is charged with providing feedback, advising the MACTEC Team, and providing assistance in shaping the overall planning process. The Union City Planning Commission was selected by the Mayor and City Council to serve as the plan's Steering Committee. They may include a mix key property owners, neighborhood leaders, local business and other economic development professionals, community service providers, areas residents, and others vested in the future development of the city and region (see list on page 2-1). The committee will meet regularly during the planning process. Often meeting in advance of major public meetings, the Steering Committee will assist with keeping the project on schedule, reviewing the preliminary data and findings, providing a "reality check" to the staff and planning team, and to serving 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 an 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

Union City will conduct two phases of community workshops during the development of the plan. Each phase is briefly described below.

Visioning Workshop

The visioning workshop is a facilitated meeting 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?” This will be a highly interactive meeting 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. The meeting also involves a Community Preference Survey (CPS). The CPS exercise allows participants an opportunity to evaluate 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 Workshops

A framework workshop will take place following the visioning workshop. The workshop will include a presentation of information gathered during the visioning workshop, including recommendations for addressing issues and opportunities. The consultant team will facilitate exercises with 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 Union City where more specific implementation plans are warranted to ensure implementation of the community vision. The consultant team will use the input from this workshop to prepare a final draft of 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 Hearings

City Council will hold two rounds of public hearings during the planning process. 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. A second round of public hearings, the Transmittal Resolution for the *Community Agenda*, will brief the community on the contents of the *Community Agenda*. The public hearings will take place at regularly-scheduled meeting of City Council. The following paragraphs describe the two public meetings in greater detail.

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

This public hearing 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 officials, the *Community Assessment*, *Analysis of Supporting Data*, and *Community Participation Program* documents will be transmitted to the Atlanta Regional Commission for review and comment.

Public Hearing 2: Transmittal of the *Community Agenda*

This public hearing provides 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 Atlanta Regional Commission for review. Following the public hearings, and based on input from the public and city officials, the *Community Agenda* will be transmitted to the Atlanta Regional Commission 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 Union City's future. Interviews will take place in person and by telephone. Interviews, usually between 30 minutes to an hour in duration, are designed to gather more detailed information about a particular area of expertise. 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. Information collected during stakeholder interviews will assist in the development of the goals, objectives, and strategies for the comprehensive planning process.

Issues/Opportunities Questionnaire

An Issues/Opportunities questionnaire will be distributed to those who attended the Kickoff meeting in order to solicit comments, seek opinions, and begin to identify community goals. The team will create two formats: hard copies and online. The online version will be posted on the City website. Links to the questionnaire can be emailed to email lists (establishment of email lists discussed later in this chapter).

The MACTEC Team and Union City staff will meet with the local newspaper and request including a questionnaire in an edition of the paper that residents can clip, complete and submit to the City for consideration in the planning process. The questionnaire provides an opportunity for stakeholders to provide the MACTEC Team input related to the issues and opportunities facing Union City. Questionnaires will also be made available for distribution at key area properties.

Questionnaires may be made available at an information table in City Hall and at other locations. Digital copies can be made available to the public on the city website as well, so that residents can print multiple copies and distribute to others in the community.

PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES

Press Releases

Press releases will be prepared and distributed to the newspaper and radio stations that serve the Union City 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 Union City public officials and consultant team staff.

Cable TV Information

Union City will work with the local cable television provider to include announcements of the public meetings and locations to view posted documents for public review on cable channel 25, the Union City government channel.

Web Site

The City will post the various parts of the plan as it progresses on the City website for public review at appropriate points throughout the planning process. 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 Union City website address is as follows:

<http://www.unioncityga.org/>

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.

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

The consultant team will prepare an announcement flyers (English and Spanish versions) to printed and post – with permission – in high traffic areas such as libraries, shopping areas, schools, and colleges.

Information Display

An information display can be set up in the lobby of City Hall that includes a display of photographs, maps, and planning features for all visitors to the building to visit.

Speakers Bureau

Members of the consultant team plan to make introductory presentations on the planning process to a variety of civic clubs in Union City as well as to other groups (e.g. Christian City).

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SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION OF THE COMMUNITY AGENDA

Outline of the schedule proposed for preparation, review and adoption of the Union City Comprehensive Plan 2010-2030 Community Agenda

The full proposed schedule for completion of the Plan is as follows:

Community Assessment/Community Participation Program Transmittal Resolution Public Hearings

- February 16, 2010

Public Citywide Kickoff Meeting

- February 25, 2010

Visioning Workshops

- March 13, 2010

Framework Workshop

- March 27, 2010

Steering Committee Meetings

- TBD (various dates throughout the planning process)

Open House and Final Plan Draft Review

- April 24, 2010

Community Agenda Transmittal Resolution Public Hearings

- May 18, 2010

Adoption

- July 2010