

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FOR THE
City of Hamilton

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM
2009–2030

Prepared by
RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION

DRAFT 2009

**City of Hamilton
Comprehensive Plan 2009-2030
Community Participation Program**

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Introduction

Purpose

The development of a meaningful Comprehensive Plan begins with the insightful input of a community's citizens, government officials and staff addressing the issues of today, the opportunities of tomorrow and the steps necessary to effectuate positive change over the next twenty (20) years. The City of Hamilton Community Participation Program was designed to encourage as much public participation, open dialogue and communication as possible. All in an effort to achieve a Community Plan consensus that translates into better government decisions and greater community agreement with those decisions.

State Comprehensive Plan Requirements

The City of Hamilton is required by state law to complete its Comprehensive Plan Update by June 30, 2009. The plan will be prepared in accordance with the Intermediate Planning Level Local Planning Requirements from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), effective May 1, 2005.

Requirements for Creating a Successful Comprehensive Plan

The major challenge in developing a successful plan for the City of Hamilton is convincing its citizens that the Comprehensive Plan belongs to each and every citizen of Hamilton and that broad based public participation is necessary to obtain citizen ownership of the plan. It is also necessary to educate plan participants that the plan should represent a balance of community interest defined by a give and take process that seeks local opinion and knowledge on planning issues. The end result of which creates community consensus (a Vision) in regards to future development policies and practices. Successful communities create a vision, agree upon a course of action to achieve the vision and take the steps necessary to implement the vision.

Identification of City of Hamilton Stakeholders

The following is a list of the City of Hamilton stakeholders. A "stakeholder" is considered to be someone who has a vested interest in the process. It may include an individual, an organization, community, agency, etc. Stakeholders are an integral part of the community planning process, and the Community Participation Program should include tools to identify and engage representatives who have a present or future stake in the community. Key stakeholders include: 1. the community residents representing a diverse range of backgrounds and interests; 2. residents, specifically those that have been historically left out of the decision making process, like members of low-income communities, immigrant communities, and ethnic and minority groups; 3. business, industry and civic leaders; 4. the development community including real estate professionals, media representatives; and 5. city and county staff and elected officials. Other key stakeholders include agriculture and forestry interests, banks, churches and church leaders, civic clubs, students, tourism officials, service organizations, military leaders and members of the military with a vested interest in the community. Local property owners, local business owners, as well as representatives from Callaway Gardens and the Georgia Conservancy have also been identified as key stakeholders.

Stakeholders are vital to the process, because they create and are affected by change. Participation of these groups can help foster community understanding and support for the Comprehensive Plan document and provide fuel for the implementation of the plan.

This list is not inclusive. As more organizations and interested parties are identified throughout the process, names will be added to this list.

In order to assure all interested parties have a voice in the process, Hamilton City Council and the Hamilton Planning Commission will serve as the steering committee for the comprehensive planning process.

The following is a list of the City of Hamilton Stakeholders. The list has been reviewed and approved by both the City Council and the City of Hamilton Planning Commission.

City of Hamilton Council

Rebecca Chambers – Mayor
Cindy Jolley – Counselor
Roberta Alston-Counselor
Ann Bacher-Counselor
Faith Birkhead, Counselor

The City of Hamilton Planning Commission

Glenda Pilkington – Chairman
Lee Sallas
Carol Crown
Bill Birkhead
Andrew Zuerner

City of Hamilton Staff

Buddy Walker, Public Services Director
Diane Geter, City Clerk
Rick Hood, Assistant Director of Public Works
Gene Allmond, Police Chief

Harris County Sheriff

Mike Jolley

Harris County Chamber of Commerce

All members (Linda Dawson - Contact Person)

Harris County Development Authority

All members (Ken Napier - Contact Person)

Harris County School Board

All Members (Glenda Johnson - Contact Person)

Harris County Leadership Class

All Members (Linda Dawson – Contact Person)

Developers/Builders/Realtors

Jim Barnes, Foggy Cedars Development (Developers)
Bob Dixon, 3D Communities Development, LLC

DFACS

Josephine Bray, Director

Health Department

Christi King,
Sandra Wilson, Director Environmental Health

Family Connection

John Winchester, Contact Person

Harris County Senior Center

Pam Sanchez, Contact Person

Harris County Housing Authority

Josephine Ramsey, Contact Person

Agricultural /Forestry

Pine Mountain Soil Conservation (Jack McClung-Contact Person), Forestry Commission, F.D. Roosevelt State Park, Harris County 4-H Club (Steve Morgan, Contact Person) etc.

Citizen Notification

Various media will be used to get citizens involved in the planning process. Civic leaders and civic groups as well as churches will be contacted to assist in getting the word out regarding citizen involvement opportunities. Press releases, posters, announcements at public meetings and flyers attached to utility bills will be used to notify the public about upcoming meetings and to generate public interest. Notices will be attached to all utility bills to include public services, DFACS, Housing Authority, Family Connections, agricultural interest, land owners, ethnic and minority groups, and low-income groups. The Georgia Conservancy in Columbus, Georgia; Callaway Gardens will be extended an invitation to the public hearings and planning meetings.

Participation Techniques

Public Hearings

The State of Georgia rules and regulations for Local Comprehensive Planning require that two (2) public hearings be held in association with the development of a Comprehensive Plan. The first public hearing will be held to inform the public that the planning process is underway and to go over the draft Community Assessment and Public Participation Program. The public hearing was held on January 5, 2009 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Hamilton City Hall. The public hearing attendees were briefed on the plan's timeline (Vision Meeting, Final Review Meeting and the Final Public Hearing Meeting) and how they can help the planning process. Attendees will also be given an opportunity to comment on the Public Participation Plan and Community Assessment.

Vision Meeting

A meeting to review a general Vision Statement created for The City of Hamilton during the 2004/2005 planning process is scheduled for August 20, 2009 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Hamilton City Hall. Attendees will be briefed on what a Vision Statement is and the elements of a good Vision Statement. Once the review is over facilitators will lead participants through a vision review/modification process. The meeting has two (2) primary goals:

1. Review Existing Vision and Modify, if necessary
2. Review/Survey participants about issues and opportunities

In order to achieve the above goals, an S.W.O.T. (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis will be conducted. Issues and opportunities for the planning period will be discussed, quality of life issues will be reviewed and major steps necessary to achieve desired results will also be discussed and measures that can be taken to identify future success will be developed.

Future Development Charrette

The Future Development Map Charrette/Design Meeting is tentatively scheduled, for August 27, 2009 at Hamilton City Hall. The meeting will start with a review of the S.W.O.T and general vision statement developed at the previous meeting. Next will be the review of the draft Character Area Map identified in the Community Assessment. The majority of the meeting time will be used to modify the draft Character Areas, create a vision for each character area, implementation measures/strategies for each character area in an effort to create a Future Development Map, based on participant input.

Final Review Meeting

A Final Review Meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 3, 2009. The purpose of the meeting will be to allow citizens to review and comment on the Community Agenda. All draft documents and maps will be available for review. Staff will be positioned at various stations to take comments. The meeting is scheduled for two (2) hours and will take place at Hamilton City Hall.

Public Hearing / Transmittal/Adoption Process

On September 7, 2009 the draft Community Agenda will be presented during a final public hearing at a regularly scheduled Hamilton City Council meeting before transmittal to the River Valley Regional Commission (RVRC) for regional and state review. After the RVRC and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs review the Community Agenda, the final draft will be presented to the Hamilton City Council at a regularly scheduled meeting. The scheduled date for the adoption hearing is November 9, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

Schedule of Completion of the City of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan

The graphic below shows the schedule for completion of the Comprehensive Plan Update.

Major upcoming milestones in this schedule include:

Participation Plan/Community Assessment Public Hearing.....	January 5, 2009
Submission of Public Participation Plan, Community Assessment to DCA	August 17, 2009
Vision Meeting	August 20, 2009

Future Development Charrette /Map Design Meetings August 27, 2009
 Final Review MeetingSeptember 3, 2009
 Second/Final Public HearingSeptember 7, 2009
 Transmittal of the Community Agenda to RVRC.....September 7, 2009
 Submission of Community Agenda to DCA.....September 10, 2009
 Adoption of the Community Agenda.....November 9, 2009

* All dates are tentative and subject to change.

	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan. 2009	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov.
Community Assessment											
Community Participation Program/Plan											
Public Hearing											
Community Agenda											
Vision Meeting											
Future Development Map/Design Meeting											
Final Review Meeting											
Second/Final Public Hearing											
Hearing to Transmit Agenda to RVRC/DCA											
Submit to DCA											
Adoption											