

Joint County-City Comprehensive Plan 2007-2027

Community Participation Plan

for

Haralson County

And the cities of

Bremen, Buchanan, Tallapoosa, and Waco

DRAFT – May 2006

Prepared by the Coosa Valley Regional Development Center

Haralson County Public Participation

DRAFT

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

One of the best ways to strengthen communities is to create opportunities for citizens to work collaboratively on the challenges that shape their community. Accomplishing this requires political leadership, citizen education, and active involvement. A successful comprehensive plan begins with a process of thinking about and visualizing the future. It is about carrying on a dialogue with the community concerning its vision for evolving and growing. 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.

1.2 Scope

Haralson County and the cities of Bremen, Buchanan, Tallapoosa and Waco are required by state law to complete their Comprehensive Plan Update by February 28, 2007. The plan will be prepared in accordance with the Local Planning Requirements from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), effective May 1, 2005.

1.3 Requirements for Success

Experience in public involvement has shown that lasting solutions are best identified when all segments of a community – individuals, elected officials, educators, 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

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

2 Identification of Stakeholders

Haralson County

Planning Commission

**Glenda Wade
Donnie Ridley
Robert Smith**

Public/Community Health Officials

Joan Campbell

Public Safety

Sheriff Eddie

Public and Private Utility Boards/Directors

Charlie Walker Georgia Power

Property Owners

Temple Inland, Robert Young, President

Local News Media

**Steve Gradick WKNG Radio
Bremen Gateway/Tallapoosa Journal Beacon**

School Board

Mr. Larry Ragsdale, Superintendent

Other interested community parties

**Veterans Association Sammy Robinson
Regional Airport Authority: Danny Hutcheson**

Buchanan

Mayor and Council

Jason Jarrell, Mayor
Lane Ayers, Mayor Pro Tern
Robert Farmer, Council Member
Debbie Johnson, Council Member
Donna Johnson, Council Member

Public Safety Officials

Chief Judy Parrish - Police
Chief Brian Walker - Fire

Public Works

Dean Tanner –Utilities Manager

Zoning Board

Gray Gamer
Scottie Worthington
Clovis Moman

Public Health

Joan Thorason - County Health Department

Authorities or Boards Housing Authority

Haralson County Chamber of Commerce
Haralson County Development Authority
Better Hometown Authority
Haralson County School Board

Bank

First National of Georgia

Churches

First Methodist First Baptist
Church of God
Endtime Warriors
West Georgia Worship

**Church of Christ
New Testament
Open Door Baptist
Jackson Chapel**

Bremen

Mayor and Council

**Sharon Sewell
Chris Coats
Steve McIntosh
Danny Robinson
Sonny Parrish**

Zoning Commission List

**Charles Carroll
Mike Cocklereece
David Hildreth
Van Pelt
Bill Standifer**

Bremen Downtown Development Authority 2005 Board of Directors

**Cindy McIntosh – Chairperson
Susan Hightower
Wendy Bennet
Debra Hall
Mayor Sharon Sewell
Terry Crawford – Secretary – Treasurer
Alan Bell
Erik Luckey
Karon M. Higginbotham**

Tallapoosa

Mayor and Council

Mayor Bridges

Councilman Kendall Robinson

Council member Jackie Roberts

Councilman Charles Worthy

Councilman Bill Wilson

Council member Connie Gentry

Public/Community Health Officials: County Board of Health

Joan Thorason

Melissa Becker

Public Safety Officials

Chief Scott Worthy Police

Chief Scott McClain Fire

Chief Brian Walker County Fire

Municipal Agencies & Authorities

Tallapoosa Housing Authority

Industrial & Recreation Authority

Haralson County Development Authority

Chambers of Commerce

Real Estate Professional

Don Smith

Bob Downey

Karen Steed

Banks

CB&T

1st National

South Trust

Insurance Companies

Sanders

Pope

Progressive

Churches

**Westview Baptist
Emmanuel Baptist
1st Baptist Church
Providence Baptist Church
Plainview Baptist Church
Methodist Church
Mt. Newley Baptist
Mt. Sinai
Presbyterian Church**

Waco

Mayor and Council

Real Estate Professional

Linda Adams

Public & Private School

West Central Technical College

Bank

1st National

Churches

**1st Baptist Church
1st United Methodist
New Hope
CUMBA
Arise Church
Waco Church of God**

3 Identification of Participation Techniques

3.1 Initial Public Hearing

Initial public hearing was held in May 2006. The purpose of these hearings was to announce to the public that the planning process for updating the comprehensive plan was underway and to encourage community participation. Public hearings, which will present the draft Community Agenda to the public, are tentatively scheduled for October 2006.

3.2 Community Visioning Meeting

The Community Visioning Meeting is tentatively scheduled for July. The participants will be led through a series of exercises that will help them create a vision for Haralson County and its cities. Participants also will discuss the issues and opportunities. The workshop will have three goals:

1. Identify what the community wants to Preserve, Change, Create, or Connect
2. Establish a vision
3. Community Preference Survey

The end product of the Community Visioning Meeting will be a narrative description for each plan area expressed in the following terms:

- Strengths and weakness of the quality of life for the County and cities.
- The opportunities and threats that confront the quality of life in the County and cities over the next 20 years.
- The quality of life that the stakeholders and participants in the workshop envision for the County and cities 20 years from now.
- The factors of change and big decisions that will be required to move the County and cities from where it is today to where participants want it to go.
- Benchmarks, or measurable indicators, or quality of life that will be used to indicate success in the future.

3.3 Community Design Workshop

The Community Design Workshop will focus on (1) how to realize the community's vision and (2) possible solutions to the community's issues and opportunities. The Workshop will give participants an opportunity to work with different land use, transportation, and design scenarios and identify actions needed to fulfill the vision established during the visioning meeting. Findings from the Community Assessment and the results from the visioning meeting will be presented. The workshop is anticipated to be a full day event and is tentatively scheduled for August 2006.

3.4 Open House

An Open House, tentatively scheduled for late September 2006, will be an opportunity for participants to review and comment on the draft Community Agenda. It will allow high-level interaction and participation to engage participants in comfortable two-way

dialogue. Displays, comment cards, handouts, and other information materials will be distributed. Formal written comments, collected at the conclusion of the Open House, will be summarized and responded to in a timely manner. The Open House will be up to 2 hours in length and will take place after the County and Cities have had an opportunity to review and comment on the draft Community Agenda.

3.5 Adoption Process

The Coosa Valley Regional Development Center will present the draft Community Agenda at a public hearing before transmittal to the Coosa Valley Regional Development Center (RDC) for regional and state review. After the RDC and DCA review the Community Agenda, the final draft will be presented to the Board of Commissioners and respective city councils and the public for adoption at a regular meeting of each local government. The tentative dates for these transmittal hearings are September and October of 2006.

3.6 Outreach

Varieties of techniques will be used to get the information out to participants. Local commercial owners, civic leaders, and churches will be contacted to assist in getting the word out regarding public participation opportunities through press releases, posters, and other information pertaining to the project. Additionally, the RDC will work with the local newspapers to see that articles on the planning process are periodically published as well as a reminder that information concerning the plan and draft documents will be posted to the RDC web site.

4 Schedule for Completion of the Community Agenda

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

Major upcoming milestones in this schedule include:

Initial Public Hearing	May
Community Visioning Meeting.....	July
Community Design Workshop.....	August
Open House.....	September
Public Hearing for Transmittal of the Community Agenda to RDC/DCA.....	November
Adoption of the Community Agenda.....	February 2007