



# CITY OF LAWRENCEVILLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2030 UPDATE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM



**Precision Planning, Inc.**  
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## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM CITY OF LAWRENCEVILLE

### Introduction

In order for Lawrenceville to maintain their Qualified Local Government Status and to remain eligible for a number of state grant funds, permitting programs and technical assistance, the Comprehensive Plan must be periodically updated. For Lawrenceville, the process must be completed by February, 2009. The current update is considered a "major plan update" of the current Comprehensive Plan and will be prepared in accordance with the changes in the state requirements. The update will also address the developmental trends in the community as well as the issues and opportunities that Lawrenceville will face over the next twenty-plus years.

For Plans prepared after May 1, 2005, the State of Georgia mandates a three-step review process, involving the preparation of the following:

- Community Assessment
- Community Participation Program
- Community Agenda

The City of Lawrenceville chose to participate in a joint Community Assessment (i.e., a review of the existing conditions within the community and issues and opportunities that the community faces) with Gwinnett County and several other cities. The joint Community Assessment has already been reviewed and approved by the DCA.

### Purpose

As described in Chapter 110-12-1-.04(1) of the Minimum Planning Requirements for Local Governments, "The purpose of the Community Participation Program is to ensure 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 broad-based participation in developing the Community Agenda will also help ensure 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 describes the means and methods by which the City of Lawrenceville will obtain public input on issues and will provide valuable information needed to develop the Community Agenda. This document will also provide a schedule (and applicable milestones) for the completion of the Community Agenda. The inclusion of a wide variety of stakeholders and citizens will provide validation to future policy decisions made by elected officials in the City of Lawrenceville.

### Review Process

Prior to the development of a Community Agenda, the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) requires that the City of Lawrenceville transmit this Participation Program for review. The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is the regional arm of DCA that reviews these two documents to determine whether or not they are complete; upon this verification, ARC in turn transmits these documents to DCA. DCA conducts a report of findings and recommendation, and ARC issues the local government a final report that includes DCA's comments. The Program will be transmitted by the City Council after a Public Hearing is held and the interested public has had an opportunity to review the document.



### **Public Participation History**

The City of Lawrenceville has recent experience with community-wide meetings, visioning workshops and planning charettes related to growth and development issues facing the City. In 2003, City officials hired Tunnell-Spangler Walsh to prepare a Master Plan for revitalizing the downtown/courthouse square area. The Master Plan followed the principles of the Livable Centers Initiative program, which includes a heavy emphasis on community-based visioning. During a three-month period, the Downtown Development Authority and downtown merchants and interested citizens worked with the consultants and conducted visioning workshops, community meetings, web site surveys, image preference surveys to draft the Master Plan and implementation strategy. The end result of the overall two-year planning process was a detailed plan for the future development of the downtown Lawrenceville area.

The City of Lawrenceville has also held several work session and public meetings regarding the proposed walking trails system. The City has received significant federal funding to provide increased pedestrian accessibility and the public was invited to discuss proposed routes. Given the recent and upcoming set of public input opportunities, the City of Lawrenceville will ensure that the Comprehensive Plan update will not duplicate these efforts, but will build upon the previous investment of time and effort. The program for soliciting input from the public will focus upon reaffirming and validating the results of the prior work and will expand the process where needed to satisfy DCA guidelines. Lawrenceville wishes to use the tremendous efforts of the public in these previous sessions and that the Comprehensive Plan process is congruent with the implementation of these plans.

### **Elements of the Program**

The Community Participation Program will set up a deliberative approach in which the Council, public citizens, Planning Commission, and other interested parties will be fully involved through a series of participation opportunities resulting in the adoption of the Community Agenda (i.e., the "guts" of the Plan). The basic elements of the public participation effort includes the following:

- Conduct an organizational meeting with the City of Lawrenceville Planning Director.
- Council to appoint a Steering Committee of City residents and business leaders.
- Conduct an introductory Citizens Steering Committee meeting to introduce members to the process and hold follow up meetings every two weeks (with the exception of December, 2007).
- Hold the first of two required Public Hearings.
- Provide information and opportunities for public input.
- Hold meetings with stakeholders and other interested parties.
- Steering committee members to solicit input from their groups (i.e., Downtown Development Authority, Tourism and Trade Association, Neighborhood Alliance, etc.) and other interested parties.
- Release of a Public Draft of the Community Agenda.
- A second Public Hearing for the transmittal of the draft Community Agenda to the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs for review.

### **Detailed Community Participation Program**

#### **Introductory Steering Committee Meeting**

An introductory meeting was held with the Steering Committee appointed by the Mayor on November 13, 2007 to discuss the state's planning process in detail and to discuss what efforts the City has previously taken in regard to



comprehensive planning and to discuss the joint Community Assessment for Gwinnett County. The City of Lawrenceville joined with the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners and several other cities to prepare a joint Community Assessment. The Steering Committee members and the consultants devised a schedule for the completion of the Community Agenda and for various methods of gaining public input. Steering Committee meetings were scheduled every two weeks (except for December, 2007) and each meeting will build upon the previous meeting. The Steering Committee is comprised of:

Mike Crow – Lawrenceville City Council  
Brad Leonard – Lawrenceville Planning Director  
Marie Beiser – Lawrenceville DDA, Downtown Architectural Review Board  
Mary Thompson – Downtown Architectural Review Board  
Eron Moore – Lawrenceville Planning Commission  
Craig Willis – Local Businessman/Lawrenceville Trade and Tourism Association  
Gene McKay – Local resident

#### ***Ongoing Steering Committee Meetings***

The schedule and outline of the topics to be discussed are as follows:

**November 13, 2007** – Introduction of Planning Team and Steering Committee Members; Summarize the Comprehensive Planning Process; The Basic Requirements of the Comprehensive Plan Update; Discuss Roles and tasks of the Steering Committee; Discussion on Additional Issues and Opportunities; Set Calendar for Milestones; Required Public Hearings, & Submissions; Set Calendar for Regular Steering Committee Meetings

**November 27, 2007** - Welcome and Recap of 11/13/07 meeting; Discussion of Community Participation Program; Defining Community Vision; Defining Character Areas

**January 8, 2008** - Welcome and Recap of 11/27/07 meeting; Discussion of Community Participation Program document; Character Area Map Review; Refining the Community Vision (mission statement)

**January 22, 2008** – Public Hearing on Community Participation Document; Defining traits for character areas; Refining Vision Statement

**February 12, 2008** – Community Issues and Opportunities further discussion; Quality Community Objectives; Tying Quality Community Objectives into Issues and Opportunities

**February 26, 2008** – Stakeholder Interview results; Future Development Map review/discussion

**March 11, 2008** – Future Development Map review/discussion

**March 25, 2008** - Review Future Development Narrative

**April 8, 2008** – Discuss Implementation Program/Short Term Work Program

**April 22, 2008** – Second Public Hearing – Review of Community Agenda Draft

**May 13, 2008** – Wrap up Discussions/ Final Review



### **Identification of Stakeholders**

A list of stakeholders for the Lawrenceville Comprehensive Plan was identified by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee at the organization meeting. These stakeholders will be interviewed and/or canvassed for their input on the future growth and development of Lawrenceville.

- Lawrenceville City Council – As the elected officials to oversee the future of the community, the Council has a vested interest in the future development of the city. The Mayor and Council members are:
  - Rex Millsaps, Mayor
  - Bob Clark
  - Mike Crow
  - Judy Johnson
  - PK Martin IV
- Gwinnett County – Lawrenceville is the county seat of Gwinnett County and the Board of Commissioners has a large presence within the city limits.
- Gwinnett Medical Center – The hospital complex is another large employer and presence within the city.
- Georgia Gwinnett College – Lawrenceville is the home of the first four-year college in Gwinnett County.
- Gwinnett Board of Education – The largest school system in Georgia is located in Gwinnett County and the headquarters is in the city limits.
- Briscoe Field (Airport Authority) – Gwinnett's rapid growth has caused the airport to increase in volume and is an economic engine for Lawrenceville. Half of the airport property is within the city limits.
- Lawrenceville Trade and Tourism Association (LTTA)/Lawrenceville DDA/Merchants Association – These organizations are charged with promoting the downtown area, monitoring, encouraging and promoting revitalization of the downtown core. The LTTA was an outgrowth of the tremendous public input provided to the downtown master planning effort. These organizations will be able to provide significant input on the future of the community.
- Local Developers – Local developers can provide input on the trends facing the community and what types of development might work as Lawrenceville matures.
- Local Churches – These organizations can assist with a greater understanding of the social needs of the community.
- Lawrenceville Housing Authority – This organization provides affordable housing for the community will be a valuable resource for determining housing needs for the community.
- Lawrenceville Neighborhoods – Lawrenceville has a long history of well-organized neighborhood groups that will provide input on the thoughts of the established residential areas within the community. Other civic groups will also be canvassed to determine the thoughts of the business and civic communities.

### **Participation Techniques**

The City of Lawrenceville, as previously mentioned, has established a Steering Committee to oversee the Comprehensive Planning process and make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on the final product. In addition to the public meetings and steering committee meetings, the following participation techniques will be used in the Comprehensive Plan Update process:

Lobby Displays – *Post maps and information at City Hall.*



Public Meetings – *Public meetings will be held by the Steering Committee to solicit input. Steering committee members will also interview their neighborhoods and their civic groups for input.*

Printed Information – *Flyers and Newspaper information will be distributed*

Interviews with Stakeholders – *Stakeholders will be interviewed to provide input on the future*

Website – *A web link has been created on the City web page with draft documents and draft documents.*

Media and Press Releases – *The local newspaper will be contacted to advertise meetings and/or status of the plan to the community;*

Mailing Lists – *The Steering committee members have or will have emailing lists for announcing events and status.*

Meetings/Hearings – *Two required public hearings will be held; **at least two Work Sessions before the Council will be conducted where progress to date will be presented.***



### Comprehensive Plan Schedule of Events

The following identifies the sequence of events to occur through June 2008.

	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
<b>Community Assessment</b> <i>Completed and Approved by DCA</i>								
<b>Community Participation Program</b>  Draft Document								
Steering Committee Meetings	11/13/2007; 11/27/2007	12/11/2007	1/8/2008; 1/22/2008	2/12/2008; 2/26/2008	3/11/2008; 3/25/2008	4/8/2008; 4/22/2008	5/13/2008	
<b>Public Hearing #1 (for Community Participation Program)</b>			1/22/2008					
Transmit Document to ARC/DCA			1/16/2008 (WS)	2/4/2008				
Other Participation Efforts								
<b>Community Agenda</b>								
Develop Community Vision								
Character Area Refinement								
Future Development Map								
Future Development Narrative								
Implementation Program								
STWP update								
<b>Public Hearing #2</b>						4/22/2008		
Transmit Document to ARC/DCA							5/21/2008 (WS)	6/2/2008

COUNTY OF GWINNETT  
STATE OF GEORGIA

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF  
LAWRENCEVILLE AUTHORIZING THE TRANSMITTAL OF THE COMMUNITY  
PARTICIPATION PROGRAM TO THE ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION AND  
STATE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT  
PURSUANT TO STATE OF GEORGIA LOCAL PLANNING REQUIREMENTS  
CHAPTER 110-12-1-.08**

**WHEREAS**, a comprehensive plan is required for municipalities and counties in Georgia in order to maintain their Qualified Local Government Status; and

**WHEREAS**, the comprehensive planning process under Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-12-1, requires the preparation of a Community Participation Program; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Lawrenceville, Georgia, has prepared a Community Participation Program; and

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 110-12-1-.08 of said rules requires that the City of Lawrenceville transmit the Community Participation Program be submitted for regional and state review; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Lawrenceville held an advertised public hearing on January 22, 2008, the purpose of which was to obtain input on the proposed Community Participation Program and notify the community of when these plan components will be transmitted to the Atlanta Regional Commission; and

**NOW THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED** by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Lawrenceville, Georgia, that the Community Participation Program shall be submitted for regional and state review in accordance with Chapter 110-12-1-.08 of the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

RESOLVED this 4<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2008.

  
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Mayor

ATTEST

  
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City Clerk