

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT AND PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

- DRAFT -

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

The Community Participation Program outlines the basic public involvement process that will be used to ensure Goals and Objectives of the Comprehensive Plan represents the values and desires of the residents. Ensuring the participation of a variety of stakeholder groups in developing the Community Agenda will also improve efforts for implementing the Plan by securing wider public understanding, support and cooperation.

The completion of the Community Assessment provides a baseline of information about the community to assist with the public involvement process, assuring the participants have a better understanding of the conditions and issues involved. The Community Participation Program will guide how this information is presented to the open public and various stakeholder groups, whose responses will refine the information, prioritize the issues and goals and identify the preferred alternatives for achieving those goals.

Identification of Stakeholders

The stakeholders of Maysville can be classified in three major categories: Residents/general public, civic interests, and local businesses and industry. Because Maysville can be defined as a smaller, rural town, the most prominent group of stakeholders targeted for the planning process will be the residents and major landowners. With a relatively homogenous character akin to a bedroom community and very few sizable businesses within the town and immediate vicinity, the general residents of the population constitute the largest interest group within the community.

The civic interests will be largely involved through the Town Council and affiliated officers, whose involvement is critical considering that the comprehensive plan process was devised to provide local public discourse and direction about the management of local communities. The Elementary school, the largest employer in the community, will also be solicited for direct involvement, and will the Banks County Chamber of Commerce and the Banks County Industrial Development Authority for their roles in the economic development of the area. Due to their relationship with Maysville and the role in utility development, representatives from the City of Commerce and Jackson County will also be invited to participate in the process.

Apart from the elementary school and Town government, the most prominent employers in Maysville are the MarJac facility and a collection of smaller retail and service operations that exist within downtown. With cooperation from the Banks County Chamber of Commerce, every business within the community will be notified about the public meeting schedule and other means for submitting comments and questions (discussed below). If there is not the volume or dynamic of industries to necessitate a formal Stakeholder Advisory Committee, there will be an effort to coordinate just one or two special stakeholder meetings for business leaders in the community apart from the general public meetings. This will provide a forum that can concentrate on economic development topics and assist in soliciting involvement from Maysville businesses.

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Public Involvement and Comment

A variety of measures will be employed to secure involvement from each group of stakeholders.

Given the rural character of the town and the short term prescribed for the planning process, the majority of public outreach activities will be driven through open public meetings. A series of open forums will be scheduled for the town library (the site of Town Council meetings and most formal gatherings) over the months of March, April and May, during which time the GMRDC and Town of Maysville will facilitate discussion about the community's vision, prioritize issues and identify critical objectives. The original schedule will focus on 4 meetings that will concentrate on the following topics:

- Meeting #1* Confirm community issues; Collect ideas for community vision
- Meeting #2* Confirm community vision; Prioritize issues; Propose character areas
- Meeting #3* Discussion of alternative development scenarios; Establishment of goals
- Meeting #4* Review of draft Community Agenda

In addition to the open forums the public will have additional opportunities to review material and provide comment. A display featuring copy of plan materials will be set up in the library and in the Town Hall. Citizens will be encouraged to review these items and provide comment to the Town or GMRDC at any time during the process. They will also have the opportunity to participate online via a Mayville Comprehensive Planning Process web page established on the GMRDC web site (www.gmrdc.org). The web site will include copies of plan materials, a schedule of public events, a survey that can be submitted as part of the process and contact information for submitting comments and questions to the GMRDC staff.

Advertising for the process and public events will be handled through several means. The local Banks County newspaper will be used for general advertising and will be contacted directly to provide notice of key events and offer cooperation for the development of any feature articles about the process. Copies of select material will be provided to the press directly and in electronic form for ease of reproduction. In addition, flyers advertising the process will be distributed to local businesses and churches for posting in shop windows and on bulletin boards. These flyers will be designed such that they provide information about the next public event as well as the locations for finding copies of Plan materials at the public displays or online.

The elected and administrative officers of Maysville will be constantly involved during the process and GMRDC staff will be available to provide additional discussion or presentations as part of regularly scheduled Council meetings.

Development of the Community Agenda

Development of the Community Agenda will focus on using the information generated in the Community Assessment for confirming and prioritizing issues and opportunities, developing the Vision and then crafting the goals and objectives that will address the issues and advance Maysville towards the stated Vision. The general timeframe for the process will be 10-12 weeks,

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seeking to capitalize on a high-energy campaign for public involvement but allowing for evolving conditions. The GMRDC will work with the Town Council and staff to develop the actual document throughout the process, allowing everyone to see and understand that the work is contributing to a very tangible product that will be accessible in the near future.

Proposed Community Agenda Development Process

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>
<i>Identify and invite members for Plan Advisory Committee</i>	Week 1
<i>Begin Displays and Promotion</i> Create promotional material, make copies of Plan material available, craft Plan status web page and establish locations for distribution of promotional material	Week 2
<i>Open Forums & Committee meetings - Initial</i> Review Community Assessment, confirm Issues and Opportunities, discuss Vision	Week 3-5
<i>Update Displays/ Communicate with Committee</i> Distribute updated information about draft Vision statement, key issues and goals for Maysville	Week 6
<i>Open Forums & Committee Meetings – Follow Up</i> Confirm Vision for Maysville, prioritize issues and goals, update Character Area maps and begin crafting Future Development Scenarios	Week 7-8
<i>Update Displays/ Communicate with Committee</i> Create draft Community Agenda and distribute for review	Week 9
<i>Open Forums and Draft Agenda Reviews</i>	Week 10-11
<i>Town Hearing and Approval of Community Agenda</i>	Week 12