

Joint County-City Comprehensive Plan 2007-2027

Community Participation Plan

for

Polk County

And the cities of

Aragon, Cedartown and Rockmart

DRAFT – April 2006

Prepared by the Coosa Valley Regional Development Center

Polk 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

Polk County and the cities of Aragon, Cedartown and Rockmart 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

Polk County

COUNTY COMMISSION CHAIR AND MEMBERS:

David Jarvis, Chairman
Ray Barber, Vice-Chairman
Billy Croker
Sandra Galloway
Mark Sullins
Roger Waldrop
Wayne Johnson, County Manager
Dawn Turner, County Clerk
Muriel Dulaney, Finance Director
Brad McFall, County Attorney
Bob See, CPA, Auditor

POLK COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION:

DISTRICT ONE

David Sullins, Chairman
Linda H. Eastling

DISTRICT TWO

Thomas Wray
Greg McElwee

DISTRICT THREE

Bill Akins
Steve Brumbelow

ALTERNATES

Jerry Forsyth, Dist. 1
Johnnie Jenkins, Dist. 2
Ray Swafford, Dist. 3

BOARD OF ELECTIONS:

Frank Depew, Chairman
Howard Smith
Dan Lester

BOARD OF TAX ASSESSORS:

Ann Floyd, Chair
Lester Ritter
James Trammell
Janell Cook, Chief Appraiser

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION:

Harland Moody
James E. Gibson
Brett Barton

ALTERNATES

Lori Barton
Joel Guthrie
James Cook

TOURISM COMMITTEE:

Gary Redding, Chairman
Lindsay Wood
Joe Anderson
Barbara Waldrop
Gwen Barber
Ken Suffridge
Vicky Atkins
Tamaka Hudson, *ex-officio*

DEVELOPMENT AUTH OVERSIGHT:

Lloyd Gray
George Mundy
Charles Pinkard

POLK COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY:

Larry Dooley, Chairman
Bobby Haney
Lloyd Gray
Charles Pinkard
Steve Smith
George Mundy
Reed Freeman
Karolyn Hutcheson, President
Ex-officio
Bryan Griffin
Dick Martin
Ray Barber
Bobby Alexander
Bob Culver

POLK SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION:

Jerry Baldwin, Chairman
Rick Lundy
Dr. Harold Wingfield
Betty Faye Lewis
Andy Fairel
Bobby Brooks
Regina Roberts
Tommy Sanders
Johnny Stone
Dr. Darrell Sorrells, Superintendent

PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICIALS:

Robert S. Sparks, Sheriff
Billy Wills, Chief of Police
Elaine Anderson, EMA Director
Roy Anderson, Fire Coordinator
Thomas Wilson, E-911 Director
Curtis Vincent, EMS Director

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH:

Benjamin S. Anderson, Jr., M.D., Chairman
Bobby Alexander, Vice-Chair
Ray Barber
F. M. Herndon
Wayne Johnson
Dr. Darrell Sorrells
Billie O. Sawyer
C. Wade Sellers, M.D., M.P.H., Director

POLK COUNTY WATER AND SEWERAGE AUTHORITY:

Mike Morrissey, Chairman
Jim Wright
Chris Culver
Howard Smith
Bernie Collins
Mark Sullins
Dick Martin, Director

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Robert S. Sparks, Sheriff
Sheila Wells, Clerk of Court
Joyce Jones, Judge of Probate Court
Dorothy Wood, Tax Commissioner
Jean Crane, Chief Magistrate

POLK COUNTY PLANNING & ZONING:

Brian McCray, Building Official
Duane Davidson, Zoning Administrator
Randell Brazier, Code Enforcement

POLK COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD:

Sandra Galloway
Bert Wood
Wayne Johnson
Curtis Lewis
Dr. Darrell Sorrells

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE:

Polk County Chamber & Development Authority
Karolyn Hutcheson, President

REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS:

Tommy Britt Real Estate
Hardy Realty
Re/Max of Rome
E. B. Slaughter Realty & Auction
Frank Statham Realty
United Properties Brokerage

AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY INTERESTS:

Cooperative Extension Service Ricky Ensley, Agent
Georgia Forestry Commission

TRADE ASSOCIATIONS:

Home Builders Association of Georgia

STATE AGENCIES:

GA Department of Natural Resources
 Environmental Protection Division
 Historic Preservation Division
Department of Family & Children Services
Labor Department
Georgia State Patrol
Veterans Services

MAJOR EMPLOYERS:

The HON Company
Engineered Fabrics
Jefferson Southern Corporation
Kimoto Tech
Temple-Inland Forest Division
Vulcan Materials Company
Tip Top Poultry
Zartic, Inc.

PUBLIC & PRIVATE SCHOOL SYSTEMS, AND COLLEGES OR UNIVERSITIES:

Cedartown High School
Westside Elementary School
Coosa Valley Technical College

LOCAL/REGIONAL NEWS MEDIA:

WGAA Radio
The Cedartown Standard
The Rockmart Journal

ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS:

Keep Polk Beautiful

DOWNTOWN/AREA BUSINESS PEOPLE:

Wal-Mart
Radio Shack
Hibbett Sports
Dollar Tree
Plaza Grocery
Byrne Design Group
CVS Pharmacy

BICYCLE, HIKING CLUBS:

The Silver Comet Trail

PRESERVATION ORGANIZATIONS AND HISTORICAL SOCIETIES:

Polk County Historical Society

BANKS:

First National Bank of Polk County
Regions Bank
SunTrust
United Bank and Trust
Coosa Valley Federal Credit Union
Community Bank of Rockmart
Family Savings Credit Union

INSURANCE COMPANIES:

Acceptance Insurance
ALFA Insurance
Allstate Insurance
Auto-Owners Insurance
Barnes Insurance Agency
Beeler Insurance
Burgess Insurance
Bush Insurance Agency
Cedartown Insurance Agency
Cone Shiflett & Hunt Insurance
Cotton States Insurance
Culver Insurance Agency
Farm Bureau of Polk County
Farmers Insurance Group
Chuck Harmison Insurance Agency
Ledbetter Insurance Agency
Mercury Insurance Group
Nationwide Insurance
State Auto Insurance
State Farm
Travelers

CHURCHES:

Cedar Lake Christian Center
New Hope Fellowship
Shiloh Baptist Church
Seventh-Day Adventist Church
Antioch Baptist Church
Collard Valley Baptist Church
East View Baptist Church
Friendship Baptist Church
Harmony Baptist Church
Lake Creek Baptist Church
Lime Branch Baptist Church
New Etna Baptist Church
New Harmony Baptist Church
Oak Grove Baptist Church
Rolling Hills Baptist Church
St. Luke Baptist Church
Ware's Grove Baptist Church
Wimberly Hill Baptist Church
Youngs Grove Baptist Church
Freedom Baptist Church
Bethlehem Baptist Church
Cedar Valley Church of God
Cedar Lake Christian Center
Anna Kresge Memorial United Methodist Church
Victory Baptist Church
Pine Bower Baptist Church

City of Aragon

City Officials:

Brenda Gazaway	Mayor
Gene Smith	Councilmember
Beverly Clinton	Councilmember
Billy Weaver	Councilmember
Earl Deaton	Councilmember
Lori Dunn	City Clerk
Gene Richardson	City Attorney
Terry Wheeler	City Municipal Judge
Billy Combs	Sanitation Dept.

Aragon Planning Commission:

Alvan Miller
Curtis Burrus

Public Safety Officials:

Chief of Police	Wayne Sanders
Fire Chief	Timothy Gates

Municipal Agencies:

Burney Collins	Building Inspector
Billy Abernathy	Zoning Board

Business Owners:

Robert Godbee

Churches:

Aragon Baptist
Aragon United Methodist
Euharlee Baptist

Neighborhood Organizations:

Aragon Historical Society

Local/Regional News Media:

The Rockmart Journal
WZOT

City of Cedartown

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Bert Wood, Chairman
Bobby Alexander, Commissioner
Ray Merritt, Commissioner
John Barrett, Commissioner
Larry Odom, Commissioner

CEDARTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION:

Olin Hackney, Chairman
Jim Mayben
Rogergs Gibson
Eddie Hilburn
Ben Neal

TOURISM COMMITTEE:

Gary Redding, Chairman
Lindsay Wood
Joe Anderson
Barbara Waldrop
Gwen Barber
Ken Suffridge
Vicky Atkins
Tamaka Hudson, *ex-officio*

CEDARTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY:

Lloyd Gray
George Mundy
Harold Wyatt
Reed Freeman
Larry Kuglar
Ray Beck
Bobby Alexander

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE:

Polk County Chamber & Development Authority
Karolyn Hutcheson, President

REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS:

Tommy Britt Real Estate
Hardy Realty
Re/Max of Rome
E. B. Slaughter Realty & Auction
Frank Statham Realty
United Properties Brokerage

AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY INTERESTS:

Cooperative Extension Service Ricky Ensley, Agent
Georgia Forestry Commission

TRADE ASSOCIATIONS:

Home Builders Association of Georgia

STATE AGENCIES:

GA Department of Natural Resources
 Environmental Protection Division
 Historic Preservation Division
Department of Family & Children Services
Labor Department
Georgia State Patrol
Veterans Services

MAJOR EMPLOYERS:

The HON Company
The Polk School District
Kimoto Tech
Cingular
Zartic, Inc.
Advance Storage
Cedartown Yarn Mills

PUBLIC & PRIVATE SCHOOL SYSTEMS, AND COLLEGES OR UNIVERSITIES:

Polk School District
Cedar Lake Christian School

LOCAL/REGIONAL NEWS MEDIA:

WGAA Radio
The Cedartown Standard

ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS:

Keep Polk Beautiful

DOWNTOWN/AREA BUSINESS PEOPLE:

Downtown Cedartown Association
First National Bank
Polk County Health Department

BICYCLE, HIKING CLUBS:

The Silver Comet Trail

PRESERVATION ORGANIZATIONS AND HISTORICAL SOCIETIES:

Cedartown Historical Society

BANKS:

First National Bank of Polk County
Regions Bank
SunTrust
United Bank and Trust
Coosa Valley Federal Credit Union

INSURANCE COMPANIES:

Acceptance Insurance
ALFA Insurance
Allstate Insurance
Auto-Owners Insurance
Barnes Insurance Agency
Beeler Insurance
Burgess Insurance
Bush Insurance Agency
Cedartown Insurance Agency
Cone Shiflett & Hunt Insurance
Cotton States Insurance
Farm Bureau of Polk County
Farmers Insurance Group
Ledbetter Insurance Agency
Nationwide Insurance
State Auto Insurance
State Farm
Travelers

CHURCHES:

Cedar Lake Christian Center
New Hope Fellowship
Seventh-Day Adventist Church
East View Baptist Church
Oak Grove Baptist Church
Rolling Hills Baptist Church

Church of God
First Baptist
First Methodist
Anna Kresge Memorial United Methodist Church
Second Baptist
First Pres.

Church of Christ
Southside Baptist
Faith Baptist Church
Glad Tidings Church of God
St. James Episcopal Church

PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICIALS:

Keith Barber, Police Chief
Sammy Stephens, Fire Chief

City of Rockmart

City Officials

Curtis B. Lewis, Mayor
Bob Culver, Mayor Pro-Tem
Bruce Bell, Councilmen
Ray Carter, Councilmen
Steve Miller, Councilmen
James Payne, Councilmen
J. L. Ellis, City Manager
Pam G. Herring, City Clerk &
Financial Officer
Michael D. McRae, City Attorney
Earl Williamson, CPA
Stephanie Drake, Municipal Ct. Judge

Rockmart Planning Commission

Cathy Matthews, Chairman
Charles Ellis, Vice Chairman
John Purser
George-Anna Watson
Mary Jane Albea

Rockmart Development Authority

Steven B. Smith, Chairman
Bob Culver, Vice Chairman
Ronald Brackett, Secretary
Roger Waldrop
Charles Pinkard
J. L. Ellis, City Manager

Public Safety Officials

Larry Harris, Chief of Police
John Adams, Deputy Chief of Police
Todd Queen, Chief of Fire & Emergency Services

Municipal Agencies

Rockmart Department of Public Work's & Utilities - Jimmy Hughes, Director
Rockmart Department of Community Development –
Stacey Smith, Supervisor
Craig Taylor, Bldg. Official
Mike Williams, Code Enforcement.

Rockmart Department of Recreation

Jeff Hulsey, Coordinator

Regional office of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division

Mountain District (Cartersville)

Real estate professionals

Charles L. Ables CCIM
Dan Forsyth Realty
Harrington Realty
Hardy Realty
Frank Statham Realty
George-Anna Watson

Chambers of commerce – board members and staff

Polk County Chamber & Development Authority

Downtown or area business people

Kitchen Solvers
J & L Discount
Katie Mae's Flowers & Gifts
Frankie's Italian Restaurant
Akins Printing
Diane Locklear, Attorney At Law
J.R. Rucker Jewelers
Goldberg Chiropractic
New Generations
What's New Consignment

State agencies with substantial local facilities in area

Bruce Albea Contracting
D.O.T. Construction Office

Major employers

Bruce Albea Contracting, Inc.
Engineered Fabrics Corp
Jefferson Southern Corporation
Tip Top Poultry, Inc.
Vulcan Materials Company
Murata Electronics North America, Inc.
Nordic Cold Storage, LLC
Eby Brown

Business owners, managers

Steve Smith
Dr. Bruce Bell
Mayor Curtis Lewis
Rockmart Business Alliance

Property owners

Nathan Dean
Dan Forsyth
Jon Forsyth
Mike Garrett
Curtis Lewis

Community service organizations

United Fund
Kiwanis Club
Rotary Club
Lions Club

Convention and Visitors Bureaus or other local/regional tourism officials

Polk County Chamber & Development Authority

Public and private school systems, and colleges or universities

Polk School District

- Eastside Elementary
- Elm Street Middle School
- Goodyear Elementary
- Rockmart High School

Coosa Valley Technical College

Environmental organizations

Keep Polk Beautiful

Preservation organizations and historical societies

Cathy Holtzclaw
c/o City of Rockmart

Bicycle, hiking clubs

The Silver Comet Trail

Local/regional news media

The Rockmart Journal
WZOT Radio

Local/regional tourism officials

Polk County Chamber & Development Authority

School boards

Polk School District

Library boards

Rockmart Library

Banks

United Bank & Trust
First National Bank
Regions Bank
Community Bank of Rockmart
Suntrust Bank
Family Savings Credit Union

Insurance companies

- AFLAC – Brad Hulsey, Agent
- Barnes Insurance Agency – Jeff Barnes, Agent
- Culver Insurance Agency – Bob Culver, Agent
- Nathan Dean Insurance Agency – Nathan Dean, Agent
- Harris Insurance Agency – Don Harris, Agent
- Allstate Insurance – John Purser, Agent
- State Farm Insurance – Mary Miller, Agent
- State Farm Insurance – Sherman Ross, Agent

Churches, ecumenical councils

- First Baptist Church
- Second Baptist Church
- Mt. Zion Baptist Church
- Rockmart Church of Christ
- Piedmont Baptist Church
- Fairview Baptist Church
- Rockmart Methodist Church

3 Identification of Participation Techniques

3.1 Initial Public Hearing

Initial public hearing will be held on April 27th in the County Commissioners Meeting Room at the Georgia State Patrol Facility (55 Cline-Jackson-Ingram Dr. in Cedartown). The purpose of these hearings is to announce to the public that the planning process for updating the comprehensive plan was underway and to encourage community participation. Public hearing, which will present the draft Community Agenda to the public, are tentatively scheduled for late October.

3.2 Community Visioning Meeting

The Community Visioning Meeting is tentatively scheduled for late May. The participants will be led through a series of exercises that will help them create a vision for Polk 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 June.

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