

**The City of Senoia**  
**2006-2026 Comprehensive Plan Update:**  
**Community Participation Program**



**August 2005**



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# **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**

The City of Senoia (City) is required by state law to complete its Comprehensive Plan Update by October 31, 2006. The plan will be prepared in accordance with the Advanced Planning Level 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

Communities that prosper do so because people work together to improve the quality of life that they want to sustain. 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

Coordination and oversight are very important parts of the overall work effort for this project. This approach, to ensure proper management of the process, includes oversight by the Senoia City Council, City of Senoia Staff, and City of Senoia Committees. In addition, a network of community organizations and local companies will be identified early in the process for distribution of meeting notices and posters as part of a broad public outreach effort.

### **Mayor & Senoia City Council**

City of Senoia Mayor – Robert Hannah  
 Robert Belisle  
 William Wood  
 Larry Owens  
 Anthony Miller

### **City of Senoia Staff**

City Manager – Richard Ferry  
 City Clerk – Debra Hogan  
 City Attorney – Andrew Whalen  
 Public Works, Roads, Water & Sewer – Randy Padgett  
 Chief of Police – Ollita Bennett  
 Librarian – Aime Scarbrough  
 Historical Society – JoAnn Utt  
 G. Ben Turnipseed Engineers – Sewer Service Area – Lamar Rogers

### **City of Senoia Commission/Committee/Authority**

#### Senoia Planning Commission

Jim Preece – Chairman  
 Jim Garver  
 Cheryl Mullinax  
 Lynn Wendt  
 Craig Bown

#### Tree Committee

Jim Rodgers  
 Brian Hendry  
 Lynn Wendt

#### Downtown Development Authority

Joyce Smith – Chair  
 Jimmy Hutchinson  
 Gail Downs

Suzanne Helfman  
Larry Owens – Council Representative  
Tray Baggarly  
Carl McKnight

**Developers**

Twin Lakes

Donna Black  
Scarborough & Rolader Development

Arnold Property-Morningside

Steve Enterkin  
Classic Communities Development

Cameron Development-Ivy Ridge

Wilma Cameron

## **3 Identification of Participation Techniques**

### **3.1 Initial Public Hearing**

As required under the state Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, an initial public hearing before the Senoia City Council will be held to announce to the public that the planning process for updating the comprehensive plan is underway and to present the draft Community Participation Program and draft Community Assessment to the public. The meeting is scheduled for August 15, 2005. The public will be informed of the plan's project schedule, the Community Visioning Meeting, Community Design Workshop, an Open House, and the Adoption Hearings and how they can get involved. The public also will be given an opportunity to comment on the process, the two draft documents, and their vision for the future of the City.

### **3.2 Community Visioning Meeting**

The Community Visioning Meeting is scheduled for September 27, 2005, from 6pm – 8pm. The participants will be led through a series of exercises that will help them create a vision for the City of Senoia. Participants also will discuss the issues and opportunities facing the City. The workshop will have three goals for the City:

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 City.
- The opportunities and threats that confront the quality of life in the City over the next 20 years.
- The quality of life that the stakeholders and participants in the workshop envision for the City 20 years from now.
- The factors of change and big decisions that will be required to move the City 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.

The meeting is anticipated to be held at the community center within the City.

### **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 scheduled for November 5, 2005 from 9am-6pm.

### **3.4 Open House**

An Open House, tentatively scheduled for January 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 City has had an opportunity to review and comment on the draft Community Agenda.

### **3.5 Adoption Process**

The consultant will present the draft Community Agenda during a regular City Council meeting before transmittal to the Chattahoochee-Flint 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 City Council and the public for adoption at a regular City Council meeting. Public comment will be received at both City Council hearings. The tentative dates for these transmittal hearings are March and May 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.

### **3.7 Standard Procedures (Media Relations)**

If the media approaches a member of the consultant team and requests an interview or has questions; the consultant will take the name of the media representative, publication they represent, when the article or TV spot will run, and what was talked about. The information then will be given to City staff for follow up.

## 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 City Council ..... August 15, 2005  
 Community Visioning Meeting ..... September 27, 2005  
 Community Design Workshop ..... November 5, 2006  
 Open House..... January 2006  
 Public Hearing for Transmittal of the Community Agenda to RDC ..... March 2006  
 Adoption of the Community Agenda..... May 2006

Task	2005							2006				
	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Initial Client Kick-off Meeting												
Community Assessment												
Community Participation Program												
Community Agenda												
Transmittal, Review, Adoption Processes												
<b>Public Meetings</b>												
Community Visioning Meeting												
Community Design Workshop												
Open House												
Public Hearing/Presentation												