Snellville 2030 Comprehensive Plan: Community Participation Program

August 14, 2006

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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 visualizing the future by creating a dialogue with residents, business owners, and other stakeholders concerning the community vision for evolving and growing. This Community Participation Program (CPP) 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 making better decisions that will be supported by the public. This document was prepared as part of the update of the City of Snellville's Comprehensive Plan.

1.2 Scope

Pursuant to the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Chapter 110-12-01 (Local Planning Requirements) under the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, the City of Snellville has to update its Comprehensive Plan by February 28, 2008 in order to maintain its Qualified Local Government (QLG) Status. As prescribed by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), the CPP will be created following the intent of the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005.

The Comprehensive Plan consists of three basic components – a Community Assessment, a Community Participation Program, and a Community Agenda.

The **Community Assessment** includes:
(1) A list of potential issues and opportunities the community may wish to take action to address.
(2) Analysis of existing development patterns, and recommended areas for consideration in developing an overall vision for future development of the community.
(3) Evaluation of current community policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives.
(4) Analysis of data and information to check the validity of the referenced evaluations and the potential issues and opportunities.

The **Community Participation Program** (CPP) is the second component of the state required planning process. The CPP is prepared early in the process to outline the specific steps that the community will take to engage the public and gain stakeholder involvement in the planning process. The program outlined in this document is the cornerstone of the comprehensive planning process, because it is through public participation and collaboration.

The most important document of the Comprehensive Plan Update is the **Community Agenda**. The development of this document creates a road map for achieving the community's vision for the future and addressing the key issues and opportunities identified during the planning process. The **Community Agenda** will include an implementation program for achieving the vision and

addressing the identified issues and opportunities. Graphic representations of the City's vision include the Future Development Map and the Future Land Use Plan, along with local policies, that will guide future development. To achieve the community's vision, the Community Agenda will contain the City's Short-term Work Program, a list of goals/programs the City plans to accomplish in the next 5 years.

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 area's 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 supporting the City's Comprehensive Plan update. This approach, to ensure proper management of the process, includes oversight by the City of Snellville. In addition, a network of community organizations and local companies was identified early in the process for distribution of meeting notices as part of a broad public outreach effort. A website, dedicated to the Comprehensive Plan will be available for members of the community to review documents and to be notified of meetings and the plan's progress. Links to the Comprehensive Plan website will be added to local sites on a volunteer basis (See Section 3.8.1 for more information).

On-going communication between the client and project team is essential for the successful completion of the project. To help ensure that such communication is ongoing, project management meetings have been scheduled for the duration of this project.

Project Management Team (PMT)
Jessica Roth – Director, Snellville Planning & Development
James Westaway – Snellville City Planner
Jason Thompson – Snellville City Planner
William Buckhalt Jr. P.E. – Snellville Construction Manager
Jeff Timler – Snellville City Manager
Jim Summerbell – JJG Project Manager
E. Megan Will – JJG Assistant Project Manager

Table 1 - Stakeholder List

Individual/ Organization/ Group	Interviews	Public Meetings*	Website	Other
Elected Officials				
Jerry Oberholtzer *Mayor*	√	√	√	City Council Meetings
Chad Alexander Smith *Council Member - Post 1*	√	√	√	City Council Meetings
Bruce Garraway *Council Member - Post 2*	√	√	√	City Council Meetings
Robert Jenkins, Mayor Pro Tem - *Council Member - Post 3*	√	√	√	City Council Meetings
Barbara Bender *Council Member - Post 4*	√	√	√	City Council Meetings
D. Warren Auld *Council Member – Post 5*	√	√	√	City Council Meetings

Individual/ Organization/ Group	Interviews	Public Meetings*	Website	Other
City Boards/Commissions/Departments				
Planning Commission	√	√	√	Public Hearings
Downtown Development Authority	√	√	√	
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board	√	√	√	
Parks and Recreation Department	√	√	√	
Board of Appeals	√	√	√	
Police Department	√	√	√	
Public Works Department	√	√	√	
Planning and Development Department	√	√	√	PMT
City Clerk	√	√	√	
Board of Appeals	√	√	√	
Administration Department	√	√	√	
City of Grayson		√	√	* Consulting Party
City of Lawrenceville		√	√	* Consulting Party
City of Loganville		√	√	* Consulting Party
Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners		√	√	* Consulting Party
Gwinnett County Board of Education		√	√	* Consulting Party
Gwinnett County Department of Planning and Development		√	√	* Consulting Party

Individual/ Organization/ Group	Interviews	Public Meetings*	Website	Other
Community/Business Groups				
Citizens of Snellville	√*	√	√	** individuals interviewed are citizens
Highway 78 Community Improvement District (Hwy 78 CID)	√	√	√	
Snellville Commerce Club	√	√	√	*** Speakers Bureau
Rotary Club		√	√	
Lions Club		√	√	
Kiwanis Club		√	√	
Explorers Club (*Boy Scouts*)		√	√	
Keenagers Club (*Seniors Group*)		√	√	
American Legion Post 232		√	√	
Jolly Ollys (*affiliated with St. Oliver's Catholic Church*)		√	√	
International MOMs Club of Snellville (*affiliated with the Methodist Church*)		√	√	
Snellville Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association		√	√	
Emory Eastside Medical Center		√	√	
Homeowners' Associations for City Subdivisions		√	√	
Places of Worship		√	√	
Briscoe Park Volunteer Group		√	√	
Friends of Oak Road Park Advisory Group		√	√	
Snellville Historical Society	√	√	√	Has offered to publish meeting notices in quarterly newsletters

Individual/ Organization/ Group	Interviews	Public Meetings*	Website	Other
Gwinnett Historical Society		√	√	
HomeFront Productions		√	√	
About Snellville Magazine		√	√	
Gwinnett Daily Post		√	√	
Atlanta Journal Constitution, Gwinnett News		√	√	
Realtors/Developers	√	√	√	*** Focus Group
Gwinnett County Public Library		√	√	
Covenant Counseling & Family Resource Center		√	√	
Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce		√	√	

* *Consulting Parties will receive copies of the draft documents for their review and comment.*
** *Many of the interviewed individuals are citizens of Snellville as well as officials, civic leaders, and City staff.*
*** *JJG has been contracted to conduct 4 speaker bureaus/focus groups. Two groups, the Commerce Club and the Realtors/Developers have been identified. The remaining two groups will be identified as the project progresses.*

2.1 Interviews

A series of interviews will be conducted to help define the list of issues and opportunities identified in the Community Assessment portion of the plan. The City of Snellville provided a list of stakeholders to be interviewed including.

- Mayor Oberholtzer
- Mayor pro-tem Robert Jenkins
- Council members - D. Warren Auld, Barbara Bender, Bruce Garraway, and Chad Smith
- Brett Harrell – DDA Secretary and Executive Director of Highway 78 CID
- Jimmy Norton – DDA Chair and Highway 78 CID Board member
- City department directors
  - o Planning and Development
  - o Public Works
  - o Finance/Administration
  - o Parks and Recreation
  - o Public Safety

- Jeff Timler – City Manager
- Tod Warner and Michael Adams – Planning Commission Chair and Vice-Chair
- Ray Mokhberi, Planning Commission and DDA member
- Marcy Pharris – Board of Appeals Chair
- Gail Deal - Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Chair
- Tom Ewing – President of the Snellville Historical Society
- Nick Kirkland and Carolyne Kirkland – Snellville Historical Society (*combined interview*)

Additional interviews may be conducted as the project progresses.

3 Identification of Participation Techniques

3.1 Initial Public Hearing

In early fall, an initial public hearing will be held before the Planning Commission and then before the City Council to present the draft Community Participation Program (CPP) and the Community Assessment. The public will have an opportunity to comment on the draft CPP and Community Assessment at the public hearing as well as through the project website. Following the public hearing, the two documents will be submitted for review and comment from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and DCA.

3.2 Citizen Planning Committee (CPC)

Public Participation

A committee of 12 members will be established early in the planning process. Three community leaders will be appointed from each of the 4 planning areas (each of the 4 quadrants of the City) and will consist of a diverse group of individuals from the identified stakeholder list. Members will be appointed by the Mayor and Council. The CPC may meet up to 5 times throughout the process. The CPC's first meeting will be held prior to the Visioning Workshop where a short presentation will be given to learn about the plan, the committee's role, and to have input into the upcoming public involvement process. The members of the CPC will be encouraged to be champions for the plan throughout the planning effort and beyond. Their responsibilities also will include spreading the word about the plan and public involvement opportunities, attending workshops, assisting in creating the vision for the City's future, and offering feedback to the City and the Consultants.

3.3 Visioning Workshop

A Visioning Workshop will be held on December 5, 2006, at the Snellville City Center – Community Room. The Visioning Workshop is the first of a series of workshops to be held within the City. The workshop will both educate citizens about planning and prompt discussions on the future of the City by addressing issues and opportunities that have potential to impact the quality of life. The workshop will incorporate a variety of interactive activities in an effort to identify:

- Issues and opportunities facing the community.
- Community goals and values.
- Strengths and weaknesses of the community.
- Stakeholder/Public preferences for community character, aesthetics and design.

- 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, of quality of life that will be used to indicate success in the future.

Snellville City Center
2342 Oak Road, Snellville

3.4 Focus Groups/Speakers Bureau

Focus groups are specialized groups that could include members of the business community, civic groups, community activists, developers, minority community representatives, and disadvantaged populations. The purpose of using focus groups is to garner more in-depth information from diverse communities or individuals. The consultant will hold up to 4 different focus groups/speakers bureau meetings, which will be an opportunity to learn more about the planning project and to offer input on the future of their City.

3.5 Scenario Workshop

A Scenario Workshop will be held near the end of the Community Visioning process to present 3 land use scenarios to address current and future issues and opportunities. Each scenario will demonstrate a different future land use pattern for the community, and indicators will be developed to show the relative impacts for each alternative. At the workshop, the public will have the opportunity to review and comment on the three scenarios and evaluate the impacts of each through discussion groups.

3.6 Open House

Once the draft Community Agenda has been completed, an Open House will be held at the City Center to present the recommendations and implementation program for the future of the City. The public will have an opportunity to review and comment on the recommendations and implementation strategies.

3.7 Public Hearings

Before the Comprehensive Plan can be adopted officially, it must first be reviewed by the ARC and the DCA. Two public hearings will be held to present the Community Agenda, one before the Planning Commission and the other before the City Council. The purpose of the public

hearings will be to authorize the draft 2030 Community Agenda to be sent forward for review by the ARC and the DCA. A brief presentation will be prepared of the highlights from the Community Agenda.

3.8 Community Outreach Tools

Involving the community is a many-faceted process. A wide array of strategies must be employed to reach as broad an "audience" as possible. Not everyone can commit to attending public meetings – other avenues must be available for capturing valuable input from citizens and allowing them to participate in the way that is most meaningful to them. Following are some tools that this planning process will use

3.8.1 Website

A website will be established that will be a platform for citizen involvement and will include information on the planning process, meeting schedules and locations (including maps), project calendars, draft and final documents, surveys or questionnaires, and contact information. The Website will be available for viewing in September 2006. A link will be created on the City's website that will lead directly to a City of Snellville 2030 Comprehensive Planning Website. Additional local sites will be asked to add the link for the Comprehensive Planning site for wider distribution.

3.8.2 Survey/Questionnaires

Surveys and Questionnaires are important tools used to reach additional citizens to ask specific questions and to gather opinions on the future direction of the City. Surveys can be as short as one or two questions on the website, or can be lengthy and ask a variety of questions.

3.8.3 Flyers

Flyers will be created prior to public meetings and workshops to advertise meeting dates and locations. They will be created in simple formats that can be printed easily in color or black and white and will be distributed electronically in PDF format through a variety of contact lists including the Citizen Planning Committee, the Snellville Commerce Club, the Highway 78 CID, and through the City's community groups list. The flyers also will be located on the website.

3.8.4 Press Releases

Press releases will be drafted prior to public meetings or milestones and will be posted on the project website and will be sent to the local media. The press releases would contain a description of the progress of the Comprehensive Plan Update, meeting locations and times, or other important information.

4 Schedule for Completion of the Community Agenda

On the following page is a graphic that shows the schedule for completion of the City of Snellville Comprehensive Plan Update. Major upcoming milestones in this schedule include:

Initial Public Hearing – Planning Commission .... September 2006
Initial Public Hearing – City Council ....October 2006
CPC Kick-off Meeting..October 2006
Visioning Workshops.. December 2006
Focus Groups/Speakers Bureau Presentations................................ November 2006 – March 2007
Scenario Workshop...January 2007
Open House... April 2007
Public Hearing for Transmittal of the Community Agenda - Planning Commission....... June 2007
Public Hearing for Transmittal of the Community Agenda - City Council...................... June 2007
Adoption of the Community Agenda.. December 2007

Snellville Comprehensive Plan - Project Schedule - 8.3.06 revision

Ref #	Task	Apr 06	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan 07	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan 08	Feb
1.0	**Project Initiation and Administration**	★				★		★	★		★	★	★	★	★	★					★			
2.0	**Prepare Community Assessment (CA)**	█	█	█	█	█																		
2.1	Identification of Issues and Opportunities (12 interviews)	█																						
2.2	Analysis of Supporting Data and Information		█	█	█	█																		
2.4	Analysis of Existing Development Patterns		█	█	█	█																		
2.5	Analysis of Consistency with QCO					█																		
2.6	Review and Revision of CA*					█																		
3.0	**Prepare Community Participation Program (CPP)**				█	█																		
4.0	**CA and CPP Transmittal & Agency Review**						█	█	█	█														
4.1	Planning Commission (PC) Public Hearing						█																	
4.2	City Council (CC) Public Hearing							█																
4.3	Transmittal of CA & CPP							█																
4.4	Regional and State Review and Response							█	█	█														
5.0	**Community Visioning & Participation**						█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█									
5.1	Form Community Planning Committee (CPC)						█	★			★		★	★	★									
5.2	Visioning Workshop									█														
5.3	Focus Groups/Speakers Bureaus							█	█															
5.4	Scenario Workshop										█													
5.5	Open House													█										
5.6	Outreach Tools						█	█	█	█														
6.0	**Draft Community Agenda**							█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█									
6.1	Community Vision									█	█													
6.2	List of Final Opportunities and Issues									█	█													
6.3	Future Development Map									█	█	█	█											
6.4	Future Development Narrative										█	█												
6.5	Future Land Use Plan Map										█	█	█											
6.6	Implementation Program											█	█											
6.7	Recommended Goals and Policies											█	█											
6.8	STWP													█	█									
6.9	Draft Document Production									█	█	█	█	█										
6.10	Open House (same as 5.5)													█										
6.11	Summary of Comments & Revisions to Documents														█									
7.0	**Adoption Process**															█	█	█	█	█	█	█		
7.1A	Planning Commission (PC) Public Hearing															█								
7.1B	City Council (CC) Public Hearing															█								
7.1C	Transmittal of Community Agenda																█							
7.2	Regional and State Review and Response																█	█	█	█	█			
7.3	Adoption																				█			
7.4	Preparation of Final Deliverables																						█	
	DCA Deadline for Comprehensive Plan Update Adoption 2.28.08																							█

★ Project Management Team (PMT) Meetings

	April - kickoff
8.1.06	Aug - draft review
10.17.06	Oct - transmittal review & public participation kickoff/pre CPC mtg.
11.21.06	Nov - pre visioning workshop
TBD	Jan - post visioning / pre scenario
TBD	Feb - post scenario discussion
TBD	Mar - future development plan review
TBD	April - draft plan delivery / pre open house
TBD	May - post open house - STWP review
TBD	June - post pc and cc mtg - final revision discussion
TBD	Nov - post ARC/DCA review - comment discussion - final revisions

★ Community Planning Committee (CPC) Meetings

10.30.06	Oct - kick-off / pre visioning workshop
TBD	Jan - post visioning workshop - pre scenario workshop
TBD	March - post scenario review - hybrid discussion
TBD	April - future development plan review
TBD	May - post open house - plan

Key Project Dates

4.20.06	Project Management Plan to PMT
4.28.06	Deadline for PMT data to JJG
7.17.06	1st Draft of CA & CPP for PMT Review
8.1.06	Deadline for PMT comments
8.14.06	2nd Draft CA & CPP for transmittal hearings
9.26.06	CA & CPP Preesntation to Planning Commission
10.9.06	CA & CPP Presentation to City Council
12.5.06	Visioning Workship
2.02.07	Land Use Scenario Working Paper
4.06.07	1st Draft of Agenda for PMT Review
5.07.07	Deadline for Open House and PMT comments
5.25.07	2nd Draft of Agenda for transmittal hearings