

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM
JACKSON COUNTY, GA, COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
August 19th, 2009, 3rd Draft
(Revised to Reflect Steering Committee Review on 8/11/09)**

Defined

“Community Participation Program” means the portion of the comprehensive plan that describes the local government’s program for insuring meaningful public and stakeholder involvement in the preparation of the Community Agenda portion of the plan. According to local planning requirements of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, the community participation program is prepared in conjunction with the “community assessment” part of the comprehensive plan, then submitted along with the community assessment, after public hearing, for regional and state review (see “review process” below).

There are three required components of the community participation program:

- (a) Identification of Stakeholders
- (b) Identification of Participation Techniques
- (c) Schedule for Completion of the Community Agenda

Objective

The program seeks to obtain meaningful involvement of stakeholders and the general public in the preparation of the comprehensive plan. This community participation program describes Jackson County’s strategies for ensuring meaningful public and stakeholder involvement in the preparation of the *Community Agenda portion* of the comprehensive plan. It is important to emphasize here that this means little if any active involvement in preparing and conducting the “community assessment” part of the plan, other than what is obtained through the required public hearing for the community participation program and the community assessment.

Review Process

The community participation program is submitted along with the Community Assessment to the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (RDC) (now Regional Commission) for review, after holding a public hearing. Within seven (7) days of receipt, the RDC will determine whether the Community Participation Program meets or does not meet the standard of completeness as determined by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). Upon determination of completeness, the RDC transmits the participation program to DCA. DCA will review the program for its adequacy in identifying specific mechanisms to ensure meaningful involvement of the community in the development of the Community Agenda. DCA will transmit a complete report of its findings and recommendations for addressing such findings to the RDC for inclusion in its Report of Findings and Recommendations.

Publication of the Approved Program and Community Assessment

Once reviewed, the Community Participation Program and Community Assessment must be publicized by the local government for public information. This requirement may be met by providing notice in a local newspaper of general circulation identifying where complete copies of the Community Assessment and Community Participation Program may be reviewed.

Stakeholders Suggested in the State Planning Recommendations and their Applicability in Jackson County

The State Planning Recommendations provide a list of almost fifty suggested stakeholders. For simplicity, they have been grouped into like or similar interests below – along with comments as to their applicability in Jackson County. To involve these interests, many of these groups are expected to be formally represented on the comprehensive plan steering committee – via individual appointments by the Jackson County Board of Commissioners. For others not formally represented on the committee, through a media release, individual businesses will be invited to submit e-mail addresses to receive information and regular updates to be posted on the county’s comprehensive planning web page. Individual business may be invited or may request stakeholder interviews.

Private Business and Related Interests

Stakeholder Segment	Comment
Agricultural and forestry interests	Represented on steering committee; farm bureau
Banks	Optional – specific representation could be sought
Business owners, managers	Optional – specific representation could be sought
Chamber of commerce	Stakeholder; Mail all notices and materials
Developers, for-profit	Represented on steering committee
Employers – major	Optional – specific representation could be sought
Entrepreneurs	Optional – specific representation could be sought
Homebuilders association	Stakeholder; Mail all notices and materials
Insurance companies	Optional – specific representation could be sought
Media – local and regional	Identified; Mail all notices and materials
Real estate professionals	(see Developers, for profit); could include agent(s)
Schools and universities -- private	No contacts identified
Utilities -- private	Mail all notices and materials (multiple providers)

Non-Profits and Community/Environmental Organizations

Stakeholder Segment	Comment
Bicycle, hiking clubs	Unknown at this time
Churches, ecumenical councils	<i>Committee suggested providing announcements and questionnaires to churches in the county (8/11/09)</i>
Community development corporations	Unknown at this time
Community service organizations	Unknown at this time
Developers, non-profit	Jackson County Habitat for Humanity
Downtown or area business people	City planners may notify
Environmental organizations	Known organizations added to contact list
Ethnic and minority groups	Represented on steering committee
High school / college students	May be able to reach through “Face Book”
Historic or preservation society	Mail all notices and materials
Immigrant groups	Unknown at this time (see ethnic and minority)
Land trusts	Two identified; included on contact list
Low-income groups	Unknown at this time (see ethnic and minority)
Neighborhood organizations	Should be represented on steering committee
Under-represented/marginalized groups	Action, Inc. Jefferson

Public Agencies and Organizations

Stakeholder Segment	Comment
Agricultural and forestry interests	Cooperative Extension Service; Georgia Forestry Commission
Board of Commissioners	Represented on steering committee
Cities in County – planning depts.	Mail all notices and materials to each municipality
City agencies – others not listed	Rely on city planners to distribute as appropriate
Convention and Visitor’s Bureau and/or Local/regional tourism officials	See Chamber of Commerce
Federal agencies with local jurisdiction	None stands out as justifying specific involvement
Health – public	Involve through community facilities assessments
Library boards	Piedmont Regional Library System; added to contacts
Military base planners	Inapplicable
Public utilities	Jackson County Water and Sewerage Authority
Planning commission (county)	Represented on steering committee
Regional agencies	Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (RDC)
Safety – public	Sheriff; emergency management, fire districts – involve through community facilities assessments
Schools – public	Three public school systems (County, Commerce, and Jefferson)
State agencies with local jurisdiction	None stands out as justifying specific involvement
Zoning board of appeals (county)	May be represented or placed on distribution list
Universities -- Public	University of Georgia – in Athens – an important stakeholder given proximity and land ownership in the county; Lanier Tech (in Commerce), Athens Tech, Piedmont College, Gainesville College, Brenau University

List of Stakeholders and Persons to Receive Communications

Defined broadly, a stakeholder is anyone who has a stake in an outcome of the comprehensive planning process. Based on the suggestions in the State Planning Recommendations, an initial list of stakeholders has been identified and compiled by the county’s planning consultant (attached to this program) and refined by the Jackson County Department of Public Development. A second list, those who should receive meeting notices and other correspondence, is also provided.

Identification of Participation Techniques

During the process of preparing a work scope, the consultants considered various community participation techniques. The work scope was written to meet the county’s specific needs for public involvement while also considering budget limitations. The following techniques were considered and as applicable included in the Community Participation Program.

Community Participation Techniques Considered

Participation Technique	Included in Program?	Explanation
Kiosk/Lobby displays	Yes	Department of Public Development to determine appropriate locations
Speaker's Bureau – briefings, presentations to civic clubs	Yes, as opportunities arise	Director of Public Development, Jackson County, and Consulting Planner may speak to clubs on invitation
Kick off public information meeting	No	Steering Committee will serve this function
Printed public information	Yes	County will rely on electronic media (web page) but may distribute printed information as needed; steering committee members will receive written copies of materials
Website – information only	Yes	Central communication tool – Department of Public Development
Website – interactive	Maybe	Questionnaire may be posted
Website – e-mail response capability	Yes	County planner will reply to e-mail inquiries; field to director or consultant as appropriate
Cable TV information	Unknown	Arrangements may be made if opportunities exist
<i>Radio Stations</i>	<i>Maybe</i>	<i>Committee suggested this outlet 8/11/09</i>
Press Releases	Yes	Director of Public Development, Jackson County, and Consulting Planner may prepare press releases at strategic intervals as appropriate
Posters, fliers, brochures, mailouts	Probably not	Budget limitations have led to use of website as primary dissemination media
Direct mail surveys	No	Budget limitations preclude this option
Visioning exercises, workshops and charrettes, and community preference meetings	Yes	Four community meetings (one for each commission district) will be held prior to plan preparation to confirm vision, define character areas, and identify issues and opportunities; two community meetings will be scheduled after first draft of community agenda is prepared
Student programs	No	Not planned, with three public school systems it presents logistical issues and budgets are limited
E-mail blasts	Yes	Notices of meetings, drafts, etc. will be sent to all e-mail addresses compiled
Technical advisory committee	No	However, information will be distributed or notice of all drafts available for download and comment
Steering committee	Yes	To be appointed by the Board of Commissioners and will include a diversity of representation
Stakeholder meetings and interviews	Yes	Planner, Director of Public Development, and Consulting Planner will interview stakeholders
Intergovernmental partnerships	Yes	Meetings with cities are ongoing with regard to transportation planning; municipalities are planning separately from the county
"Facebook" communications	Yes	Public development is initiating

Schedule for Completion of the Comprehensive Plan Including Community Agenda

Recertification Deadline: October 31, 2010

Monthly Calendar by Major Component of the Comprehensive Plan

Month	Community Assessment	Community Participation	Community Agenda
June 2009		C Complete	
July 2009		S Complete	
August 2009	C Complete		
August 2009	S Complete		
September 2009		CWs (5)	
September 2009	PC hearing	PC hearing	
October 2009	BOC hearing and submit for review	BOC hearing and submit for review	
November 2009	RC/DCA	RC/DCA	
December 2009	RC/DCA	RC/DCA	C Complete
January 2010			S Complete
February 2010			SC Complete
Feb. – March 2010		CWs (2)	
March 2010			PC hearing
April 2010			BOC hearing and submit for review
May 2010			RC/DCA
June 2010			RC/DCA
July 2010			RC/DCA
August 2010			RC/DCA
September 2010			PC recommends
October 2010			BOC Adopts

Legend:

- C -- Consultant
- S – Staff Review
- SC – Steering Committee
- PC – Planning Commission
- BOC – Board of Commissioners
- RC/DCA – Regional and state review
- CWs – Community Workshops

Note: 5th community workshop added (Chamber)

JACKSON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SCHEDULE

STEERING COMMITTEE (5 Meetings)

July 2009	Steering Committee (SC) appointed by Board
July 2009	Initial introductory materials to SC including schedule
August 2009	<u>Meeting #1</u> : introduction/visioning, schedule (<i>held 8/11/09</i>)
September 2009	Distribute “community assessment” (general feedback)
October 2009	<u>Meeting #2</u> : Review Results of Community Workshops
November 2009	<u>Meeting #3</u> : Emphasis on “issues and opportunities; Existing Policy Review; Initiatives
January 2010	<u>Meeting #4</u> : First Review of Draft Community Agenda
February 2010	<u>Meeting #5</u> : Second Review of Draft Community Agenda

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS PRIOR TO PLAN PREPARATION

September 2009	Five Workshops (1 for each Commission District + Chamber)
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COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS AFTER DRAFT PLAN IS PREPARED

Feb. – March 2010	Community Meetings/Open Houses (2) Steering committee champions/members attend if possible
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PLANNING COMMISSION (3 meetings)

September 2009	Public hearing on community assessment and community participation program
March 2010	Public hearing on community agenda
September 2010	Planning Commission recommends adoption of community agenda after receiving results of regional/state review

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS (3 meetings)

October 2009	Public hearing on community assessment and community participation program – Resolution authorizing submittal for review
April 2010	Public hearing on community agenda – Resolution authorizing submittal for review
October 2010	Board of Commissioners adopts community agenda after receiving results of regional/state review

PUBLIC INPUT RECEIVED ON THE MAJOR ROADS PLAN

Jackson County obtained stakeholder input in the early stages of the data collection phase for the Countywide Roads Plan through the establishment of a Focus Group. Each of the five Commissioners appointed five members of the public to serve on the Focus Group for input as to the identification and prioritization of current roadway concerns and issues. This input was solicited using a Nominal Group Technique over the course of three meetings (Source: Moreland Altobelli Associates, Inc., Countywide Roads Plan 2009 Draft).

The first meeting was held on December 18, 2008 in the auditorium of the Jackson County Administrative Offices located in the City of Jefferson. During that meeting, the Focus Group was instructed as to the basic elements comprising the existing road system, and then the Focus Group prepared a list of their major concerns or issues associated with the roads within the county. During the 2nd meeting of the Focus Group held on January 15, 2009, each member rated the priority of each of the identified concerns and issues. The individual priorities were tabulated and ranked into quartiles in order to establish the relative priorities of all of the identified concern and issues. The final meeting of the Focus Group was conducted on March 3, 2009, wherein the results of the process were presented to the members for their review and concurrence (Source: Moreland Altobelli Associates, Inc., Countywide Roads Plan 2009 Draft)

Stakeholder input was also solicited via a written questionnaire that was mailed to the Mayors of each of the nine municipalities within Jackson County. Upon receipt of the completed questionnaires, the supplied information was analyzed and summarized for further discussion with municipal representatives through a series of meetings with representatives of each of the nine cities. A joint meeting was held for those cities in the Quad Cities, and a separate meeting with the officials in Braselton, and another separate meeting with the city officials in Commerce (Source: Moreland Altobelli Associates, Inc., Countywide Roads Plan 2009 Draft).

List of Stakeholders
Jackson County, GA, Comprehensive Plan
(refine/add to as county determines appropriate)

Jackson County Area Chamber of Commerce

270 Athens Street, PO Box 629, Jefferson, GA 30549
Phone: 706-387-0300
Fax 706-387-0304
info@jacksoncountyga.com

Jackson County Builders Association, Inc.

122 Washington Street, Jefferson, GA 30549
Phone: 706-367-0611
Fax: 706-367-0610
jcbuilders@jacksoncountybuilders.com

Athens Grow Green Coalition

PO Box 1085, Athens, GA 30603
moderator@athensgrowgreen.com

Upper Oconee Watershed Network

P.O. Box 531, Athens, Georgia, 30603
upperoconee@yahoo.com

Georgia Conservancy

817 West Peachtree St., Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30308
Phone: (404) 876-2900 Ext. 106
Fax: (404) 872-9229
Katherine Moore, Growth Management & Blueprints Program Manager
kmoore@gaconservancy.org

Jackson County Historical Society

P. O. Box 1234, Commerce, GA 30529
Phone: 706-335-3881

Jackson County Extension

P.O. Box 760, 102 Cloverleaf Circle, Jefferson, GA 30549
Phone: 706-367-6344
Fax: 706-367-6348
marksh@uga.edu

Jackson County Water and Sewerage Authority (JCWSA)

PO Box 869, 117 MLK Ave., Jefferson, GA 30549
Phone: 706-367-1741
Fax 706-367-1759
FAIke@jcwsa.com

Jackson County Industrial Development Authority

P.O. Box 629
Jefferson, GA 30549
smartin@jacksonemc.com

Jackson County Airport Authority

630 Lyle Field Road
Jefferson, GA 30549
Phone 706-367-1493
bstapleton@jacksoncountygov.com

Georgia Department of Transportation District 1

Russell McMurry, P.E.
2505 Athens Hwy SE Gainesville, GA 30503
P.O. Box 1057 Gainesville, GA 30503
Phone: (770) 532-5526

Jackson County Farm Bureau

2388 Hwy. 129N
Jefferson, GA 30549
Phone: 706-367-8877
ammerk@gfb.org

CHANGE Action, Inc.

67 Athens Street
Jefferson, GA 30549
Phone: 706-387-7655
action@jacksoncountygov.com

Nicholson Water Authority

175 Lakeview Drive, P.O. Box 99
Nicholson, GA 30565
Phone: 706-757-2230

Town of Braselton

4982 Highway 53 Braselton, Georgia 31507
Phone: (706) 654-3915
Fax: (706) 654-3033

City of Commerce

27 Sycamore Street Commerce, Georgia 30529-2437
Phone: (706) 335-3164
Fax: (706) 335-6879
commerce@athens.net

City of Hoschton

79 City Square Hoschton, GA 30548
Phone: 706.654.3034
Fax: 706.654.9834
info@cityofhoschton.com

City of Jefferson

147 Athens Street, Jefferson, Georgia, 30549
Phone: (706) 367-5121
Fax: (706) 367-5134

City of Maysville

P. O. Box 86
Maysville, Georgia 30558
Phone 706-652-2274
Fax: 706-652-3511
cityofmaysville@windstream.net

City of Nicholson

175 Lakeview Drive, Nicholson, GA 30565
Phone: 706-757-3408

City of Pendergrass

41 Blackberry Lane, Pendergrass, GA 30567
Phone: 706-693-2494
Fax: 706-693-7149

City of Talmo

P.O. Box 70 45 A.J. Irvin Road, Talmo, GA 30574
Phone: 706-693-2325
dfontaine@talmo-ga.com

**List of Groups to Receive Correspondence
Jackson County, GA, Comprehensive Plan
(continuously expand as interest evolves)**

MainStreet Newspapers, Inc.

PO Box 908, 33 Lee Street, Jefferson, GA 30549
Phone: 706-367-5233
Fax: 706-367-8056
angieeditor@aol.com

The Gainesville Times

345 Green St. N.W., Gainesville, GA 30501
Phone: 770- 32-1234
Toll-free: 800-395-5005 (in Georgia)
kalbertson@gainesvilletimes.com

Jackson Electric Membership Corp.

P.O. Box 38, 850 Commerce Road, Jefferson, GA 30549
Phone: 706-367-5281
info@jacksonemc.com

Georgia Power Community and Economic Development

75 Fifth Street NW, Suite 150, Atlanta, GA 30308
Fax: 404-506-1474

Athens Land Trust

2109 West Broad St., Athens, GA 30606
706-613-0122
Fax: (706) 613-0143
admin@athenslandtrust.org

Oconee River Land Trust

380 Meigs St., Athens, GA 30601
706-552-3138
Fax: 706-613-7775
info@ortl.com

Georgia Options in Community Living, Inc.

185 Ben Burton Circle, Bogart, GA 30622
706-546-0009
Fax: 706-546-0215
admin@georgiaoptions.org

Georgia River Network

126 South Milledge Avenue, Suite E3, Athens, GA 30605
706-549-4508
Fax: 706-549-7791

The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc.

2450 Milledge Avenue, Athens, Georgia 30602-5817
Phone: 706-227-5369
Fax: 706-227-5370
gcga@uga.edu

Action, Inc., Jefferson, GA

29 South Ave, Jefferson, GA 30549-1149
Phone: 706-367-9599

Jackson County Habitat for Humanity

Commerce, GA
Phone: 706-367-5281

Georgia Forestry Commission – District 2

3005 Atlanta Hwy, Gainesville, GA 30507
Phone: 770-531-6043
jthomas@gfc.state.ga.us

Jackson County Environmental Health Office

260 Lee Street, Jefferson, GA 30549
Phone: 706 367-3643
Fax: 706 367-8070

University of Georgia

Office of Institutional Effectiveness
Attn: Strategic Planning
Bob Boehmer, Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness
Phone: (706) 542-2558
bboehmer@uga.edu

Lanier Technical College, Jackson Campus

631 South Elm Street
Commerce, GA 30520
Phone: 706-335-1931
Fax: 706-335-2946
info@laniertech.edu

Gainesville State College, Public Relations

P. O. Box 1358
Gainesville, GA 30503
3820 Mundy Mill Rd.
Oakwood, GA 30566
Phone: (678) 717-3618
pr@gsc.edu

Brenau University External Relations

500 Washington St. SE, Gainesville, GA 30501
Phone: 770.534.6174
mthomas@brenau.edu

Piedmont College in Athens

595 Prince Avenue
Athens, Georgia 30601
Phone: (706) 548-8505
Fax: (706) 433-1750

Athens Technical College

Phone: 706-355-5000
(no additional contact information found)

Piedmont Regional Library System

Alan Harkness, Regional Director
189 Bellview Street, Winder, GA 30680
Phone: 770-867-2762 x108
aharkness@prlib.org