

City of Acworth Comprehensive Plan 2006-2026 Community Participation Program

Prepared for:
The City of Acworth
Acworth, Georgia
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Community Participation Program is to ensure that the City of Acworth Comprehensive Plan reflects the full range of the community’s values and desires, by involving a diverse spectrum of stakeholders in development of the Community Agenda. This broad-based participation will help ensure that the plan is implemented because many are involved in its development and thereby become committed to seeing it through. The Community Participation Program provides a concise schedule to guide the development of the

Community Agenda, including planned community participation events or meetings at key points during the process. This document includes three required steps described in sections below:

- Identification of Stakeholders
- Identification of Participation Techniques
- Schedule for Completion of the Community Agenda

1.2 Scope

State law requires the City of Acworth to update its Comprehensive Plan by June 30, 2007. As prescribed by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), the update of the Comprehensive Plan follows the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005. The following sections describe how Acworth plans to involve the public in the creation of the Community Agenda.

2.0 Identification and Participation of Stakeholders

It is important to incorporate checks and balances as well as coordination and oversight into a project of this importance. This approach assures quality throughout the process. The checks and balances and oversight is being provided through the involvement of City officials and citizen stakeholders including the Acworth Board of Aldermen, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, City departments and other Acworth organizations. Groups participating as stakeholders are listed below.

2.1 City of Acworth Board of Aldermen

- Tommy Allegood, Mayor
- Butch Price, Council Post 1
- Doug Allen, Council Post 2
- Bob Weatherford, Council Post 3
- Tim Richardson, Council Post 4
- Tim Houston, Council Post 5

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2.2 City of Acworth Steering Committee

- Abbie Parks Tourism
- Annette Frederick Downtown Merchants Association (Buzz & Brew)
- Ben Flanagan Planning and Zoning Commission
- Beth Watson Tree Commission
- Brett North Planning and Zoning Commission
- Butch Price Alderman
- Darlene Knight Downtown Development Authority
- Doug McKittrick Downtown Development Authority
- Jeff Glover Acworth Business Association
- Jim Mize Historic Preservation Commission

Keith McPherson Tourism
Liz Miller Historic Preservation Commission
Lou Oswald Lake Authority
Marty Richardson Housing Authority
Rhonda Newton ABA (Georgia State Bank)
Scott Evans Lake Authority
Shana Gould Downtown Merchants Association (Divas & Dames)
Shirley Walker Tree Commission
Tim Houston Alderman
Toby Carmichael Planning and Zoning Commission
Tommy Allegood Mayor

2.3 City of Acworth Participating Staff and Departments

Brian Bulthuis City manager
James Albright Director of Parks and Recreation
Jeremy Hayes Asst City manager
Mark Hipp Director of Public Works
Michael Wilkie Chief of Police

2.4 The City of Acworth Boards and Commissions

Acworth Business Association
Acworth Planning and Zoning Commission
Acworth Downtown Development Authority
Convention and Visitors Bureau
Historic Preservation Commission
Planning and Zoning Commission
Tree Commission

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3.0 Identification of Participation Techniques

3.1 Stakeholder Participation

A meeting was held with the Steering Committee on May 30, 2006. Small group interviews were conducted with Directors and Managers from City departments during June, 2006. Additional stakeholder interviews will be conducted as required to identify or clarify issues and opportunities in order to receive a thorough understanding of public opinions, ideas and concerns.

3.2 Outreach

A variety of techniques will be used to get the information out to participants:

1) Website. The City website, <http://www.acworth.org>, will be used to display press releases, the

Community Assessment, Participation Program and Agenda as well as other information pertaining to the project.

2) Organizational E-mail Lists. The various City organizations and officials mentioned previously

have contact lists that will be utilized to supply a network of outlets for distribution of meeting

notices via e-mail. The same network may be used to coordinate the posting of notifications in public spaces.

3) Signage. Acworth will also use the large, electronic sign board at Cowan Road and Main Street to advertise public meetings. Promotional signage along major thoroughfares and intersections will also help to notify the public.

4) Newspapers. Notices will also be listed in the Northside News, Around Acworth and the Marietta Daily Journal newspapers which are distributed throughout the City and Cobb County.

3.3 Public Meetings for the Community Assessment, the Community Participation Program and the Community Agenda.

A public hearing before the Mayor and Board of Aldermen was held on June 19, 2006 to review

the Issues and Opportunities findings of the Community Assessment and to brief the public on

the Community Participation Program. Upon public review and approval, the Community

Assessment and Community Participation Program will be transmitted to the Atlanta Regional

Commission (ARC) for regional and state review.

The 2006 Comprehensive Plan Community Agenda will be presented at a public meeting before

the Board of Aldermen. The public will have one final opportunity to comment on the plan

before the plan is transmitted to the ARC for review. Due to an extensive coordination effort

with the Cobb County Comprehensive Transportation Plan, the tentative date for this approval

hearing will be scheduled between November 1, 2006 and January 31, 2007.

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3.4 Visioning workshop

A Visioning Workshop will be held between September 1st and October 31st 2006. The consultant will coordinate the citizen participation process with assistance from the City. The

Community Agenda process will comprise the following steps:

- Identify the community's wants and needs.

- Refine the existing vision statement, if applicable

- Develop several scenarios to direct future growth and development.

The end product will consist of maps, drawings, a report and a list of action items for the City to

consider for future enhancements. Elements of the end product may include:

- A description of the strengths and weaknesses of the Community Agenda

- The issues and opportunities that confront the implementation of the Community Agenda

- The vision for the quality of life the stakeholders and participants desire 20 years from now.

- The identification of benchmarks that may be used to indicate the progress or success of

the Community Agenda (such as items for Short Term Work Program).

3.5 Cobb County Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Cobb County and its six municipalities have launched a comprehensive planning study of

transportation needs and challenges. Beginning with a review of existing conditions and

projected future demands, the study team will also assess land use and transportation relationships throughout the county. The study will investigate alternative ways to ensure the

efficient movement of people and goods over the next twenty-five years. The planning study

will examine peer county systems and plans in other regions of the United States, conduct

multimodal technical analyses, build and test scenarios involving various land use schemes as

well as all modes of transportation. Modes studied will include all systems from roads to pedestrian and bicycle paths to mass transit and freight movement alternatives.

Financial

options, impact analyses and draft development plans will be studied to arrive at recommendations for the future- all with full public participation and review.

Findings and recommendations from the CTP will be included in Acworth's Comprehensive Plan.

The Study Team has developed and implemented a comprehensive community participation

program that will be carefully coordinated with outreach activities being conducted by the

County and Acworth so as to minimize duplication and overburdening citizens. The Program

includes a broadly representative Stakeholder Coordinating Committee appointed by the

County Commission and the City Councils. The Committee will work with the Study Team on an

ongoing basis providing guidance in a number of areas, particularly in the area of public outreach.

Various communication tools and methodologies will be used to reach out to the public, including newsletters, project website and e-mail, news media, public meetings, small group

briefings and interviews. The Study Team will make every effort to reach and involve every

segment of the population.