

2006 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update for Baldwin County and the City of Milledgeville



Community Participation Program

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COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

The purpose of the community participation program is to insure that the local comprehensive plan reflects the full range of community values and desires, by involving a diverse spectrum of stakeholders in development of the community agenda. This meaningful participation by the community will also help insure that it will be implemented because many in the community are involved in its development and thereby become committed to seeing it through. The community participation program is intended to supplement, not replace, the two required public hearings.

Identification of Stakeholders

Stakeholders in the community are those people that are most affected by the revisions to the comprehensive plan. This group of people will have a large part in developing the community agenda. The following list of stakeholders for the development of the joint Baldwin County and City of Milledgeville community agenda was compiled through public input and research completed by Middle Georgia Regional Development Center staff.

Baldwin County Board of Commissioners	Baldwin County Board of Education
Baldwin County Fire Chief	Baldwin County Health Department
Baldwin County Parks and Recreation Department of Family and Children’s Services	Baldwin County Sheriff’s Department
Central State Hospital	Central Georgia Technical College/ Department of Technical and Adult Education
Milledgeville Convention and Visitors Bureau	City of Milledgeville
Georgia Military College	Georgia College and State University
Milledgeville/Baldwin County Development Authority	John Milledge Academy
Milledgeville Police Department	Milledgeville Main Street-The Downtown Development Authority
Oconee River Greenway Authority	Oconee Regional Medical Center
Scott State Prison	Rivers State Prison
T&S Hardwoods	Shaw Industries
Vought Aircraft Industries, Inc.	The Baldwin Bulletin
Local Developers	The Union Recorder
Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Oconee	Baldwin State Prison
Georgia Power	Georgia Antebellum Capitol Society, Inc.
Milledgeville/Baldwin County Emergency Management Agency	Lockerly Arboretum
Northrim Office Park	Milledgeville Mall
Men’s State Prison	Habitat for Humanity
Baldwin Inmate Boot Camp	Baldwin County Churches
Oconee Center	Bostick State Prison
Ocmulgee Center	Oconee Regional Healthcare Foundation
Georgia State Patrol	Georgia Bureau of Investigation
	Hospice of Baldwin County

Identification of Participation Techniques

The follow are the methods of public participation that were decided upon by citizens of Baldwin County and the City of Milledgeville. These methods were selected because they were felt to be the most comprehensive way of collecting public input from a diverse spectrum of community citizens.

Method	Description
Focus Groups	One time discussion of a particular topic. One time face-to-face meeting structured to be informal to encourage open discussion among participants. Involves 6-12 individuals selected to meet specific criteria in order to broadly represent a particular segment of society.
Public Hearings	A form of public meeting limited in size. Tends to involve only interested citizens. Usually experts and interested citizens. Presentations are made.
Notification, Distribution, & Solicitation of Comments	Simplest form of consultation. Can involve the sending out of reports. May also involve other methods.

Schedule for Completion of the Community Agenda

Public hearings have been used in combination with focus groups to obtain public input not only on the agenda portion of the comprehensive plan, but on the community assessment and public participation plan as well.

A public hearing was held on January 25, 2005 to kick off the process. This hearing was used to introduce the public to the process and notify them of the next step. An additional public hearing was held on February 24, 2005 to discuss community participation methods. At this meeting the above methods were approved by those in attendance and citizens were given the opportunity to sign up to participate in the first set of focus groups. A third public meeting was held on April 4, 2005 to present the Middle Georgia Regional Development Center’s Staff analysis of the Community Assessment and Community Participation Program. The land use portion of the Community Assessment was not presented at this time due to the lack of the completion of the land use map. The Middle Georgia Regional Development Center received the data from the University of Georgia required to complete the existing land use map in April of 2005. The second public hearing to present the land use portion of the Community Assessment was held on October 20, 2005.

Focus groups were used to discuss the findings of the community assessment including: lists of issues and opportunities, character areas, and areas requiring special attention. The first set of focus groups was modeled after the community assessment sections. All meetings were held in the Baldwin County Courthouse and were open to the public. Citizens were given an opportunity

to sign up for the focus groups at the public hearing held on February 24, 2005. The following is the schedule of when these focus group meetings were held.

Focus Group	Meeting Date
Economic Development	April 11, 2005
Community Facilities & Services	April 21, 2005
Housing	April 28, 2005
Natural & Cultural Resources	May 12, 2005
Land Use	May 17, 2005

A public hearing was held on June 2, 2005 to present the results of the above focus groups. The public was given a chance to comment on the findings of the focus groups and sign up to participate in focus groups for the preliminary character areas derived from these first focus groups.

The second set of focus groups was then held for each of the preliminary character areas. These focus groups were used to create a development plan and short-term work program for each of the character areas to complete the community agenda portion of the comprehensive plan. Once again all meetings were held in the Baldwin County Courthouse and were open to the public. The following is the schedule of when these focus group meetings were held.

Focus Group	Meeting Date
Highway 441 Corridor	June 16, 2005
Downtown Milledgeville	June 29, 2005
Oconee River Corridor	July 12, 2005
Existing Industrial Park	July 26, 2005
Educational Infrastructure	August 11, 2005

A public hearing was held on August 25, 2005 to present the findings of these focus groups. Upon further study, citizens and Middle Georgia Regional Development Center staff concluded that an additional character area was needed to fully represent the remaining sections of the community. At the public hearing on August 25, 2005 it was decided that a sixth character area would be included in the comprehensive plan and it would be named the Rural Baldwin County Character Area. The focus group for this area was held on September 15, 2005. The findings of this focus group were presented at the public hearing held on October 20, 2005.

A final round of focus groups was held to finalize items for the short-term work programs for each character area. These were held in the Baldwin County Courthouse and were open to the public. Those who had signed up for the previous set of focus groups were invited back as well as any other interested parties. The results of these focus groups will be incorporated into the final version of the Community Agenda.

The following is a schedule of when these focus groups were held.

Focus Group	Meeting Date
Highway 441	November 16, 2005
Downtown Milledgeville	November 22, 2005
Oconee River Area	November 29, 2005
Industrial Park	December 8, 2005
Educational Infrastructure	December 21, 2005
Rural Baldwin County	January 19, 2006

Once the Middle Georgia Regional Development Center staff has completed the completeness checklist for the Community Assessment and Community Participation Program, these portions will be displayed for public review both in hard copy and electronic form. Hard copies will be distributed to local government offices, libraries, and other public areas as determined by the comprehensive plan committee. An electronic copies will be posted on the Middle Georgia Regional Development Center's website with links to the site available on the local governments' websites.

An additional public hearing will be held in late June or early July of 2006 to present the draft Community Agenda. After undergoing a completeness review by the Middle Georgia Regional Development Center staff, this portion will also be available for public review through document distribution and links to an electronic copy via the Middle Georgia Regional Development Center's and local governments' websites.