

# **Community Participation Plan Sugar Hill Comprehensive Plan**

*Submitted to:*  
**Georgia Department of  
Community Affairs**

*By:*  
**City of Sugar Hill**

**October 18, 2007**



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## Introduction

The word community can be defined as a population of people living in a common location. There can be a wide variation when it comes to the basic social, professional, economic, and political values of the residents that make up a community. In preparing a Comprehensive Plan, it is important to work with citizens to identify the issues and challenges unique to their community. The Comprehensive Planning process begins with an evaluation of the current strengths and needs of the community followed by a vision for the future. This Community Participation Program is designed to give citizens the opportunity to take part in the planning process in an effort to gain support for proposed programs from the public and to produce a document that best reflects the overall vision for the community. An innovative and comprehensive public involvement program will ensure that the public feels vested in the results of the planning process.

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) requires that a Community Participation Program be implemented as part of the Comprehensive Planning Process as outlined in the Rules for Comprehensive Planning, Section 110-12-1-.04. The goal for the Program as outlined in the DCA Rules is as follows:

*“The purpose of the Community Participation Program is to ensure 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 broad-based participation in developing the Community Agenda will also help ensure that it will be implemented, because many in the community are involved in its development and thereby become committed to seeing it through.”*

The DCA also requires that a plan for the Community Participation Program be developed and submitted to DCA for approval prior to the start of the public involvement process. This document outlines the City’s strategy to develop and implement a public involvement program for the City of Sugar Hill’s Comprehensive Plan and is hereby submitted to DCA for approval.

# 1. Scope

The mission of the Community Participation Plan is to provide citizens the opportunity to make their voices heard by taking part in the development of the Comprehensive Plan. An effective community participation program should be designed to educate the public as well as provide an opportunity for citizens to be part of the planning process. The participation strategies outlined in this report have been selected to assure that citizens understand the planning process and that multiple opportunities for public involvement exist.

To facilitate the development and submittal of the Community Assessment and this document (the Community Participation Plan) two public involvement strategies have already been implemented. A Project Team was formed to assist with production of the Community Assessment, Data Assessment, and Participation Plan. A public meeting was also held, in accordance with the DCA Rules for Comprehensive Planning, to introduce the plan and increase public awareness throughout the process and before the Community Assessment and Community Participation Plan were submitted to the DCA.

Upon approval of the Community Participation Plan from the DCA, the City will “kick-off” its public involvement program with an Open House. The Open House will give citizens the chance to learn about the plan and express their opinions in an informal setting. Educational material will be available at City Hall, on the website, and on the local access cable channel to keep the public informed throughout the process. Two public workshops will be held to review the draft development strategies, and the issues and opportunities presented in the Community Assessment. Finally, prior to submittal of the Community Agenda, at the conclusion of the planning process, public meetings will be held to present the Agenda to the public. The following public involvement strategies have been selected by the City as part of the public involvement strategy and are discussed in this report:

- Public Meetings
- Community Meetings
- Community Survey
- Public Information & Outreach

In most cases, informing and educating the public is not enough. The most successful strategy is one that also gets citizens involved in the decision making process that will shape the future of their community. The City intends to accomplish this goal by providing various levels of public involvement, which have the potential to reach all citizens. A web survey will be administered in order to provide an avenue for the general public to provide input. Citizens that want to take a greater role in the planning process will have the option to participate in community events such as public meetings and/or public workshops. Participating citizens will have the opportunity to work directly with the City during the development of the Community Agenda.

Implementing the tasks outlined in this report will improve the overall quality of the Plan by defining the values of the community and working together to accomplish those goals. Additionally, involving the public during the planning stage will help to garner support for the Comprehensive Plan and its eventual implementation.

## 2. Project Team

A technical advisory committee has been established to gather technical information, provide feedback to the project managers, and to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan accurately represents the City's vision for the future. The team includes representatives from various City departments, the City Council, and other officials as listed below:

### Project Team

- Mayor
- City Manager
- Planning Director
- City Staff
- City Council
- Planning Board

The Project Team (PT) has met on a regular schedule to oversee the development of the Community Assessment and Community Participation Plan. Please see Appendix A for a copy of meeting summaries. The following list details the early efforts of the PT:

- Existing Land Use Map. Fieldwork was conducted to verify the existing land uses. The PT then reviewed the existing Land Use map and made the appropriate updates.
- Community Character Map. The PT analyzed the current land use distribution and development patterns and established a vision for the future that is illustrated in the Community Character map.
- Areas Requiring Special Attention (ARSA). The PT used the existing Land Use and Community Character maps to develop the ARSA map. Areas were identified based on the consistency between current trends in a given area and the future vision for the community.
- Issues and Opportunities. The PT reviewed the State Planning Recommendations and created a comprehensive list of issues specific to Sugar Hill that need to be addressed in order to meet the goals outlined in the plan. A list of opportunities was developed based on the identified issues.
- Data Assessment. The data assessment evaluated a variety of demographic trends that need to be considered in the scope of long-term planning. Population growth and economic development are just a few items gathered from this assessment. Other factors analyzed by the PT were income, employment, housing, economic trends, utilities, education, natural resources, and coordination between governments.

The PT will continue to meet throughout the planning process. The initial findings of the PT will be updated and revised based on feedback generated during the public involvement process.

### **3. Public Meetings**

The state minimum standards require that a Public Hearing be held before City Council to inform the public regarding the status of the Comprehensive Plan and to adopt a resolution to submit the Community Assessment and Community Participation Plan to the DCA. The City's consultant presented the work completed for the Community Assessment and Community Participation Plan to the City of Sugar Hill Council on September 5, 2007. This meeting was open to the public and advertised in accordance with City procedures. The meeting schedule was posted on the City's website and the agenda was made publicly available at City Hall before the meeting. Please see Appendix B for a copy of the agenda for this meeting. The following items were presented at the public meeting:

- Existing Land Use Map
- Community Character Map
- Areas that Require Special Attention Map
- Issues and Opportunities
- Data Assessment
- Quality Community Objectives Assessment
- Public Involvement Strategy
- Project Schedule

This initial public meeting provided citizens with an opportunity to ask questions and voice any concerns about the proposed strategy for public involvement and plan development. Another round of public meetings will be held prior to final adoption of the Community Agenda.



## **4. Identification of Public Participation Techniques**

### **4.1. Public Workshops / Charettes**

A great part of the success of the Comprehensive Plan will be dependent on community involvement. Effective involvement from the communities that comprise the City will ensure that the Plan gains community wide support, addresses the issues and concerns of the general population, and is ultimately implemented. The benefits of community involvement include:

- Citizens desire to be involved in decisions that affect their community.
- People with different areas of expertise contribute ideas, resulting in a well thought out plan with better solutions.
- Fellow citizens tend to support programs in which they had involvement during the planning phase.
- By allowing residents, special interest groups, and business leaders to be involved in the process, planners and decision makers have the chance to think “outside the box.”
- Involving “citizen experts” helps facilitate communication.
- Working together provides the opportunity to understand other people’s concerns and issues.
- Widespread citizen involvement promotes a more interconnected community.
- Community support builds program momentum and keeps the project moving forward.
- Citizen comments are heard and responded to early in the process, which leads to more effective program implementation and future acceptance.

It is important that a free flow of information be maintained between the City and the various communities. This is important because the people attending the public workshops live and work within the community, and they will be the best resource to convey the Plan’s message. The City should consider that in order to effectively implement the future Comprehensive Plan, the Community Participation Program must create an awareness of land use, development, and community related issues and opportunities.

### **4.1.1 Public Workshops / Charettes Strategy**

Two Public Workshops will be held during the public involvement phase in order to provide opportunity for all residents within the City to participate in the planning process. Each meeting will follow the general agenda below:

- I. Presentation. Comprehensive Planning Requirements, Procedures, and Schedule. This presentation will include a summary of the Community Assessment and planning work to date.
- II. Group Activity. The participants will be broken up into several groups (depending on attendance) to discuss the Character Area(s) specific to their community. The Group will be asked to review the draft definition and recommended development strategies and make comments and recommended changes. In addition, each group will be asked to identify issues and opportunities that affect their community.
- III. Group Presentation. Each group will present their revised Character Area and issues and opportunities to the community.

The City will advertise these meetings through direct mailings, emails, the City's website, and handouts available at City Hall. Notifications will be provided to a combination of individual citizens, community leaders, church leaders, and the Chamber of Commerce. "Read ahead" material will be available on the City's website and will be available at City Hall. Experience has shown that making "read ahead" material available leads to more productive meetings by allowing the information to be reviewed in advance. The Public Workshops will be held in an informal but professional manner to create an environment that will facilitate participation and to show due respect to the participants who are donating their time. Meetings will be held after work hours and will be limited to a maximum of two hours per meeting.

### **4.2. Sugar Hill Fall Festival**

The City of Sugar Hill will set up a booth at the Seventh Annual Fall Festival on Saturday, October 20<sup>th</sup> at E.E. Robinson Park. This well-attended event contains a variety of activities for residents and is a great opportunity for the City to answer questions about the Comprehensive Plan. The "Comprehensive Plan" booth will contain informational handouts, community surveys, and will give residents the opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns about community related issues.

### **4.3. Community Survey**

In an effort to increase public involvement, the City will develop a community survey to gain feedback from citizens. The community survey is an effective tool as it is available to a large population at a minimal cost for the City and a minimal time commitment to the participants. A digital survey will be posted on the City website and hard copy surveys will be available at City Hall. The survey will contain questions on a wide range of community related topics. This would include showing pictures of different development patterns and asking citizens to rate them.

The results of the surveys will be tabulated and examined by the City. Based on the results, the City will incorporate the main issues and concerns of the citizens into the development of the future vision.

### **4.4. Public Information & Outreach**

In addition to the strategies identified above, the City will produce handouts to update citizens about the content and progress of the Comprehensive Planning process. The City will also ensure that all community participation opportunities are well publicized, so that all residents and property owners in the City of Sugar Hill have an opportunity to provide input. The City will utilize the following public information techniques:

- Media Kit (Press Package). A packet of information will be provided to the press containing information/facts to write an article (or a series of several articles) on the Comprehensive Plan. This press release will also contain information on the Community Meetings and Community Survey. A City contact name and phone number will also be included.
- Newsletter. The City of Sugar Hill issues a quarterly newsletter that is mailed to all residents of the City. This newsletter is also available at City Hall. The City will include information about the community meetings, community survey and other public involvement/information opportunities and schedule. This task will be performed at the beginning of the community participation program to encourage residents of the City to get involved in the process and will be repeated towards the end of the program to give residents a “last chance” to participate.
- Informational Handouts(s). These handouts and/or fact sheets will be simple and straightforward in order to explain the Comprehensive Planning process and what it is designed to accomplish. There may be more than one handout to explain various aspects of the Comprehensive Plan. The handouts will be made available at City Hall and will be distributed at public meetings.
- Websites. Websites are a great method of getting information out to a large group of people. A section or link will be added to the City’s website for the Comprehensive Plan allowing quick immediate information for the general public. The webpage will

include information on the program, dates for public meetings, the community survey, and a link to e-mail any questions or concerns. This website address will be listed in all materials designed for the program. The website also provides an opportunity to catalog appropriate public documents and make them available to the public through use of downloadable PDF files.

**4.5. Public Involvement Schedule**

Public Involvement Tasks	2007			2008					
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Approval of Strategy from DCA									
Public Workshops									
Meeting 1									
Meeting 2									
Sugar Hill Fall Festival									
Survey									
Media Press Kit									
Newsletter									
Informational Brochures									
Website									

# **APPENDICES**

# APPENDIX **A**

## Project Team Meeting Summaries



## AGENDA

- I. Contract**
- II. Planning Requirements**
  - a. New DCA Rules
  - b. State Planning Recommendations
- III. City of Sugar Hill Comprehensive Plan Status**
  - a. Gwinnett County Comprehensive Plan
  - b. Existing Information
  - c. Previous Comprehensive Plan
- IV. Planning Schedule**
- V. Land Use Data**
  - a. Current Land Use Data Collection
  - b. Potential Character Areas
  - c. Area Requiring Special Attention
- VI. Data Assessment**
  - a. Existing Information
  - b. Resources
- VII. Project Team**
  - a. Members
- VIII. Adjourn**
  - a. Schedule next meeting
  - b. Give homework assignments



**CITY OF SUGAR HILL  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

*Coordination Meeting Summary  
March 27, 2007 2:00 PM*

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## AGENDA

### **I. Contract**

The latest draft of the comp plan contract amendment was discussed and Kaipo provided ISE staff with some final edits. ISE staff committed to making those edits right away and emailing that contract back to Kaipo ASAP. Kaipo felt that the contract amendment could be executed as soon as the revised version was received.

### **II. Planning Requirements**

Courtney reviewed the new comp plan requirements with the attendees, and provided the following guidance documentation:

- ISE's Comp Plan requirements summary
- DCA State Planning Recommendations for Character Areas
- DCA State Planning Recommendation Tool for Quality Community Objectives

ISE left several additional copies with Sugar Hill staff for their use and distribution.

### **III. City of Sugar Hill Comprehensive Plan Status**

The City of Sugar Hill's Comp Plan is official due in February 2009 however, the schedule proposed by ISE completes the Plan well in advance of this deadline. The city also did not participate in the Gwinnett Countywide Community Assessment, so this document will be of limited use. The City does have a downtown development LCI plan that will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. ISE requested a copy of this document from Sugar Hill, and Kaipo agreed to upload an electronic copy to ISE's FTP site.

### **IV. Planning Schedule**

The meeting attendees reviewed the scheduled from the proposal and all work is on task.

### **V. Land Use Data**

#### **a. Current Land Use Data Collection**

ISE staff is currently working with Sugar Hill staff to get a copy of the parcel layer for Sugar Hill from Gwinnett County. Once ISE has this layer, GIS staff will move forward with the Land Use windshield survey. This is currently planned for the week of April 4<sup>th</sup>. ISE staff will also attempt to update address information in the field in anticipation of the creation of a stormwater utility master address database.

#### **b. Potential Character Areas & Area Requiring Special Attention**

Once the land use survey is complete, ISE staff will develop draft Character Area and Areas Requiring Special Attention maps. These maps will be reviewed and updated by City staff and the Project Team, prior to be finalized. It is likely that



the downtown area (covered by the LCI plan) will be its own unique character area with development patterns established by this plan.

## **VI. Data Assessment**

### **a. Existing Information**

ISE will rely on City staff to gather information related to the City facilities and services including:

- Parks & Recreation
- Public & Special needs housing
- Civic Groups
- Public Facilities (e.g. Public pool)

Any services or facilities utilized by Sugar Hill citizens should be included (even if they are not located in Sugar Hill)

ISE staff will make contact with the County to gather information on Countywide facilities and services, however, City staff assistance with this may be required.

### **b. Resources**

The following resources were identified:

- Gwinnett County Chamber of Commerce
- Sugar Hill Downtown Development Authority

## **VII. Project Team**

### **a. Members**

The Project Team will serve as a technical resources and review board throughout the planning process. The following people/positions were identified as potential members:

- Bob Hail
- Kaipo Awana
- Tim Schick
- Planning Board Representative
- Parks & Recreation Director
- Downtown Development Authority Chairman

## **VIII. Adjourn**

### **a. Next meeting**

The first project team meeting is scheduled for **April 30<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM.**

### **b. Give homework assignments**

The following next tasks were identified:

- City staff to upload the parcel database to the ftp site.
- ISE staff to send the revised contract to Kaipo
- City staff to provide the following plans to ISE: LCI Plan, Town Center Master Plan, and Future Land Use Plan
- City staff to identify Project Team members and confirm our meeting.
- City staff to provide information on public facilities
- ISE staff to gather water supply watershed data and provide to the City.



**CITY OF SUGAR HILL  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**  
*Project Team Meeting  
April 30, 2007 2:00 PM*

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## AGENDA

- I. Planning Requirements**
  - a. New DCA Rules
  
- II. Planning Schedule**
  
- III. Land Use Data**
  - a. Current Land Use Data Collection
  
- IV. Data Assessment**
  - a. Existing Information
  - b. Resources
  
- V. Character Areas**
  - a. Future Land Use Plan
  
- VI. Adjourn**
  - a. Schedule next meeting
  - b. Give homework assignments



## Summary

### Attendees:

Bob Hail	City Manager, Sugar Hill
Kaipo Awana	Planning and Development Director, Sugar Hill
Tim Schick	City Planner, Sugar Hill
Andy McQuagge	Recreation Director, Sugar Hill
Courtney Power	ISE, Inc.
Ron Feldner	ISE, Inc.

### **I. Planning Requirements**

Courtney discussed the new planning requirements with the project Team.

### **II. Planning Schedule**

The Project Team reviewed the planning schedule. The project is currently on task in accordance with the schedule.

### **III. Land Use Data: Existing Land Use Survey**

The Project Team reviewed the existing land use survey produced by ISE. This map was based on the windshield survey conducted by ISE staff in April. The group reviewed the map, and made the following revisions/comments:

- Create a new land use category for property currently under development. There should be a residential developing and commercial developing category.
- Chose one residential density category based on the overall design of the subdivision, rather than assigning it on a parcel by parcel basis.
- There will be a conservation category that includes all dedicated greenspace as well as private openspace created as part of conservation subdivisions.
- There will be a parks category that includes all active recreational parks, private and public.

#### **IV. Data Assessment**

ISE presented information gathered to date as part of the data assessment. The Project Team reviewed the information and made the following comments/suggestions:

- The population figures should be updated to the best of our ability to more accurately reflect what is happening today. Bob estimated that there are approximately 15,000 people currently living in the City and that by 2010 there would be 18,000. ISE agreed to update the 2005 population using the residential certificates of occupancy issued in years 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, & 2005. ISE would then use the information collected by the City regarding existing approved lots and future proposed projects to update the 2010 projection. The rest of the projection would be amended accordingly. Bob provided ISE with information regarding COs and approved lots for 2007.
- Tables that include information on the US, State, and Atlanta should also include Sugar Hill information for comparison. Specifically see tables 2 and 3.
- Ensure tables are clearly labeled and appropriately named.
- Utilize percentages rather than actual number in Table 10.
- When comparing information, make sure to utilize the same format, i.e. table or graph.
- Table 14. The percentages were added. There is not 28% unemployment in the Atlanta area.
- Make sure the sources are always labeled.
- Utilize percentages rather than numbers in table 16 too.
- In table 16 do not add additional trailer units after 2005. Add those to single family units, and explain in the text that due to existing regulations the city does not expect the addition of more trailer units.
- The City agreed to provide any information they had on historic resources in the County to be incorporated in the data assessment.

#### **V. Character Areas**

The Project Team reviewed the existing future land use plan, and the DCA's state planning recommendations for Character Areas, and then outlined some initial character areas for the City of Sugar Hill. These character areas included:

- Suburban residential
- Neighborhood Commercial Nodes
- Regional Commercial Corridor (Peachtree Industrial)
- Town Center
- Mixed Use Redevelopment Area
- Commercial Redevelopment Area

- Industrial Area
- Light Industrial Mixed Use Area

ISE is currently creating a GIS layer of the proposed character area and will present this map and definitions of the Character areas at the next meeting.

**VI. Adjourn**

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, May 21, 2007 from 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM. The meeting was schedule after work hours and prior to the Planning Commission Meeting to allow for more Project Team members to participate. A light dinner will be provided and the meeting will be an open style.



**CITY OF SUGAR HILL  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

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*Project Team Meeting*

*May 21, 2007 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM*

## AGENDA

- 5:00 – 5:30**      **Light Dinner**  
*Introduction: New DCA Rules for Comprehensive Planning*  
*Overview*  
*Issues & Opportunities Independent Exercise*
- 5:30 – 5:45**      **Existing Land Use Survey Review**  
*Current Land Use Data Collection*
- 5:45 – 6:15**      **Character Areas**  
*Proposed Character Areas*  
*Desired Development Patterns*
- 6:15 – 6:30**      **Areas Requiring Special Attention**  
*Area Identification*
- 6:30**              **Adjourn**  
*Set next meeting date*  
*Homework assignments*



**CITY OF SUGAR HILL  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

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*Project Team Meeting*

*May 21, 2007 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM*

## Meeting Summary

### **Existing Land Use Survey Review**

The Existing Land Use Map was revised based on feedback from the Project Team. Changes made include the following:

- Area around the golf course in the North west section of the City was changed from 'Conservation' to 'Undeveloped'
- Single parcel on Buford Dam Road was changed to 'Commercial / Retail'
- Triangular area between Cumming, Riverside, and Suwanee Dam was changed to 'Commercial / Retail'
- Area in subdivision at the end of Brighton Rose was changed to 'Residential – Developing'
- Parcels north of Whitehead on Suwanee Dam was changed to 'Commercial / Retail'
- Large parcel on PTI west of Price was changed to 'Public / Institutional'
- Parcels north and south of Roberts Road were changed to 'Residential – Developing'

An updated Existing Land Use map will be emailed to the Project Team for final review.

### **Character Areas**

- The preliminary Character Area Map, category descriptions, and development strategies were reviewed and discussed.
- ISE will update the map and text based on feedback from the Project Team.
- An updated Map and table defining each category and identifying development strategies will be sent out prior to the next meeting.

### **Issues & Opportunities**

- The Project Team identified some initial issues & opportunities (see attached).

**Next meeting date is planned for June 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM**

## ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

### Population

#### Issues

- Population Growth
- The city limits are not contiguous

#### Opportunities

- Increase the amount of services in the City to provide for more residents
- Control population growth vs. services through restriction of high-density developments
- Fill in holes around City to create a “square” boundary and/or City limits
- Attract families, growth community (conservative)
- Ensure adequate recreational and educational facilities to serve young children and families

### Economic Development

#### Issues

- HWY 20 commercial development. How much is appropriate and what level of intensity?
- There is a significant amount of sprawling development along major thru routes
- Public officials need to agree on the overall vision with regard to land use decisions.
- Need to attract more businesses (manufacturing / commercial)

#### Opportunities

- Commercial redevelopment at the corner of PIB and Gold Creek
- Providing incentives to encourage small-scale commercial development near neighborhoods.
- Provide tax and service benefits to businesses that would support residents needs and increase commercial income stream
- Develop a plan for business recruitment and retention

### Housing

#### Issues

- There is a need to provide a balanced mix of housing types
- Some houses in older areas of the City have been poorly maintained



- Leaders want Low-density residential development (ie. No town homes, or high-density uses)

### Opportunities

- Revitalize areas of poorly maintained housing
- Encourage homeownership
- Investigate the need for additional development standards for housing
- Encourage reinvestment in traditional neighborhoods
- Encourage developers to build homes with “larger footprints” to raise property values of existing homes
- Encourage developers to level and rebuild areas that have been poorly maintained or represent high crime areas
- Accommodate growth and diversity needs while maintaining rural feel of community

## **Land Use**

### Issues

- There is heavy commercial development along major roads
- The existing residential conditions in the City are low-density
- Land uses are segregated from one another

### Opportunities

- Maintain commercial corridors and promote commercial development that is similar via zoning restrictions
- Minimize any agricultural uses
- Minimize any commercial use islands within residential areas
- Develop revenue generating commercial uses (hotels, restaurants, etc) for people visiting the City
- Concentrate commercial uses to major intersections and major roads
- Provide neighborhood commercial nodes for ease of use and limited travel time (less traffic congestion)
- Masterplan for commercial and industrial corridors along Buford HWY and PIB
- Provide for better connections between commercial and residential uses

## **Natural & Cultural Resources**

### Issues

- Need to identify additional resources to implement SWMP
- Currently there is not convenient access to some of the recreational areas in the City

### Opportunities

- Ch. River runs adjacent to the City for about 2-3 miles.
- Several City Parking (existing) & City Golf Course
- Implement SWMP in accordance with Phase I permit
- Incorporate greenspace / conservation land into subdivision design
- Provide paid access to parking on the north side of Hwy 20 at the river for outdoorsmen and "rough area" park goers
- Creation of dog parks to encourage pet friendly city and to give opportunities to those pet owners who do not have large yards.

### **Transportation**

#### Issues

- Sugar Hill is a "bed room community" lots of congestion out of city on PIB, Buford Hwy, and Hwy 20
- Hwy 20 is congested during peak hours

#### Opportunities

- Connect future green space and athletic complexes public facilities (parks, schools, churches, city properties)
- Potential terminus of cross county connector on Buford Hwy
- Provide more connecting sidewalks for pedestrians
- Formal sidewalk / bikeway plan
- Streetscaping on arterial roads
- Connecting sidewalks and crosswalks with indicators are needed



**CITY OF SUGAR HILL  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

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*Project Team Meeting*

*June 18, 2007 7:30 PM – 9:00 PM*

## AGENDA

- 7:30 – 7:80**      **Character Areas & Areas Requiring Special Attention**  
*Review of Character Area Development Strategies and Map  
Identification of Areas Requiring Special Attention*
- 8:00 – 8:15**      **Data Assessment**  
*Review of Revised Population Projections*
- 8:15 – 8:30**      **Issues & Opportunities**  
*Review and Revisions of Draft Issues and Opportunities*
- 8:30 – 8:45**      **Community Participation Plan**  
*Public Involvement Strategies*
- 8:45 – 9:00**      **Schedule**  
*Completed Drafts  
Group Comments  
Public Meetings*



**CITY OF SUGAR HILL  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

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*Project Team Meeting*

*June 18, 2007 9:00 PM – 10:00 PM*

## Meeting Summary

### **I. Character Areas & Areas Requiring Special Attention**

The Project Team reviewed the Character Area Development Strategies and made the following changes:

- Change the Commercial Redevelopment Area to Commercial Infill since there is minimal existing development.
- Eliminate the Educational District area associated with the new high school. This area will be incorporated into the commercial corridors.
- The definition of the “Office Park Character Area” required amendment

A copy of the revised Character Area definition is attached.

### **II. Data Assessment**

The Project Team reviewed the new population projections from the Data Assessment and determined that they were acceptable and in line with recent development in the community.

### **III. Issues & Opportunities**

The Project Team reviewed the draft Issues and Opportunities and made amendments. A copy of the revised Issues and Opportunities is attached.

### **IV. Community Participation Plan**

The Project Team identified the following strategies for public involvement:

- Open Houses
- Newsletter
- Web Survey
- Public Display

### **V. Schedule**

The future schedule as outlined at this meeting is as follows:

- Presentation to Council: August 6<sup>th</sup>. (I will not be available for this meeting, and I would like to change it to August 13<sup>th</sup> if possible.)
- Public Meeting: September 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Fall Festival Public Display: October 20<sup>th</sup>

## ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

### Population

#### Issues

- As the population continues to grow existing facilities and services may become inadequate.

#### Opportunities

- Ensure public services facilities are adequate to provide for more residents
- Control population growth vs. services through restriction of high-density developments
- Provide services and facilities to foster a family atmosphere.
- Ensure adequate recreational and educational facilities to serve young children and families
- Future residential development should be single family, low density
- Encourage the location of a satellite campus or technical college to provide more educational and training opportunities.

### Economic Development

#### Issues

- There is currently no established plan for commercial development on HWY 20.
- Sugar Hill is a largely residential city and there is a need for more retail and service commercial businesses to serve the residential population.

#### Opportunities

- Need to develop a plan to attract and focus appropriate commercial development along major commercial corridors.
- Commercial redevelopment should be encouraged at the corner of PIB and Gold Creek
- Encourage small-scale, retail and service oriented commercial development near neighborhoods for ease of use and limited travel time.
- Create an economic development plan that addresses appropriate business recruitment and retention for major corridors as well as neighborhood commercial areas.
- Discourage strip commercial development on minor corridors.

### Housing

#### Issues

- There is a need to provide a variety of housing price points.
- Some houses in older areas of the City have been poorly maintained.
- The City is satisfied with the current housing stock and character.

### Opportunities

- Identify residential areas that have been poorly maintained or represent high crime areas for residential redevelopment.
- Revitalize areas of poorly maintained housing
- Encourage homeownership.
- Investigate the need for additional development standards for housing.
- Encourage reinvestment in traditional neighborhoods.
- Encourage single-family residential development to serve the needs of families moving to the City.

## **Land Use**

### Issues

- More commercial development is desired along major roads identified as commercial corridors.
- The City wishes to maintain the current low-density residential development pattern.
- Land uses are segregated from one another
- The city limits are not contiguous

### Opportunities

- Maintain commercial corridors and promote commercial development that is similar via zoning restrictions
- Concentrate commercial uses along major intersections and major roads
- Provide neighborhood commercial nodes for ease of use and limited travel time (less traffic congestion)
- Masterplan development for commercial and industrial corridors along Buford HWY, Hwy 20, and PIB
- Provide for better connections between commercial and residential uses
- Allow for ease of access through connection to the sidewalk network.
- Fill in holes around City to create a "square" boundary and/or City limits

## **Natural & Cultural Resources**

### Issues

- Need to identify additional financial and staff resources to implement the stormwater management program.

- Chattahoochee River runs adjacent to the City for approximately 2.5 miles, however the City does not take advantage of or promote it as a recreational and drinking water resource.
- There is no access provided to the Chattahoochee from Hwy 20.

### Opportunities

- Implement SWMP in accordance with Phase I permit.
- Continue to identify and protect greenspace within the City.
- Incorporate greenspace/conservation land into new development design
- Provide access to parking on the north side of Hwy 20 at the Chattahoochee River for visitors and residents.

## **Transportation**

### Issues

- Sugar Hill is a "bed room community" which creates a great deal of rush hour traffic and congestion
- Hwy 20 is specifically congested during peak travel hours
- Currently, there is minimal opportunity for public transit

### Opportunities

- Connect future green space and athletic complexes public facilities (parks, schools, churches, city properties, and greenspace) with sidewalks/multi-use trails.
- Encourage the development of the cross county connector to terminus on Buford Hwy
- Provide more connecting sidewalks for pedestrians
- Develop a formal sidewalk/bikeway/ multiuse trail plan
- Design and implement streetscape projects on arterial roads to improve aesthetics, promote pedestrian activity, and slow traffic.
- Connecting sidewalks and crosswalks with pedestrian traffic control devices.
- Develop a park & ride @ 985

	<i>Description</i>	<i>Development Strategy</i>
<i>Commercial Infill Development</i>	Declining, unattractive, vacant or under-utilized area identified for future commercial development. Area will have a high potential for access by vehicular traffic and transit; on-site parking; low degree of open space, and masterplanned development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retro-fit to be more aesthetically appealing and, therefore, more marketable to prospective tenants by:</li> <li>• Building new commercial structures at the street front, taking up a portion of the oversize parking lot and creating a shopping “square” around a smaller internal parking lot.</li> <li>• Upgrading the appearance of existing older commercial buildings with façade improvement, new architectural elements, or awnings.</li> <li>• Reconfiguring the parking lot and circulation routes for automobiles. Providing pedestrian and bicycling amenities, including covered walkways, benches, lighting and bike racks.</li> <li>• Adding landscaping and other appearance enhancements, trees in parking lots to provide shade and help reduce storm water runoff.</li> </ul>
<i>Greenspace</i>	Area of protected greenspace established for recreation, alternative transportation, or conservation purposes. Includes ecological, cultural and recreational amenities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain property in as natural a state as possible.</li> <li>• Link greenspaces into a pleasant network of greenways, set aside for pedestrian and bicycle connections between schools, churches, recreation areas, city centers, residential neighborhoods and commercial areas.</li> <li>• Allow only for minimal development and impervious surfaces as is appropriate for recreational uses.</li> <li>• Promote these areas as passive-use tourism and recreation destinations.</li> </ul>
<i>Industrial</i>	Land used in higher intensity manufacturing, assembly, processing activities where noise, particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation, or other nuisance characteristics are not contained on-site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage greater mix of uses (such as retail and services to serve industry employees) to reduce automobile reliance/use on site.</li> <li>• Areas should be masterplanned</li> <li>• Ensure adequate infrastructure for future buildout.</li> </ul>
<i>Mixed Use Redevelopment</i>	Declining, unattractive, vacant or under-utilized area identified for future mixed use development. Area will be developed to include a mix of residential and neighborhood commercial uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential development and commercial uses should be designed to compliment each other and create a live/work environment.</li> <li>• Varied residential uses should be allowed including upstairs residential/ downstairs commercial.</li> </ul>



	<i>Description</i>	<i>Development Strategy</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed use area design should be masterplanned, very pedestrian-oriented, with walkable connections between different uses.</li> <li>• Road edges should be clearly defined by locating buildings at roadside with parking in the rear.</li> <li>• Enhance the pedestrian-friendly environment through streetscape improvements.</li> </ul>
<i>Neighborhood Commercial</i>	A neighborhood focal point with a concentration of activities such as restaurants, retail, service commercial, professional office, and appropriate public and open space uses should be easily accessible by pedestrians.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowable uses should be compatible with neighborhood character and may include a mix of retail, services, and offices</li> <li>• Road edges should be clearly defined by locating buildings at roadside with parking in the rear.</li> <li>• Enhance the pedestrian-friendly environment through streetscaping improvements.</li> <li>• Architectural standards and allowable uses should reflect the local neighborhood character.</li> <li>• No franchise architecture should be permitted in these areas.</li> </ul>
<i>Neighborhood Commercial Corridor</i>	This area is adjacent to the Town Center and allows for a mix of commercial uses that are less intense than those in the regional commercial area. Uses in this area are smaller scale and provide a transition into the Town Center. Development should be consistent with the surrounding areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development includes a mix of retail, services, offices, and other mid-scale commercial uses.</li> <li>• Design standards should be consistent with the desired character of the area.</li> <li>• There should be a smooth transition between higher intensity and lower intensity uses.</li> <li>• Developments should include an appropriate level of pedestrian orientation.</li> </ul>
<i>Office Park</i>	Areas designated for master planned office park development characterized by high degree of access by vehicular traffic, and transit if applicable; on-site parking; and a mix of uses to serve workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop as masterplanned office parks having adequate water, sewer, storm-water, and transportation infrastructure for all component uses at build-out.</li> <li>• Develop design standards for office buildings and landscaping to protect the aesthetics of the development.</li> <li>• Incorporate signage and lighting guidelines to enhance quality image of development.</li> <li>• Incorporate measures to mitigate impacts on the natural environment.</li> </ul>

	<i>Description</i>	<i>Development Strategy</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow for upstairs residential/ downstairs commercial to create a live/work environment.</li> <li>• Encourage mix of uses (such as retail and services to serve office employees) to reduce reliance on automobiles on site.</li> <li>• Office park design should be very pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses within the development</li> </ul>
<i>Regional Commercial Corridor</i>	<p>Concentration of regionally marketed commercial and retail centers, office and employment areas, and higher-education facilities. These areas are characterized by high degree of access by vehicular traffic and transit access. These areas typically have a low degree of internal open space and high floor-area-ratio.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All new development should be accessible through shared driveways and inter-parcel road connections providing alternate access to these developments and reducing curb cuts and traffic on the main highway.</li> <li>• Encourage landscaped medians to provide vehicular safety, aesthetics, and also pedestrian crossing refuge.</li> <li>• Provide paved shoulders or bike lanes that can be used by bicycles or as emergency breakdown lanes.</li> <li>• Coordinate land uses and bike/pedestrian facilities with transit stops, if applicable.</li> <li>• Manage access to keep traffic flowing; using directory signage to developments.</li> <li>• Develop standards for signage and prohibit new billboards.</li> </ul>
<i>Suburban</i>	<p>Area where suburban residential subdivision development is occurring or has already occurred. The City should encourage these areas to develop with high pedestrian orientation, connectivity, and neighborhood-appropriate uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a mix of housing types including traditional neighborhood development (TND) style residential subdivisions.</li> <li>• Internal street connectivity should be encouraged.</li> <li>• Encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain the regional character.</li> <li>• Promote street design that fosters traffic calming and allows for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.</li> </ul>

	<i>Description</i>	<i>Development Strategy</i>
<i>Town Center</i>	A focal point for several neighborhoods that has a concentration of activities such as general retail, service commercial, professional office, higher-density housing, and appropriate public and open space uses easily accessible by pedestrians.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Center should include a relatively high-density mix of retail, office, services, and employment.</li> <li>• Residential development should reinforce the town center through locating higher density housing options adjacent to the center, targeted to a broad range of income levels, including multi-family town homes, apartments and condominiums.</li> <li>• Design for each Town Center should be very pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses.</li> <li>• Road edges should be clearly defined by locating buildings at roadside with parking in the rear.</li> <li>• Include direct connections to the greenspace, trail networks, and sidewalks.</li> <li>• Enhance the pedestrian-friendly environment, by adding sidewalks and creating other pedestrian-friendly trail/bike routes linking to neighboring communities and major destinations, such as libraries, neighborhood centers, health facilities, commercial clusters, parks, schools, etc.</li> </ul>
<i>Residential Mixed Use</i>	Residential area that contains a mix of neighborhood commercial uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial uses and architecture should be consistent with the residential character of the area.</li> <li>• Commercial uses should be low-intensity retail, office, and service uses.</li> <li>• Street connectivity and trails should be encouraged to provide a link between residential areas and commercial uses.</li> </ul>

# APPENDIX **B**

## Public Meeting Agendas



**CITY OF SUGAR HILL  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

*City Council Planning Session Meeting  
September 4, 2007 ~ 7:00 PM*

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## Agenda

- I. Introduction (5 Min.)**
  - a. DCA Rules
  - b. Submission Schedule
  - c. Comprehensive Plan Elements
  
- II. Community Assessment (15 Min.)**
  - a. Character Areas
  - b. Data Assessment
  - c. Issues & Opportunities
  - d. Quality Community Objectives
  
- III. Next Steps (5 Min.)**
  - a. Community Participation Plan
  - b. Resolution to Submit
  - c. Community Agenda
  
- IV. Questions**
  
- V. Adjourn**