CITY OF ALPHARETTA
2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Community Participation Program

Prepared for:
City of Alpharetta
Alpharetta, Georgia

By:

MACTEC

MACTEC Engineering and Consulting, Inc.
Atlanta, Georgia

In association with:

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# Table of Contents

## Introduction .................................................................................................................................................. 3
- Purpose .................................................................................................................................................. 3
- Scope .................................................................................................................................................. 3

## Identification of Stakeholders .................................................................................................................. 5
- Mayor and City Council .......................................................................................................................... 5
- Steering Committee ............................................................................................................................... 5
- Project Management Team .................................................................................................................... 5
- Specific Groups Targeted for Outreach .................................................................................................. 6

## Participation Techniques ........................................................................................................................ 7
- Steering Committee ............................................................................................................................... 7
- General Public Meetings ........................................................................................................................ 7
- Additional Information Gathering Techniques ....................................................................................... 9
- Public Relations Strategies ................................................................................................................... 9

## Schedule for Completion of the Community Agenda .............................................................................. 11
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INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Community Participation Program for Alpharetta

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Community Participation Program is to ensure that the City of Alpharetta 2030 Comprehensive Plan reflects the full range of the community's values and desires, by involving a diverse group of stakeholders in the development of the plan. This broad-based participation, through stakeholder commitment and involvement, will help ensure that the plan is implemented.

SCOPE

The Community Participation Program provides a 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 the sections below:

- Identification of Stakeholders
- Identification of Participation Techniques
- Schedule for Completion of the Final Plan
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IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

Outline of the Comprehensive Plan’s diverse group of community stakeholders set to be involved in the development of the Community Agenda

Coordination and oversight are very important parts of the overall work effort for this project. This approach, to ensure proper management of the process, includes oversight by the Alpharetta Mayor and City Council, Steering Committee and city staff.

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

Arthur Letchas  
Mayor

Mike Kennedy  
City Council – Post 2

Cheryl Oakes  
City Council – Post 4

Douglas J. DeRito  
City Council – Post 1

Chris Owens  
City Council – Post 3

D. C. Aiken  
City Council – Post 6

STEERING COMMITTEE

Larry Attig  
Downtown Property Owner

Kyle Caswell  
Planning Commission

Eric Graves  
City Staff – Traffic Engineering

Mike Kennedy  
City Council

Cheryl Rand  
Recreation Commission

Georgia Barrow  
Development Authority

Dennis Chapman  
North Farm Subdivision

Paul Gwyn  
Downtown Property Owner

Debbie Michelet  
Senior Population

Fred Smith  
Downtown Property Owner

Fergal Brady  
Code Enforcement Board

Richard Debban  
Downtown Property Owner

Bill Johnson  
WCSA (Windward)

Tom Miller  
Windward Subdivision

Jeff Stallard  
Design Review Board

Howard Carson  
Private Sector Developer

Tom DiGiovani  
Berkshire Manor Subdivision

Eamon Keegan  
Youth Population

John Monson  
Arrowood Subdivision

Richard Wernick  
Private Sector Developer

PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM

Diana Wheeler  
City of Alpharetta  
Community Development Director

Christopher Jones  
City of Alpharetta Economic Development Coordinator

Bog Regus  
City Administrator

Ron Huffman, AICP, ASLA  
MACTEC

Marty Sewell, AICP  
MACTEC

Lynn Pierson  
City of Alpharetta Plans Administrator/  
Zoning Administrator

Dora Tejada  
City of Alpharetta  
GIS Specialist

Lee Walton, AICP  
MACTEC

Paige Hatley, AICP  
MACTEC

Steve Cover, AICP  
MACTEC

Brad Davis  
MACTEC
SPECIFIC GROUPS TARGETED FOR OUTREACH

Developing a shared vision for the community requires input from all segments of the population. As recommended by DCA, the planning process will incorporate techniques (described in Chapter 3 of this document) that target outreach to the following diverse range of stakeholders/stakeholder groups in order to provide each with the opportunity to participate:

- Banks
- Beautification/community cleanup organizations
- Bicycle, hiking clubs
- Business owners, managers
- Greater North Fulton Chamber of Commerce
- Churches, ecumenical councils
- Community development corporations
- Community residents representing a diverse range of backgrounds and interests
- Community service organizations
- Convention and Visitors Bureaus or other local/regional tourism officials
- Developers (profit and non-profit) and related planning and design consultants
- Downtown or area business people
- Entrepreneurs
- Environmental organizations
- Federal, state, regional agencies with local jurisdiction
- High school/college student representatives
- Insurance companies
- Land trusts
- Library boards
- Local Family Connection Collaborative
- Local/regional news media
- Local/regional tourism officials
- Low income groups
- Major employers
- Municipal agencies and authorizes
- Neighborhood organizations (including HOAs)
- Other interested community parties not included in this list
- Planning commission, design review board, board of zoning appeals, preservation commission, and key staff
- Preservation organization and historical societies
- Property owners, including major land holders
- Public and private schools systems and colleges and universities
- Public and private Utility Boards/Directors
- Public Community Health Officials
- Public safety officials
- Real estate professionals
- Regional office of the Georgia EPD
- School boards
- Senior Population
- North Fulton Community Improvement District
- State agencies with substantial local facilities in the area
- Trade associations (home builders, etc)
- Under-represented, marginalized groups
PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES

Identification of the specific techniques to be used during the Comprehensive Plan planning process that will help develop the Community Agenda.

Alpharetta will rely heavily on public input during the preparation of the Community Agenda. Techniques described below will include stakeholder interviews, Steering Committee meetings, interviews, workshops, the creation of a web site, press releases, an open house, public hearings, and presentations to elected officials.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee is charged with providing feedback, advising the MACTEC Team, and providing assistance in shaping the overall planning process. Individuals invited to participate on the Steering Committee represent a wide range of interest groups and, to some extent, are intended to serve as a microcosm of the community. They may include a mix of key property owners, neighborhood leaders, local business and other economic development professionals, community service providers, area residents, and others vested in the future development of the city and region (see list on page 2-1). The committee will meet regularly during the planning process often meeting in advance of major public meetings. The Steering Committee will assist with keeping the project on schedule, reviewing the preliminary data and findings, providing a “reality check” to the staff and planning team, and serving as a political barometer for plan recommendations.

GENERAL PUBLIC MEETINGS

Kickoff Meeting

The purpose of the Kickoff Meeting is to announce the beginning of the planning process to the citizens and other stakeholders and provide opportunity to view a presentation covering the project purpose and general plan approach. Initial opinion surveys and volunteer sign up forms are available at this meeting.

Community Workshops

Alpharetta will conduct two phases of community workshops during the development of the plan. Visioning workshops will make up phase one. A Framework workshop makes up phase two. Each phase is briefly described below.
Visioning Workshops

The visioning workshops (five total held in locations throughout the city) are facilitated meetings designed to determine the community vision and address the three key planning questions – “What do we have?” “What do we want?” and “How will we get it?” These will be highly interactive meetings where attendees work in groups to draw maps, develop goals and policies, and design their community. The MACTEC Team will use the input from the workshops to finalize the issues and opportunities, character areas and to define the community vision. An evaluation of a series of visual images categorized by housing types and styles, streetscape appearance, open space, commercial areas, and other design or use types will take place. The planning team will ask participants to state a preference as images showing alternative designs are displayed side by side. The planning team will tabulate the results for presentation in later meetings.

Framework Workshops

A framework workshop will take place following the visioning workshop. The workshop will include a presentation of the information gathered during the visioning workshop, including recommendations for addressing the issues and opportunities. The MACTEC Team will facilitate exercises with the participants intended to fine tune the community vision, including a discussion of the draft Future Development Map. The framework workshop provides the opportunity to specifically discuss key areas of the community where more specific implementation plans are warranted to ensure implementation of the community vision. The MACTEC Team will use the input from the workshop to prepare a final draft of the issues and opportunities, character areas and community vision and to begin exploring specific strategies designed to implement the community vision.

Open House

The open house will take place following the framework workshop in advance of the Transmittal Public Hearings for the Community Agenda. Participants will view the Community Agenda, including the Future Development Map and implementation plan, and will also have the opportunity to offer comments that may result in changes to the plan. The open house format allows participants to drop in at their convenience and stay as long as they wish.

Public Hearings

Public hearings will be held in two rounds during the planning process at the meetings of the Alpharetta City Council. The first public hearing, the Transmittal Resolution for the Community Assessment and Community Participation Program, will announce to the public that the planning process for updating the comprehensive plan is underway. The second public hearing, the Transmittal Resolution for the Community Agenda, will brief the community on the contents of the Community Agenda. The following paragraphs describe the two public meetings in greater detail.

Public Hearing I: Transmittal of Community Assessment/Community Participation Program

This public hearing will inform the public of the Community Participation Program, including the project schedule and how the community can get involved as outlined in this document. It also provides the community an opportunity to comment on the draft Community Assessment. The Community Assessment highlights the issues and opportunities that will be taken into consideration in developing the Community Agenda. Following the public hearing, and based on input from the public and city officials, the Community Assessment, Analysis of Supporting Data, and Community
Participation Program documents will be transmitted to the Atlanta Regional Commission for review and comment.

Public Hearing 2: Transmittal of the Community Agenda

At this public hearing, the consultant team will present the Community Agenda to the City Council following an Open House. The hearing provides an opportunity for residents to make final suggestions, additions, or revisions and to be informed of when the Community Agenda will be submitted to ARC for review. Following the public hearing, and based on input from the public and city officials, the Community Agenda will be transmitted to ARC for review and comment.

Additional Information Gathering Techniques

Stakeholder Interviews

During the development of the plan, the MACTEC Team will conduct one-on-one interviews with key community leaders using a standardized series of questions designed to gather detailed information about Alpharetta’s future. Information collected during stakeholder interviews will assist in the development of the goals, objectives, and strategies for the comprehensive planning process.

Community Survey

The planning team will distribute a community survey to those who attended the Kickoff meeting in order to solicit comments, seek opinions, and begin to identify community goals. The MACTEC Team and county and city staff will meet with the local newspaper and request that each include in multiple editions a copy of a printed survey that residents can complete and submit for consideration in the planning process. The survey provides an opportunity for stakeholders to provide the MACTEC Team input related to the issues and opportunities facing Alpharetta. Surveys will also be made available for distribution strategically-located properties, such as the Crabapple Government Center, City Hall, and the Roswell Street Community Center. In addition, the survey will be made available online on the project website. Surveys may also be made available at an information table at City Hall.

Public Relations Strategies

Press Releases

Press releases will be prepared and distributed to the newspapers that serve the Alpharetta area. The press releases will be used to announce public meetings and the posting of documents for public review. Press releases will include contact information for Alpharetta public officials and consultant team staff.

Web Site

The consultant team has created a project website, www.alpharettaplan.com, to serve as a portal for plan information throughout the planning process. Browsers will be able to download the documents for review as well as agendas and presentations from public meetings in PDF. The
website will include meeting schedules, background information regarding planning in Georgia, and links to sources for additional information. It will also include contact information in order to submit comments by traditional mail, by e-mail, or by telephone. A link to the site will be provided on the city’s website.

**Email “blast” Database**

Periodic mass mailings by email to provide important notices and other information are also a tool for distributing information. At public meetings, attendees can provide their e-mail addresses on the sign in sheet. Periodic progress e-mails and future meeting announcements will then be sent to the distribution list.

**Other Methods**

Beyond the use of newspapers and the Internet for notification, there are many other alternatives for getting the word out.

**Newsletter**

Newsletters of community groups and neighborhood associations are a great way to target information of interest in a particular geographic area or to specific interest groups.

**Flyers**

The consultant team will prepare an announcement flyer to be printed and post – with permission – in high traffic areas such as libraries, shopping areas, schools, and colleges.

**Information Display**

An information display can be set up in the lobby of City Hall that includes a display of photographs, maps, and planning features for all visitors to the building to visit.

**Online Social Media**

The planning team will incorporate social media to further inform the public and provide opportunities for input. The team will set up a Facebook page and a Twitter account.
SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION OF THE COMMUNITY AGENDA

Outline of the schedule proposed for preparation, review and adoption of the City of Alpharetta 2030 Comprehensive Plan Community Agenda

The full proposed schedule for completion of the Plan is as follows:

Community Assessment/Community Participation Program Transmittal Resolution Public Hearings
- September 27, 2010

Public Citywide Kickoff Meeting
- November 9, 2010

Visioning Workshops (five total)
- Week of November 29, 2010
- Week of December 6, 2010

Framework Workshop
- January 11, 2011

Steering Committee Meetings
- July 19, 2010
- August 17, 2010
- October 26, 2010
- January 31, 2011
- March 3, 2011 (conducted in conjunction with the regularly-scheduled Planning Commission meeting)
- March 31, 2011

Open House and Final Plan Draft Review
- March 22, 2011

Community Agenda Transmittal Resolution Public Hearings
- May 23, 2011

Adoption
- August to October 2011