

Middle Georgia Regional Plan

2011-2031



Stakeholder Involvement Program

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Stakeholder Involvement Program

Adopted, _____(date)_____
by the Middle Georgia Regional Council

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Introduction

The development of the Middle Georgia Regional Plan began in mid-2009 with the Regional Assessment and is scheduled to be completed by June 2011. The purpose of the Stakeholder Involvement Program is to outline the various strategies and techniques that will be used by the Middle Georgia Regional Commission to obtain adequate public and stakeholder involvement in the preparation of the Regional Agenda portion of the Middle Georgia Regional Plan. The Stakeholder Involvement Program is organized in three sections: 1) Identification of Stakeholders, 2) Identification of Participation Techniques, and 3) Schedule of Completion of the Regional Agenda.

The communities within the 11-county Middle Georgia Region range from large urban centers to small rural towns. The presence of Robins Air Force Base also contributes to Middle Georgia's distinct character, impacting the requirements of and opportunities within the region. Due to the regional nature of the plan and the diverse needs of the communities, which comprise the region, it is essential that a variety of outreach efforts are utilized to engage broad-based participation from regional policymakers to special interest groups, citizens, and other stakeholders. The identified stakeholder involvement methods range from website and email updates to newspaper notices and public meetings, all of which are further described below in the Participation Techniques section. All outreach efforts will be coordinated and utilized to proactively disseminate accurate information about the planning process and to receive input and feedback about the Regional Agenda.



Identification of Stakeholders

The development of the Regional Agenda necessitates input from a variety of stakeholders, from local government officials and community organizations to development professionals and the general public. The following is the initial list of identified stakeholders; however, as this process progresses additional stakeholders are likely to be identified and will be added to this list as necessary.

- All Local Governments
 - Baldwin County
 - City of Milledgeville
 - Bibb County
 - City of Macon
 - Town of Payne City
 - Crawford County
 - City of Roberta
 - Houston County
 - City of Centerville
 - City of Perry
 - City of Warner Robins
 - Jones County
 - City of Gray
 - Monroe County
 - City of Culloden
 - City of Forsyth
 - Peach County
 - City of Byron
 - City of Fort Valley
 - Pulaski County
 - City of Hawkinsville
 - Putnam County
 - City of Eatonton
 - Twiggs County
 - Town of Danville
 - City of Jeffersonville
 - Wilkinson County
 - Town of Allentown
 - City of Gordon
 - City of Irwinton
 - Town of Ivey
 - City of McIntyre
 - City of Toombsboro
- Arts Councils
- Banks
- Better Hometowns
- Boards of Education/Private Schools
- Business Leaders
- Chambers of Commerce
- Citizens
- Colleges and Universities
- Community Organizations
- Convention and Visitors Bureaus
- Cooperative Extensions
- Developers
- Development Authorities
- Environmental Organizations
- Farm Bureau
- Georgia Forestry Commission



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- Historical Societies
 - Hospitals/Medical Centers
 - Joint Development Authorities
 - Main Street
 - Middle Georgia Historic Preservation Advisory Committee
 - Middle Georgia Regional Commission Council
 - Metropolitan Planning Organizations (Macon Area Transportation Study and Warner Robins Area Transportation Study)
 - NewTown Macon
 - Non-profit Organizations
 - Historic Preservation Organizations (Historic Macon Foundation / Georgia Trust)
 - Public Safety Officials
 - Robins Air Force Base
 - State and Federal Agencies (Department of Natural Resources, Department of Economic Development, Department of Transportation, Department of Human Resources)
 - Utilities Companies (Georgia Power, EMCs)



Identification of Participation Techniques

The following outreach and participation techniques are intended to provide timely, accurate information while capturing a broad range of stakeholder and community input throughout the process of developing the Regional Agenda.

Email Blasts. Planning staff will compile a database of stakeholder email addresses. Attendees to the open house and public meetings will be given the option of providing an email address and being added to the database. The stakeholder email database will be utilized to notify stakeholders of project milestones, to provide opportunities for input, and to announce meetings and public hearings.

Lobby Display. Both a moveable display board and a printed public information sheet containing information about the Regional Plan, the process, and information sought will be made available in the Regional Commission office lobby. A wide range of individuals visit the Regional Commission offices during the course of a day, from elderly and disabled persons meeting with the Aging Services staff to community leaders and elected officials. The Regional Commission's conference facilities are also used on a regular basis by a variety of organizations and agencies. Making information available in a highly visible location at the Commission office allows visitors to peruse the information at their leisure and even enables them to speak with the staff directly on an informal basis.

Media Plan. The Regional Commission staff will develop press releases at certain milestones and public meeting notices periodically throughout the planning process.

Open House. The Open House will be the kick-off event for public information and outreach efforts during the development of the Regional Agenda. Intentionally casual, the event will provide a forum for informal discussion and exchange of ideas. Information presented at the Open House will include maps, informational fliers, the draft Regional Assessment, and printed survey forms. Ideally, the Open House will run all day in a conference room at the Regional Commission offices. The information will be available in the Regional Commission lobby to inform and obtain input from Council members.

Project Team Meetings. Regional Commission staff will meet bi-monthly (more frequently when necessary) to maintain the desired timelines, benchmarks, and overall direction of the plan process.

Questionnaire. A questionnaire will be developed to obtain stakeholder input and will be made available at Open House and on the Regional Commission website. The questionnaire will be used to assist with crafting the regional vision statement and identifying additional areas requiring special attention and issues and opportunities.

Regional Commission Council. The involvement of the Middle Georgia Regional Commission Council will be sought during plan development. Specific techniques will include providing information about the plan and input opportunities prior to monthly Council Meetings as well as providing updates to the Council via email, when appropriate.

Required Public Hearing. As mandated by the State Planning Requirements, a public hearing will be held at the end of the planning process to present stakeholders and the general public with the final draft Regional Agenda prior to the document's transmittal to DCA for review and comment.

Stakeholder Interviews. The Regional Commission staff will meet

with identified stakeholders and Council members to identify major community issues and discuss opportunities and specific action items for inclusion in the Regional Agenda. Information and input will also be solicited at regular meetings of regional special interest groups or organizations, such as the Middle Georgia Historic Preservation Advisory Committee (HPAC), the Middle Georgia Clean Air Coalition (MGCAC), Macon Area Transportation Study (MATS), etc.

Website Information. A page on the Middle Georgia Regional Commission website will be dedicated to the Regional Plan. The webpage will provide periodic updates on the planning process and will include information such as meeting schedules, announcements, and draft portions of the Regional Agenda, including preliminary maps. The Regionally Important Resources Plan and draft Regional Assessment and Stakeholder Involvement Plan will also be available. To enable the exchange of information and suggestions, the webpage will also include contact information for staff and encourage email transmissions between staff, stakeholders, and the general public to obtain input about the posted information.



Schedule for Completion of the Regional Agenda

The Schedule for Completion of the Regional Agenda reflects the Middle Georgia Regional Commission's approach to plan development. The following schedule is adapted from the suggested schedules provided in the State Planning Recommendations to meet the specific needs and circumstances of the Middle Georgia region. The schedule consists of both internal project deadlines and corresponding stakeholder participation techniques, including specific events aimed at including the Regional Commission Council.



