

GREATER COOK COUNTY 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Community Participation Program

Cook County and the Cities of Adel, Cecil, Lenox and Sparks



September 2009

Prepared by the:



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The preparation and implementation of the Community Participation Program (CPP) is an important first step to involve the citizens in the development of the Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of the CPP is to ensure that the citizens of Cook County and its municipalities are aware of the planning process and have sufficient opportunity to review and comment on the Comprehensive Plan. The CPP also creates a dialogue between citizens, businesses, owners, other stakeholders and elected officials and with this two-way communication opens the way for a unified vision for Cook County and its municipalities that will be supported by the public.

1.2 Requirements for Success

Pursuant to the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Chapter 110-12-01 (Local Planning Requirements), Greater Cook County has to update its Comprehensive Plan by July 31, 2010, in order to maintain its Qualified Local Government Status (QLG).

The Community Participation Program (CPP), as prescribed by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), will follow the intent of the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005.

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission (SGRC) will guide the citizen participation efforts associated with the Comprehensive Plan. Several meetings will be held to inform and educate the citizens about the project and to solicit their input in the definition of the Plan's vision, values, priorities, goals, objectives and policies. The meetings will be held for the unincorporated area of Cook County and the Cities of Adel, Cecil, Lenox and Sparks.

The SGRC will also solicit input from other groups within the County, including, but not limited to appropriate City and County staff, Greater Cook County Planning Commission, City Councils, County Commissioners, Chamber of Commerce, and the Business Development Authority.

The following principles will guide the successful implementation of this Community Participation Program and the development of the Comprehensive Plan:

- 1) The public has a say in decisions about actions that affect their lives;
- 2) The public is involved as early as possible in the community participation and decision-making process in order to build trust;
- 3) The involvement of those potentially affected is sought and participants are encouraged to assist in defining how they participate;
- 4) Participants are provided with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way;
- 5) Education and participation are directly combined whenever possible; and
- 6) The needs and concerns of the public are listened to and their input is integrated into the outcome.

2. IDENTIFICATION OF COMMITTEES AND STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders are those who affect and/or are affected by the development and implementation of the Greater Cook County Comprehensive Plan. The following is a list of stakeholders whose involvement will be beneficial to the development of the Plan. This list is not all-inclusive and all interested parties are encouraged to actively participate in the development the Comprehensive Plan.

2.1 Technical Advisory Committee

This is the professional city and county staff selected to work closely with the Southern Georgia RC to provide techniques, tools and strategies needed to inform the citizens regarding the Comprehensive Plan.

Technical Advisory Committee Membership

- Jerry Permenter - City Manager
- Bill Twomey - County Manager
- Michael Felts – Planning & Zoning
- Kerry Waldron – Development Authority
- Jan Folsom – Cook County Board of Education
- Jan Sanchez – Adel Cook County Chamber of Commerce
- David Mainor – Adel Water Department
- Dixon Sinclair – Adel Solid Waste
- Charlie Bridges – Engineer, Cook Solid Waste
- Wayne Giddens -Public Works, Interim EMA Director
- John Daughtrey – Cook County Sheriff
- Marty Stafford – City of Sparks Police Chief
- Jimmy Walker – City of Adel Fire Chief
- Angela Wall - SGRC Environmental Planner
- Michael Jacobs – SGRC Historic Preservation Planner

2.2 Stakeholder/Steering Committee

The Steering Committee for the Greater Cook County Comprehensive Plan update consists of County and City representatives and members from business and community organizations to advise, review and help shape the overall plan process. A listing of the stakeholders follows on the next page.

ELECTED OFFICIALS	
Organization/Group/Individual	Organization/Group/Individual
City of Adel Mayor & Council	City of Sparks Mayor & Council
City of Cecil Mayor & Council	Cook County Chairman & Commission
City of Lenox Mayor & Council	
COMMISSIONS/BOARDS/ DEPARTMENTS	
Organization/Group/Individual	Organization/Group/Individual
City of Adel Manager & Clerk	Cook County Manager & Clerk
City of Adel Fire Dept.	Cook County Sheriff Dept.
City of Cecil Clerk	Cook County Bldg Inspector / Zoning Administrator
City of Cecil Fire Dept.	Cook County Economic Development Commission
City of Lenox Clerk	Cook County Planning Commission
City of Lenox Fire Dept.	Cook County Health Department
City of Sparks Clerk	Cook County Board of Education
City of Sparks Fire Dept.	Southern Georgia Regional Commission Planning Staff
City of Sparks Police Dept.	
COMMUNITY / BUSINESS GROUPS	
Organization/Group/Individual	Organization/Group/Individual
Adel Industrial Development Authority	Cook County Chamber of Commerce
Lenox Agriculture Services	Greene Home Center
Cook County Council for the Council	Memorial Hospital of Adel
BASF Industry	Adel Steel Inc.
Greater Cook County Boys & Girls Club	Adel News
Citizens	Airport Authority

2.3 Other Stakeholders

Other stakeholders include representatives of various agencies and organizations such as the colleges, various schools, media, Faith-based organizations, civic associations, advocacy groups, homeowners associations, realtors and the Chamber of Commerce.

Stakeholders will be called upon to assist with the development of the Community Assessment and Community Vision, leading to the Goals and Objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. Presently there are over 58 names of people that have expressed interest and are receiving regular updates and invitations to the stakeholder meetings.

3. IDENTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES

The goal of the Community Participation Plan is to educate the public and media on the Comprehensive Plan process and content. In order to achieve broad participation, all segments of the population will be included. The following provides an overview on the public participation process and how it will be implemented.

3.1 Visioning Workshop/Kick-off Meeting

A Community Visioning/Kick-off meeting was held to announce the planning process to the citizens, and stakeholder committee and provide an overview of the Comprehensive Plan's purpose and general approach for completion. The meeting was held on July 8, 2009, from 9am – 12 pm at the Cook County Administration Building in Adel, Georgia.

The goals of this workshop were:

- a) to identify the vision of the participants for Greater Cook County 20 years from now and translate this vision into goals and policies; and
- b) to identify issues and opportunities facing the area, including strengths and weaknesses; and
- c) to identify development characteristics and boundaries for proposed character areas;
- d) to establish participation and support for each planning area in the development of the joint Comprehensive Plan.

3.2 Initial Public Hearing

Following several stakeholder meetings, as required by the State Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, public hearings before the Cook County Board of County Commissioners and City Councils were and will be held to announce that the planning for the update of the Greater Cook County Comprehensive Plan is underway. Southern Georgia RC staff made a brief presentation to outline the schedule and any further public involvement opportunities. At the meeting scheduled for September 8th, 2009, the public has final opportunity to comment on the draft Community Participation Program and the draft Community Assessment. Previous input and public involvement opportunities through the stakeholder meetings will have been provided prior to this public hearing. Following the public hearing and including the input from the public and County and City officials, the Community Participation document and Community Assessment will be transmitted to the DCA for their review and comment. Cook County and the Cities of Adel, Cecil, Lenox and Sparks will advertise all public hearings in compliance with adopted guidelines for public notification.

3.3 Stakeholder/Steering Committee Meetings

The Stakeholder Committee will provide continued guidance and feedback throughout the Comprehensive Plan's update process. Meetings will be scheduled at regular intervals to ensure review and buy-in of deliverables and in advance of and as a follow-up to public meetings and hearings.

3.4 Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder interviews will be held as appropriate and are intended to identify major issues and to develop a complete understanding of public opinions, comments and concerns. These issues include potential sources of conflict and controversy as well as perceived or real barriers to implementation. Participants in the interviews may include community leaders from various geographic, socio-economic and business sectors of the community who are committed to the success of the Comprehensive Plan. Results of any stakeholder interviews will be incorporated into the development of the Comprehensive Plan.

3.5 Public Hearing for Plan Transmittal

The Southern Georgia RC staff will make a brief presentation of the highlights of the Greater Cook County Comprehensive Plan at public hearings before the Cook County Board of County Commission and City Officials. The purpose of the public hearings will be to authorize the draft of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan to be sent to DCA for review. All public hearings will be advertised in compliance with adopted guidelines for public notification.

3.6 Project Website

The Southern Georgia RC will have a special link on its home page to a webpage that will provide information on the progress of the planning process. Additional links to the webpage will be available through Cook County. This site will provide information on the Comprehensive Plan's three components including status and drafts for review. The site will also announce meeting opportunities for citizen involvement, provide contact information for staff, and will provide a dedicated e-mail address for questions and comments. The following are websites through which to access the comprehensive plan website: www.sgrc.us, www.cityofadel.us, www.cookcountyga.us, www.adelcookchamber.org, and www.cookcountyedc.us.

3.7 Public Information Outreach Plan

The Southern Georgia RC will coordinate the development of an effective media plan to publicize the Plan and its progress to the citizens and other stakeholders. The following activities may also be used to inform the media and the citizens:

- a) Adel News
- b) Media Coverage

Media outlets such as print, radio and television will be educated about the plan through the use of briefings and media sessions. The development of press releases, stories, columns and interviews will be used to inform the Public.

- c) Public Information Materials

Outreach materials will be created and used to help the public understand the comprehensive planning process, distribute information and encourage feedback. The materials will be distributed at public meetings and other geographic locations and may include items such as fact sheets, comment forms, surveys, displays, flyers, notices and a mailing distribution data base.

4 . SCHEDULE FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE COMMUNITY AGENDA

The following is a schedule for the completion of the Community Agenda of the 2030 Greater Cook County Comprehensive Plan. For future updates to the completion schedule visit the Greater Cook County 2030 webpage on the Southern Georgia RC website (www.sgrc.us) or on the Cook County (www.cookcountyga.us) or City of Adel (www.cityofadel.us) websites or call the Southern Georgia RC at 229.333.5277.

DATE	OBJECTIVE
July 8, 2009,	1 st Public Workshop (Kick-off Event) with Steering Committee and expanded Stakeholder Group to explain planning process to the community and receive preliminary input
July 8 – August 15, 2009	Community-wide workshops to discuss and prioritize the preliminary Issues and Opportunities list and outline preliminary boundaries for Character Areas & Areas of Special Attention
July 8 – September 1, 2009	Processing of public, Steering Committee and Stakeholder input and feedback to Southern Georgia RC to draft CPP and Community Assessment
September 2, 2009	Review & final comment on DRAFT Community Participation Program and Community Assessment
September 8, 14, 17 and 21, 2009	Public Hearings on the draft Community Assessment and Public Participation Program and subsequent transmittal to DCA for review
October – March, 2010	Develop Draft Community Agenda through meetings with Stakeholder Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committee for feedback and input
April, 2010	Community wide Public Meeting to present Draft Community Agenda and receive final comments and revisions.
May 15, 2010	2nd Special Joint Public Hearing to transmit Draft Community Agenda to DCA for review
May 15 – June 15, 2010	DCA Review period
July 31, 2010	Adoption of 2030 Comprehensive Plan by Cook County, and the Cities of Adel, Cecil, Lenox and Sparks