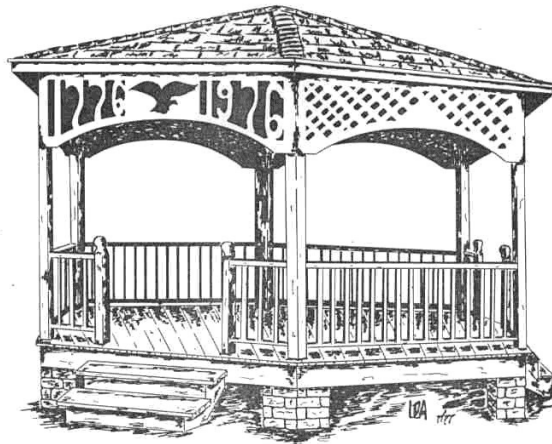


THE CITY OF HOSCHTON

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2010-2030

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM



April 2010

Prepared by the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission



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1. Community Participation Program Overview

1.1 Purpose

One of the best ways to strengthen communities is to create opportunities for citizens to work collaboratively on the challenges and opportunities that shape their hometown. Accomplishing this requires political leadership, citizen education, and active involvement. A successful comprehensive plan relies on a process of thinking about and visualizing a desired future. It is about establishing and carrying on a dialogue within the community concerning its vision for evolving and growing. This Community Participation Program was crafted with these principles in mind and establishes a two-way line of communication between residents and their government officials, with the overall goal of quality decisions supported by the public.

1.2 Scope

The City of Hoschton is required by Georgia law to complete its Comprehensive Plan Update by October __, 2010. The plan will be prepared in accordance with the Advanced Planning Level Local Planning Requirements from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA; Chapter 110-12-1), effective May 1, 2005.

1.3 Requirements for Success

Experience in public involvement has shown that lasting solutions are best identified when all segments of a community – individuals, elected officials, educators, the business community, and civic organizations – are brought together in a spirit of cooperation. A collaborative approach to community engagement is not an opportunity, but a necessity. Involvement and engagement of the community is done for three reasons:

- Educate the public and increase awareness
- Capture the knowledge and preferences of the people who live in and support the community
- Mobilize support for and acceptance of the plan

The measure of effectiveness of a public involvement program is not how well the public has been informed, but to what degree its input has contributed to making decisions that are feasible and are supported by a large segment of the community and its elected officials.

Public comment and sentiment are a rich source of information about peoples' values and philosophies. These tenets must be interpreted into meaningful information to guide the project. It is essential to know the community's values to avoid, minimize, and mitigate potential impacts as well as narrow the field of possible solutions. This process is designed to accomplish the following:

- Maximize the quality of decision-making
- Increase ease of implementation
- Provide greater public understanding and ownership of community goals and objectives
- Provide tangible evidence that the community has created its own identity



2. Identification of Stakeholders

Coordination and oversight are critical parts of the overall work effort for this project. A network of community groups, agencies, and individuals have been identified to help guide the planning process.

2.1 Government & Education

Elected Officials of the City of Hoschton and Jackson County
Hoschton Planning and Zoning Commission
Hoschton Historic Commission
Hoschton Economic Development Commission
West Jackson Fire Department
Jackson County Water and Sewer Authority
Jackson County Board of Education
Jackson County Recreation Department

2.2 Civic and Religious Groups

Hoschton Women's Civic Club
Hoschton Business Alliance
Hoschton First Baptist Church
Hoschton United Methodist Church
Church of God of Prophecy
New Community Church
Wesley Chapel
AME Church

2.3 Other Stakeholders

Gary & Olssen Developers
Pirkle Family
John Buchannan
Estate of Scott Hudgens
Bill and Edna Sell
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)



3. Identification of Participation Techniques

3.1 Initial Public Hearing

A public hearing to present the draft Community Participation Program and draft Community Assessment to the public is scheduled for May 3, 2010.

3.2 Community Input & Visioning

One meeting will be held for the City of Hoschton in July 2010. Participants will be led through a series of exercises to create a vision and refine the issues and opportunities identified in the Community Assessment.

The end product of the Community Visioning Meeting will be an illustration and description of a desired community, as expressed in the following terms:

- Strengths and weaknesses of quality of life for the City
- Opportunities and threats that could affect the quality of life in Hoschton over the next 20 years
- Quality of life that the stakeholders and participants in the workshops envision for the City 20 years from now
- Factors of change and major decisions that will be required to move the City from where it is today to where participants would like it to be
- Benchmarks, or measurable indicators, of quality of life that will be used to evaluate success over the course of the planning horizon

Additionally, mailed, telephoned, faxed, and emailed comments will be accepted throughout the planning process.

3.3 Adoption Process

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (RC) will present the draft Community Agenda at a public hearing before transmittal from the City to the RC for regional and state review. After the RC and DCA review the Community Agenda, the final draft will be presented to the Council and the public for adoption at a regular local government meeting. The tentative date for these transmittal hearings is August with final adoption in October.

3.4 Outreach

Varieties of techniques will be used to disseminate pertinent information to participants. Civic leaders, churches, and educational groups will assist in notifying the public regarding participation opportunities through press releases, fliers, and other information pertaining to the project. Additionally, the RC will work with the local newspaper, the Jackson-Herald, to see that details on the planning process are periodically published as well as a reminder that information concerning the plan and draft documents will be posted to the Northeast Georgia Planning web site (www.negplanning.org).



4. Schedule for Completion of the Community Agenda

The graphic below shows the schedule for completion of the Comprehensive Plan Update. Major upcoming milestones in this schedule include:

Community Input and Visioning Meeting - July 2010

This meeting will address the following areas:

- Community Vision
- Issues and Opportunities
- Policies
- Future Development Map
- Character Areas for Future Development (for Defining Narrative)
- Short Term Work Program

Public Hearing for Transmittal of the Community Agenda to RC - August 2010

A public hearing consistent with DCA regulations will be held in August 2010.

Adoption of the Community Agenda - October 2010

The City Council will transmit the Agenda to the RC and DCA in September fo October adoption.

Time-line for Completion

	July	August	September	October
Community Meeting	X			
Public Hearing		X		
Review of Community Agenda		X	X	
Adopt Community Agenda				X