

# Colquitt County

Community Participation Program

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# Introduction

The Community Participation Program is the second portion in the Comprehensive Plan development process. Whereas the Community Assessment explains “what we have” in place on the ground, at this exact moment in time, the Community Participation Program is the means that will be used to decipher, “what we want” in place on the ground, over the next 20 years.

This document outlines how the Cities and County will engage the public in the development of the most important part of the plan, the Community Agenda; the “how are we going to get what we want” portion. Colquitt County’s Participation program will include citizens of all ages in a variety of activities. Some activities will require only a small amount of effort on the part of citizens, while others will be more involved and require a bit more time and commitment.

This document has three sections:

*Potential Stakeholders* – a preliminary list of groups and organizations that have a stake in the plan and are more likely to be impacted by the direction provided within the Community Agenda. As the process moves along, groups may be added or subtracted as necessary.

*Participation Techniques* – a listing and description of all of the community activities that will be undertaken to acquire as much community input as possible.

*Schedule for Completion of Community Agenda* – the schedule of when the various participation activities will take place.

The aim of engaging the communities at all levels is not just a mere exercise in public relations. Aside from increasing community awareness, the goal is to provide the community with the opportunity to affect what their community will look like tomorrow; and in doing so, develop a relationship of openness and collaboration between local governments and the citizens they serve. Local officials are familiar with the consequences of an ill-informed public. By executing this plan, local officials can forge ahead in transferring the ideals and goals of the Community Agenda into real life, with the confidence that they have collected the proper amount of community “buy-in” and support.



# Potential Stakeholders

The preliminary stakeholder list is comprised of individuals throughout the community and represents both government and public service agencies. Additional stakeholders may be identified as the plan moves forward and will be added to the list accordingly. Stakeholders have and will continue to be interviewed throughout the Comprehensive Plan development process. Their continued participation during the development of the community agenda will be used to hone in on key issues that impact the groups they service and to develop action items to address those issues.

## **Government Entities**

- Colquitt County, County Administrator
- City of Moultrie, City Manager
- City Councilors
- County Commissioners
- City of Moultrie Engineering & Public Works Department
- City of Moultrie Planning Department
- Moultrie-Colquitt County Recreation Department
- Fire Departments
- Police Departments
- Sheriff's Department
- County Zoning Administrator
- City of Moultrie Zoning Administrator
- Georgia Department of Transportation
- Colquitt County Department of Family and Children Services
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- United States Department of Agriculture

## **Local Boards & Authorities**

- Moultrie-Colquitt County Chamber of Commerce
- Moultrie-Colquitt County Planning Commission
- Downtown Development Authority
- Colquitt County School Board

- Moultrie Housing Authority
- Moultrie Historic Preservation Commission
- Southwest Georgia Regional Development Center

## **Non-Profit Organizations**

- Sunbelt Agricultural Expo
- Southwest Georgia Community Action Council
- Colquitt County Arts Council
- Habitat for Humanity
- Faith based Organizations

## **Other Community Organizations**

- Colquitt Regional Medical Center
- Ellenton Migrant Health Clinic
- Moultrie Technical College
- University of Georgia (Archway and Extension Office)
- ABAC on the square
- Major Landowners
- Residential Developers, Builders and Contractors
- Commercial Developers, Builders and Contractors
- Local Banks
- Realtors
- Citizens



# Participation Techniques

## **Community Survey**

A questionnaire will be distributed throughout the county soliciting comments and opinions of citizens regarding their general satisfaction with local services and what issues are most important to the community from a citizen's perspective. The survey will be distributed through a variety of avenues: made available on the City of Moultrie and Colquitt County websites; published in the local newspaper, The Moultrie Observer; given to school age children to take home to their parents; and made available at local city halls and libraries.

## **Kick-off Meeting/ Visioning Session**

A kick-off meeting will be held in each of the cities to introduce citizens to Comprehensive Plans and the timelines and activities planned to put together their community's plan. The unincorporated County will be included with the City of Moultrie. A brief presentation will be given to acquaint the community with the Issues and Opportunities identified in the Assessment. Following the presentation, we will move right into a visioning session for the community, where we will begin to hone in on the concerns that are specific to each community. By the end of each meeting, we will have a final list of Issues and Opportunities as well as a vision statement for each community.

## **Community Study Groups**

A Community Study Group (CSG) will be established for each of the small cities, and a joint CSG for Colquitt County and the City of Moultrie. Two people will be appointed by each local government to sit on their local Community Study Groups. The remainder of each group will be made up of interested citizens and stakeholders. The CSG's will meet five times over the course of two months.

Two of those meetings will be larger joint meetings, where representatives from all six groups will meet together. During these unified meetings, each group will update the other groups on their progress, and share any issues they feel are beyond the scope of their community and would be more appropriately addressed as joint issues. These meetings will also be learning sessions for the groups, where the representatives from each community will be introduced to the concepts and tasks their respective groups will need to complete before the next joint meeting. Topics for discussion at these meetings will include, Issues & Opportunities, Community Preference Surveys and Implementation Measures.

The individual Community Study Groups will be tasked with reviewing the Character Area descriptions and boundaries for their community. They will then create a vision statement for each area, as well as agree on the Approved Land Uses and determine the appropriate Implementation measures and applicable Quality Community Objective's for those areas.



## Student Projects

In an attempt to decipher how Colquitt County's youngest citizens see their community, we will engage local students and parents in the Planning process at the elementary, middle and high school levels through three different projects. All of the projects have been arranged in collaboration with the Colquitt County Board of Education and will be graded projects within the classroom. RDC staff and key City and County officials will be present during the children's presentations of their assignments and will participate in the judging process.

### *My Town is GREAT!*

This is an art project for 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. They will be asked to illustrate what in their community they are most fond of. Students will present their pictures to their class and teachers will select one finalist. The finalist from each participating school will then present their drawing before the judging panel, which will choose a winner, runner-up and third place finisher. The first place finisher will have their drawing framed and displayed at the School Board.

### *The Good, Bad & Ugly*

This is a photo project for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Groups of students will be provided with a disposable camera to photograph the areas within their community that they feel are *good* (places they enjoy going or are aesthetically pleasing); *bad* (areas where they feel uncomfortable and at times may be considered unsafe) and *ugly* (places that could be enjoyable locations if they were in better condition). Students will organize their photos into a montage and present them in class. Teachers will select one group per participating class to present their essay before the judging panel, which will choose a winner, runner-up and third place finisher. The first place finisher will have their photo montage framed and displayed at the School Board.

### *Changing Tomorrow, Today*

This is an essay project for 11<sup>th</sup> grade students. Students will be asked to write an essay (5 page maximum) on what they would like to change in their community. They will have to address changes under 3 categories: areas where they'd like to *change the land use* (i.e. a large underutilized building could be used as a community center, etc.); areas where they'd like to *change the look* (i.e. areas with no landscaping, unappealing architecture or orientation, etc.); areas or services where they'd like to *change the location* of the building or area (i.e. moving a community park downtown rather than at the edge of town, etc.) Each student will present their essay in front of their class. Teachers will select one student per participating class to present their essay before the judging panel, which will choose a winner, runner-up and third place finisher. The first place finisher will have their essay framed and displayed at the School Board.

Finalists will present their project before the judging panel during an evening reception at the Colquitt County Arts Center, where the public will be invited. The Judging Panel will be comprised of School Board, City and County officials and RDC staff.



## **Media Strategies**

All area media outlets will be notified of newsworthy events that are related to the comprehensive plan and provided with public meeting notices throughout the plan development process.

## **Field Trip for Local Officials**

City of Moultrie officials will be taken to the City of Fitzgerald to tour the housing rehabilitation and revitalization projects that have been accomplished in Fitzgerald through the use of a variety of housing funding sources. After the tour and a presentation by Mr. Cam Jordan, a facilitated work session with city councilors will be held in order to begin looking at how the City can begin to address the housing needs that were identified in the Community Assessment.

## **Public Hearings**

There will be two Public Hearings held as required by DCA's Local Planning Requirements. Each Public Hearing will be held before the local governments transmit any portion of the Plan to the Department of Community Affairs for review and approval. The Public Hearing to review the Community Assessment will be held in December and the Public Hearing to review the Community Agenda will be held in April.



# Schedule for Community Agenda Completion

	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Cities and County appoint	X						
Kick-off Meetings/Visioning		X					
Media Strategies	X	X	X	X	X		
Community Survey		X					
Community Study Group Meetings		X	X				
Colquitt County School Projects		X	X				
Fitzgerald Field Trip			X				
Complete Draft Community Agenda				X			
Take Community Agenda to Councils for review				X			
Public Hearing regarding Draft Community Agenda					X		
Transmittal Resolutions signed					X		
DCA 30 day review period for Community Agenda						X	
Adoption of Comprehensive Plan							X



# APPENDICES



# Colquitt County

## Community Survey

### 1. Where do you live?

Unincorporated County Berlin Doerun Ellenton Funston Norman Park Moultrie

**b. If in Moultrie, where?** Northwest Northeast Southwest Southeast

### 2. Do you work in Colquitt County? YES NO

*Please answer the following questions regarding the community in which you live and the local government that services that community.*

### 3. What service of local government are you SATISFIED with? (Circle all that apply)

- A. Roads, Highways and Bridges
- B. Schools
  - i. Elementary Schools
  - ii. Middle Schools
  - iii. High Schools
- C. Utilities
- D. Police, Fire and Medical Services
- E. Parks and Recreation
- F. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- G. All of the above
- H. None of the above

### 4. What service of local government are you DISSATISFIED with? (Circle all that apply)

- A. Roads, Highways and Bridges
- B. Schools
  - i. Elementary Schools
  - ii. Middle Schools
  - iii. High Schools
- C. Utilities
- D. Police, Fire and Medical Services
- E. Parks and Recreation
- F. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- G. All of the above
- H. None of the above
- I.



5. Would you be willing to pay for additional services? YES NO

6. Please rate how well your community does the following things? ( 1-poor, 2-fair, 3-good, 4-very good, 5-excellent)

	1	2	3	4	5
Job opportunities					
Housing Provision					
Road Provision and Maintenance					
Law Enforcement					
Building Code Enforcement					
Emergency Medical Services					
Fire Protection					
Recreational Choices					
Transportation Choices					
Restaurants & Entertainment					
Cultural Choices (i.e. museums, plays)					
Cost of Utilities					

7. From the following list, please circle the top three issues that you feel are the most important facing your community:

- |                                       |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| A. Downtown Development               | J. Law Enforcement                |
| B. Historic Preservation              | K. Higher Education Opportunities |
| C. Availability of Cultural Resources | L. Affordable Housing             |
| D. Transportation Alternatives        | M. Few Employment Opportunities   |
| E. Zoning                             | N. Access to Health care          |
| F. Commercial Development             | O. Better Roads                   |
| G. Neighborhood Revitalization        | P. Other:                         |
| H. Environmental Protection           | _____                             |
| I. Recreation                         |                                   |

8. Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Send completed surveys to:  
**Southwest Georgia RDC, 30 W. Broad St., P.O. Box 346, Camilla, GA, 31730**  
 Thank you for your input!



# Colquitt County Community Meeting Flow Chart

**Community Study Groups**

Meeting #1

Kick-off Meeting

Visioning



**Unified Group**

Issues & Opportunities



**Community Study Groups**

Meeting #2

Discuss Issues & Opportunities

Review Character Area Elements

- Boundaries and Descriptions
- Vision Statement
- Approved Land Uses



**Unified Group**

Community Preference Survey

Implementation Measures



**Community Study Groups**

Meeting #3

Community Preference Survey

Select Implementation Measures

Select applicable Quality Community Objectives

