

CITY OF CANTON

HORIZON 2030

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM



Table of Contents

Introduction

Public Participation History

Process and Expectations

Elements of the Program

Detailed Community Participation Program

- Citywide Kick-Off Meeting

- Citizen Survey

- Citizen Stakeholder Committee

- Council Workshops

- Public Participation Forums

- Citywide First Public Hearing

- Citywide Second Public Hearing

Other Public Involvement Opportunities

Conclusion

Schedule

HORIZON 2030 – The Canton Vision

Community Participation Program

Introduction

In order for a jurisdiction to maintain its Qualified Local Government status (that is, to remain eligible for a wide range of State grants, assistance and permitting programs), a Comprehensive Plan must be updated from time-to-time. In the case of Canton, the City of Canton's re-certification date is October 31, 2008. This current update is characterized by the State as the 'tenth-year update,' which, because of significant changes that have occurred in Canton over the past decade, coupled with the adoption of new planning standards by the State, requires a complete reevaluation, reorganization and rewrite of the Plan elements.

VISION

The act or power of anticipating that which will or may come to be

Planning requirements for the preparation and adoption of Comprehensive Plans are adopted by the State's Board of Community Affairs pursuant to the Georgia Planning Act, and administered and supplemented by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The most recently applicable planning standards took effect May 1, 2005. These new standards have reorganized the plan into three parts: The Community Participation Program, the Community Assessment, and the Community Agenda.

The first part of the comprehensive plan is an adopted Community Participation Program. The Community Participation Program describes the strategy for ensuring adequate public stakeholder involvement in the preparation of the Community Agenda portion of the plan.

The Community Participation Program forms the underlying foundation of the Comprehensive Plan through the development of a community-based vision and the creation of guiding principles. The formation of goals, objectives, policies and strategies within the framework of the guiding principles will be developed through the planning process to achieve the City of Canton's vision. Effective citizen involvement in a comprehensive plan can be achieved through the efforts of a dedicated group of citizens and staff, and informative outreach to the public at large. Because the Plan deals with long-

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step..."

Author Unknown

This process begins with an extensive examination given to measure general progress and proficiency and this process ends with

***HORIZON 2030
The Canton Vision***

range issues, it will be important for the process to be productive, thought provoking, and interesting to maintain the involvement of a diverse citizenry. The citizens must feel that their participation is making a difference and is a good use of their time in order to keep them active throughout the process.

Public Participation History

Since the last update to the Canton Comprehensive Plan in 1996, Canton has had an extensive history with on-going public participation in the City's planning process. The public has been actively involved in participation and formulation of the Canton Enterprise Zone, Canton Overlay Zone Community Standards, Canton Thoroughfare Plan, proposed Historic Preservation Guidelines and numerous economic development committees.

Process and Expectations

The community participation process is seen as an interactive and fluid process that is circular in nature. This process will lead up to the development of the Canton Comprehensive Plan, **HORIZON 2030 – The Canton Vision**. Information, comments and desires will be collected from the public, council, and staff. The Citizen Stakeholder Committee will review information, make recommendations and advisory comments. Public input will serve as the basis of the City's future development plan map and implementation policies and programs over the planning horizon. Product expectation is as follows:

- Refine the current City Vision: "The City of Canton will nurture all residents, businesses, and cultural institutions by linking their resources together and providing new innovative opportunities to pursue a higher quality of life while preserving our heritage and natural resources.
- Develop components of the vision which adequately addresses state requirements and satisfies local preferences;
- Outline issues relating to each individual element and the City as a whole;
- Create guiding principals that will provide the vision for all plan policies, strategies and implementation specifics;
- Look at best and innovative processes, projects and examples to apply to the City of Canton; and
- Develop concrete objective and implementation actions to achieve the Canton Vision.

Three objectives are important in a Community Participation Program:

- The process must promote legitimate opportunities for the public to be actively involved in shaping **HORIZON 2030 – The Canton Vision**;
- The process should be designed to build community consensus and ownership in the Comprehensive Plan, so it is not perceived as a Plan written by a few people in a closed process; and

- The process must also provide information to people who are interested in knowing what is going on, but choose not to actively participate.

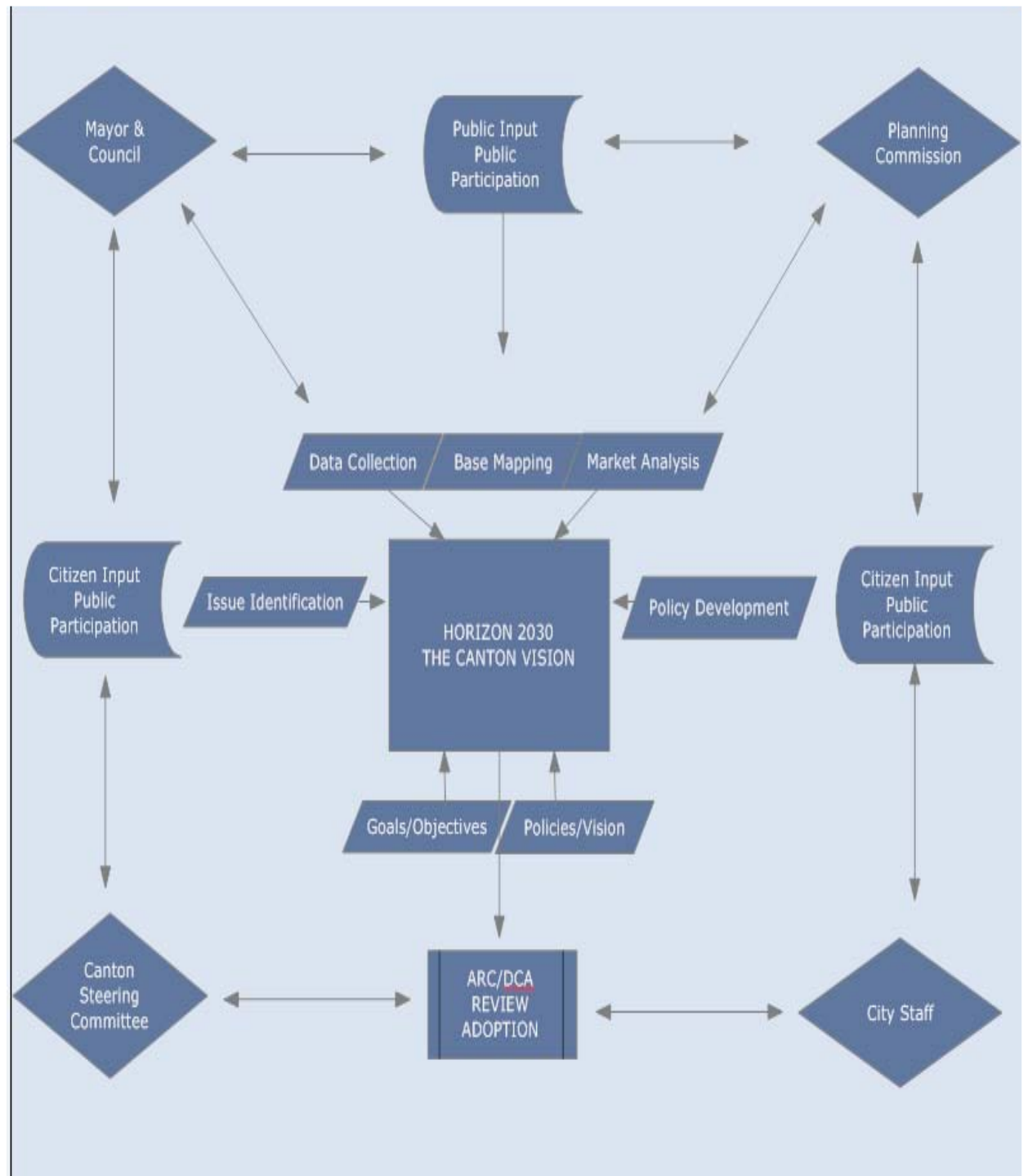
In order to accomplish these objectives, the citizen involvement effort will be continuous throughout the vision process. The City recognizes the importance of using a public participation process as a way to build consensus in the Vision. There will be times during the planning horizon when the Vision will be tested and attempts will be made to deviate from, or ignore, the Vision. It will be difficult for elected officials to maintain the integrity of the Vision unless there is a constituency that will help to defend it.

Elements of the Program

The Community Participation Program establishes a deliberate approach in which all interested parties, as well as the general public, will be fully involved through a series of public participation opportunities resulting in adoption of **HORIZON 2030 – The Canton Vision**.

The public participation effort will include the following:

- Utilization of a Citizen Survey (City web site and mass mailing)
- Formation of a Citizen Stakeholder Committee
- Hold a “Beginning of Process” meeting to introduce the planning process. This meeting will be advertised on the Web, and the media will be notified.
- Hold the first of two required Public Hearings to present the Citizen Participation Program and the Community Assessment
- A series of topic-related workshops with the Citizen Stakeholder Committee to review the Plan in detail, resolve problems and identify policy issues requiring direction from the Council.
- A series of monthly City Council Work Sessions to review issues, policy and milestones in the planning process.
- Community Participation Forums to assist in preparing the Vision and the Strategic Plan for the City.
- Release of the Community Agenda Public Review Draft and posting to the website for general review and comment
- Public Participation Forums for review of the draft Community Agenda.
- Hold a legally advertised Public Hearing to transmit the final Draft **HORIZON 2030 – The Canton Vision** to Atlanta Regional Commission and Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review



Details for the Community Participation Program

Citywide “Beginning of Process” Meeting

A “Beginning of Process” meeting held in May at the beginning of the Planning Process to introduce the comprehensive planning process. This meeting is intended primarily to inform the public about the process and outline the public participation opportunities. This meeting will be structured to be educational and informational.

Citizen Survey

The City of Canton has prepared a citizen’s survey which will allow the citizens of Canton an opportunity to provide information as well as rate the provision of City services. The citizen’s survey is patterned after the National Citizens Survey with local modifications for the state requirements for Comprehensive Plans. The citizen’s survey will be posted on the City of Canton’s web site. The citizen’s survey will also be mailed to every water customer of the City. This tabulated information will then be used for the basis of the issues and opportunities as well as the basis for the formulation of goals, objectives and policies for **HORIZON 2030 – The Canton Vision**.

Citizen Stakeholder Committee

The new DCA standards require the development of a Vision and Guiding Principles that form the basis for each plan element, land use patterns and eventually concrete goals, objectives and policies to implement the Plan. To accomplish this efficiently and effectively, a Citizen Stakeholder Committee will be formed, consisting of a cross section of residents, businesses, and other interests. A stakeholder group of various interest groups from the city will be appointed by the City Council to form the backbone of the public involvement process. This Committee will be all-inclusive with regard to groups – both organized and in general – that have an interest in the future development of the City.

The purpose of the Citizen Stakeholder Committee will be to assist in the preparation of the Draft Community Agenda through their collective and individual concerns and issues, and to make recommendations to the City Council for final decisions and direction.

Identification of Stakeholders

The Comprehensive Plan Citizen Stakeholder Committee will be formed by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Canton, which represents a broad and diverse mix of Canton residents.

A list of potential representation on this committee for appointment could include:

- Residents – resident participants will be chosen from established residential neighborhood organizations, and from areas that are newly developing. Residential selection will include both new and long-term residents.
- Business Community – business participation may include long-term business residents and newcomers. Small businesses, newly developing businesses, and established businesses should be represented. The Chamber of Commerce will be specifically represented.
- Development and Investment Community – a subcategory of the business community is the development and investment community that is actively working in Canton. This group may include commercial developers, residential developers, homebuilders, real estate agents and brokers, and banking representatives.

Special Interests – this group includes special interest representation in such areas as the environment, historic preservation, the Board of Education, and public infrastructure development. This group also includes representation from the planning commission.

Numerous meetings will be held during this process as follows:

- Initial start up meeting to focus on organization, goals & objectives, development of a vision statement and concentration on issues, strengths and weaknesses of the community, and a discussion of the Community Assessment demographics and related issues.
- Review Community Assessment natural, historic and infrastructure issues.
- Review guiding principles, policies and initial character areas.
- Review implementation strategies and land use patterns, visions and character areas; wrap up and development of final recommendations.

Although primary activities will specifically involve the Citizen Stakeholder Committee, all meetings will be advertised on the web site and open to the general public.

Meeting results will be documented and presented to City Council by staff at regularly scheduled public briefings.

Council Work Sessions

Work Sessions will be scheduled at key planning milestones to review and discuss input from the Citizen Stakeholder Committee meetings and the Public Participation Forums.

- Organizational meeting of the elected officials to discuss Goals & Objectives, available data, and existing plans, organize the Citizen Stakeholder Committee, and finalize the Community Participation Plan.
- Work Session to review the Community Assessment data.
- Work Session to review final Citizen Stakeholder Committee recommendations, land development strategies and implementation measures, and Future Development Map.
- Work Session to review public participation forum comments, Short Term Work Program and final Community Agenda.

Community Participation Forums

The City of Canton will conduct citizen participation meetings each Tuesday during the preparation of HORIZON 2030 – The Canton Vision. These meetings will focus on both citywide and local land use issues. These meetings will be open to anyone who wishes to attend. Unlike the kick-off public hearing, which is intended to educate and inform these workshops are intended to solicit input in a structured manner.

The purpose of the first series of public participation forums will be to inform citizen of the current progress, of the findings of the initial Community Assessment and estimated land demand, and to solicit input on the critical issues facing the City. Comments will be received in oral and written form. These forums will be held in City Council Meeting Chambers, 3rd Floor, Canton City Hall, 151 Elizabeth Street.

The second series of public participation forums will be to present the Draft Community Agenda. The forums will be conducted in an educational format and input will be solicited through a question and answer session at the end of the presentation. Comments will be received in oral and written form. The primary objective will be to give the citizens an opportunity to comment on specific issues in the draft before it is submitted to the local officials and regional development center. These forums will be held in City Council Meeting Chambers, 3rd Floor, Canton City Hall, 151 Elizabeth Street.

Citywide First Public Hearing

The First Public Hearing will be held in City in City Council Meeting Chambers, 3rd Floor, Canton City Hall, 151 Elizabeth Street. This public hearing will be legally advertised and communicated on the city web site. This public hearing

will provide an update on the planning process and present the Community Participation Plan and the Draft Community Assessment.

Citywide Second Public Hearing

The Second Public Hearing will be held in City Council Meeting Chambers, 3rd Floor, Canton City Hall, 151 Elizabeth Street, prior to transmittal of the Final Draft Community Agenda to DCA for review. This public hearing will be legally advertised and communicated on the city web site. This meeting will begin with a brief presentation of the results of the planning process, major issues facing the City and a summary of the Future Development Plan Map. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive comments from citizens and to discuss any final changes with the elected officials at the meeting. Following this meeting, and the addition of public comments, the City Council will adopt a Resolution authorizing the transmission of the Community Agenda for state review.

Other Public Involvement Opportunities

The City will strive to utilize all media advertising opportunities to keep the general public informed during this process, and to involve as many citizens in the process as possible. This may include having media coverage at City Council and/or Citizen Stakeholder Committee Meetings, utilizing the City’s web sites to include meeting dates and document information, as it is available, utility mail outs and the development of a citywide email blast list for interested parties and past committee members.

Internet Access

The City of Canton web page will be continually updated throughout the planning process. All documents distributed at meetings and community events will be included on the web page, including such items as draft maps, the planning process, schedules, frequently asked questions, related links and an interactive page where the public would have an opportunity to provide comments and suggestions.

Conclusion

This effort is intended to provide opportunities for the citizens of Canton to participate meaningfully in the development of the update to the Comprehensive Plan. As the process unfolds, the process will be reviewed periodically and revisions may be made to assure that this intent is realized.

Schedule

The following is a milestone schedule illustrating how we propose to proceed with this plan:

Month	Meeting Type	Expected Outcome
May	Citizen Stakeholder Committee	Appoint individuals to

June	Organization and Formation	Committee
May June	Citizen Survey	Issues, Opportunities, Strengths and Weaknesses
July	Citizen Stakeholder Committee Organizational Meetings	Goals & Objectives
August 12	Citizen Stakeholder Committee Review of Community Assessment	Community Assessment Issues, Opportunities, Strengths & Weaknesses,
August 21	Public Hearing (To approve transmittal of Community Assessment and Community Participation Program)	Transmittal of Community Assessment and Community Participation Program
August September	Atlanta Regional Commission Georgia Dept. of Community Affairs	Review and Comments
August 26	Citizen Stakeholder Committee	Community Agenda (Using Character Areas to address Issues & Opportunities)
September 2 & 16	Citizen Stakeholder Committees	Community Agenda (QGO Assessment & Vision)
September	Mayor & Council Work Session	Community Agenda
September 23	Public Participation Forum	Community Agenda (Vision)
October 7 & 14	Citizen Stakeholder Committee	Community Agenda (Character Area Recommendations)
October	Mayor & Council Work Session	Community Agenda
October 7	Public Participation Forum	Community Agenda (Strategic Plan)
October 14 & 21	Citizen Stakeholder Committees	Community Agenda (Policies & Short Term Work Program)
October 28	Public Participation Forum	Final General Public Comments
November	Mayor & Council Work Session	Final Community Agenda
November 6	Public Hearing # 2	Transmittal of HORIZON 2030 – The Canton Vision
November December January	Atlanta Regional Commission Georgia Department Community Affairs	Review and Comments
February	Mayor and City Council	Adoption