

Public Participation

Public Participation Plan and
Schedule for the 10th Year
Comprehensive Plan Update

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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

OVERVIEW

Effective citizen involvement in a comprehensive plan can be achieved with efforts by a dedicated group of citizens and staff. Because the plan is a multi-year project dealing with long-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.

The following is the Plan for achieving broad and effective public participation in the development of the Cherokee County 10th Year Comprehensive Plan Update.

Objectives of the Plan

There are three objectives that are important in a citizen outreach program:

- The process must promote legitimate opportunities for the public to be actively involved in shaping the Plan;
- The process should be designed to build community consensus and ownership in the Plan, so it is not perceived as a Plan written by a few people in a closed process; and
- The process must provide information to people who are interested in knowing what is going on, but chose not to actively participate.

In order to accomplish these objectives, the citizen involvement effort should be continuous throughout the planning process. The County and its cities should recognize the importance of using a public participation process as a way to build consensus in the Plan and in building a constituency for the Plan. There will be many times over the years when the Plan will be tested and attempts will be made to deviate from, or ignore, the Plan. It will be difficult for Elected Officials to maintain the integrity of a Plan unless there is a constituency that will help to defend it.

Elements of the Plan

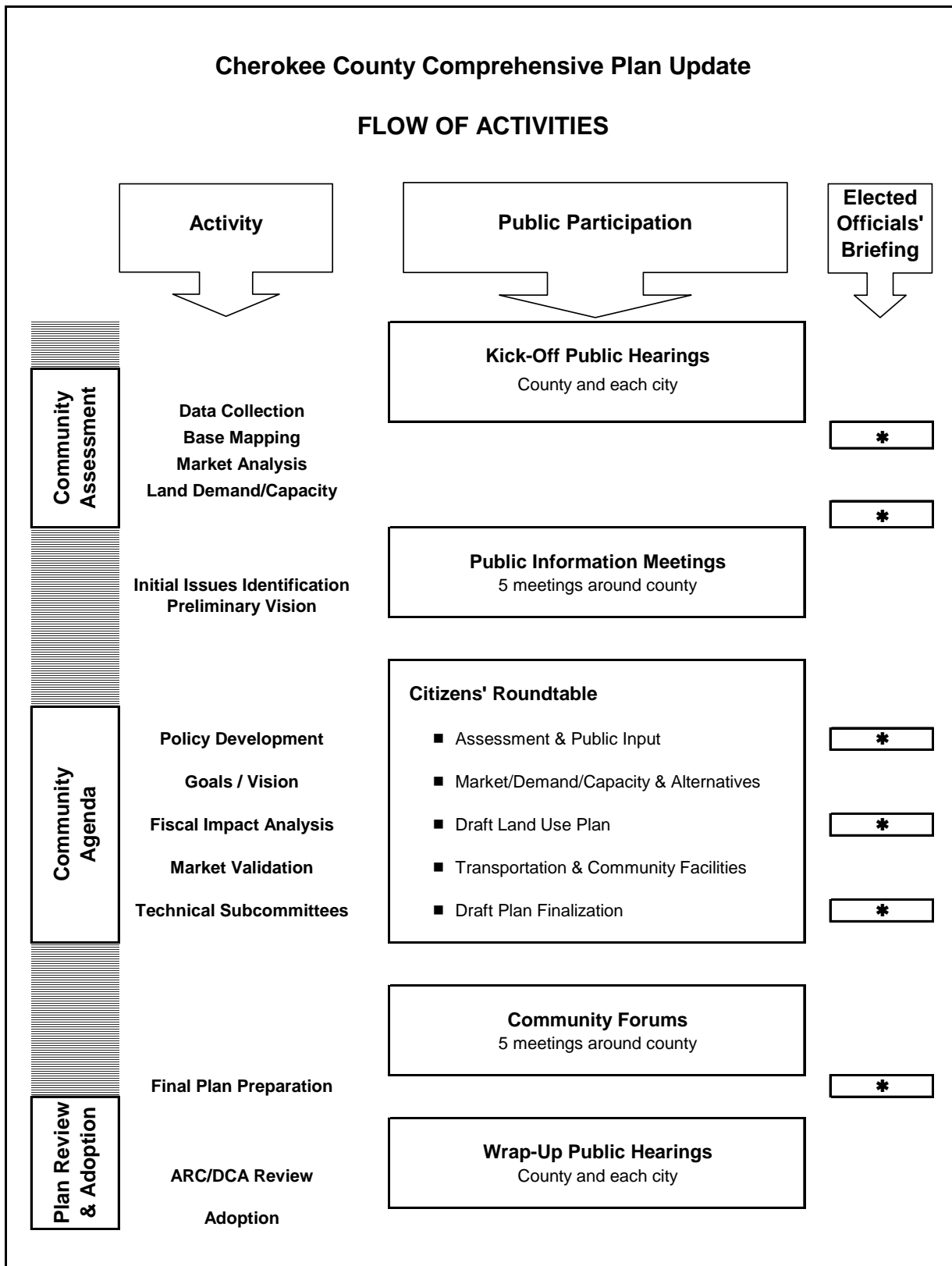
For the Cherokee County 10th Year Comprehensive Plan Update, the public participation will involve the following events:

1. A Countywide Kickoff Meeting;
2. Community Assessment Meetings/Town Hall Issue Forums-(5 open houses around the County);
3. A series of District Plan Workshops to identify local land use and planning issues -(5 meetings located around the County);
4. A workshop held in Woodstock;
5. Five supplemental meetings in Woodstock as needed, formats to be determined and advertised;
6. Citizens' Roundtable Meetings (6-7 meetings);
7. "Plan Cherokee" Educational Meetings (5 meetings);
8. Briefings with Elected Officials from all jurisdictions (7 meetings held throughout the process at key benchmarks); and
9. A series of District Plan Forums to present the draft Plan to the geographic areas prior to the final draft (5 meetings located around the County).

Publication and Notice of Events

All events and meetings will be open to the general public and will be advertised in a paper of local circulation, posted on the Cherokee County official website and announced by email or mail to all citizens who request notification of Plan related events.

The following are the specifics of the elements of the Public Participation Plan.



1. Countywide Kick-Off Meeting (first required public hearing)

A Kickoff Meeting was held on May 17, 2005 at the beginning of the Planning process to “unveil” the Planning process. This public hearing will be a joint public hearing for the unincorporated portion of the county, The City of Ball Ground, The City of Waleska, and the City of Woodstock. The meeting is intended primarily to inform the public about the process, share preliminary assessment data and outline public participation opportunities. As such, the meeting will be structured to be educational and informational. We anticipate a Power Point-style format that addresses the following items:

- What a Comprehensive Plan is, what it attempts to accomplish, and what its limits are.
- How this Plan will be developed and an overview of the work program.
- The City/County partnership approach to the Plan.
- Key Planning policy questions to be addressed by the Plan, as identified in the Community Assessment such as:
 - The geographic pattern of new growth
 - The density and intensity of new growth
 - The timing of growth
 - The quality and character of growth
 - The relationship of growth to infrastructure and community facilities
 - Economic development strategies and direction
 - The relationship of growth to the natural environment
 - Socioeconomic aspects of growth
- Citizen involvement opportunities, specifically focusing on the public workshops and the role of the Plan Forum.
- Timeframe/schedule including dates for transmittal to the regional development center.

2. Community Assessment Forums

Five meetings will be held around the County to review DCA “community assessment data,” and to identify specific strengths/weaknesses and vision within small areas of the county. A comment form outlining the DCA “community assessment” will be provided during these meetings, distributed throughout the county and as an interactive sheet on the County’s website. These initial forums will provide guidance for development of preliminary issue identification during the Community Assessment phase of the update.

3. District Plan Workshops

To assist in the development of the Community Agenda, a series of five workshops will be held over four days in September, 2006 in various geographic areas of the County to focus on both countywide and local land use issues in the evening, and one meeting during the day on the 15th. These meetings will be open to anyone who wishes to attend. The purpose of these workshops will be to inform citizens of the findings of the initial Community Assessment, and estimated land demand and solicit input on the critical issues facing the County and the long range goals of the public through land use planning activities, especially focusing on the local (to the geographic area) issues. Unlike the kick-off meeting which is intended to educate and inform, these workshops are intended to solicit input in a structured manner. To accomplish this, the consultant will organize working groups at each session. Each workshop will be two hours in length, and the typical agenda will include the following:

- Introduction to the forum by the facilitator (consultant). (30 minutes)
 - Present findings of Community Assessment-Critical Issues
 - Present Land Demand Forecasts
 - Explanation of the Work Session
- Breakout groups of 5-7 persons each to work on distributing future land uses on provide maps. We will instruct the groups to select a recorder and a spokesperson, and will provide them with newsprint to record their comments and results. (One hour).
- Reports on the results of breakout groups by spokespersons. (20 minutes)
- Wrap up. (10 minutes)

4. Woodstock Workshop

There will be a workshop held specifically to identify local planning issues in Woodstock. This meeting will be scheduled as needed. The format of this meeting will be designed to identify City specific planning and land use issues.

District Workshops

September 12-15-2005

5. Supplemental Woodstock Meetings

The work program includes five meetings for the City of Woodstock. The primary objective of these meetings is to enable the consultant to determine the individual needs and issues within the City, and to assist in the development of the Community Agendas. The format and timing of these meetings is to be determined as needed to address specific concerns within the City, such as technical staff input, existing committee review (LCI, Downtown Development, etc), general public input as determined during the process. The agenda and time of meetings will be publicly advertised prior to each scheduled session to ensure the public has the opportunity to attend and comment on the determined agenda.

6. Citizens' Committee Roundtable Meetings

The best way to get a cross section of county residents and businesses to ensure that all interests are represented is the formation of a Citizens' Committee. A stakeholder group of various interest groups from the County has been appointed by the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners and the City Councils to head up the backbone of the public involvement process. The Citizens' Roundtable is all-inclusive with regard to groups—both organized and in general—that have an interest in the future development of Cherokee County. This group of 30 to 50 individuals will represent advocates and interests from each of the cities, business community, economic development agencies, housing interests, environmental concerns, homeowner groups, infrastructure groups (water & sewerage authority, Board of Education, DOT), and community leaders. Representatives from this group will also act as “communicators” between the Technical Advisory Subcommittees and the Roundtable as a whole.

Six countywide citizen roundtable meetings will be held throughout the planning process at key benchmarks in the planning process. An additional meeting may be added in the fall of 2006. Although primary activities will specifically involve the stakeholder group, all meetings will be advertised on the web site and open to the general public. Meeting results will be documented as part of the overall public participation process in the comprehensive plan.

Citizen RT #1: This meeting will be held on August 31, 2005. The consultant will work with the committee to establish the protocol for meetings and the role of the committee in the overall planning process.

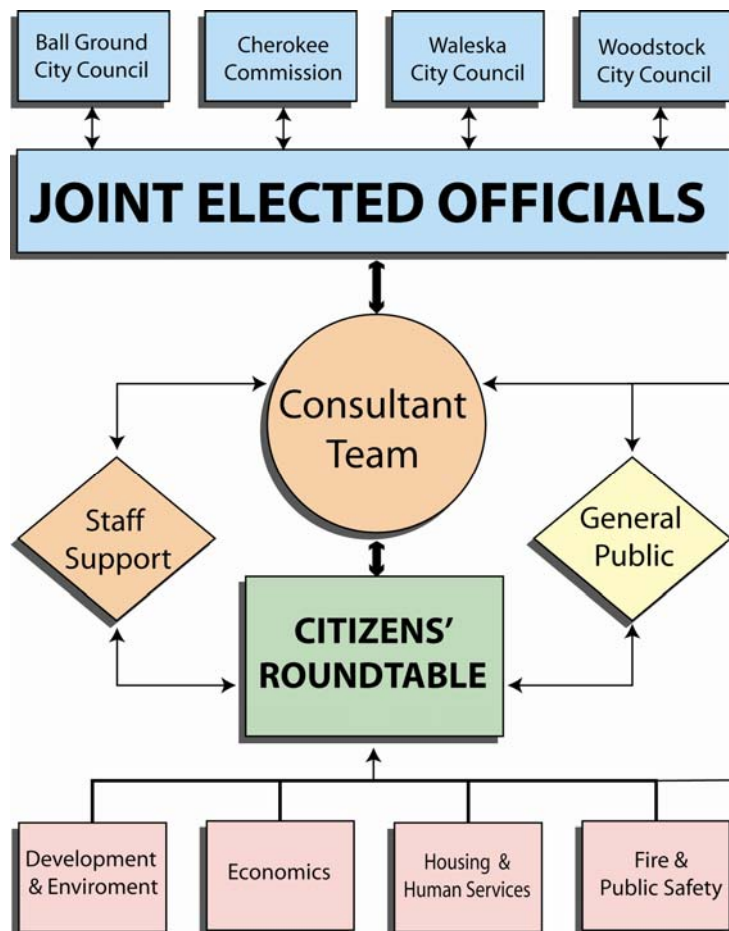
Citizen RT #2: This meeting will be held on September 28, 2005. The consultant will present assessments, data trends, and preliminary issues identified in the District Plan Workshops, and gather input on these topics from the committee members.

CRT Members

- Mayors from each City
- General Public/Citizens
- Homeowner Associations
- Cities
- Planning Commissions
- Board of Education
- Recreation and Park Authorities
- Real Estate
- Chamber of Commerce
- Developers
- Water and Sewer Authority
- Infrastructure Development

A list of individuals on the Citizen Roundtable Committee is attached.

- Citizen RT #3:** This meeting will be held on December 7, 2005. The consultants will present data on the Market and Fiscal Analysis, and the Land Demand and Capacity Analyses to inform the committee members of the implications of these elements to the future of the County, and encourage the committee members to provide guidance on policy direction based on this information.
- Citizen RT #4:** This meeting will be held on February 22, 2006. The consultants will present the findings and implications of transportation and community facility assessments to the committee members and encourage them to provide guidance on policy direction based on this information.
- Citizen RT #5:** This meeting will be held on March 29, 2006. The consultants will present a draft of the Community Agenda for approval prior to submission to the regional development center.
- Citizen RT #6:** This meeting will be held on May 17, 2006. The consultant will present a draft of the land use patterns for the Plan and solicit input from the committee members.



7. "Plan Cherokee" Education Sessions

The "Plan Cherokee" Education Sessions, "Plan Cherokee" will be supplemental to the roundtable meetings. The Plan Cherokee Group will sponsor education sessions on various Planning topics. The public is encouraged and invited to participate and learn about various topics. It is anticipated that several sessions will be held over the course of the Planning process to address a variety of issues relevant to the future of the County. These sessions will involve presentations by recognizable national, regional and local authorities and will be designed to promote dialogue on issues related to the growing community with an emphasis on Education, Alternatives and Solutions. Educational sessions include:

- Metro Atlanta Quality Growth Task Force
- "Investing in Your Future," Dr. Donald Ratajzak
- "Public Transit Options," GRTA

Other session topics are to be announced.

8. Joint Elected Officials Briefings

Eight briefing sessions will be held throughout the Planning process. These sessions will be conducted by the consultant and will be used to inform the Elected Officials of Cherokee County, Woodstock and the other communities of the development of the Plan and the information gathered from the other citizen involvement activities. Except for the first and seventh briefing, all Elected Official briefings will follow the Citizen Committee meetings and include reports from these sessions.

Status Meeting: This meeting was held on May 17, 2005. The purpose of this briefing was to introduce the Elected Officials to the Planning Process. Key issues that will be addressed at this session include the following:

- Coordination of the various jurisdictions;
- An overview of the Planning process, and key events in the timeline; and
- The Public Participation Plan

JEO Briefing #1: This meeting will be held on August 16, 2005. The purpose of this session with the Elected Officials will be to establish the role of the Citizen's Roundtable committee in the planning process and inform the consultants about the various issues identified by the elected officials. This will be a preliminary step in the visioning and development of the Community Agenda.

- JEO Briefing #2:** This meeting will be held on September 29, 2005. The consultant will present assessments, data trends, and preliminary issues identified in the District Plan workshops and comments from the CRT so that the officials can provide guidance on policy direction.
- JEO Briefing #3:** This meeting will be held on December 8, 2005. The consultant will present information from the Market and Fiscal Analysis and the Land Demand and Capacity Analysis, as well as input from the CRT on these topics. The officials will be asked to provide guidance on policy direction based on this information.
- JEO Briefing #4:** This meeting will be held on February 23, 2006. The consultant will present the findings and implication of transportation and community facility assessments and the CRT input to the officials. The officials will be asked to provide guidance on policy direction based on this information.
- JEO Briefing #5:** This meeting will be held on March 30, 2006. The consultants will present a draft of the Community Agenda and solicit approval from the officials prior to transmission of the Agenda to the regional development center.
- JEO Briefing #6:** On May 18, 2006, the draft of the land use plan will be presented to the elected officials for discussion and comment.
- JEO Briefing #7:** This meeting will be held in the fall of 2006 upon completion of a public draft of the Plan. The consultants will present a draft of the Plan to the elected officials and solicit input and approval from them before conducting the final set of public District Plan Forums on the Draft Plan.

9. District Plan Forums on Draft Plan

The District Plan Forums on the Draft Plan will be a series of five meetings held over a three day period in October of 2006 to present the draft of the Plan and Implementation to the citizens in various districts of the County. The key elements of the Plan and implementation will be presented by the consultants with an emphasis on the elements related to the individual district. Unlike the first series of workshops this will be more of an educational format and input will be solicited through a question and answer session at the end of the presentations. The primary objective will be to allow the citizens a chance to comment on district specific issues in the draft before it is submitted to the local officials and regional development center. The meetings will be held in the same locations as the District Plan Workshops listed above.

CONCLUSION

We believe this effort will provide opportunities for the citizens of Cherokee County to participate in the development of the update to the Comprehensive Plan. As the process unfolds, we can make decisions about how best to involve the community.

CHEROKEE COUNTY 10TH YEAR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
MILESTONE SCHEDULE

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2005												
Staff Coordination Meeting (County/Cities)/PPP, Schedule												
Basic Inventories, Transportation, Market Analysis Phase I												
CRT--Introduction Meetings					17							
JEO Status Meeting					17							
Kick off-Public Hearings (County/Cities)					17							
Plan Cherokee Education Meeting					25							
JEO #1-Business Meeting								16				
CRT #1-Business Meeting								31				
Community Assessment Summary												
Community Assessment Meetings (Town Hall Issue Forums)*												
District Plan Workshops (Land Plan Game) (5)*									12-15			
Woodstock Workshop									*	*		
Development Trends & Capacity												
CRT #2--Assessment Data, trends, issues									28			
JEO #2--Assessment Data, trends, issues									29			
Plan Cherokee Education Meeting										26		
Market Analysis II, Preliminary Fiscal Analysis												
Land use patterns & trends identification												
Transportation & CF Assessment												
CRT #3--Market & Fiscal Analysis, LD&CA												7
JEO #3--Market & Fiscal Analysis, LD&CA												8
2006												
Plan Cherokee Education Meeting	25											
CRT #4--Transportation & Community Fac.		22										
JEO #4--Transportation & Community Fac.		23										
Development of Community Agenda												
CRT #5--Community Agenda			29									
JEO #5--Community Agenda			30									
Land use alternatives and patterns												
Community Character												
Transportation and Land Use patterns												
Plan Cherokee Education Meeting				26								
CRT #6--Land Use Patterns					17							
JEO #6--Land Use Patterns					18							
Final Market and Fiscal Studies												
Final Transportation element, projects, maps												
Final Policy Development, Land Use Plan and Map												
Implementation Plan												
CRT #7-Final Review of Plan Elements, Comments								*	*			
JEO #7-Final Review of Plan Elements, Comments Fall '06								*	*			
Finalize Public Review Draft Plan												
Community Forums (5)										*		
Final Public Review Draft												
2007												
Public Hearing-Transmittal	*											
ARC/DCA Review												
Public Hearing-Adoption			*									

Joint Elected Officials

Citizens' Roundtable

Tentative Dates-to be set

JEO

CRT

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Advertised Public Participation Opportunities

Open, General Public Welcome

Additional meetings may be scheduled for Woodstock as the need arises.