

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The Community Agenda is the most important part of the Henry County/Cities Joint Comprehensive Plan. Based on the findings of the Community Assessment completed earlier in the planning process and input gathered from the public involvement process that was outlined in the Public Participation Program, this document provides a vision for the community's future and a plan to implement that vision. It also identifies key issues and opportunities that the community wishes to address during the next 20 years, a list of policies to be followed in making day-to-day decisions, and a detailed Short-term Work Program that outlines what actions each of the jurisdictions within the community will implement on over the next 5 years.

1.2 Scope

This document was prepared following the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Chapter 110-12-1-.05, Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, "Local Planning Requirements," effective May 1, 2005. It includes the three basic requirements for a Community Agenda:

- (1) A Community Vision that is comprised of a vision statement and Future Development Map;
- (2) A list of the Issues and Opportunities that the community intends to address over the next 20 years (see Chapter V, "Translating the Vision into the Plan"); and
- (3) An implementation program for achieving that vision, the heart of which is a Short-term Work Program that identifies specific actions the community will take over the next 5 years.

This document also includes some background information that is not required of a Community Agenda, but does describe the context within which the community is planning for its future. The chapter entitled "Context for Change" provides a high level overview of the demographic trends that will influence the community's future, and the chapter entitled "The Community's Vision for the Future" describes the extensive public involvement effort that was undertaken to craft the community vision statement and the Future Development Map. In some respects, these additional chapters are summaries of the other two components of the Comprehensive Plan, the *Community Assessment* and *Community Participation Program*, completed earlier.

1.3 Use of the Plan

Local officials for the County and the four municipalities, as well as local community leaders should use this Community Agenda, in three ways. First, the Future Development Maps and Future Land Use Maps should be referenced in making rezoning and capital investment decisions. They provide a representation of the community's vision and indicate character areas where various types of land uses should be permitted. They take into consideration the land use patterns illustrated in the County's Existing Land Use Map, the current zoning maps for each jurisdiction, topographic characteristics, natural resource sensitivity, the availability of existing and proposed infrastructure, and the needs of anticipated population and employment growth.



Second, the plan provides policies that will help guide day-to-day decisions. These policies are a reflection of community values and are in keeping with the basic goals of the plan. They, too, will be used as guidelines in the analysis of rezoning decisions.

Third, the plan includes an Implementation Plan that will help direct public investment and private initiative. Plan implementation is carried out through the application of regulations such as zoning and development codes and through projects and programs outlined in the Short-term Work Program. This plan outlines recommended changes in land use regulations and codes to be consistent with the community's vision; and, after plan adoption, it will be up to County staff and the Board of Commissioners to consider these code changes and revise if necessary. It should be noted that a Comprehensive Plan is a living document. In accordance with the DCA Local Planning Requirements, it should be updated regularly to reflect changing conditions and shifts in public policy.

