



**Community Participation Program
for the
Joint Henry County/Cities Comprehensive Plan
Including the Cities of Hampton, Locust Grove,
McDonough, and Stockbridge**

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*Draft***



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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The preparation of the Community Participation Program (CPP) is an important first step in obtaining citizen involvement in the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of the CPP is to ensure that citizens and other stakeholders are aware of the planning process, are provided opportunities to comment on the local plan, and have adequate access to the process of defining the community's vision, values, goals, policies, priorities, and implementation strategies. The Henry County Government and the cities of McDonough, Hampton, Locust Grove, and Stockbridge must implement a program to provide for and encourage public participation during the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan. The goal of this Comprehensive Plan will be to formulate a vision of "One Henry" and to develop an implementation strategy to make it a reality. The Community Participation Program, as prescribed by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), will follow the intent of the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005.

1.2 Requirements

The County will guide the citizen participation and coordination efforts associated with the plan. A series of meetings will be facilitated to build consensus through a collaborative planning process that creates an open, inclusive, and interactive forum. Meetings will be held in the cities of Hampton, McDonough, Locust Grove, and Stockbridge, as well as the unincorporated portion of the County. This effort will additionally utilize the findings of the previous citizen participation workshops completed for unincorporated Henry County. The purpose of these meetings will be to inform and educate the citizens of Henry County about the project, and solicit their input and comments about the project.

In addition to the Comprehensive Plan, the County also is undertaking several other planning efforts, including a Joint County/City Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). Under a separate contract, Parsons Brinckerhoff is completing the CTP for Henry County and Dovetail Consulting is leading a Public Input/Communication program for the CTP. However, the CTP is closely connected to the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, consultant teams working on these two parallel projects will collaborate, sharing data, analysis, and the public involvement process.

The Plan will involve input from groups within the County, including but not limited to, the Zoning Advisory Board, applicable County and Cities staff, development professionals, the general public, municipal planning commissions, the Board of Commissioners, and mayors.

2 Identification of Committees and Stakeholders

Coordination and oversight are very important parts of the overall work effort for this project. To ensure proper management of the process, this approach, will include oversight by the Henry County Board of Commissioners, City of McDonough, City of Hampton, City of Locust Grove, City of Stockbridge, a Technical Committee, a Steering Committee, and Stakeholder and Focus Groups, which include representatives of various organizations.

1. **Technical Advisory Committee** - Professional County staff selected to work closely with consultants to provide techniques, tools, and strategies needed to inform and educate the citizens regarding the Plan

Technical Committee Membership:

- One representative from each City (Hampton, Locust Grove, Stockbridge, and McDonough)
- One representative from the Board of Education
- One representative from the Water and Sewerage Authority
- One representative from the Development Authority
- One representative from the Environmental Health Department
- One representative from Stormwater Management
- One representative from USDA Forestry Service
- One representative from USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Consultants for Comprehensive Transportation Plan
- Consultants for County/Cities Joint Comprehensive Plan
- Key County and City staff as needed

2. **Steering Committee** – The Board of Commissioners has appointed a Steering Committee composed of County and cities representatives and board members from business and community organizations to advise, review, and help shape the overall plan process.

Steering Committee Representatives and Appointments

- Steering Committee Chairperson - Jonathan W. Shoemaker, and the Henry County Board of Commissioner Chairman's Appointee
- District I Appointee - Dr. William Barr
- District II Appointee - Randall Lane
- District III Appointee - Ray Rainer
- District IV Appointee - Kathy Gilbert
- District V Appointee - Dawn Davis
- City of Hampton - Donald G. King, Planning Director
- City of Locust Grove - Tim Young, AICP, Director, Community Development
- City of McDonough - Mrs. Nan Lee, Economic Dev. Director

- City of Stockbridge - Ted Strickland, City Manager
- Chamber of Commerce - Ken L. Huff, Georgia Power, Metro South Region
- Quality Growth Council - Stan Cameron
- Henry County Development Authority - W.L. Carter
- Farm Bureau - Jack Elkins
- Citizen-at-Large - Ronnie Owings
- Georgia Forestry Commission - Jenny Lynn Bruner
- Hospital Authority - G. Sam Ahern, President and CEO Henry Medical Center
- Board of Education - Dr. Preston Malcom, Asst. Superintendent for Admin. Services
- Water and Sewerage Authority - Stephen Hogan, P.E., Division Manager - Engineering & Operations, Henry County Water & Sewerage Authority

3. **Stakeholder Groups** - The stakeholder groups are comprised of representatives of the various organizations. Examples include Fire and Police Departments, Henry Council for Quality Growth, Subdivision Homeowners Associations, Faith-based Organizations, Civic Associations, Advocacy Groups, Realtors, Department of Agriculture/USDA; Conservationists, and Housing and Transportation Authorities.

The stakeholder groups will be called upon to assist with the development of the Community Assessment and Community Vision, leading to the Goals and Objectives of the Comprehensive Planning Process.

3 Identification of Participation Techniques

The goal of the CPP is to educate the public and media regarding the Comprehensive Plan. To ensure broad participation, all segments of the community will include representation especially low- and moderate-income and minority populations. The following tasks will aid in the planning, assessment, evaluation, and implementation of the new plan update.

3.1 Initial Public Hearing

As required under the state *Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning*, a public hearing before the Henry County Board of Commissioners will be held to announce to the public that the planning process for updating the Comprehensive Plan is underway. The public will be informed of the Plan's project schedule and how they can get involved as outlined in this document. The public also will be given an opportunity to comment on the draft Community Participation Program and draft Community Assessment. Following the public hearings, and based on input from the public and County officials, this document and the Community Assessment will be transmitted to the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and the DCA for their review and comment. Henry County will advertise all public hearings in compliance with adopted guidelines for public notification.

3.2 Monthly Staff/Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

Monthly meetings will be scheduled to maintain the desired timelines, benchmarks, and overall direction of the plan process.

3.3 Steering Committee Meetings

The Steering Committee will provide guidance and feedback throughout the planning process. The Committee will be used for stakeholder interviews in the Community Assessment and Community Agenda development process. Meetings will be scheduled at appropriate benchmarks to coincide with project deliverables and in advance of public meetings.

3.4 Stakeholder Interviews

The purpose of stakeholder interviews is to identify major issues and develop a complete understanding of the public opinions, comments, and concerns; including potential sources of conflict and anticipated barriers impeding effective implementation. The members of the Steering Committee are appropriate to serve as stakeholders for these interviews. These individuals are community leaders from various geographic areas of the community who are committed to the success of the Comprehensive Plan. The team will use prepared, County-approved survey questions. The results will be incorporated into the development of the Plan and used to illustrate the impact that the feedback has had on the progress of the technical work.

3.5 Preliminary Visioning Workshops

A series of five Preliminary Community Visioning Workshops were held in January and February 2006 in Stockbridge, Hampton, McDonough, Locust Grove, and the unincorporated County. The goals for these Preliminary Visioning Workshops were to:

1. Identify the development characteristics and boundaries of future character areas;
2. Identify the quality of life the participants envision for the area 20 years from now; and
3. Establish the role of each planning area (municipality and unincorporated area) in the Vision for “One Henry.”

The Visioning Workshops were a coordinated effort of both the Comprehensive Plan and the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). The information gathered at these workshops will be used by both teams to determine a community vision for the future of Henry County. Following the guidelines of DCA’s Local Planning Requirements, these workshops would normally not take place until after approval of the Community Participation Plan; however, in order to meet the data needs for the CTP, these workshops were held early.

The Preliminary Visioning Workshops were held at the following locations:

Stockbridge	Hampton	Locust Grove	McDonough	Henry County
January 30 Merle Manders Conference 111 Davis Road Stockbridge 6:00 PM	January 31 Hampton Depot E. Main St/McDonough St Hampton 7:00 PM	February 7 First Baptist Church 10 Cleveland St Locust Grove 7:00 PM	February 13 City Hall 136 Keys Ferry Street McDonough 6:00 PM	February 20 Henry County Admin Bldg Community Meeting Room 140 Henry Pkwy McDonough 6:00 PM

3.6 Visioning Open House Meeting

Henry County will host an open house meeting on March 13, 2006 at the Henry County Administration Building Community Room to share the results of the Visioning Workshops with citizens and other stakeholders and discuss potential goals, objectives, and priorities based on the information gathered. This meeting will be conducted in concert with the consultants and staff of the CTP.

3.7 Open House Plan Presentations

A series of Open Houses in each of the five planning areas (municipalities and unincorporated area of the County) will be held near the end of the planning process. The staff and consultants will present the highlights of the Draft Joint Henry County/Cities Comprehensive Plan and the specific recommendations. The public will be encouraged to attend, view presentation graphics, and hold one-on-one discussions with project team members and County staff. Open Houses will be publicized through a local media campaign. Displays, comment cards, handouts, and other informational materials will be distributed. Formal written comments collected at the conclusion of the open houses will be summarized and responded to in a timely manner.

3.8 Public Hearing for Plan Transmittal

The consultant will present the Joint Henry County/Cities Comprehensive Plan at a public hearing before the Henry County Board of Commissioners and City Officials. The public will have an opportunity to comment on the Plan before it is transmitted to the ARC and DCA for review. Henry County will advertise all public hearings in compliance with adopted guidelines for public notification.

3.9 Maintain Project Website

Henry County will have a special link on its home page website that will provide information on the progress of the planning process. Additional links to the project webpage will be available on the Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority, and the Comprehensive Transportation Plan websites. Throughout the process, information will be updated, and the public questionnaires will be revised to solicit well-focused comments. A dedicated e-mail address will be assigned to the project and will be managed by Henry County staff.

3.10 Public Information Outreach Plan

The Henry County Public Information Officer will coordinate the development of an effective media plan to publicize to its citizens and other stakeholders. The following tactics will be used to inform the citizens and media about the plan progress.

- **Media Education** – Media outlets (i.e. print, radio & television) will be educated about the plan through the use of briefings and media sessions. The development of press releases, feature stories, columns, and interviews will be used to inform the public.
- **Public Information Materials** – Outreach materials will be created and used to help the public understand the Comprehensive Plan. These materials will be distributed at public meetings, and other geographical locations to educate and establish visible, continuous public feedback (i.e. fact sheets, comment forms, surveys, questionnaires, displays, flyers, notices, and a stakeholder database for mass mailing).

4 Schedule for Completion of the Community Agenda

Following is a list of major upcoming milestones for the completion of the Community Agenda.

Initial Public Hearing.....	September 26, 2005
Five Preliminary Visioning Workshops	
Stockbridge.....	January 30, 2006
Hampton.....	January 31, 2006
Locust Grove.....	February 7, 2006
McDonough.....	February 13, 2006
County Administration Building.....	February 20, 2006
Visioning Open House.....	March 13, 2006
Five Open House Presentations.....	September-October 2006
Public Hearing for Plan Transmittal.....	November 2006
Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan by each City and the County.....	March 2007