

Community Participation Plan Port Wentworth Comprehensive Plan



Submitted to:

**Georgia Department of
Community Affairs**

By:

City of Port Wentworth, Georgia

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Introduction

The word community can be defined as a population of people living in a common location. There can be a wide variation when it comes to the basic social, professional, economic, and political values of the residents that make up a community. In preparing a Comprehensive Plan, it is important to work with citizens to identify the issues and challenges unique to their community. The Comprehensive Planning process begins with an evaluation of the current strengths and needs of the community followed by a vision for the future. This Community Participation Program is designed to give citizens the opportunity to take part in the planning process in an effort to gain support for proposed programs from the public and to produce a document that best reflects the overall vision for the community. An innovative and comprehensive public involvement program will ensure that the public feels vested in results of the planning process.

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) requires that a Community Participation Program be implemented as part of the Comprehensive Planning Process as outlined in the Rules for Comprehensive Planning, Section 110-12-1-.04. The goal for the Program as outlined in the Rules is as follows:

“The purpose of the Community Participation Program is to ensure that the local comprehensive plan reflects the full range of community values and desires, by involving a diverse spectrum of stakeholders in development of the Community Agenda. This broad-based participation in developing the Community Agenda will also help ensure that it will be implemented, because many in the community are involved in its development and thereby become committed to seeing it through.”

The DCA also requires that a plan for the Community Participation Program be developed and submitted to DCA for approval prior to the start of the public involvement process. This document outlines the City’s strategy to develop and implement a public involvement program for the City of Port Wentworth’s Comprehensive Plan and is hereby submitted to DCA for approval.

1. Scope

The mission of the Community Participation Plan is to provide citizens the opportunity to make their voices heard by taking part in the development of the Comprehensive Plan. An effective community participation program should be designed to educate the public as well as provide an opportunity for citizens to be part of the planning process. The participation strategies outlined in this report have been selected to assure that citizens understand the planning process and that multiple opportunities for public involvement exist.

To facilitate development and submittal of the Community Assessment and this document (Community Participation Plan), one public involvement strategy has already been implemented. Three public meetings were held, in accordance with the DCA Rules for Comprehensive Planning, to introduce the plan and increase public awareness throughout the process and before the Community Assessment and Community Participation Plan were submitted to the DCA.

Upon approval of the Community Involvement Plan from the DCA, the City will begin its public involvement program with a web-based community survey. The community survey will give citizens the chance to express their opinions in an informal and anonymous setting. Educational material will be available at City Hall, on the website, and on the cable channel to keep the public informed throughout the process. Public meetings will be convened to review the draft development strategies, issues and opportunities presented in the Community Assessment as they related to the various communities within Port Wentworth. Finally, prior to submittal of the Community Agenda, at the conclusion of the planning process, a fourth public meeting will be held to present the Agenda to the public. The following public involvement strategies have been selected by the City as part of the public involvement strategy and are discussed in this report:

- Public Meetings
- Community Meetings
- Community Survey
- Public Information & Outreach

In most cases, informing and educating the public is not enough. The most successful strategy is one that also gets citizens involved in the decision making process that will shape the future of their community. The City intends to accomplish this goal by providing various levels of public involvement, which have the potential to reach all citizens. The community survey will be administered in order to provide an avenue for the general public to provide input. Citizens that want to take a greater role in the planning process will have the option to participate in community events such as public meetings and/or community meetings. Participating citizens will have the opportunity to work directly with the City during the development of the Community Agenda.

Implementing the tasks outlined in this report will improve the overall quality of the plan by defining the values of the community and working together to accomplish those goals. Additionally, involving the public during the planning stage will help to garner support for the Comprehensive Plan and its eventual implementation.

2. Public Meetings

The state minimum standards require that a Public Hearing be held before City Council to inform the public regarding the status of the Comprehensive Plan and to adopt a resolution to submit the Community Assessment and Community Participation Plan to the DCA. The City's consultant presented the work completed for the Community Assessment and Community Participation Plan to the City of Port Wentworth Planning and Zoning Commission on April 2, 2007 and July 16, 2007. The comprehensive planning process was introduced to the City of Port Wentworth Council on September 28, 2006 and July 26, 2007. All meetings were open to the public and advertised in accordance with City procedures. Schedules were posted on the City's website and agendas were made publicly available at City Hall before the meetings. Please see Appendix B for copies of the agendas for these meetings. The following items were presented at the public meetings:

- Existing Land Use Map
- Community Character Map
- Areas that Require Special Attention Map
- Issues & Opportunities
- Data Assessment
- Quality Community Objectives Assessment
- Public Involvement Strategy
- Project Schedule

These initial public meetings provided citizens with an opportunity to ask questions and voice any concerns about the proposed strategy for public involvement and plan development. Another round of public meetings will be held prior to final adoption of the Community Agenda.

3. Identification of Public Participation Techniques

3.1 Community Meetings

A great part of the success of the Comprehensive Plan will be dependent on community involvement. Effective involvement from the communities that comprise the City will ensure that the Plan gains community wide support, addresses the issues and concerns of the general population, and is ultimately implemented. The benefits of community involvement include:

- Citizens increasingly desire to be involved in decisions that affect their community.
- People with different areas of expertise contribute ideas, resulting in a well thought out plan with better solutions.
- Fellow citizens tend to support programs in which they had involvement during the planning phase.
- By allowing residents, special interest groups, and business leaders to be involved, planners and decision-makers have the chance to think “outside the box.”
- Involving “citizen experts” helps facilitate communication.
- Working together provides the opportunity to understand other people’s concerns and issues.
- Community involvement allows for a more interconnected community.
- Community support builds program momentum and keeps the project moving forward.
- Citizen comments are heard and responded to early in the process, which leads to more effective program implementation and future acceptance.

It is important that a free flow of information be maintained between the City and the various communities. This is important because the people that comprise the Stakeholder Committee live and work within the community, and they will be the best resource to convey the Plan’s message. The City should consider that in order to effectively implement the future Comprehensive Plan, the Community Participation Program must create an awareness of land use, development, and community related issues and opportunities.

3.1.1 Community Meeting Strategy

Four Community Meetings will be held during the public involvement phase in order to provide opportunity for all of the identified communities within the City to participate in the planning process. The communities will be chosen to represent the various character areas and stakeholders within the City of Port Wentworth. The four communities for which a meeting will be specifically held include:

- Rural Villages/Rural Residential Area
- Suburban Areas
- Traditional Village
- Commercial/Industrial Community and Business Leaders

Community meetings will be held in an available meeting space as close to the community as possible. The Commercial/Industrial Community and Business Leader meeting will be held in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce to ensure the greatest possible attendance. Each meeting will follow the general agenda below:

- I. Presentation: Comprehensive Planning Requirements, Procedures, and Schedule. This presentation will include a summary of the Community Assessment and planning work to date.
- II. Group Activity: The participants will be broken up into several groups (depending on attendance) to discuss the Character Area(s) specific to their community. The Group will be asked to review the draft definition and recommended development strategies and make comments and recommended changes. In addition, each group will be asked to identify issues and opportunities that affect their community.
- III. Group Presentation: Each group will present their revised Character Area and Issues & Opportunities to the community.

The City will advertise these meetings within each community through direct mailings, emails, the City's website, and handouts available at City Hall. Notifications will be provided to a combination of individual citizens, community leaders, church leaders, and the Chamber of Commerce. "Read ahead" material will be available on the City's website and will be available at City Hall. Experience has shown that making "read ahead" material available leads to more productive meetings by allowing the Stakeholders to review the information in advance. Stakeholder meetings will be held in an informal but professional manner to create an environment that will facilitate participation and to show due respect to the participants who are donating their time. Meetings will be held after work hours and will be limited to a maximum of two hours per meeting.

3.2 Community Survey

In an effort to increase public involvement, the City will develop a community survey to gain feedback from citizens. The community survey is an effective tool as it is available to a large population at a minimal cost for the City and a minimal time commitment to the participants. A digital survey will be posted on the City website and hard copy surveys will be available at City Hall. The survey will contain questions on a wide range of community related topics. This would include showing pictures of different development patterns and asking citizens to rate them.

The results of the surveys will be tabulated and examined by the City. Based on the results, the City will incorporate the main issues and concerns of the citizens into the development of the future vision.

3.3 Public Information & Outreach

In addition to the strategies identified above, the City will produce handouts to update citizens about the content and progress of the Comprehensive Planning process. The City will also ensure that all community participation opportunities are well publicized, so that all residents and property owners in the City of Port Wentworth have an opportunity to provide input. The City will utilize the following Public Information techniques:

- *Media Kit (Press Package).* A packet of information will be provided to the press containing information/facts to write an article (or a series of several articles) on the Comprehensive Plan. This press release will also contain information on the Community Meetings and Community Survey. A City contact name and phone number will also be included.
- *Newsletter.* The City of Port Wentworth issues a quarterly newsletter that is mailed to all residents of the City. This newsletter is also available at City Hall. The City will include information about the Community Meetings, Community Survey and other public involvement/information opportunities and schedule. This task will be performed at the beginning of the community participation program to encourage residents of the City to get involved in the process and will be repeated towards the end of the program to give residents a “last chance” to participate.
- *Informational Handouts(s).* These handouts and/or fact sheets will be simple and straightforward in order to explain the Comprehensive Planning process and what it is designed to accomplish. There may be more than one handout to explain various aspects of the Comprehensive Plan. The handouts will be made available at City Hall and will be distributed at public meetings.
- *Websites.* Websites are a great method of getting information out to a large group of people. A section or link will be added to the City’s website for the Comprehensive

Plan that will allow for quick immediate information for the general public. The webpage will include information on the program, dates for public meetings, the community survey, and a link to e-mail any questions or concerns. This website address will be listed in all materials designed for the program. The website also provides an opportunity to catalog appropriate public documents and make them available to the public through use of downloadable PDF files.

3.4 Public Involvement Schedule

Public Involvement Tasks	2007				
	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Approval of Strategy from DCA					
Community Meetings					
Meeting 1: Traditional Village					
Meeting 2: Rural Neighborhoods/Rural Residential					
Meeting 3: Suburban					
Meeting 4: Commercial/Industrial					
Survey					
Media Press Kit					
Newsletter					
Informational Brochures					
Website					

Appendix A
Project Team Meeting Summaries

**CITY OF PORT WENTWORTH
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

*Project Team Meeting #1
August 8, 2006 10:00 AM*

AGENDA

- I. Planning Requirements**
 - a. New DCA Rules
 - b. State Planning Recommendations

- II. GIS Data and Mapping Component**
 - a. Review of existing GIS datasets
 - b. Current Land Use Data Collection / Categories
 - c. Potential Character Areas
 - d. Area Requiring Special Attention

- III. Data Assessment**
 - a. Status
 - b. Responsibilities

- IV. Issues and Opportunities**
 - a. Issues and Opportunities State Planning Recommendations

- V. Quality Community Objectives**
 - a. Assessment Tool

- VI. Adjourn**
 - a. Schedule next meeting
 - b. Give homework assignments

**CITY OF PORT WENTWORTH
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

*Project Team Summary
August 8, 2006 10:00 AM*

Summary

I. GIS Data and Mapping Component

- a. Review of existing GIS datasets – ISE will review existing GIS datasets to see what information we have and/or need to obtain. ISE will also look into acquiring Pictometry images/software for Port Wentworth and any associated costs to do so. Phillip will look into acquiring the wetlands layer produced by Thomas & Hutton.
- b. Current Land Use Data Collection / Categories – ISE will begin field collection and production of the City's existing Land Use map next week. Phillip will be reviewing the current land use classifications and amending them as necessary.
- c. Potential Character Areas – Phillip will create the initial Character Area map, which will then be digitized by ISE and reviewed/revised by the Project Team.
- d. Zoning Map – ISE will update the zoning map as discussed.
- e. Digital Plats – The City will work to provide ISE with digital plats of current developments (Rice Hope, Newport, Lake Shore, etc.)

II. Data Assessment

- a. Population Projections – ISE will work on the initial population projections using the Certificates of Occupancy and build out schedule provided by the City. This will be completed by the next Project Team meeting.
- b. Census Block Groups – ISE will provide the City with a population map based on Census Block Groups

III. Other Items

- a. Industry Database – ISE will create a database and map of industries using the City's business license database.

IV. Upcoming Dates

- a. Next Project Team Meeting – **August 22, 2006 @ 10:00 AM**
- b. Council Meeting – **August 24, 2006 @ 7:00 PM**

Appendix B
Public Meeting Agendas

REGULAR MEETING OF MAYOR AND COUNCIL
AGENDA
September 28, 2006

6:30 pm – Pre-Agenda

7:00 pm – Regular Meeting of Mayor and Council

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. ROLL CALL – CLERK OF COUNCIL
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
5. PUBLIC HEARING
 - A. Site Plan Review Application submitted by Northpoint Industrial, LLC for PIN #: 7-0039A-01-003 (Godley Road/Jimmy DeLoach Parkway) located in a P-C-1 zoning district
 - B. Subdivision Application (Final Plat) submitted by Rice Hope Development, Inc. for PIN #: 7-0906-04-019 (Highway 21), Lakeside Phase 1B-1 at Rice Hope
 - C. Subdivision Application (Final Plat) submitted by Rice Hope Development, Inc. for PIN #: 7-0906-04-002, 009 & 011 (Highway 21), Rice Hope Highway 21 Commercial Parcels 1-7
 - D. Ordinance No. 06-28, Filling of Swimming Pools
 - E. Ordinance No. 06-29, Sanitation New Service Fee
 - F. Ordinance No. 06-30, Budget Adjustment – FY07
6. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS
 - A. Courtney Power, ISE, Comprehensive Plan
 - B. Joe Buck, Candidate for School Board President
 - C. Andrew Quarterman, 327 Meinhard Road
7. ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS
8. ADOPTION OF MINUTES
 - A. Regular Meeting of Mayor and Council – August 24, 2006
9. COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS
10. STATUS OF CITY REPORT
11. RESOLUTIONS/ORDINANCES/PROCLAMATIONS
 - A. Ordinance No. 06-25, Yard Trimming Regulations, *Second Reading (First Reading – 8/24/06)*
 - B. Ordinance No. 06-28, Filling of Swimming Pools, *First Reading*
 - C. Ordinance No. 06-28, Filling of Swimming Pools, *Second Reading*
 - D. Ordinance No. 06-29, Sanitation New Service Fee, *First Reading*
 - E. Ordinance No. 06-29, Sanitation New Service Fee, *Second Reading*
 - F. Ordinance No. 06-30, Budget Adjustment – FY07, *First Reading*
 - G. Ordinance No. 06-30, Budget Adjustment – FY07, *Second Reading*
12. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

13. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Site Plan Review Application submitted by Northpoint Industrial, LLC for PIN #: 7-0039A-01-003 (Godley Road/Jimmy DeLoach Parkway) located in a P-C-1 zoning district
- B. Subdivision Application (Final Plat) submitted by Rice Hope Development, Inc. for PIN #: 7-0906-04-019 (Highway 21), Lakeside Phase 1B-1 at Rice Hope
- C. Subdivision Application (Final Plat) submitted by Rice Hope Development, Inc. for PIN #: 7-0906-04-002, 009 & 011 (Highway 21), Rice Hope Highway 21 Commercial Parcels 1-7
- D. Automatic Aid Agreement with Garden City (Fire)
- E. Quit Claim Deed to Lift Station on Grange Road
- F. Capital Broadband Agreement for Cable Service in Rice Hope
- G. Automatic Aid Agreement with Pooler for Fire Service
- H. Well Permit Application for Parkside Subdivision
- I. GovDeals Sellers Agreement
- J. RDS Debt Collection Agreement
- K. Pay Request #5 – O’Leary Road Waterline
- L. Agreement for Grant Administration Services
- M. Contract for Engineering Services – North Area Water Transmission Main
- N. Agreement with Georgia Ports Authority for Police Service and Assistance
- O. Increase of Utility Reconnection Fee
- P. Port Wentworth Chamber of Commerce Budget FY07
- Q. Agreement for Accounting Services

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION - To Discuss a Legal Matter

15. ADJOURNMENT

City of Port Wentworth
PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP

AGENDA

April 2, 2007 at 5:30 pm

1. Comprehensive Plan

City of Port Wentworth
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

AGENDA

July 16, 2007 at 6:30 pm

- 1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**
- 2. PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. ROLL CALL - SECRETARY**
- 4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**
 - A. Planning Commission Meeting – June 18, 2007
- 5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
- 6. SITE PLAN/SUBDIVISION APPROVAL**
 - A. Subdivision Application submitted by Shore Thing, LLC for PIN #: 7-0978-05-012 (Southside Meinhard Road at Highway 30), Final Plat for Lakeshore, Phase 3
 - B. Site Plan Review Application submitted by Distribution Services International for PIN #: 7-0009-02-002 & 7-0009-02-003 (1 Birkenhead Street) for a warehouse expansion located in a P-I-1 (Planned Industrial) zoning district – **SITE PLAN AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW AT CITY HALL**
 - C. Site Plan Review Application submitted by NRPH, Inc. for PIN #: 7-0035-01-005 (1000 Crossgate Road) for a warehouse expansion located in a P-I-1 (Planned Industrial) zoning district – **SITE PLAN AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW AT CITY HALL**
- 7. DEVELOPMENT PLANS**
- 8. ZONING MAP AMENDMENTS (REZONING)**
- 9. ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT (ORDINANCES)**
- 10. OTHER**
 - A. Comprehensive Plan Presentation
- 11. ADJOURNMENT**

REGULAR MEETING OF MAYOR AND COUNCIL
AGENDA

July 26, 2007

6:30 pm – Pre-Agenda

7:00 pm – Regular Meeting of Mayor and Council

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**
2. **PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **ROLL CALL – CLERK OF COUNCIL**
4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
5. **RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**
6. **ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS**
7. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**
 - A. Regular Meeting of Mayor and Council – June 28, 2007
 - B. Special Called Meeting of Mayor and Council – July 5, 2007
8. **COMMUNICATIONS & PETITIONS**
9. **STATUS OF CITY REPORT**
10. **RESOLUTIONS/ORDINANCES/PROCLAMATIONS**
 - A. Ordinance No. 07-23, Zoning Text Amendment Application submitted by Roland J. Geiger for PIN # 7-0978-07-02 (432 Monteith Road) to allow grading company in a C-1 (Neighborhood Business) Zoning District, (First Reading – 6/28/07) Second Reading
 - B. Resolution No. 07-25, Community Assessment & Community Participation Plan
 - C. Proclamation No.07-26, National Night Out
11. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
 - A. Site Plan Application submitted by Kennedy Ragsdale & Associate Inc. for PIN # 7-0906-04-016 (East side of I-95 across from the Visitor's Center) (Delayed from 06/28/07)
 - B. Acceptance of the Frontage Road Holiday Inn Express (Delayed from 06/28/07)
 - C. Agreement with Access for Telecommunication Services (Delayed from 6/28/07)

12. **NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Subdivision Application submitted by Shore Thing, LLC for PIN #: 7-0978-05-012 (Southside Meinhard Road at Highway 30), Final Plat for Lakeshore, Phase 3

Public Hearing

Action

- B. Site Plan Review Application submitted by Distribution Services International for PIN #: 7-0009-02-002 & 7-0009-02-003 (1 Birkenhead Street) for a warehouse expansion located in a P-I-1 (Planned Industrial) zoning district

Public Hearing

Action

- C. Site Plan Review Application submitted by NRPH, Inc. for PIN #: 7-0035-01-005 (1000 Crossgate Road) for a warehouse expansion located in a P-I-1 (Planned Industrial) zoning district

Public Hearing

Action

- D. Revision to a Recorded Plat for Rice Hope Commercial Property
- E. Kelly Software Agreement for the purchase and maintenance of Building Permit Software
- F. Acceptance of bid for Junie's Lounge

13. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** – To Discuss a Legal Matter

14. **ADJOURNMENT**