



Chatham County – Savannah Comprehensive Plan

Community Participation Program

March, 2006



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In 2001 and 2002, Chatham County and the City of Savannah held a series of three workshops for the purpose of discussing the Comprehensive Plan update and considering an update of City and County zoning ordinances. Elected officials concluded the process by directing staff to prepare a unified work program for both updates. A Program Manual was prepared by staff outlining a work program, advisory committee structures, consultant roles, and a public participation process.

This document contains information from the extensive public involvement that occurred during the four-year update process of preparing the comprehensive plan and associated zoning recommendations. Public participation will continue in 2006 as the zoning recommendations are implemented.

Public participation has occurred in several forms, including:

- Broad-based advisory committees
- Community Survey
- Town Hall Meeting
- A widely distributed Executive Summary
- An information video prepared for local cable television
- Community leadership training
- A four-month intensive public participation program
- Public Hearings
- A Community Open House
- On-line availability of draft documents

While records of survey results, meeting notices and agendas, meeting proceedings and comments, document revisions based on public comment, public hand-outs, and other materials are too extensive to include in this report, most significant material substantiating the public participation process is included.

2.0 ADVANCE PLANNING

The series of three workshops held by the City and County and facilitated by the MPC in 2001 and 2002 included discussion of essential forms of public participation to achieve a successful outcome. Discussion at the workshop was formalized by MPC staff into a Program Manual. A draft of the manual was presented to the elected officials in the final workshop. In reviewing it, elected officials gave special attention to public participation, especially in the context of the Steering Committee (see later discussion). Steering committee membership was expanded to include 10 representatives from neighborhood associations throughout the City of Savannah and unincorporated Chatham County.

The Program Manual contained a Public Participation Plan that called for a Community-wide Survey, a Town Meeting, and establishment of two Advisory Committees. It also detailed a program for involving the public at various stages of the process.

The Program Manual envisioned a process that included the following elements: 1) a Communitywide Public Opinion Survey; 2) a Town Hall Meeting; 3) a broad-based Steering Committee; public meetings and formal Public Hearings.

The public participation program was later expanded to include the following additional element: 1) a high quality Executive Summary printed for wide distribution; 2) an education video for use in community venues and on cable television; 3) community leadership training; and 4) a greatly expanded public meeting schedule.

Figure 1 contains the chart from the Program Manual illustrating the public participation process.

3.0 ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance update process requires a high level of public participation, accomplished through an advisory committee structure as well as through general public hearings, meetings, and surveys. The following advisory committees were established for the update process:

- Executive Committee (the MPC)
- Steering Committee
- Community and Neighborhood Advisory Committees
- Technical Advisory Committee and Subcommittees

See Figure 2 for a description of committee processes, structure, and interrelationships as established in the Program Manual. Further information is available in Figures 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3 of the Program Manual.

The Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committee were formed in mid-2002, worked through 2003, and submitted their formal recommendations in early 2004. The committees were kept informed of progress during subsequent phases of drafting and public meetings.

The committees also participated in a Community Open House on October 27, 2005. This event was designed to present final recommendations to the public prior to submitting them to the Metropolitan Planning Commission.

See Appendix A for information on advisory committee meetings and membership.

FIGURE 1. THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

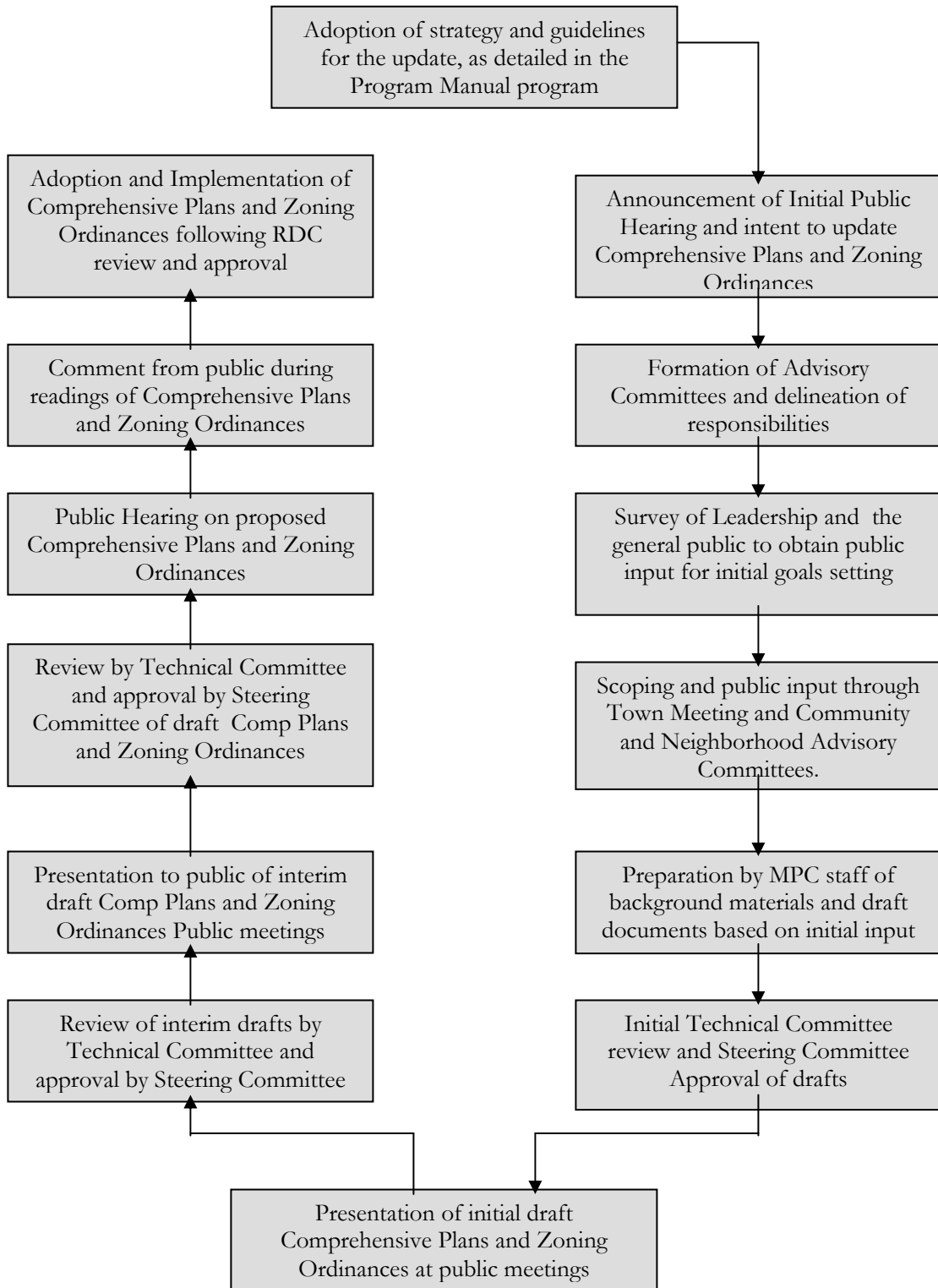


FIGURE 2.

ROLE AND COMPOSITION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall be the Metropolitan Planning Commission or a committee of the MPC. The role of the Executive Committee is to review progress, provide guidance to staff, and provide general oversight.

Steering Committee. The role of the Steering Committee is to establish a broad base of community involvement and advocacy for the update process. The Steering Committee will offer formal comment on policy decisions proposed by staff and consultants and provide advocacy for those decisions to the Metropolitan Planning Commission, the County Commission, and the City Council. Elected and appointed officials may designate an appointee. Organizations shall designate their own representative. The MPC shall designate non-organizational appointees. Meetings will be scheduled on a quarterly schedule.

- Membership:
- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Chairman of County Commission | Affordable and/or Fair Housing Advocate |
| Mayor, City of Savannah | Child/Youth Advocate |
| MPC Chairman | Elderly Advocate |
| Homebuilders Assn. | Historic Savannah Foundation |
| Commercial Developer | School Board |
| Chamber of Commerce | SCAD/SSU/AASU admin. representative |
| Tourism Industry | University Science Expert |
| Savanna Econ Dev Authority | University Policy Expert |
| Savannah Board of Realtors | Technical Committee Liaison |
| Large Tract Land Owner | Neigh./Community Advisory Cmte Chairs |
| Savannah Tree Foundation | Military |
| Environmental Forum | Executive Director of the MPC |

Ex-Officio: City and County Managers may designate appropriate staff

Community and Neighborhood Advisory Committees. These are existing committees appointed by the City, County, and the MPC including County Land Use Advisory Committees and City Neighborhood Advisory Committees. They will review and comment on draft planning documents, and chairs will sit on the Steering committee.

Technical Advisory Committee. The Technical Advisory Committee will provide an opportunity for professionals who are involved in development to review update progress and contribute professional perspectives to the process. Meetings will initially be scheduled on a monthly basis; the committee may schedule additional meetings as required. The following organizations and professions will each have one appointee to the committee:

- Membership:
- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| American Institute of Architects | Environmental Engineer |
| American Soc. Landscape Architects | Geologist or Hydrologist |
| Appraisal Institute | Homebuilders Association of Savannah |
| Arborist or Botanist | Property Development Lender |
| Civil Engineer | Real Estate Development Attorney |
| Coastal Resources Scientist | Real Estate Professional |
| Commercial Real Estate Developer | Executive Director of MPC, Chairman |
- Ex-Officio: City/County Department Head

4.0 COMMUNITYWIDE PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

The MPC contracted with the Savannah State University Survey Research Center to conduct a county-wide survey for the purpose of identifying public opinion on a variety of issues related to planning and zoning. The findings of the survey were used to publicize the update program. The findings were reported at the Town Meeting.

The survey helped to bring attention to the process and to make the advisory committees aware of public concerns. Survey findings were reported at the Town Hall Meeting and in local media.

5.0 TOWN HALL MEETING

The Town Meeting was held at the Coastal Georgia Center in September, 2002. The event was hosted jointly by the City of Savannah and Chatham County. MPC staff organized the program.

6.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In early 2005, as preparation for the intensive public outreach program through the spring and summer MPC staff prepared an Executive Summary containing information on the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan, issues and opportunities that it would address, and information for the public on how to participate.

Following the initial phase of public participation, the Executive Summary was revised to reflect comment received to that point. The revised Executive Summary was prepared in a large, four-fold graphic format and contained a draft Future Land Use Map.

A copy of the Executive Summary can be found in the Appendix.

7.0 PUBLIC EDUCATION VIDEO

As part of a summer-long Public Participation Program in 2005, MPC staff produced a digital video on the Tricentennial Plan for use in public meetings and on cable television.

The video emphasized the visioning process and goal-setting aspects of planning with the aim of stimulating viewer interest in major planning issues in the City and the County.

A copy of the digital video disk (dvd) is available upon request.

8.0 COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP TRAINING

With assistance from the Neighborhood Coordinator at Historic Savannah Foundation, MPC staff conducted four neighborhood leadership training workshops. The purpose of the workshops was to prepare neighborhood leaders to answer questions about the Tricentennial Plan and to organized committees or boards to review draft existing land use maps for accuracy, and to review draft future land use maps for consistency with neighborhood goals.

9.0 PUBLIC MEETINGS

During the Spring and Summer of 2005, MPC conducted an intensive period of public involvement including meetings with neighborhood associations, larger community areas, and business and professional organizations. In all, 36 meetings were held. Most of the meetings were held in community centers and other central locations during evening hours.

Meetings provided an overview of the Tricentennial Plan, a detailed review of proposed existing and future land use maps, and a process for identification of issues and opportunities facing the neighborhood, the city, or the county as a whole.

A summary chart of meetings can be seen in Figure 3.

10.0 PUBLIC HEARINGS

The initial Public Hearing for the Tricentennial Plan was held on September 10, 2002 as part of the kick-off Town Hall Meeting. The event was attended by over 200 people. Public comment was recorded during an open microphone period and on comment cards.

A second formal Public Hearing was held in the Metropolitan Planning Commission Hearing Room on June 7, 2005. This event was timed to stimulate interest in the final stages of the planning process and to encourage participation in neighborhood meetings during the summer.

A third Public Hearing will be conducted by the MPC during formal review of the draft Chatham County – Savannah Comprehensive Plan by the MPC.

Public Hearings will also be held by the Chatham County Commission and the City of Savannah as required for adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

11.0 COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE

A Community Open House was held on October 27, 2005 at 6:00 p.m. to present the draft Future Land Use Map refined during the public meetings held through the summer. Comments from the Open House were incorporated into the final draft maps prepared for the MPC review process.

12.0 ON-LINE DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY

The draft Chatham County – Savannah Comprehensive Plan was made available in pdf file format on the MPC website in May 2005. The document was kept up-to-date for subsequent revisions. Information on website access was provided at all public meetings and in all informational documents.

13.0 CONSISTENCY

In order to ensure that public participation in the planning process would result in meaningful implementation through zoning and other administrative mechanisms, a policy of “consistency” was discussed at public meetings. This proposed policy was strongly endorsed by the public.

The policy of consistency requires that policy adopted in the Chatham County – Savannah Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed and amended prior to amending zoning or other implementing ordinances. In other words, official policy established in the Comprehensive Plan will become the basis for zoning amendments.

FIGURE 3. TRICENTENNIAL PLAN PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PHASE

2005 PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULE

Tricentennial Plan Visioning Announcement and Public Hearing

June 7, 5:00 p.m., MPC Conference Room

Neighborhood Association Training Workshops

May 25, 9:00 a.m., MPC Hearing Room

May 26, 5:30 p.m., MPC Hearing Room

May 31, 7:00 p.m., MPC Hearing Room

Business and Other Organization Workshops

July 13, 8:30 a.m., Chamber of Commerce

August 17, 12:00 p.m., Homebuilders Association

August 29, 4:00 p.m., United Way Board of Directors

(Special presentations will be scheduled for other business groups and organizations.)

Community Planning Workshops (workshops are from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.)

April 26, 5:30 p.m., Historic Neighborhood Council – Historic Savannah Foundation

June 9, 6:00 p.m., AASU – Southside Neighborhoods

June 21, 6:00 p.m., JEA – Neighborhoods between DeRenne Ave and Montgomery Cross Rd

June 23, 6:00 p.m., MPC Hearing Room – Historic Neighborhoods (South)

July 12, 6:00 p.m., MPC Hearing Room – Historic Neighborhoods (East of Bull Street)

July 14, 6:00 p.m., MPC Hearing Room – Historic Neighborhoods (Downtown Area)

July 28, 6:00 p.m., MPC Hearing Room – Historic Neighborhoods (West of Bull Street)

August 2, 6:00 p.m., Herman Hesse Elementary School – Southeast Chatham

August 4, 6:00 p.m., Southwest Middle School – West Chatham (Unincorporated)

August 9, 6:00 p.m., Islands Community Center – Islands Area

October 27, 6:00 p.m., MPC Hearing Room – Community Open House

Neighborhood Association Meetings

February 9, 6:30 p.m., Victorian Neighborhood

March 7, 7:00 p.m., Parkside Neighborhood

March 10, 6:30 p.m., Ardsley-Chatham Crescent Neighborhood

March 16, 6:00 p.m., Benjamin Van Clark Neighborhood

May 10, 7:00 p.m., Gordonston Neighborhood

June 14, 6:30 p.m., Baldwin Park Neighborhood

June 14, 6:00 p.m., Eastside Concerned Citizens

June 15, 6:00 p.m., Ogeecheeton Neighborhood

June 16, 10:00 a.m., Windsor Forest – MPC Conference Room (neighborhood committee)

July 11, 6:00 p.m., Carver Heights Neighborhoods

July 13, 6:00 p.m., Liberty City Neighborhood

July 14, 1:30 p.m., Colonial Village board members

July 18, 6:00 p.m., Tatenville Neighborhood

July 27, 2:00 p.m., West Savannah Advisory Committee, Moses Jackson Center

August 1, 7:00 p.m., Colonial Village Neighborhood

August 9, 6:00 p.m., Feiler Park Neighborhood

August 17, 6:00 p.m., Benjamin Van Clark Neighborhood

September 6, 6:30p.m, Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood

September 12, 6:00 p.m., Live Oak Neighborhood

October 20, 5:00 p.m., Tatumville Neighborhood

(Neighborhood presentations will be scheduled continuously through the summer as requested or needed to supplement regularly scheduled Community Planning Workshops).

APPENDIX A

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP
AND MEETINGS**

CHATHAM – SAVANNAH TRICENTENNIAL PLAN
STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Tony Abbot	West Chatham Advisory Committee
Dr. Charles Belin	Armstrong Atlantic State University
Ms. Diane Berryhill	Savannah Board of Realtors
Mr. Mark Bouy	Bouy Brothers Builders
Ms. Susan Bragg	Dept of Family and Children Services
Mr. Rob Brannen	Homebuilders Association of Savannah
Mr. Michael Brown	Marley Mangement
Ms. Dian Brownfield	Downtown Neighborhood Association
Mr. Will Burgstiner	The Braniger Organization
Mr. Richard Collins	Housing Authority of Savannah
Mr. Wayne Dawson	Fair Housing Council
Ms. Jacqueline Elmore	Youth Futures Authority
Mr. Martin Fretty	Department of Housing
Dr. Shirley Geiger	Savannah State University
LTC Jeffery Goble	Hunter Army Airfield
Mr. Hugh Golson	Chatham County School Board
Ms. Lee Grimes	Savannah Economic Development Auth.
Mr. Bil Hubbard	Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce
Ms. Jean Iaderosa	Chatham Area Transit
Ms. ErnestineJones	Liberty City Community Association
Mr. Scott Lansing	Chatham Area Transit
Mr. Ernest W.Lee II	Savannah College of Art and Design
Mr. Jerry Lominack	Technical Committee Liaison
Mr. Hector Lopez	Lopez Construction
Ms. Patti Lyons	Senior Citizens of Savannah
Mr. Doug Marchand	Georgia Ports Authority
Ms. Patricia Mason	Reed Stover, P.C.
Mr. Mark McDonald	Historic Savannah Foundation
Ms. Patricia McIntosh	The Georgia Conservancy
Mr. W. John Mitchell	New Legacy Community Development
Mr. Sid Nutting	Southeast Advisory Committee
Mr. Freddie Patrick	Eastside Concerned Citizens
Mr. James Polychrones	Savannah College of Art and Design
Mr. Kennth Sadler	City Council - District 4
Ms. Helen Stone	Chatham County Commission- Dist 1
Ms. Lise Sundrla	Savannah Development & Renewal Auth.
Ms. Olivia Swanson	Cuyler/Brownsville Neighborhood Assoc.
Ms. Jeanne Valentine	Islands Advisory Committee
Mr. Jack Wardlaw	Wardlaw Construction
Mr. Randy Weitman	Georgia Ports Authority
Mr. Charles W. Williams	JRW Development
Mr. Larry Wimpy	Landlords Association
Mr. Steve Wohlfeil	Hussey, Gay, Bell & DeYoung
Ms. Ardis Wood	Ardsley Park Neighborhood Association

CHATHAM – SAVANNAH TRICENTENNIAL PLAN
STEERING COMMITTEE ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Mr. Russell Abolt	Chatham County Manager
Mr. James Blackburn	City of Savannah, Attorney
Mr. Michael Brown	City of Savannah, City Manager
Ms. Diane Cantor	Habitat for Humanity
Mr. Ellis Cook	City Council – District 3
Mr. Jeff Felser	City Council – At Large Post 2
Mr. David Gellatly	Chatham County Commissioner – Dist 6
Dr. Billy Hair	Chatham County Commission
Mr. Jonathan Hart	Chatham County, Attorney
Ms. Marianne Heimes	Islands Neighborhood Association
Mr. Tim Holbrook	City of Port Wentworth, Mayor
Mr. James Holmes	Chatham County Commissioner – Dist 2
Mr. James R. Hungerpillar	Town of Veronburg, Mayor
Ms. Edna B. Jackson	City Council – At Large Post 2
Ms. Melissa Jest	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Mr. Otis Johnson	City of Savannah, Mayor
Mr. Van R. Johnson, II	City Council - District 1
Mr. J. P. Jones	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Mr. Clifton Jones, Jr.	City Council - District 5
Mr. Dean Kicklighter	Chatham County Commissioner – Dist 7
Mr. Mike Lamb	City of Pooler, Mayor
Mr. Pete Liakakis	Chatham County Commission, Chairman
Mr. Stephen Lufburrow	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Mr. Alexander Luten	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Mr. Timothy Mackey	Metropolitan Planning Comm., Chairman
Mr. Lacy Manigault	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Mr. Walker McCumber	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Mr. John McMasters	Chatham County Commissioner
Mr. Lee Meyer	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Mr. W. John Mitchell	New Legacy Community Development
Mr. Frank Murray	Chatham County Commissioner
Mr. Harris Odell	Chatham County Commissioner – Dist 5
Ms. Mary Osborne	City Council - District 2
Mr. Walter Parker	City of Tybee Island, Mayor
Mr. James Petrea	Town of Thunderbolt, Mayor
Mr. Andy Quinney	City of Garden City, Mayor
Mr. Robert Ray	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Mr. Ben Rozier	City of Bloomingdale, Mayor
Mr. Bill Saxman	Saxman Planning and Development
Dr. Priscilla D. Thomas	Chatham County Commissioner – Dist 8
Mr. Tony Thomas	City Council - District 6
Mr. Patrick Shay	Chatham County Commissioner – Dist 3
Mr. Patrick K. Farrell	Chatham County Commissioner – Dist 4

CHATHAM – SAVANNAH TRICENTENNIAL PLAN
STEERING COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEES

Economic Development Subcommittee

Participants

Susan Bragg	Dept of Family and Children Services
Will Berson	The Georgia Conservancy
Kendra Carter	Community Planning & Development
Jacqueline Elmore	Youth Futures Authority
Del Ferguson	City of Bloomingdale
Jane Feiler	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Lee Grimes	Savannah Economic Development Auth.
Jean Iaderosa	Chatham Area Transit Authority
Alex Ikefuna	Community Planning & Development
Ernestine Jones	Liberty City Community Association
Julie Lamy	Economic Development Department
Bridget Lidy	Savannah Development & Renewal Auth.
Anne Roise,	Economic Development Department
Bill Saxman,	Consultant
Lise Sundrla	Savannah Development & Renewal Auth.
Charles Williams	JRW Development
Randy Weitman	Georgia Ports Authority
Brian White	Community Planning & Development
Ardis Wood	Ardsley Park Neighborhood Association

Guest Presenters

Steve Stevens	Stage Front Presentation Systems
Peggy Jolley	Savannah Economic Development Auth.

Staff to the Subcommittee

Dennis Hutton	Planner, MPC
Alan Bray	Planner, MPC

Transportation Subcommittee

Susan Bragg	Dept of Family and Children Services
Suzanne Donovan	Private Citizen
Jean Iaderosa	Chatham Area Transit Authority
Julie Lamy	Economic Development Department
Frank McIntosh	Savannah Tree Foundation
Patty McIntosh	The Georgia Conservancy
Ruth Powers	Chatham County Engineering Dept.
Jeanne Valentine	Islands Advisory Committee
Randy Weitman	Georgia Ports Authority
Charles Williams	JRW Development
Ardis Wood	Ardsley Park Neighborhood Association

Guest Presenters

Bill Johnson	Live Oak Public Library
Mark Wilkes	Metropolitan Planning Commission

Staff to the Subcommittee

Dennis Hutton	Planner, MPC
Courtland Hyser	Planner, MPC

Housing/Historic Preservation Subcommittee

Michael Brown	Marley Management
Diane Cantor	Habitat for Humanity
Earline Davis	Housing Authority of Savannah
Jane Feiler	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Kim Garcia	Department of Housing
Hugh Golson	Chatham County School Board
Alex Ikefuna,	Community Planning & Development
Stephanie Jackel	Downtown Neighborhood Association
Bridget Lidy	Savannah Development & Renewal Auth.
Hector Lopez	Homebuilder Association of Savannah
Mark McDonald	Historic Savannah Foundation
James Polychrones	Savannah College of Art and Design
Kristin Hyser	Department of Housing
Bill Saxman	Consultant
Helen Stone	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Olivia Swanson	Cuyler-Brownville Neighborhood Assoc.
Brian White	Community Planning & Development

Staff to the Subcommittee

Beth Reiter	Historic Preservationist, MPC
Lee Webb	Historic Preservation Planner, MPC
Tom Wilson	Director of Comprehensive Planning, MPC
Alan Bray	Planner, MPC

Natural Resources Subcommittee

Clark Alexander
Marc Bouy
Jerry Lominack
Hector Lopez
Patty McIntosh
Tara Merrill
Sid Nutting
Dale Thorpe
Jean Valentine

Skidaway Institute of Oceanography
Bouy Brothers
American Institute of Architects
Lopez Construction
The Georgia Conservancy
EMC Engineering
Southeast Advisory Committee
Savannah Tree Foundation
Islands Advisory Committee

Staff to the Subcommittee

Jackie Jackson
Courtland Hyser

Environmental Planner, MPC
Planner, MPC

**CHATHAM – SAVANNAH TRICENTENNIAL PLAN
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Dr. Clark Alexander	Skidaway Institute of Oceanography
Mr. Mark Boyles	Saussy Engineering
Mr. Dan Fischer	EMC Engineering
Mr. Don Lindner	Appraisal Institute
Mr. Jerry Lominack	American Institute of Architects
Mr. Phillip McCorkle	McCorkle Pedigo & Johnson LLP
Ms. Patricia McIntosh	The Georgia Conservancy
Mr. Jim Oosterhoudt	RETEC Group, Inc.
Ms. Ruth Powers	Chatham County Engineering Dept.
Mr. Ryan Schneider	Armstrong Real Estate
Ms. Helen Stone	Chatham County Commission- Dist 1
Mr. Harold Yellin	Hunter MacLean Exley & Dunn PC

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGENCY MEMBERS

Alan Bray	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Alex Ikefuna	Community Planning & Development
Anne Roise	Economic Development Department
Beth Reiter	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Bridget Lidy	Savannah Development & Renewal Auth.
Bryan White	Community Planning & Development
Charlotte Moore	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Clyde Wester	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Courtland Hyser	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Dennis Goldbaugh	Chatham County Engineering Dept.
Chrlan Owens	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Gary Plumbley	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Helen Stone	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Jackie Jackson	Metropolitan Planning Commission
John Howell	Metropolitan Planning Commission
John Hutton	Savannah Development Services
Julie Lamy	Economic Development Department
Kristin Hyser	Department of Housing
Lee Webb	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Lise Sundrla	Savannah Development & Renewal Auth.
Mark Wilkes	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Martin Fretty	Department of Housing
Robert Sebek	Chatham County Zoning Administrator
Ruth Powers	Chatham County Engineering Dept
Teresa Concannon	Coastal Ga Regional Development Center
Tina Bockhold	Chatham County Engineering Dept.
Tom Thomson	Metropolitan Planning Commission
Tom Todaro	Savannah Inspections Department
Tom Wilson	Metropolitan Planning Commission

Vince Grevemberg

Chatham County Engineering Dept.

SAVANNAH-CHATHAM COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
TRICENTENNIAL PLAN COMMITTEE MEETINGS

FULL COMMITTEE	JOINT MEETING WITH TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE	NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE	TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE	HOUSING AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION SUBCOMMITTEE	TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE	INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE
6/27/2002	6/5/2002	11/14/2002	11/7/2002	11/14/2002	11/7/2002	6/26/2002	8/2/2002
9/26/2002	9/9/2004	12/12/2002	12/5/2002	12/12/2002	12/5/2002	8/28/2002	9/6/2002
11/21/2002		1/23/2003	1/16/2003	1/23/2003	1/16/2003	9/18/2002	10/11/2002
2/20/2003		2/27/2003	2/13/2003	2/27/2003	3/13/2003	10/23/2002	11/8/2002
9/11/2003		3/20/2003	3/13/2003	3/20/2003	4/24/2003	11/20/2002	12/6/2002
12/11/2003		4/17/2003	5/22/2003	4/17/2003	5/22/2003	12/11/2002	2/7/2003
		5/15/2003	6/26/2003	5/15/2003	6/26/2003	1/22/2003	3/7/2003
		6/19/2003		6/19/2003		3/19/2003	5/2/2003
		7/17/2003		7/17/2003		4/6/2003	8/1/2003
						5/21/2003	10/3/2003
						6/18/2003	2/13/2004
						7/16/2003	4/22/2004
						8/20/2003	6/4/2004
						9/17/2003	8/27/2004
						10/17/2003	12/2/2004
						11/19/2003	12/3/2004
						12/17/2003	

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE MATERIALS FROM THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM



C H A T H A M C O U N T Y - S A V A N N A H
METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
110 EAST STATE STREET, P.O. BOX 8246, SAVANNAH GEORGIA 31412 - 8246

Press Release

The Metropolitan Planning Commission is working on a comprehensive plan for the future. This plan involves members of the community as well as experts in land use, transportation, architecture, engineering, planning, development, and other related fields. It includes a Steering Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, and Community Advisory Groups.

One important first step is to gauge community opinion about future growth and development. To this end, the MPC has engaged the Survey Research Center at Savannah State University. They will administer a community opinion survey to about 400 randomly selected households. The community is urged to express their views if their household is randomly selected to participate. The staff of the Survey Research Center indicate that the interview is not difficult but that it will take about 15 minutes to complete. Most of the questions are related to the quality of life in Savannah and Chatham County.

The results of this study will be shared with the community later in July and with expert planning consultants who have been hired to work with the MPC to update the City and County Comprehensive Plan.

Contact:

Dr. Barbara Bart, Director
Survey Research Center
Savannah State University
912 256-2244

or

Dr. George Williams, Dean
Graduate Studies and Sponsored Research
Savannah State University
Same number

NEWS RELEASE

The Metropolitan Planning Commission will hold a Town Meeting on September 10 at 5:00 p.m. in the Coastal Georgia Center auditorium. The MPC is updating comprehensive plans and zoning for the City of Savannah and unincorporated areas of Chatham County. The Town Meeting is being held to inform the public about the planning update process and to provide a forum for public comment.

The MPC has termed the comprehensive plan and zoning update process the Tricentennial Plan. Savannah was established in 1733 and the plans now being written will be presented in 2003 with a 30 year planning horizon. This means that goals, policies, and zoning standards will be written to accommodate growth anticipated through 2033.

This effort by the MPC is the first major update of zoning since it was first adopted in 1960. City and County comprehensive plans were adopted in 1993, however updating the zoning ordinances requires updating the plans for consistency. Under current state requirements the plans are scheduled for a review in 2003 and a complete overhaul in 2008. The Tricentennial Plan will not only update the plans to meet state requirements, but will bring zoning and comprehensive planning into full alignment.

City and County residents may speak at the Town Meeting on any subject encompassed by comprehensive planning. Topics include zoning, housing, transportation, economic development, historic preservation, natural resources, community facilities, and recreation.

The MPC has arranged for a panel of distinguished speakers to present their observations about what is essential to good planning in the 21st Century. Panelists include: Mr. Egbert Perry, President of Integral Group and chairman of the Atlanta Affordable Housing Task Force; Dr. Reid Ewing, Research Professor, Rutgers University, one of the nation's leading experts on transportation and land use; Mr. Gary Garczynski, president of the National Association of Homebuilders; and ...

Dr. Barbara Bart, director of the Survey Research Center at Savannah State University, will report on the recent MPC public opinion survey at the Town Meeting. Preliminary results of the survey show strong public concern about many of the issues being addressed by the Tricentennial Plan. The full report will be released at the Town Meeting.

Planning and zoning consultants assisting the MPC with the Tricentennial Plan will be present at the Town Meeting. The consultants, distinguished speakers, and MPC staff will be available to answer questions from the public.

DEFINITIONS, HIGHLIGHTS, AND SIDEBARS

A “comprehensive plan” is a plan that contains growth projections and establishes goals, objectives, and strategies to efficiently and effectively accommodate that anticipated growth. Comprehensive plans normally look at least 20 years into the future and are reviewed on a five year basis. Georgia and over 20 other states require local governments to have comprehensive plans.

A “zoning ordinance” establishes districts where compatible types of development may be constructed. It also contains development standards for each of those districts (such as building height and setbacks). The provisions of a zoning ordinance have the force of law, whereas a comprehensive plan is a policy document. A zoning ordinance is a means of implementing comprehensive plan goals and objectives.

Some Highlights from the MPC Public Opinion Survey

- *Employment* was cited most often as an important factor drawing people to the Savannah area. Other highly ranked reasons were *affordability* and *attractiveness* of the area.
- *Price* and *security* were the foremost reasons for selecting a neighborhood in which to live. Proximity to *employment* and to *parks* and *open space* were also highly ranked for their importance.
- *Parks* and *tree protection* ranked higher than other City/County services; 62.6% of respondents support acquisition of more *greenspace* and 59.2% favoring use of LOST funds for this purpose.
- *Drainage canal* conditions were a source of concern, with 56% of respondents reporting that they were dissatisfied with these facilities.
- *Rezoning requests* are too easily approved according to many respondents.
- Better *design guidelines* were favored by four to one ratio -- not only in historic areas, but also in commercial areas and new neighborhoods.
- *Traffic congestion* was cited as the most serious problem. *Unplanned growth* and *loss of community character* were also cited often as concerns.

WHY THE UPDATE?

- Good management requires sound planning
- Sound public planning requires community goal setting
- Community goal setting creates a shared vision and greater cohesiveness within the community
- Plans and zoning ordinances currently in effect were developed in different eras
- Current process is an opportunity to bring plans and zoning laws into alignment
- Zoning in effect now has accumulated many “short term fixes” that have produced confusing and inconsistent language

HOW DOES PLANNING AND ZONING AFFECT ME?

- Helps maintain public services and infrastructure as the community grows
- Guides growth efficiently for best use of the tax dollar
- Establishes and addresses priorities identified by the community (e.g., special needs housing)
- Ensures that development is compatible in mass, scale, and appearance to its surroundings
- Improves community appearance
- Adds value to property by raising overall quality and standard of development

SAVANNAH-CHATHAM COUNTY

TRICENTENNIAL PLAN TOWN MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2002, 5:00 P.M.
COASTAL GEORGIA CENTER

PROGRAM

- 5:00 – 5:10 p.m.** **Welcome and Introductions**
Ms. Helen Stone, Chair, Metropolitan Planning Commission
Mr. Floyd Adams, Mayor, City of Savannah
Dr. Billy Hair, Chairman, Chatham County Commission
- 5:10 – 5:30 p.m.** **Background, Purpose, Expectations, and Vision for the Tricentennial Plan**
Mr. Floyd Adams, Mayor, City of Savannah
Mr. Frank Murray, Chatham County Commission
Mr. J.B. Blackburn, City Attorney
Mr. Milton Newton, Executive Director, MPC
- 5:50 p.m.** **Report on the MPC Public Opinion Survey**
Dr. Barbara Bart, Director, Survey Research Center, Savannah State University
- 5:50 – 7:00 p.m.** **Distinguished Guest Panel**
Mr. Thomas Wilson, Director of Comprehensive Planning, MPC, Moderator
Mr. Egbert Perry, President, The Integral Group, Atlanta
Mr. Keyvan Izadi, Land Use Planner, National Association of Homebuilders
Dr. Reid Ewing, Research Professor, Rutgers University
Ms. Jackie Martin, South Carolina Coastal Conservation League
- 7:00 – 7:30 p.m.** **Public Question and Comment Period**
Mr. Thomas Wilson, Moderator
MPC Staff, Consultants, and Distinguished Speakers will respond to comments and answer questions posed by the public.
- 7:30 p.m.** **Closing Comment and Adjournment**
Ms. Helen Stone



C H A T H A M C O U N T Y - S A V A N N A H
METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
110 EAST STATE STREET, P.O. BOX 8246, SAVANNAH GEORGIA 31412 - 8246

NEWS RELEASE

The Chatham County – Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) has prepared a draft Comprehensive Plan for the City of Savannah and unincorporated Chatham County. The draft plan, which is in three volumes, is now available for public review. Interested parties may learn more about the draft in the following ways:

- Through neighborhood leadership training sessions¹
- At public meetings scheduled throughout the summer (see back for schedule)
- In the Public Libraries, where draft plans can be found at the Reference Desk
- On the MPC website: www.thempc.org
- On Cable TV Government Channel segments throughout the summer

The public comment period will run from June through August. Following the public comment period, MPC staff will prepare a final draft for review by the Metropolitan Planning Commission board. Additional public comment will be taken during the MPC deliberations. The MPC will then vote to submit a recommendation on the plan to County Commission and City Council. The Comprehensive Plan will then be forwarded to those bodies for additional public hearings, discussion, and adoption.

Once the Comprehensive Plan is adopted and new land use policies are in place, work on an updated Chatham County – Savannah Zoning Ordinance will proceed at an accelerated pace. It is anticipated that the new Zoning Ordinance will be available for public review by June, 2006.

Attachments:

- 1) FAQ Sheet
- 2) Executive Summary

¹ Neighborhood association leaders were invited to attend training sessions scheduled for May 25, 26, 31.



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PUBLIC HEARING

CHATHAM COUNTY – SAVANNAH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Chatham County – Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on June 7, 2005 at 5:00 p.m. in the MPC Hearing Room, 112 East State Street, Savannah, Georgia for the purpose of taking public comment on the update of the City-County Comprehensive Plan. A three month period of community meetings will follow during which interested parties will have an opportunity to comment.

The Chatham County – Savannah Comprehensive Plan is being updated in two phases. Phase I encompasses an update of the following components: Community Vision, Demographics, Land Use, Economic Development, Housing, Historic and Cultural Resources, Natural Resources, and Transportation. Phase I is scheduled for completion by December, 2005. Phase II encompasses an update of the following components: Community Facilities, Intergovernmental Coordination. Phase II is scheduled for completion by October, 2008.

Comment may be directed to: Comprehensive Planning Department, Metropolitan Planning Commission, 110 East State Street, Savannah, GA 31401. Telephone: 912-651-1440.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan is a document that the State requires cities and counties to prepare every ten years. The Plan establishes community goals and strategies to accomplish the goals. Most Plans have the following minimum content:

- Population
- Land Use
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Historic and Cultural Resources
- Natural Resources
- Transportation

A Comprehensive Plan is a roadmap for development based on how the residents envision their community and a policy formation for zoning.

What is zoning?

Zoning provides for the orderly development of land in a way that protects existing landowners. Zoning laws prohibit activities by one citizen that could be harmful to other citizens.

Zoning provides the legal basis for regulating the location of uses and provides standards for development.

What is a zoning ordinance?

All zoning ordinances contain the same basic elements and must be consistent with the Georgia Zoning Procedures Law:

- **Use Tables** define what activities are permitted in various zoning districts.
- **Development Standards** establish requirements such as setbacks and height limits so that development patterns within zoning districts will be consistent. Development standards are measurable.
- **Criteria** provide a consistent basis for issuing permits within a zoning district. Criteria differ from standards in that they are not measurable. A standard may require a certain number of parking spaces for a use whereas criteria may require that the use not create excessive additional traffic.
- **Nonconforming Uses** are activities that existed within zoning districts before current zoning was instituted. Generally, a nonconforming use is one that would be detrimental to the neighborhood if were permitted throughout the district or if it were permitted to expand.

- **Procedures** determine how applications for permits, variances, and appeals will be handled and who will make the decision regarding approval.
- **Definitions** are included to ensure that everybody who reads the ordinance understands exactly what the terms mean.
- **Official Zoning Map** identifies the boundaries of each zoning district.

What is land use?

Land use is the activity on a specific parcel of land (residential, commercial, industrial, etc).

What is mixed use development?

Mixed use development includes two or more uses on a tract of land. Mixed use zoning districts are more challenging to administer than single use districts because not all uses can co-exist compatibly (for example, industrial and residential uses). Therefore, special care must be taken to ensure that all allowable uses in a mixed use district are compatible with each other.

What is density?

Density as applied in land use and zoning is a measure of dwelling units per acre.

What is Smart Growth?

The principles of Smart Growth suggest ways to foster growth and development without the detrimental side effects of sprawl. For more information on Smart Growth and its guiding principles, visit <http://www.smartgrowth.org/>.

What is the Tricentennial Plan?

The Tricentennial Plan is the name that has been chosen for Savannah and Unincorporated Chatham County's joint comprehensive plan and zoning update. It is called the Tricentennial Plan because it has a planning horizon of 2033, the 300th anniversary of the founding of Savannah.

Why update the existing comprehensive plan with the Tricentennial Plan?

Georgia state law requires periodic updates to local comprehensive plans. The existing comprehensive plan must be updated to ensure that Savannah and Chatham County remain eligible for a range of state assistance programs. Beyond that, comprehensive plan updates are a good idea because comprehensive plans form a foundation for policies that help guide development decisions on a day-to-day basis. Updating the plan helps to keep it relevant, and also helps to ensure that the community grows in an orderly and desirable manner.

What are the next steps in the Tricentennial planning process?

- Complete Technical Work on the Comprehensive Plan (Spring, 2005)
- Present the Draft Plan in a Series of Public Meetings (Spring-Summer, 2005)
- Refine Draft Plan Based on Public Comment (Summer-Fall, 2005)
- Present Draft Plan to MPC--Additional Opportunity for Public Comment (Fall, 2005)
- Present Draft Plan to City Council and County Commission for Adoption--Additional Public Hearings (Fall-Winter, 2005)
- Prepare New Zoning Ordinance Consistent with the Draft Land Use Plan (2006)



Are there opportunities to improve your neighborhood through the Tricentennial Plan?

Are there problems in your neighborhood that should be addressed by the Tricentennial Plan?

Are there land use and zoning issues in your neighborhood that need to be addressed?

What changes would you like to see in your neighborhood in the next 5 to 10 years?

If you have any other comments please send them to:

Planning

Metropolitan Planning Commission
P.O. Box 8246
110 East State St.
Savannah, GA 31412-8246
Attn: Tom Wilson, Director of Comprehensive

Telephone: 912-651-1449
email: wilsont@thempc.org



VISION COMPETITION

ON THE FUTURE OF CHATHAM COUNTY AND SAVANNAH

CATEGORIES

Essay Competition

1. Essays should describe the writer's vision of the future of Savannah and Chatham County at the Tricentennial in 2033;
2. They should relate the past and the future by describing the founding of Savannah in 1733;
3. They should mention the community's many assets, such as its diversity, historic and cultural resources, and environment;
4. They should not exceed 500 words (two double spaced pages in 12 point type).

Artistic Competition

1. Artistic renderings should represent the future of Savannah and Chatham County at the Tricentennial in 2033;
2. They should creatively relate the past and the future of the City and County;
3. They should capture the essence of the community's many assets, such as its diversity, historic and cultural resources, and environment;
4. They should be in the form of paintings, drawing, or computer images on paper or canvas.

AWARDS

Anyone who is a resident of the City of Savannah or unincorporated Chatham County is encouraged to submit entries in one or both of the categories. Cash awards of \$250, \$150, and \$50 will be provided for first, second, and third place in each category. A framed award certificate will be given to all placing contestants.

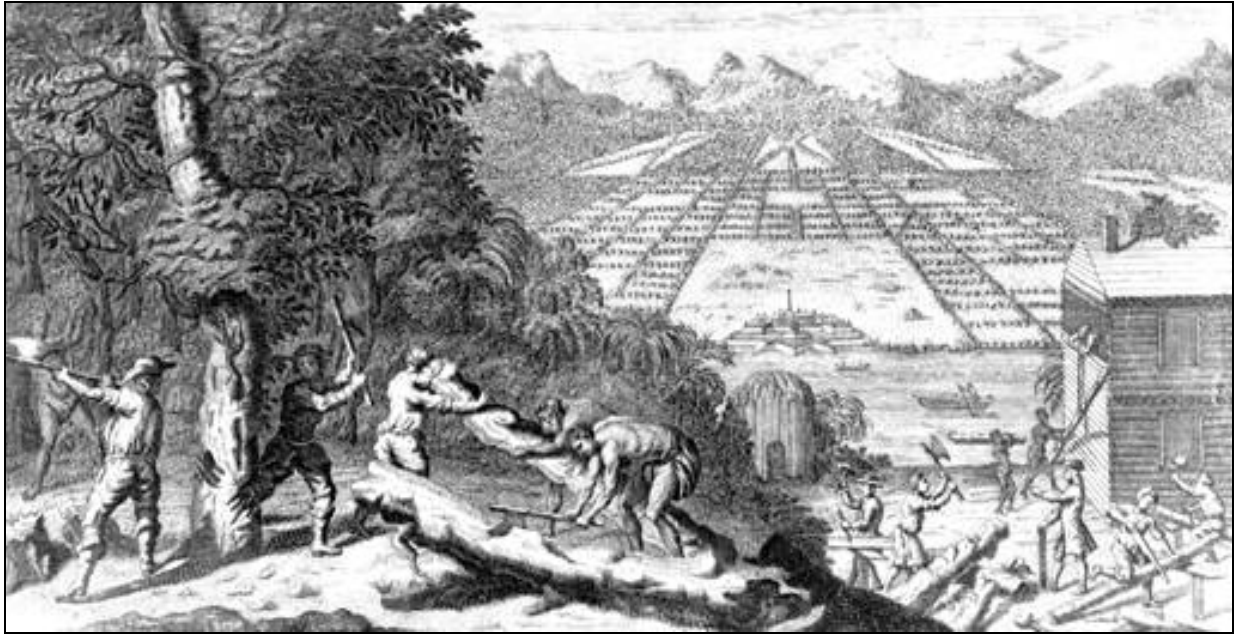
DEADLINE

Entries must be received no later than September 2, 2005. They should be addressed to:
MPC Vision Competition, 110 East State Street, Savannah, Georgia 31401

A New Vision

The engraving and excerpts below represent an artistic and written vision statement for the new Georgia colony published in 1732 in "Some Account of the Designs of the Trustees for Establishing the Colony of Georgia in America." The Tricentennial "Vision Competition" seeks a new vision statement for the Savannah area at the Tricentennial.

The Trustees' Vision of the Founding of Savannah and the Georgia Colony



“The Trustees intend to relieve such unfortunate persons as cannot subsist here, and establish them in an orderly manner, so as to form a well regulated town.... By such a Colony, many families, who would otherwise starve, will be provided for, and made masters of houses and lands; the people in Great Britain to whom these necessitous families were a burthen, will be relieved; numbers of manufacturers will be here employed, for supplying them with clothes, working tools, and other necessaries; and by giving refuge to the distressed Saltzburgers, and other persecuted Protestants, the power of Britain, as a reward for its hospitality, will be encreased by the addition of so many religious and industrious subjects.

The Colony of Georgia lying about the same latitude with part of China, Persia, Palestine, and the Madeiras, it is highly probable that when hereafter it shall be well-peopled and rightly cultivated, England may be supplied from thence with raw Silk, Wine, Oil, Dyes, Drugs, and many other materials for manufactures, which she is obliged to purchase from Southern countries....

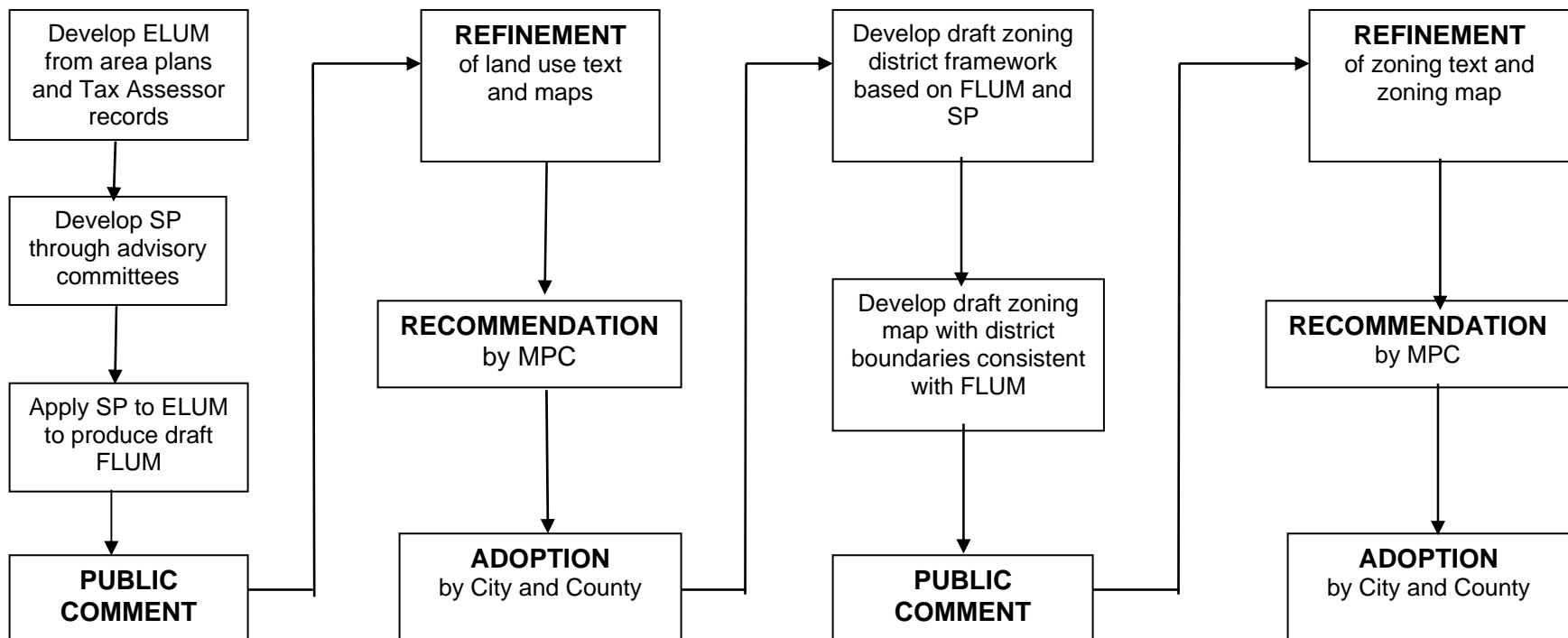
All human affairs are so subject to chance, that there in no answering for events; yet from reason and the nature of things, it may be concluded, that the riches and also the number of the inhabitants in Great Britain will be increased, by importing at a cheap rate from this new Colony, the materials requisite for carrying on in Britain several manufactures. For our Manufacturers will be encouraged to marry and multiply ... and also many people will find employment here....”

APPENDIX C

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE PHASE

Land Use Plan – Zoning Ordinance Development Flowchart

ELUM = Existing Land Use Map² FLUM = Future Land Use Map³ SP = Strategic Plan⁴



² An “existing land use map” is an inventory of current land use.

³ A “future land use map” is a map that reflects official policy about future development patterns.

⁴ The strategic plan consists of a vision statement, goals, objectives, and implementation strategies.