

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPONENTS

The Georgia Planning Act of 1989 requires that cities and counties prepare a comprehensive plan. An update to that plan is required every ten (10) years. The underlying concept of the local comprehensive planning requirements is the belief that communities can achieve their goals by addressing a comprehensive range of issues in a local plan, including demographics, economic development, natural and historic resources, housing, community facilities, and land use.

On May 1, 2005, new comprehensive planning rules took effect that created four planning levels (Minimal, Basic, Intermediate and Advanced) into which local governments are divided, based upon a combination of their population size in 2000 and their average annual growth rates for the period from 1990-2000. All jurisdictions in the Atlanta region, including the City of Fayetteville, are held to the highest standard, the Advanced Planning Level.

A comprehensive plan meeting the planning requirements for the Advanced Planning Level must include three components: (1) a Community Assessment, (2) a Community Participation Program, and (3) a Community Agenda, as described below.

Community Assessment

The first part of the comprehensive plan is an objective and professional assessment of data and information about the community that is intended to be prepared without extensive direct public participation. The purpose of the Community Assessment is to present a factual and conceptual foundation upon which the rest of the comprehensive plan is built. Preparation of the Community Assessment is largely a staff or professional function of collecting and analyzing data and information about the community and presenting the results in a concise, easily understood format, such as an executive summary, for consideration by the public and decision-makers involved in subsequent development of the Community Agenda.

There are four required components to the Community Assessment listed below:

1. Identification of Potential Issues and Opportunities. Review the list of typical issues and opportunities provided in the State Planning Recommendations and select those that may be applicable for the community. This initial step is intended to yield an all-inclusive list of potential issues and opportunities for further study, which may be modified through additional analysis.
2. Analysis of Existing Development Patterns. This must include the following three components: existing land use map, an evaluation of existing land use patterns and trends within the jurisdiction of the local

government (including areas that are likely to be annexed within the planning period) to identify any areas requiring special attention, and recommended character areas.

3. Analysis of Consistency with Quality Community Objectives. Evaluate the community's current policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives.

4. Supporting Analysis of Data and Information. This data may verify potential issues or opportunities identified above; may uncover new issues or opportunities not previously identified; may indicate significant local trends that need to be brought to the attention of decision-makers; may suggest adjustment of recommended character areas (e.g., to avoid intrusion into environmentally sensitive areas, etc.).

Community Participation Program

The second part of the comprehensive plan is a Community Participation Program that describes the local government's strategy for ensuring adequate public and stakeholder involvement in the preparation of the Community Agenda portion of the plan. 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.

Community Agenda

The third part of the comprehensive plan is the community's vision for the future as well as its strategy for achieving this vision. Because the Community Agenda provides guidance for future decision-making about the community, it must be prepared with adequate input from stakeholders and the general public. The Community Agenda must include three major components:

1. A community vision for the future physical development of the community, expressed in the form of a map indicating unique character areas, each with its own strategy for guiding future development patterns;
2. List of issues and opportunities identified by the community for further action which is the final, locally agreed upon, list of issues and opportunities the City intends to address. Each of these issues or opportunities must be followed-up with a corresponding implementation measures in the Implementation Program.

3. Implementation Program is the overall strategy for achieving the Community Vision and for addressing each of the Community Issues and Opportunities. It identifies specific measures to be undertaken by the community to implement the plan.

The required update of comprehensive plans for all local governments in Georgia began in the year 2004 and ends in 2008. Fayetteville's update is required by February 28th, 2007.