

Public Participation Program for Miller County and the City of Colquitt Summer 2005

The planning procedures and standards adopted by the Department of Community Affairs at the beginning of May 2005, mandate a thorough description of the program that the local planners developed to ensure sufficient levels of public involvement in the creation of the administration's Public Agenda, the final segment of the community's 10 year comprehensive plan.

Initially the RDC contacted the respective County and City governments to generate a preliminary list of stakeholders. In consultation with the initially identified group, further stakeholders were identified and contacted directly. After further research, RDC staff contacted other significant actors, such as Henny Penny Studios and the Miller County Arts committee. Between January 1st 2005 and June 23 6 meetings were held that brought together representatives from Miller County Hospital, Miller County Board of Education, Miller County Commissioners, the City of Colquitt City Manager, the Executive Director of the City of Colquitt Community Development Corporation, representatives from the Library service, the recreation commission, the Chamber of Commerce as well as members of the general public.

These meetings culminated with a final review of the Miller County and City of Colquitt Assessment, on May 21. The community was then notified that the Assessment was available for general review and further public comment. In the intervening period, posters detailing the most telling issues in the assessment and calling for as well as directing, public input into the assessment were produced by the RDC and hung prominently in both City Hall and the Miller County Courthouse Annex.

As of June 28, 2005, both City and County have completed gathering public input and passed resolutions to transmit the Consolidated Assessment. Other local governments have been notified and letters confirming the initial completeness check have been mailed by the Southwest Georgia Regional Development Center.

A SWOT questionnaire was developed by the RDC and is being administered by telephone to generate a clear picture of community concerns and overall values. The answers to this questionnaire will be used as the starting point of the community's overall visioning session scheduled for Saturday August 6th. The August public meeting is

designed to solely address the overall vision for the future rather than focus on other specific Agenda elements.

In the wake of the August meeting, between 8-10 meetings open to the public will be scheduled to delineate both goals and policies for specific agenda elements such as Economic Development, Housing, Land Use. Upon the completion of the first draft, the Public Agenda, will be presented to the local governments, and notices calling for further public input will be posted.

After all further input has been collected and corrections to the document completed a further published public hearing will be set and a resolution to transmit to the RDC and the DCA shall be passed.

List of Identified Stakeholders

1. Members of the Public
2. County Commissioners
3. City Council and Mayor as well as Administrative Staff
4. Miller County Public Health
5. Miller County Hospital
6. Miller County Board of Education
7. Local Spring Creek Conservation Coalition
8. Miller County Arts Committee
9. Henny Penny Studios
10. Local Church Leaders

Public Participation Strategies

Telephone Surveys, Mass Mailing of Questionnaires, Posters, Flyers and Newspaper Advertisements for Visioning sessions and subsequent Community Agenda Meetings. RDC staff attended public hearings on assessment.

PHASE	TASK	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	D
1	Review Documents, Collect Data												
	First Public Meeting												
	Identify Stakeholders and Contact												
	Create Steering and Subcommittees												
	Presentation of First draft of Assessment to Committee Members and other interested parties												
	Informational Presentations to various stakeholder groups such as Chamber of Commerce, Arts Council, City and County Councils												
	Corrections and Additions to Draft												
	Transmittal												
Phase 2													
	Posters developed and hung												
	Phone												

	Interviews with citizens carried out												
	Invitations to Primary Visioning Session Sent out												
	Visioning Session												
Phase 3													
	Weekly (or bi) sessions with sub committees to develop Community Agenda												
	Public Information Meetings												
	Completion and presentation of Community Agenda												
	Corrections, Additions, Further Comments												
	Final Public Hearing												
	Transmittal												

Completion of Community Agenda Program

Attended by 16 prominent stakeholders including both Mayor of Colquitt and Miller County Commission Chairperson, generated a clear vision statement and 8 guiding principles to consider while developing the Community Agenda.

Pending the successful completion of the August 6th, 2005 Visioning Session, weekly meetings with different subcommittees and other interested parties will be scheduled to develop goals and policies specific to the subject such as Economic Development, Housing etc. At this moment, the first draft of the Community Agenda is expected to be completed by the end of September, presented to the public for final review during the month of October and revised and finalized in November and submitted to DCA during that month.

The strategies for the specific subcommittee meetings will entail Visualization, Cognitive Mapping, Cost/Benefit Analysis, Visual preference surveys, further telephone surveys and an examination of past short term work programs.