



**GORDON COUNTY
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM UPDATE**

Gordon County and the cities of Calhoun, Fairmount, Plainville, Ranger, and Resaca are beginning a Five-Year Update of the Community Work Program within their joint comprehensive plan that was originally adopted in December 2007. The five-year update is required and will be prepared according to new rules promulgated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, which are effective on January 1, 2013. This public hearing will explain the process that will be followed for the update, which has a State established deadline of June 30, 2013. The update will include a Report of Accomplishments regarding the last five-year short-term work program; the creation of a new Community Work Program; review and update of the list of Issues and Opportunities; and review and update of the Land Use Element. Updates of other portions of the plan document are discretionary per the state rules.

Following this process will allow the participating local governments to maintain their Qualified Local Governments (QLG) status, and therefore be eligible for state grant funds, state loans, and state permits.

This public meeting will be held in the conference room of the Gordon County Administration Building, 201 North Wall Street, Calhoun, Georgia on Tuesday, January 15, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. The public is invited to attend and participate in this public meeting.

Publish on Wed. Jan. 2 and Wed. Jan. 9, 2013 in a display ad.

Gordon County and Cities

Five-Year Update

The Process

* *New DCA Comprehensive Planning Rules were approved by the DCA Board on November 7, 2012 and will be effective January 1, 2013 and will be used to guide this process.*

The Paperwork Product: 1) a new **Community Work Program** (previously called the *Short-Term Work Program or STWP*); and a 2) **Report of Accomplishments** which will identify the status of the activities proposed in the Joint Comprehensive Plan adopted in December 2007. The Report of Accomplishments will address activities that: a) have been completed; b) currently underway with anticipated completion date; c) have been postponed explaining “why;” and d) have not been accomplished and are no longer activities the local govt. intends to undertake and “why.” 3) **Needs and Opportunities** to address; 4) **Either a Character Areas Map and Defining Narrative or a Future Land Use Map and Narrative.** (Item 4 is required for all local governments with zoning or equivalent land development regulations that are subject to the Zoning Procedures Act.)

Discretionary items can include: a) review of Community Goals; a Capital Improvements Element; an Economic Development Element; a Transportation Element; or a Housing Element.

The Actual Process:

* This first public hearing is required to describe the process to be used for plan development, opportunities for public participation, and to obtain input on the planning process. (The above paperwork is not required at the first public hearing.)

* The plan paperwork is prepared with public input, perhaps through a stakeholder committee assembled by each local government or jointly assembled.

* After the above draft paperwork is prepared, the local governments hold a second public hearing, which can be a joint public hearing, for public review of the document. Public comments can be addressed in the paperwork.

* After the close of the above public hearing, the final draft plan paperwork is submitted to the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission under a cover letter signed by the chief elected official of the local government. (The letter must certify that the community considered both the Regional Water Plan and the Rules of Environmental Planning Criteria.)

* The Regional Commission, upon receipt of the paperwork and noting the date of receipt from the local government, would immediately submit a copy to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for review. The date of paperwork submittal for review is the beginning of the official plan review process.

* Notification of Interested Parties. The RC will notify: 1) other governments inside and outside the Region that are contiguous to the submitting local government, and other local governments that are likely to be affected by the plan; 2) local authorities, special districts or other entities that evaluate intergovernmental processes; 3) Regional Commissions that are contiguous to the local government or that are likely to be affected by the plan; and 4) affected state agencies, including DOT, DNR, GEFA, and DCA.

* Interested parties above will be given a deadline for comments.

* Regional Commission Review. The review shall include potential conflicts with other plan, opportunities for inter-jurisdictional/regional solutions to common issues; and consistency with the adopted regional plan.

* DCA Review. Within 35 days of submittal for review, DCA will look for compliance with the minimum standards and procedures for comprehensive planning. The review may result in identification of deficiencies or advisory comments coming back to the RC.

* Report of Findings and Recommendations. Within 40 days after submittal for review, the RC must submit this report to the local governments and DCA. Report includes: 1) summary of comments from interested parties; 2) the RC findings from its own review; and 3) a copy of DCA's finding and advisory comments.

* Plan Revisions. If the Finding & Recommendation report finds non-compliance with the minimum standards & procedures, the local govt. must revise the Plan and resubmit to the Regional Commission & DCA for review.

* Adoption of the Plan. Once the Report of Finding and Recommendations is squared away, the local governments can execute an Adoption Resolution after the expiration of a 60-day period measured from the date of plan submittal. *(Note: The 60-day period is still in the current law, but DCA intends to go to the General Assembly in early 2013 with the support of GMA and ACCG and the Governor to seek the elimination of the 60-day period. This would mean that adoption could occur any time after the finding and recommendation report is squared away.)*

* The local government must forward the adoption resolution to the RC within seven (7) days, then the RC must within seven (7) days forward the resolution to DCA.

* Qualified Local Government status (QLG) is re-affirmed by DCA, meaning the local government is eligible for State grants, loans, and permits.

* Publicize the Availability of the Plan. Local government must notify the newspaper or post on the local website about the adopted plan's availability to the public.

This entire process beginning in January 2013 will run on a schedule that seeks completion prior to June 30, 2013, a deadline for Gordon County and the municipalities established by the Department of Community Affairs.

Project Timeline

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| Jan. 15 | Public Hearing #1 describing the state required planning process (during commission meeting). |
| Feb. 9 | Board review and discussion of the 2007 – 2011 Report of Accomplishments & 2013-2017 Community Work Program (during retreat). |
| Feb. 11-28 | Both documents are posted on the county's web site and facebook page soliciting for public comments on both documents. |
| March 5 | Public Workshop soliciting for public comments on both documents (during commission meeting). |
| March 19 | Public Hearing #2 to solicit public comments one more time and authorize submittal of the documents to the Regional Commission and DCA for their review. |
| May | Adoption of documents prior to the June 30, 2013 deadline. |