

## PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

### Introduction

This Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is designed to guide the stakeholder and public involvement proceedings for the development and adoption of Gwinnett County’s Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and associated sector studies described below. The PIP is intended to serve as a game plan for public involvement and is designed to allow flexibility in its implementation.

PIP Contents	
<i>Project Background.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Approach.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Stakeholders .....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Stakeholder Engagement.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Menu of Outreach Tools.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Appendix A: UDO Advisory Committee .....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Appendix B: Schedule.....</i>	<i>13</i>

### Project Background

In 2010, a new and innovative 2030 Unified Plan for Gwinnett County has been adopted that will set the patterns of the future. Citizens are recognizing the need to change to more efficient land use patterns that will make more efficient use of public services and infrastructure investments.

The overall goal of the 2030 Unified Plan is to establish a new image for Gwinnett as an International Gateway. The five major themes of the Unified Plan (see right) reflect priorities that must be embraced in the UDO and future land use planning in order to accommodate the needs and reflect the spirit of a burgeoning international gateway. These priorities include supporting and providing multimodal transportation corridors, more diverse housing options, transit oriented development, mixed-use development, walkable areas, and marked greenspace. With all this in mind, one of the objectives of the PIP is to recognize the increased diversity of people and cultures that are claiming Gwinnett County as home and should have a voice in the planning process.

- THE 5 MAJOR THEMES OF THE 2030 UNIFIED PLAN**
1. **Maintain economic and fiscal health.** Reframe development to focus on mixed-use corridors and activity centers with a variety of functions and scales.
  2. **Foster redevelopment.** Use proactive zoning [County-initiated zoning] if necessary, along with bonuses and incentives. In some cases it will be necessary to set minimum density levels to generate a critical mass for economic vitality and walkability.
  3. **Promote mobility and accessibility.** Integrate land use and transportation patterns around a multimodal transportation system that is more interconnected and efficient. Plan land use patterns to be supportive of planned high-capacity transit corridors.
  4. **Provide more housing choices.** Recognizing the wider spectrum of needs, from workforce housing to executive housing, the County needs to provide more choices for its citizens due to the greater diversity of the coming generations of residents.
  5. **Keep Gwinnett a preferred place** that is more attractive, more walkable, and laced with more open space and trails. Look for tools in the development regulations to create local parks.

Gwinnett County is now ready to create a **UDO** that will embrace the new image, goals, and policies of the 2030 Unified Plan. Along with this UDO are two sector studies, or small area plans for the following areas: (1) the **Research and Development Corridor** along Highway 316 and (2) the **Rural Estate Character Area** in the eastern side of the county. The term character refers to a specific geographic area that has unique or special characteristics, has potential to evolve into a unique area when provided specific and intentional guidance, or requires special

attention due to unique development issues.<sup>1</sup> Both sector studies stem from recommendations in the Unified Plan for further study of these areas.

The County has contracted with Jordan, Jones & Goulding (now Jacobs, referred to within as project team) to do the research, planning, writing, public involvement and facilitation necessary to create new ordinances to implement the five major themes of the Unified Plan.

## **Approach**

This PIP is intended to establish the best combination of public outreach and public information media, surveys, workshops, stakeholder meetings, community meetings, or other involvement methods, along with the schedule for these elements. This PIP details the steps in the public involvement process, the schedule, the roles of the project team and Gwinnett County staff, and the appropriate structure of stakeholder input methods and public involvement materials to achieve successful implementation of the project.

## **Outreach Goals**

The modification and creation of zoning and development regulations affects the entire community. As a result, reaching out to all community members throughout the project is important. The following outreach goals should guide this process, insuring that a broad cross section of the public is involved with a special focus on key stakeholders, including elected officials, the business community, and developers:

1. Create awareness throughout the community of the UDO process.
2. Provide all community members with input and feedback opportunities.
3. Dispel misconceptions.
4. Educate stakeholders on new regulations.

### *Sector Plan Specific Goals*

The outreach process will also ensure that appropriate stakeholders and affected members of the public are actively engaged in the small area studies for the Research and Development Corridor and the Rural Estate Character Area. The primary outreach goal for these sector plans is to ensure that all area stakeholders are represented in outreach activities, subsequent plan recommendations, and their eventual incorporation in the UDO.

## **Facilitation Goals**

Changes to the zoning and development codes will have diverse effects on different parties. Because of this, facilitation is a key element of this PIP. The key facilitation objective is to reach consensus on contentious or confusing topics, while achieving the most favorable outcome for the greater public. The following three goals will supplement this objective:

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<sup>1</sup> The Georgia Department of Community Affairs Local Planning Requirements direct communities to identify character areas as a part of their Comprehensive Plan. Please see the Unified Plan for more information.

1. Bring key stakeholders to the table.
2. Facilitate productive discussions of controversial issues.
3. Build consensus on new zoning and development controls.

The core of the public involvement process will be built around a UDO Advisory Committee patterned after the Unified Plan’s Advisory Committee (see below). It will be composed of a carefully crafted cross-section of Gwinnett County community members in terms of geography, ethnicity, and sector of the community. There will also be a systematic method for tracking and responding to public input, and a constantly updated website that will enable citizens to review the latest documents and stay informed of upcoming opportunities for public dialogue.

## Stakeholders

Below are lists of relevant stakeholders to be incorporated as a part of the PIP implementation. These lists will likely expand to include additional stakeholders as the planning process ensues.

### UDO Stakeholders

Gwinnett County Staff  
Gwinnett Co. Board Members  
Gwinnett Co. Board of Education  
Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce  
Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful  
Gwinnett Place CID  
Evermore CID  
Gwinnett Village CID  
Lilburn CID  
Council for Quality Growth  
Homeowners’ Associations  
Hospital Authority  
Gwinnett Co. Planning Commission  
Recreation Advisory Board  
SPLOST Citizen Committee  
Transit Advisory Board  
Water & Sewer Authority  
Chamber of Commerce  
Homeowners Associations

### R&D Corridor Stakeholders

Georgia Gwinnett College  
Gwinnett Technical College  
Gwinnett Airport  
Gwinnett Medical Center  
GA Bioscience Authority  
Gwinnett Progress Center  
Local business owners (Cisco, NPR, Publix)  
Gwinnett DOT  
Gwinnett Planning Commissioners (D.1,3,4)  
Gwinnett Public Schools  
City of Lawrenceville  
City of Dacula  
Atlanta Regional Commission

### Rural Estate Character Area Stakeholders

Individual Property Owners  
Council for Quality Growth  
City of Dacula  
City of Grayson

Out of this pool of stakeholders the following formal groups will be established as part of this planning process:

UDO Technical Team – whose role it will be to provide general project guidance for both the UDO and Sector Plans, including review draft materials, and assistance in public outreach. The Team is made up of key county staff and consultants. A list of members can be found in the Project Management Plan.

UDO Advisory Committee – whose role it will be to provide additional input and guidance on the UDO draft materials and on key issues. The UDO Advisory Committee will be established by Gwinnett County in the first month of the planning process. The committee is comprised of approximately 30 individuals representing a cross section of the county’s geography and interest groups as picked by County staff and approved by the Board of Commissioners. A list of members can be found in **Appendix A**

## **Stakeholder Engagement**

Public involvement and engagement is the cornerstone of a successful planning initiative. Working with the various representatives of the community including the public, private and civic stakeholders throughout the plan will help make the UDO strong and acceptable. Following are a number of engagement tools and methods that will be used during the course of the project. A draft detailed project schedule is included in **Appendix B**.

## **Website**

A Gwinnett UDO Project Website [www.GwinnettUDO.com](http://www.GwinnettUDO.com) will be launched in the Spring 2011 to provide a one-stop-shop for information related to the project including the descriptions of the project components, a schedule of project activities, and updates on project progress, as well as materials including press releases, draft documents, frequently asked questions, public notices, and links to related websites. The website will be hosted and linked to the Gwinnett County government site. The website will include “virtual meetings” including presentations, surveys and other exercises from the various meetings for those individuals who are unable to attend in person. A feedback form will also be provided for citizens to submit questions or comments and requests for additional information.

## **Outreach**

A menu-based approach was used to provide outreach techniques and materials that best suit the project. Final decisions on the specific tool will be determined as the project progresses. A sample of potential tools and methods that may be used are included in the following list:

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Gwinnett UDO and Sector Plans

<i>TOOL</i>	<i>DESCRIPTION</i>
<b><i>Wireless Keypad Voting</i></b>	Prioritizing key issues through wireless keypad voting is used by Jacobs as a progressive and valuable tool for public meetings or focus groups. Wireless keypads are distributed to participants with specific questions asked or images shown. The results are shown instantly within a PowerPoint presentation. The activity allows all voices to be heard, not just the few who often dominate conversation. This process would be used to instantly show what the people in the room are thinking, prompting dialogue and additional discussion that might have otherwise gone unspoken. Participants are asked to indicate their preferences or priorities by ranking the statements or pictures in different categories. The rankings then are tallied and concepts emerge from the pattern of preferences. People have opinions on how future decisions can affect their lives and the results of the priority voting can help guide decisions in certain elements of the project.
<b><i>Newspaper Articles</i></b>	Local newspapers would be the primary point of contact for spreading the word and educating the reader on the project. Feature articles over the course of the project would be drafted and submitted to the local newspaper.
<b><i>Press Releases</i></b>	Press releases would provide basic information to be distributed to newspapers, other local media, on the website, and to the stakeholder email database. The press releases would be drafted prior to public meetings to inform the public of meeting dates, times, and locations, and to provide an update on the community input process. Additional press releases would be drafted to share information with the public upon a mutually agreed upon schedule.
<b><i>Survey/Questionnaires</i></b>	Surveys and questionnaires would be used to gather information from stakeholders and interested citizens. These surveys/questionnaires could contain both closed and open-ended questions to help target information to both extract information related to specific community concerns and to help identify those concerns. Interactive questionnaires also could be available on the project website.

Public Involvement Plan  
Gwinnett UDO and Sector Plans

<b>TOOL</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
<b>Intercept Survey</b>	Intercept surveys are face-to-face interviews of stakeholders carried out at meetings or in any space where there is opportunity for interaction with a substantial segment of the community. The surveys would be conducted in conjunction with other activities for the project. Intercept surveys are quite helpful for obtaining information about a specific community, study area, or segment of the population. The surveys (50-75) are quick 2-3 minute one-on-one discussions concerning the individual's perceptions, concerns, and ideas.
<b>Flyers/Posters</b>	Flyers/Posters would be utilized to inform community members of the Community Workshop, hearings, and other events as mutually agreed upon. The flyers/posters would be disseminated electronically through members of the focus groups, staff contacts and stakeholder email databases, and would be available on the website. Good use of flyers would be as inserts to community newsletters or handouts for meetings of churches, homeowner associations, the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Clubs, and other community organizations.
<b>Fact Sheets</b>	A fact sheet can be developed at the beginning of the project to give background information, process, and contact information. A series of fact sheets could be useful at the end of the project to address specific components of the Zoning Resolution (or entire UDO) to act as a quick overview and to answer frequently asked questions. When an individual inquires about a specific component, that particular fact sheet can be mailed; distributed at a community/public meetings; put in public buildings, such as libraries, for dissemination to the public; sent to the media, etc.
<b>Public Service Announcements (PSAs)</b>	PSAs are used to remind and inform the public about an issue or a special event. The local cable television station scrolls information relevant to the project. This tool can be very effective in "getting the word out" to people about an important event while still being very cost-effective.

Public Involvement Plan  
Gwinnett UDO and Sector Plans

<i><b>TOOL</b></i>	<i><b>DESCRIPTION</b></i>
<i><b>Public Speakers Bureau</b></i>	Jacobs project team staff will prepare PowerPoint presentations and materials for meetings of community organizations. These presentations would be intended to reach important audiences or targeted groups that are not well represented in the planned public meetings. The presentations could be made by Jacobs team members, a specialist, or by County staff and officials, depending on the preferences of the client.
<i><b>Video</b></i>	Videos produced by the project team is another outlet to share information with the general public either through the local cable television station or through YouTube.com

**Leadership Briefings**

Throughout the process of developing the UDO, the staff will brief key County staff and appointed and elected officials who will ultimately carry the zoning revision forward in implementation. The Leadership Briefings will be held with key County staff members who work daily with Zoning and Development Regulations; the County’s Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals; and the Board of Commissioners.

\* Project updates and briefings will be made to the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners as mutually agreed upon.

The purpose of these briefings is to gather input and guidance from the groups as well as brief them on the progress of the project.

**The UDO Advisory Committee**

The UDO Advisory Committee will provide guidance and feedback to the project team throughout the project. Meetings will be scheduled by the UDO Advisory Committee and the project team to coincide with project deliverables and milestones. A total of seven meetings are anticipated starting in 2011. Immediately following each UDO Advisory Committee meeting, the consultant will meet with planning and development staff to discuss the input received and how to best incorporate it into the project.

- Meeting 1: Introduction, Project Goals, Role of Committee, Feedback on Current Ordinance
- Meeting 2: Review Evaluation of Current Ordinances, Form Based Codes, Table of Contents
- Meeting 3: Review Strategy Statement
- Meeting 4: Review Draft Definitions and Zoning Districts
- Meeting 5: Review Land Development and Environmental Standards
- Meeting 6: Review Public Improvements Standards and Administrative Processes
- Meeting 7: Review Draft UDO and Adoption Process

*Deliverables: Handouts, PowerPoint presentations, and other informational media and materials as necessary for each committee meeting and a memo summarizing each meeting provided to the County's project manager within 5 business days of each meeting.*

### **Stakeholder Interviews**

Soon after project initiation, a series of stakeholder interviews and data gathering meetings will be held with representatives of local interests within the sector plan study areas as designated by County staff. The interviews/meetings will be held for the R&D Corridor Sector Plan soon after project initiation and at a later time for the Rural Estate Character Area Sector Plan. The purpose for each sector plan will be to discuss participation in the project, the goals of the sector plans, and project approach and timeline, and to collect relevant data and gather input.

#### **Overall Interview Goals**

- *Educate participants on the policies and vision of the 2030 Unified Plan.*
- *Identify programmed private developments and public improvements,*
- *Identify needed capital improvements and policies, that have not yet been programmed*
- *Identify potential tools that should be used to implement the Unified Plan.*

#### **R&D Corridor Sector Plan Interviews**

*Purpose:* To discuss stakeholders' participation in the project, the sector plan, and project approach and timeline, and to collect data. Data would be collected through a series of questions including an integrated Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis, questions regarding land use, transportation investments, economic development, quality of life, capital improvement plans within the study area, and any pertinent zoning and land use policies.

#### **Rural Estate Character Area Sector Plan Interviews**

*Purpose:* To estimate how much developers will be able and willing to pay for bonus development at receiving site and what dollar amount landowners would want in order to forego the ability to build dwelling units on sending sites.

#### *Required Information to Proceed with Rural Estate Interviews*

- Hypothetical sending and receiving site.
- Data on likely average increase in development gained from zoning changes.
- Assembled information from above: mapped location, land area, maximum density/intensity under current zoning, maximum density/intensity consistent with the Unified Plan.

*Deliverables: Summary of interviews with local stakeholders, recording key findings, listing data collected for the study, and contact information for all participants*

## **R&D Corridor Workshop**

Based on comments from the stakeholder interviews and staff input, the project team will conduct a public workshop to further refine the implementation strategies for the corridor as established in the Unified Plan, and gauge community opinion as to preferred public investments, policy initiatives and the land use regulations appropriate for implementing the vision. The public will be presented with the Assessment findings, the recommendations of the stakeholder interviews and staff, and will be asked to engage in helping to craft a conceptual master plan for the corridor. The project team will help lead the participants in interactive exercises and facilitated discussion with the use of illustrations and photos.

### *Deliverables:*

- *Copies of any handouts, PowerPoint presentations or maps presented at the workshop.*
- *Summary of the workshop results.*
- *Public notification materials such as press releases, flyers, and web content for posting on the County website advertising the meetings and their results.*

### **R&D Strategic Framework Working Paper**

After holding the R&D Corridor workshop, the project team will draft a set of recommendations that include Urban Design Guidelines, transportation strategies, recommended refinements of the Unified Plan, and specific regulatory provisions for inclusion in the draft UDO. These recommendations will outline different implementation options for consideration by staff and the implications of those options. The working paper will be submitted to the Leadership Team for review and comments, it is anticipated that any recommended revisions or edits will be returned to the project team for incorporation within one week of receipt of the draft summaries by the County staff. Once approved the working paper would be posted on the website.

## **Rural Estate Character Area Sector Plan Open House**

A Public Open House on the Draft Rural Estate Character Area Sector Plan will be held the evening of a scheduled Board of Commissioners Meeting. The prepared draft Rural Estate Sector Plan, which will comprise of either a TDR feasibility study or its alternative, will be presented in the form of a power point presentation.

### *Deliverables:*

- *Presentation before the Board of Commissioners on draft TDR Program*
- *Comments from the Public*

## **Public Hearings**

Public hearings will be held for the adoption of the UDO. The project team will present the UDO in a hearing of the Planning Commission and compile a list of changes requested by the Planning Commission. Next, will be a presentation of the UDO to the Board of Commissioners in a public hearing for a first reading. Finally, if necessary, a second public hearing by the Board of Commissioners will be held to receive final comments from the Board and the public.

Adoption of the final resolution would consist of approval of the UDO, as revised by stipulated list of approved changes listed on the Errata sheet or contained within the adoption motion. After action is taken, the project team would compile the final version of the UDO by incorporating the revisions approved in the motion passed by the Board of Commissioners.

*Deliverables: Errata sheets documenting changes recommended by the Planning Commission and changes authorized by the Board of Commissioners.*

**APPENDIX A: UDO ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Joe Allen	Gwinnett Place CID
Taylor Anderson	Registered Professional Engineer
Terry Baker	Registered Landscape Architect
Marcia Bumbalough	Development
Teresa Cantrell	Planning Commission
Craig Clum	Development
Jennifer Deweese	Commercial development
Mark Gary	Commissioner Lasseter
P.K. Hale	Commissioner Lasseter
Carol Hassell	Environmental
Wayne Hill	Evermore CID
John Hodgson	Gwinnett County Public Schools
Matt Houser	Planning Commission
Eric Johansen	Commissioner Lasseter
Maureen Kelly	ARC
John McCrory	Commissioner Beaudreau
Gerald McDowell	Lilburn CID
Michael Park	KAAGA
Michael Parris	Council for Quality Growth
Rebecca Peed	Planning Commission
Herman Pennamon	Georgia Power
Mike Royal	Zoning Board of Appeals
Lauren Salas	Chamber of Commerce

Public Involvement Plan  
Gwinnett UDO and Sector Plans

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<b>Name</b>	<b>Representing</b>
James Song	Chamber of Commerce
Michael Sullivan	Water & Sewerage Authority
David Swetta	Commissioner Beaudreau
Chuck Warbington	Planning Commission; Gwinnett Village CID
Tom Wheeler	Development

Public Involvement Plan  
Gwinnett UDO and Sector Plans

APPENDIX B: PROJECT SCHEDULE

Part / Phase / Task	Months from Notice to Proceed																	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	2010	2011												2012				
	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M
<b>Parts A &amp; B: Provision of a Unified Development Ordinance *</b>																		
<b>Phase B1</b>																		
1 Project Kick-Off	T																	
2 Prepare Public Involvement Plan																		
3 Prepare Public Outreach Materials																		
4a Review and Evaluate Form Based Codes																		
4b Review and Evaluate Planning Documents																		
5 Review and Evaluate Innovative Planning Approaches		on-going task																
6 Leadership Briefings - Round 1		T	B															
7 Convene the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Advisory Committee			C		C		C		C		C		C		C			
8 Develop Strategy Statement																		
<b>Phase B2</b>																		
1 Prepare Table of Contents and Standard Document Format								T, B										
2 Leadership Briefings - Round 2																		
3 Consolidate and Update Ordinance Definitions																		
<b>Phase B3</b>																		
1 Review and Update Zoning District Standards																		
2 Conduct Leadership Briefings - Round 3																		
3 Update and Revise Land Development Regulations and Standards																		
4 Update and Revise Environmental Standards																		
5 Update and Revise Public Improvement Stds.																		
6 Conduct Leadership Briefings - Round 4A																		
7 Update and Streamline Admin. Processes																		
8 Formal Draft UDO																		
9 Draft Executive Summary																		
10 Leadership Briefings - Round 4B																		
11 Final Draft UDO																		
<b>Phase B4</b>																		
1 Public Hearings																		
2 Delivery of Adopted Code and Executive Summary																		
3 Transition to New Unified Development Code																		
<b>Part C: Research and Development Corridor Sector Plan</b>																		
<b>Phase C1</b>																		
1 Stakeholder Interviews and Data Collection																		
2 Sector Plan Inventories and Assessment																		
<b>Phase C2</b>																		
1 Presentation to the Technical Team of the Assessment Working Paper																		
2 R&D Corridor Workshop																		
<b>Phase C3</b>																		
1 R&D Corridor Strategic Framework																		
2 Finalize R&D Corridor Sector Plan																		
3 Incorporation of final recommendations into the UDO																		
<b>Part D: Rural Estate Character Area Sector Plan</b>																		
<b>Phase D1</b>																		
1 Sector Plan Inventories and Assessment																		
2 Prepare Draft TDR Hypothetical Program																		
3 Present draft Hypothetical TDR Program to the BOC																		
<b>Phase D2</b>																		
1 Analyze Data and Prepare/Present Options to the UDO Technical Team																		
2 Refine Rural Estate Options																		
3 Prepare and Present Draft Rural Estate Sector Plan to County Board and Open House																		
<b>Phase D3</b>																		
1 Finalize Rural Estate Sector Plan																		
2 Incorporation of final recommendations into the UDO																		
<b>Meeting Schedule (consolidated from above)</b>																		
<b>Technical Team Meetings (Staff level)</b>	T	T			T	T	T	T					T					
<b>Leadership Briefings (PC and BOC)</b>			B		B		B		B			B			B			
<b>Public Meetings</b>						P			P							P		
<b>UDO Advisory Committee Meetings</b>			C		C		C		C		C		C		C			

★ Key decision point by BOC  
T Technical Team Meetings (Staff Level)  
P Public Meeting  
C UDO Advisory Committee Meeting  
B Leadership Briefings (PC and BOC)