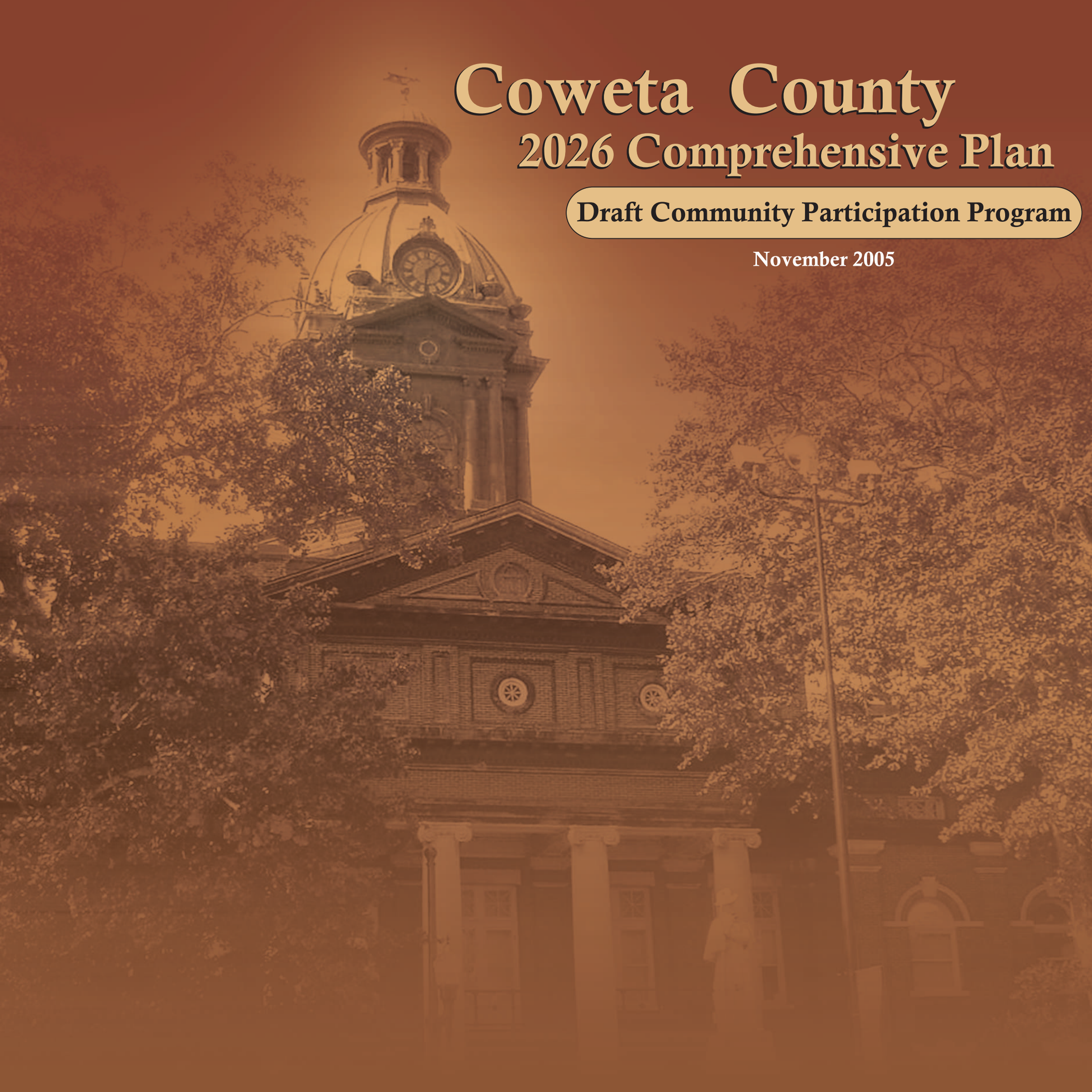

Coweta County
2026 Comprehensive Plan

Draft Community Participation Program

November 2005

Coweta County 2006-2026 Comprehensive Plan: Community Participation Program

June 30, 2005

Draft

JORDAN JONES & GOULDING

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

One of the best ways to strengthen communities is to create opportunities for citizens to work collaboratively on the challenges that shape their community. Accomplishing this requires political leadership, citizen education, and active involvement. A successful comprehensive plan begins with a process of thinking about and visualizing the future. It is about carrying on a dialogue with the community concerning its vision for evolving and growing. This Community Participation Program was crafted with these principles in mind and established a two-way communication between local citizens and their government officials, with the overall goal of better decisions supported by the public.

Visioning Workshop Presentation

1.2 Scope

Coweta County (County) is required by state law to complete its Comprehensive Plan Update (CP) by October 31, 2006. As prescribed by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), the CP will be created following the intent of the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005. Planning for and work on the CP, however, began over a year before the new standards were adopted. So the public involvement process for this effort was designed originally to meet and exceed the previous planning standards that were in effect as of January 1, 2004.

Under these earlier standards, the public participation effort was required to start early with a public hearing and encouraged to continue throughout the process. As a result, Coweta County launched a very aggressive public involvement process in January 2005, and to date have already conducted a number of very effective public involvement efforts. Because the public participation program is already in motion as of the writing of this report, this Community Participation Program describes those public involvement efforts that have already been accomplished along with plans for continuing these efforts through the entire planning process.

It should be noted that this Community Participation Program was designed to serve more than one purpose. In addition to the Comprehensive Plan, the County also is undertaking several other planning efforts; including a study of Growth Management Tools, a Sewer Feasibility Study, and a Joint Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). The CTP for Coweta is being completed by URS under a separate contract. However, the CTP is an important portion of the CP and the two consultant teams of JJG and URS have used and will continue to use a collaborative effort, sharing data, analysis, and the public involvement process. In addition, the Newnan-Coweta Chamber of Commerce also is concurrently working on an update of its Vision 2020 Plan, and this public involvement effort is also serving to support that plan.

1.3 Requirements for Success

Experience in public involvement has shown that lasting solutions are best identified when all segments of a community – individuals, elected officials, educators, the business community, and civic organizations – are brought together in a spirit of cooperation. A collaborative approach to community engagement is not an opportunity, but a necessity. Community engagement and involvement is done for three reasons:

- To educate and increase public awareness
- To capture the knowledge and preferences of the people who live in and support the communities
- To mobilize support and acceptance of the plan

Communities that prosper do so because people work together to improve the quality of life that they want to sustain. The measure of effectiveness of a public involvement program is not that the public has been informed, but that public input has contributed to making a decision that is feasible and is supported by a large segment of the community.

Public comment and sentiment are a rich source of information about peoples' values and philosophies. These values and philosophies must be interpreted into meaningful information to guide the project. It is essential to know the community's values to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts as well as narrow the field of alternative solutions. This process is designed to accomplish the following:

- Improve the quality of decisions
- Increase ease of implementation
- Provide greater public understanding of community goals and objectives
- Provide tangible evidence that the community created its own identity

Visioning Workshop – Break-out session

2 Identification of Stakeholders

Coordination and oversight are very important parts of the overall work effort for this project. This approach, to ensure proper management of the process, includes oversight by the Coweta County Commissioners, a Project Management Team, and stakeholders for the Comprehensive Transportation Plan. In addition, a network of community organizations and local companies was identified early in the process for distribution of meeting notices and posters as part of a broad public outreach effort. A list of these organizations and local companies can be found under the description of this outreach effort on page 10.

Coweta County Commissioners
Larry DeMoss – District 3
Tim Higgins – District 5
Paul Poole – District 1
Leigh Schlumper – District 4
Greg Tarbutton – District 2

Project Management Team (22 Members)
L. Theron Gay, County Administrator
Eddie Whitlock, Assistant Administrator
Roxie Clark, Assistant Administrator
Mitch Powell, County Attorney
Wayne Kennedy, Director of Development and Engineering
Brad Gresham, Water & Sewer System Manager
Duane Fields, Environmental Health Department Manager
Mickey Rogers, Tax Assessor
Tom Corker, Information Officer
Barbara Osborne-Harris, County Librarian
Carl McKnight, Recreation Department Manager
Matt Lovett, Solid Waste Department Manager
Mike Yeager, County Sheriff
Dennis Hammond, County Fire Chief
Eddie Ball, Emergency 911 Director
Blake Bass, Superintendent Coweta County Schools
Ed Davis, Building Official
Bill Harrison, Coweta County Development Authority
Angela White, Convention and Visitors Bureau
Robert L. Tolleson, Director, Planning and Zoning
Sandra R. Parker, Comprehensive Planner
Tavores Edwards, Transportation Planner

Comprehensive Transportation Plan Stakeholders

Name	Affiliation
Larry DeMoss	Chairman, Coweta County Commission
Leigh Schlumper	Coweta County Commission
Keith Brady	Mayor, City of Newnan
Billy Tucker	Mayor, City of Grantville
Robert Hannah	Mayor, City of Senoia
Ted Bateman	Mayor, City of Haralson
Wendell Staley	Mayor, Town of Sharpsburg
Harry Van Gorden	Mayor, Town of Turin
Jerry Smith	Mayor, Town of Moreland
Theron Gay	Coweta County Administrator
Eddie Whitlock	Assistant County Administrator
Richard Bolin	Newnan City Manager
Larry Clark	Grantville City Manager
Robin Spradlin	Sharpsburg Town Administrator
Richard Ferry	Senoia City Administrator
Cleatus Phillips	Newnan Comm. Dev. Director
Robert Tolleson	Coweta County Planning Director
Wayne Kennedy	Coweta County Engineering Director
Tavores Edwards	Coweta County Transportation Planner
Sandra Parker	Coweta County Comprehensive Planner
Eddie Ball	Coweta County E-911
Candace LaForge	Newnan-Coweta Chamber of Commerce
Fritz Thum	Newnan-Coweta Historical Society
Angela White	Coweta County Convention & Visitors Bureau
Calvin Walker	Newnan-Coweta Airport
Bill Harrison	Coweta County Development Authority
Blake Bass	Coweta County Board of Education
Willie L. Geter	Coweta County NAACP
Cynthia Jenkins	G-3 Communities & Newnan City Council
Minnie Robinson	Community Action for Improvement
Sandra Strozier	Newnan Housing Authority
Ruth Cuellar	Rainbow Ministries
David Schilling	Atlanta Regional Commission
Regan Hammond	Atlanta Regional Commission
Michael Adams	Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)
Tom Queen	GDOT District 3
Darby Beach	Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA)
Tom Sills	Chattahoochee-Flint Regional Development Center
Ida Johnson	Coweta County Senior Center Director
Kari Chapman	Senoia Housing Authority
Brenda Sims	Grantville Housing Authority

3 Identification of Participation Techniques

3.1 Initial Public Hearing

As required under the state minimum standards, an initial public hearing before the Coweta County Board of Commissioners was held to announce to the public that the planning process for updating the comprehensive plan was underway. The initial public hearing was held on January 18, 2005, at 6:00 pm in the Board of Commissioners' meeting room. Both the Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Transportation Plan processes and schedules were presented to the Board and to the public. The public was informed of the two plans' project schedules, community visioning meetings as well as how to access the community survey and how they could get involved. The public also was given an opportunity to comment on the process and their vision for the future of the County.

A second public hearing was held on April 14th, just prior to the final adoption of the new standards to inform and update the public and the Board of Commissioners about the new DCA Standards.

3.2 Community Survey

The County and the Chamber of Commerce collaborated on a Community Survey, an extensive questionnaire related to land use issues, transportation, healthcare, education, etc. for citizen input. Paper surveys were available throughout the County at 60 locations through March and an on-line survey was available until May 6th. The results of the survey were tabulated into a computer program using Snap Surveys Software. Results of the Community Survey were shared with the Comprehensive Plan consultants for analysis with results of community visioning and with other interested agencies: municipalities of Coweta County, the Chamber of Commerce, and the school system. A copy of the Community Survey and a summary of the results is included in **Appendix B**.

Visioning Workshop & Community Survey Logo

3.3 Visioning Workshops

A total of 11 Visioning Workshops were held throughout the County from February 17 through May 5, 2005. The meetings were held at schools and community centers around the County. In all, approximately 535* citizens attended the meetings from February through May. **The total 535 citizens count reflects repeat attendees.*

Meeting Date	# Citizens	# CAC	Total
2/17/2005	55	7	62
2/22/2005	38	8	46
3/3/2005	54	5	59
3/8/2005	41	4	45
3/17/2005	54	5	59
3/22/2005	23	3	26
3/31/2005	15	3	18
4/12/2005	46	3	49
4/21/2005	48	3	51
4/25/2005	7	2	9
4/28/2005	33	2	35
5/5/2005	73	3	76
		TOTAL	**535**

Visioning Meeting - Presentation

Date	Meeting Location	Address
February 17, 2005	Arnall Middle School	700 Lora Smith Road, Newnan
February 22, 2005	Willis Road Elementary School	430 Willis Road, Sharpsburg
March 3, 2005	East Coweta Middle School	6291 E. Highway 16, Senoia
March 8, 2005	Jefferson Parkway Elementary School	154 Farmer Industrial Blvd., Newnan
March 17, 2005	Newnan High School	190 LaGrange Street, Newnan
March 22, 2005	Northgate High School	3220 Fisher Road, Newnan
March 31, 2005	Northside Elementary School	720 Country Club Road, Newnan
April 12, 2005	Arnco-Sargent Elementary School	2449 West Hwy 16, Sargent
April 21, 2005	FS # 16/Dresden Community Room	2545 Hwy 34 West, Newnan
April 25, 2005	FS # 16/Dresden Community Room	2545 Hwy 34 West, Newnan
April 28, 2005	Grantville Elementary School	5725 Hwy 29, Grantville
May 5, 2005	Center for the Performing and Visual Arts	Lower Fayetteville Road, Newnan

The various locations and dates gave residents several opportunities to give their input on the future of Coweta County. The number of meetings scheduled was for the convenience of the citizens. The input from the meetings was used in both the Comprehensive Plan and the Comprehensive Transportation Plan. All meetings ran from 6:30-9pm.

The minutes of each of these workshops can be found in **Appendix A** of this report. A map illustrating the residence of workshop participants can be found in the "Technical Addendum". The map illustrates that the workshops did draw participants from all regions of the County.

3.4 Citizen Advisory Committee

Before conducting the visioning workshops, a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) was appointed to represent the citizens of the county. Each County Commissioner appointed two individuals from their respective districts and two of the commissioners themselves to serve on the CAC. The Committee's main task was to listen to issues and concerns at the visioning workshops. They were asked to attend as many meetings as possible, especially in their district, listen to the vision for Coweta produced at each meeting, and synthesize the ideas into the countywide vision described at the meetings and through the survey results.

Member	Appointing Commissioner	District
Dick Day	Paul Poole	1st District
Larry Huckaby	Paul Poole	1st District
Dr. Marc Guy	Leigh Schlumper	4th District
Dale Pepper	Leigh Schlumper	4th District
Paris Pressly	Larry DeMoss	3rd District
Leigh Sanders	Larry DeMoss	3rd District
Liz Camp	Greg Tarbutton	2nd District
Pete Furniss	Greg Tarbutton	2nd District
Willie Geter	Tim Higgins	5th District
Mike McGraw	Tim Higgins	5th District
Leigh Schlumper	Board of Commissioners	4th District
Greg Tarbutton	Board of Commissioners	2nd District

The CAC met prior to the first visioning workshop to review project goals and objectives, project schedule, and participant expectations about the project. In many ways, this provided an opportunity for the panel to meet the consultant team and express their individual interests in the project and for the community.

At the conclusion of the district level visioning workshops, the CAC met to review the similarities and differences among the issues discussed and the visions established for each

district. They followed a structured review of the district-level visions to form an integrated Countywide Vision. The CAC developed an encompassing vision statement for the County found in **Appendix C**.

CAC – Members – (l to r) Pastor Willie Geter, Peter Furniss, Dick Day, & Leigh Sanders

3.5 Commissioners' Milestone Meetings

Over the life of the plan, updates will be given to the Board of Commissioners for their review and comment. When necessary, work sessions will be arranged with the Commissioners to further discuss some of these topics. The milestone meetings have been structured to cover the following topics:

1. Review of the State Minimum Standards for Local Comprehensive Planning
2. Countywide Vision
3. Growth Management Strategies and Strategic Framework Working Paper
4. Scenario Development
5. Sewer Master Plan and Preferred Growth Management Strategy
6. Action Plan

3.6 Public Outreach Presentations (up to 7)

When deemed necessary, educational outreach presentations will be given to civic, business, community, and/or special interest groups to present study information, listen to concerns, answer questions, and seek continued participation and support throughout plan development. These presentations also may include interviews on the local public access television station. The presentations and talking points developed also may be used by community leaders at local meetings and events to provide project updates and findings. By involving local groups on their own terms, the use of speaking engagements will leverage existing meeting opportunities, expand opportunities for community participation, and establish closer relationships with various organizations.

Public Access Television Interview

3.7 Countywide Open House

A Countywide Open House will be held on October 6, 2005 to share the information that has been compiled for the Comprehensive Plan and the results of the Comprehensive Transportation Plan for public review and comment. The Open House will serve to ensure that all development and land use issues have been identified and that the input received during the process has been reflected in the draft plan. It will allow high-level interaction and participation to engage participants in comfortable, two-way dialogue. A

key component will be the preparation of easily understood and visually pleasing information. Attendees will be invited to view presentation graphics in detail and hold one-on-one discussions with project team members and Coweta County staff in attendance. The Open House will be publicized through a local media campaign. Displays, comment cards, handouts, and other information materials will be distributed. Formal written comments, collected at the conclusion of the open house, will be summarized and responded to in a timely manner.

3.8 Public Hearing for Plan Transmittal

The consultant will present the 2026 Comprehensive Plan at a public hearing before the Board of Commissioners. The public will have an opportunity to comment on the plan. The tentative date of this transmittal hearing is in May 2006.

3.9 Project Webpage

On a regular basis (10 updates), JJG will produce materials in PDF format suitable for posting on the county website and work with the County Information Officer, Tom Corker, to maintain a webpage that addresses the County's needs and furthers public education regarding the project. For questions regarding the website, please contact Tom Corker at (770) 254-2603. The webpage address is through the Coweta County website and the Comprehensive Plan's webpage at http://www.coweta.ga.us. The webpage also will have contact information for the consultant team.

Webpage update milestones:

1. Prior to Visioning Workshop (early February 2005)
    a. Press release
    b. Poster
2. Update on Visioning Workshops progress (mid March 2005)
3. Visioning process (May 2005)
4. Countywide Vision (early July 2005)
5. Project Update (late July 2005)
6. Draft Sewer Master Plan/Growth Management Plan (late September 2005)
7. Sewer Master Plan/Growth Management Plan (December 2005)
8. Countywide Open House announcement (mid February 2006)
9. Transmittal of draft Comprehensive Plan update (May 2006)
10. Final Plan (October 2006)

3.10 Outreach

Varieties of techniques were used to get the information out to participants. Space on the County website was used to display press releases, posters, and other information pertaining to the project. Another source was two local cable channels that featured the Comprehensive Plan as a focus. The Chamber of Commerce invited the project consultants to be the featured guests at one of their Early Bird Breakfasts to present on the project.

The Chamber of Commerce also assisted in supplying a network of outlets for distribution of meeting notices and posters. The following list reflects just some of the companies and organizations that are part of the outreach effort.

Organizations on Key Community Contact List for Chamber communication network:

American Association of Retired Persons
American Business Women's Association
American Cancer Society
American Heart Association
Association for Retarded Citizens
Bill Gremillion Radio Club
Board of Realtors
Christian Ministerial Fellowship
Civitan Club
Council on Aging
Coweta Cycling Club
Coweta County Farm Bureau
Coweta County School Board
Coweta Festivals
Coweta County Republican Women's Club
Coweta County Republican Party
United Daughters of the Confederacy
Georgia Conservancy
Grantville Association
Heritage School Parent Club
Jaycees
Kiwanis Club of Coweta County
Kiwanis Club
Kiwanis-White Oak Golden K
Kiwanis of Wesley Woods
Lions Club of Senoia
Masonic Lodge #60 (Coweta)
Masonic Lodge #82 (Senoia)
Masonic Lodge #337 (Turin)
NAACP
Newnan Coweta Art Association
Newnan-Coweta Chamber of Commerce
Newnan-Coweta Historical Society
Newnan Junior Service League
Newnan Optimist Club
Order of the Eastern Star
Pilot Club
Republic Women's Club
Rotary Club of Newnan
Salvation Army Services Center
Newnan Shrine Club of YARRAB Temple
Toastmasters
United Way
Western Baptist Association
Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 226

3.11 Standard Procedures

3.11.1 Media Relations

If the media approaches a member of the consultant team and requests an interview or has questions, the consultant will take the name of the media representative, publication they represent, when the article or TV spot will run, and what was talked about. The information will then be passed along to Tom Corker, the Coweta County Information Officer.

3.11.2 Special Interest Groups

There are several special interest groups within Coweta County. A major part of the Comprehensive Plan comes from public input and the consultants understand that the special interest groups are an important part of Coweta's future. However, the Comprehensive Plan is a

work in progress and the citizen input must come from the public at large. Therefore, it is the policy of the consultant team to refer all inquiries from special interest groups and the public about our planning efforts, outside of scheduled public forums, to the County Planning staff. In particular, we will inform Sandra Parker or Robert Tolleson of any inquiries made and will not volunteer any information about our analysis or recommendations without their expressed written consent.

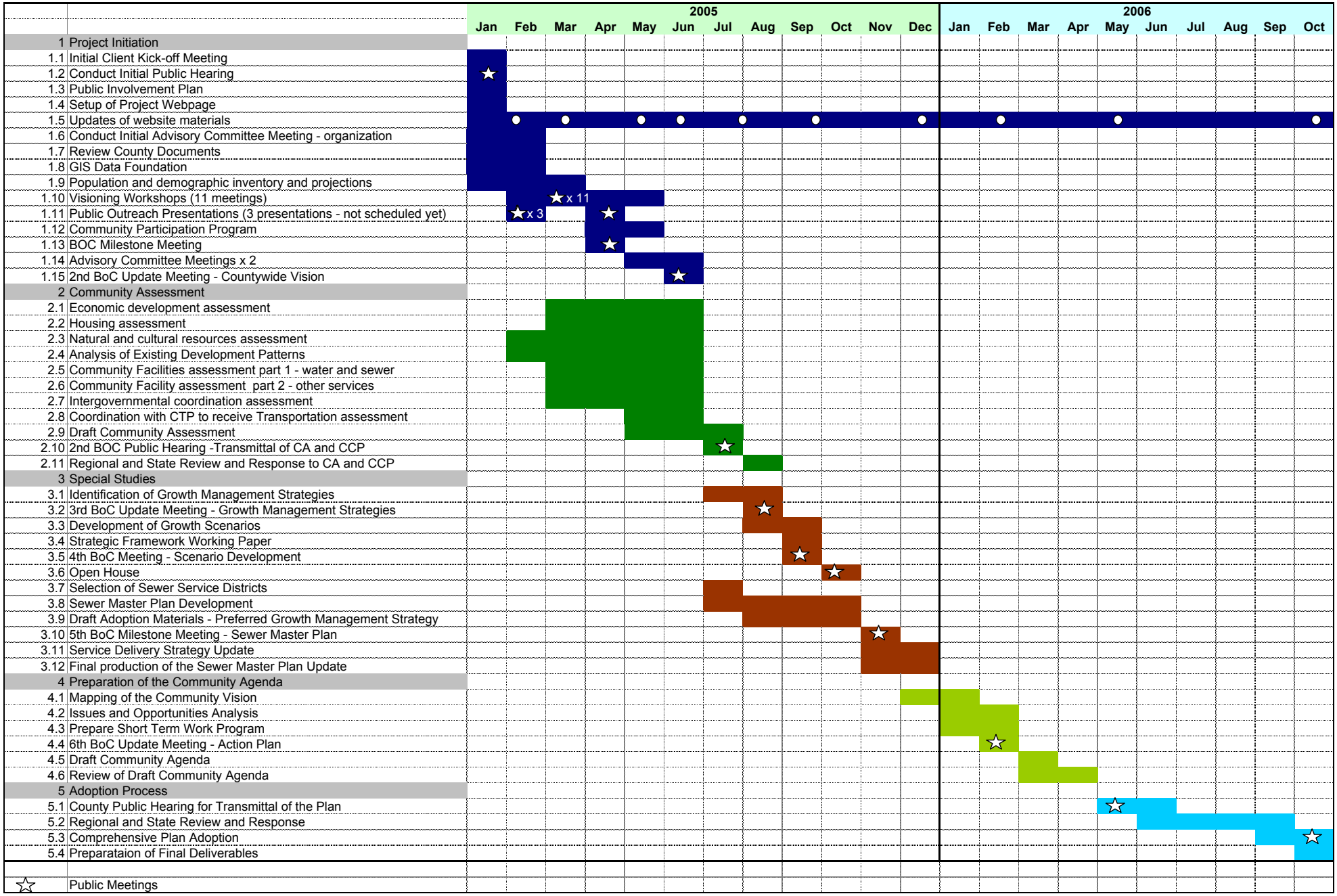
4 Schedule for Completion of the Community Agenda

On the following page is a graphic that shows the schedule for completion of the Community Agenda. Major upcoming milestones in this schedule include:

Open House .....October 6, 2005
Transmittal Hearing for Community Agenda ..... May 2006
Adoption of the Community Agenda.....October 2006

In addition, tentative dates for regular updates to the website are also shown in the graphic

Coweta Comprehensive Plan Schedule



6/2/2005

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