

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Public participation in local decision-making is fundamental. Effective public participation is both functional for planning and meaningful to the public. A county-wide rezoning will tremendously impact all county residents and their property. It is vital to be mindful of this fact when conducting public meetings.

It is also important to not lose sight of potential NIMBYism effects that can be the outcome of public meetings that cater to residents with the time and means to participate. Therefore, the Planning Department's expertise and the Planning Board's recommendations should be used to balance the desires of various communities if an imbalance is noted for the overall goals and vision of the County.

Public engagement can help us achieve:

- Better identification of the public's values, ideas, and recommendations
- More community buy-in and support
- Improved decision-making and better outcomes
- More trust between local leadership and the community
- Better understanding of the broader vision of the community

Public Participation Goals

The following goals will be achieved through this Public Participation Plan:

1. Make the process accessible, inclusive, and engaging to stakeholders and the public.
2. Provide interested parties with information and multiple opportunities to review and comment on proposed amendments to the Land Development Code and the county-wide rezoning.
3. Deploy multiple approaches to promote and encourage open and effective public discussion.

Communication and Outreach Tools

[Website](#)

Staff will create and maintain a project webpage on the County's website that will be the main place for drafts of the updates, information on the process, and to submit comments.

[Social Media](#)

Posts on Facebook and Instagram will introduce the project and invite residents and businesses to learn more and provide comments on the county's website.

[Community Organizations](#)

Staff will work with community organizations to contact special interest groups regarding the changes to the Land Development Code and the rezoning process. This outreach will include inviting these organizations and their members to provide feedback on drafts and attend public hearings.

[Notice Email List](#)

An email list of interested stakeholders in the 2045 Comprehensive Plan will serve as a foundation for a specific list related to the LDC rewrite and county-wide rezoning process. The list will be used to notify participants of the progress of participation opportunities. Interested parties can be added to the list by contacting the Planning Department.

Before Zoning Districts are Finalized:

Visioning Exercises: Conduct three visioning exercises in the County. Participants are asked to develop desirable characteristics for the area's future development. Facilitators will guide discussions and ensure an overall vision with various land uses is conceptualized.

- Target Specific Communities:
 - Edneyville – New sewer district
 - Specific allowed land uses
 - Farmland and Development Pressures
 - Tourism
 - Etowah – Ecusta Trail & County Purchase of Sewer District
 - Introduce the concept of an overlay for trail-oriented development and connectivity
 - Understand concerns and opportunities

Charrettes: Focus on design and urban form and examine what types of architecture/style and uses would be ideal for the area. Use visual preference surveys and detailed drawings to help participants develop specific ideas for what they want their community to look like.

- Meeting content can vary but may include identifying issues that need to be addressed, developing new uses, and reviewing supplemental requirements. This will help us to confirm the zoning districts and receive more feedback on the detailed issues.

After Zoning Districts are Finalized:

Public Hearing: The Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing after the Planning Board makes its final recommendation. An additional hearing may be held when the Commissioners adopt the new zoning districts and county zoning map.