

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Q1. What is a Comprehensive Plan?**

The Comprehensive Plan will serve as a road map for the community to follow as it considers decisions, both large and small, over the next 20 years. This plan will be the County and its municipality's visions for the future and strategic outline for getting there. The plan is a policy guide that provides a framework for making development and zoning decisions.

The planning process includes an assessment of existing resources and issues, projections of future conditions and needs, and consideration of collective goals and desires. While the emphasis is on buildings and infrastructure, it does not ignore the important social, natural resource and economic values of the community. The Comprehensive Plan is a method of translating the community's values into specific actions. Shorter-term reviews will keep it current and relevant to the changing needs of the community and is closely coordinated with other municipal documents and initiatives.

The Comprehensive Plan is NOT a zoning ordinance, a subdivision regulation, a budget, a capital improvement program or other regulatory document. It is meant to be the basis for the preparation of these elements.

## **Q2. How can my community make use of its Comprehensive Plan?**

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to enable municipal officials to better manage change and to inform residents and businesses about the community's characteristics, trends, and policies. The plan will guide municipal actions, including the regulation of future residential, commercial and industrial growth in Watertown.

## **Q3. What does a Community Comprehensive Plan contain?**

The plan contains the following sections, according to the requirements set out by the State of Georgia's Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning.

- **Goals and Policies.** This first section calls for a goals and policies statement. This is where each local government will identify and clarify its' values and create goals.
- **Land Use Element.** Delineates where different land uses will be allowed in the future. This is also where the Future Land Use Map will be developed.
- **Community Work Program.** This final section outlines the recommended actions, schedule, responsible parties, and notes funding sources for the specific actions necessary to achieve the objectives of each element above.

**Q4. How will people in the community participate and learn what is going on during the Comprehensive Planning process?**

Specific meetings will be advertised and conducted to solicit and encourage community participation. A variety of means will be used to keep people informed, for example, newspaper, cable providers, newsletters, and government web sites. If you ever want to know what is happening, contact your City Hall or one of our planners at the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (229.522.3552).

**Q5. Who needs to be a part of the planning process?**

All elected officials in the county and the cities need to be a part of the plan process. Additionally, any Chamber of Commerce directors and members or Economic Development and Downtown Development members need to be involved. Representation from the school systems, local businesses, hospitals, churches, and other community organizations are all important voices needed to make your plan truly comprehensive.

**Q6. What is the best way for me to be notified about important Comprehensive Plan meetings?**

Sign up on the website with your email address to stay notified about important meetings and information.