

Comprehensive Plan Update Public Participation Strategy

Introduction

The goal of the Comprehensive Plan Update project is to “align the land use and development plan with established community priorities,” beginning with a comprehensive assessment and revision of the Land Use Element. Consistent with the *State of the Land Use Element* recommendation, the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department will “utilize a values-based and data-informed planning approach” to update and revise the Land Use and Mobility Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Other Comprehensive Plan Elements may be updated in the future.

A values-driven approach to comprehensive planning focuses on issues and values expressed by citizens as the basis for developing the Goals, Objectives, and Policies of the Plan. Engrained in the values-driven approach is the idea that planning for future growth and development should be guided by the things that people value about the place where they live and how they would like to see the community change for the better in the future. A values-driven approach to comprehensive planning incorporates relevant data, including historic trends and current demographic and socio-economic statistics, with the purpose of informing the development of Objectives and Policies that implement the values-based Vision and Goals.

Objectives of the Public Participation Strategy

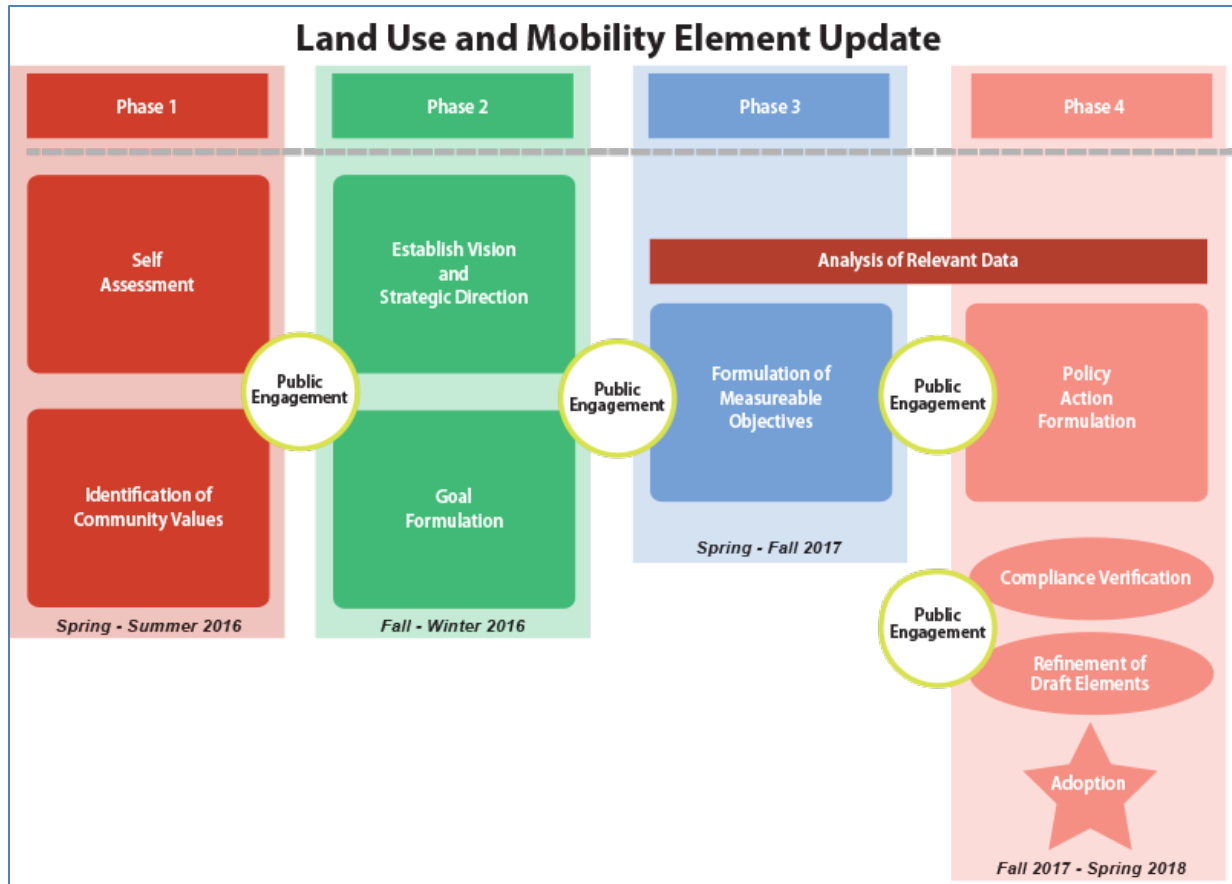
The overall purpose of the Public Participation Strategy is to encourage strong participation throughout the Comprehensive Plan Update process. Encouraging participation throughout the process ensures that the Comprehensive Plan broadly reflects the values of the community.

Public participation is woven into each phase of the Comprehensive Plan Update to provide numerous opportunities for the public to engage in the process. Based on this overall strategy, opportunities will be available for the public to provide input on:

- Community Values and Vision
- Draft Comprehensive Plan Goals
- Draft Comprehensive Plan Objectives
- Draft Comprehensive Plan Policies
- Draft Comprehensive Plan Elements

The phases of the Comprehensive Plan Update and opportunities for the public to provide input are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Comprehensive Plan Update Schedule



Public Participation Approach

Characteristics of the Public Participation Strategy

To encourage broad participation, the Public Participation Strategy:

- Leverages strategic community-based connections
- Has consistent graphics and themes
- Engages the community in a variety of venues
- Provides a variety of options and opportunities
- Focuses on completeness over perfection

In order to accomplish a public participation approach with these characteristics, the strategy is structured to:

1. Build on recent and ongoing public participation efforts
2. Reach people where they are
3. Include valuable personal interactions

Public Participation Strategy – Phases I and II

Build on Recent and Ongoing Public Participation Efforts

Many recent projects in the community included visioning efforts and other public participation. Instead of beginning the Comprehensive Plan Update by asking the public similar questions and collecting similar information as was recently collected through these other projects, the Comprehensive Plan Update project began with a review of these recent projects, their visioning efforts, and the feedback and input from the public. This review of recent projects is summarized in the *Preliminary Assessment of Community Values*. The *Preliminary Assessment of Community Values* was presented to the City of Tallahassee City Commission on May 18, 2016 at a regular City Commission meeting and the Leon County Board of County Commissioners on May 24, 2016 at a regular Board of County Commissioners meeting.

The recent and ongoing public participation efforts used in the *Preliminary Assessment of Community Values* is summarized in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Recent Visioning Efforts

		Preliminary Community Values				
		Equity	Livability	Choice	Opportunity	Stewardship
Recent Visioning Efforts	City Commission Key Priorities for 2016	X	X	X	X	X
	County Commission Strategic Plan	X	X	X	X	X
	2016 Work Plan for Sense of Place Districts	X	X	X	X	X
	Regional Mobility Plans (2035 and 2040)		X	X	X	X
	Imagine Tallahassee	X	X	X	X	X
	Sales Tax Extension Report	X	X	X	X	X
	Blueprint 2000 and Beyond	X	X	X	X	X
	Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Renaissance Plan	X	X	X	X	
	Providence Neighborhood Renaissance Plan	X	X	X	X	
	Capital Cascades Sector Plan		X			X
	Lake Bradford Sector Plan	X	X	X		X
	Oak Ridge Sector Plan	X	X	X		
	South Monroe Sector Plan	X	X	X	X	
	West Pensacola Sector Plan	X	X	X		
	Southern Strategy Area Report	X	X	X	X	
	ULI South City Plan	X	X	X	X	

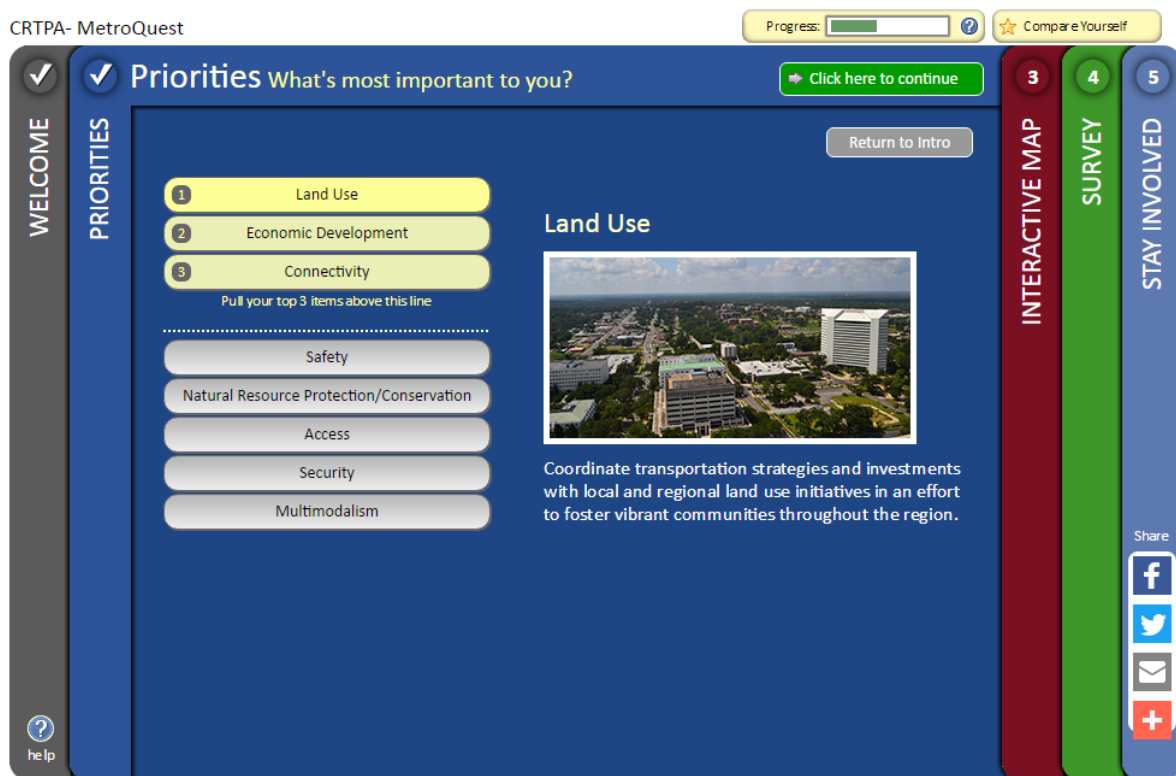
The *Preliminary Assessment of Community Values* will be used as the foundation for outreach efforts. Based on the input received from the community, the preliminary community values and preliminary land use and mobility principles (included as Attachment 1) will be refined and brought to the Local Planning Agency in a workshop. The community values along with the land use and mobility principles will then be brought to the Board of County Commissioners and the City Commission for review, refinement, and acceptance.

In addition to the visioning efforts used in the development of the *Preliminary Assessment of Community Values*, other public participation efforts will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan Update throughout the project as appropriate. These efforts may include the Tallahassee/Leon County Office of Economic Vitality Community Survey, the StarMetro Route Changes Feedback survey, and other projects that occur during the Comprehensive Plan Update project schedule.

Reach People Where They Are

Encouraging broad participation in the Comprehensive Plan Update process includes engaging people who cannot attend public workshops or otherwise engage in the process because of a variety of personal constraints. The use of MetroQuest as a digital public participation tool is proposed as a means to increase participation in the Comprehensive Plan Update. MetroQuest is a public participation tool accessible from desktop computers, laptops, tablets, or smartphones. MetroQuest gives citizens opportunities to provide feedback through an engaging and graphical interface without the constraint of having to attend a public workshop at a specific date and time. MetroQuest can be customized to use graphics and images consistent with the overall project. The tool will provide a venue for residents to give their input on their values and what they would like the community to look like in the future. The MetroQuest tool will be available electronically for three months. A printed equivalent of the MetroQuest survey can be made available as an alternative format. Figure 3 shows an example of how MetroQuest was used in the local area during the development of the Regional Mobility Plan by the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA).

Figure 3: Example of a MetroQuest Survey



Include Valuable Personal Interactions

While technology allows more people across the community to participate and engage with their local governments, personal interactions and face-to-face conversations provide an opportunity to have meaningful conversations and dialogues without the limitation of computer screens. Because of this, a series of public workshops are proposed to supplement the MetroQuest tool. Citizens will not only have the opportunity to provide input into the Comprehensive Plan Update through the online tool; they will also have the opportunity to engage directly with staff through a series of public workshops throughout the community.

For Phases I and II of the Comprehensive Plan Update project, staff proposes to plan, prepare for, and facilitate five public workshops at community centers located throughout the County. Leon County Community & Media Relations and City of Tallahassee Department of Communications will assist with notifying the public of the project and their opportunities to provide input through MetroQuest and Public Workshops. Notifications will be sent out through social media and news releases and to email subscribers.

In addition to the public workshops, staff proposes to identify local community groups that represent a variety of interests in the community and offer to present about the Comprehensive Plan Update project at one of their regular meetings. Staff will also request information about public participation opportunities be distributed through their membership email lists as appropriate. To effectively and efficiently use staff time and resources, a limited number of organizations with larger memberships will be selected. Information can be provided electronically to smaller organizations to encourage participation using MetroQuest, attendance at one of the workshops, or attendance at one of the larger community group meetings.

Staff will also identify opportunities to provide information, either in person or using printed materials, at activity centers (such as public libraries) and community events. These efforts will be focused on encouraging residents to provide input through MetroQuest and to attend one of the public workshops.

If feasible, staff also proposes to use the local newspaper to provide information about the Comprehensive Plan Update project and how residents can provide input throughout the process.

Public Participation Strategy - Phases III and IV

The public participation for Phases I and II will be used to refine the preliminary community values and the land use and mobility principles. These refined values and principles will be reviewed with the Comprehensive Plan Update focus group and presented in a workshop to the Local Planning Agency. Following the Local Planning Agency Workshop, the values and principles will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners and City Commission for review, refinement, and acceptance. Once accepted, the values and principles will serve as the foundation for developing draft Goals, Objectives, and Policies for the combined Land Use and Mobility Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

As the draft Goals, Objectives, and Policies are developed, the public will continue to have opportunities to provide input. Information will be posted on the project website. Additional public workshops will be hosted by staff for these Phases. Planning staff propose to coordinate efforts with local community organizations to inform their members of workshop dates and time by contacting them through their email lists. Citizens will also have opportunities to provide input as the drafts are brought to the Local Planning Agency and to the Board of County Commissioners and City Commission for each Phase of the project.



Comprehensive Plan Update Public Participation Strategy

Attachment 1 – Preliminary Community Values and Preliminary Land Use and Mobility Principles

Preliminary Community Values

Based on a review of recent visioning efforts, the following preliminary community values were identified:

Equity – The community values fairness and equity in providing services, safety, housing opportunities, economic opportunities, education, justice, and other elements that contribute to a high quality of life for all residents.

Livability – The community values a safe, sustainable built environment that offers distinct, vibrant urban activity centers, nodes, neighborhood centers, key corridors, and green places for living, working, and recreating in the Capital Region.

Choice – The community values lifestyle options and opportunities, and the freedom to make informed choices and decisions.

Opportunity – The community values access to opportunities to flourish as individuals and as a community, and to improve our individual and collective lifestyles.

Stewardship – The community values the responsible management of our resources and assets.

		Preliminary Community Values				
		Equity	Livability	Choice	Opportunity	Stewardship
Recent Visioning Efforts	City Commission Key Priorities for 2016	X	X	X	X	X
	County Commission Strategic Plan	X	X	X	X	X
	2016 Work Plan for Sense of Place Districts	X	X	X	X	X
	Regional Mobility Plans (2035 and 2040)		X	X	X	X
	Imagine Tallahassee	X	X	X	X	X
	Sales Tax Extension Report	X	X	X	X	X
	Blueprint 2000 and Beyond	X	X	X	X	X
	Apalachee Ridge Estates Neighborhood Renaissance Plan	X	X	X	X	
	Providence Neighborhood Renaissance Plan	X	X	X	X	
	Capital Cascades Sector Plan		X			X
	Lake Bradford Sector Plan	X	X	X		X
	Oak Ridge Sector Plan	X	X	X		
	South Monroe Sector Plan	X	X	X	X	
	West Pensacola Sector Plan	X	X	X		
	Southern Strategy Area Report	X	X	X	X	
	ULI South City Plan	X	X	X	X	

Preliminary Land Use and Mobility Principles

The application of the preliminary community values to land use and mobility is summarized in the following principles:

A healthy environment comes first – Ensure all parts of our community have clean water, clean air, and healthy open spaces. The preservation of natural areas, including conservation areas, environmentally sensitive features, and water resources, is a primary priority when making land use and transportation decisions. Environmental stewardship and economic development are mutually reinforcing. A healthy ecosystem that supports clean, vibrant places is good for the economy and attracts new businesses and residents. A healthy environment is vital to the overall health, well-being, and productivity of everyone in our community.

Values: Equity, Livability, Opportunity, Stewardship

Maintain the distinction between rural and urban areas – Maintain the distinction between rural and urban areas to provide diversity in lifestyle choice while reducing sprawl, promoting efficient development patterns, lowering infrastructure costs, and emphasizing growth that pays for itself. Maintaining the distinction between rural and urban areas supports the protection of areas used for agriculture, silviculture, and natural resource-based activities, the preservation of natural systems and ecosystem functions, and the protection of scenic vistas and pastoral development patterns.

Values: Livability, Choice, Stewardship

Value and invest in transportation choices – Invest in transportation options in ways that allow residents to make choices about how they travel through the provision of a network of roadways, trails, sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and transit routes. Providing a variety of feasible mobility options that do not prioritize motorized transportation systems at the expense of non-motorized transportation options acknowledges right-of-way constraints, the cost of transportation infrastructure, and the effects of widening roadways on neighborhoods and community character. The provision of feasible transportation options empowers residents and visitors to decide how to travel around the community and how to spend their money with regards to transportation.

Values: Equity, Livability, Choice, Opportunity, Stewardship

Housing diversity and choice for all – Promote greater diversity of the housing stock to offer more choices, provide opportunities to people with varying income levels, and allow more flexibility for people in different stages of life. Increasing the diversity of housing types also addresses options for higher density housing supported by transit and non-motorized forms of transportation.

Values: Equity, Livability, Choice, Opportunity

Livable, walkable neighborhoods and places – Design and build neighborhoods, activity centers, and nodes to be lively, safe, sustainable, and healthy. Well-designed places result in destinations with increased safety, more diversity of the built environment, increased social interaction, improved accessibility, more flexibility in meeting different community goals, and more unique identities.

Values: Livability, Choice, Stewardship

Economic Opportunity – Expand the local economy by promoting innovation, improving access to training and job opportunities, growing and incubating local businesses, and attracting new industry. Expanding the local economy supports the development of vibrant places in the community, the linkage of different community assets, and access to more employment options and opportunities.

Values: Equity, Livability, Choice, Opportunity

Respect regional interconnectedness – Exhibit regional leadership and responsibility with intergovernmental and multijurisdictional issues. Many issues that impact the community, such as natural resource management and transportation, extend beyond jurisdictional boundaries. Intergovernmental coordination is necessary between the County and the City, as well as with neighboring jurisdictions to effectively address and manage these issues. Decisions related to issues such as the management of our natural environment and transportation networks should reflect the importance of context and scale at the neighborhood, city, county, and regional level.

Values: Equity, Livability, Stewardship

Healthy Communities – Provide for access to recreational opportunities, active transportation, healthy food options, and health services, while ensuring environmental justice and safe neighborhoods. Healthy communities are characterized by the ability of people to make choices from a variety of safe, healthy, available, accessible, and affordable opportunities to meet their daily needs while being treated fairly and equitably.

Values: Equity, Livability, Choice, Opportunity