Summit to focus on Upstate growth

Stakeholders, officials from 10 counties to learn results of 'Shared Vision' survey

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GREENVILLE — Stakeholders and policymakers from Oconee and Pickens counties will join other officials from around the Upstate for the Ten at the Top Regional Vision Summit today at the Carolina First Center.

Event organizers will share the final results of a survey that compiled more than 6,000 responses from residents throughout the 10-county region. Respondents shared their opinions about growth, planning, land use regulation, the environment, education, jobs and more.

Today's program begins at 9 a.m. and is scheduled to wrap up by noon.

Ten at the Top is an extension of last year's "Upstate Reality Check" discussion of how the region should prepare for the estimated population spike over the next two decades. Experts predict that by 2030 the Upstate is likely to experience dramatic growth, including more than a quarter-million new residents, an additional 120,000 new households and the creation of more than 200,000 jobs.


Hybl

TATT Executive Director Dean Hybl said today's event is part of a yearlong process to create a Shared Upstate Growth Vision. He said organizers would be asking Summit participants for input and feedback on the initial findings from the survey.

"Initially, our intent was to have a final regional vision ready by (the Summit), but it became clear during the survey process that before we can truly finalize a vision, we need much more community engagement and buy-in regarding the entire vision process."

TATT is following up on today's Summit with a series of community forums in each of the region's 10 counties in October and November.

Pickens County will hold its forum Oct. 5 at Dunn-Burks in Easley. Oconee's forum is set for Oct. 11 at the Gignilliat Center in Seneca.

Hybl said the forums would provide residents with opportunities for face-to-face dialogue helpful for generating targeted input of what matters most to them in future planning.

"It is now our expectation that the final vision will be unveiled in the early spring of 2011," he said.

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PRELIMINARY RESULTS

The Shared Upstate Growth Vision survey found that most residents in Oconee and Pickens counties:

- Agree that the Upstate is a great place to live
- Think traffic is increasing and will get worse
- Say the best strategy for future job and business growth is to focus on small business and start-up companies
- Support more planning and land-use regulation
- Feel job creation is the most important priority