Archway Partnership – Washington County
Year-to-date Priority Update
Roger Harrison, Archway Professional
August 5, 2009

- Air Quality
  - Laura Bland and I meet regularly, and are members of the Air Quality task force.
  - Education/marketing material is currently being created about the summer burn ban.
  - EPA Grant was submitted on April 17th and returned favorable in the amount of $1.7 Million. This grant will retrofit 88 buses as well as 20 other vehicles in Washington County with particulate matter filtration systems. The overall goal is to reduce our PM2.5 levels, but the immediate effect will be felt by the lungs of children who ride the bus every day.
  - Idle reduction stickers went on every bus in the Washington County fleet to remind drivers that idling contributes to PM2.5 pollution and lung problems. The stickers say “Reduce Idling; Young Lungs At Work”
  - The Sandersville Police Department will loan the use of electronic information road signage before the beginning of the burn ban to remind citizens that it is coming.

- Education
  - The Ridge Road Elementary Landscaping project was a huge success. The Board of Education tapped Archway and Cooperative Extension to head this project with volunteers as labor. Jill Sweat, a horticulture student at UGA’s College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences was hailed as a hero for saving the taxpayers of Washington County an estimated $65,000. She received a resolution from the Washington County Board of Commissioners, and was given a luncheon in her honor and for appreciation.
  - The disaster recovery plan is moving forward. I serve on a state-wide committee crafting the plans. I have developed an internship job description, and will market it to MPA departments and the Emergency Management program at Georgia State in late August/early September.
  - Our relationship with Sandersville Tech is stronger than ever. They remain a committed partner through the LPN/RN Bridge program, and offering facilities whenever we need them.
  - The history trunk project is well under way. This was a program brought to Archway by the College of Education at GC&SU. The trunks will be filled with local historical items, and distributed to local schools on a check-out basis. We made a trip to the Atlanta History Center to look at their best-in-class examples. The Washington County Historical Society has taken the lead on this project.
  - The Education Subcommittee is back up and running with Gladine Thompson at the helm. The main target of those discussions has been the start-up of a Boys and Girls Club. Alex Bryant, recent MPA graduate is working with me for the summer and fall, and I have asked her to focus on this project. She has researched area clubs and made connections. We are nearly to the point of presenting it to the community for funding options. We maintain that this program (or a similar one) will be the best for teen crime, drop-out rates, and teen pregnancy by occupying youth for the hours of 3-6pm.
• Economic/Community Development
  o Leadership Washington was selected as a USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) and awarded $67,000. The original grant application was for $50,000, so this was a pleasant surprise to get more than requested. This grant will be used for enhancing Leadership Washington and Youth Leadership Washington. It will also allow the start-up of a Health Leadership subset, and pay for some of the Medical Scholars program to recruit physicians. In addition, this will involve GCSU’s student leadership program. This grant will fund scholarships to regional and state-wide economic development training such as The Georgia Academy for Economic Development. Finally, the grant will pay for the local Archway Professional to travel to Oklahoma City to the Economic Development Institute to train to become a certified economic developer.
  o The Sandersville Downtown Development Authority sought out the assistance of Archway in June to explore the launch of a recycling program. I applied for $20,000 worth of in-kind recycling bins and we received them July 30th, 2009. This is 1200 bins. August 4th, 2009, “Sandersville Recycles!” was formed from the initial interest committee. A pilot program was agreed upon by Advanced Waste disposal of 500 homes at no cost. We are developing the educational material for distribution over the next two months, and the pilot program will start October 19, 2009.
  o The HSBT Student Design group completed the Washington County logo for the Chamber of Commerce in May. The logo is now used by the chamber as their primary logo. I was named to an ad hoc committee to explore signage options for the entrances to the county. The group agreed upon a sign which uses this logo designed by HSBT. Input from Fanning and Carl Vinson Institute through Dennis Epps was invaluable in gaining perspective from outsiders who travel the state regularly.
  o The College of Family and Consumer Sciences is in the process of conducting a housing needs assessment for the county. Dr’s Tom Rodgers and Karen Tinsley are coordinating this project. Sandersville continues to participate in the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing. I serve on the local board.
  o The Chamber of Commerce has had an intern for the summer working on the redesign of their website. This will include the Economic Development Authority. They have been extremely pleased with the progress. The project will be completed in August.
  o Jason Jordan, a recent cartography graduate at UGA has worked for the summer on GIS mapping, photographing, and describing all historically significant points in the county (including over 300 cemeteries). This has been a daunting task, but we feel that the payoff will be tremendous for historical tourism and genealogy buffs. This is a continuation of a project started by Ed Jackson.
  o The City of Tennille recently completed a downtown redesign with input from Archway. They have also requested an intern for website redesign after the Chamber of Commerce’s success. The intern will tele-work in the fall.
  o At the encouragement of Archway, Tennille has joined as a member of the Better Hometown Program. We are excited about their networking opportunities and all the services and benefits that come along with that program.

• Healthcare
  o Hazel Lewis, Archway Graduate Assistant completed a wonderful softscape/approach plan for Washington County Regional Medical Center. The CEO and staff were amazed and pleased. This saved WCRMC $25,000 vs. going to a private designer.