I. Americus Sumter County Tourism Council, Inc.

Participants: Tourism Council Members; Barbara Grogan, Sumter Archway; Leah Graham Stewart, UGA Archway; Mario Cambardella, UGA Archway; Felicia Harris, UGA Archway; Shannon Knepp, UGA Archway.

The Sumter Archway Executive Committee has spent the past year involved in economic development discussions around four identified topics of growth. One of the identified economic development topics is tourism, and local discussions generated several requests for assistance. Two of those requests include assistance with way finding signage and a review of two websites managed by the Council. Archway graduate students Leah Stewart and Mario Cambardella developed a “Wayfinding Signage Toolkit” to assist the Council as they review their signage geared towards directing community visitors. Additionally Archway graduate students Felicia Harris and Shannon Knepp have assisted the Council with initial reviews of their two websites (www.therealgeorgia.com and www.magnoliahighway.com). In January 2011 Felicia and Shannon will visit Americus to lead the Council through in-depth discussions to update the websites, with a goal of making them more user friendly.

II. GICH: Housing and Demographics Research Center Survey

Participants: Americus Sumter GICH Team; Dr. Tom Rodgers, UGA HDRC; Dr. Karen Tinsley, UGA HDRC; Barbara Grogan, Sumter Archway; Twenty-two local entities/businesses.

The Americus-Sumter community joined the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing in January 2010. A portion of the local GICH plan includes a housing needs analysis, and the UGA Housing and Demographics Research Center has been identified as a partner to complete this task. Facilitated by the Sumter Archway Partnership, the local GICH team invited community entities/businesses to participate with administering and collecting survey data regarding housing needs. Twenty-two entities participated in the initial kick-off meeting with the UGA HDRC, and all agreed to participate with the survey efforts.