Habersham County Explores Recycling Initiatives

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In fall 2014, officials in Habersham County identified the need for countywide recycling, noting that the county landfill was nearing its capacity. Finding ways to minimize the amount of waste that will go into the landfill is critical to the community.

Recognizing that community-wide recycling programs have shown potential for success in other similar communities, the Habersham Archway Executive Committee requested assistance in designing facilities and creating a community-wide program for Habersham. A few drop-off recycling centers already existed in Clarkesville and Cornelia, but there was a desire for more options with greater convenience and ease of use to local citizens.

Abi Phillips, a graduate student in the UGA College of Environment & Design, created design proposals for a community recycling center. The design included recycling bins that were clearly labeled with paper, plastic, metal and clothing titles to provide clear instructions on submitting recyclables. Her design incorporated landscape options that were easy to maintain but added a more inviting look to the site.

To continue the momentum of recycling in the community, the Habersham Archway Partnership also formed an issue work group tasked with exploring options for countywide recycling initiatives. The ultimate goal is to establish recycling centers in each of the seven municipalities and in the un-incorporated county. The City of Demorest plans to pilot a new drop-off site in the parking lot of the Demorest Police Department and Public Safety Building. This site would serve Demorest residents as well as faculty and students from Piedmont College.

In fall 2015, Public Relations students from the UGA Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communications will create promotional and educational pieces of collateral with the hopes of marketing the recycling facilities to the community at large.

Advancing Community Priorities

The implementation of additional recycling centers and a county-wide recycling strategy will help meet the needs anticipated from additional growth in Habersham County in the future. The addition of recycling centers and increased use by residents will help extend the life of the county landfill, a critical infrastructure component for economic development.