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327 W. Savannah Avenue
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

REGIONAL CALENDAR

MARCH

⇒ **March 22** RDC Board Mtg., Adel

APRIL

⇒ **April 21-23** ACCG, Savannah
⇒ **April 25** Census Training, RDC
⇒ **April 26** RDC Board Mtg., Adel

MAY

⇒ **May 7-8** RDC EDPros, Brasstown

in the REGION

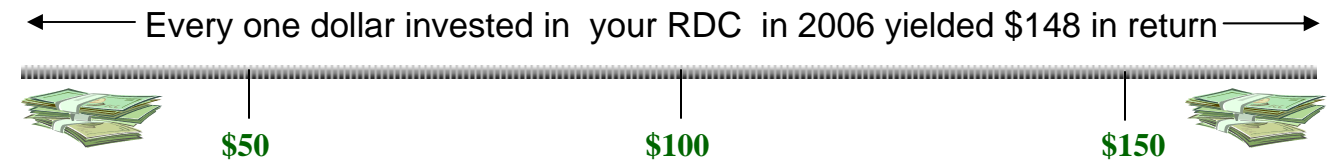
MARCH ■ 2007

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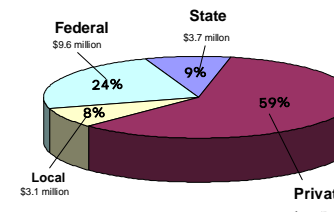
A leader in the development of local and regional programs since 1963.

DID YOU KNOW?



1 Created **287 jobs** as a result of loan programs and leveraged **\$6 million in state and federal dollars** and **\$14 million in private dollars**. **6** Assisted **636 clients** in workforce development projects valued in excess of **\$2 million**.

2 Initiated 3 economic development projects valued at more than **\$1 million**, which leveraged **\$1.5 million in private dollars**.



7 Provided environmental planning for the region valued at **\$500,000 dollars**.

3 Wrote **19** local community development plans valued at nearly **\$1 million**.

8 Completed **4** new transportation plans and two other projects with a value of **\$1 million**.

4 Administered **27** grant funded projects valued at **\$4 million** and leveraged **\$7 million in private dollars**.

9 Developed **Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plans** for every county within the region.

5 Developed **57** new GIS databases for tax parcels, infrastructure, EMS 911 and others valued at **more than \$1 million**.

10 Developed **customized computer applications and technical support** for **34** units of local government.

South Georgia Regional Development Center participated with State, Federal, Local and Private Partners in plans and projects worth more than **\$39 million** in 2006.

An Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

Economic Development

Contact: Sherry Davidson

South Georgia RDC Hires Genesis Group To Assist MPO With Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan

As part of the transportation planning activities carried out through the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the South Georgia RDC has hired a consultant to develop the first ever Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan for Valdosta/Lowndes County. This master plan will provide an overview of the transportation needs within our metro area and examine existing facilities for these modes of transportation as well as future amenities to enhance safe interconnectivity between our parks, schools, and community activity centers. The plan will promote healthier lifestyles and alternatives that can be integrated with our roadway network.



The Azalea Trail completed in 2005 is a multipurpose trail that provides access between the Craig Center, Drexel Park at VSU and the Vallotton Park Recreation Facility.

The MPO held a public kick-off meeting on March 15 to provide elected officials, planners, engineers and the public an opportunity to review preliminary data analysis and to discuss ideas, hopes, and concerns relative to biking or walking. For further information or input contact Daniel McGee at (229) 333-5277 or email: dmcgee@sgrdc.com

Information Technology Services

Contact: Vance Roberts

ITS Trains In .NET Technology

Recent training in .NET technology has given the ITS department a new tool: Web Services. Web Services allow programmers to make portions of a database available in HTML, the language of the World Wide Web. When a Web Service is published, it is available to be accessed by any other application on the internet. For instance, we could publish a Web Service that provides building permit information. This could allow a web developer to inquire into our permits database without requiring the user to click on a link to go directly to our web page to perform the inquiry. His software would access our Web Service and bring the data back into his webpage seamlessly. This allows us to provide a useful tool for other developers and have complete control of what data is available because we aren't exposing our entire database to the internet.



Loan Program

Contact: Michelle Frey

Tift Regional Dental Group Moves To New Offices On Love Ave.



The South Georgia RDC, through our Revolving Loan Fund, is participating with Ameris Bank in Tifton to finance the new offices of Tift Regional Dental Group.

Tift Regional Dental Group has been in Tifton for 36 years. Dr. Jay Phillips, a native of Tifton, joined the group in 1994 and became the managing partner of the practice. In 2005, Dr. Chris Hasty joined the group to meet the demands of growth. Dr. Mike Langenfeld, who began the practice in 1971, now works part-time.

There have been many changes over the years—growing from 4 employees in a mall location to 21 employees on Kennedy Road and an office in Lenox, to their newest location on Love Ave.

The doctors began seeing patients at the new office on January 2, 2007. There will be a formal ribbon cutting in March. Three jobs are being created.

Local Government Assistance

Contact: John Leonard/Marty LeFiles

SGRDC Hosts Orientation For Local Government Officials

The South Georgia RDC staff held an orientation for local government officials in the area on February 28, 2007.

The purpose of the orientation was to acquaint local officials with services provided by South Georgia RDC: Community & Economic Development, GIS, SBA, WIA, and Information Technology, and how these services can impact their local communities' growth.



Geographical Information Systems

Contact: Chris/Rachel B. Strom

SGRDC GIS and Environmental Planning team to secure Funding from Georgia EPD



The GIS and the Environmental Planning staff at SGRDC have teamed up to secure funding from Georgia EPD for an innovative mapping program covering the 10 counties in the state's South Health

District. The Well and Septic Tank Referencing and Online Mapping System (**WelSTROM**) project is slated to begin in March. When complete, this project will deliver numerous tools to health district inspectors and a region-wide, web accessible, centralized and real-time, spatial database of septic system and well installations. This is a first in the State of Georgia.

Data is input... When inspectors visit a well or septic system installation site to conduct an inspection, the paper forms currently in use are populated with valuable information such as water table, soil type, system capacity and other findings. While on site, the inspector will use GPS to capture the X,Y coordinates and address of the installation. Using any computer with an internet connection, inspectors will input that Lat/Long and septic/well information into an online database form. The online form will be password protected and feature dropdown lists, checkboxes, etc to minimize key-strokes and data entry errors. Inspectors will have read/write access to the records in the database created by their account and read-only access to all other records in the database.

...and tools are the output. SGRDC-GIS will extract monthly updates from this database and using the x,y and address data, they will be mapped using an internet map site (IMS) developed as part of the project, the inspectors will be able to view, query and print maps of wells and septic locations along with other data such as flood hazard areas, wetlands, river corridors, parcels and other layers. This will be a valuable tool for identifying potential issues when permitting future installations.

Along with the mapping functions of the website, health district staff will be able to generate reports from the database based on date ranges, inspector names, county name, installation type and an number of other criteria. These reports will be print-ready from an internet browser.

Why is this so special? Because it's spatial! For the first time on a regional scale, it will allow users to see the spatial relationship of installations and puts decision-making data at the fingertips of health district staff. This project is going to be accomplished with no software installations at the County's inspectors office. That means no software upgrade costs, and a huge reduction in technical coordination to

Workforce Development

Contact: Marcia Gaskins

Citizen Discussion Forum



The South Georgia and Southeast Georgia Workforce Investment Boards co-hosted a Citizen's Discussion Forum on "Building the Next Workforce" on February 28, 2007, at South Georgia College in Douglas, GA. Pauline Council, South Georgia Workforce Investment Board Chair, welcomed the attendees, which included representatives from the private sector, economic development, education and local elected officials. The South Georgia area included private sector representatives such as Jo Wingate of Wingate Farms (also Vice Chair of the South Georgia Workforce Investment Board), Greg Justice from Regal, Anne Barnas from SmithBarnas and Associates and Marshall Conner of Georgia Power. Elected officials included Valdosta Mayor John Fretti (also a State Workforce Investment Board member), Hahira Mayor Wayne Bullard and Tifton Vice Mayor Joe Lewis. Education and economic development were well-represented, and included East Central Technical College President Ray Perren and Myrna Ballard, President of the Valdosta-Lowndes Chamber of Commerce. South Georgia RDC Board member Ronald Nixon also attended the forum.

The forum was one of a dozen held across the state in February. The forums were sponsored by the State Workforce Investment Board, the Georgia Department of Labor, and the Southern Growth Policies Board. Through the Southern Growth Policies Board, Governors of fourteen states collaborate to investigate economic development issues of high priority across the South. Each year, an issue is selected for in-depth research that results in policy and action recommendations for implementation at local, state, and regional levels.

The Southern Growth Policies Board will produce a written report of Georgia's findings, which will be included in a formal report to be presented at the Southern Growth Policies Board Annual Conference in early June, 2007.

GIS continued.....

continue this project for years to come. Because this application is web-based, this project can grow to include any counties that wish to participate by simply adding a user account.

SGRDC is developing innovations in response to the needs of our communities. If there is a need you have and think that GIS may have a solution, give us a call at (229) 333-5277.