

## Innovations Deliver Local Assistance

*“What all inventions have in common is that they start from a knowledge of what’s already out there.” - James Dyson*

Since 1986 NADO has been collecting and sharing information about innovative programs and projects in small metropolitan and rural America. This issue of the *Economic Development Digest* summarizes 77 programs and provides contact information.



Aliceann Wolhbruck  
Executive Director



Joe Brannan  
President

Many of the individuals who manage these programs will participate in NADO’s 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Training Conference in Minneapolis, September 13-16, 2003 to share their insights and experiences with elected officials and professional staff of regional development organizations. A recent report of the Pew Partnership for Civic Change, *What’s Already Out There*, noted, “True invention is a gradual process. Inventors identify a problem and stay with it until they find a solution; but they rarely, if ever, start from scratch.”

The projects profiled offer ideas about where to start to solve local problems and illustrate the important role of regional development organizations and their partners. The innovative projects include helping the elderly with their medication; revitalizing small town commercial centers; coordinating emergency management activities through enhanced 911; improving the environment through redevelopment of brownfields; organizing microenterprise and entrepreneurial training; providing fiber optics to a rural industrial park; upgrading housing in low-income neighborhoods; using Geographic Information Systems to facilitate good land use planning; and managing work experience training.

Few local problems and needs are solved with one grand scheme. Beginning a new program is a risky activity and there are bound to be mistakes as well as triumphs. By connecting the individuals who manage these ventures with those who are looking for ideas, the lessons learned can be transmitted directly and honestly without fear of public criticism. The NADO Innovation Award Program provides a forum to find out what is already there and how these ideas can work in another region.

“The bond that connects all NADO members is service to local governments,” according to NADO President Joe Brannan, Executive Director of the South East Governments Association in Bisbee, Arizona. Because “all development is local” each of these projects has an impact in a city, town or county and is contributing to these communities’ economic and human development.

Congratulations to this year’s winners – the regional development organizations and their partners who are managing or coordinating these projects. These programs are examples of the many and varied innovative approaches to local problem solving that NADO members are pursuing.

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**Publisher**

Aliceann Wohlbruck

**Editor**

Zanetta Doyle

**Managing Editor**

Laurie Thompson

**Contributor**

Kelly Novak

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The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) is a public interest group founded in 1967 to promote economic development in small metropolitan and rural regions. The association is the leading advocate for a regional approach to rural, economic and community development. The NADO Research Foundation, founded in 1988, helps bridge the communications gap among different levels of government, educational, nonprofit and private sector organizations.

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**For more information contact the NADO Research Foundation:**

Phone: 202/624-7806

Fax: 202/624-8813

Email: info@nado.org

Internet: www.nado.org

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## Aging and Human Services

This category of projects and programs reveals the need for local government assistance and services. Aging projects, like making businesses more elder-friendly and human services, like tax preparation assistance for the disadvantaged promote a higher standard of living that ultimately fuels economic growth.

As the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for a rural ten-county region, **East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission** and the **Legal Services Corporation** of Alabama are administering a **Legal Services for the Elderly** program. The program provides free and easy access to legal services for low-income persons, age 60 and over. With one full time attorney and three additional offices (ten more attorneys and two paralegals) the program annually provides over \$200,000 in legal assistance to over 500 clients.

The **Senior Citizens Outreach Program (SCOP)** was designed by **Northern Arizona Council of Governments, Winslow Police Department** and community partners to monitor the well being of senior citizens and reduce senior victimization and fear of crime. Weekly, Winslow's police officers are assigned five to eight senior citizens to consistently contact and monitor their well being. The program has been expanded to include handicap ramp installations. Program funding comes from the City of Winslow, Winslow Weed & Seed (a Department of Justice program) and a local church.

When the **Atlanta Regional Commission** launched its regional Vision 2020 Initiative, they selected the City of Clarkston to be a 2001 pilot site for the **Clarkston Multicultural Senior Center** because Clarkston's 7,200 residents speak 17 languages. Each day of the week the lunch menu

features a resident ethnic population entree, such as Vietnamese or Russian. Participants also select activities like English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Co-sponsors include local ethnic restaurants and cooperative links to the Atlanta region's aging and refugee services networks.

The **Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center's Elder Friendly Business Certification Program** creates awareness among the region's business community about their largest consumer group - senior citizens. Coastal Georgia RDC is working with Elders in Action in various ways, such as having trained volunteers secretly "shop" local businesses, to ensure quality senior services and build an "Elder Friendly" certi-



*Community day at the The Clarkston Multicultural Senior Center in Georgia.*

fication program. Upon certification, businesses will be listed in an Elder Friendly Business Certification Directory for senior citizens. The business will also receive a decal for public display.

The **Alzheimer's Wandering and Rescue Education (AWARE)** instructs caregivers, professional nursing facilities and community agencies on how to prevent, rescue and communicate with wandering Alzheimer's patients. AWARE, administered by Kentucky's **Green River Area Development District's Area Agency**



**on Aging (AAA)**, is the result of a community collaborative effort of four agencies. AWARE helps family caregivers identify reasons for wandering and ways to make their homes safer. Professional caregivers receive how-to instruction on behavioral issues. Local officers learn about effective ways to search, find and communicate with Alzheimer's patients.

The **Medication Management Project** promotes correct medication use, prevention of drug errors and finding the best dollar value in medication therapy for seniors. Together, eight of Minnesota's Area Agencies on Aging, including the **Arrowhead Regional Development Commission**, and the Minnesota Pharmacists Association administer the project and offer sessions and one-to-one drug therapy consultations for seniors in 46 counties. The free consultations teach seniors about the medications they are taking, vitamins and other senior medical issues. Pharmacists also can write recommendations for the seniors' doctors and personal pharmacists.

The **Northwest Missouri Regional Council of Governments** used CDBG funding to establish the **Jump Start Car Loan Program**. The program provides opportunities for 25 low-income families in two counties to purchase vehicles. Eligible participants must meet income guidelines; have a valid driver's license, clean driving record and car insurance. Participants must make on-time payments, continue insurance coverage and complete financial literacy, car maintenance and car-purchasing courses after receiving vehicles. If the participant meets all the requirements after one year, the remainder of the loan is forgiven.

The **Northwest Missouri Regional Council of Governments' Money Smart Financial Literacy Project** offers individuals in the five-county region a chance to gain knowledge about personal finance and banking services. Ten instructor-led "Money Smart" classes cover financial topics,

including basic banking and choosing checking accounts. The instructors come from the project's partnership of banking, insurance and human services professionals. Over 1,000 community members have attended. Project support comes from Wal-Mart, the Department of Labor, Northwest Missouri Regional Development Corporation, the Federal Deposit Insurance Company (FDIC) and career center.

Through a collaboration between the local Seniors and Law Enforcement Together (S.A.L.T.), **Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments** and Area Agency on Aging, over 150 human service professionals and attorneys attended **Senior Financial Safety Symposium** classes to learn about fraud and scams targeting the elderly in their North Carolina region. The attendees were taught how to alert seniors and what the available community response for prevention and remedies were. Continuing educational credits were given to the attending administrators and attorneys. All speakers presented free of charge.

Using the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) theme as comparison between the successful drivers/teams to families, Texas' **Texoma Council of Governments** and partners' **Family Self Sufficiency Program** shows participants how to set goals, seek sponsorship and endure hardships to buckle into the driver's seat and finish the race to independence. Participants are able to visualize the benefits of providing their own "NASCAR," Nutrition, Automobile, Schooling, Childcare, Appearance and Rent/Utilities. Funding was provided by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The **"You Can't Beat Family" Campaign to Reduce Domestic Violence** program by the **Texoma Council of Governments**, uses a Texas Silent Witness exhibit and training, as a catalyst to reach project goals. The exhibit displays 113 life-



*Weekly, Winslow Arizona police officers are assigned five to eight senior citizens to consistently contact and monitor their well being.*

sized silhouettes representing female domestic violence victims who died in Texas during 2001. The display has been placed in public locations like schools. Training is designed for criminal justice professionals and the public at large. Funding comes from the Department of Justice, Violence Against Women Office and the Office of the Governor.

The **Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council Area Agency on Aging's Residential Repairs for the Elderly** program is a joint community collaboration that provides a seamless system of using multiple funds to repair elderly persons or seniors' residences. The program began ten years ago and has served 350 seniors. Every other year \$50,000 from the Older American Act funds and over \$100,000 from the Department of Energy Weatherization Program are used to provide program services.

The **South Plains Association of Governments Area Agency on Aging (AAA) and Coalition of Community Assistance Volunteers** project in Texas provides free federal tax return preparations and tax credits and financial training and outreach to low-income citizens, with special emphasis on non-English speaking, elderly and disabled individuals and families. In the program's first year one rural and four urban tax preparation sites were established. The rural site alone was able to contribute to individuals a total of over \$17,000 in tax credits and refunds. ●

**East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission, Legal Services for the Elderly.** Contact: Randy Frost or James W. (Bill) Curtis, POB 2186, Anniston, AL 36202-2186; 256/237-6741; Fax: 256/237-6763; email [rfrost@adss.state.al.us](mailto:rfrost@adss.state.al.us)

**Northern Arizona COG/Winslow Police Department, Senior Citizens Outreach Program (SCOP).** Contact: Ken Sweet, NACOG, 119 E. Aspen Ave., Flagstaff, AZ 86001; 928/213-5211; Fax 928/773-1135; email [ksweet@nacog.org](mailto:ksweet@nacog.org) or Stephen Garnett, Winslow Police Department, 115 E. Second Street, Winslow, AZ 86047; 928/289-4820; Fax 928/289-3803; email [sg70@winslow-az.net](mailto:sg70@winslow-az.net); Web site [www.winslowarizona.com/police.html](http://www.winslowarizona.com/police.html)

**Atlanta Regional Commission, The Clarkston Multicultural Senior Center.** Contact: Charles Krautler or Cheryl Schramm, 40 Courtland Street, Atlanta, GA 30303; 404/463-3100; Fax 404/463-3264; email [ckrautler@atlantaregional.com](mailto:ckrautler@atlantaregional.com); web [www.atlantaregional.com](http://www.atlantaregional.com)

**Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center, The Elder Friendly Business Certification Program.** Contact: Grace A. Owens, Aging Services Coordinator, P.O. Box 1917, Brunswick, GA 31521; 912/264-7363; Fax 912/262-2313; email [gaowens@dhr.state.ga.us](mailto:gaowens@dhr.state.ga.us)

**Green River Area Development District's Area Agency on Aging (AAA), Alzheimer's Wandering and Rescue Education (AWARE).** Contact: Jiten Shah, 3860 U.S. Highway 60 West, Owensboro, KY 42301; 270/926-4433; Fax 270-684-0714; email [jitenshah@gradd.com](mailto:jitenshah@gradd.com); Web site [www.gradd.com](http://www.gradd.com)

**Arrowhead Regional Development Commission, Medication Management Project.** Contact: John Chell or Catherine Sampson, 221 West First Street, Duluth, MN 55802; phone 218/529-7540; fax 218/529-7592; email [csampson@ardc.org](mailto:csampson@ardc.org); web site: [www.ardc.org](http://www.ardc.org)

**Northwest Missouri Regional Council of Governments, Jump Start Car Loan Program.** Contact: Kraig Robinette or Kimberly Mildward, 114 West Third Street, Maryville, Missouri 64468; 660/582-5121; Fax 660/582-7264; email [Kimberly\\_Mildward@mail.nwmorcog.org](mailto:Kimberly_Mildward@mail.nwmorcog.org); Web site [www.nwmorcog.org](http://www.nwmorcog.org)

**Northwest Missouri Regional Council of Governments, Money Smart Financial Literacy Project.** Contact: Kraig Robinette or Kimberly Mildward, 114 West Third Street, Maryville, Missouri 64468; 660/582-5121; Fax 660/582-7264; email [Kimberly\\_Mildward@mail.nwmorcog.org](mailto:Kimberly_Mildward@mail.nwmorcog.org); Web site [www.nwmorcog.org](http://www.nwmorcog.org)

**Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments, Senior Financial Safety Symposium.** Contact: Matthew Dolge or Kevin Robertson, 400 West Fourth Street, Suite 400 – Winston-Salem, NC 27101; 336/761-2111; Fax: 336/761-2112; email [krobertson@nwpcog.org](mailto:krobertson@nwpcog.org); Web site [www.nwpcog.org](http://www.nwpcog.org)

**Texoma Council of Governments, Family Self Sufficiency Program.** Contact: Frances Pelley or Sally Hodges, 1117 Gallagher Drive, Sherman TX 75090; 903/813.3525; Fax 903/813.3539; email [shodges@texoma.cog.tx.us](mailto:shodges@texoma.cog.tx.us); Web site [www.texoma.cog.tx.us](http://www.texoma.cog.tx.us)

**Texoma Council of Governments, "You Can't Beat Family" Campaign to Reduce Domestic Violence.** Contact: Frances Pelley or Sarah E. Somers, 1117 Gallagher Drive, Sherman TX 75090; 903/813.3552; Fax 903/813.3539; email [ssomers@texoma.cog.tx.us](mailto:ssomers@texoma.cog.tx.us); Web site [www.texoma.cog.tx.us](http://www.texoma.cog.tx.us) or [www.tcogsilentwitness.com](http://www.tcogsilentwitness.com)

**Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council Area Agency on Aging, Residential Repairs for the Elderly.** Contact: Kenneth N. Jones, Jr. or Jose L. Gonzalez, 311 North 15<sup>th</sup>, McAllen, Texas 78501-4705; 956/682-3481; Fax 956/631-4670; email [knjones@lrgvdc.org](mailto:knjones@lrgvdc.org) or [jgonzalez@lrgvdc.org](mailto:jgonzalez@lrgvdc.org); Web site [www.lrgvdc.org](http://www.lrgvdc.org)

**South Plains Association of Governments Area Agency on Aging, Coalition of Community Assistance Volunteers.** Contact: Jerry Casstevens or Pete H. Lara, PO Box 3730 Freedom Station, Lubbock, TX 79542-3730; 806/762-8721; Fax 806/765-9544; email [plara@spag.org](mailto:plara@spag.org); Web site [www.spag.org](http://www.spag.org)

# Business and Entrepreneurship Development

Industrial park development, business clusters, revitalization, economic diversification, microenterprise support, lender tax credits, loan funds and infrastructure -- all these elements are needed to support business and entrepreneurial growth.

The **Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center** and county partners implemented a region-wide development vision when they launched the **Four County Industrial Research Park** project. This 2,200-acre industrial/research park is located on a high growth interstate corridor east of Atlanta. Northeast Georgia RDC assisted in obtaining a state grant to determine the financing structure, intergovernmental agreements and creation of a joint development authority. Property has been purchased, and bonds have been secured to assist in startup funding. Infrastructure needs, such as water/wastewater, are now being assessed.

The **Developing a Rural Cluster Strategy** project, is a combined effort of the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University and three southern Illinois regional development organizations in the Delta Regional Authority -- **Greater Egypt Regional Planning and Development Commission, Southern Five Regional Planning Commission and Southeastern Illinois Regional Planning and Development Commission** -- works with regional organizations, local developers, business leaders and others to evaluate and implement regional cluster development strategies. The project includes an econometric study of existing clusters, interdependency business evaluations and regional outreach including capital/business investment. Funding came from the EDA.

**Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission** administered the **City of Fort Madison Reactivating Commercial Sectors** project to assist the city elected officials and management with the reactivation of the city's traditional commercial sectors. City officials provided \$200,000 toward low interest loans to commercial and retail establishments with a maximum loan of \$25,000. Each of the four local banks presented a \$200,000 match to the city funds. Six loans have been made (\$90,000) with investments of over \$1,200,000, a 1:13 ratio. Eight loans have been made (\$154,000) with investments of over \$786,065, a 1:5 ratio.

The **Buffalo Trace Area Development District and Bracken County's Microenterprise Training and Loan Program** is using CDBG funds and bank loans to assist low-income families in three counties with small business startups and expansions. The program will offer training and counseling services to entrepreneurs and make loans up to \$7,500 for five years at two percent interest to microenterprises (five employees or less). Buffalo Trace ADD will administer the program. A county area Chamber of Commerce will provide training and counseling services.

The **Green River Area Agriculture Diversification Program** in Kentucky, administered by the **Green River Area Development District**, assists local agricultural producers in the seven-county region. The program strives to decrease farmer's dependency on tobacco by offering resources for the expansion into diverse agriculture areas. Using state agriculture development funds and local producer matches, the program has already



*Supporting a local catfish feed mill expansion and aiding job retention, prompted the South Delta Planning and Development District, Inc., in Mississippi, to pursue the Sunflower County – INDIBEL, Inc. Economic Development Infrastructure Improvements project.*

assisted 36 producers with expansion into various agriculture areas, such as high-density apples, vineyards, blueberries, honey and goat herding for dairy and meat products.

The “**Team Up for New Market Tax Credits**” program was offered by the Minnesota-based **Community Reinvestment Fund (CRF)**. Lenders nationwide participated in teleconferences in which CRF explained the advantages of teaming up for the credits instead of applying individually (fewer administrative burdens but similar program benefits.) The lenders were asked to detail the types of loans they would make and their communities' needs. Fifty lenders from 32 states signed on and CRF won \$162.5 million in tax credits.

Supporting a local catfish feed mill expansion and aiding job retention, prompted the **South Delta Planning and Development District, Inc.**, to pursue the **Sunflower County – INDIBEL, Inc. Economic Development Infrastructure Improvements** project. Using CDBG funds, state infrastructure development funds and INDIBEL, Inc.'s. (the feed mill owner) investments, infra-

*continued on page 6*

structure will be constructed to serve the feed mill's expected increase in corn feed usage. An access road will accommodate trucks servicing four new storage tanks and rail spurs will accommodate corn imports, due to the Mississippi Delta's short window for corn harvesting.

The **East Texas Rural Access Program Revolving Loan Fund** program administered by the **ArkTex Council of Governments and North East Texas Economic Development District** seeks to provide much needed capital for the start of a revolving loan fund (RLF) for residents served by the East Texas Rural Access

Program. The RLF program will also support efforts to expand rural access to primary health care and the local economic and employment opportunities associated with that primary health care. Funding Sources are: the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and US Department of Agriculture. ●

**Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center, Four County Industrial Research Park.** Contact: James Dove or Chris McGahee, 305 Research Drive, Athens, Georgia 30605-2795; 706/369-5650; Fax 706/369-5792; email cmcgahee@negrdc.org; Web site www.negrdc.org

**Greater Egypt Regional Planning and Development, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Southern Five Regional Planning Commission and Southeastern Illinois Regional Planning and Development Commission, Developing a Rural Cluster Strategy.** Contact: Ike Kirkikis, Greater Egypt Regional Planning and Development, POB 3160, Carbondale, IL 62902; 618/549-3306; Fax 618/549-3309; email gerpdc@midwest.net or Norm Walzer, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Western Illinois University, 518 Stipes Hall, Macomb, IL 61455; 309/298-1031; Fax 309/298-2142; email N-Walzer@wiu.edu; Web site www.iira.org

**Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission, City of Fort Madison Reactivating Commercial Sectors.** Contact: Brian Tapp, 214 N 4th Suite 3A, Burlington, IA 52601; 319/752-5107 x 204; Fax 319/754-4763; email btapp@seirpc.com; Web site www.seirpc.com

**Buffalo Trace Area Development District and Bracken County, Bracken Microenterprise Training and Loan Program.** Contact: Steve Miller or Doug Padgett, P.O. Box 460, Maysville, Kentucky 41056; 606/564-6894; Fax 606/564-0955; email doug.padgett@mail.state.ky.us; Web site www.btadd.com

**Green River Area Development District, Green River Area Agriculture Diversification Program.** Contact: Jiten Shah or John Sansom, 3860 U.S. Highway 60 West, Owensboro, KY 42301; 270/926-4433; Fax 270/684-0714; email jiten-shah@gradd.com or johnsansom@gradd.com; Web site www.gradd.com

**Community Reinvestment Fund, Team Up for New Market Tax Credits.** Contact: Frank Altman or Michael Blumfield, 801 Nicollet Mall, Suite 1800 West Minneapolis, MN 55402; 800/475-3050; Fax 612/338-3236; email marketing@crfusa.com; Web site www.crfusa.com

**South Delta Planning and Development District, Inc., Sunflower County – INDIBEL, Inc. Economic Development Infrastructure Improvements.** Contact: William B. Haney, Jr. or Allyson Denson, P. O. Box 1776, Greenville, MS 38702; 662/378-3831; Fax 662/378-3834; email acdenson@bellsouth.net; Web site www.southdeltapdd.com

**ArkTex Council of Governments and North East Texas Economic Development District, East Texas Rural Access Program Revolving Loan Fund.** Contact: L. D. Williamson or Jerry Sparks, P. O. Box 5307, Texarkana, TX 75505-5307; 903/832-8636; Fax 903/832-2672; email jsparks@atcog.org; Web site www.atcog.org

# Community, Economic and Social Development

These projects not only support development, but also provide local governments with technical services, planning assistance and the in-kind services that many small and rural communities are unable to provide for themselves.



*It is estimated that the Southeast Missouri Regional Planning and Economic Development Commission City of Fredericktown Business Park project will create 175 jobs.*

The goals of **Sierra Economic Development District's Coloma/Lotus Community Action Plan**, in northern California, include leadership, community and economic development. Through a survey and workshops, strategies were created to identify necessary resource development including creating multipurpose trails linked to businesses, campgrounds and Bed & Breakfasts and preserving open space and historic buildings. Two of the plan goals are now being implemented and have attracted additional grant funding. The funding sources are: the U.S. Forest Service Economic Recovery Grant (\$15,000), Sierra EDD (\$3,000 match) and in-kind funds (\$945).

**Community Choices**, an initiative by the **Atlanta Regional Commission**, offers quality growth toolkits, specialized community planning academy training and funding through the Livable Center Initiatives (LCI), to help local governments build quality

growth communities. Already, 1,000 CD-format toolkits have been distributed and approximately 500 persons attended training classes. LCI has awarded \$4 million in planning grants to 42 communities for project studies ranging from revitalizing downtowns to multi-modal connectivity. The initiative was included in the areawide Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and received Federal Highway Administration funding.

**Mid-Minnesota Development Commission, Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission, Southwest Regional Development Commission, and Region Nine Regional Development Commission** in Southwest Minnesota formed a partnership, under **The Southwest Minnesota Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation**, to work on joint projects and offer clients the expertise of all four commissions. Leadership from each region meets regularly to develop areas of cooperation, shared values, policy and initiatives. Efforts are being made to develop a cooperative administrative system for local Area Agencies on Aging, sharing GIS assets and exploring joint staff training.

In north-central Minnesota, the **Headwaters Regional Development Commission** focused on positioning their region's communities and businesses to prosper amid recent dramatic demographic and economic changes, resulting from the new economy, with the **Prospering in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – Strategically Positioning for the New Economy** program. The Headwaters RDC, in partnership with the Northwest Minnesota Foundation, has used innovative methods and technology to address recent and future challenges. A new leadership model that blurs the lines between private and public was developed for use throughout the region.

**The Southeast Missouri Regional Planning and Economic Development Commission** and partners are securing financing to build a business park in the City of Fredericktown, Missouri. The project involved establishing a city/county TIF district, local bonds and securing an EDA grant to leverage state CDBG, USDA Rural Development, MoDOT and the Delta Regional Authority funds. The construction of the park's additional water storage, sewer, a road, a new \$6 million electric co-op complex and a local college satellite campus are underway. An estimated 175 jobs will be created.

The **Eastern Carolina Joint Land Study** was conducted by the **Eastern Carolina Council of Governments** and partners, to protect and promote present and future operational capabilities of Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, North Carolina. Community partners concerned about encroachment and current and future base use petitioned the Department of Defense Office of Economic Adjustment for funding to do a Joint Land Use Study. The partners, including the two counties, three municipalities and the state formed committees, and are continuing to meet to ensure implementation of recommendations.

The **Community Benchmarking Collaborative**, developed by South Carolina's **Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments** and now in its fourth year, produces an annual quality of life report for the region. The report contains a series of indicators, selected to measure trends such as population, poverty, wages, environment and transportation. For the past two years, a survey has been used to measure public perception about quality of life. The Technical Review Committee, comprised of practitioners in various fields, reviews each indicator and discusses the outcomes and a steering committee addresses priorities.

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The **Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments** is also developing an **Energy Element for the Town of Summerville**, in an effort to locally incorporate energy-saving practices. A South Carolina Energy Office grant is supporting the research and preparation of an energy assessment of the town's residents and commercial, industrial, institutional and agricultural annual usage levels. Based on assessments and expected population growth, projections for future energy needs will be made and a non-renewable resources conservation strategy will be developed for the Energy Element, which will be included in Summerville's comprehensive economic plan.

Local leaders of four counties in the **South Central Tennessee Development District (SCTDD)** came together to improve economic

and community development and create a four-county strategic plan. This effort, called **Communities Tomorrow: Localized Vision Planning**, used local input to establish a vision of what communities want to be, defines goals and initiates collaborative action plans. The plan addresses issues common to all four counties, such as workforce development. As the grant applicant, SCTDD plans to subcontract with the regional Workforce Board to employ a full-time **Communities Tomorrow** Coordinator.

**The Economic Impact of Dairies on the South Plains of Texas: A County Perspective** is contained in an informational brochure compiled by the **South Plains Association of Governments**. Information was gathered from three local dairies to determine the economic effects of the dairy industry, as compared with the locally significant cotton farm industry.

Economic indicators reviewed included tax revenues, water usage, job creation and overall economic impacts. The brochure explains that the introduction of the dairy industry to west Texas can be a mutually beneficial arrangement.

The **Cumberland Plateau Regional Broadband Project**, a regional project by the **Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission** and partners, will provide 51 miles of fiber optics from Abingdon, Virginia to Richlands, Virginia. Independent studies show that as many as 1,200 new jobs will result. The project will serve the Cumberland Plateau Regional Industrial Parks. In addition, a new technology park will be developed and provide economic diversification, making the region more economically competitive. Funding was provided by EDA, county governments, Virginia Tobacco Commission and the Virginia Coalfield Coalition. ●

**Sierra Economic Development District, Coloma/Lotus Community Action Plan.** Contact: Betty Riley, 560 Wall Street, Suite F, Auburn, CA 95603; 530/823-4703; Fax 530/823-4142; email [betty@sedd.org](mailto:betty@sedd.org); Web site [www.sedd.org](http://www.sedd.org)

**Atlanta Regional Commission, Community Choices.** Contact: Charles Krautler or Kellie McDonough, 40 Courtland Street, Atlanta, GA 30303; 404/463-3212; Fax 404/463-3105; email [kmcdonough@atlantaregional.com](mailto:kmcdonough@atlantaregional.com); Web site [www.atlantaregional.com/quality\\_growth/toolkits.html](http://www.atlantaregional.com/quality_growth/toolkits.html)

**Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC), Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission (UMVRDC), Southwest Regional Development Commission (SWRDC), and Region Nine Regional Development Commission (Region 9 RDC), The Southwest Minnesota Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation.** Contact: Donn Winckler, MMDC; 333 W. Sixth Street, Willmar, MN 56201; 320/235-8504; Fax 320/235-4329; email [donn.winckler@mmdc.org](mailto:donn.winckler@mmdc.org); Web site [www.mmdc.org](http://www.mmdc.org) Paul Michaelson, UMVRDC; 323 W. Schlieman Ave., Appleton, MN 56208; 320/289-1981; Fax 320/289-1983; email [umvrdc@umvrdc.org](mailto:umvrdc@umvrdc.org); Web site [www.umvrdc.org](http://www.umvrdc.org); Jay Trusty, SWRDC; 2401 Broadway, Suite 1, Slayton, MN 56172; 207/836-8547 ext. 106; Fax 507/836-8866; email [srcd@swrdc.org](mailto:srcd@swrdc.org); Web site [www.swrdc.org](http://www.swrdc.org); and Reginald Edwards, Region 9 RDC 410 E. Jackson Street, P.O. Box 3367, Mankato, MN 56002; 507/387-5643; Fax 507/387-7105; email [reggie@rndc.mankato.mn.us](mailto:reggie@rndc.mankato.mn.us); Web site [www.rndc.org](http://www.rndc.org)

**Headwaters Regional Development Commission, Prospering in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – Strategically Positioning for the New Economy.** Contact: Cliff Tweedale or David Hengel, P.O. Box 906, Bemidji, MN 56619; 218/ 444-4732; Fax 218/444-4722; email [dhengel@hrdc.org](mailto:dhengel@hrdc.org); Web site [www.hrdc.org](http://www.hrdc.org)

**Southeast Missouri Regional Planning and Economic Development Commission, City of Fredericktown Business Park.** Contact: Thomas G. Tucker, 1 West St. Joseph Street, P. O. Box 366, Perryville, MO 63775; 573/547-8357; fax 573/547-7283; email [semorpc@semorpc.org](mailto:semorpc@semorpc.org); Web site [www.semorpc.org](http://www.semorpc.org)

**Eastern Carolina Council of Governments, Eastern Carolina Joint Land Study.** Contact: Larry Moolenaar or Judy Hills, PO Box 1717, New Bern, NC 28563-1717; 252/638-3185; Fax 252/638-3187; email [jhills@eccog.org](mailto:jhills@eccog.org); Web site [www.eccog.org](http://www.eccog.org)

*community continued on page 9*

**Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments, Community Benchmarking Project.**

Contact: Ronald E. Mitchum, 5290 Rivers Avenue, Suite 400, North Charleston, SC 29406; 843/529-0400; Fax 843/529-0305; email Ronm@bcdcog.com; Web site www.bcdcog.com

**Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments, Energy Element Development for the Town of Summerville's Comprehensive Plan.**

Contact: Ronald E. Mitchum, 5290 Rivers Avenue, Suite 400, North Charleston, SC 29406; 843/529-0400; Fax 843/529-0305; email Ronm@bcd-cog.com; Web site www.bcdcog.com

**South Central Tennessee Development District, Communities Tomorrow: Localized Vision Planning.**

Contact: Joe Max Williams, PO Box 1346, Columbia, TN 38402-1346; 931/381-2040; Fax: 931/381-2053; jmax@sctdd.org; Web site www.sctdd.org

**South Plains Association of Governments, The Economic Impact of Dairies on the South Plains of Texas: A County Perspective.**

Contact: Jerry Casstevens or Tim Pierce, PO Box 3730 Freedom Station, Lubbock, TX 79542-3730; 806/762-8721; Fax 806/765-9544; email tpierce@spag.org; Web site www.spag.org

**Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission, Cumberland Plateau Regional Broadband Project.**

Contact: Andrew Chafin, PO Box 548, Lebanon, VA 24266; 276/889-1778; fax 276/889-5732; email accppdc@cablenet-va.com; Web site www.cppdc.org

## Emergency Response and Mitigation

These regional projects and programs exemplify the overlap between the services that regional organizations provide communities such as, creating emergency guides for Area Agencies on Aging and improving emergency response times by using GIS technology.

The **Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center's AAA** and community partners produced **Emergency Preparedness Guides**, which offer a comprehensive emergency preparedness plan for the elderly. The guide was designed by Coastal Georgia AAA, a consultant and a product design company, and features a hardbound, tri-fold binder containing removable cards. The cards are incident specific and color-coded, and contain information pertinent to specific emergency and county-specific emergency contact numbers for public agencies. The guide is to be distributed to aging service providers and emergency management agencies.

**South Georgia Regional Development Center's project, "An Ounce of Prevention"** -- demonstrates the use of GIS technology and development regulations to mitigate the economic impact of disasters in a pre-disaster context. This project considers both environmental hazards and development hazards applicable to the environment. Substantially hazardous areas in either sense, were mapped within a GIS and restrictive land use regulations were drafted and adopted by communities allowing controls for development in and around these hazardous areas. Partners included USDA's National Consortium for Rural Geo-spatial Innovations, EDA and local governments.

The **Pierce County E911 Geocoded Road Map** program provides the E-911 Department of Pierce County with a visual for emergency call respons-

es. **Southeast Georgia Regional Development Center** mapped all county and private roads using the Trimble TDC1 data collector. Roads were then geocoded using the US One Range (file-based) available through the ArcCatalog Geocoding Service and county Master Street Address Guide. Dispatchers now can use the interactive system and indexed wall map with congested area sub maps, to quickly guide responding police, fire and emergency medical teams.

**First District Association of Local Governments** and partners in rural South Dakota took on the **Implementation of 911 Mapping and Routing: A Coordinated Effort** to shorten emergency response times by providing one county 911 dispatchers with the ability to quickly distribute route directions to response vehicles. First District developed GIS data sets by checking paper maps containing items such as emergency service zone boundaries and also designed them to meet certain commercial dispatch software standards. The implementation was completed in one year.



*The Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center's AAA and community partners produced Emergency Preparedness Guides, which offers a comprehensive emergency preparedness plan for the elderly.*

**Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center's Area Agency on Aging (AAA), Emergency Preparedness Guides.** Contact: Barbara Rowell, Quality Assurance Specialist, P.O. Box 1917, Brunswick, GA 31521; 912/264-7363; Fax 912/262-2313; email [bfrowell@dhr.state.ga.us](mailto:bfrowell@dhr.state.ga.us)

**South Georgia Regional Development Center, An Ounce of Prevention – Hazard Mitigation Using GIS Technology and Development Regulations.** Contact: John L. Leonard or Chris Strom, 327 W. Savannah Ave., Valdosta, GA 31601; 229/333-5277 ext. 142; Fax 229/333-5312; email [cstrom@sgrdc.com](mailto:cstrom@sgrdc.com); Web site [www.sgrdc.com](http://www.sgrdc.com) or <http://gisweb.sgrdc.com>

**Southeast Georgia Regional Development Center, Pierce County E911 Geocoded Road Map.** Contact: Lace Futch or Genie Lee, 1725 South Georgia Parkway, West, Waycross, GA 31503; 912/285-6097; Fax 912/285-6126; email [gclsegardc@accessatc.net](mailto:gclsegardc@accessatc.net); Web site [www.segardc.org](http://www.segardc.org)

**First District Association of Local Governments, Implementation of 911 Mapping and Routing: A Coordinated Effort.** Contact: Dick Edenstrom or Ryan Hartley, 124 1<sup>st</sup> Ave NW, P.O. Box 1207, Watertown, SD 57201-6207; phone 605/882-5115; Fax 605/882-5049; email [ryan@1stdistrict.org](mailto:ryan@1stdistrict.org); Web site [www.1stdistrict.org](http://www.1stdistrict.org)

## Environment

The regional nature of environmental projects and programs have shaped the focus of these projects on areas such as watershed planning, water resource protection, water quality management, brown-fields redevelopment, transportation impacts and habitat management. Many have used GIS to develop these projects.



*Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (McAllen, TX) releases thousands of grass carp into the Rio Grande River to control invasive aquatic weeds endangering the water supply.*

**The PRIDE (Personal Responsibility In a Desirable Environment) Initiative** cleans waterways, eradicates illegal dumps and promotes environmental education in southern and eastern Kentucky. **Eastern Kentucky PRIDE, Inc.**, coordinates the initiative and operates grant programs funded with \$66 million from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The initiative partners local, state and federal agencies with volunteers, students and civic organizations. Area Development Districts' contributions include administering septic system grants for low-income homeowners. Measurable results include 103,862 volunteers participating in cleanup events and 20,560 homes receiving sanitary sewer service.

**Arrowhead Regional Development Commission** in Minnesota put together the **Citizen Based Data Collection**

**for Vermilion Lake Management** project to guide future shoreland development, land use analysis, zoning to protect water quality and preserve lake character. A GIS-based Web site was developed to coordinate shore land section assignments, allowing volunteers to register online for section assignments. The volunteers printed customized base maps, collected data and then returned the maps/data for GIS input. Project funding came from the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources and the county planning department.

**Mid-Minnesota Development Commission** instituted a **Four County Comprehensive Local Water Plan Collaborative (Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker and Renville Counties)** to fulfill each county's eligibility requirements for Natural Resource Block Grant funds from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources. The four counties' Mid-Minnesota Joint Powers Board contracted with the Development Commission for a fee to update each county's water plan, addressing such issues as drainage, shoreland management and groundwater protection. The regional collaboration and the Development Commission's use of GIS database saved the four counties approximately \$120,000.

The **North Carolina Department of Transportation**, North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources and North Carolina Department of Administration undertook developing a policy and associated **Guidance Manual for Assessing Indirect and Cumulative Impacts of Transportation Projects** via a formalized Memorandum of Understanding. The document includes sections on water quality, coastal wetlands and protected species. It provides methods and procedures for assessing potential indirect and cumulative impacts on environmental resources under federal and

state mandated regulation. In addition, the partner agencies have developed one- and three-day training seminars.

In partnership with the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the US Army Corps of Engineers – Wilmington District, the **North Carolina Department of Transportation** is working to deliver needed transportation infrastructure improvements while protecting environmentally sensitive resources through increased avoidance, minimization and an **Impacts of Transportation Projects Environmental Permit Process Improvement Initiative**. The increased efficiency of the process coupled with the protection of high quality resources will result in transportation projects being implemented sooner that meet the needs of the customers without negatively impacting communities.

Through the **Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments' Development of Impervious Surface Coefficients** project, the amount of impervious surface associated with different land use categories will be estimated, thus allowing this South Carolina region's decision-makers to visualize the possible impacts that various developments have on water quality. To accomplish this, impervious surface and land use data will be digitized for GIS usage. The creation of the first impervious surface coefficients will be specifically useful for watershed planning throughout the Southeastern states. Funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Sea Grant College Program.

**The Land-of-Sky Regional Council** and numerous partners are implementing a "**Regional Brownfields Initiative (RBI)**." This long-term economic redevelopment project helps revitalize potentially contaminated or underused properties. Blighted properties are identified, researched, prioritized and adopted into the program for environmental assessment, clean-up

and redevelopment. The project received initial funding through EPA Brownfields programs, EDA and Advantage West. Regional partners include local governments, state agencies, banks, developers, commercial realtors, environmental groups, consultants and the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC).

Developed by **Mid-Carolina Council of Governments** and the **Cape Fear River Assembly**, including the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources Division of Water Resources, the **Cape Fear River Basin Hydrologic Modeling Project's hydrologic model (1998) of the Cape Fear River Basin** is intended to support analysis of potential impacts from inter-basin transfers proposed by the neighboring communities. During 2002, it was also used successfully to analyze the potential impacts of the severe drought on ground water supply.

In central North Carolina, the **Mid-Carolina Council of Governments and Cape Fear River Assembly Partners'** watershed planning, known as the **Morgan and Little Creeks Local Watershed Planning Initiative**, identifies and evaluates potential opportunities to restore and enhance local stream and wetland functions. The watershed plans are cooperatively developed with representatives of local governments, nonprofit organizations and communities. The plans outline watershed issues, set priorities, develop strategies, secure funding and implement protection and restoration projects. The plan provides a blueprint for locally solving issues like water quality and flooding.

The **Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council Triploid Grass Carp Project** in South Texas facilitated the introduction of Triploid (Sterile) Grass Carp into the lower Rio Grande River to control the invasive aquatic weeds. **Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council** provided the coordination of a Bi-National

Aquatic Weed Task Force, which developed an "Integrated Pest Management Plan." The plan implementation is underway and the Carp have been introduced as the primary biological control method. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation awarded the development council \$150,000 for the project.

**Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission** and community partners in rural Virginia formed the **Regional Water Resources Policy Committee** to cultivate a comprehensive action-oriented plan for Shenandoah Valley watersheds management. In response to the drought, elected region's officials began working together after a Regional Water Relationships Forum in 1999. Their committee work progressed from simply looking at water supply to the greater issues of water resources protection. Now, the committee has expanded to include jurisdictions upstream in Virginia and downstream in West Virginia.

The **Salt Rock Regional Sewer Project** in the West Virginia **Region II Planning and Development Council's** region is a \$28.9 million project, aimed at two goals: 1) Ensure compliance of two local governments with the state Department of Environmental Protection, eliminating any National Pollution Discharge Elimination System violations; and 2) Allow three local governments to expand and upgrade sewer services. This project is the first step in developing a regional sewer project, a planned countywide sewer system and is the first effort of its kind in the state. ●

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**Eastern Kentucky PRIDE, Inc., PRIDE (Personal Responsibility In a Desirable Environment) Initiative.** Contact: Richard Thomas, The Center for Rural Development, 2292 S. Hwy. 27, Somerset, KY 42501; 606/677-6150; Fax 606/677-6055; email rthomas@centertech.com; Web site www.kypride.org

**Arrowhead Regional Development Commission, Citizen Based Data Collection for Vermilion Lake Management.** Contact: John Chell, Dave Yapel or Rudy Schoolderman, 221 West First Street, Duluth, MN 55802; 218/529-7540; Fax 218/529-7592; email dyapel@ardc.org or rschoolderman@ardc.org Web site: www.ardc.org

**Mid-Minnesota Development Commission, Four County Comprehensive Local Water Plan Collaborative (Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker and Renville Counties).** Contact: Donn Winckler or Matthew Johnson, 333 W. Sixth Street, Willmar, MN 56201; 320/235-8504; Fax 320/235-4329; email donn.winckler@mnrdc.org; Web site www.mnrdc.org

**North Carolina Department of Transportation, Guidance Manual for Assessing Indirect and Cumulative Impacts of Transportation Projects.** Contact: Secy. Lyndo Tippet or Roger E. Sheats, Jr, Environment, Planning and Local Governmental Affairs, 1501 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1501; 919/733-2520; Fax 919/733-9150; email rsheats@dot.state.nc.us; Web site under development

**North Carolina Department of Transportation, Impacts of Transportation Projects in North Carolina Environmental Permit Process Improvement Initiative.** Contact: Contact: Secy. Lyndo Tippet or Roger E. Sheats, Jr., Environment, Planning and Local Governmental Affairs, 1501 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1501; 919/733-2520; Fax 919/733-9150; email rsheats@dot.state.nc.us; Web site under development

**Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments, Development of Impervious Surface Coefficients.** Contact: Ronald E. Mitchum, 5290 Rivers Avenue, Suite 400, North Charleston, SC 29406; 843/529-0400; Fax 843/529-0305; email Ronm@bcdcog.com; Web site www.bcdcog.com

**Land-of-Sky Regional Council, Regional Brownfields Initiative.** Contact: Joe McKinney or Ron Townley, 25 Heritage Drive Asheville, NC 28806-1914; 828-251-6622; Fax 828-251-6353; email ron@landofsky.org; Web site www.landofsky.org

**Mid-Carolina Council of Governments and the Cape Fear River Assembly, Cape Fear River Basin Hydrological Modeling Project.** Contact: Don Freeman or Deborah Amaral; P.O. Box 1089; Fayetteville, NC 28302, 910/223-4601; Fax 910/486-9057; email cfra@faynet.com; Web site www.cfra-nc.org; James Caldwell, P.O. Drawer 1510; Fayetteville, NC 28302; 910/323-4191; Fax 910/323-9330; email jcaldwell@fayetteville.net

**Mid Carolina Council of Governments and Cape Fear River Assembly Partners, Morgan and Little Creeks Local Watershed Planning Initiative.** Contact: Don Freeman or Deborah Amaral; P.O. Box 1089; Fayetteville, NC 28302, 910/223-4920; Fax 919/782-8008; email cfra@faynet.com; Web site www.cfra-nc.org; James Caldwell, P.O. Drawer 1510; Fayetteville, NC 28302; 910/323-4191; Fax 910/323-9330; email jcaldwell@fayetteville.net

**Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council, Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Corporation Triploid Grass Carp Project.** Contact: Kenneth N. Jones, Jr., 311 North 15<sup>th</sup>, McAllen, Texas 78501-4705; 956/682-3481; Fax 956/631-4670; email knjones@lrgvdc.org; Web site www.lrgvdc.org

**Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission, Regional Water Resources Policy Committee.** Contact: Stephen W. Kerr or Tom Chistoffel, AICP, 103 E. Sixth St., Front Royal, VA 22630; 540/636-8800; Fax 540/635-4147; email nsvrc@shentel.net; Web site www.lfpdc7.state.va.us

**Region II Planning and Development Council, Salt Rock Regional Sewer Project.** Contact: Michele P. Craig or Kathryn K. Elliott, 1221 Sixth Avenue, P.O. Box 939, Huntington, WV 25712; 304/529-3357; Fax 304/529-7229; email kel-liott@citynet.net; Web site www.region2pdc.org

# Housing

These housing projects combine regional organization experience in technology, planning and coordination, resulting in housing opportunities that support regional economic and community development.

Creating accurate, low cost and replicable housing needs assessments for Wilkinson County is the trinity of the **Wilkinson County Housing Needs Assessment Project**. Using GPS, GIS and training from the **Middle Georgia Regional Development Center**, county personnel have located and mapped all county housing unit conditions. Field-collectors submitted GPS rover data to Middle Georgia RDC for post-processing and differential correction.

The results were: countywide maps showing housing densities based on condition levels and a GIS software-based housing needs assessment report.

**South Delta Planning and Development District, Inc.** is upgrading housing conditions for low to moderate-income homeowners and also enhancing neighborhood esthetics with the **City of Drew HOME Project**. The City of Drew demolished five existing housing structures and constructed five new units for low to moderate-income homeowners. While cleaning up dilapidated housing units and portions of the small city, the project also provided five families with energy efficient new homes. The Mississippi Development Authority Home Investment Partnership program provided project funding.

**Brazos Valley Council of Governments and Coalition Partners** in Texas will simultaneously build 15 homes in a newly created subdivision bordering a blighted area, increasing tax revenues and offering youth activities under the **Washington Park Subdivision Development Project**. Labor will be provided through the youth build program. The city is furnishing the infrastructure. The affordable housing corporation is providing the oversight, financing and responsibility for home sales to qualified low-income buyers. The workforce development board will be compensating instructors and providing needed youth stipends. ●



*South Delta Planning and Development District, Inc. is upgrading housing conditions for low to moderate-income homeowners in Mississippi, and also enhancing neighborhood esthetics with the City of Drew HOME Project. (Above: A before and after picture of a refurbished home.*

**Middle Georgia Regional Development Center, Wilkinson County Housing Needs Assessment Project.**

Contact: James C. Tonn, Blaine Williams or Brent K. Lanford, Middle Georgia RDC, 175-C Emery Highway, Macon, GA 31217; 478/751-6160; Fax 478/751-6517; email [blanford@mgrdc.org](mailto:blanford@mgrdc.org); Web site [www.mgrdc.org](http://www.mgrdc.org)

**South Delta Planning and Development District, Inc., City of Drew HOME Project.** Contact: Contact: William B. Haney, Jr. or Randall Lauderdale, P. O. Box 1776, Greenville, MS 38702; 662/378-3831; Fax 662/378-3834; email [rlrdle@bellsouth.net](mailto:rlrdle@bellsouth.net); Web site [www.southdeltapdd.com](http://www.southdeltapdd.com)

**Brazos Valley Council of Governments and Coalition Partners, Washington Park Subdivision Development Project.** Contact: Tom Wilkinson, Jr. or Naomi Reyes, P.O. Drawer 4128, Bryan, Texas 77805-4128; 979/775-4244; Fax 979/775-3466; email [nreyes@bvcog.org](mailto:nreyes@bvcog.org); Web site [www.bvcog.org](http://www.bvcog.org)

# Technology

These technology projects display the wide variety of ways that regional organizations can assist local governments, such as using GIS for smart growth planning, and developing electronic forms to extend e-government practices. Each project expands the region's potential for sustainable economic development.

officials, and technology company leaders to enhance the county's technology development prospects. Program partners, a diverse array of CEOs, education deans, and technology trade group representatives, worked together to develop a vision statement and implementation roles for program partners. The results, thus far, are the development of a B.S. and

The northern New Mexico **GIS Based Web site** ([www.NMBizSites.com](http://www.NMBizSites.com)) was developed by the **Regional Development Corporation** and partners to retain, expand and attract businesses to the region. The Regional Development Corporation developed "BizSites," a GIS-based Web site, to list and locate commercial property and offer printable tables, photos and maps. This site provides businesses with easy access to commercial property listings, economic, demographic and spatial data, useful for site selection and expansion decision-making. Support comes from the Department of Energy, University of California and Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Understanding that easy access to information is the difference between an efficient government and a slow bureaucracy, the **Southeast Local Development Corporation of the Southeast Tennessee Development District** created the **Applied PDF Local Government Knowledgebases**. The Portable Document Format (PDF) system helps local governments archive information for ease of retrieval and use. Many documents that formerly required printing are now electronically downloadable. A standard inexpensive off the shelf program can be used and storage can be accomplished using a CD-ROM.

A partnership between North Carolina's **KerrTar Regional Council of Governments**, eight local senior centers and various public and private entities developed the **Senior Web** project to make computers, Internet and computer training available to a generation that, for the most part, has not yet been introduced to them. First, each senior center's capacity for establishing a computer lab was evaluated. Then hardware and software sources were secured, followed by eight lab installations with over 60 new and used computers, at no cost to the senior centers. ●



*Bringing GIS to small, rural Georgia communities in Central Savannah River Area Regional Development Center's region was the motive behind their Regional Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Implementation project.*

Bringing cost-effective GIS to small, rural Georgia communities in **Central Savannah River Area Regional Development's** (CSRA RDC) region was the motive behind their **Regional Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Implementation** project. CSRA RDC first contracted 400-scale aerial photography for a four-county area; then the digital parcel creation was contracted using the paper tax maps and new aerial photography. CSRA RDC provided each local government with third-tier, end-user GIS software, allowing them to add infrastructure and other seamless data sets. Regional implementation of this project kept contracting costs down.

**North Bay Technology Roundtable**, a project of California's **Sonoma County Economic Development Board**, has brought together technology-related trade groups, education

M.S. degree in Computer and Engineering Science at Sonoma State University, career fairs, and a workforce gap analysis.

The **Middle Georgia Regional Development Center** is facilitating smart growth strategies for the fast growing community of Warner Robins with the **Warner Robins Growth Strategies Compact Disc (CD)**. The CD is a planning tool, which contains numerous GIS growth-related data layers useful for GIS analysis, loading external data and producing custom maps. Installation is not required and users can run the program on any laptop. The CD also contains pre-compiled maps, a map preview tool, Adobe Acrobat Reader, plot files and U.S. Geological Survey Digital Orthophoto Quarter Quad aerial photography.

**Central Savannah River Area Regional Development Center, Regional GIS Implementation.**

Contact: Anthony Crosson or Lori Sand, AICP, 3023 Riverwatch Parkway, Suite A, Augusta, GA 30907; 706/210-2000; Fax 706/210-2006; email lsand@csrardc.org; Web site www.csrardc.org

**Sonoma County Economic Development Board, North Bay Technology Roundtable.**

Contact: Ben Stone, 401 College Avenue, Suite D, Santa Rosa, CA 95401-5148; 707/565-7170; Fax 707/565-7231; email bstone@sonoma-county.org; Web site www.nbtr.org

**Middle Georgia Regional Development Center, Warner Robins Growth Strategies Compact Disc (CD).**

Contact: James C. Tonn or Brent K. Lanford, Middle Georgia RDC, 175-C Emery Highway, Macon, GA 31217; 478/751-6160; Fax 478/751-6517; email blanford@mgrdc.org; Web site www.mgrdc.org

**Regional Development Corporation,**

**www.NMBizSites.com: A GISbased Web site for Northern New**

**Mexico.** Contact: Lillian Montoya-Rael or Chris Lopez, MCP, 428 Sandoval, Suite 201, Santa Fe, NM 87501; 505/984-3042; Fax 505/983-8654; email lbaker@rdcnm.org; Web sites www.rdcnm.org or www.NMBizSites.com

**Southeast Local Development Corporation of the Southeast Tennessee Development District, Applied PDF Local Government Knowledgebases.**

Contact: Joe Guthrie, Tom Carson and Ron Banks, PO Box 4757, Chattanooga, TN 37405-0757; 423/266-5781; Fax 423/267-7705; email rbanks@sedev.org; Web site www.sedev.org

**KerrTar Regional Council of Governments, Senior Web.**

Contact: Neil Mallory or Steve Norwood, P.O. Box 709, Henderson, NC 27536; 252/436-2040; Fax 252/436-2055; email snorwood@kerrtarco.org; Web site www.kerrtarco.org

# Tourism

These projects and programs effectively use marketing, scenic byways, heritage corridors and collaboration as tools to make tourism development cost efficient and strategic. All enhance economic and community development opportunities.

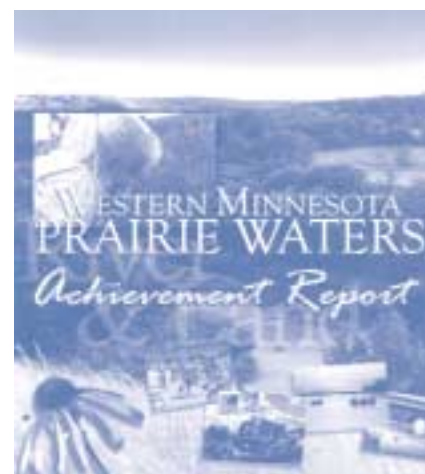
The **Central Arizona Association of Governments** devised the **Regional Tourism Marketing Strategy** as an economic diversification and job creation measure for their rural two-county region. This *Strategy* documents natural and historic resources, special events, and tourist-support facilities. Regional strengths and weaknesses were also identified and analyzed. This *Strategy* has laid the foundation for continued discussion about regional tourism issues. No such vehicle for tourism-related communication existed prior to this project. The EDA has approved an application to develop and implement the strategy's "Theme Marketing" elements.

The **Western Minnesota Prairie Waters Regional Tourism Program** cooperatively markets the **Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission's** five-county region to potential tourists and businesses as a travel destination. The program was designed and implemented by the Upper Minnesota Valley RDC to pool resources and make marketing feasible for their rural communities. Cooperatively, the program can reach outside markets and offer more attractions. Marketing techniques used include print advertisements, Web site, travel shows and full-time staff. A 2001 marketing study showed that for every program dollar spent, \$30.50 was generated.

The **Minnesota River Valley Scenic Byway Intergovernmental Cooperation** initiative and its partners (14 counties, 40 communities and volunteer board) and project adminis-

trator, the **Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Valley Development Commission**, are encouraging economic development through the promotion, preservation and protection of the valley along the 287-mile byway. Since 1995, the regional development commission has assisted with the administration of meetings, projects and grant writing. The successes, such as an increase in active volunteers and over \$450,000 in planning grant awards, help substantiate its designation as a Federal Highway Administration national byway.

The **Utah Heritage Highway 89** alliance has goals and objectives that not only emphasize heritage development but also are likely to initiate economic and community development, such as obtaining grants to market the region as a tourism destination and stimulating job creation by having alliance partners assist in supporting individual artisans and artisan co-ops. Designation as a national heritage area will bring \$1 million per year for ten years to the region. Project co-sponsors include the **Six County Economic Development District** and Panoramaland Resource Conservation and Development Council. ●



*The Western Minnesota Prairie Waters Regional Tourism Program cooperatively markets the Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission's five-county region to potential tourists and businesses as a travel destination.*

Tourism continued on page 16

**Central Arizona Association of Governments, Regional Tourism Marketing Strategy.**

Contact: Maxine Leather or Craig Ringer, 271 Main Street, Superior, AZ 85273; 520/689-5004; Fax 520/689-5020; email cringer@caagcentral.org

**Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission, Western Minnesota Prairie Waters Regional Tourism Program.**

Contact: Paul Michaelson or Dawn Hegland, 323 West Schlieman Ave, Appleton MN 56208; 866/866-5432; Fax 320/289-1983; email prairiewaters@umvrdc.org; Web site www.umvrdc.org or www.prairiewaters.com

**Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Valley Development Commission, Minnesota River Valley Scenic Byway Intergovernmental Cooperation.**

Contact: Paul Michaelson or Dawn Hegland, 323 West Schlieman Ave, Appleton MN 56208; 320/289-1981; Fax 320-289-1983; email dawn.hegland@umvrdc.org; Web site www.umvrdc.org or www.mnrivervalley.com

**Six County Economic Development District, Utah's Heritage Highway 89.**

Contact: Monte Bona, Chesley R. Christensen, 115 West Main, Mt. Pleasant, UT 84647; 435/462 2456; Fax 435/462 2581; email ches@ext.usu.edu; or Russ Cowley, Six County EDD, P.O. Box 820, Richfield, UT 84701; 435/896-9222; Fax 435/896-6951; email rcowley@ext.usu.edu; Web site www.utahheritage.com

# Transportation

These transportation projects -- rural planning, transit, safety, scenic byways, GIS mapping and rail -- validate the benefits that occur when regional development organizations administer local transportation planning and implementation.

**Alabama Scenic Byways Marketing Plan, an Alabama Association of Regional Councils' initiative,**

is encouraging communities to pursue more preservation and enhancement projects. The councils are developing marketing strategies and outreach tools, such as a Web site and marketing materials, to educate local leaders about byways benefits like additional tourism dollars, resource preservation and building community pride. Funding sources come from the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) Scenic Byways program, administered by Alabama's Department of Transportation.

The Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments, its transit departments and local advertising firm, established the **Transit Advertising Program** to generate local revenue via increasing rural and urban transit use. They created and implemented a low-cost regional advertising campaign, using transit bus exteriors (wraps) and interiors for advertisement placement. The resulting transit revenues are used as a match to attract additional federal transit funding. The project funding sources have included the Federal Transit Administration and contract revenues.

The Central Savannah River Area Regional Development Center was the lead planning agency in the **Citizen Empowerment Regional Planning Project**, which resulted in the 2003 designation of Georgia's Historic Piedmont Scenic Byway and new tourism opportunities. Four local jurisdictions, two regional planning commissions, and three state agencies



*Southern Tier West Regional Planning and Development Board's Southern Tier Extension Rehabilitation Project in New York, is aimed at rehabilitating mostly dormant former mainline rural railroad and returning it to active service as a primary rural transportation corridor.*

collaborated, using a variety of methods, such as a listserv and teleconferencing, to ensure the participation of residents, especially rural residents. This is Georgia's fifth Scenic Byway designation and will serve as a public participation model for future state byway planning.

Southwest Georgia Regional Development Center established a **Regionally Coordinated Community Transit** project in order to offer rural transit system choices and allow for coordination of federal, state and local programs. By coordinating two major state transportation contracts, Southwest Georgia RDC has instituted a cost-effective regionally based rural system. One contract with the Georgia Department



*The Perry County Port Authority Rail Improvement project was spearheaded by Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission. Together, EDA, USDA, and Indiana 15, assisted in purchasing a rail scale, rail spur construction and 11 railroad crossings improvements.*

of Transportation supports the basic infrastructure like vehicles and equipment. The other contract with the Georgia Department of Human Resource allows for coupling transit services and guaranteed revenue for rural transit systems.

The **Perry County Port Authority Rail Improvement** project spearheaded by **Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission** provided the river-port facility with needed infrastructure. In the past two decades, the county experienced several business facility closures, layoffs and job loss. The Port Authority was formed for economic diversification and job creation, but the port needed many repairs. Together, EDA, USDA, and Indiana 15, assisted in purchasing a rail scale, rail spur construction and 11 railroad crossings improvements. Port improvements have stimulated local business development and created approximately 200 new jobs.

**Kentucky's Green River Area Highway Safety Program's** mission is to organize and implement a regional effort to reduce highway crashes, fatalities and injuries, especially on two-lane rural roads. In 2001, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet began working with **Green River**

**Area Development District (ADD)** and the other 15 ADDS to initiate Highway Safety Programs. Local task forces were formed, "high crash" locations and causes were identified. Regional safety plans were then developed. Green River ADD's plan focused on safety education and has hosted over 50 safety events, such as mock crashes.

The **Regional Transportation Advisory Committee – In-kind Transportation Planning Grant Program** offered by Minnesota's **Arrowhead Regional Development Commission** provides transportation planning to small communities that otherwise could not afford it. Arrowhead RDC uses a state transportation-planning grant to support the planning services that its Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) gives to small communities, which competitively apply to the RTAC for the in-kind grants. The planning time can be used to develop transportation enhancements, parking studies, regional infrastructure plans and others.

**Southern Tier West Regional Planning and Development Board's Southern Tier Extension Rehabilitation Project** is aimed at

rehabilitating mostly dormant former mainline rural railroads and returning them to active service as a primary rural transportation corridor. The results or impacts have been great: 1,710 jobs, \$20.7 million in investments, infrastructure investments leveraged is \$4 million from the private sector and \$19.9 million from the public sector. The projected additional future infrastructure investments (three to five years) are \$15 million. The funding (\$5 million) was provided by EDA and state DOT.

The **North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)** sponsored the creation of 20 Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs) covering the state's rural areas and now sponsors the **North Carolina Rural Planning Organizations Using GIS** initiative. In 2003, the NCDOT Public Transportation Division made funding available to each RPO for GIS, furthering their capabilities to incorporate GIS into their daily transportation planning and decision making process. In turn, this advocates continuous data sharing, a faster process and better overall communication among RPOs, NCDOT and environmental resource agencies.

*Transportation continued on page 18*

Leadership from Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties in South Carolina recognize that non-driving residents have difficulty with basic daily routines, like getting to work and to medical appointments. In addition, a growing population is increasing traffic congestion. Based on these issues, a request was made to the **South Carolina Appalachian Council of Governments** to perform the **Tri-County Regional Transportation Study**, which addresses the feasibility of creating a Regional Transportation Authority. While this study has just been completed, it is the first step toward the creation of a Regional Transit System by increasing the awareness of service needs, identifying common goals, and outlining steps for proceeding.

The **Lower Savannah Council of Governments' Regional Transportation Management Association (RTMA)** is building cooperation and coordinating independent public transit providers to produce more effective and improved transportation services region-wide. The association's members included elected officials and public and private transit operators. Their objective is to coordinate mapping and routing and sub-contract among transit operators for increased efficiency, group purchasing and training, communications and group advocacy. The South Carolina DOT designated the RTMA's coordination effort as a virtual transit enterprise pilot site to test route-matching/dispatching software. ●

**Alabama Association of Regional Councils, Alabama Beautiful Scenic Byways Marketing Plan.** Contact: Wayne Burnette, 5900 Carmichael Place, Montgomery, AL 36117; 334/277-2221; email wburnette@coa.state.al.us; Web sites [www.alarc.org](http://www.alarc.org) & [www.alabamabyways.org](http://www.alabamabyways.org)

**Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments, Transit Advertising Program.** Contact: Keith Jones, POB 2603, Muscle Shoals, AL 35662; 256/389-0555; Fax 256/389-0599; email [kjones@nwscc.cc.al.us](mailto:kjones@nwscc.cc.al.us); Web site [www.nacolg.com](http://www.nacolg.com)

**Central Savannah River Area Regional Development Center, Citizen Empowerment Regional Planning Project.** Contact: Anthony Crosson or Costa Pappis, 3023 Riverwatch Parkway, Suite A, Augusta, GA 30907; 706/210-2000; Fax 706/210-2006; email [cpappis@csrardc.org](mailto:cpappis@csrardc.org); Web site [www.csrardc.org](http://www.csrardc.org)

**Southwest Georgia Regional Development Center, Regionally Coordinated Community Transit.** Contact: Dan Bollinger, Sr. or Brad Sheffield, P.O. Box 346, Camilla, GA 31730; 229/522-3552; Fax 229/522-3558; email [bsheffield@swgrdc.org](mailto:bsheffield@swgrdc.org); Web site [www.swgrdc.org](http://www.swgrdc.org)

**Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission, Perry County Port Authority Rail Improvement Project.** Contact: Debby Beavin or Theresa Criss-Hartwig, 221 East First Street, Ferdinand Indiana 47532; 812/367-8455; Fax 812/367-8171; email [theresa@ind15rpc.org](mailto:theresa@ind15rpc.org); Web site [www.ind15rpc.org](http://www.ind15rpc.org)

**Green River Area Development District, Green River Area Highway Safety Program.** Contact: Jiten Shah or Gina Boaz, 3860 U.S. Highway 60 West, Owensboro, KY 42301; 270/926-4433; fax 270/684-0714; email [jiten-shah@gradd.com](mailto:jiten-shah@gradd.com) or [ginaboaz@gradd.com](mailto:ginaboaz@gradd.com); Web site [www.gradd.com](http://www.gradd.com)

**Arrowhead Regional Development Commission, Regional Transportation Advisory Committee – In-kind Transportation Planning Grant Program.** Contact: John Chell or Andy Hubley, 221 West First Street, Duluth, MN 55802; 218/529-7512; Fax 218/529-7592; email [ahubley@ardc.org](mailto:ahubley@ardc.org); Web site: [www.ardc.org](http://www.ardc.org)

**Southern Tier West Regional Planning and Development Board, Southern Tier Extension Rehabilitation Project.** Contact: Donald R. Rychnowski or Thomas Barnes, Center for Regional Excellence, 4039 Route 219, Suite 200, Salamanca, New York 14779; 716/945-5301; Fax 716/945-5550; email [tbarnes@southerntierwest.org](mailto:tbarnes@southerntierwest.org); Web site [www.southerntierwest.org](http://www.southerntierwest.org)

**North Carolina Department of Transportation, Using GIS with North Carolina Rural Planning Organizations.** Contact: Secy. Lyndo Tippet or Roger E. Sheats, Jr., Environment, Planning and Local Governmental Affairs, 1501 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1501; 919/733-2520; Fax 919/733-9150; email [rsheats@dot.state.nc.us](mailto:rsheats@dot.state.nc.us); Web site under development

**South Carolina Appalachian Council of Governments, Tri-County Regional Transportation Study for Anderson, Oconee and Pickens Counties.** Contact: Robert M. Strother or Daniel Wagner, P.O. Box 6668, Greenville, SC 29606; 864/242-9733 ; Fax 864/242-6957; email [dwagner@scacog.org](mailto:dwagner@scacog.org); Web site [www.scacog.org](http://www.scacog.org)

**Lower Savannah Council of Governments, Regional Transportation Management Association.** Contact: Eric P. Thompson, POB 850, Aiken, SC 29202; 803/649-7981; Fax 803/649-2248; email [chsade@lscog.org](mailto:chsade@lscog.org)

# Workforce Development

The skill training, entrepreneurial support, job training and labor assistance incorporated regional workforce development plans are well represented by these projects and programs, which demonstrate how the labor force is a key element to successful economic development.

Connecticut's **New London Development Corporation** and community partners are recruiting and training unemployed and underemployed residents for the construction industry jobs through a **Pilot Construction Skills Training Program**. The program is designed to meet the needs of local contractors by creating a broad-based construction industry labor pool. All training is done at subsidized housing construction sites. The project was originally funded by a U.S. Department of Labor Skill Shortage Grant and is now funded by various local sources, including CDBG grants. So far all participants have found construction employment.

The **Lincoln Trail Area Development District** and Workforce Investment partners initiated the **Leitchfield Career Center project** to develop a one-stop career center and

respond to increased client service demands. Career center partners offer employment and training opportunities, unemployment insurance and labor market information, as well as services geared toward businesses. Grayson County Fiscal court provided the building renovations. Workforce Investment Act incentive funds were used to improve the resource room's technologies. The center now has the capacity to serve 1,000 customers every month.

**South Delta Planning and Development District, Inc.** and partners are serving and encouraging entrepreneurship development and business expansions in the 14-county Delta Workforce Investment Area by way of their **Workforce Specialty Site for Entrepreneurial Skills Training** project. Together, project partners, including a community college and the Delta Workforce Investment Board, are providing counseling, training and research assistance for small business management. During project year 2002, 82 clients have been served, 93 participants have attended seminars, 11 special projects have been completed, and three businesses have started.

**Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments** and the **Mobile Drug Testing Consortium** reduces the administrative costs for the federal drug testing requirements for certified driver's license carriers. With the mobile testing unit, rather than sending employees to testing sites, the testing unit goes to the consortium member's work site. This saves employees an average of two hours of time per test administered. Testing costs have not increased and documentation and tracking are also more efficient. Consortium members' dues support the mobile operation.

North Carolina's **Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments' Job Resource and Training Center Work Experience Program** incorporates work experience opportunities for welfare customers who complete skill training. Training center job developers market to potential employers, the tax incentive and no-cost labor advantages of agreeing to place work experience customers. Once the customer is placed in a work experience position, the employer completes an evaluation form every week to ensure worker competency. Eighty-five percent of the work experience placements have resulted in permanent employment. ●

**New London Development Corporation, Pilot Construction Skills Training Program.** Contact: David Goebel, 165 State Street, Suite 313 or POB 2042, New London, CT 06320; 860/447-8011 ext. 14; email dgoebel@nldc.org; Web site www.nldc.org

**Lincoln Trail Area Development District, Leitchfield Career Center.** Contact: Wendell Lawrence or Jackie Masterson, PO Box 604, Elizabethtown, KY 42702; 270/769-2393; Fax 270/769-2993; email Jackie@ltadd.org

**South Delta Planning and Development District, Inc., Workforce Specialty Site for Entrepreneurial Skills Training.** Contact: William B. Haney, Jr. or Bob Booth, P. O. Box 1776, Greenville, MS 38702; 662/378-3831; Fax 662/378-3834; email sdpddwia@bellsouth.net; Web site www.southdeltapdd.com

**Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments, Mobile Drug Testing Consortium.** Contact: Matthew Dolge or John Robertson, 400 West Fourth Street, Suite 400 – Winston-Salem, NC 27101; 336/761-2111; Fax 336/761-2112; email jrobertson@nwpcog.org; Web site www.nwpcog.org

**Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments, Job Resource and Training Center Work Experience Program.** Contact: Matthew Dolge or Theresa Reynolds, 400 West Fourth Street, Suite 400 – Winston-Salem, NC 27101; 336/761-2111; Fax 336/761-2112; email mdolge@nwpcog.org; Web site www.nwpcog.org

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**National Association of Development Organizations Research Foundation**  
400 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 390  
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