

# CEDS Committee

---

Tommy McKenzie, Chairman	Macon County
Chip Jones	Stewart County
Cecil McMickle	Marion County
Bump Welch	Marion County
Richard McCorkle	Marion County
Wally Summers	Sumter County
David McCurry	Chattahoochee County
Edward Lee	Chattahoochee County
Patricia Goodman	Randolph County
Carol Rutland	Muscogee County
Pops Barnes	Muscogee County
Mike Speight (until 1/2017)	Crisp County
Tom Queen	Taylor County
Pam Jordan	Talbot County
Sarah Walls	RVRC
Patti Cullen	RVRC
Jim Livingston	RVRC
Casey Beane	Georgia DCA
Candy Head	Georgia DOL
Anna Hurt	Georgia Department of Economic Development

# CEDS Committee January 28, 2015 Minutes

---

## **Persons Attending**

Patti Cullen, RVRC  
Chip Jones, Stewart County  
Cecil McMickle, Marion County  
Bump Welch, Marion County  
Wally Summers, Sumter County  
Edward Lee, Chattahoochee County  
Candy Head, GDOL  
Patricia Goodman, Randolph County  
Pops Barnes, Muscogee County

Mike Speight, Crisp County  
Sarah Walls, RVRC  
Tommy McKenzie, Macon County  
Jo Childers, DCA  
Tom Queen, Taylor County  
Richard McCorkle, Marion County  
Tim Sweezy, Marion County  
Katie Howard, RVRC

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Speight. All members and guests were welcomed.

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and approved unanimously with a motion by Wally Summers and a second by Patricia Goodman. It was noted that additional data is needed about high school graduation, dual enrollment and certificates earned while in high school.

Chairman Speight reviewed several meetings held with REACH GA since the last CEDS Committee meeting. Retired Commissioner Ron Jackson spoke at the November RVRC Council meeting and spoke about many topics including REACH GA. (see attached handouts for description of the program) He suggested that it would be a good way to encourage dual enrollment and increase high school graduation. Chairman Speight contacted REACH GA and set up a meeting in December at the Marion County Elementary School with Marion County School Superintendent Richard McCorkle to discuss the program. The program was also discussed with the Marion County High School principle and guidance counselor. All were very interested in the program.

In early January staff from REACH GA as well as Mike Speight and Katie Howard attended the Chattahoochee Flint Regional Educational Support Agency (RESA) to share information on the REACH GA program. There were eight (8) school superintendents present and all appeared to be interested.

Quitman County is one of the early members in the program and is very enthusiastic. Stewart County is in the process of filling out the application which is due in Mid February. Marion County has approached a corporate partner to be a permanent financial sponsor for the program. If this works out, they will apply for this program.

Chairman Speight will reach out to the RESA director to see if there is definite interest in our counties and offer the help of the CEDS Committee if necessary.

There being no further business to come before the group, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*Katie Howard*

# Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee

## Meeting Minutes

### April 22, 2015

---

#### ***Persons Attending***

---

Cecil H. McMickle, Marion County  
Carole Rutland, Muscogee County  
Janet Joiner, City of Vienna  
Edward Lee, Chattahoochee County  
Chip Jones, Stewart County  
Tom Queen, Taylor County  
Tommy McKenzie, Macon County  
Patti Cullen, RVRC

Janice West, RVRC  
Candy Head, GDOL  
Patricia Goodman, Randolph County  
Sarah Walls, RVRC  
Pops Barnes, Muscogee  
Mike Speight, Crisp County  
Katie Howard, RVRC

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Speight. The minutes of the last meeting were unanimously approved with a motion by Carole Rutland and a second by Tommy McKenzie.

Katie Howard discussed the new CEDS guidelines which call for broader participation in the CEDS process. Potential groups to be included were identified:

- School Superintendents
- Chambers of Commerce
- Development Authorities
- Workforce Investment Boards,
- Technical Colleges
- Historic Chattahoochee Commission,
- Hospitals
- Family Connections
- Housing Authorities
- Dept. of Community Affairs
- GA Department of Economic Development
  - Economic Development
  - Tourism
- Colleges
- Inland Port
- Employer Committees
- Department of Natural Resources – State Parks
- National Parks
- Railroads – Heart of Georgia, SWGA Railroad, Norfolk Southern, CSX
- EMCs – Diversified, Upson, Flint
- Georgia Power
- Dept. of Transportation
- Mainstreet
- Elected officials
- Columbus Visitor’s Bureau
- Southwest Georgia United (Empowerment Zone in Dooly/Crisp Counties)

It was decided that the public meeting should be held in mid-June. The group discussed the idea of having several ‘regional’ meetings but that was tabled for next year because of time constraints.

Mission Statement – As part of the new CEDS guidelines, EDA is suggesting that each CEDS contain a Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and Call to Action. The group reviewed some samples and made suggested changes (see ideas below).

Mission Statement – The mission of the RVRC shall be to create, promote and foster the orderly growth, economic prosperity and continuing development of the region.

Vision Statement – The RVRC will support the industrial, civic, commercial, educational, natural and human resources of the Region and member communities. This will be done by serving as a facilitator for the region to increase the skills of the working age population and help schools implement concepts that encourage a problem-based learning process.

Call to Action – Preparing the current and future generations to have the job and life skills necessary to be successful. A call to the River Valley Region to commit to actions which advance the education of the population toward a shared vision for 2016 and beyond.

It was also suggested that the group identify Core Values as part of this process.

Each committee member was asked to review the draft Mission and Vision Statements as well as the Call to Action and to bring suggested changes to the next meeting. They were also asked to start thinking of Core Values to be adopted.

The next meeting was scheduled for May 27, 2015 at the Josh Gibson Center in Buena Vista, immediately prior to the RVRC Legislative Luncheon.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katie Howard

# Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee Minutes May 27, 2015

---

## ***Persons Attending***

---

Janice West, RVRC	Candy Head, GDOL
Carole Rutland, Muscogee County	Michelle Sealy, Crisp
Patricia Goodman, Randolph County	Jo Childers, DCA
Pam Jordan, Talbot County	Mike Speight, Crisp
Sarah Walls, RVRC	Patti Cullen, RVRC
Wally Summers, Sumter County	Katie Howard, RVRC

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Speight. The minutes of the last meeting were approved unanimously with a motion by Carole Rutland and a second by Patricia Goodman.

The CEDS Public Meeting will be on June 17 at 10:30 a.m. at the Offices of the Marion County Board of Commissioners in Buena Vista. Everyone is encouraged to attend and to share the invitation with their mailing lists.

The draft Mission Statement, Vision, Call to Action and Core Values were reviewed. The group decided on the following:

- Mission Statement – The mission of the RVRC shall be to create, promote and foster the orderly growth and economic prosperity for our region.
- Vision Statement – A region where current and future generations succeed at home, at work, and in their communities
- Core Values:
  - Accountability
  - Collaboration
  - Community
  - Innovation
  - Diversity
  - Integrity
  - Good Stewardship

It was decided to delete the Call to Action as being unnecessary.

The next committee meeting will be on June 24 immediately before the RVRC Council meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

*Katie Howard*

# Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee Meeting Minutes June 24, 2015

## ***Persons Attending***

---

Charles Gibson, City of Lumpkin  
Tommy McKenzie, City of Montezuma  
Edward Lee, Chattahoochee County  
Patricia Goodman, Randolph County  
Chip Jones, City of Richland  
Bump Welch, Marion County  
Mike Speight, Dooly/Crisp County  
Katie Howard, RVRC  
Carole Rutland, Muscogee County  
Janice West, RVRC

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Speight. The minutes of the last meeting were approved unanimously with a motion by Patricia Goodman and a second by Bump Welch.

1. Katie Howard reviewed the results of the CEDS Survey. A total of 326 surveys have been completed.
  - a. Top Strength – Tourism followed by local health care facilities
  - b. Top Weakness – Lack of a Well-trained Workforce followed closely by a quality local/regional school system.
  - c. Top Threat – flight of younger generation followed by declining industries
  - d. Top Opportunities – Available land followed by tourism assets.
  - e. Top goals – Create new jobs and increase job skills.
  - f. Other – one of the main problems listed under ‘other’ was crime.
2. The results of the Public Meeting held on June 17, 2015 were reviewed. At the meeting, each participant was asked to identify the best thing about their community and the thing that needed the most improvement. These items were then incorporated into goals and were then prioritized.
  - a. The workforce of the River Valley Region will be ready to meet the needs of the current and future employers. (14 votes)
  - b. Promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and assist in the recruitment of new businesses in the region. (13 votes)
  - c. The River Valley Region will have sufficient infrastructure to meet the needs of the citizens and private sector businesses for the next 20 years. (10 votes)
  - d. Collaboration (diversity, bonds, and community) (5 votes)

- e. Improve and expand the existing affordable housing stock for the citizens of the River Valley Region. (4 votes)
  - f. Promote and preserve the existing tourism assets in the region. (3 votes)
  - g. Agriculture development and retention. (3 votes)
  - h. All industrial parks in the River Valley Region will meet the needs of the business community. (2 votes)
3. The CEDS Committee reviewed the objectives identified in the existing CEDS for each goal to determine which ones could be changed/deleted as well as identifying SMART goals for certain ones. The following goals/objectives were reviewed:
- a. The workforce of the River Valley Region will be ready to meet the needs of the current and future employers. (14 votes)
    - i. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage increase of the high school graduation rate and the reduction of High School drop out rates.
    - ii. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage internships and work study programs within the High Schools in the region.
    - iii. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage partnerships between Technical Colleges and High Schools in the region.
    - iv. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage every High School graduate to further their education with a Technical College Certificate/Degree or an Associates/Bachelor's Degree from a 2-year or 4-year college or university.
    - v. OBJECTIVE: Support efforts to significantly improve reading levels of all students by the third grade.
    - vi. OBJECTIVE: Support vocational training in high schools.
    - vii. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage GED and continuing education efforts for the adult population of the River Valley Region by partnering with technical colleges and other agencies.
    - viii. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage dual enrollment in all high schools in the region.
  - b. Promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and assist in the recruitment of new businesses in the region. (13 votes)
    - ix. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage the use of local revolving loan funds to assist in the development and expansion of small businesses.
    - x. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage the use of the "Buy Local" and "Georgia Grown" programs.
    - xi. OBJECTIVE: Support local and regional development authorities by providing technical assistance as requested and by providing information on tax credits, low interest loans and other incentives.
    - xii. OBJECTIVE: Encourage and support the development of a plan to market the region to former residents and encourage them to move back.

- c. The River Valley Region will have sufficient infrastructure to meet the needs of the citizens and private sector businesses for the next 20 years. (10 votes)
  - i. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage water and sewer system improvements to improve the capacity of the systems
  - ii. OBJECTIVE: Support broadband improvements throughout the region.
  - iii. OBJECTIVE: Support E-911 efforts throughout the region.
  - iv. OBJECTIVE: Support the Regional Transit Authority.
  - v. OBJECTIVE: Support the study of high speed passenger rail in the Columbus MPO urban area.
  - vi. OBJECTIVE: Support needed runway extension at the Columbus Metropolitan Airport.
  - vii. OBJECTIVE: Support the improvement of all aspects of the transportation system to facilitate the flow of goods and people, enhance economic growth, connect people and jobs, and improve quality of life.
  
- d. Collaboration (diversity, bonds, and community) (5 votes)
  
- e. Improve and expand the existing affordable housing stock for the citizens of the River Valley Region. (4 votes)
  - i. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage local governments to pursue all means available to eliminate substandard housing in the 16-county region including public and private sources.
  - ii. OBJECTIVE: Support continued improvement of existing housing conditions through all available public and private means.
  - iii. OBJECTIVE: Encourage the development of infill housing in areas already served by public infrastructure.
  - iv. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage the removal of dilapidated housing and structures throughout the region.
  
- f. Promote and preserve the existing tourism assets in the region. (3 votes)
  - i. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage the preservation of historic buildings in the region.
  - ii. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage cooperative marketing of existing tourism assets.
  - iii. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage the development of new tourism assets in the region.
  - iv. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage the Georgia Grown Program.
  - v. OBJECTIVE: Support and Encourage the Highway 27 Association and its efforts to develop the corridor.
  - vi. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage local Chambers of Commerce and Convention and Visitor's Bureaus.
  - vii. OBJECTIVE: Support, encourage and expand the existing cultural arts in the region.

- viii. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage designation of Chattahoochee Trace Region as a National Heritage Corridor.
- ix. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage the development and designation of Scenic By-Ways in the region.
- x. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage the Whitewater development along the Chattahoochee River in Columbus.
  
- xi. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage the use of State Parks and facilities throughout the region.
- xii. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage the development of a marina in Georgetown-Quitman County.
- xiii. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage regional tourism efforts such as the Highway 27 Association, Andersonville Trail, etc.
  
- g. Agriculture development and retention (3 votes)
  
- h. All industrial parks in the River Valley Region will meet the needs of the business community. (2 votes)
  - i. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage all Industrial Parks in the River Valley Regional Commission's
  - ii. 16-county region to be shovel-ready and all qualified Industrial Parks to be certified by Georgia Power.
  - iii. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage necessary infrastructure improvements to all Industrial Parks in the region.
  - iv. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage access to railroads or rail spurs to a minimum of half of the Industrial Parks in the region where possible.
  - v. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage development of virtual speculative buildings in a minimum of two industrial parks in the region.
  - vi. OBJECTIVE: Support road improvements along Hwy. 280 and rail improvements for the Inland Port.
  - vii. OBJECTIVE: Support the development of water reservoirs in the region
  - viii. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage maintenance of all state owned rail line from Georgetown to Cordele.
  - ix. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage the deepening of the deepwater port in Savannah.
  - x. OBJECTIVE: Support and encourage the expansion of the Inland Port.

The committee decided that under the first goal, objectives ii – viii could be considered strategies for implementation rather than objectives. This change will be reflected in the updated CEDS.

Several other strategies were discussed under the goal of support existing and expanding businesses as well as new businesses. These included promoting use of the RVRC Revolving

Loan Funds. Ideas were suggested including the continuation of the Annual RLF bankers' luncheon, regular communications with bankers via e-mails about the program and success stories.

All strategies identified must be SMART:

- i. Specific
- ii. Measureable
- iii. Achievable
- iv. Relevant
- v. Time based

The next meeting will be on August 26, 2015 where the draft CEDS will be presented for review. The Draft CEDS will be e-mailed out to all members prior to the meeting.

There being no further business to come before the group, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*Katie Howard*

# CEDS Committee Meeting Minutes October 28, 2015

---

## Persons Attending

Edward Lee  
Mike Speight  
Jim Livingston  
Tom Queen  
Cecil McMickle

Ricky McCorkle  
Bump Welch  
Carole Rutland  
Jo Childers  
Janet Joiner

Patricia Goodman  
Chip Jones  
Sarah Wall  
Mariyana Kostov  
Pops Barns

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Speight at 9:30 AM.

Jim Livingston introduced Amber Staples who is interning in the Columbus RVRC office. Jim also introduced Mariyana Kostov – the RVRC GIS staff based in Americus.

Mariyana Kostov and Jim Livingston showed the CEDS Committee a map of the region outlining the counties that had property information available to the public behind a paywall and those that allowed free access to the public. This was raised to make sure the regional representatives knew that some parts of the region allowed free access to property information and others made the public pay for its use. The counties that allowed free access were under a contract with the mapping provider QPublic.

The committee discussed the benefits of using a free service for outside development, and also discussed the reasons a community would opt to require the users themselves pay for the service. The Chairman talked about the importance and opportunity to attract outside investment, and the need to make searching for property as easy as possible. The costs of counties hosting the service were not known, and Mariyana Kostov promised to bring more information on costs communities were paying to the next meeting.

Chairman Speight outlined the work being done to promote workforce development through the REACH program. RVRC staff, Chairman Speight, as well as REACH representatives will be meeting with the RESA board of county school superintendents in November. REACH representatives should be available to help with the fundraising, and no funds will need to be raised in the first year. Ricky McCorkle noted the challenges of raising funds for so many needs in a rural school district and donor fatigue the few businesses that are in the county have with funding all the school priorities, and agreed that it was a good program and opportunity for the region.

Jim Livingston showed a couple of maps of the state that outlined broadband and telecom service providers as well as fiber backbone networks in the state of Georgia. He let the committee know that over \$1.6 million of investment through Connect America Funds (CAF II) will be invested in the region by one of the largest telecom companies – Windstream. AT&T will also be investing large amounts from CAF II, but those exact figures were not available yet.

There being no further business to come before the group, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted--

Jim Livingston

# CEDS Committee Meeting Minutes November 18, 2015

---

## ***Persons Attending***

---

Edward Lee	Carole Rutland	
Mike Speight	Chip Jones	Mickey George (visitor)
Jim Livingston	Tommy McKenzie	Bruce Hill (visitor)
Tom Queen	Janet Joiner	Casey Moore (visitor)
Cecil McMickle	Patricia Goodman	Holly Winner (visitor)
Wally Summers	Chip Jones	
Bump Welch	Janice West - RVRC	

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Speight at 9:30 AM.

Bump Welch made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 28 meeting. Janet Joiner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Jim Livingston introduced Holly Winner – the new Presidential Pathways tourism coordinator. Holly gave some background on herself and said she would be excited to meet with committee members and work in the region.

Mike Speight gave an update on the REACH program – Jim Livingston, Mike Speight and Sara Neely from REACH spoke to the RESA in Ellaville in November, explaining the program and making sure the school districts understood the benefits to applying. Application deadline is in January.

Jim Livingston also reported that the team learned that over 1,200 students in the region were enrolled in the community colleges through dual enrollment. There were 315 at South Georgia Tech and 915 at Columbus Tech. He also reported that Schley and Marion Counties were listed at above the average graduation rates for the state – both ranked 24<sup>th</sup> overall. The Georgia Milestones tests were also discussed by the superintendents at the RESA meeting, and all expressed an interest in improving their scores. Wally Summers gave an update on South Georgia Tech's driver education program – and announced that the opportunity was available to students.

Jim Livingston gave an update on the county costs for Q Public. The cost for both Harris County and Webster County was less than \$4,000. Mickey George and Bruce Hill both reported that the cost for Macon County was \$7,500. Patricia Goodman reported that the cost for Randolph County was \$6,500. There was some discussion on why the costs were so different, as well as the benefits of having the data online. Bruce Hill, as a real estate appraiser, spoke of the need and utility of being able to access ownership data and the need to easily access the information. He talked about the need for the easy access to the information, in order to get sufficient bids for banks to find appraisers and make potentially loans. Mickey George also spoke of the costs, and while recognizing its importance, how that expense is significant enough to deter the county from paying the expense. There was some discussion on how useful and necessary the service was, and whether it suppressed the county real estate market

if it was behind a pay wall. Jim Livingston offered to review, get more information from real estate professionals, and report back. Mickey George also suggested that the RVRC may be able to address some of the cost issues through enterprise ESRI GIS services. Jim Livingston also promised to look into that possibility.

There being no further business to come before the group, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20.

Respectfully Submitted--

Jim Livingston

# CEDS Committee Meeting Minutes January 27, 2016

---

## ***Persons Attending***

---

Edward Lee  
Mike Speight  
Jim Livingston  
Tom Queen  
Carole Rutland

Janet Joiner  
Pam Jordan  
Jo Childress  
Rickie McCorkle  
'Pops' Barnes

Patricia Goodman  
Candace Head  
Sarah Wall - RVRC  
Janice West - RVRC

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Speight at 9:30 AM.

Patricia Goodman made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 18 meeting. Janet Joiner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **New Business:**

Jim Livingston updated the committee on the work done to promote Highway 27 Association, including showing the project website that was recently introduced. He noted that it was a privately funded regional initiative with few resources was able to get a logo, website and written text that has led to media mentions in other magazines, including in early January in the Atlanta Journal Constitution. Jo Childress talked about the trails initiatives throughout Georgia and the support the state has for the Highway 38 and 41 projects based around agri-tourism. Jim Livingston also distributed a map and brochure of the Highway 41 corridor that traverses the eastern counties in the region. Janet Joiner talked about the Highway 41

Jim Livingston also passed around a brochure promoting Georgia Farm Markets, noting that there was an opportunity to identify and encourage more farm markets in the region. He also pointed out the 2016 CEDS Strategy point advocating for greater agricultural products from the region. Jo Childress suggested contact with Cindy Norton at the Georgia Department of Agriculture in their agri-tourism office.

Patricia Goodman talked about the Georgia Camera Ready meeting in Atlanta on February 22. Jim Livingston, Allison Slocum and Patricia Goodman are going to Atlanta together for the meeting, and there are two more seats available in the car up there. Jim Livingston encouraged others to join us for the meeting from throughout the region. Candace Head also mentioned the new development of the Georgia Film Academy that is being administered in part by Columbus State University and the Springer Theater in Columbus – first class for On-Set Film Production Certificate has just begun. He showed the website for the film academy and talked about the opportunities for the region that this would present. Jim asked for a list of names of people in each county who would be good contacts to develop a core group to push camera ready and film issues in the region. Names suggested were:

Randolph County – Patricia Goodman  
Stewart County – Chip Jones

Talbot County – Pam Jordan

Dooly County – Lalista Thompson

Macon County – Camile \*\*\*

More names were to be researched by the committee to develop the list for each county.

### **Old Business**

Jim Livingston gave an update on the QPublic issues. He did find from developers and real estate professionals that they were in need of the information and did tend to gravitate to the counties where the information was easier to access. Macon County will become a test case for a RVRC effort to use ESRI tools to put the ownership information online through both the RVRC website and the county website, serving as a work-around to the expenses of listing the information through QPublic.

Mike Speight gave an update on the REACH program – 6 of our 16 counties are now involved with REACH, including Quitman, Randolph, Sumter, Muscogee, Taylor and eventually Macon.

There being no further business to come before the group, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20.

Respectfully Submitted--

Jim Livingston

# CEDS Committee Meeting Minutes February 24, 2016

---

## ***Persons Attending***

---

Edward Lee  
Mike Speight  
Jim Livingston  
Tom Queen  
Janet Joiner

Pam Jordan  
'Pops' Barnes  
Patricia Goodman  
Butch McMickle  
'Bump' Welch

Tommy McKenzie  
Wally Summers  
Theresa Garcia Robinson -  
GDEcD  
Janice West - RVRC

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Speight at 9:30 AM.

'Pops' Barnes made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 26 meeting. Janet Joiner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Theresa Garcia Robinson was introduced from the Georgia Department of Economic Development. She is the Region 8 representative.

### **New Business:**

Jim Livingston updated the committee on an effort to bring attention to brownfields in the region. The Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Natural Resources will both be at the next council meeting to discuss brownfields in April. The Georgia Brownfields Association had a meeting in Columbus to help begin the process of educating Real Estate professionals, attorneys, and developers about brownfields and benefits attained from actively addressing environmental issues on redevelopment sites. A brownfield is any property that does, or looks like it may have environmental damage. Janet Joiner spoke about the EPA Brownfields clean-up in Vienna that has remediated a 55,000 square foot school of all asbestos and lead paints to allow it to potentially be reused as a community center.

### **Old Business:**

There was some discussion about the farm trails in the region, and a need to get a better handle on the farms that would benefit from the Georgia Farm Bureau listings and Georgia Grown sites. The group talked about the difference between row crops which are prevalent in our region, and not inclined to switch their farming practices to the smaller scale market focused farms in the various state listings. Jim Livingston said that Jo Childress at DCA was very interested in the project and that he will be working to collect a comprehensive list of candidates from each county starting in April.

The Georgia Film Day on Monday, February 21 was very successful for the region. There were 15 representatives from the region at the Camera Ready seminar, and in the process to get to Atlanta for the day, we have found new Camera Ready point of contact in Schley, Sumter, Marion and Macon counties. There will be a follow up meeting in April to do a combination of training on the Camera Ready program as well as outlining goals to promote the region as a film destination. Pam Jordan and Patricia Goodman both talked about their experiences in Atlanta, noting the usefulness in both getting an understanding of what types of sites the film industry was looking for as well as using the day to

review what they are doing in their counties to get the requisite photos up on the Camera Ready website. They mentioned that the photos should look good, but not necessarily be professional. The analogy used in Atlanta was that the sites should be photographed as if they are a Real Estate listing. Lots of photos, including interior photos make a difference.

There being no further business to come before the group, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20.

Respectfully Submitted--

Jim Livingston

# CEDS Committee Meeting Minutes April 27, 2016

---

## ***Persons Attending***

---

Edward Lee – Chattahoochee County

Mike Speight – Crisp County

Tom Queen – Taylor County

Janet Joiner – Dooly County

Pam Jordan – Talbot County

‘Pops’ Barnes – Muscogee County

Patricia Goodman – Randolph County

Carole Rutland – Muscogee County

Jimmy Davis – Macon County

Cecill ‘Butch’ McMickle – Marion County

‘Bump’ Welch – Marion County

Tommy McKenzie – Macon County

Richard McCorkle – Marion County

Chip Jones – Stewart County

Barbara Alfano – US EPA

Shannon Ridley Georgia EPD

Ed Lee- HEARTS of Georgia

Sarah Walls – RVRC

Patti Cullen - RVRC

Janice West - RVRC

Jim Livingston - RVRC

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Speight at 9:30 AM.

Patricia Goodman made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 24 meeting. Pam Jordan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Barbara Alfano from the US EPA and Shannon Ridley from Georgia EPD were introduced by Jim Livingston as national and state experts on brownfield issues.

### **New Business:**

Barbara Alfano and Shannon Ridley talked about definitions of a brownfield and examples of successful brownfields grants and cases in our region. Barbara Alfano explained the federal definition of a brownfield as well as the practical definition. She said that a brownfield is in effect any property that looks as if it may be contaminated. This may prevent redevelopment of the property because of concerns about whether a phase 1 or Phase 2 environmental review would find expensive clean-up costs were necessary. In fact, through the process of EPA Brownfields Assessment grants, it was found that 30% of properties needed no cleanup work done whatsoever. She also reviewed two EPA Brownfield grants that were made in the region – one to the City of Columbus in 2002 and one to the City of Vienna in 2014.

Shannon Ridley talked about the State of Georgia programs that, while not grant programs, do allow the properties to be cleaned up. She talked about their brownfield program that, with an application fee, will allow the transfer of ownership, but not environmental liability if the property is cleaned up correctly. It can be a very valuable tool to help reduce liability for prospective new owners.

### **Old Business:**

Jim Livingston talked about a successful Camera Ready session to provide technical assistance to the region’s Camera Ready representatives. They spent a day at the Columbus Makerspace in April uploading images and sites to the state database. The feedback from the state Camera Ready staff was

that our images need to include better interior photos. The analogy used in Atlanta was that the sites should be photographed as if they are a Real Estate listing. Lots of photos, including interior photos make a difference.

Jim Livingston also updated the group on the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions (GARC) project to identify trails in our region as a part of an overall effort to create the first map of trails statewide. He asked for assistance from each county to identify and build this list for our region.

There being no further business to come before the group, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20.

Respectfully Submitted--

Jim Livingston

# CEDS Committee Meeting Minutes August 24, 2016

---

## **Persons Attending**

Edward Lee – Chattahoochee County  
Mike Speight – Crisp County  
Janet Joiner – Dooly County  
Pam Jordan – Talbot County  
Tom Queen – Taylor County  
Patricia Goodman – Randolph County  
Carole Rutland – Muscogee County  
Jimmy Davis – Macon County  
Cecill 'Butch' McMickle – Marion County  
'Bump' Welch – Marion County

Tommy McKenzie – Macon County  
Chip Jones – Stewart County  
Candace Head - GDOL

Craig Dominey - GDEcD  
Sarah Walls – RVRC  
Patti Cullen - RVRC  
Janice West - RVRC  
Jim Livingston - RVRC

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Speight at 9:30 AM.

Patricia Goodman made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 27 meeting. Carol Rutland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **New Business:**

Jim Livingston talked about the CEDS annual report due at the end of September to EDA. This annual report will follow the previous efforts, with much of the format, and work items laid out already. Jim stated that he would circulate a draft of the report for the CEDS committee to review and approve before the full council would adopt the annual report at their September meeting.

## **Old Business:**

Craig Dominey from GDEcD talked about the Camera Ready program and film in Georgia in general, giving the committee some insights on the film business in the state. The committee took the time to ask several questions of Craig about the size of the industry and strengths and weaknesses to getting films in our region.

Jim Livingston updated the committee on the efforts to apply to US EPA for a Brownfield Assessment grant. Based on recommendations from environmental consultants who have been monitoring this with us, the recommendation was made to focus efforts on one part of the region. Based on the need and opportunities, the targeted area suggested was Sumter, Crisp, Dooly and Macon Counties. Jim and Lance Renfrow in the Columbus office will be meeting with a steering committee to identify potential sites and find potential partners in these counties to submit a grant. EPA will likely release their grant criteria in late September.

Jim Livingston also updated the group on the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions (GARC) project to identify trails in our region as a part of an overall effort to create the first map of trails statewide. The GARC had met and are beginning to compile the trails, but the GIS issues to have each RC communicate with each other are significant and will take some time.

Jim also mentioned that there were several local governments that have been identified by DCA as not being compliant with Qualified Local Government status for one of several reasons (financial and otherwise). He advised everyone to check the DCA list to make sure the local governments they represent knew they were flagged and could be working to come into compliance.

There being no further business to come before the group, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20.

Respectfully Submitted--

Jim Livingston

# CEDS Committee Meeting Minutes October 26, 2016

---

## **Persons Attending**

Edward Lee – Chattahoochee County  
Mike Speight – Crisp County  
Janet Joiner – Dooly County  
Pam Jordan – Talbot County  
Tom Queen – Taylor County  
Patricia Goodman – Randolph County  
Carole Rutland – Muscogee County  
'Bump' Welch – Marion County  
Chip Jones – Stewart County

Tommy McKenzie – Macon County  
Wally Summers – Sumter County  
Cecil McMickle – Marion County

Sarah Walls – RVRC  
Patti Cullen - RVRC  
Jim Livingston - RVRC

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Speight at 9:30 AM.

A motion was made by Chip Jones to approve the minutes of the September 28 meeting. Carol Rutland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **New Business:**

Jim Livingston discussed a training conducted by EDA on how to effectively write the upcoming CEDS document in a way that would be more accessible and useful for elected officials and the community. There will be more emphasis on making a readable document rather than having it burdened with technical data. Ideas for topics were discussed around Transportation, Energy, and Public Relations. In particular, the committee discussed the potential nuclear power plant in Stewart County, the need to get rail to that location along the Heart of Georgia Railway, and a desire to encourage reforestation in the region after a clear cut. Jim suggested that there were several large scale issues to suggest and that a separate committee meeting would be necessary as a half-day session to discuss the issues to address in the new CEDS document. He would look for a suitable date in January to be followed by the standard CEDS meeting date in late January held in conjunction with the RVRC Council meeting.

## **Old Business:**

### **Brownfields**

NewFields Environmental has agreed to write the US EPA Brownfield Assessment grant for the four counties of Crisp, Dooly, Sumter and Macon at no cost to RVRC or the communities. The counties have been meeting to discuss suitable properties and create a story for the application process, but more potential properties are needed. The application deadline is December 20. The City of Columbus will also be submitting an application to EPA for the same assessment grant and hopefully one or both of the two applications will be funded. Jim also informed the committee of a very successful Brownfield 101 information session that was held in Columbus at the RVRC office in conjunction with the City of Columbus and Georgia Brownfield Association.

## **Film Initiative**

Jim reported that there were an uneven number of logins to the state Camera Ready database. Several communities did not have a representative and did not have logins, but those communities that did had a high of almost 50 logins to a low of 2. Overall, there were 155 properties listed on the Camera Ready database for the region. Jim stated that he would like to see that number climb to 200.

There being no further business to come before the group, the meeting was adjourned at 10:10.

Respectfully Submitted--

Jim Livingston

# CEDS Committee Meeting Minutes October 26, 2016

---

## **Persons Attending**

Edward Lee – Chattahoochee County  
Mike Speight – Crisp County  
Janet Joiner – Dooly County  
Pam Jordan – Talbot County  
Tom Queen – Taylor County  
Patricia Goodman – Randolph County  
Carole Rutland – Muscogee County  
'Bump' Welch – Marion County  
Chip Jones – Stewart County

Tommy McKenzie – Macon County  
Wally Summers – Sumter County  
Cecil McMickle – Marion County

Sarah Walls – RVRC  
Patti Cullen - RVRC  
Jim Livingston - RVRC

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Speight at 9:30 AM.

A motion was made by Chip Jones to approve the minutes of the September 28 meeting. Carol Rutland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **New Business:**

Jim Livingston discussed a training conducted by EDA on how to effectively write the upcoming CEDS document in a way that would be more accessible and useful for elected officials and the community. There will be more emphasis on making a readable document rather than having it burdened with technical data. Ideas for topics were discussed around Transportation, Energy, and Public Relations. In particular, the committee discussed the potential nuclear power plant in Stewart County, the need to get rail to that location along the Heart of Georgia Railway, and a desire to encourage reforestation in the region after a clear cut. Jim suggested that there were several large scale issues to suggest and that a separate committee meeting would be necessary as a half-day session to discuss the issues to address in the new CEDS document. He would look for a suitable date in January to be followed by the standard CEDS meeting date in late January held in conjunction with the RVRC Council meeting.

## **Old Business:**

### **Brownfields**

NewFields Environmental has agreed to write the US EPA Brownfield Assessment grant for the four counties of Crisp, Dooly, Sumter and Macon at no cost to RVRC or the communities. The counties have been meeting to discuss suitable properties and create a story for the application process, but more potential properties are needed. The application deadline is December 20. The City of Columbus will also be submitting an application to EPA for the same assessment grant and hopefully one or both of the two applications will be funded. Jim also informed the committee of a very successful Brownfield 101 information session that was held in Columbus at the RVRC office in conjunction with the City of Columbus and Georgia Brownfield Association.

## **Film Initiative**

Jim reported that there were an uneven number of logins to the state Camera Ready database. Several communities did not have a representative and did not have logins, but those communities that did had a high of almost 50 logins to a low of 2. Overall, there were 155 properties listed on the Camera Ready database for the region. Jim stated that he would like to see that number climb to 200.

There being no further business to come before the group, the meeting was adjourned at 10:10.

Respectfully Submitted--

Jim Livingston

# CEDS Committee Meeting Minutes January 25, 2017

---

## **Persons Attending**

Edward Lee – Chattahoochee County  
Janet Joiner – Dooly County  
Tom Queen – Taylor County  
Richard McCorkle – Marion County  
Patricia Goodman – Randolph County  
Carole Rutland – Muscogee County  
'Bump' Welch – Marion County  
Chip Jones – Stewart County

Tommy McKenzie – Macon County  
Wally Summers – Sumter County

Paul Farr – South Georgia Tech  
Sarah Walls – RVRC  
Janice West – RVRC  
Jim Livingston - RVRC

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tommy McKenzie at 9:30 AM.

A motion was made by Janet Joiner to approve the minutes of the October 26 meeting. Patricia Goodman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **New Business:**

Tom Queen mentioned potential shifts in policy based on new federal administration in particular for Rural Hospitals and EDA.

Richard McCorkle extended an invitation from the Marion County High School civics and government class to meet at the high school for our next CEDS meeting. That meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 22 at 9:00 AM. Details on where to meet would be mailed closer to the

## **Old Business:**

### **CEDS 5 Year Update**

Jim Livingston went over steps taken by the committee members who participated in a planning session earlier in January. At that planning session, the group went over the EDA requirements for the 5 year update, including a presentation of what priority areas would be for the CEDS. A copy of a proposed survey to measure primary goals was also distributed, adjusted, and revised to be ready to be sent to the region. Jim asked for the committee to help distribute the survey as widely as we can.

One of the items that the EDA has asked for is a usable document. Several annual reports were distributed, and a price was obtained to get the graphic design done. The plan will be to create a shorter document that would be useful for elected officials and economic development professionals in the region with all supporting documentation on the web.

Goal areas were discussed by the committee. Some of the prime goal areas that were discussed were Broadband, Transportation, Workforce Development, The overall state of the Regional Economy, and Tourism. Other goal areas discussed were Energy and Agriculture. These goal areas will continue to be discussed over the next couple of months as results from the survey are analyzed.

## **Brownfields**

Two US EPA Brownfield Assessment grants were submitted for the region totaling \$900,000. These grant requests are currently suspended, but will likely work their way through the approval process. Typical timeline is to hear about whether the projects are successful by May.

Jim also informed the committee of follow-up from the successful Brownfield 101 information session that was held in Columbus at the RVRC office. RVRC is continuing to conduct outreach in conjunction with the City of Columbus and Georgia Brownfield Association to encourage participation in the statewide symposium in April as well as developing a regional event in the fall.

#### **Stewart County Power Plant Update**

Chip Jones gave an update on the status of approval process necessary to get the Georgia Power plant sited in Stewart County. Permitting process will start in 2019. Construction will begin in 2022 and the power plant will be online in 2030. That is if all remains on schedule. It was agreed that everything possible should be done to ensure that as many jobs as possible would be available to residents of the region.

There being no further business to come before the group, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30.

Respectfully Submitted--

Jim Livingston

# CEDS Committee Meeting Minutes February 22, 2017

---

## **Persons Attending**

Edward Lee – Chattahoochee County  
Janet Joiner – Dooly County  
Tom Queen – Taylor County  
Richard McCorkle – Marion County  
Patricia Goodman – Randolph County  
Pam Jordan – Talbot County  
'Bump' Welch – Marion County  
Tommy McKenzie – Macon County  
'Pops' Barnes – Muscogee County

Candy Head – GA DOL  
Paul Farr – South Georgia Tech  
Jamie Penoncello – Marion County  
Patti Cullen - RVRC  
Sarah Walls – RVRC  
Janice West – RVRC  
Jim Livingston - RVRC

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tommy McKenzie at 9:00 AM. The meeting was conducted at the Marion County High School at the invitation of principal Jamie Penoncello. Three students from the student council at Marion County High School were also in attendance.

Meeting minutes from the January meeting will be reviewed and approved at the March CEDS meeting.

## **New Business:**

### **Columbus Makerspace Building Project**

Jim Livingston let the committee know that a grant to the City of Columbus CDBG program was submitted with help from a developer who would be working on the project. The intention is for the city funds to be matched with state and federal funds to help develop the property along the lines of a co-working space in New Orleans called Propeller. That facility has been able to accelerate businesses in the region to leverage small investments into 60+ viable businesses.

### **Student input on the CEDS process**

The three students from Marion County High School reviewed the existing survey and gave their input on what they would like to see happen for Economic Development as they enter the workforce. They noted that it was difficult for them to find jobs currently, and that they were concerned that there were not a diversity of options for them. All students who met with the committee were committed to going to college, and all indicated they would like to return to the region if jobs were available. The committee also asked them about the dual enrollment process (all either were dual enrolled or were planning on it). The students also mentioned their excitement that an arts program could be supported by Marion County next year. The committee members noted that it was a great opportunity to meet and discuss these issues with the students.

## **Old Business:**

### **CEDS 5 Year Update**

Jim Livingston shared most recent data from the current CEDS Survey. He said that all counties had responded, although more responses were needed from Sumter, Crisp and Muscogee County to match the proportional sizes of these counties relative to the region. The project remains on track at this point.

There being no further business to come before the group, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00.

Respectfully Submitted--

Jim Livingston

# CEDS Committee Meeting Minutes March 22, 2017

---

## **Persons Attending**

Edward Lee – Chattahoochee County  
Richard McCorkle – Marion County  
Pam Jordan – Talbot County  
'Bump' Welch – Marion County  
Tommy McKenzie – Macon County  
'Pops' Barnes – Muscogee County  
Chip Jones – Stewart County

Carol Rutland – Muscogee County  
  
Walter Rosso – Chattahoochee County  
Candy Head – GA DOL  
Patti Cullen - RVRC  
Sarah Walls – RVRC  
Jim Livingston - RVRC

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tommy McKenzie at 9:30 AM. Meeting minutes from the January and February meeting were reviewed and approved with a motion from Carol Rutland, seconded by Pops Barnes.

## **New Business:**

### **Georgia Power Nuclear update – Stewart County**

Chip Jones gave background on current status of the Stewart County power plant site. Georgia Power has put the project on hold for the time being. There is some speculation that part of the reason for this is cost overruns at Plant Vogtle that is currently over-budget and with some contractor issues with the lead contractor Toshiba. It is unknown if or when Georgia Power will restart its plans to site a plant in Stewart County. Walt Rosso reported that they are continuing to request cooperation from Chattahoochee County for potential emergency response to the site.

### **Federal Programs update**

Patti Cullen mentioned that the current discussions around Washington, DC regarding cuts to federal programs would greatly impact the work RVRC does. Although she believes that the programs will ultimately be kept in place, the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions is working on a position paper that will outline the benefits of the programs being discussed and how they are used in our communities. With this information, communicating with federal representatives will be necessary to make sure they understand the importance of these programs being discussed for budget reductions or elimination.

Walt Rosso mentioned that the infrastructure plan from the White House would likely require shovel ready projects, and that engineering work should be done now to determine what projects, if any, would be ready to go. Patti Cullen said that the previous administration required those projects to have completed design phase and be ready to bid.

## **Old Business:**

### **CEDS 5 Year Update**

Jim Livingston shared most recent data from the current CEDS Survey. He said that all counties had responded, although more responses were needed from Sumter, Crisp and Muscogee County to match the proportional sizes of these counties relative to the region. The project remains on track at this point.

There being no further business to come before the group, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30.

Respectfully Submitted--

Jim Livingston

# CEDS Committee Meeting Minutes April 26, 2017

---

## **Persons Attending**

Edward Lee – Chattahoochee County  
Richard McCorkle – Marion County  
Pam Jordan – Talbot County  
Cecil McMickle – Marion County  
Tommy McKenzie – Macon County  
Janet Joiner – Dooly County  
Tom McQueen – Taylor County  
'Pops' Barnes – Muscogee County

David Lewis – Muscogee County  
Melvin Blackwell – Muscogee County  
Tim Buchannan – Chattahoochee County  
Candy Head – GA DOL  
Casey Beane – DCA  
Anna Hurt – GA DEcD  
Janice West - RVRC  
Sarah Walls – RVRC  
Jim Livingston - RVRC

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tommy McKenzie at 9:30 AM. Jim Livingston introduced guests David Lewis and Melvin Blackwell from the Muscogee County School District, Tim Buchannan who is the new CEO of the Chattahoochee College and Career Academy, and Casey Beane who is the new Region 8 Representative from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, as well as Anna Hurt who is the new Region 8 Representative from the Georgia Department of Economic Development.

March meeting minutes were reviewed and approved with a motion by Richard McCorkle, seconded by Edward Lee.

## **New Business:**

### **Dr. David Lewis – Muscogee County School District Superintendent**

Dr. Lewis spoke about the strategic plan that the Muscogee County School District has started since his tenure as superintendent. He also spoke about the challenges in education, particularly with teaching and managing students with the many responsibilities that are put on a school system. He noted the importance of developing kids who think and can problem solve, not just recite information on a test. He also discussed the poverty and home situations that often adversely impact school performance. Richard McCorkle also noted the issues of poverty, home life and the challenges that Marion County school system faces. In particular, Mr. McCorkle talked about the efforts to have students who are in school to get a job and those who are there to earn a degree, and presses the Marion County schools to be thinking about the job and career placement at earlier ages. Jim Livingston asked what ways economic development can be helpful to education. All educators agreed that encouraging more time spent in the classroom, reduced testing requirements, and efforts to improve ability for students to be engaged with fewer distractions at home would be primary assistance.

## **Old Business:**

### **CEDS 5 Year Update**

Jim Livingston shared most recent data from the current CEDS survey. Survey responses continue to come in, with a current push to get a better response from Muscogee County. Jim went through the top votes from the survey responses and talked a little about the independent responses that individuals were writing in for the survey. Jim also asked about what priorities beyond the ones previously discussed should be highlighted in the upcoming CEDS. These included Energy, Transportation,

Agriculture, Business Support, Visitors, and Industrial Park Development. Candy Head said that the success of discussing education issues in the previous CEDS should be continued with the current rewrite. There was some discussion between Dr. Lewis, Tim Buchannan and Richard McCorkle about the need to highlight education as a part of developing a suitable workforce. All this should be done without introducing unintended consequences of adding requirements or hurdles for the local school systems.

There being no further business to come before the group, the meeting was adjourned at 10:25.

Respectfully Submitted--  
Jim Livingston

# CEDS Committee Meeting Minutes August 23, 2017

---

## **Persons Attending**

Edward Lee – Chattahoochee County  
Pam Jordan – Talbot County  
Cecil McMickle – Marion County  
Tommy McKenzie – Macon County  
Janet Joiner – Dooly County  
Patricia Goodman – Randolph County  
'Pops' Barnes – Muscogee County  
Carole Rutland – Muscogee County

Wally Summers – SGTC  
Paul Farr - SGTC  
Candy Head – GA DOL  
Casey Beane – DCA  
Patti Cullen - RVRC  
Sarah Walls – RVRC  
Jim Livingston - RVRC

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tommy McKenzie at 9:30 AM.

April meeting minutes were reviewed. One change was noted for the minutes – adding 'Pops' Barnes to the meeting attendance. The minutes were then approved with a motion by Pops Barnes and seconded by Patricia Goodman.

## **New Business:**

There was no new business to discuss.

## **Old Business:**

### **CEDS 5 Year Update**

Jim Livingston shared the updated proposed goals and objectives. One objective was added: Maintain Environmental Integrity in the Region. The group was then divided into four equal parts to evaluate and come up with top priority action plans for each objective. The groups were also tasked with identifying if any of the proposed action plans needed to be reworded, deleted, or if any needed to be added. Each group reported out the top action items listed that became the key actions to focus on.

Listed below are the key items the group came up with:

#### Tourism:

- Participate in regional tourism groups
- Regional festivals and events
- Cultural arts

#### Workforce:

(This group went into greater detail on this main point. Their full findings are below)

Assist the Workforce in the region in gaining the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for regional jobs in the 21st century

- a) Maintain connections with local employers to ensure that skills needed are addressed in workforce training initiatives (Employer Committee, Technical College, Dept of Labor); support the recruitment, retention and expansion of businesses in the region
- b) Facilitate and encourage programs within the local school systems – Dual Enrollment/Move On When Ready
- c) Support the transition from military to civilian jobs
- d) Encourage apprenticeships and internships for businesses to teach high school and college aged students; develop region-wide mentoring programs to include internships and apprenticeships
- e) Expand adult education programs

Business Recruitment:

- Ft. Benning BRAC
- Support local economic development plans
- TA to local and regional development authorities

Quality of Life:

- Best Practices on Quality of Life issues
- Code Enforcement
- Vibrant and attractive corridors and places

Community Leadership:

- Leadership training opportunities
- Provide best practices information/lunch and learn meetings

Agriculture:

- Value Added
- locally grown and farm to market support
- improve land usage

Infrastructure:

- Cordele Inland Port
- Industrial Parks

Main Street development:

- Historic Preservation
- Infill Development
- Pop-up stores allowed

Housing:

- Code Enforcement
- Land Banks
- Variety of Housing Stock

Environment:

- Army Corps of Engineers water level discussion along Chattahoochee River
- Brownfields addressed

Once top priorities were discussed amongst the group, a list of what EDA will call Vital Projects was discussed. The group identified several that became clear priorities for regional economic development. The top overall projects that would be considered are:

- Workforce Business Needs
- Cordele Inland Port
- Industrial Parks
- Code Enforcement
- Tourism Development
- Leadership Training

The plan will be developed with these key projects as the cornerstone of proposed actions for the region.

There being no further business to come before the group, the meeting was adjourned at 10:25.

Respectfully Submitted--  
Jim Livingston