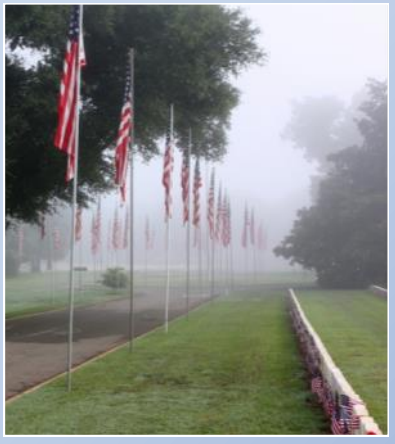
RVRC

River Valley Regional Commission



Annual Report 2013-2014

Chairman's Message

June 30, 2014, marked the fifth anniversary of the creation of the River Valley Regional Commission. The merger of the two Regional Development Centers has proven to be a very positive move for our 16 counties and 35 cities. We have all begun to think regionally and work together on many projects that are best for the region as well as working on projects for our individual communities. Anything we accomplish as a region benefits all of our communities.

RVRC Council Chair Terrell Hudson (far right) addresses guests at the annual Legislators Appreciation Luncheon held in May. Also pictured are Council Secretary Richard Morris, RVRC Executive Director Patti Cullen, and Council Secretary Clinton Perry Jr.

It has been an honor serving as the chair of the RVRC Council along with vice chair Clinton Perry, secretary Richard Morris, and all Council Members. It is especially rewarding to have all those appointed to serve on the Council really take an interest in the Commission by attending the Council Meetings. The attendance remains exceptional.

The River Valley Regional Commission and its staff are here to serve your community with assistance in all phases of planning and zoning, grant research and writing, historic preservation, workforce development, senior citizens services, geographical information services, community and economic development, small businesses loans through our revolving loan fund programs, and transit services including bicycle and pedestrian programs.

In FY 2014, the RVRC assisted in bringing in approximately **$19,608,301** to the 16-county region; this means that for every $1 dollar of dues received by the RVRC from our cities and counties, their overall return on investment has been **$52.40** in federal and state funding. **Fifty-three percent** of funding received this year was federal and **47 percent** was received from the state.

I want to say thank you to all of the elected officials, staff, and our counties and cities for the support they give to the River Valley Regional Commission. If any assistance is needed please do not hesitate to call on the staff.

Terrell Hudson

Council Members

The River Valley Regional Council, composed of representatives from our 16 counties and 35 cities, meets monthly to review and discuss activities of the RVRC. Individual committees have been formed within the council to discuss issues related to transportation, economic development, environmental, and planning. The committees meet as needed to review, discuss, and to make decisions on related projects, and report their findings back to the full Council.

Cussetta—Chattahoochee County
Jim Lawrence Commission Chair
James Morton Commissioner
Edward Lee Private/Non Public

Clay County
Lee Hubbard Commissioner
Steven Foy Martin
Councilman, Fort Gaines

Crisp County
Arthur James Nance
Commission Chair
A.J. Rivers Commissioner, Cordele
Mike Speight Private/Non-Public

Dooly County
Terrell Hudson Commission Chair
Eddie Daniels Mayor, Vienna

Harris County
John Harry Lange Commission Chair
Rebecca Chambers Mayor, Hamilton
Doug Etheridge Private/Non-Public

Macon County
Ambrose Richmond Felton
Commission Chair
Gerald Beckum Mayor, Oglethorpe
Tommy McKenzie Private/Non-Public

Marion County
Cecil McMickle Commissioner
Ralph Brown Mayor, Buena Vista
James R. "Bump" Welch
Private/Non-Public

Muscogee County
Teresa Tomlinson Mayor, Columbus
Jerry "Pops" Barnes
Councilor, Columbus
Dr. Fred Gordon Private/Non-Public

Quitman County
Richard Morris Commission Chair
David Kinsey Commissioner
Allen Fort Private/Non-Public

Randolph County
Jimmy Bradley Commission Chair
Steve Whatley Mayor, Cuthbert
Patricia Goodman
Private/Non-Public

Schley County
Greg Barineau Commission Chair
Carlton Wilson Councilor, Ellaville

Stewart County
Joe Lee Williams Commission Chair
Charles Gibson Mayor, Lumpkin
Chip Jones Private/Non-Public
Lawrence Young Private/Non-Public

Sumter County
Randy Howard Commission Chair
Nelson Brown Councilor, Americus
Wally Summers Private/Non-Public

Talbot County
Freeman Montgomery
Commission Chair
Knox Blackmar Councilor, Talbotton
Pam Jordan Private/Non-Public

Taylor County
Clinton Perry Jr. Commission Chair
Barry Whitley Mayor, Butler
Tom Queen Private/Non-Public

Webster County
George Moore Commission Chair
Melvin Crimes Commissioner

Appointees
Noel Williams
Governor's Appointee
Private/Non-Public

Maggie McGruther
Governor's Appointee
Private/Non-Public

Richard McCorkle
Governor's Appointee
Private/Non-Public

Mitchell Watkins
Lt. Governor's Appointee
Private/Non-Public

Dr. Carole Rutland
Speaker of the House Appointee
Private/Non-Public

Planning

Regional Planning

The regional plan adopted last year presented a vision for the River Valley, identified minimum standards for local governance and recommended minimum environmental protection measures needed to help achieve the vision. The implementation regulations granted a three-year grace period for compliance with the state's new Regional Planning Standards. The Commission began research to determine which standards and/or protection measures each local government may have to address to be in compliance by January 2016.

Local Planning

The state implemented new Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective January 2013. The first jurisdictions in the region to be affected by the new regulations had planning deadlines in June 2014. Staff completed Comprehensive Plan updates for Clay County, Bluffton, Fort Gaines; Crisp County, Arabi, Cordele; Harris County, Hamilton, Pine Mountain, Shiloh, and Waverly Hall. Staff assisted Quitman and Webster counties in preparing to adopt their respective plans and meet their October 2014 deadlines.

Pre-Disaster Mitigation

Local pre-disaster mitigation plans are a requirement for eligibility for pre-disaster assistance and post-disaster recovery assistance. Pre-disaster mitigation planning is a process of identifying a community's greatest disaster threats (e.g., tornadoes, extreme weather events) and determining how best to reduce exposure to those threats. The successful implementation of good plans should reduce injuries, deaths, and property losses caused by natural and man-made disasters. Staff assisted Clay, Dooly, Macon, Marion, Randolph, Schley, Stewart, Sumter, Talbot, Taylor and Webster counties. The Clay, Randolph, and Stewart County plans were approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Zoning

Zoning helps preserve property values and provides local governments the tools to prepare for growth. The staff provided planning and zoning technical assistance to Chattahoochee, Quitman, Stewart, and Talbot counties and the cities of Fort Gaines, Hamilton and Richland. This allows these local governments to utilize their zoning ordinances and to make the most informed and educated decisions possible. This year staff reviewed four variance requests, four zoning requests, and two conditional use requests. Staff completed updates to the Macon County Zoning Ordinance and began working with the Schley County zoning committee to develop the county's first zoning ordinance.

Historic Preservation

The Historic Preservation Planner provides assistance to people interested in restoring historic properties and to historic organizations that promote preservation throughout the region. This year staff reviewed 69 applications for Certificates of Appropriateness for the Board of Historic and Architectural Review for the City of Columbus. Staff also completed 21 Section 106 reviews for the Columbus Housing Demolition/Rehabilitation Program. Additionally, staff completed historic preservation reviews for 11 applications requesting grant funding for various regional communities. Staff provided technical assistance for one National Register nomination (Muscogee County) and for the development of a community park around a historic spring (Talbot County).

Geographic Information Systems

The Geographic Information System (GIS) department serves as a depository for mapping information within the region. The staff used GPS software to collect and map municipal water infrastructure information for the City of Arabi and also maintains the city's website. Staff developed a web-based application that assists the Stewart County Board of Elections. The GIS staff continues to maintain tax parcel data for Crisp, Macon, Marion, Quitman, Randolph and Webster counties.

Environmental Planning

Plans to reduce the threats of high fecal coliform counts and sediment loads have been completed for Pataula Creek in Clay, Quitman, Randolph, and Stewart counties. Staff monitored sites within the Pataula Creek watershed monthly for a one-year period concluding in June 2014. High levels of fecal coliform were detected from September through December.

Best management practices have been implemented for Pennahatchee Creek in Dooly County. Water quality monitoring began in December and will continue through September. UGA has completed a draft of the first few sections of "Landowner's Guide for Feral Hog Management."

Pictured above is a corral enclosure with feeder and guillotine-style door installed in the Pennahatchee Creek area. The motion camera on the left side of the corral is powered by solar panels and sends an image to the abatement contractor's cellular phone when anything moves within the enclosure. The contractor may switch to live video as needed.

10
monitoring sites on Pataula Creek

8
monitoring sites on Pennahatchee Creek

550
feral hogs captured of the estimated **1,000** in the Pennahatchee Creek area

18,000
linear feet of fencing installed to prevent wildlife from entering Pennahatchee Creek

Transportation Planning

Transit Activities

The Lower Chattahoochee Regional Transportation Authority was created by the state legislature to operate the Pataula Transit System. Resource Management Systems, Inc. operates the system, which is based in Springvale (Randolph County). Transit is used to support seniors, jobs, and other endeavors.

RVRC staff continues to work with the Department of Human Services (DHS) on coordinated transportation efforts. The original FY 2014 DHS contract included the eight western counties, then in December 2013 staff began administering the DHS contract for the entire 16-county region. Staff merged the programs, fleets, operations, and administrative paperwork. Accepting the new contract preserved 18,702 DHS trips from December 16, 2013, to June 30, 2014. In FY14, **40,793** trips were made in the 16-county region. Also, **861** bus passes were distributed in Muscogee County, all of which were four-week passes.

Staff prepared the 2014 Chattahoochee County Transit Plan.

Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)

Mobility Management Program

The Mobility Manager works with entities in each county to discuss transit options, cost efficiencies, and economic development support. The Mobility Manager also provides guidance and expertise for the three-county Lower Chattahoochee Transportation Authority (Quitman, Randolph, and Stewart).

A regional inventory of transit services and providers was conducted in order to determine individual system needs, service gaps, and existing levels of coordination. From the inventory, a regional directory was developed to facilitate service access.

Transportation Enhancement (TE)

This program enables funding for transportation projects of cultural, aesthetic, historic and environmental significance. Local communities have completed projects such as rehabilitation of rail station depots, bike/pedestrian trails, sidewalks, and streetscapes. The staff assisted the following communities with implementing different phases of their TE projects:

- City of Shellman - streetscape project
- City of Andersonville - depot renovation
- City of Cordele - sidewalk improvements

Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning

RVRC staff plan and implement programs and events that promote cycling and walking as healthy, safe forms of transportation and recreation. The staff serves as technical advisors to the boards of Bicycle Columbus, Sumter Cycling, Safe Kids, and the Chattahoochee Valley Area Southern Off-Road Bicycle Association. RVRC also maintains a regional bicycle and pedestrian website, activevalley.org.

Staff assisted Bicycle Columbus in preparing a proposal that was accepted to host the statewide Bike Summit in 2014.

Safe Routes to School Program

Staff worked with Macon County Middle School to complete a Safe Routes to School Plan, which contains detailed assessments of transportation needs within a 2-mile radius from the school. The plan also provides recommendations for how to encourage more children to walk and bike to school. **Eleven** schools in the region have Safe Routes to School plans.

The staff continues to support the Georgia Safe Routes to School Resource Center by scheduling site visits, renewing partnership forms and participating in Walk-to-School Day events.

Cyclists depart from the depot in Shellman during the Tour de Farm held in November 2013.

350
people participated in the annual Bike to Work Day events in Americus and Columbus

92
people participated in the 3rd annual Prison to Peanuts Bicycle Adventure

65
people participated in the Lumpkin Fair on the Square Bicycle Ride

130
people participated in the MidTown Bike Around events

65
people participated in Tour de Farm

Community & Economic Development

The Community & Economic Development Department provides grant writing, grant administration, and technical assistance to our region's local governments. The RVRC is designated as an Economic Development District which allows us to receive funding in order to provide technical assistance to cities and counties, development authorities, and existing and emerging private entrepreneurs, businesses, and industries.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

In April 2013 staff prepared the following successful CDBG applications, which were approved for funding in September 2013:

- City of Butler – $500,000, sewer system improvements
- City of Cordele – $500,000, sewer system improvements
- City of Cuthbert – $500,000, housing rehabilitation
- City of Fort Gaines – $500,000, sewer system improvements
- City of Ideal – $250,000, water system improvements
- City of Marshallville – $500,000, wastewater treatment improvements
- City of Reynolds – $500,000, water and sewer system improvements
- City of Vienna – $420,897, sewer system improvements
- Marion County – $500,000, street and drainage improvements

On April 1, 2014, RVRC staff submitted 15 applications for various communities for the upcoming CDBG funding cycle.

Development Projects

Quarterly meetings provided opportunities for networking and learning tools for promoting and growing local downtown areas. Staff was able to coordinate these meetings through the assistance of a Rural Business Opportunity Grant. Sessions were held in Talbotton, Cordele, Americus, and Plains on topics such as social media, entrepreneurship, and festivals.

Rehabilitation Projects

Staff created a redevelopment plan for the City of Butler which addresses the needs of its citizens. The plan was developed through a process which involved a Community Visioning Meeting and Design Charrette. Specific steps were recommended to help the city achieve its goals and objectives. A marketing analysis was completed to identify areas that could be used as potential new businesses or expansions of existing businesses. This work was completed as part of a Rural Business Opportunity Grant.

Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)

Loans were approved for D&J Plastics in Quitman County and Eco Clean LLC in Muscogee County. Eco Clean LLC received a loan of $207,000 to build a new gas station/convenience store/laundromat in Columbus. The $2,208,000 project also includes funding from the Small Business Administration and a private bank. Eleven jobs will be created.

The $200,000 loan approved for D&J Plastics will be combined with a loan from the OneGeorgia Authority, a private bank loan, and equity from the company. The loan will be used for construction of a new warehouse. Ten jobs will be created; 83 jobs and 35 contract jobs will be retained

Digital Economy

The RVRC received a $65,000 grant to implement a plan that will help increase the region's participation and benefit from the digital economy. The process is examining how the region uses technology in four sectors: economic development, education, health care, and public safety. The first step of the planning process took place in spring 2014 through an online survey to determine how people in the region access the internet, data speeds in the region, and how people and businesses use the internet. A project website (rivervalleydigitaleconomy.info) was set up to demonstrate how easily a website can be created and to provide information as the project progresses.

Ten closed CDBG projects benefitted **2,600** people.

Closed CDBGs included:
3 water system improvement projects
3 street and drainage improvement projects
2 sewer system improvement projects
2 two housing rehabilitation projects with 9 stick-built houses rehabilitated and one mobile home unit reconstructed.

Pictured above: Workers making improvements to the City of Ideal water system, one of the CDBG projects which closed this year.

$4.1 million
received in CDBG funding

$407,000
approved for revolving loans for two businesses that will create **21** jobs

$323,804
Redevelopment Fund Grant to the City of Vienna to rehabilitate a downtown building facade

$100,000
Department of Justice grant for project to improve diversion rates for at-risk youth in Clay, Quitman, Randolph and Terrell counties

$85,000
Rural Development Enterprise Grant to the Macon County Development Authority to capitalize a Revolving Loan Fund

$70,500
Immediate Threat & Danger grant to the City of Byromville for its water filtration system

$70,000
Immediate Threat & Danger grant to the City of Marshallville for water distribution repair

$25,000
USDA Community Facilities grant to the City of Vienna for the purchase of 3 police cars

Workforce Investment

The River Valley Regional Commission serves as the grant recipient and administrative entity for the local area Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services. The local WIA serves an eight-county area consisting of Crisp, Dooly, Macon, Marion, Schley, Sumter, Taylor, and Webster counties. WIA offers educational and training opportunities to assist and enhance employment opportunities that will lead to employment, job retention, and self-sufficiency for eligible individuals age 17 and up. Based on local performance, the River Valley WIA program has been classified as meeting the nine WIA performance measures.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) provide educational and/or occupational skills training to enhance employability. Training typically includes both classroom and hands-on learning for specific educational and/or occupational related areas. The **118** ITA participants received assistance with tuition, books, training supplies, and transportation costs while in training.

On-the-Job Training (OJT) assists employers in finding skilled employees who meet their employment needs. Employers work with an OJT Career Advisor to outline required work duties, qualifications and to determine the length of training time needed to master job tasks. WIA customers are interviewed by the employer who makes the final hiring decision. OJT services were provided for **21** people. Employers participating with the OJT activity included: Crisp Youth Detention Center (Crisp), Pinehill Nursing Center (Dooly), Innovative Senior Solutions (Sumter), Tyson Foods (Dooly).

GED Plus offers basic skills remediation and training activities to assist WIA-eligible customers with obtaining their General Education Diploma (GED). GED remediation training provides an instructor-led review of the subject areas of the GED training materials. Work readiness training is the "Plus" portion of the program and focuses on resume preparation, job search techniques, interviewing skills, career exploration, work ethics, personal budgeting and finances, dressing for success, job search assistance, post-secondary educational exploration and workplace skills. Training is delivered in an instructor-led classroom setting for six weeks. GED examination fees and supportive service benefits are available to assist with cost of training. Enrollment in GED Plus was **226**.

Youth Work Experience Services enhance employment opportunities for youth participants who have recently obtained their GED and have little or no work experience. Youth are paid wages in the amount of $7.25 per hour during the Work Experience activity. Employers participating as worksites included: Mercy Housing (Sumter), Sumter County Board of Commissioners, Innovative Senior Solutions (Crisp and Sumter), Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Services (Crisp and Sumter), Doll's Haven (Sumter), Unadilla Housing Authority (Dooly), Sumter County Humane Society, Railway Freight (Sumter), Plains Welcome Center (Sumter), Family Connections (Crisp), and Schley County Chamber of Commerce.

Trade Act Training Services provide special benefits and training opportunities for workers whose jobs have been affected by trade with foreign nations or whose jobs have been moved outside the United States. Laid-off employees (dislocated workers) receive benefits such as, but not limited to, educational and occupational training, extended Unemployment Insurance benefits, and relocation assistance. Trade Act Services were provided for **18** people.

Employment Rate for people enrolled in WIA programs as of the 3rd Quarter and their average earnings for six months:

	Entered Employment	Retention	Average Earnings
Adults	76.7%	72.5 %	$12,005
Dislocated Workers	74.1%	80.6%	$11,765

Tyson Foods in Vienna is one of the local employers providing On-The-Job Training services.

$1,056,387
WIA grant awards designated for area for Program Year 2013 and Fiscal Year 2014

226
people enrolled in GED Plus

118
people served by Individual Training Accounts

80
businesses and employers benefitted from WIA services

21
people received On-the-Job training services

18
people received Trade Act services

$7.50 - $22.00
wage rate range for WIA participants

Performance Outcomes

71 GEDs
27 associate degrees
26 state licenses
14 training/occupational certificates
7 diplomas (technical college areas)
6 commercial drivers licenses
1 bachelor's degree

Area Agency on Aging

The mission of the Area Agency on Aging is to create and sustain a livable community that promotes health and well-being for older adults and persons with disabilities. Our vision is to "Be Informed, Be Prepared and Live Well."

Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) is the portal for seniors, caregivers and people with disabilities to obtain information as well as placement for appropriate services and resources. Access to these services provides opportunities for the elderly and disabled to maintain independence and dignity through a comprehensive, coordinated system of resources and support. Counselors made contact with more than **17,920** people seeking information from our human services resource database that includes more than **25,000** listings in more than **300** service categories.

Home-Delivered and Senior Center Meals are available through our subcontractors that serve meals in 12 senior centers and deliver meals to homes. Choice meals are offered in Macon and Sumter County senior centers which allows congregate meal participants to choose an entrée one day a week. More than **230,109** meals were served to seniors over 60 years of age, their caregivers, and persons with disabilities.

Chronic Disease Management Program (CDSMP) is an evidence-based program teaching participants to live well with and manage their chronic condition. One lay-leader training was conducted with **five** lay leaders trained. Two community classes were conducted in Crisp and Dooly counties.

Kinship Care provided more than **42** individuals raising related children with assistance and support through presentations and support group meetings in Stewart County. Several presentations were made at elementary and middle schools in the region regarding resources for families that are raising related children.

Community Care Services Program (CCSP) is a Medicaid waiver service for those needing extensive care at home to prevent nursing home admission. The program saves Medicaid dollars and allows the clients to remain in their own home and community. The average Medicaid costs for nursing home care was **$30,857** per person. The average Medicaid service benefits cost per CCSP consumer for the same period was **$9,238**. CCSP saved residents in the region **$15,348,935**. Also, **43 percent** of CCSP recipients pay a cost share based on their income.

Wellness and Prevention staff provided presentations and programs on safety, nutrition, physical activity and exercise, osteoporosis screening and disease management for **10,998** seniors. The AAA partnered with the public health department for the 9th year in offering osteoporosis screenings. These screenings were completed in Marion and Macon County senior centers. The wellness program is also coaching senior center managers on how to promote healthy lifestyles by providing current health-related information and daily physical activity with their participants.

Case Management provides assistance to clients on the Home and Community Based Services waiting list who have little or no caregiver support and are not able to receive Home and Community Based Services immediately. Other resources are identified and a care action plan is developed to help meet the client's needs. Case management services were provided for **46** clients. The Telephone Reassurance Program "Heart to Heart" provided **1,075** support calls for clients on HCBS waiting lists, using volunteers who are also waiting-list clients. The AAA continues to partner with the Georgia Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association to extend the Telephone Reassurance Program to caregivers and clients with dementia. The Telephone Reassurance Program was offered in Muscogee, Harris, Talbot, Stewart, Randolph and Sumter counties.

Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program served **578** seniors at 12 senior centers and 1 subsidized apartment complex. This is the 7th consecutive year the AAA was able to provide this service. Each senior was able to cash in $20 vouchers in exchange for fresh produce.

457,000
beneficiaries served through GeorgiaCares

230,109
meals served to seniors, caregivers, and persons with disabilities

17,920
contacts with people seeking services and information through the Aging and Disability Resource Connection

13,722
people served by the Ombudsman Program

10,998
seniors served by AAA Wellness staff

397
clients received Home and Community Based Services such as homemaker, respite, and personal care support

908
clients received caregiver services

515
people served through Community Care Services Program

31
caregivers were provided **$1,200** each to assist with respite needs

Area Agency on Aging

Caregiver Services help keep caregivers healthy so they can continue providing care to their loved ones while taking care of themselves too. The Powerful Tools for Caregivers program offered three classes with **30** people attending. This program provides caregivers with tools and strategies to help them handle caregiver challenges. The West Central Georgia CARENET grew significantly this year and continues to meet on a regular basis.

GeorgiaCares provides information about Medicare and other related insurances. The River Valley GeorgiaCares Program attended **199** events and reached more than **457,000** beneficiaries this year. The River Valley GeorgiaCares Program partners with the Department of Community Health to assist beneficiaries in obtaining Medicare Savings Programs, dedicated enrollments for Part D, the Senior Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and Low Income Subsidy provided through Social Security. The program saved beneficiaries **$289,727.26** in prescription drug costs. Applications were completed for **395** people for the Medicare Savings Program, which saved beneficiaries **$522,818** in Medicare Part B premiums, coinsurance and other out-of- pocket costs.

The River Valley GeorgiaCares Program is also the designated Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) investigating Medicare errors, fraud and abuse. Staff provided **154** SMP events and outreach activities.

Coordinated Transportation is contracted with the Division of Aging Services and is operational in 11 of our 12 senior centers: Clay, Crisp, Dooly, Harris, Macon, Marion, Muscogee, Randolph, Sumter, Stewart, and Taylor counties. This service enables clients to get to and from senior centers, medical appointments, shopping, and other activities. Demand Transportation is also provided for clients in Muscogee County. Coordinated Transportation services were provided to **2,542** persons with **46,322** units of service. Through this program the Talbot County Board of Commissioners provides Talbot County seniors transportation to and from the senior centers. Transportation services were provided to **25** persons with **7,232** units of service.

Money Follows The person (MFP)/ Options Counseling assists residents who wish to return to their communities. The AAA Options Counselor visits with nursing home residents and works with nursing home staff to determine if further action should be taken based on the resident's self-direction. If services are available and the resident wishes to leave the nursing home, the program known as "Money Follows the Person" is initiated. This program assists residents in resettling in the community with home and community services. The AAA transitioned **16** people from nursing homes back into the community and Options Counseling was provided to **155** residents in our region's 20 nursing homes.

Long Term Care Ombudsman program helps residents of nursing homes and personal care homes resolve problems with services and benefits to ensure their rights and standards of quality care are maintained. These programs also provide older persons and their caregivers information regarding long-term care facilities. This program served **13,722** people.

Recreation such as socialization, exercise, games and arts and crafts activities equaling **8,076** units of service were provided to **53,598** duplicated persons at 12 senior centers.

Elderly Legal Assistance Program (ELAP) provides legal representation, legal information, and community education in civil legal matters. **Sixty** community educational sessions were provided for **1,114** persons. This program served **75** clients and provided **1,120** counseling hours. ELAP also provided **1,089** people with information and referral services.

RVRC Staff

Executive Director
Patti Cullen

Assistant Executive Director
Sarah Walls

Administrative Department
Emily Chambers, Finance Officer (Columbus Office)
Tammy Collins, Finance Officer (Americus Office)
Grace Grant, Executive Secretary
Becky Holmes, Office Manager
Annie Thompson, Fiscal Assistant
Debbie Zwaga, Secretary/Receptionist

Planning Department
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Rick Morris, Planning Director (Columbus Office)
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Jarrod McCarthy, Mobility Manager
Julio Portillo, Regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Planner
Lance Renfrow, Environmental/GIS Planner
Cassie Myers, Environmental/GIS Planner
Jim Livingston, Special Projects Coordinator
Charlotte Davis, Special Projects Coordinator
Mia Anderson, Marketing Manager/Assistant Planner

Community & Economic Development Department
Katie Howard, Community & Economic Development Director
Grant Richardson, Community Developer
Buddy Strength, Community Developer

Workforce Investment Department
Janice West, Director
Norma English, Program Specialist

Area Agency on Aging
Tiffany Ingram, Director
Mary Day, Assistant Director
Ilona Preattle, Program Director
Kia Barrow, Gateway Coordinator
Shameika Averett, GaCares Coordinator
Shawna Love, GaCares Volunteer Coordinator
Linda Harris, Case Manager
Eboni Holder, Intake and Referral Specialist
Shakendra Strafford, Intake Referral Specialist
Bill Weathers, Intake and Referral Specialist
Rochella Wright, Intake and Referral Specialist
Franetta Miles, Administrative Assistant
Gail Simpson, Fiscal Analyst
Lauren Pfrogner, Admin/Data Entry & Special Projects
Annmarie Rivera, Data Resource Specialist
Alysa Stephens, Options Counselor
Rachel Williams, MFP Transitions Coordinator

Awards & Certifications

- The Vienna Redevelopment Plan received an award from the **National Association of Development Organizations** and from the **Georgia Planning Association**.
- The River Valley Area Agency on Aging received a first place award for having a 100 percent redemption rate in the Georgia Farmers Market Nutrition Program. The program provides seniors with vouchers for fresh produce.
- **Shameika Averett** completed a Certificate in Aging through Boston University.
- **Kia Barrow** received Options Counseling certification.

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