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INNOVATION AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY UNIVERSITIES
AWARDS PROGRAM

CASE
STUDY
2013

**Redevelopment Plan Proposal
for the Altama Community
Transformation District (ACT)
in Brunswick-Glynn County**

THE UGA ARCHWAY PARTNERSHIP

The Archway Partnership concept began in 2005 as a simple question: “How do we—the University of Georgia—improve our capacity to respond to Georgia’s community and economic development needs?” What emerged was a new way to help Georgia communities solve problems by increasing community access to the full resources of UGA. By communities driving the identification of needs through partnership participation, UGA resources could be brought to bear efficiently and expeditiously.

This process begins with the development of an Executive Committee of community leaders who help guide the processes of the partnership. Participants include community members from local governments, businesses, health authorities, school boards, Chambers of Commerce, development authorities and local education institutions. Steering Committees are made up of other community stakeholders willing to commit time and energy to developing and prioritizing community issues. Interested residents are recruited for Issue Work Groups, usually chaired by Steering Committee members, and together they focus on developing strategies to address real issues in the community.

Today the Archway Partnership is a formal unit of the University of Georgia’s Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach (PSO). PSO includes eight units providing diverse services to communities across Georgia to solve real world public problems. PSO also engages academic faculty and students in service work from continuing education, small business development assistance, marine extension, service learning, economic development capacity building, and leadership training. Academic faculty and students participate in many of these services. The Archway program represents a unique community driven model and has received national attention.

ORIGINS OF THE BRUNSWICK-GLYNN COUNTY ARCHWAY PARTNERSHIP

The Brunswick-Glynn County Archway Partnership was established July 1, 2008, bringing together into a Growth Task Force (GTF) that includes local leaders concerned with high priority community needs. The City of Brunswick, Glynn County Board of Commissioners, Glynn County Board of Education, Brunswick- Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce, Brunswick-Glynn County Development Authority, Southeast Georgia Health System, and the College of Coastal Georgia, as well as citizen groups, business interests, and non-profit organizations, are all GTF representatives at the Archway discussion table. As an Archway Partnership community, Brunswick-Glynn County has seamless access to the full array of resources of the University of Georgia.

The Brunswick-Glynn County/ Archway Growth Task Force (GTF) was established to address growth issues and explore redevelopment opportunities in the Altama community. Representatives of 14 local and regional planning agencies were engaged in the process. The GTF has identified a 1,600-acre property along Altama Avenue known as the Altama Community Transformation District (ACT). The main campuses for the College of Coastal Georgia and the Southeast Georgia Health System, the site for Brunswick’s new High School, and a variety of other

land uses are all located within the ACT. The prospects of future population growth, the expansion plans of the College of Coastal Georgia, Southeast Georgia Health System, the Glynn County Board of Education, and the interests of business and property owners all have a significant interest in the creation of a thriving community in a revitalized Altama Avenue corridor and in the surrounding areas.

THE ARCHWAY PROCESS

During fall 2010, a group of UGA PSO faculty met with the GTF members to examine how PSO might contribute to GTF's efforts as a whole, as well as to establish mechanisms for engaging specific areas of PSO expertise. Focusing on three specific areas, PSO worked directly with GTF in creating a redevelopment plan for the Altama Community Transformation District that focused on three specific needs: redevelopment/revitalization, stakeholder engagement, and implementation mechanisms.

Redevelopment/Revitalization

PSO completed four primary elements of redevelopment/revitalization for the ACT District:

- **CORRIDOR REDESIGN:** At the center of ACT is the Altama Avenue corridor. Elements of this portion of the redevelopment plan included: Land uses, streetscape design, architectural building design, site design standards, historic preservation, green space/recreation areas, signage, lighting, branding, planning tools such as overlay zoning districts, and emergency preparedness. Additionally, branding elements were discussed which could be used throughout the process, in and around the ACT district, and with various partners.
- **HOUSING ASSESSMENT:** Understanding the existing housing environment as better equipped for commercial interactions, and knowing that despite the community's governing influence on housing and GTF in the development of design guidelines, incentives and policies. Elements of this portion included: documentation of existing housing stock, design elements, and demographics.
- **TRANSPORTATION/ROAD DESIGN:** Elements of this portion of the plan included right-of-way design.
- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** In order to ensure the area's complete enhancement, economic development issues addressed a market analysis and an over/under supply study. Additionally, local entities collaborated to establish a defined work plan for attracting prospects, areas, and specific goals.

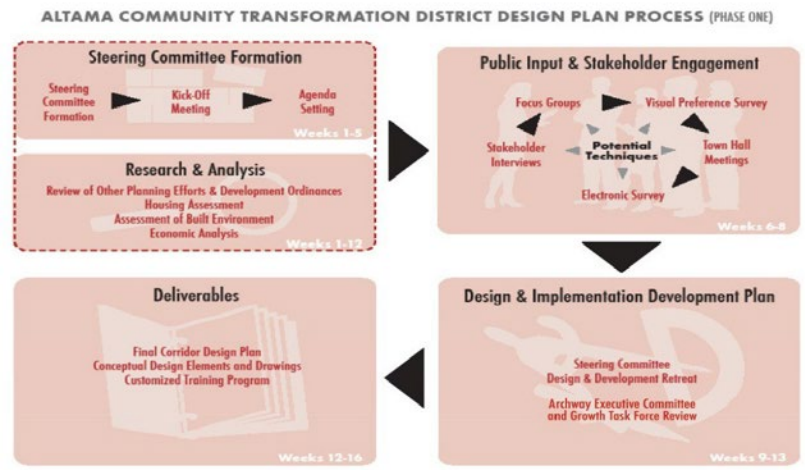
Stakeholder Engagement

It was critical to have buy-in from the general public and governing bodies at all levels of planning throughout the entire process. Each of the aforementioned areas of the redevelopment plan required extensive stakeholder input and engagement from neighborhood groups, residents,

elected and appointed government officials, GTF planners, business owners, students, college and K-12 administrators. Methods used throughout the process included: personal interviews, focus groups, town hall meetings, informal conversations, and the input and guidance garnered from the Design Steering Committee (appointed local citizens to guide the design process on a daily basis).

Implementation Mechanisms and Training

Critical to the ACT redevelopment plan were mechanisms for successful implementation and training of elected/appointed officials and other stakeholders of those mechanisms. Financing options, local financial institutions/programs, streamlined permitting processes, and training were created as part of PSO's work to assist the local community with implementation of the ACT redevelopment plan.



Altama Design Plan Process

IMPACT TO DATE

The plan provides Brunswick and Glynn County with a road map for redevelopment focusing on four key elements: corridor redesign overlay district (i.e., streetscape, land-use, design standards, etc.); transportation (i.e., right of way, alternative choices, etc.); housing (i.e., uses, condition, historical significance, etc.); and economic development (e.g., opportunities for business expansion and recruitment). The GTF and local governments have adopted the plan and are using it to guide the redevelopment of this critical corridor that serves as a primary gateway and significant business thoroughfare. This process and application has been viewed as a critical success to the redevelopment of this important sector of the State.

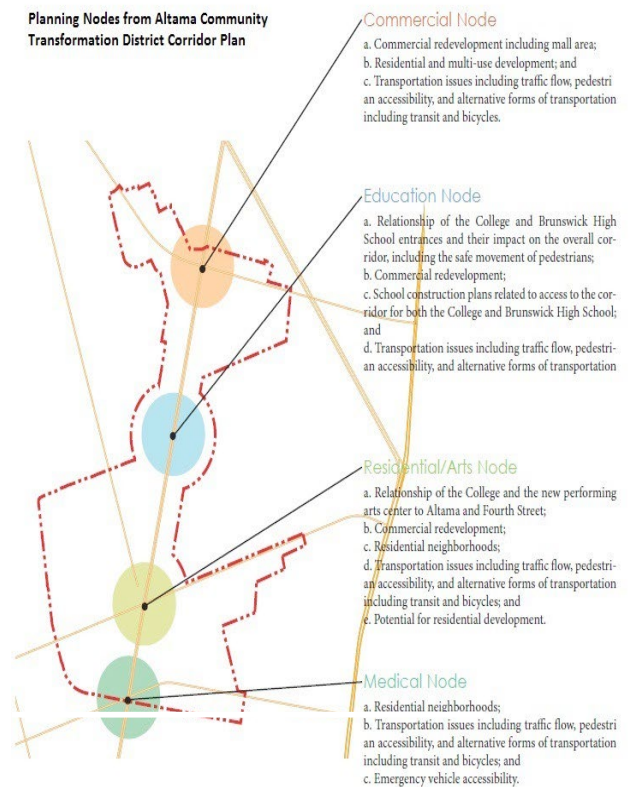


Figure 12: Altama Community Transformation District planning nodes

Altama Community Transformation District planning nodes



Detailed view of Altama Community Transformation District and Altama Avenue