



Communities of Opportunity

A Community Development Initiative of the Georgia Rural Development Council



Community Improvement Strategy

Elbert County

Co-Op: Elbert County

Community Improvement Strategy: Lack of Industry/Job Opportunities and Education

Elbert County desires to improve the educational opportunities for its children K-12 and address issues that have hindered industrial development within the county that have impacted the number of job opportunities available.

Issues to be addressed

The citizens of Elbert County have identified several issues that they feel have hindered additional industrial development within the county. Those issues include the need to retain and expand the local hospital, complete the 4-laning of Highway 72, expand airport runway, lack of leadership and community support, lack of necessary infrastructure, the need for a marketing plan, and the need to develop tourism opportunities particularly around the lake at Russell Park. Elbert County also identified the need to enhance the academic programs and educational opportunities for the children of the county.

Strategy

Over the two-year period, Elbert County will accomplish the following:

1. Improve the availability of hospital services in Elberton and Elbert County and to insure that Elbert Memorial Hospital remains a viable, contributing part of the local economy.
2. Complete 4-Laning of Hwy 72, Improve Airport Terminal & Extended Runway
3. Garner Leadership and community buy-in resulting in a large pool of community supporters and volunteers
4. Target infrastructure expansion to optimize Commercial & Industrial Growth
5. Develop tourism venues and activities in Elbert County
6. Identify potential business recruits
7. Gain more community involvement to provide an expanded programs that compliment and enhance academic achievement
8. Establish performance incentives for Students and Educators
9. Insure Elbert County Children are ready to learn upon entering school.
10. Give the Youth of Elbert County an enriched educational experience to promote excellence and life long teaching
11. Develop Community Awareness of the Long-Term Value of Education

The community will measure its success at the end of two years by:

1. Expanding the services of Elbert Memorial Hospital
2. Completing 4-Laning of Hwy 72
3. Raising funds to extend runway at airport
4. Planning for infrastructure expansion
5. Developing a marketing plan to recruit new industry
6. Developing a tourism plan to expand tourism potential
7. Increasing high school graduation rate programs are started over 2-year period.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Issue Addressed	Action Item	Responsible Local Partners	Responsible State Partners	Cost Estimate	Possible Funding Sources	Starting and ending dates for completion of action item
Elbert Memorial Hospital	Recruit and retain needed physicians	Elberton-Elbert County Hospital Authority, EMH Medical Staff, EMH Foundation, Chamber of Commerce, Elbert County Board of Education, local realtors	Georgia Board of Physician Workforce, USDA, Department of Community Health, Department of Economic Development, Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Composite Board of State Medical Examiners, North East Georgia RDC (NEGA RDC)	Primary Care MD's salary/income guarantees currently range from \$175,000 to \$200,000. Specialist's salaries vary depending on specialty. Other considerations include practice setting (i.e. group v. solo) and call obligations	Elberton-Elbert County Hospital Authority, EMH Foundation, USDA, Elbert County, City of Elberton, private donations	July 2008 – July 2010
Elbert Memorial Hospital	Gain physician support for current services	Elberton-Elbert County Hospital Authority, EMH Medical Staff, EMH Foundation	USDA, Dept. of Community Health, Dept. of Economic Development, DCA, NEGA RDC	To be determined based on need to purchase or otherwise make available new or additional technologies. \$50,000 - \$500,000 est.	Elberton-Elbert County Hospital Authority, EMH Foundation, USDA, Elbert County, City of Elberton, private donations, Dept of Economic Development, DCA	July 1, 2008- June 30, 2009

Issue Addressed	Action Item	Responsible Local Partners	Responsible State Partners	Cost Estimate	Possible Funding Sources	Starting and ending dates for completion of action item
Elbert Memorial Hospital	Gain physician support for new services	Elberton-Elbert County Hospital Authority, EMH Medical Staff, EMH Foundation	USDA, Dept. of Community Health, Dept. of Economic Development, DCA, NEGA RDC	To be determined based on need to purchase or otherwise make available new or additional technologies. \$50,000 - \$250,000 est.	Elberton-Elbert County Hospital Authority, EMH Foundation, USDA, Elbert County, City of Elberton, private donations, Dept of Economic Development, DCA	July 1, 2008- June 30, 2009
Elbert Memorial Hospital	Gain support of local leadership through education about role of hospital in community	Elberton-Elbert County Hospital Authority, EMH Foundation, Chamber of Commerce, Elbert County, City of Elberton, Elbert County Development Authority, Downtown Development Authority	USDA, Dept. of Economic Development, DCA, NEGA RDC, Georgia Municipal Association, Association County Commissioners of Georgia	\$1,000 – \$2,500	Elberton-Elbert County Hospital Authority, EMH Foundation, USDA, Elbert County, City of Elberton, private donations, Dept of Economic Development, DCA, Georgia Municipal Association, Association County Commissioners of Georgia	July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2008
Elbert Memorial Hospital	Keep pace with rapidly changing technology	Elberton-Elbert County Hospital Authority, EMH Foundation, Chamber of Commerce, Elbert County, City of Elberton	USDA, Dept. of Economic Development, DCA, NEGA RDC, Dept. of Community Health	Depending on application IT infrastructure costs for EMR est. \$400,000 – \$800,000. Automated medication distribution system approx. \$300,000\	Elberton-Elbert County Hospital Authority, EMH Foundation, USDA, Elbert County, City of Elberton, private donations, Dept of Economic Development, DCA, SPLOST	July 1, 2008 – July 2010

Issue Addressed	Action Item	Responsible Local Partners	Responsible State Partners	Cost Estimate	Possible Funding Sources	Starting and ending dates for completion of action item
Elbert Memorial Hospital	Attract and retain highly skilled and qualified nurses, technologists, therapists and other health professionals	Elberton-Elbert County Hospital Authority, EMH Foundation, Athens Technical College, Elbert County Board of Education	UGA, Medical College of Georgia, Georgia Secretary of State, Dept. of Labor	Imaging Dept. costs: \$300,000 - \$1,500,000. Lab costs: \$50,000 - \$200,000 TBD	Elberton-Elbert County Hospital Authority, EMH Foundation, Elbert County, City of Elberton, private donations	July 1, 2008 – July 2010
Elbert Memorial Hospital	Replace aging facility	Elberton-Elbert County Hospital Authority, EMH Foundation, Chamber of Commerce, Elbert County, City of Elberton, Elbert County Development Authority, Downtown Development Authority	USDA, Dept. of Community Health	\$5 million to \$45 million depending on size, scope and timing of project	SPLOST, Bond Referendum, USDA, HUD, Dept. of Economic Development, Elberton-Elbert County Hospital Authority, EMH Foundation, private donations	July 1, 2008 – July 2010
Elbert Memorial Hospital	Find new sources of revenue for Elbert Memorial Hospital	Elbert Medical Hospital Board	DCA	N/A	Appalachian Regional Commission, USDA	July 1, 2008 – July 2010
Infrastructure	Produce a long-term plan for water and sewer extensions in the City of Elberton plan for water and sewer extensions, targeting for commercial and industrial growth.	City of Elberton, Elbert County, Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority	Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA), NEGA RDC, DCA	To be determined	GEFA, OneGeorgia, USDA, Appalachian Regional Commission	July 2008 – July 2009

Issue Addressed	Action Item	Responsible Local Partners	Responsible State Partners	Cost Estimate	Possible Funding Sources	Starting and ending dates for completion of action item
Infrastructure	Produce long-term plan to upgrade sewer treatment capacity in City of Elberton	City of Elberton Collaborate w/County Chamber &	Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA), NEGA RDC, DCA	To be determined	GEFA, OneGeorgia, USDA, Appalachian Regional Commission	July 2009 – July 2010
Infrastructure	Produce long-term plan to provide telecoms in new commercial and industrial areas if it doesn't exist. (already exists in City of Elberton, including Industrial Park)	City of Elberton, AT&T, Comcast provide high speed & DSL	Dept of Economic Development	To be determined	Dept of Economic Development	July 2009 – July 2010
Transportation	Extend Runway at the Elbert County Airport to 5,000 feet	Elbert County, Development Authority, Chamber of Commerce	DOT	\$1 Million	Air Georgia Program	July 2008 – July 2010
Transportation	Highway 72-complete four-Laning (Madison CO. & Elbert Co.)	Elbert County, City of Elberton, Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority	DOT	\$120-130 million	DOT budget	July 2008 – July 2010
Community Commitment	Send local leaders for training at the Georgia Academy for Economic Development	Elected Officials, Administrators, Community leaders (Elbert County, Elberton & Bowman)	Georgia Rural Development Council, DCA	\$1,000	Local Governments, private businesses	July 2008 – July 2010 August 2008 – November 2008

Issue Addressed	Action Item	Responsible Local Partners	Responsible State Partners	Cost Estimate	Possible Funding Sources	Starting and ending dates for completion of action item
Community Commitment	Develop a vision statement for Elbert County	Elected Officials, Administrators, Community leaders (Elbert County, Elberton & Bowman)	DCA, NEGA RDC	To be determined	Local Governments, private businesses	July 2008 – December 2008
Community Commitment	Conduct public meetings designed to educate & inform the community at large about the Co-Op Initiatives	Elected Officials, Administrators, Community leaders (Elbert County, Elberton & Bowman)	DCA, NEGA RDC Responsible	To be determined	Local Governments, private businesses	July 2008 – December 2008
Community Commitment	Research what other communities have done successfully to gain community buy-in on community initiatives	Chamber of Commerce, City of Elberton, Elbert County Board of Commissioners, Elbert County Board of Education	UGA, DCA, Georgia Chamber of Commerce	\$500	Chamber of Commerce, City of Elberton, Elbert County Board of Commissioners, Private Donations	August 2008 – September 2008
Community Commitment	Leadership Retreat	Chamber of Commerce, City of Elberton, Elbert County Board of Commissioners, Elbert County Board of Education, local businesses	UGA, DCA	\$5,000	Chamber of Commerce, City of Elberton, Elbert County Board of Commissioners, Elbert County Board of Education, Private Donations	Jul-09

Issue Addressed	Action Item	Responsible Local Partners	Responsible State Partners	Cost Estimate	Possible Funding Sources	Starting and ending dates for completion of action item
Community Commitment	Develop Media Campaign	City of Elberton, Chamber of Commerce, Elbert County Board of Commissioners, local cable, Radio & newspapers	N/A	\$2,000	Chamber of Commerce, City of Elberton, Elbert County Board of Commissioners, Elbert County Board of Education, private donations	July 2008 – July 2010
Recruitment, Marketing, Assets, & Research	Conduct Feasibility Study to determine what we have and what businesses are looking for in relocation or new development	Chamber of Commerce, City of Elberton, Elbert County Board of Commissioners	UGA, DCA, Dept of Economic Development	To be determined	Chamber of Commerce, local governments	July 2008 - January 2009
Recruitment, Marketing, Assets, & Research	Review of Best Practices in counties similar to ours	Chamber of Commerce	UGA, DCA, Dept of Economic Development	\$500-\$1,000 Travel	Chamber of Commerce, City of Elberton, Elbert County Board of Commissioners, Elbert County Board of Education, private donations	July 2008 - January 2009
Recruitment, Marketing, Assets, & Research	Research appropriate industry incentives	Chamber of Commerce, City of Elberton, Elbert County Board of Commissioners	DCA, Dept of Economic Development	N/A	N/A	January 2009 – March 2009

Issue Addressed	Action Item	Responsible Local Partners	Responsible State Partners	Cost Estimate	Possible Funding Sources	Starting and ending dates for completion of action item
Recruitment, Marketing, Assets, & Research	Develop a Marketing Plan	Chamber of Commerce, City of Elberton, Elbert County Board of Commissioners, Elbert County Board of Education	DCA, UGA, Georgia Department of Education	To be determined	Chamber of Commerce, City of Elberton, Elbert County Board of Commissioners, Elbert County Board of Education, private donations	January 2009- April 2009
Tourism	Research what other communities have done	Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Committee	Georgia Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Division of Department of Economic Development	N/A	N/A	January 2009 – March 2009
Tourism	Further develop plans to build Marina & Convention Center at Russell Park	Chamber of Commerce, Elbert County Board of Commissioners, Local Citizens	-Georgia Chamber State House & Senate Members (Local Reps), State Parks and Historic Sites Division of the Department of Natural Resources	To be determined	Local governments	January 2009 – June 2009
Tourism	Develop Plan to "Market" local sites. i.e. Guidestones, St. Parks, Lakes, Town Square, Granite Bowl, Theatre, Russell Dam, Historical Sites (old Dan Tucker...	Chamber of Commerce, local Daughters of the American Revolution Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution, Local High School, History Teachers	Georgia Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Division of Department of Economic Development	To be determined	Local governments, local sites	January 2009 – June 2009

Issue Addressed	Action Item	Responsible Local Partners	Responsible State Partners	Cost Estimate	Possible Funding Sources	Starting and ending dates for completion of action item
Non-Core Academic Programming	Inventory and evaluate existing programs both local and in other communities	Elbert County Board of Education, Elbert County Chamber of Commerce, Civic Organizations, Churches, Leadership Elberton	Regional Education Services Agency (RESA), Georgia Department of Education	N/A	N/A	September 2008 – December 2008
Non-Core Academic Programming	Expand Mentoring Programs Grade 6-8	Elbert County Board of Education, Elbert County Chamber of Commerce, Civic Organizations, Churches, Leadership Elberton	Regional Education Services Agency (RESA), Georgia Department of Education	To be determined	Elbert County Board of Education, local governments	January 2009 – July 2010
Non-Core Academic Programming	Expand Youth Apprentice Program and Career Development Programs	Elbert County Board of Education, Elbert County Chamber of Commerce, Civic Organizations, Churches, Leadership Elberton	Regional Education Services Agency (RESA), Georgia Department of Education	To be determined	Elbert County Board of Education, local governments	January 2009 – July 2010
Non-Core Academic Programming	Expand participation in New Core Academic Programs (i.e. Fine Arts, etc)	Elbert County Board of Education, Elbert County Chamber of Commerce, Civic Organizations, Churches, Leadership Elberton	Regional Education Services Agency (RESA), Georgia Department of Education	To be determined	Elbert County Board of Education, local governments	January 2009 – July 2010

Issue Addressed	Action Item	Responsible Local Partners	Responsible State Partners	Cost Estimate	Possible Funding Sources	Starting and ending dates for completion of action item
Incentive and Reward	Research other Communities that have successful incentive programs here in academic world. Two part action plan: 1-Teachers 2-Students	Elbert County Board of Education	Regional Education Services Agency (RESA), Georgia Department of Education, University of Georgia	To be determined	UGA Research	July 2008
Incentive and Reward	Designate Elbert County Incentive Award Committee	Elbert County Incentive Award Committee, Elbert County Board of Education	N/A	N/A	N/A	August 2008
Incentive and Reward	Survey Teachers	Elbert County Incentive Award Committee, Elbert County Board of Education	N/A	N/A	N/A	August 2008
Incentive and Reward	Survey Students (graduate and in school)	Elbert County Incentive Award Committee, Elbert County Board of Education	N/A	N/A	N/A	August 2008
Early Childhood Learning	Elbert County Read at Home Provide free books to all Elbert County children from birth to 5.	Community Partnership of Elbert County (CPEC-CAT), City of Elberton, Granite Association, Churches, Private Businesses, Citizens	Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning	\$47,000 \$36/year/child	City of Elberton, civic groups, local churches, Fundraisers, donations	July 2008 – July 2010

Issue Addressed	Action Item	Responsible Local Partners	Responsible State Partners	Cost Estimate	Possible Funding Sources	Starting and ending dates for completion of action item
Early Childhood Learning	Provide nutrition classes at churches, schools and community centers.	Elbert County Extension Service, CPEC Early Childhood Strategy Team	Georgia Division of Public Health	To be determined	Local governments	July 2008 – July 2010
Early Childhood Learning	Establish satellite centers for Prenatal care	Elbert County Board of Health	Georgia Division of Public Health	To be determined	Local governments	July 2008 – July 2010
Early Childhood Learning	Develop church based programs for pre-school educational awareness	Elbert County Extension Service, CPEC Early Childhood Strategy Team, local churches	Georgia Division of Public Health, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning	To be determined	Donations, civic groups, churches	July 2008 – July 2010
Youth Development	Develop a Plan for Coordinated After School Programs for Grades 1-12	Boy Scouts, Elbert County Board of Education, Boys & Girls Clubs, Churches, 4-H, YMCA, Arts/Theatre, Family Connections	Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Council for the Arts, Georgia 4-H, Division of Family and Children Services in the Department of Human Resources	To be determined	Local governments, private donations, Family Connections, Division	July 2008 – July 2010
Youth Development	Coordinate, Recognize & Support Leadership Programs (Consolidate Resources)	City of Elberton, Elbert County Board of Commissioners, Elbert County Chamber of Commerce, Boy Scouts, 4-H, Interact Key, Churches	Family Connections	To be determined	City of Elberton, Elbert County Board of Commissioners, Elbert County Chamber of Commerce	July 2008 – July 2010

Issue Addressed	Action Item	Responsible Local Partners	Responsible State Partners	Cost Estimate	Possible Funding Sources	Starting and ending dates for completion of action item
Youth Development	Expand Schools' Counseling programs by utilizing existing Counseling Resources	Elbert County Board of Education, Department of Family and Children's Services, Elbert County Health Department, Family Connections	Department of Family and Children's Services, Georgia Department of Education	To be determined	Family Connections, local government, Elbert County Board of Education	July 2008 – July 2010

