

Co-Op: Irwin County

Community Improvement Strategy: Buy Local Campaign and Economic Development

Community Improvement Strategy:

In order to promote economic development, Irwin County will work to create a Buy Local Marketing and Educational Campaign and will conduct survey and studies to determine what retail businesses and industry could succeed in the county.

Issues to be addressed

Many Irwin County residents travel out of the county to purchase both basic and specialty items. The Chamber of Commerce and downtown merchants would like to launch a “shop local” marketing campaign to explain to citizens the importance of shopping locally to keep their financial resources and sales tax dollars in the local economy in order to fund local schools, fire department, recreation department, and other vital county functions. To this end, the community will form a committee to promote the nationally known “3-50 Buy Local Marketing Campaign.” In addition, the community would like to conduct surveys and other studies to determine which industries and businesses will work best in Irwin County and keep resources in the local economy.

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

1. Higher local sales tax revenue increasing from \$455,949 in 2008 to \$500,000 by 2012.
2. 10 new businesses to open by December 2012
3. Complete county level Over/Under Supply Analysis
4. Conduct local survey with at least 10% county participation

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
Marketing a Shop Local Campaign	Appoint a committee under the umbrella of the Irwin County Chamber of Commerce to develop and promote the 3-50 Buy Local Marketing Campaign	Matt Seale, Irwin County Chamber of Commerce, Merchants Association	DCA	n/a	n/a	February 2010
Marketing a Shop Local Campaign	Develop an action plan to promote the 3-50 Campaign	Matt Seale, The 3-50 Buy Local Committee Chair and Members	DCA	n/a	n/a	March 2010
Marketing a Shop Local Campaign	Create weekly "Irwinomics" column in the local newspaper to educate the public on the benefits of spending their money locally	The 3-50 Buy Local Committee Chair and Members, Ocilla Star, Matt Seale; Chamber of Commerce	DCA	n/a	n/a	January 2010 (weekly) - ongoing
Marketing a Shop Local Campaign	Have shop local themed broadcasts on the local access channel	Chamber of Commerce, The 3-50 Buy Local Committee, Housing Authority, Mayor's Office	n/a	n/a	n/a	Begin March 2010

Marketing a Shop Local Campaign	Distribute information via handouts and presentations regarding the benefits of shopping locally at local church bulletins and civic club meetings	Philip Edwards and Arlinda Murrell, The 3-50 Buy Local Committee, Local churches, Rotary Club, Pilot Club, Chamber of Commerce, other community civic groups	DCA	To be determined	Co-Op funds	June 2010
Marketing a Shop Local Campaign	Distribute information regarding 3-50 with mail inserts and/or payroll stuffers at hospital/EMC/local government/schools and in water bills	Joey Whitley, The 3-50 Buy Local Committee	n/a	To be determined	Co-Op funds	July 2010
Marketing a Shop Local Campaign	Use on-line social media to promote 3-50	Bill Prather, The 3-50 Buy Local Committee	n/a	n/a	n/a	March 2010
Marketing a Shop Local Campaign	Consider creating a entrepreneurship program in local high school	Bill Prather, Irwin County Board of Education, Monica Smith; Future Business Leaders of America, Agriculture Department at local school, local entrepreneurs	DCA, Dept of Economic Development	To be determined		August 2010 – May 2011
Marketing a Shop Local Campaign	Increase marketing efforts for the Ocilla Sweet Potato Festival and apply for the Dept of Economic Development's	Laura Beth Tucker, Festival organizers, Irwin County Chamber of Commerce	Dept of Economic Development, Magnolia Midlands Tourism Representative - Lori W. Hennesy Cell: 678-640-4342	To be determined	Dept of Economic Development's Co-Op Marketing Grant	July 2010 – October 2010

	Tourism Marketing Grant for funding		lhennesy@georgia.org			
Marketing a Shop Local Campaign	Look into the logistics of developing a “Local Bucks” program by contacting Americus, Greensboro, Nashville, Tifton, Douglas to determine how they were able to develop a successful program	Donna Rawlins, Irwin County Chamber of Commerce	DCA	n/a	n/a	June 2010 – September 2010
Economic Development Study	Contract with the Small Business Development Center to conduct a county level Over/Under Supply Analysis	Hazel McCranie, Irwin County Chamber of Commerce	Gwen Hanks, Applied Research Division Small Business Development Center, 706-542-6765 Michelle Shaw, Regional Project Manager – Existing Industry & Recruitment, Dept of Economic Development, 229-386-3095	\$500	Co-op funds	April 2010-May 2010
Economic Development Study	Conduct local survey on what retail goods could be added to inventory in existing businesses by using surveymonkey.com	Hazel McCranie, Irwin County Chamber of Commerce	Gwen Hanks, Applied Research Division Small Business Development Center, 706-542-6765 Michelle Shaw,			April 2010

			Regional Project Manager – Existing Industry & Recruitment, Dept of Economic Development, 229- 386-3095			
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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto Agree to adopt the Irwin County Community Improvement Strategy.

FOR THE RECIPIENT

FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

By: _____
Chair, County

By: _____
Program Coordinator

By: _____
Mayor, City