

# PROGRESS

Chronicling Smart Growth and Development in Fairburn

August 2009, Volume 2, Issue 3

## Development Authority Efforts Continue

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### Development Authority News

The Fairburn Development Authority added another chapter in its history book when it held its first meeting at the Historic Freight Depot in July.

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#### **Authority Members Training**

During the month of August, Authority members will participate in basic and advanced classes offered by the Fanning Institute and taught by some of the foremost Economic Development experts in our state.

Basic classes are designed to help new Authority members meet requirements in Georgia for training within one year of appointment.

Advanced classes are offered as a follow-up opportunity for veteran Authority members who want to further their knowledge and skills in

development authority work. It especially focuses on deal making, legal issues, project case studies, and interactions with local government.

These professional development activities add to the board's overall knowledge and strengthens our community's economy.

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#### **Retreat with Planning & Zoning Commission To Follow**

Authority members and Planning Commission members will soon meet to develop a practical action strategy for implementation of the Fairburn LCI Plan. Discussions will be aimed at identifying roles and action steps for both groups and will seek to set and assign priorities as the plan goes forward.

### **Mark Your Calendar Brenau University Grand Opening Set For August 25**

Plans are underway for a fall schedule of educational programs offered by this newest addition to our Education Campus. The first courses of study that Brenau will be offering as it builds both undergraduate and graduate programs will be in business administration with education and health care programs following as soon as possible.

Brenau's arrival is another milestone along the way in this exceptional and unprecedented \$10 million project funded by the Development Authority and the City of Fairburn.

The Grand Opening will take place at 10:30 A.M. The public is invited.

This quarterly newsletter is designed to inform Fairburn residents, property owners, business owners and others about events, challenges, changes and facts relating to Development in our City. This publication will keep you up-to-date on all development issues including news, highlights, events, business tips and tourism efforts.

# Educational Campus Update

## Excerpts from an interview with Deborah Condon, Director, GMC Community College

*What progress have you made in your first year here?*

I'm extremely pleased to be able to report that we exceeded our projected student enrollment by eighteen percent. At this time we have already received 250 new applications for the fall term ... and while not all of these students will necessarily join us here the numbers continue to be impressive. Additionally, we are increasingly drawing more interest from students in Fayette County and Coweta County.



*What do you see for the future?*

I expect that we will need additional classroom space shortly and most likely an additional building within the next eighteen months. We currently have a combined population of 675 students, faculty and staff on campus each week. I am conservatively budgeting for a 5 % percent increase in this next year although I think we'll exceed that number. It might also interest you to know that I have an operating budget of slightly more than \$2.8 Million planned for next year.

*Are you involved in any community outreach?*

We feel the need to give something back to the city of Fairburn. Our Education and Instructional Technology students will be involved in mentoring youngsters at your new youth center ... and as you know we currently host and partner with your Environmental Institute which will enable Fairburn to reap the rewards of a green and prosperous future. We're looking at additional opportunities as well.

*Any other thoughts you'd care to share?*

I am extremely happy with the kindness, generosity and welcome GMC has received from the citizens and city of Fairburn. Visitors to our campus continue to be impressed by city's vision for this facility ... as you know it is one thing to have a vision ... but to have acted on that vision in the way you have is remarkable and is to be commended. I must say that this campus truly feels like home to us ... because it is.



**Campus June 2008**



**Campus September 2008**



**Campus August 2009**



# Economic Impact of Campus

GMC Community College's weekly combination of 675 students, faculty and staff has already had significant impact on Fairburn. With Brenau University scheduled to begin classes shortly, the overall number of campus students and staff will certainly increase. Additional institutions of higher learning will further add to this mix .

What then, is the short-term economic impact of college or university-related spending on communities like Fairburn that host institutions of higher education? In college towns across our state and nation there are three important categories of expenditures that reoccur on a regular basis: spending by the institutions themselves for salaries, benefits, operating supplies and expenses; spending by students and staff; and spending by institutions for capital projects.

Studies in Georgia and across the nation consistently show spending by institutions and students yields an average multiplier value of 1.50. A recent study by Jeffrey Humphreys at the University of Georgia states, **"On average, every dollar of initial spending generates an additional 50 cents for the host economy. In addition, for each campus job, 1.4 off-campus jobs exist because of spending related to the institution.**

Humphries goes on to say, "The economic as well as the social and political benefits of a college are significant to the local economy. A college improves the skills of its graduates and increases their productivity and lifetime earnings ... and local businesses benefit from easy access to a large pool of part-time and full-time workers. In addition, the outreach and service units of a college or university provide valuable services to local businesses, government and households. Moreover, cultural and educational programs and facilities often are available to the general public and provide intangible benefits to the host community by improving local residents' quality of life."

This is real economic development and it occurs right here in Fairburn on a daily basis.



**The Development Authority/Downtown Development Authority meets at 4:00 pm on the third Monday of every month at the Freight Depot.**

*The public is encouraged to attend. We're on the web. Visit us at [www.fairburn.com](http://www.fairburn.com).*

**The Authority is composed of seven (7) members appointed by the City Council and recognized by the State of Georgia as a public corporation with a specified set of powers and a specific purpose and mission to:**

- Revitalize and redevelop the central business district
- Develop and promote for the public good and general welfare, trade, commerce, industry, and employment opportunities
- Finance projects within the central business district that will develop and promote the public good and general welfare
- Issue bonds to finance projects

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## Authority Members

Jean Barkley Russell, Chair, Steve Thomas, Vice-Chair, Hal Shields, Secretary-Treasurer, Lawrence Byrd, John Carr, Sr., Jeff Couch, Ray Hannah

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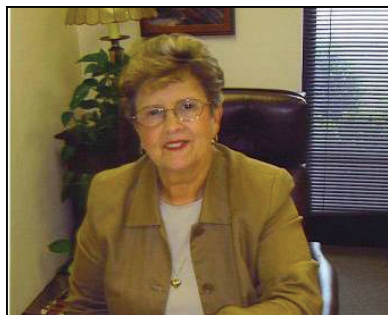
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## Mayor Hannah's Comments

### LCI Study

While our Livable Centers Initiative study was managed by the City of Fairburn along with a consultant team from the Sizemore Group, its direction and final recommendations were determined by community participants comprised of residents, property owners, local businesses, educational institutions and community leaders.

I'd like to thank all of you who gave so generously of your time for this important project. Your efforts are appreciated and your input has helped provide us with a clear vision of what you want Fairburn to be .



You've indicated a vision for our community with a thriving, compact historic downtown with good services; retail, restaurants, entertainment, offices and housing options. You seek a walkable and pedestrian friendly downtown with a village center and connection to neighborhoods.

You'd like sidewalks, bike lanes and multi-paths along with alternative transit modes such as rail for better connectivity to the region and you seek to build on the quaint, historic character that is uniquely Fairburn.

Our city has lovely, historic, tree-lined neighborhoods, new residential developments, strong community bonds and a downtown of locally owned businesses. It continues to have the small town flavor many communities have lost ... and our LCI final plan will provide us with what we all want; a sustainable, human-scaled framework to organize future growth in a way that does not lose sight of Fairburn's past.

Your vision is my vision and together we will make it a reality.

This newsletter is published by the Development Authority of Fairburn to promote the affairs of the Authority as well as to highlight programs and activities of affiliated groups. You can direct comments, suggestions and questions to Development Authority/Downtown Development Authority at [econdev@fairburn.com](mailto:econdev@fairburn.com) or call 770.969.6315 Editor: Patrick Pallend