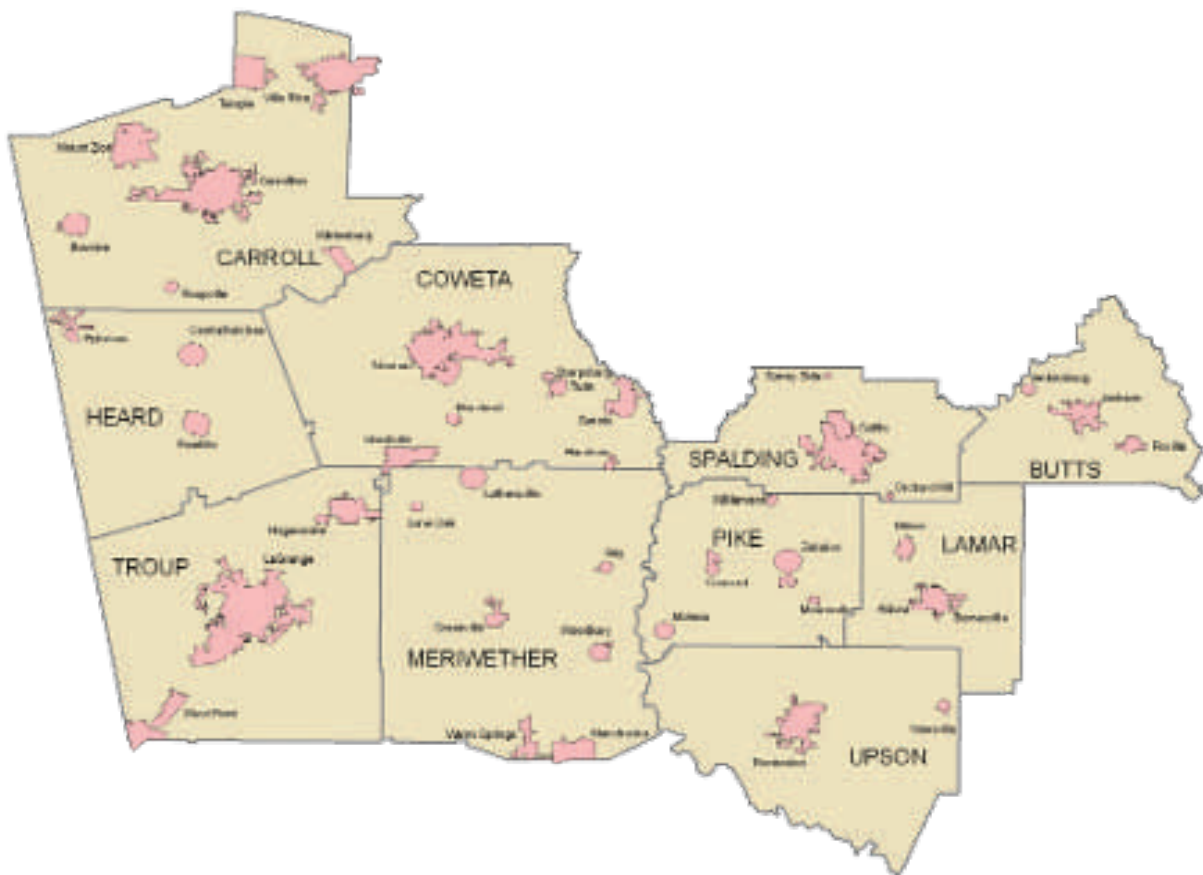




## 2012 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY ( CEDS)



Serving Butts, Carroll, Coweta, Heard, Lamar, Meriwether, Pike, Spalding,  
Troup, and Upson Counties

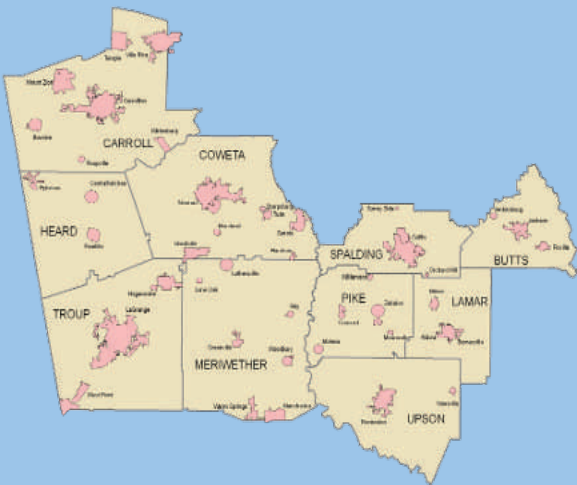
September 2012

### THREE RIVERS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

#### ADVANTAGES

*Exploring the economic advantages of doing business in the Three Rivers Economic Development District.....*

- *Location: Proximity to Atlanta, Macon and Columbus, Georgia;*
- *Access to Interstates 75, 85 & 185*
- *Access to Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport;*
- *Home to KIA plant, Georgia's largest automotive maker;*
- *Beautiful passive and active recreational facilities;*
- *Historic downtown squares and main streets that offer a unique sense of place for each community;*
- *A rich heritage with numerous cultural amenities; and*
- *Excellent water resources.*



#### WHAT IS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?

**E**conomic Development means that a local economy is vitalized. It means that there are more and better job opportunities, a healthier commercial tax base, fewer commercial vacancies and the retention of a wider range of places to eat, shop, bank and be entertained. Continued economic growth in the Three Rivers Economic Development District means all of these things. Three River's economic development objectives encompass growth and commercial development for local businesses creating jobs, and compatibility among existing and new uses leading to a higher quality of life for residents.

#### VISION FOR THREE RIVERS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

**D**uring the initial stages of the CEDS process, one (1) meeting was held with key economic development professionals across the region to discuss the overall vision for the Three Rivers Economic Development District. The initial vision that directly pertains to Economic Development is as follows:

- To facilitate regional economic development planning in the Three Rivers Region
- To develop a planning process that recognizes and builds upon the strengths of the individual communities (hometowns) to address the needs of the entire region;
- To apply public and private resources in a manner that is individually and mutually suitable to the member communities of the Region in that they may enhance environmental protection; and

- To foster sound infrastructure planning and to create balanced development programs that improves the economic self-sufficiency and the quality of life within the Region and within each member community.

## **COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY(CEDS)**

**T**he purpose of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is to initiate and sustain a local planning and implementation process by which jobs are created, more stable and diversified economies are fostered, and living conditions are improved. A CEDS is a mechanism for coordinating economic developments activities and is a valuable tool for bringing focus to the planning and development efforts of these unique and diverse communities throughout the region.

This CEDS has been prepared, in part, to meet a prerequisite for designation as an Economic Development District (EDD) under the Economic Development Administration (EDA). EDD designation is necessary in order to qualify for Economic Development Administration (EDA) assistance under its public works, economic adjustment and planning programs. Ten (10) counties and forty-four (44) incorporated municipalities within the Three Rivers Economic District have been included in this regional plan and are also eligible to seek funding under the EDD designation for projects that have been outlined in the CEDS.

A successful CEDS document:

- analyzes local conditions, identifies problems and opportunities, defines the vision and goals of the area, designs strategies to accomplish goals, coordinates activities to implement

strategies and evaluates/ updates the process;

- leads to the formulation and implementation of a program that creates jobs, raises income levels, diversifies the economy, and improves the quality of life, while protecting the environment;
- is developed through a local planning process designed to guide economic growth of an area. It provides a mechanism for coordinating the efforts of individuals, organizations, local governments and private industry concerned with economic development. The CEDS is the result of a continuous economic development planning process, developed with broad based and diverse community participation; and
- is short, easily accessible and used by the general public, government decision makers and business interests to understand the regional economy and to make decisions that lead to its improvement. Each CEDS is unique and reflects the challenges and opportunities facing the Region.

### **COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS):**

- Required to qualify for economic development assistance under its public works and economic adjustment grants and most planning programs.

A CEDS process will enable the Three Rivers Economic Development District (TREDD) to:

- Create jobs;
- Foster more stable and diversified economies ;
- Raise income levels;
- Improve the quality of life; and
- Protect the environment.

## **CURRENT ECONOMIC PROFILE**

**T**he Three Rivers Economic Development District (TREDD) is approximately 3,255 square miles in land area and is located within close proximity from the financial and commercial districts of Downtown Atlanta. The District includes the ten county region of Butts, Carroll, Coweta, Heard, Lamar, Meriwether, Pike, Spalding, Troup and Upson Counties. The District features a combination of both suburban communities of the Atlanta Metropolitan Region, as well as many small, rural and historic communities. The Three Rivers Economic Development District plays an increasingly important role in the economic health of West Central Georgia and the State of Georgia.

Transportation amenities in the Three Rivers Economic District include easy access to interstates 75, 85, and 185. Major US Highways include 19, 23, 27, 29, 41, and 85. There are approximately 7,475 highway miles within the TREDD. Over 15,000 daily vehicles miles are traveled throughout the District.

The region offers hundreds of miles of railroad to transport freight from Georgia and Alabama ports to area businesses and industries.

The Three Rivers Economic District has a strong network of historic neighborhood squares and main streets to provide amenities, jobs and luxuries that residents desire to have a good quality of life.

Employment centers are located in all ten counties throughout the Three Rivers Economic Development District.

**T**hree Rivers Economic Development District has made major strides in changing its perception and making it a more desirable place to live, work and visit. It is important to keep the following in mind in order to achieve continued success.

- Focus on more and higher value development to improve the tax base;
- Focus on more jobs and jobs appropriate for the workforce, and worker training for new jobs;
- Better the quality of life. This both benefits residents and helps to attract additional development;
- Preserve diverse socio-economic population; and
- Determine and promote image/identity and position within our regional economy.

## **THE CHALLENGE**

**T**here are challenges to overcome while trying to achieve the economic development priorities within the TREDD. Some of the hurdles in meeting the future needs of the region include:

- The need to meet the growing demands of baby boomers and the senior citizen population;
- The need to ensure rural transit is available to everyone;
- The need to establish, maintain or expand internet and broadband availability throughout the region.
- The need to expand or maintain water and sewer, particularly in designated growth areas.
- The need to educate and prepare our children for the future job market; and
- The need to ensure transportation infrastructure improvements are completed to serve the needs of existing and potential industries and the growing population.

### **THREE RIVERS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

The Three Rivers Regional Commission (TRRC) is a multi-jurisdictional planning agency whose membership includes public officials, private individuals, post-secondary education representatives, economic development leaders, and other stakeholders from throughout the Region. The recently created organization serves as the Economic Development District (EDD) providing technical, planning, community and economic development assistance, and aging services to ten Counties in West Central Georgia.

The membership of the Commission includes representation from Butts, Carroll, Coweta, Heard, Lamar, Pike, Spalding, Troup and Upson Counties. The membership includes: (1) "County Official" - The chief elected official or designee of each County's governing body; (2) "Municipal Official" - Mayor/Council Member of the County seat or other designated city from each County; (3) "Private Official" - One private-sector official from each County representing any for-profit enterprise, management official, or executive holding a key decision making position (or designee); (4) Three (3) At-Large Appointments by the Governor of Georgia; (5) One (1) At-Large Appointment by the Lieutenant Governor of Georgia; and, (6) One (1) At-Large Appointment by the Speaker of the House. Currently, the TRRC Council representation includes: 20 public officials, 10 private officials, and five (5) at-large officials). The Composition of the Council for Three Regional Commission is in compliance with EDA and State of Georgia governing membership requirements. A detailed list of council members is included on the following page.

The Three Rivers Regional Council meets bi-monthly or six (6) times a year. The meetings are held on the fourth Thursday in various locations throughout the Region.

The Three Rivers Regional Council met on the following dates:

- October 27, 2011 @ 6.00 p.m. - Turin Town Hall - Turin, Georgia;
- December 8, 2011 @ 6.00 p.m. - Turin Town Hall—Turin, Georgia;
- February 23, 2012 @ 6:00 p.m. - Turin Town Hall—Turin Georgia
- April 26, 2012 @ 2:00 pm—Coweta County Fairgrounds—Newnan, Georgia
- June 28, 2012 @ 2:00 p.m. Turin Town Hall—Turin, Georgia; and
- August 23, 2012 @ 2:00 p.m. - Turin Town Hall, Turin, Georgia

A CEDS brainstorming session was held on July 25, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. at the Coweta County Expo Center in Newnan, Georgia, to discuss economic development issues and opportunities within the Region and the CEDS update. Representatives from economic development agencies as well as local governments were invited to attend and comment on the proposed CEDS. Suggestions for economic development projects were also given at this meeting. Staff sent e-mail updates and contacted committee members for review as required.

Three Rivers will conduct a public review of the CEDS from August 27, 2012 thru September 27, 2012. The CEDS document shall be posted on the Three Rivers Regional Commission website at [www.threeriversrc.com](http://www.threeriversrc.com).

## 2012 THREE RIVERS

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT COUNCIL

<b>Table 1: TRRC Council /CEDS Committee</b>				
<b>NAME</b>	<b>GENDER</b>	<b>RACE</b>	<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>PUBLIC/ PRIVATE</b>
Roger McDaniel	Male	Caucasian	Butts	Public
Wayne Phillips	Male	Caucasian	Butts	Public
Christina Anderson	Female	Caucasian	Butts	Private
Bill Chappell	Male	Caucasian	Carroll	Public
Shirley Marchman	Female	African-American	Carroll	Public
Donna Armstrong-Lackey	Female	White	Carroll	Private
Tim Lassetter	Male	Caucasian	Coweta	Public
Clayton Hicks	Male	Caucasian	Coweta	Public
Tony Sinclair	Male	Caucasian	Coweta	Private
June Jackson***	Female	Caucasian	Heard	Public
Denney Rogers	Male	Caucasian	Heard	Public
Kathy Knowles	Female	Caucasian	Heard	Private
Bennie Horton	Male	African-American	Lamar	Public
Peter Banks	Male	Caucasian	Lamar	Public
Irvin Trice	Male	African-American	Lamar	Private
Nancy Jones	Female	Caucasian	Meriwether	Public
Ron Garrett	Male	Caucasian	Meriwether	Public
Faye Perdue	Female	Caucasian	Meriwether	Private
Don Collins	Male	Caucasian	Pike	Public
Mike Beres	Male	Caucasian	Pike	Public
Fred Roney	Male	Caucasian	Pike	Private



**2012 THREE RIVERS**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT COUNCIL**

<b>Table 1: TRRC Council /CEDS Committee</b>				
<b>NAME</b>	<b>GENDER</b>	<b>RACE</b>	<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>PUBLIC/ PRIVATE</b>
Eddie Freeman	Male	Caucasian	Spalding	Public
Joanne Todd	Female	Caucasian	Spalding	Public
Freddie Phillips	Male	Caucasian	Spalding	Private
Richard English	Male	African-American	Troup	Public
Bobby Frazier**	Male	African-American	Troup	Public
Joe Upchurch	Male	Caucasian	Troup	Private
Steve Hudson	Male	Caucasian	Upton	Public
Hays Arnold*	Male	Caucasian	Upton	Public
Jim Fletcher	Male	Caucasian	Upton	Private
Ed Bledsoe	Male	Caucasian	Coweta	Governor State Appointee
VACANT				Governor State Appointee
VACANT				Governor State Appointee
John Rainwater	Male	Caucasian	Butts	Lt. Governor State Appointee
VACANT				Speaker State Appointee

**\*Chairman**

**\*\* Vice-Chairman**

**\*\*\* Secretary**

## GOALS AND PRIORITIES

**T**he Three Rivers Economic Development District has identified goals and priorities that are more specific to its overall vision. The goals and the priorities are intended to help the region maximize its strengths, capitalize on its opportunities, and resolve problems.

**Goal One** - Improve overall quality of life for Three River's residents and enhance the District's fiscal well-being.

- **Priority 1:** Increase the District's commercial and industrial tax base; and
- **Priority 2:** Implement the economic development visions outlined in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and continue to attract and encourage quality developments to enhance the appeal of the Three Rivers Economic Development District.

**Goal Two** - Increase job availability within the Three Rivers Economic Development District.

- **Priority 1:** Establish workforce development and economic development as a top priority for the District and improve resident's access to jobs.
- **Priority 2:** Match workforce development services to skill levels and needs for residents.
- **Priority 3:** Identify ways of marketing information about workforce development programs to residents.

**Goal Three** - Facilitate achieving economic development goals by implementation of transportation priorities.

- **Priority 1:** Continue to work with the State to implement existing transportation plans.
- **Priority 2:** Coordinate economic development decisions that support the goals of transportation efforts within the District.

**Goal Four** - Establish the Three Rivers Economic Development District a premier and unique natural and cultural destination in the State of Georgia.

- **Priority 1:** Capitalize and build on existing natural and cultural assets;
- **Priority 2:** Identify opportunities to create passive and active recreation; and
- **Priority 3:** Identify opportunities to create cultural gathering spaces.

**Goal Five** - Protect Three River's cultural and economic diversity.

- **Priority 1:** maintain the diverse business representation on local main streets and downtown squares;
- **Priority 2:** Expand economic opportunities for low/moderate income citizens.

**Goal Six** - Promote quality development that implements the vision of the CEDS.

- **Priority 1:** Eliminate economic distress through revitalization and development.
- **Priority 2:** Encourage the highest and best use of Three River's limited and underdeveloped land.



**Goal Seven** - Increase the number of business and industries that establish, expand and maintain operations within the Three Rivers Economic Development District.

- **Priority 1:** Promote the Three Rivers Economic Development District as a business friendly community.
- **Priority 2:** Provide subsidies, tax breaks, loans or grants to help new businesses establish themselves and existing business grown within the Three Rivers Economic Development District.
- **Priority 3:** Attract and attain a variety of businesses providing goods and services in all neighborhoods.

**Goal Eight** - Strengthen the role and vitality of Main Streets and Downtown Squares and building Regional Commercial Districts.

- **Priority 1:** Improve the aesthetics of public places and spaces, existing squares, commercial streets through the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds.
- **Priority 2:** Adopt Tax Allocation Districts (TAD) and Enterprise and Opportunity Zones, and other programs to target priority projects or district improvements.
- **Priority 3:** Develop a quality and vitality mix of businesses within all commercial districts, main streets, and downtown squares.
- **Priority 4:** Promote more intense development of regional centers where appropriate to promote employment and tax base for major industrial/commercial centers.

- **Priority 5:** Build on existing nodes to create more efficiency in the regional centers and minimize impact on other areas.

**Goal Nine** - Implement and refine the plans for the District's largest industrial areas and retain isolated industrial and office uses, and abandoned mills.

- **Priority 1:** Provide funding for brownfield cleanup and hazardous waste removal.
- **Priority 2:** Analyze trade-offs between loss and retention of industrial uses.

**Goal Ten** - Promote the State of Georgia's efforts to deepen the Savannah River to serve the Savannah Port.

- **Priority 1:** Interact with various state agencies and stakeholders to discuss the overall benefits of deepening the Savannah River channel to the Port of Savannah.
- **Priority 2:** Continuously educate our communities about the importance of the deepening of the Savannah River
- **Priority 3:** Work with industries that seek to expand or establish a business that supports access to the Savannah Port.

**Goal Eleven:** Establish program initiatives through public and private partnerships to improve soft skills of the District's workforce.

- **Priority 1:** Educate students K-12 about the importance of soft skills.
- **Priority 2:** Encourage public agencies and private industries to work together to find innovative methods to teach everyday skills of running a business.

- **Priority 3:** Establish mentorships and apprenticeships programs that focus on soft skills and on-the-job training.
- **Priority 4:** Encourage private industries to commit to workforce development in various community programs that target school aged children.
- **Priority 1:** Streamline permitting process;
- **Priority 2:** Identify a contact person from each local government to manage production companies; and
- **Priority 3:** Develop a local database of shooting locations.

**Goal Twelve:** Expand broadband to underserved rural communities and increase opportunities for business development.

- **Priority 1:** Establish a regional broadband taskforce to identify solutions to gain access to broadband in rural communities.
- **Priority 2:** Conduct a regional broadband study to identify gaps with the area.
- **Priority 3:** Seek various funding sources to help fund the expansion of broadband services to rural communities.
- **Priority 4:** Increase consumer awareness of the benefits of broadband access within rural areas.

**Goal Thirteen-** Expand Tourism opportunities with the TREDD.

- **Priority 1:** Seek opportunities to expand Agri-Tourism throughout the Three Rivers Economic Development District.
- **Priority 2:** Seek opportunities that support natural and cultural tourism within the region.

**Goal Fourteen:** - Seek opportunities to expand movie and film production within the Three Rivers Economic Development District.

**Goal Fifteen:** Pre-plan to improve the region's emergency operations and recovery during disasters.

- **Priority 1:** Each local government should develop a quick recovery plan and use it as a marketing asset for the region.
- **Priority 2:** Develop alternative power sources for critical public infrastructure, businesses, and public services.
- **Priority 3:** Improve emergency operations center communications during emergency situations to provide businesses and residents with critical up-to-date information.

**TREDD ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

**Economic Development Opportunities with the TREDD are identified below.**

- Growth of the Atlanta Region;
- The Kia Plant
- Established Tourism/Potential for Tourism;
- Regional Aesthetic Pride, Beauty and Strong small hometowns;
- Superior Interstate Access (TREDD is second only to the Atlanta Region in interstate miles).
- Superior Access to Hartsfield-Jackson Airport;
- Emerging Automobile Manufacturing Cluster;
- West Georgia Technical College Campuses in Carroll and Coweta, Counties and the City LaGrange. Satellite Campuses are also located in Franklin and Greenville.
- Southern Crescent Technical College serves the Counties of Butts, Lamar, Pike, Spalding and Upson.
- Gordon College continues to see record breaking enrollment at its two year institution in Barnesville. The College recently expanded its facility and core curriculum.
- The expansion of the University of Georgia system which offers graduate degrees at the University of Georgia @ Griffin. Seven undergraduate majors are now offered, plus graduate programs in agricultural leadership and education.

**Issues:**

- Emerging Clusters of Birmingham, Atlanta, Macon, Columbus and Montgomery; and
- New Cancer Treatment of America (CTCA) – Cancer Treatment Center facility to expand healthcare jobs with the District.
- Growth in enrollment of colleges, universities and Technical College within the District
- Issues or needs facing the Ten-County TREDD:
  - Lower than average per capita income in many TREDD Counties;
  - High unemployment in many TREDD Counties;
  - Shortage of high paying jobs;
  - Improvements needed in K-12 Education;

- Need for Industry Diversification;
- Loss of Farmland;
- Need to Develop Home-Grown Business;
- Need for additional East-West vehicular connectivity, particularly between Intestates 75 and 85.
- Need to upgrade local airports;
- Better recognition of supraregional issues;
- Need to untap Tourism Potential; and
- Need for new medical facilities, particularly within the rural areas.
- The County has 300 acres of Interstate land that is served by water and sewer and railroad service.
- The County has direct interstate access to Hartsfield-Jackson Airport and aeronautics-related industry.
- The County boasts a relatively high millage rate.
- Jackson Lake and Indian springs State Park are but two of the County's recreational venues/opportunities.
- Manufacturing jobs are fueling a higher number of households in this community.
- The community also has a strong Partnership for Smart Growth.

**Issues:**

A County-by-County analysis of issues and opportunities is provided below. Much of the commentary in the following section is the result of the visioning/brainstorming session discussed previously.

**BUTTS COUNTY**

**Opportunities:**

- Butts County has interstate access on Interstate 75 with total interstate access to the Port of Savannah. Its interstate access offers opportunities with logistics operations and the food manufacturing and packaging cluster.

- The County would benefit from improved water infrastructure.
- Careful planning on the I-75 corridor will protect residents and business from being inconvenienced by traffic obstructions.
- Twenty-six percent of the Counties Roads remain unpaved.
- One in every 203 housing units is in foreclosure (July, Source: Realtytrac). Stronger subdivision regulations may be necessary.

## **CARROLL COUNTY**

### **Opportunities:**

- Carroll has a diverse economic base and is aggressive in pursuit of protected agricultural lands.
- West Georgia State University offers jobs within the community and allows residents to stay in the community.
- The County has large amounts of I-20 frontage and connections to Birmingham and Atlanta as well as Tennessee.
- U.S. Highway 27, S.R. 61, and S.R. 100 all contribute to the County's economic bone fides.
- The County can boast good corporate residents such as Tanner Medical Center and Southwire. Tanner Medical Center in Carrollton completed its renovation and expansion on 3/26/10.
- The County is embarking on a strategic comprehensive planning process.
- Downtown Square in Carrollton that has undergone extensive revitalization.
- The Bursen Center remains one of the most successful business incubation centers. It should also rank as an education facility because of its successful programs/series on starting businesses and the legal, records, tax, financing, marketing and planning needs of a start-up.

- The County is aggressively pursuing more passive and active recreational opportunities, as it is already well represented in this trait.
- The County is dedicated to protecting agricultural lands and to strengthening its position as an agricultural producer.

### **Issues:**

- Carroll County experienced more than its share of plant closings in the reporting period;
- The County has the highest rate of foreclosures in the TREDD at 1 in every 172 housing unit receiving a foreclosure filing. The foreclosures are tracked mainly in the growth areas along I-20 from Villa Rica through Temple; and
- I-20 congestion in Douglas and Fulton counties threatens Carroll business operations and growth.

## **COWETA COUNTY**

### **Opportunities**

- The announcement of the Cancer Treatment Center complements the VA clinic and the Piedmont-Newnan Hospital. These facilities will offer good paying medical services jobs in the community and should bolster the economics of retail and service industries throughout the County. Coweta County is beginning to show significant gains in this industry.

- Coweta's interstate frontage and access/ planned access are in a league with Gwinnett or Forsyth counties on the north side of Atlanta. All local communities realize the benefits of good access to the interstate system and the opportunities it provides through the diagonal swath of I-85, which cuts through the County.
  - Coweta County's small towns have retained their integrity even throughout the County's growth spurt. The largest city, Newnan has a vibrant square.
  - The communities are working towards increasing active recreation venues and new parks and tourist destinations.
  - Chattahoochee-Bend State Park is Georgia's newest State Park.
  - Browns Mill Battlefield site is the newest planned attraction.
  - Smaller cities like Moreland, have untapped tourism potential. For example, Moreland plans to build upon its place on the Southern Literary Trail.
- The County needs help to tap its tourism potential.
  - Foreclosure rate of 1/203 belies pockets of subdivision failures.

#### **HEARD COUNTY**

##### **Opportunities:**

- The County receives a large percentage of its tax revenue from the five power producing plants.
- The County has made major investment into its schools (all new in Franklin), has opened a new Animal Control facility, a 911 center and recreation/event arena.
- Foreclosures are low (1/974).
- US 27 offers four-lane access and connection between interstates.

##### **Issues:**

- Over 45% of Heard County employment is in the Construction Sector. This makes residents and county businesses susceptible to large fluctuations in employment and more vulnerable to recession.
- The County needs to broaden its tax base and to receive more sales taxes from locally-based enterprises.
- Smaller communities (Ephesus and Centralhatchee) need infrastructure improvements.

##### **Issues:**

- The region and the communities need to be prepared for future growth and its consequences, particularly along I-85. As growth naturally slows on the north side of Atlanta more opportunities will shift to the south side.
- The smaller communities now appreciate the access that I-85 provides, in the future they have to carefully plan



## **LAMAR COUNTY**

### **Opportunities:**

- Upson Regional Medical Center Hospital is both a major employer and a major asset to the Lamar community.
- Gordon College remains an asset and its nursing program feeds one of the region's greatest needs.
- Local schools are a source of pride with a new career academy.
- The film industry is active in the community.
- The County has a relatively low (1/374) foreclosure rate.

### **Issues:**

- The County is still negatively affected by the Carter's layoff of 2009. The plant closure resulted in the loss of 212 jobs.
- Gordon College needs to be better integrated into the fabric of the community.

## **MERIWETHER COUNTY**

### **Opportunities:**

- One winery is starting up in the county
- The County offers more tourism opportunities than any other in the region with the District.

- Popular tourist attractions include Little White House, the Cotton Pickin' Fair and the Roosevelt Institute.
- Pine Mountain is adjacent to Meriwether County. This important physical, convention and tourism destination helps all of the tourist venues in Meriwether County.
- The Roosevelt Institute received an award for its Polio Exhibit.
- The County has participated in the Kia and automobile related growth.
- The County works to optimally leverage its I-85 frontage.
- Foreclosures (1/524) are relatively low in the County.
- The Meriwether-Pike Scenic Byway.

### **Issues:**

- High (20.10 percent) of persons below the poverty level.
- A major loss of jobs in textiles manufacturing is evident in the County.
- The County needs to reinvigorate Manchester Industrial Park.

## **PIKE COUNTY**

### **Opportunities:**

- Like Meriwether and Upson the county sits in the "golden triangle" between Atlanta-Macon-Columbus.

## **SPALDING COUNTY**

- The County enjoys estate living, arts, entertainment and recreation (including three (3) golf courses).
- The Meriwether-Pike Scenic Byway.
- The Candler Air Museum in Williamson has its second hangar.
- Community has a relatively low rate of unemployment.
- 1/325 foreclosure rate is small due to low subdivision growth and fewer in-town neighborhoods than surrounding counties.

### **Issues:**

- Its status as a Tier 3 Incentives Community does not fit with surrounding counties, and puts the County at a business incentives/recruitment disadvantage.
- The county needs a veterinarian and more locally grown businesses that create tax revenue.
- Lack of interstate access and a high percentage (36.9%) of unpaved roads.
- The County does not offer rail or airport transportation to support busy Highway 19.

### **Opportunities:**

- The County enjoys easy access to I-75. SR 16 was upgraded to a 4-lane highway to connect Griffin to I-75 and future plans are underway for SR 16 to carry more freight throughout the TREDD.
- In Spalding Regional Medical Center the community has an economic engine as well as a first-rate facility for its medical needs.
- Sun City Peachtree both complements and complicates planning in Spalding County, though it puts the County on the map for services to this burgeoning population.
- Spalding County has relatively low (1/319) foreclosure rate with both inner city neighborhoods (Griffin) and subdivision growth outside of the unincorporated areas of the County.

### **Issues:**

- The City of Griffin has low home ownership rates, high teen pregnancies rates, and large numbers of children living below the poverty level and absentee landlords.
- Griffin would benefit greatly by becoming a work-ready community.

- Griffin/Spalding threatened by strip commercial development/exurbanization on its north side of the County.

## **TROUP COUNTY**

### **Opportunities:**

- The Callaway Foundation Troup County is a generous kind benefactor located in the County.
- Troup is an entrepreneur-friendly community and is actively implementing the Georgia Tech strategic plan to deal with growth.
- The Kia Plant offers future economic development opportunities.
- The County boasts 250 new Korean families. This major influx of new citizens is due to the growing number of auto manufacturing suppliers and plants serving the County.
- All three cities have TAD powers in preparation of growth from the KIA plant.
- 1/438 foreclosures is relatively low.

### **Issues:**

- Though many new manufacturing jobs were added to Troup County, it continues to weather the decline of the textile industry and layoffs from T-Mobile and Emerson.
- Its geographic location requires the County to coordinate (and compete) with counties in Alabama, the Columbus Region and the Atlanta/TRRC region.

## **UPSON COUNTY**

### **Opportunities:**

- The County has a large 290 acre industrial park and good connections via Highway 19.
- The County is well-situated to serve both Fort Benning and Warner Robbins.
- The County has a hospital and an improved airport. New corporate citizens in Animal Health and Sciences sector may signal an emerging cluster.
- Upson County is a certified work-ready community.
- Low foreclosure rate (1/676).
- Education and healthcare employment remains the top occupations within the County.

### **Issues:**

- Large employment (23 percent) in the manufacturing industry affected the recent layoff and greater diversification is needed.
- Large numbers of children in Upson County are living below the poverty level.

## **GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GDEcD)**

**T**he Georgia Department of Economic Development is the primary state agency charged in leading statewide efforts to market Georgia as the best place to do business.

The agency has a strong network of partnerships and valuable statewide collaborations. It has successfully managed three hundred sixty (360) economic development projects through the GDEcD Global Commerce Division. The three (3) divisions of the GDEcD include:

- Global Commerce;
- Film, Music & Digital Entertainment; and
- Tourism.

These divisions of the Georgia Department of Economic Development have continued to make significant progress despite economic decline over the past several years. Jobs have been created through business recruitment and expansion, international trade, and entertainment productions. In addition, travel and investment continued to increase with much success in record numbers.

### **The key services provided by the Georgia Department of Development include:**

- Attracting new business investment;
- Supporting the expansion of existing industry and small businesses;
- Locating new markets for Georgia products;
- Attracting tourists from within and outside Georgia;
- Promoting Georgia as a desirable location for entertainment businesses and projects; and
- Partnering with stakeholders to optimize results.

The Georgia Department Economic Development supports the Three Rivers Economic District and its effort to produce a quality comprehensive economic development strategy that works hand-in-hand with the goals of the GDEcD and focuses on accessing Georgia's assets and resources. On the next page, GDEcD provided a letter of support to express their commitment to economic development within the State of Georgia. The TREDD verifies that the activities identified within the CEDS are consistent with goals of the GDEcD. Finally, the CEDS project activities will ensure economic vitality within the TREDD and the State of Georgia.

According to the FY2011 Annual Report for the Georgia Department of Economic Development, the overall economic impact of development on the state of Georgia included:

- Companies invested \$4.39 billion in communities around the state;
- 23 percent of FY11 investments were made by international companies, representing 4,045 jobs and \$1.6 billion in investment;
- GDEcD's International Trade team assisted 265 trade deals in at least 37 countries;
- FY11 saw record investment in the state by the entertainment industry, with more than \$689.3 million in direct spending in FY11;
- Total economic impact of the 327 feature films, TV movies, TV series, commercials and music videos that filmed in Georgia was \$2.4 billion;
- The travel industry in Georgia generated \$21 billion in tourist expenditures last year, up 8.3 percent from the previous year; and
- Tourism generated \$1.56 billion in state and local tax revenue.

## **HAZARD MITIGATION AND EMERGENCY NEEDS**

**T**he Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines hazard mitigation as “Any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from hazards.” It has been demonstrated that hazard mitigation is most effective when based on an inclusive, comprehensive, long-term plan that is developed before a disaster occurs.

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) requires state and local governments to prepare and adopt hazard mitigation plans approved by FEMA as a condition of eligibility for receiving hazard mitigation grants under several programs. The State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) relies on a partnership with regional planning commissions throughout the state to help local jurisdictions develop and adopt countywide, multi-jurisdictional, multi-hazard mitigation plans.

In the wake of 2009 floods and April 2011 tornados, several local governments within the TREDD witnessed first hand the importance of the need to plan for mitigation. Carroll County was one of the Counties adversely affected by the storms of flooding in September of 2009, wherein the Governor issued a state of emergency and GEMA/FEMA funds were made available. Heard County was also affected by the flood of September 2009. The County received GEMA/FEMA funds to repair Riverside Park, the old recreation park in the City of Franklin.

Deadly tornados moved through the District in April 2011. The tornados damaged many businesses and homes within the TREDD. A state of emergency was declared in the counties of Coweta, Lamar, Meriwether,

Spalding and Troup. These counties were also eligible to apply for assistance under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to identify actions taken to prevent or reduce long-term risk to life and property from natural hazards. Local governments within these counties were also eligible to receive funds to help offset 75 percent of the cost of debris removal and emergency protective measures.

Between 2010 and present, TREDD assisted many counties in the region with developing hazard mitigation plans. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, requires that these hazard mitigation plans be updated every five years in order for state and local jurisdictions to maintain eligibility for Hazard Mitigation Assistance. The update process is currently underway at the county level for many communities in the region.

The CEDS planning efforts sought to incorporate hazard mitigations priorities as a part of economic development strategies related to the pre-planning for emergency response during a natural disaster.

The following table includes related Hazard Mitigation Plans for all counties within the TREDD:

Table 2

County	Status Update
Butts County	Adopted 2010
Carroll County	Adopted 2010
Coweta County	Under Development
Heard County	Adopted 2012
Lamar County	Adopted 2010
Meriwether County	Adopted 2011
Pike County	Adopted 2008
Spalding County	Adopted 2011
Troup County	Under Development
Upton County	Adopted 2010

## VITAL PROJECTS

### BUTTS COUNTY

<i>Project</i>	<i>Estimate Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Entity</i>	<i>Jobs Created</i>
Bucksnort Land Application Spray Fields	\$500,000	Jackson & Butts County	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
This project proposes to install 5 spray fields at the Butts County, et al. Water and Sewer Authority's land treatment facility to increase capacity from 550,000 gallons per day to 800,000 gallons per day. This will increase capacity to serve industrial and commercial properties.			

<i>Project</i>	<i>Estimate Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Entity</i>	<i>Jobs Created</i>
West Butts Elevated Water Storage Tank	\$1,000,000	Jackson & Butts County	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
This project proposes to install 500,000 gallons elevated storage tank in southwest Butts County to provide for additional storage, pressure regulation, and fire protection to serve industrial and commercial properties on I-75 corridor.			



## **VITAL PROJECTS**

### **BUTTS COUNTY**

<i><b>Project</b></i>	<i><b>Estimate Cost</b></i>	<i><b>Responsible Entity</b></i>	<i><b>Jobs Created</b></i>
Fieldstone Multi-Use Development Water and Sewer Infrastructure	\$350,000	Jackson and Butts County	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
This project proposes to install water mains and appurtenances, gravity sewer and appurtenances, on-site lift station to serve an 80-acre multi-use commercial/residential development on Highway 16 near I-75.			

<i><b>Project</b></i>	<i><b>Estimate Cost</b></i>	<i><b>Responsible Entity</b></i>	<i><b>Jobs Created</b></i>
HWY 16 Sewer Expansion Project - East of I-75	\$750,000	Jackson and Butts County	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
This project proposes to complete sewer on HWY 16, east of I-75 to Colwell Road, both north and south of HWY 16.			

## VITAL PROJECTS

### BUTTS COUNTY

<i>Project</i>	<i>Estimate Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Entity</i>	<i>Jobs Created</i>
Riverview Business Park/Short Road Gravity Sewer	\$600,000	City of Jackson & Butts County	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
This project proposes to complete gravity sewer within Phase 1 of Riverview Business Park, running on Georgia HWY 36 and then along Short Road. This will provide direct access to gravity sewer to commercial properties in this area.			

<i>Project</i>	<i>Estimate Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Entity</i>	<i>Jobs Created</i>
Riverview Business Park—Business Park Drive	\$1,000,000	City of Jackson & Butts County	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
This project proposes to complete construction and paving of the main road in Phase 2 of the Riverview Business Park.			

## **VITAL PROJECTS**

### **BUTTS COUNTY**

<i><b>Project</b></i>	<i><b>Estimate Cost</b></i>	<i><b>Responsible Entity</b></i>	<i><b>Jobs Created</b></i>
Riverview Business Park—Riverview Park Way	\$750,000	Jackson & Butts County	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
The project proposes to acquire right-of-way for an access road to accommodate growing truck traffic entering the Riverview Business Park. The project will also include accel/decel lanes on GA HWY 36.			

<i><b>Project</b></i>	<i><b>Estimate Cost</b></i>	<i><b>Responsible Entity</b></i>	<i><b>Jobs Created</b></i>
Coldwell Road - Frontage Road	\$2,000,000	Jackson and Butts County	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
This project proposes the acquisition of right-of-way and other costs associated with road improvements to establish a frontage road adjacent to the I-75 corridor.			

## VITAL PROJECTS

### BUTTS COUNTY

<i>Project</i>	<i>Estimate Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Entity</i>	<i>Jobs Created</i>
Water and Sewer expansion to serve industrial uses	\$500,000	Jackson & Butts County	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
This project proposes the extension of water and sewer infrastructure to accommodate new industrial user's demands.			

<i>Project</i>	<i>Estimate Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Entity</i>	<i>Jobs Created</i>
HWY 42 Rails Spur	\$500,000	Jackson & Butts County	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
This project proposes to install a rail switch and new rail track, complete grading and engineering to serve a potential industry with rail access.			

## **VITAL PROJECTS**

### **BUTTS COUNTY**

<i><b>Project</b></i>	<i><b>Estimate Cost</b></i>	<i><b>Responsible Entity</b></i>	<i><b>Jobs Created</b></i>
Truck Stop Way	\$1,500,000	Jackson & Butts County	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
This project proposes to complete engineering process, acquire right-of-way, and construction of the required second entrance of Riverview Business Park, Phase 2.			

## VITAL PROJECTS

### COWETA COUNTY

<i>Project</i>	<i>Estimate Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Entity</i>	<i>Jobs Created</i>
Lower Fayetteville Road Widening Project	\$32,500,500	Coweta County	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
This project proposes to widen Lower Fayetteville Road from 2 to 4 lanes in order to create additional East-West Connectivity.			

### COWETA COUNTY & SPALDING COUNTY

<i>Project</i>	<i>Estimate Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Entity</i>	<i>Jobs Created</i>
State Route 16 Widening Project	TBA	GDOT, Spalding County and T	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
This project proposes to widen State Route 16 from 2 to 4 lanes in order to create additional East-West Connectivity between Interstates 75 and 85.			



## **VITAL PROJECTS**

### **UPSON COUNTY**

<i><b>Project</b></i>	<i><b>Estimate Cost</b></i>	<i><b>Responsible Entity</b></i>	<i><b>Jobs Created</b></i>
1. 266 Technology Park water expansion project	\$10,000	Thomaston-Upson Industrial Development Authority	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
The project proposes the expansion of existing 6" water lines from 266 Technology Park to the Speculative Building (approximately 450 feet). Completion this line will ensure that water needs can be met for prospective industries.			

<i><b>Project</b></i>	<i><b>Estimate Cost</b></i>	<i><b>Responsible Entity</b></i>	<i><b>Jobs Created</b></i>
2. 266 Technology Park natural gas line expansion project	\$400,000	Thomaston-Upson Industrial Development Authority	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
The Thomaston-Upson Industrial Development Authority proposes to expand a six-inch natural gas line from Technology Parkway to a speculative building located at 266 Technology Parkway. Completion of the natural gas lines will enable new industry to "finish out" the speculative building with the gas feature already in place.			

## **VITAL PROJECTS**

### **REGIONAL PROJECT—MERIWETHER, TROUP, HEARD & UPSON COUNTIES**

<i><b>Project</b></i>	<i><b>Estimate Cost</b></i>	<i><b>Responsible Entity</b></i>	<i><b>Jobs Created</b></i>
Broadband Expansion Project	TBA	Joint Venture between Meriwether, Troup, Heard and Upson Counties	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
This project proposes to expand broadband services to rural areas that lack internet to serve businesses and new industries.			

### **REGIONAL PROJECT—MERIWETHER, TROUP AND UPSON COUNTIES**

<i><b>Project</b></i>	<i><b>Estimate Cost</b></i>	<i><b>Responsible Entity</b></i>	<i><b>Jobs Created</b></i>
Proposed Four Lane Corridor Route	TBA	Joint Venture between Meriwether, Troup, and Upson Counties	TBA
<b>Brief Description:</b>			
This project proposes a four lane corridor route that stretches from I-75 in Bibb County to I-85 in Troup County. The Corridor will provide a East-West connector, particularly allowing freight to travel from I-75 to the Kia Plant and increasing industry development within the rural counties of Meriwether and Upson.			

## **ACTION PLAN**

The Three Rivers Economic Development District is committed to ensuring continued economic prosperity, sustainability and preservation of the qualities that attract and retain businesses in the community. To accomplish its mission, the Three Rivers Economic Development District has developed the following set of broad goals to create and sustain economic development opportunities throughout our District.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**



**GOAL:** *Establish Three Rivers Economic Development District as a prime location to implement “green businesses” through the Green Economy Initiative.*

**Objective:** Collaborate with public and private entities to develop strategies for green business expansion.

**Summary:** The Green Economy is a fast growing economic model that is expected to create green jobs, ensure real, sustainable economic growth, and prevent environmental pollution, global warming, resource depletion, and environmental degradation. The impact of a green economy will free us of unnecessarily high levels of energy and materials use and create a safer environment for future generations.



### **Action Plan:**

- Learn from successful communities that have implemented green businesses;
- Develop action steps needed to capitalize on local workforce, businesses and university programs in order to become a leader in the green economy;
- Evaluate the potential of a local green business incubator.
- Identify the workforce training needs of potential green businesses and work with local educational institutions to develop training in accordance with needs; and
- Research federal stimulus programs for green economy opportunities.

**Responsibility:** TREDD, economic development organizations  
**Time Frame:** Short-Term  
**Resource:** Staff-Time, Georgia Economic Development

 **GOAL:** ***Create/Maintain business association collaborations***

**Objective:** Engage business groups to collaborate on economic vitality actions

**Summary:** Collaboration with business associations provides an effective measure to support strong communication and link local economic development professionals. Additionally, it provides an opportunity for business groups to express economic concerns and find quality solutions to enhance economic stability within our District. Finally, this method of our collaboration illustrates a positive mechanism for building bridges to connect our vast economic resources.



**Action Plan:**

Evaluate how to best interface and work with local downtown business associations, chamber of commerce associations, workforce development agencies and industrial development authorities to increase participation and meet economic needs; and

Support and assist in local communities efforts to educate the business and residential community on the benefits of buying from locally-owned businesses.

**Responsibility:** TREDD  
**Time Frame:** On-going  
**Resource:** Staff-Time

 **GOAL:** ***Promote job retention and creation throughout our District***

**Objective:** Target activities that focus on the retention and creation of local businesses and industries

**Summary:** Job retention and creation is vital to maintaining the District's economic vitality. It is important that the TREDD actively participate in efforts to increase employment opportunities by getting new businesses to relocate in a community or existing businesses to expand.



**Action Plan:**

Invite the District's largest employers to Economic Development meetings to discuss workforce needs, business concerns and growth opportunities;  
Identify and visit select businesses to better understand local operations, workforce skills, needs and the role economic vitality plays within the community;  
When appropriate and affordable, encourage local leaders and stakeholders to participate in International Trade Resource Center events to attract foreign business;  
and  
Enhance marketing techniques to attract quality businesses.

**Responsibility:** TREDD, local economic development organizations,  
Local governments

**Time Frame:** Short-Term

**Resource:** Staff-Time



**Goal:** *Encourage businesses to train and hire local residents*

**Objective:** Improve the economic well being and quality of life within the community by providing quality jobs for local residents.

**Summary:** It is important to find ground-breaking techniques to promote local businesses and workforce development. Local officials should work together to strengthen the partnership between counties and their workforce investment boards, which provide significant investment and tools to address economic development. Local stakeholders must also support efforts to create a skilled workforce, both technical and vocational.



**Action Plan:**

Work with local institutions, state and local workforce development agencies to develop and sustain an adequate workforce;  
Support school-to-work programs involving local schools, universities, technical colleges and businesses;  
Work with employers to identify training needs and access workforce training grants where appropriate; and  
Create business internship and education opportunities.

**Responsibility:** TREDD  
**Time Frame:** Ongoing  
**Resource:** Staff-Time



**Goal: *Promote Infrastructure Improvements***

**Objective:** Support Capital Improvement Plan items that improve public infrastructure and specifically enhance the local transportation network and provide for the expansion of major utilities such as water and sewer, natural gas, and broadband.

**Summary:** Development infrastructure encompasses the physical and technological systems upon which development occurs. The lack of public infrastructure creates huge concern for local leaders throughout the TREDD. The need to provide suitable available business sites for potential industries is a major challenge due to limited financial resources. Strategic action is needed to ensure that communities within the TREDD have a competitive advantage to secure federal and state funding for public infrastructure improvements.



**Action Plan:**

Raise awareness of the importance of public infrastructure as an economic development asset of the community as it relates to quality of life;  
Work with Transportation and Public Works officials to secure grants for implementation;  
Where appropriate, employ economic revitalization techniques (such as Business Improvement Districts (BID)) as matching or alternative funding sources for improvements; and  
Continuously identify ongoing transportation and public utility projects.

**Responsibility:** TREDD, LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

**Time Frame:** On-going

**Resource:** Staff-Time

**Business Development and Diversification**



**Goal:** *Conduct an in-depth, regional cluster analysis*

**Objective:** Fully develop a cluster strategy approach to regional business development.

**Summary:** Economic base diversification continues to be a key goal for the Three Rivers Economic Development District. It is equally important to diversify the regional economic base in a targeted manner. Utilizing a cluster approach has emerged as the strategy of choice for economic development. This allows communities to target their diversification to industries where they have the greatest competitive advantage, and therefore the highest likelihood of success.



**ACTION PLAN:**

Collaboratively work with the Small Businesses Administration to strengthen business education programs;  
Refer potential clients to the Small Business Administration for assistance with starting a business;  
Broaden knowledge base of available resources that support small businesses and entrepreneurship; and  
Participate in activities that provide educational awareness of small business opportunities.

**Responsibility:** TREDD, SBA, local governments





**ACTION PLAN:**

Identify traded sector jobs through the implementation of a cluster analysis;  
Complete a cluster inventory and analysis and implement key recommendation for growing cluster developments;  
Spur broad cluster activity by establishing a special network of local economic development professionals skilled in the expansion of clustered industries; and  
Facilitate business expansion opportunities and employment growth for cluster industries.

**Responsibility:** TREDD & Economic Development Professionals

**Time Frame:** Short-Term

**Resource:** Staff-Time

**Small Business Development, Entrepreneurship and Technology**



**Goal:** *Promote small business development, entrepreneurship and technology.*

**Objective:** Three Rivers Regional Economic Development District will seek opportunities to enhance the entrepreneurial infrastructure necessary to create and attract companies with high growth potential.

**Summary:** Innovation and entrepreneurialism are key drivers for the Three Rivers Economic Development District. The primary focus is on creating and attracting not only high technology-based, high growth companies, but small local business that will maximize workforce capacity with the TREDD. Support and ongoing dialogue between small businesses and government agencies is necessary to communicate the importance of special programs designed to promote small businesses. This action plan is focused on coordinating service delivery strategies and expanding access to state and federal level resources.

## **POPULATION**

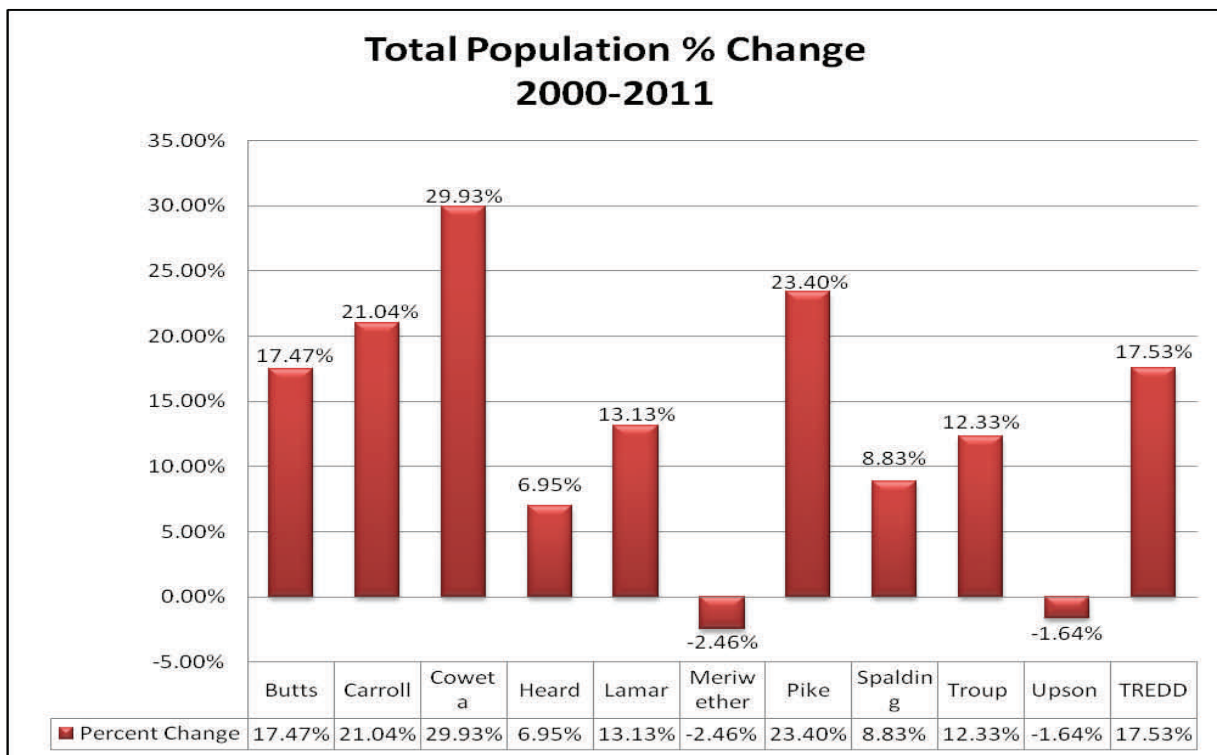
In 2010, the Three Rivers Economic Development District (TREDD) reach a total population of 489,781. Most of the population is located in Coweta County (26%), followed by Carroll County (23%), then Troup County (14%). Heard County had the smallest percentage of the region's population (2%). Lamar and Pike Counties also have small percentages of the region's population, with less than five percent each (4% and 3% respectively). Table 1 identifies the population for TREDD counties.

<b>TABLE 1: POPULATION FOR COUNTIES AND TREDD</b>				
	<b>2010</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>% Change 2000-2010</b>
<b>Butts</b>	23,655	19,522	23,504	17.47%
<b>Carroll</b>	110,527	87,268	111,159	21.04%
<b>Coweta</b>	127,317	89,215	129,629	29.93%
<b>Heard</b>	11,834	11,012	11,744	6.95%
<b>Lamar</b>	18,317	15,912	18,194	13.13%
<b>Meriwether</b>	21,992	22,534	21,617	-2.46%
<b>Pike</b>	17,869	13,688	17,751	23.40%
<b>Spalding</b>	64,073	58,417	64,033	8.83%
<b>Troup</b>	67,044	58,779	67,764	12.33%
<b>Upson</b>	27,153	27,597	26,977	-1.64%
<b>TREDD</b>	489,781	403,944	494,383	17.53%

Between 2000 and 2010, the population in the TREDD's region increased by 17.53%. This is slightly less than Georgia's growth rate of 18.3% for the same period. The U.S. growth rate for this ten year period was 9.7%. ECC's growth rate is projected to remain at slightly less than half of Georgia's growth rate through 2020. Carroll, Coweta, and Pike Counties show projected growth rates higher than those of the State.

At the county level, Meriwether County and Upson County showed the lowest 2000 – 2010 growth rates at -2.46% and -1.64% respectively; Coweta County and Pike County showed the highest growth rates for this period (29.93% and 23.40% respectively). Graph 1 shows the population change of TREDD counties from 2000 to 2011.

**Graph 1**

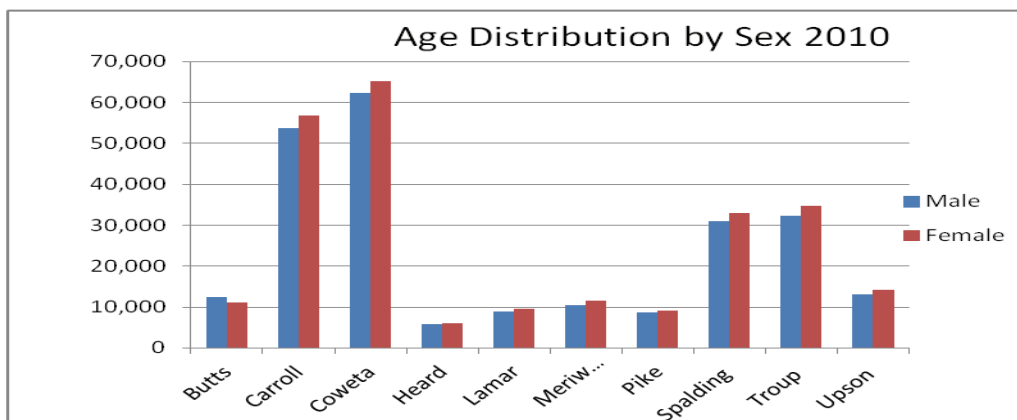


## AGE DISTRIBUTION AND GENDER

Most of the population in the TREDD can be found in the adult labor pool (ages 20-64). According to the U.S. Census, 40.42% of TREDD's population is made up of people age 20 to 64 years old. Citizens age 65+ comprise 12.08% of the TREDD population. The senior citizen population is expected to increase over time as the baby boomer generation ages. Table 2 highlights age distribution within the TREDD.

Table 2: Age Distribution								
	Under 18	Under 5	5-19	20-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65 and Over
Butts	5,325	1,425	4,532	1,604	3,262	5,236	4,611	2,985
Carroll	28,124	7,803	24,953	9,841	14,732	22,329	18,761	12,108
Coweta	34,832	9,283	28,582	6,637	16,228	30,062	23,285	13,240
Heard	3,048	746	2,638	640	1,253	2,624	2,368	1,565
Lamar	3,869	1,087	4,016	1,443	2,044	3,564	3,676	2,487
Meriwether	5,210	1,429	4,384	1,243	2,477	4,237	4,755	3,467
Pike	4,838	1,011	4,305	849	1,883	4,180	3,445	2,196
Spalding	16,211	4,625	13,346	3,987	8,324	12,949	12,303	8,539
Troup	17,802	4,749	15,082	4,366	8,213	13,606	12,725	8,303
Upson	6,417	1,691	5,498	1,579	3,017	5,569	5,547	4,252
TRRC	125,676	33,849	107,336	32,189	61,433	104,356	91,476	59,142

**Graph 2**



Graph 2 displays age distribution by sex. Females represent a higher percentage of the population across the TREDD. The exception is in Butts County where males outnumber the females and in Heard County where the population has an even male to female ratio.

## **HOUSING**

**H**ousing characteristics is an area of critical interest to every government. They are a measure to a community's quality and quantity of life. Housing trends are used to identify cause and affect relationships between local housing conditions and economic and social conditions. Trends such as housing projections, type, and location can be studied to understand how a community functions and to predict what directions the market may take in the years ahead. In 2010, there were 175, 728 housing units within the TREDD. Over the past 10 years, 27, 344 houses were added in the District. Table 3 illustrates the number of households by County from 2000 to 2010. All of the Counties have added a significant number of households over the past ten years, with the exception of Upson County, which lost 220 households.

<b>Table 3: Total Households</b>			
	<b>2010</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>Butts</b>	7,789	6,455	17.13%
<b>Carroll</b>	39,421	31,568	19.92%
<b>Coweta</b>	44,137	31,442	28.76%
<b>Heard</b>	4,287	4,043	5.69%
<b>Lamar</b>	6,377	5,712	10.43%
<b>Meriwether</b>	8,453	8,248	2.43%
<b>Pike</b>	5,957	4,755	20.18%
<b>Spalding</b>	23,105	21,519	6.86%
<b>Troup</b>	23,690	21,920	7.47%
<b>Upson</b>	10,502	10,722	-2.09%
<b>TRRC</b>	175,728	148,384	15.56%

Median housing costs throughout the district are widely considered affordable, given the TREDD's median household incomes. However, median home values remain below the State's median housing value for homeowners, thus making the District highly attractive to buyers seeking an affordable cost of living. Table 4 describes the distribution of median home values for the TREDD and its Counties from 2000 to 2010. The median housing value within the TREDD was \$142,880 in 2010. This amount was less than the state average of \$161,400. Coweta County's median home value (\$177,900) was significantly higher than the State of Georgia's (161,400) median home value.

<b>Table 4: DISTRIBUTION OF MEDIAN HOME VALUES</b>				
	<b>2000</b>		<b>2010</b>	
	<b>Actual</b>	<b>% of State</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>% of State</b>
<b>GEORGIA</b>	\$111,200	100.00%	\$161,400	100.00%
<b>Butts</b>	\$86,700	77.97%	\$142,900	88.54%
<b>Carroll</b>	\$93,300	83.90%	\$139,900	86.68%
<b>Coweta</b>	\$121,700	109.44%	\$177,900	110.22%
<b>Heard</b>	\$72,900	65.56%	\$95,300	59.05%
<b>Lamar</b>	\$79,900	71.85%	\$114,100	70.69%
<b>Meriwether</b>	\$66,300	59.62%	\$95,600	59.23%
<b>Pike</b>	\$103,000	92.63%	\$153,300	94.98%
<b>Spalding</b>	\$86,600	77.88%	\$124,400	77.08%
<b>Troup</b>	\$83,700	75.27%	\$130,300	80.73%
<b>Upson</b>	\$66,100	59.44%	\$93,700	58.05%
<b>TREDD</b>	\$97,140	87.36%	\$142,880	88.53%

The alternative to buying a home is renting, which is designed to offset the large costs of ownership. Table 5 examines the median gross rent for TREDD and its Counties from 2000 to 2010. As with housing costs, median gross rents for the TREDD have drastically increased from 2000 to 2010. In comparison to the State average of \$ 808 per month, the median gross rent in the TREDD was \$732 per month in 2010. The median gross rent of the TREDD Counties ranged from \$564 in Upson County to \$887 in Coweta County. Upson County and Meriwether County offered the lowest median rents at \$564 per month and \$647 per month, respectively.

<b>Table 5: Median Gross Rent</b>				
	2000		2010	
	Actual	% of State	Actual	% of State
<b>GEORGIA</b>	\$613	100.00%	\$808	100.00%
Butts	\$480	78.30%	\$751	92.95%
Carroll	\$488	79.61%	\$749	92.70%
Coweta	\$628	102.45%	\$887	109.78%
Heard	\$428	69.82%	\$708	87.62%
Lamar	\$441	71.94%	\$659	81.56%
Meriwether	\$427	69.66%	\$647	80.07%
Pike	\$470	76.67%	\$853	105.57%
Spalding	\$537	87.60%	\$762	94.31%
Troup	\$582	94.94%	\$662	81.93%
Upson	\$414	67.54%	\$564	69.80%
<b>TREDD</b>	\$551	89.89%	\$732	90.57%

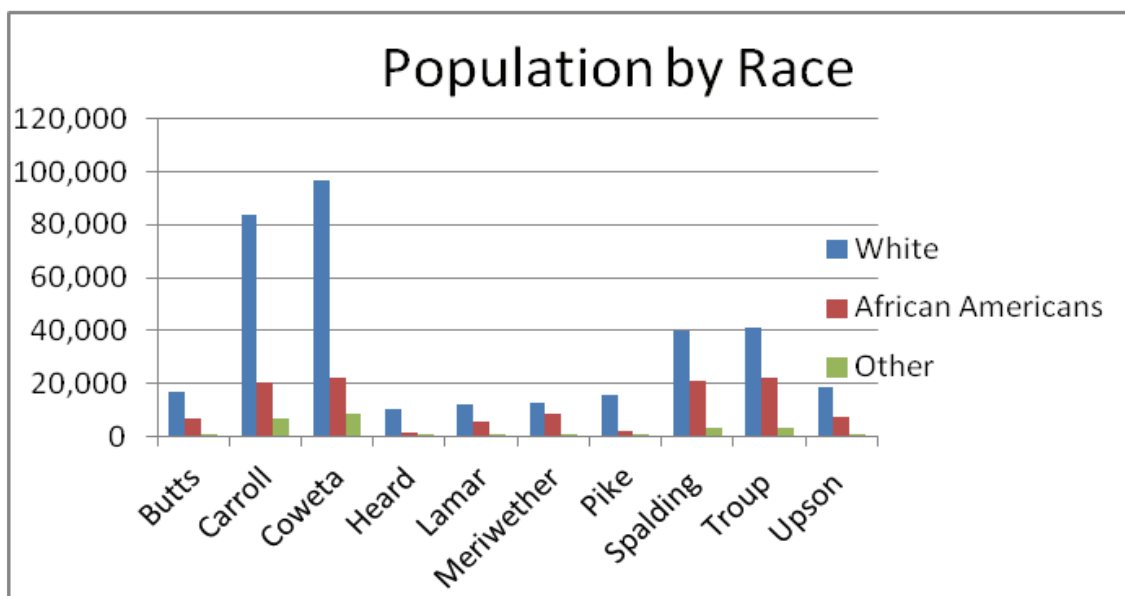
The rate of foreclosures has deeply impacted our national, regional and local economies. The impacts of foreclosures for our Counties translates into more revenue being allocated to items such as policing, fire protection, social services, demolition, inspection, legal action, and overall management of foreclosure homes, if they remain empty and are not sold quickly. Table 6 highlights the number of foreclosures by County. In 2012, Carroll County reported the highest foreclosure counts within the TREDD. In Carroll County, 1 in every 172 housing units received a filing of foreclosure in 2012. Butts County reported the second highest count of foreclosures with 1 in every 203 housing units receiving a filing of foreclosure. Heard County is the least affected by the negative impacts of foreclosures. Only 1 in every 2,474 housing units received a foreclosure filing.

<b>Table 6: Foreclosure Activity (2012)</b>		
	Foreclosures	1 in every Housing Unit
<b>Butts</b>	390	1/203
<b>Carroll</b>	1,975	1/172
<b>Coweta</b>	1,041	1/267
<b>Heard</b>	25	1/2474
<b>Lamar</b>	148	1/374
<b>Meriwether</b>	164	1/524
<b>Pike</b>	189	1/325
<b>Spalding</b>	764	1/319
<b>Troup</b>	406	1/438
<b>Upson</b>	155	1/676
<b>TREDD</b>	5,257	

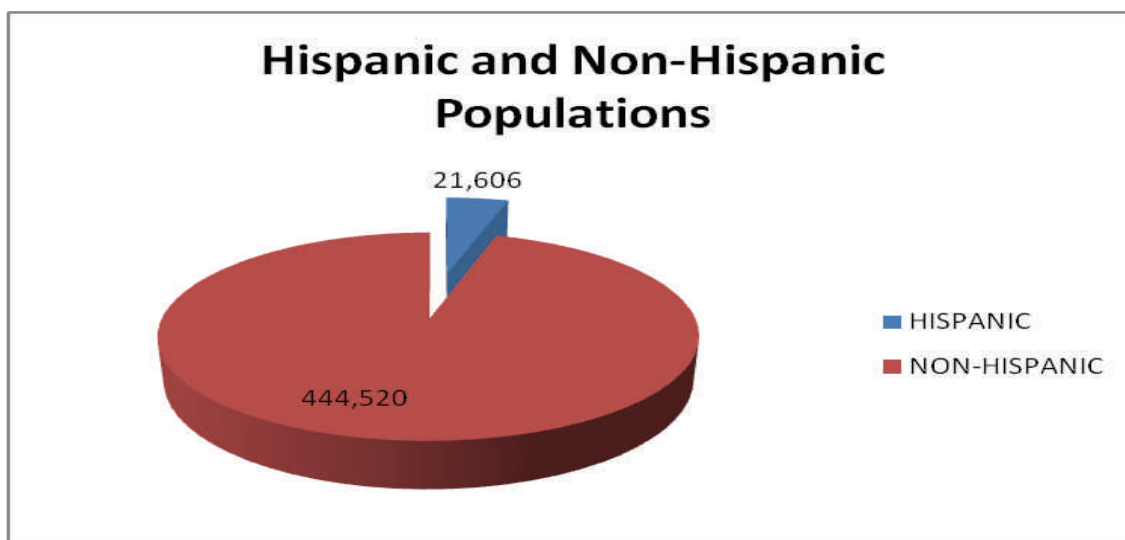
## **RACIAL COMPOSITION**

**W**hite and African American races remain the largest racial groups in the TREDD. However, the Hispanic population has dramatically increased in the last decade. Graphs 4 and 5 display the racial composition of counties within the District.

**Graph 4**



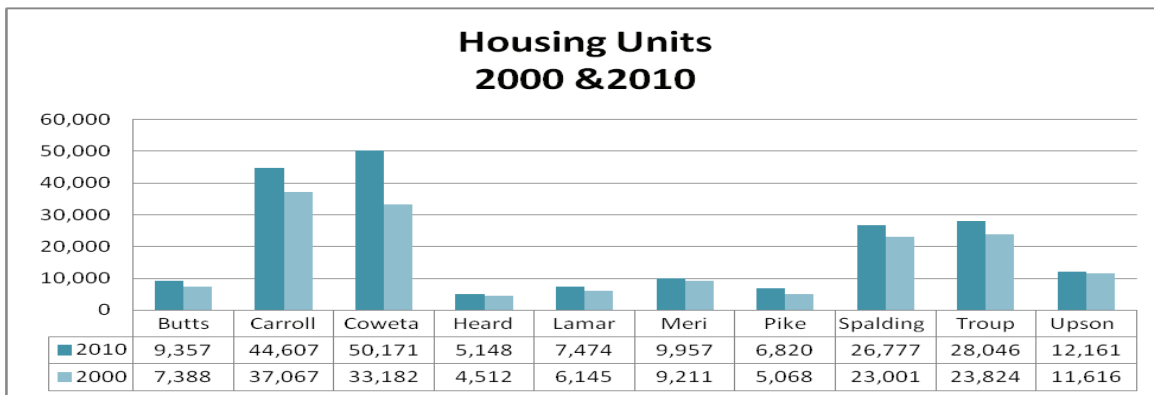
**Graph 5**





Graph 5 compares the total number of housing units in the TREDD Counties from 2000 to 2010. Five of the Counties within the TREDD had less than 10,000 housing units while the remaining five had over 10,000 housing units. Coweta (50,171) and Carroll (44,607) Counties reported the highest number of housing units within the District.

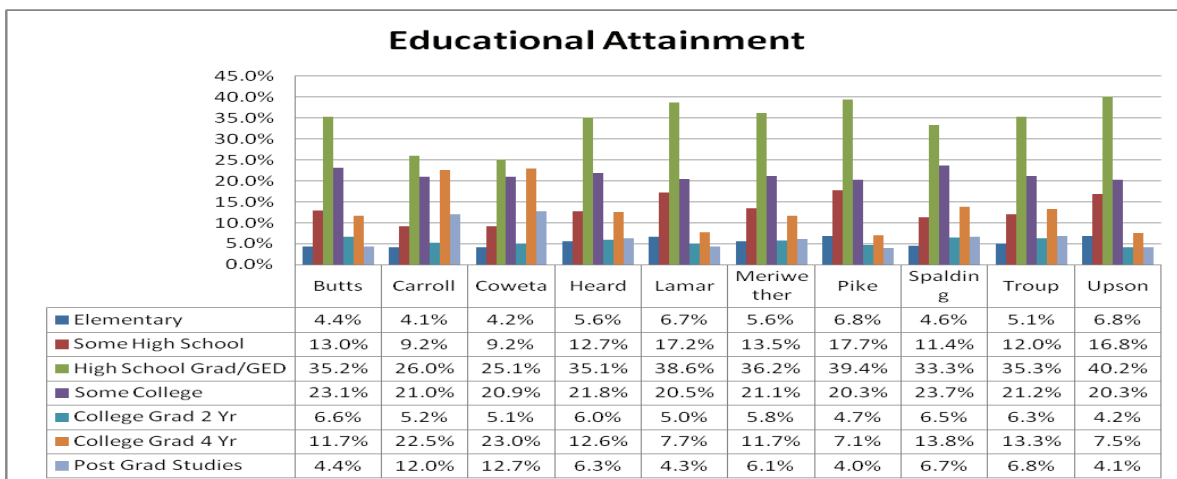
**Graph 5**



### **Education of Labor Force**

Education is an important indicator of the overall productivity of an economy. The higher the level of educational attainment within a community: the greater the human capital available to aid the production of goods and services for the various sectors of the economy. Thus, education and productivity are positively correlated. Graph 6 displays within the educational attainment of citizens within the TREDD.

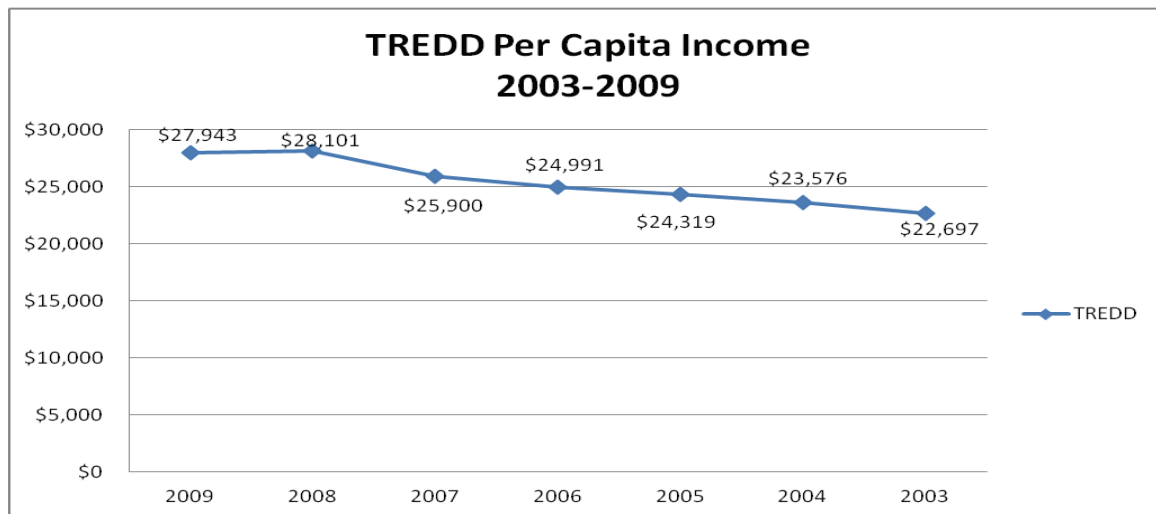
**Graph 6**



## **INCOME**

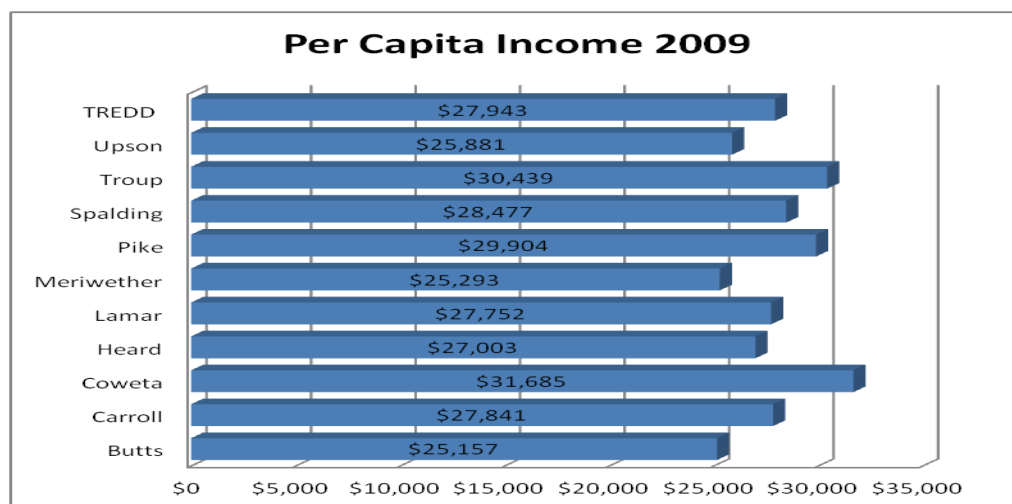
Graph 7 shows the TREDD per capita income from 2003 to 2009. The District's average total personal income earned by individual workers was \$27,943 in 2009. This displays an increase of \$5,246 from 2003 to 2009.

**Graph 7**



Graph 8 evaluates the per capita income by County in 2009. Coweta (\$31,685) and Troup (\$30,439) Counties had the highest per capita income levels. Butts (\$25,157) and Meriwether (\$25,293) Counties had the lowest per capital income levels.

**Graph 8**



The income of an average household increased from \$38,064 in 1999 to \$44,802 in 2010 in the TREDD, according to the U.S. Census. Coweta County had the highest income in the region with \$61,550 in 2010. Pike County had the second highest income in the region with \$53,213. Graph 9 compares 1999 and 2010 median household incomes for counties within the TREDD.

**Graph 9**

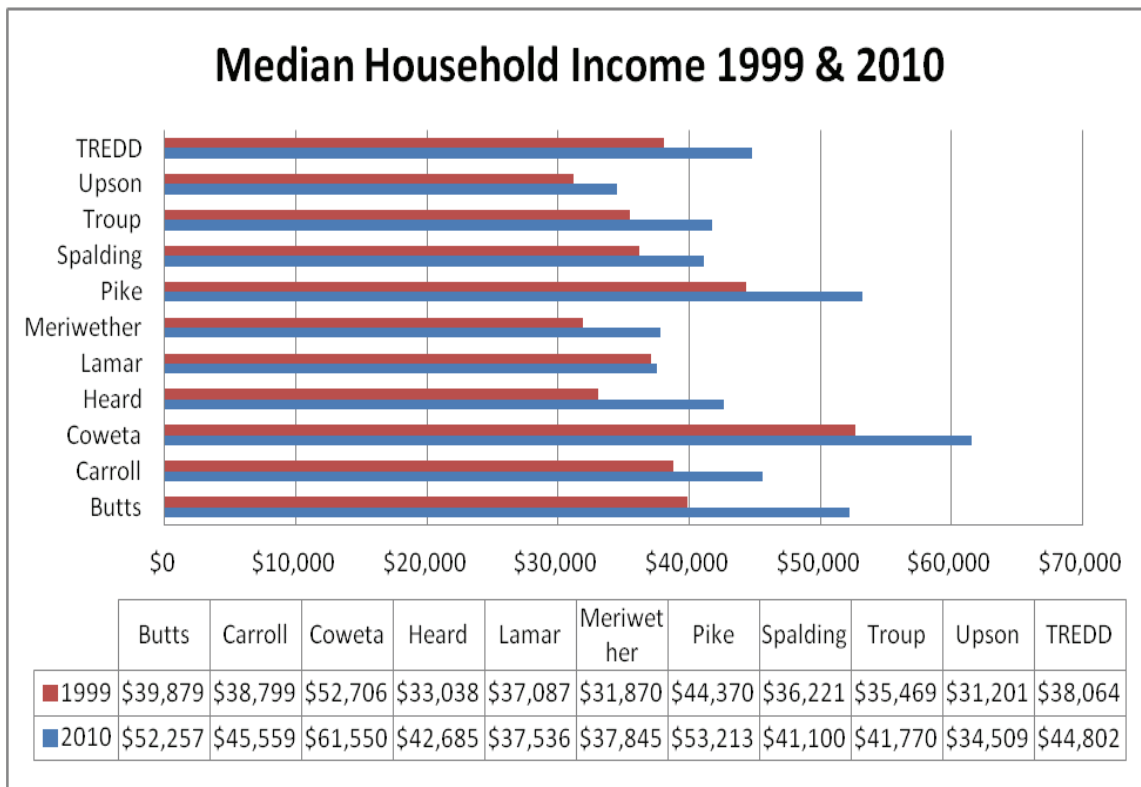


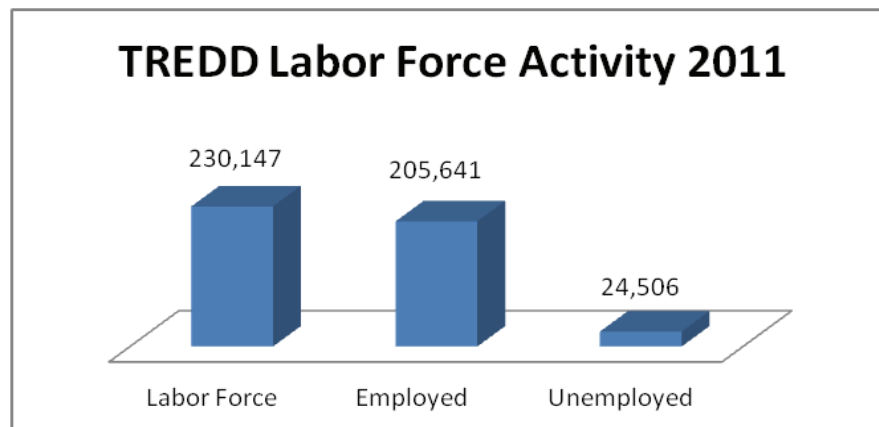
Table 7 compares poverty levels of the State of Georgia, TREDD, and its counties. In 2010, over 80,000 residents of the District reportedly earned less than the poverty threshold, which is approximately 17.02% of the total population. The majority of the region experienced similar levels of poverty. Coweta (11.00%) and Pike (12.70%) Counties had the lowest poverty levels within the District. Spalding (35.10%) County had an overwhelming number of children living below the poverty level. It is important for policy makers in the TREDD to pay close attention to causes of poverty, which may include low levels of higher education, unemployment, disability, and fixed incomes of an aging population. Investment in education will translate to lower poverty levels in the near future.

<b>Table 7: Persons Below Poverty 2010</b>			
	<b>Persons Below Poverty</b>	<b>% of Total Population</b>	<b>% children 0 – 17</b>
<b>Butts</b>	3,506	16.50%	23.50%
<b>Carroll</b>	20,312	19.00%	24.30%
<b>Coweta</b>	14,026	11.00%	16.90%
<b>Heard</b>	2,488	21.30%	31.20%
<b>Lamar</b>	3,011	17.80%	26.80%
<b>Meriwether</b>	4,324	20.10%	31.20%
<b>Pike</b>	2,222	12.70%	18.30%
<b>Spalding</b>	14,122	22.50%	35.10%
<b>Troup</b>	13,686	21.10%	29.90%
<b>Upson</b>	5,648	21.30%	31.80%
<b>TREDD</b>	<b>83,345</b>	17.02%	-----
<b>Georgia</b>	<b>1,540,988</b>	15.70%	-----

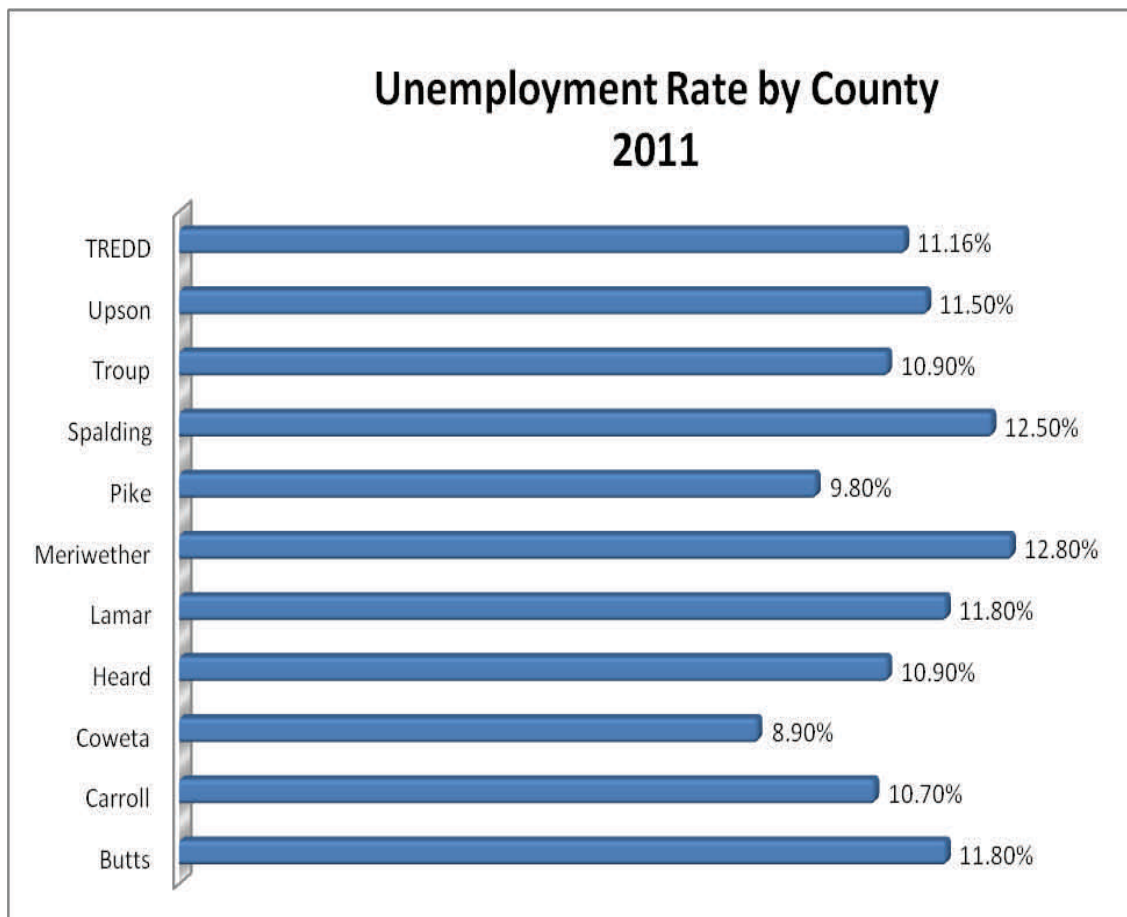
## ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Information concerning the skills and abilities of the labor force provides a strong indication of the economic potential of a District. Occupational characteristics highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the available labor pool, offering guidance as to the employment needs and limitations. In 2011, 205,641 residents were employed throughout the TREDD. The annual unemployment rate for the TREDD was 11.16%. Graph 10 identifies the 2011 labor activity within the TREDD.

**Graph 10**



**Graph 11**



Unemployment rates are significant in identifying the viability of the local economy. Trends in this area reflect the stability of local industries. Unemployment levels also represent a measure of the poverty level within the area and potential deficiencies in the redistribution of wealth. Unemployment rates from 2011 are displayed in Graph 11. Meriwether (12.8%) County had the highest unemployment rate within the TREDD followed by Spalding (12.50%) County. Coweta County had the lowest unemployment rate at 8.90%.

Graph 12 examines the Average Weekly Wage of employees in 2009. The Average Weekly Wage of the TREDD was \$638. By County, the average weekly wage ranged from \$529 in Pike County to \$957 in Heard County. Heard County accredited the high average weekly earnings to the well paying jobs of construction workers within the area.

**Graph 12**

