



IPDC DEVELOPMENTS

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ISOTHERMAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Golden Leaf awards \$2,250,000 to Rutherford County Projects

Two projects in Rutherford County have been awarded funds from the Golden LEAF Foundation as part of their new community assistance initiative which awards funds to non-profits and local governments in economically distressed counties. Local organizations including IPDC, county commissioners, county employees and Golden Leaf staff worked together to select submitted projects that would most benefit Rutherford County.

The Broadband Access Initiative at Foothills Connect received \$1,450,000 to continue to place high-speed internet access throughout the county. The goal is to have ultra high-speed internet access throughout the county starting with the schools, fire departments, emergency medical services, police departments, and eventually every home in Rutherford County.



The second project awarded was \$800,000 to develop a trades training program at Isothermal Community College for short-term training in welding, machining, and construction. The courses will meet the needs of new and expanding industry in the region and will help job seekers gain higher-paying, higher-benefit employment.

This project was developed as a partnership between Isothermal Community College, IPDC's Region C Workforce Development Board, Rutherford County Economic Development Commission, and Youth Empowerment of Rutherford County.



You ARE what you EAT!!



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IPDC nabbed first place in the scarecrow contest sponsored by Rutherford Town Revitalization. For this year's entry, staff chose the theme "You are what you eat". Kudos to (L-R) Lori Simpson, Mandy Johnson and Susan Shires for their creativity and enthusiasm in getting our blue ribbon!

The \$100 prize money will be used toward the Christmas Families and Trick or Treat on Main Street.

Tryon Chosen for Small Town Main Street Program

Congratulations, Town of Tryon!!

Tryon was one of only six small towns selected for the 2007 NC Main Street Program. The NC Department of Commerce program helps small towns to recognize and preserve their historic fabric to create vibrant central business districts in four areas: organization, design, promotion, and economic restructuring. Tryon Mayor, Alan Peoples, noted that the town is "moving forward toward a better tomorrow...toward bustling shops, new businesses, a beautiful townscape, and a strong sense of unity." For information, contact Jim Fatland, (828) 859-6655 or visit www.nccommerce.com/en/CommunityServices/CommunityPlanningAssistance/NCMainStreetCenter/



Region C Gets Ready for the North Carolina Career Readiness Certificate

Implementation grants to initiate the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) Program have been awarded to two Region C community colleges, McDowell Technical Community College and Cleveland Community College, and Isothermal Community College will know soon about its application. The grants are the work of a state-wide partnership between the Community College System, Workforce Development regions, JobLink Career Centers, private business/industry, and the public school system.

The CRC is a portable credential that promotes the development of job skills and career readiness. Employers are increasingly concerned with ensuring that both potential and incumbent employees have the skills necessary to thrive in today's workplace. By 2010 more than 80 percent of all jobs are projected to require skills beyond those earned in high school. The CRC assures employers that the individual possesses basic skills in three areas: applied mathematics, reading, and locating information. The NC CRC is based on the ACT WorkKeys system, a nationally recognized system of job profiling, assessment and instructional support. The system awards three levels of certification – **Bronze, Silver and Gold.**

Anyone interested in obtaining Career Readiness Certification should contact their local college or JobLink:

McDowell County: CRC is available at the McDowell JobLink. Contact Gale Oliver at (828) 659-6001, ext. 106 or Jerry Broome at ext. 102.

Cleveland County: CRC is available at the Cleveland JobLink and CCC. Contact Christina Blanton, JobLink Coordinator at (704) 480-5414, ext. 107 or Emily Epley at CCC, (704) 484-6632.

Rutherford County: CRC will be available at Rutherford JobLink and ICC. Contact Christina Blanton, JobLink Coordinator at (828) 245-9841 or Thad Harrill at ICC, (828) 286-3636, ext. 363.



Brownfields Initiative Proposals Submitted to EPA

IPDC Grant Services and Planning staffs have submitted two proposals to the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to fund the development of a new regional Brownfields Initiative for Region C. A brownfield is property where the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse is complicated by the presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. This initiative would assist potential purchasers with the costs of determining whether or not a site has environmental contamination. It could also assist with getting a Brownfield Agreement in place with the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources to specify what remediation must happen on a specific site in order for it to be used for a new specific purpose.

IPDC staff has already begun developing educational materials and is in the process of launching a blog on the internet to provide local government leaders and planners with access to information about brownfields, environmental contamination and land recycling.

Staff applied for \$200,000 for hazardous materials assessment and \$200,000 for petroleum assessment. Proposals were due by October 12, 2007 and announcements are expected by March 30, 2008. For more information, contact Teresa Spires, (828) 287-2281, ext. 227.

RPO News and Notes

NCDOT engineers presented the latest information regarding the US-221 bypass at the RPO's regular TCC/TAC Meeting on Sept. 6, 2007. The proposed bypass, part of the US-221 widening from Marion to the South Carolina state line, runs between Rutherfordton and Spindale.

A public hearing on the alternatives will be held, and the Merger Team will choose an alternate based upon environmental impacts, public comments and cost.

The **Corridor Public Hearing** is expected to be held in **early 2008**;

The **selection of a corridor (LEDPA)** is expected to take place in **July, 2008**;

Right of Way acquisition is expected to begin **July, 2011**;

Construction is expected to begin in the **summer of 2013**. This project is part of the overall widening / improvement of US-221 from Marion to South Carolina.

The portion in Rutherford County south of US-74 is expected to begin construction in summer 2009. The portion between Marion and Rutherfordton is expected to begin construction in summer 2011.



The Isothermal RPO Transportation Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinating Committees meet quarterly on the fourth Thursday of the month. The next scheduled meeting is Nov. 29, 2007.



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLANNING GRANTS



NCDOT has issued a Call for Proposals for Pedestrian or Bicycle Planning Grants. These funds are to be used for the completion of either a pedestrian or bicycle comprehensive plan. Proposals are due by Dec. 3, 2007. More information can be found at: www.itre.ncsu.edu/ptg/bikeped/ncdot/index.html

SECTION 8 HIGHLIGHTS

The Section 8 Housing Assistance Program (HAP) received additional funding beginning July 2007 to support the 1,331 Housing Choice Vouchers allocated by the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) for the calendar year 2007. The funding increase was retroactive to January 1, 2007 and has resulted in a total of 262 new families receiving Vouchers during July and August. The application process was reopened beginning July 9, 2007 and continued through August 10, 2007. A total of 910 applications were processed by housing staff during the 30 day application period.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SHELBY STAR
Jason Wright, on ladder, and Matthew Hyland work in front of Blitz house.

Congratulations to Family Self-Sufficiency participant, Tara Smith, in transitioning from rental assistance to the Housing Choice Voucher Home Ownership

Program. Tara became the proud owner of a home constructed during the Habitat for Humanity Housing Blitz in early September.

Habitat along with sponsor First Baptist Church of Shelby worked on Thursday, Friday and Saturday for two consecutive weeks to complete the Blitz home. The church's Women's Missionary Union provided meals for the crews in addition to assistance from Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church.

IPDC also congratulates Costina Davis, a Polk County homeowner, upon her September 2007 graduation from the Family Self-Sufficiency program.

Costina received a final check for \$3,035.28 which gave her a grand total of \$3,735.28 awarded by HUD during her participation in the FSS program. An interest bearing FSS escrow account was established by IPDC for Costina with deposits made to the account based on increases in her earned income.



Costina Davis (left) receives final escrow check from FSS Program Coordinator, Pam Hall (right).

Weatherization Assistance Program

Cooler temperatures are just around the corner and the WAP staff is working hard to meet their fiscal year commitments. The program provides three major improvements to the homes of low-income, elderly, and handicapped residents:

- Reduction of excessive air infiltration
- Reduction of heat loss through attics, walls, and floors
- Tuning heating and air conditioners so they are more efficient

It's important to remember that the weatherization program is not a remodeling, maintenance or rehabilitation program. If you would like more information, please call Becky McKelvey at (828) 287-2281, ext. 1238.

New IPDC Website!

IPDC has recently switched hosts and is currently rebuilding its website, at www.regionc.org. Information is being added to the web-site weekly, so expect changes!

We would like your event or meetings added to the website calendar, so please forward that information to us. ***If there is something that you feel needs to be added or changed, please let us know!***

Thank you for your patience as we update our website - it is a work in progress (as all websites are)!



IPDC Staff Changes

Josh King has joined the IPDC as the new regional planner/RPO. He hails from Buffalo, NY and comes to us via Charlotte. After a brief stint with the US Army, he attended Buffalo State College and graduated with a B.S. in Urban and Regional Planning and Analysis. He has several years experience working with community groups in the greater Buffalo region and looks forward to working with the local governments here.



David Covington came to IPDC in August as the new Executive Director of the Western North Carolina Housing Partnership. Originally from Winston-Salem, David has lived in Rutherford County for the past 24 years, working in the textile industry. In the last seven years he worked for three textile companies that closed, so he has seen first-hand the dramatic economic changes in Region C. He is ready for the challenges of helping to develop quality affordable housing in the 31-county area of the housing partnership.



Lawndale Receives \$1 Million North Carolina Community Assistance Grant

The town of Lawndale was awarded a \$1 million grant last week that will go toward upgrading the town's sewer facilities. Mayor Rick Garver said plans for the grant money would help the town boost its economy and attract new businesses and restaurants. The grant application was submitted by IPDC grant services staff. For more information, contact Teresa Spires at (828) 287-2281.

We hope this issue was informative. Please share with others in your organization.



Isothermal Planning and
Development Commission

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Mailing Address Line 2

Mailing Address Line 3

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Board of Directors Meeting Schedule for Fiscal Year 2008

September 11, 2007
November 13, 2007
January 8, 2008

March 11, 2008
May 2, 2008 Annual Meeting and Dinner
June 10, 2008