



ENVISION

Creating Meaningful Change in Our Community

Press Release

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For Immediate Release

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Effective Regionalism At Its Best!

DOTHAN, Ala. - The ENVISION Effective Regionalism Task Force announced that three of its committees, Regional Healthcare, Wiregrass Beautification and EMS/EMA, have exciting activities and strategies in place that involves regionalism in an eight-county area: Houston, Henry, Dale, Geneva, Pike, Barbour, Covington and Coffee counties.

"These are exciting times in our region," stated Mike Schmitz, task force chair. "Each of these committees is led by and comprised of strong, community-minded volunteers. It is through their determination and commitments, that these committees will be able to address the issues at hand and achieve the goals set before them."

The Effective Regionalism Task Force is one of four task forces that was established from the goals identified in the March 2006 *ENVISION Community Strategic Plan*. Once created, the Effective Regionalism Task Force broke itself down into 11 smaller specialized committees in order to address specific issues. Three of those committees are:

- **Regional Healthcare Committee**, Chair - Ronnie Dean, *Southeast Alabama Medical Center*
The Committee is comprised of the Southeast Alabama Hospital Council members. The Committee will identify actionable health needs in the communities within the eight-county area. The chief executive officers, or their designee, will lead the planning efforts and will report progress to the Regional Healthcare Committee.
- **Wiregrass Beautification Committee**, Chair - Jack Sasser, *Wiregrass Rehabilitation Services, Inc.*
The Committee has put together a clean-up program that is a regional initiative to educate people about litter prevention and ways to reduce, reuse, recycle and properly manage waste materials; place emphasis on regional partnerships and alliances with citizens, businesses and government to improve the region; and focus on beautification, recycling and litter control. The Committee will consider

programs such as KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL and PEOPLE AGAINST LITTER (PALS) as resources and a means of making the Wiregrass more attractive to individuals considering relocating to the area and to add economic value as industries also consider locating to the Wiregrass.

- **EMS/EMA Committee**, Chair - Bruce McNeal, Southeast Alabama Medical Center
The Committee is comprised of representatives from emergency medical services and emergency management agencies. The Committee will to identify common issues that negatively impact the agencies and people that these representatives serve and the development of strategic plans to help resolve these issues. Through meaningful discussions and planning, the Committee feels that resolutions of these issues can occur. A detailed listing of agencies in the eight county region, along with each agencies' capabilities and resources, is currently being compiled.

"It is through this collaboration of work that enables us to create meaningful change in our community. This is regionalism at its best," concluded Schmitz.

ENVISION Background:

In October 2005, area officials came together to undertake a comprehensive planning effort that allowed citizens, elected leaders and business leaders to identify key issues to address so that continued improvements could be made in the Wiregrass area. The final result was the "ENVISION Community Strategic Plan." The "Strategic Plan" outlined specific, detailed goals, objectives and action steps for our community to take in order to achieve its ideal future. And to obtain this ideal future, the ENVISION initiative needs to ensure a healthy economy and growing community.

ENVISION is an inclusive, community volunteer initiative operating in collaboration with the Wiregrass Foundation, Dothan Area Chamber Foundation, City of Dothan, Houston County and Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce as significant partners.

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