

The West Side Connection

West side planning moves forward



The Greenville West Side Comprehensive Plan was presented to the community at an open house event at the Kroc Center in December. Attendees moved from station to station to learn about different recommendations from each chapter of the plan.

2014 started out strong for Greenville's west side as The Lawrence Group presented a draft of the *Greenville West Side Comprehensive Plan* to City Council for review in early January.

The plan is part of the multi-phase \$1.8 million federal grant planning project, Connections for Sustainability, that has produced several reports since 2011 regarding transportation, economic development, housing, and open space in the city.

The plan evolved from months of hard work by City of Greenville staff, project consultants, and the members of the community who participated in the weeklong design workshop in August and other input sessions held throughout the fall and winter.

Highlights from the comprehensive plan include three core principles, which underlie all of the recommendations throughout the rest of the plan. The core principles promote



A resident listens as City staff goes over recommendations from the comprehensive plan about parks and open space at the open house presentation in December.

creating opportunity for people of all backgrounds, establishing a culture of healthy living, and making the west side a child-friendly community.

These principles align with the Department of Housing and Urban Development-Department of Transportation-Environmental

Protection Agency (HUD-DOT-EPA) Partnership for Sustainable Communities' six livability principles, shown on pages four and five. The plan's core principles should serve as guidelines for

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Community brand coming to west side

As planning efforts on the west side progress, the Connections for Sustainability team prepares for a new planning task with residents and business owners. Arnett Muldrow and Associates, a local consulting firm, has been working with the Connections team over the duration of the project, and they will be leading a branding

workshop for the community in March.

The workshop will last over three days with the goal of developing a distinctive brand system for the west side. The first two days will be spent talking with residents and members of the community in order to understand their views. During this time, the consultants

will also spend time visiting business owners and talking to people in the west side in order to get to know the community better. On the final day of the workshop, attendees will get to see

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Check Out the Website

connections.greenvillesc.gov

What's New

Stay updated with the latest news from Connections for Sustainability. This page provides a brief overview of the project's most recent events.

Livability Educator

Want to know more about Jaclin's unique educational programs? Visit the Livability Educator and Livability Studio pages on the website to access her materials.

Project Library & more...

All of the reports and plans produced during the Connections for Sustainability project are available on the Project Library page. The website also has information on neighborhoods in the study area as well as a project timeline. See page 4 for a preview!

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The West Side Connection

Market study underway for west side

To follow up on input received during the design workshop week, Bob Lewis, Principal at Development Strategies out of St. Louis, Missouri, will return to Greenville to conduct a more in-depth market analysis.

Mr. Lewis spent three days in early February revisiting the study area and interviewing stakeholders in the west side regarding community needs. He spent the next weeks using these comments and data to determine types of development that are appropriate and realistic for the west side community.

Types of development considered in the study included retail, housing, and commercial among other things, but the City specifically requested an in-depth look at the potential for a grocery store in the market.

During the design workshop and at various other Connections events, the need for a grocery store in the area was clearly heard. This type of study is the first of many steps in trying to fill that gap for the community.

This study is also significant

because it complements the recommendations made in the Greenville West Side Master Plan and offers more specific strategies based on what he found the west side market can support.

Additionally, Mr. Lewis' participation during the design workshop back in August gives him insight into the future of the west side community, meaning his work is closely tied to the other planning efforts in the west side.

Join us on Thursday, March 6 at 6 PM at the Kroc Center to learn about Mr. Lewis' results. He will be presenting his recommendations to the public and will be prepared to take comments and questions.



Bob Lewis

Principal, Development Strategies

Let's Play!



Have you seen the MobiRec Van in your neighborhood yet?

The MobiRec van is used to reach neighborhood children who may not have access to recreation programs. There are many items in the van to play with, including: a parachute, footballs, soccer balls, hula hoops, and tons of other toys!

Check out the Connections website for more information!

WGGC receives facelift and NOOKs for children

The West Greenville Community Center is getting a technological make-over! New computers and computer tablets, NOOKs, are being funded as part of the Connections for Sustainability grant project.

The new computers will bring much-needed advances to the center and will be used in both the afterschool program and the Livability Education program. Since the Nooks are portable, the community center space can be better utilized for a variety of programs.

In addition to the computers and tablets, new desks, chairs, bulletin boards, and computer software will also be purchased. To make the community center more user-friendly, a new reception desk and seating will also be purchased for the lobby. This will help the facility better serve the public and students, as well as provide a point of access for the NOOKs.

The computer lab is open daily for the public to use, but hours vary between summer and school year schedules so check with the community center before you come out. Stay tuned to the Connections website and monthly newsletter for Livability Educator courses offered through the spring.

Handwriting Without Tears®
WET DRY TRY

JENNIFER

CAPITALS (A) **NUMBERS** (5)

lowercase (f)

NOOKs can provide an immediate response/assessment to help students learn reading, math, and writing using software such as the Handwriting Without Tears program used in Greenville County schools.

Neighborhood Associations

Join your local neighborhood association! To meet new neighbors and stay informed about your community, contact your neighborhood president for membership details, or go to a meeting listed below. More info is available at <http://www.greenvillesc.gov/Living/Associations.aspx>.

Southernside

President
Mary Duckett
Meeting Time
2nd Thursdays @ 7 pm
Meeting Place
813 Hampton Ave

West End

President
Sloan Sitton
Meeting Time
1st Tuesdays @ 6:30 pm
Meeting Place
Pendleton Street Baptist Church

West Greenville

President
Rev Vardrey Fleming
Meeting Time
2nd Tuesdays @ 6:30 pm
Meeting Place
West Greenville Community Center

Majora Carter speaks on Home(town) Security

November was an exciting month for Connections for Sustainability, and a major highlight was guest speaker Majora Carter.

Majora is an eco-entrepreneur, urban revitalization strategist, and Peabody Award winning radio broadcaster, and Connections for Sustainability was fortunate enough to host Majora for two speaking engagements. The topic of conversation was strengthening the economic fabric of neighborhoods from the inside, which Majora calls Home(town) Security.

The first engagement was a lunch-and-learn event, which had strong participation from the west side neighborhoods and service providers represented. Majora led the conversation with a presentation on her model to make a community program successful.

The discussion that followed responded to specific issues in the west side community and generated constructive conversations between several different organizations. Topics addressed included youth programs, securing funding, and employment strategies.

The second engagement was a formal presentation in the evening to a crowd of approximately 75. Majora presented her model for successful neighborhood programs and elaborated with her own programming stories from her hometown, the South Bronx. She shared how she was able to leverage a \$10,000 grant into a \$3 million park on the river, which speaks to her ability to turn ideas into achievements.

The event wrapped up with questions and answers relating her experience to the west side.

MAJORA CARTER'S MODEL FOR A SUCCESSFUL NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAM

Meet a Need: Ideas have to serve a market or policy need to be successful. Additionally, the idea has to be attractive to others, including investors.

Secure Investment: Once an idea is established that meets a need in the community, find the right angel investment to start building out the program.

Launch Beta Version: With funding in place, do a test run of the program. This will help identify any problems that may have gone unnoticed otherwise.

Learn and Refine: Learn from the beta version and rework any snags that occurred in the programming. This is also a good time to research other programs and get input from others.

Reiterate and Expand: Every program should be a constant learning experience and expanding to meet needs as the program grows. Make sure to keep the previous four steps a part of the program model as it prepares to grow.



Community members meet and greet (top) during a Sustainable Conversations lunch-and-learn in November, and a larger audience listens as Majora Carter speaks that evening at the Kroc Center (bottom).

Have you been to one of our Sustainable Cinema or Sustainable Conversations events yet?

*Light lunches or snacks provided
Great learning opportunity*

Check out the Connections website for upcoming dates!

Fall fair, talent show a big success

The West Side Fall Fair had more than 150 guests as we celebrated the community with a presentation on history, nature crafts, It's a TREEmendous Day in the City events, and the West Side Talent Show.

The Kroc Center was packed with adults and children alike who came to check out the educational booths and entertainment.

Among several others, representatives from the Shoeless Joe Jackson Museum, The Children's Museum of the Upstate, the NAACP, and Clemson's Master Naturalist program hosted booths. Other guests included Don Koonce, a local historian who presented the history of the west side; C. Michael Forsyth, a local author who read from his latest book; a local artist who created a piece during the event as one of the

many raffle items; and MobiRec, which turned the outdoor space into an awesome play area.

A large section of the fair was dedicated to the It's a TREEmendous Day in the City celebration of urban trees as part of the TD Green Streets grant lead by the Livability Educator. Attendees created tree crafts, learned about tree care, and took home their own saplings. Dale Westermeier with the City's Parks and Recreation Department taught a tree planting workshop in front of the Kroc Center.

Many would say, however, that the best part of the day was the talent show. A range of performers participated, including talented vocalists, a young drummer, a first grade version of Michael Jackson, two pianists, and several outstanding dance groups.



These two neighborhood children take time from creating nature crafts to enjoy the Safe Routes to School photo booth and props.

The West Side Connection

Planning...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

future projects in the west side.

The major recommendations from the plan directly relate to each of the three guiding principles. One recommendation from the housing chapter suggests the formation of a community land trust which would create opportunities for preserving affordable housing, addressing the first principle of creating opportunities for everyone. A recommendation to create an urban farm and education center supports the second principle, encouraging healthy lifestyles. Many recommendations from the transportation chapter address the third principle, creating a child

friendly community, including the suggestion to create safer pedestrian connections along Academy Street.

The plan chapters address major issues within the west side community, including organizational structure, jobs, health, transportation, public space and infrastructure, housing, and development strategies.

The plan addresses implementation in terms of private and public investment strategies. The suggested private investments largely focus on housing and commercial development. The recommended public investments address transportation and public infrastructure issues. Some of these recommendations are street improvements throughout

Livability Principles

Provide more transportation choices.

Develop safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health.

Promote equitable, affordable housing.

Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races, and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.

Enhance economic competitiveness.

Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs by workers, as well as expanded business access to markets.

CONNECTIONS: WHAT'S HAPPENED SINCE 2011?

E-Newsletter

The monthly e-newsletter has been a great way to keep up with the latest happenings in the Connections project. It also features the "Sustainable Spotlight," a great article with tips on how to include sustainable practices in your daily life.

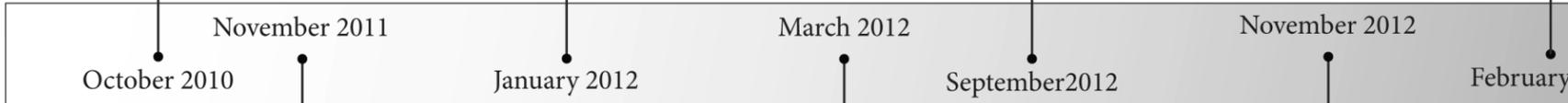
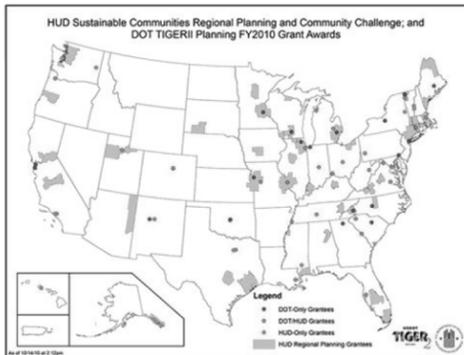
Focus Teams Partner with Clemson

The City enlisted Clemson's city planning students to assist the Focus Teams that were created to guide the project's main emphases of housing, transportation, economic development, and open space.

Park Plan K

The west side planning p design workshop. After r from the public, the final September 2013.

\$1.8M Grant Awarded



Livability Educator Hired

Jaclin joined the team and has since crafted educational programs for kids and adults, secured grants, created classroom lesson books, written and illustrated two coloring books, and led the Sustainable Cinema events. Wow!



Citywide Planning Phase Begins

Transportation and housing studies as well as work on transit oriented economic development design standards began during this phase. This phase also included several workshops, public meetings, and presentations for both studies. The transit feasibility study was published in January 2013 and the housing study followed in March 2013.



Champions of the Environment Grant

Livability Educator secured a \$2,000 grant to build a plastic bottle greenhouse at AJ Whittenberg, which was dedicated in July 2013.

Support existing communities.

Target federal funding toward existing communities—through strategies like transit oriented, mixed-use development, and land recycling—to increase community revitalization and the efficiency of public works investments and safeguard rural landscapes.

Coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment.

Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy

Value communities and neighborhoods.

Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods—rural, urban, or suburban.

the west side; bridge/underpass improvements on Queen Street, West Washington Avenue, and Hampton Avenue; better transit options; park improvements throughout the community including restoration of Woodside's ball field and enhancements to the Swamp Rabbit Trail within the west side; and stormwater and sewer improvements.

Each recommendation is accompanied by a funding level estimate and a timeframe for implementation ranging from short-term to long-term. A short-term recommendation given is to introduce a trolley route to the west side. According to the plan, this could be implemented within one to five years at a cost range of \$50,000 to \$250,000. An example

of a long-term recommendation from the plan is to improve the park system in the west side. While some improvements could be achieved in the short-term, many improvements, like the potential park plan, may be decades out. This is largely due to availability of funding.

The significance of this plan is it provides a framework as the area continues to develop. It will serve as a tool City Council can reference for how the area should grow, what timeframe is appropriate for projects, and how much those projects are estimated to cost.

The plan will be available on the Connections for Sustainability website as soon as it is published. Be sure to check it out on the Project Library page.

The Connections for Sustainability project has been underway for three years now and has produced reports, community events, educational pieces, and a lot more. We have put together this project timeline to show you some of the major accomplishments from this time. Check out the complete timeline on the Connections for Sustainability website under the Project Timeline page.

Kicks Off

Phase kicked off with a receiving tons of input draft was presented in



Spring and Green Fair

The Connections team hosted an educational fair at the West Greenville Community Center featuring information on living green for west side residents.



First Edition of WSC Printed

5,000 copies of each edition of The West Side Connection have been distributed to promote the west side planning phase.



West Side Planning Phase Ramps Up

The west side master planning process launched with a series of neighborhood meetings and a bike and walk tour before the weeklong design workshop. The plan draft was presented to the public at an open house in early December 2013, and it was presented to City Council in January 2014. It will be available online when published!



Sustainable Series Start Up

The Sustainable Conversations and Sustainable Cinema events began with discussions on neighborhood safety and short videos on bikes in the urban environment. The series have since continued monthly and have hosted guest speakers such as Majora Carter, who visited in November 2013.



TD Green Streets Grant

The Livability Educator administered a \$20,000 grant to fund educational activities regarding the benefits and maintenance of trees as well as the planting of over 100 trees along Hudson Street.



West Side Fall Fair

More than 150 people turned out to the fair, which featured a history of the west side, crafts, raffles, It's a TREEmendous Day in the City celebration of trees, and an exciting talent show featuring the west side's best!



Majora Carter

Connections for Sustainability hosted Majora Carter for a special lunch-and-learn leadership clinic as part of the Sustainable Conversations speaker series.



Walk in the Woods prepares for spring

As the weather warms up and the days get longer, you might find yourself looking for outdoor activities to occupy your free time. We live in a beautiful region filled with natural amenities like great hiking trails and waterfalls, but we also live in a great city with wonderful parks. Jaclin DuRant, Livability Educator, has been documenting these natural amenities and great spots in her series, Walk in the Woods. Check out the edition below to learn about a great spot where you can spend an entire day or just your lunch break. Be sure to look closely for spectacular wildlife, and look for the next Walk in the Woods on the Connections website as we look forward to spring!

I am fortunate to work in downtown Greenville, and thus have the opportunity to take occasional walks on the Swamp Rabbit Trail. On one of my recent walks along the trail, I brought along my camera to capture some of the amazing nature that I see along the way.

Many people use the Swamp Rabbit Trail for exercise and transportation. The inclusion of bike and walking paths in an urban environment benefits the city's population as a whole. Even if you are unable to use the trail yourself, the reduced traffic and congestion due to others using the trail can lead to reduced air pollution, fewer traffic accidents, and a shorter and safer commute.

One of my favorite things about walking along the Swamp Rabbit Trail in downtown Greenville is getting to walk beneath the trees. Trees provide a variety of important functions in an urban environment. Everyone knows that trees use carbon dioxide and give off oxygen as a respiratory product, but they also help to cool the city and reduce the urban heat island effect. Shade alone can reduce the temperature of a surface by 20 to 45°F according to the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Tree roots also stabilize soil, helping to prevent erosion and reduce the effects of nonpoint source pollution on streams and rivers by absorbing water and compounds in the water and by slowing stormwater runoff.

The leaves of trees absorb gaseous compounds from the air, leading to a reduction in air pollution. Additionally, trees

provide shelter and food for a variety of animals. Many of the trees that can be found along the Swamp Rabbit Trail are native to the upstate of South Carolina and are adapted to survive here.

In addition to the trees, there is a wide variety of herbaceous plants, shrubs, and vines that grow alongside the trail. I really should carry a sign that says "I brake for flowers." I could hardly walk 10 feet without stopping to try and take a picture of one plant or another. (I do make sure that I step off the trail before taking my pictures, so that I don't get in anyone's way.)

One of my favorite shots from this batch was of a crimson clover flower. Crimson clover is a leguminous plant that is often used as a cover crop in agricultural fields because of its ability to increase soil nitrogen content and stabilize the soil to prevent erosion. Bees are also big fans of crimson clover's nectar.

On this particular walk, I was taking photographs of tree leaves to use in a lesson on tree identification. In order to have good pictures, I had to get pretty close to the leaves, and I was astounded by all of the insect life that I found. There were caterpillars, leafhoppers, and aphids with a ladybug nearby having lunch. Even though they can be pests, I really thought that the oak leafhopper nymphs were fantastically beautiful.

The variety of life in this city never ceases to amaze me. My walk on the Swamp Rabbit Trail was just half a mile. I can't imagine what wonders await me on the rest of the trail! You should check it out, too.



The oak leafhopper nymphs pictured above are young insects that feed on oak trees.



Left: These are cherry blossoms, which you may have noticed on trees throughout the city. You can recognize them by their white petals and pink centers.



Right: You can identify crimson clover by its rich red color and cone shape. Make sure to look toward the ground to find this species.



Look for redbud trees around Greenville by their smooth tree trunks and small pink and purple blossoms

Need more ideas on how to spend your time outdoors this spring?

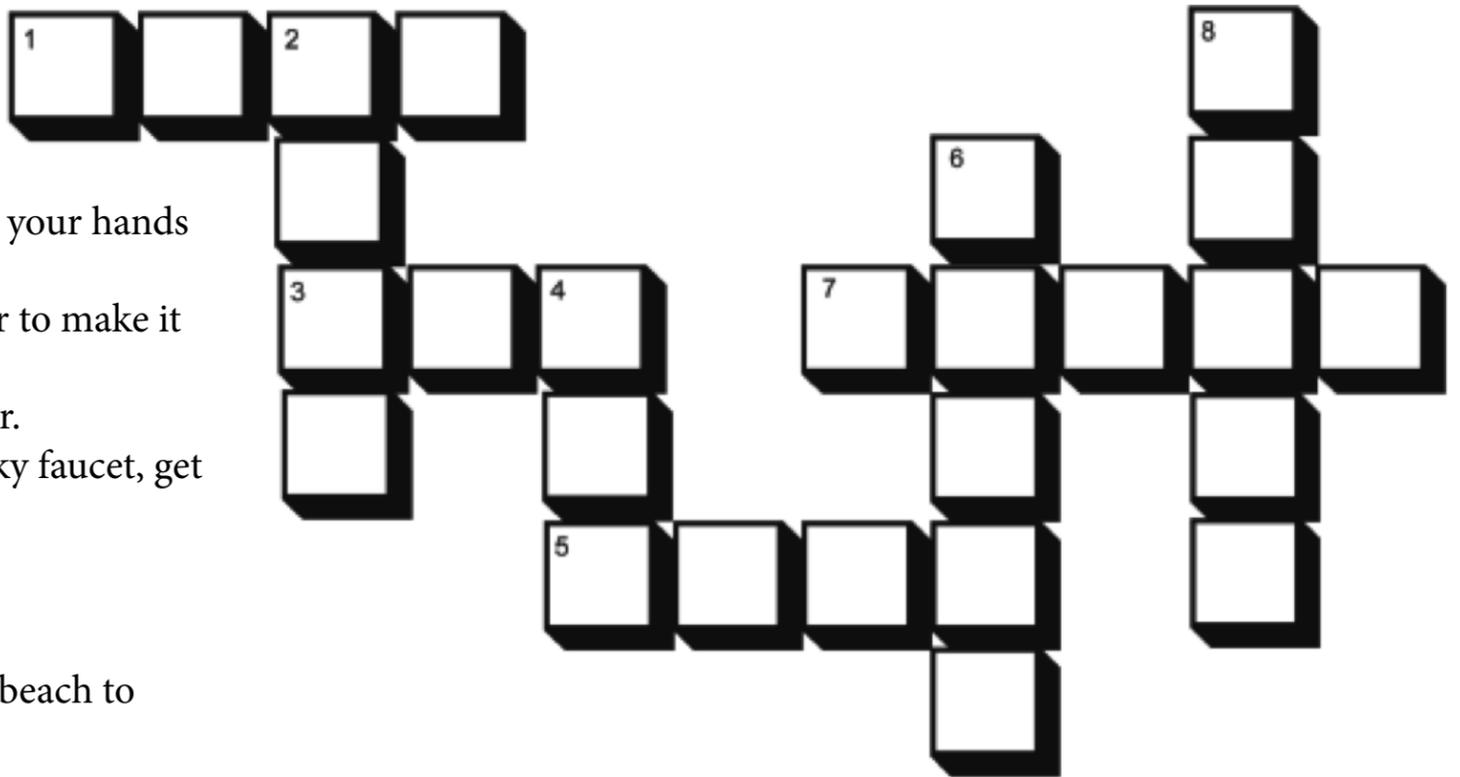
Walk IN THE Woods



Get inspired at
connections.greenvillesc.gov/WoodsWalk.aspx

See if you can use the clues to figure out the answers to this water crossword puzzle!

If you get stuck, the answers are at the bottom.



Across

1. Always _____ your hands before dinner.
3. Add this to water to make it cold.
5. Big body of water.
7. If you have a leaky faucet, get it _____.

Down

2. People go to the beach to _____.
4. Snake-like fish.
6. Water travels through these.
8. When you boil water, _____ rises out of the pan.

Answers: 1. wash 2. swim 3. ice 4. eel 5. lake 6. pipes 7. fixed 8. steam

Source: Environmental Protection Agency, epa.gov

Just for Kids!

Edmund Frog and William Mouse are back learning about stormwater runoff and the importance of water quality with a new friend, Mel Sunfish, in "The Great Pond Clean-Up," a new children's coloring book written and illustrated by Livability Educator, Jaclin DuRant. "The Great Pond Clean-Up" will be available soon on the Connections website.



Community branding...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the finished brand.

Now, you may be asking yourself what exactly a brand system is and why it is important. A brand system is made up of several different parts that may include a logo, color palette, tagline, font, and an overall graphic identity. All of these pieces work together to express a community's personality and to make that community relatable to its residents as well as its visitors. This means that the function of a brand is to strengthen sense of place and help an area stand out as a unified and distinct community.

One great thing about a brand system is that a community like the west side can have a unified identity, but individual neighborhoods and districts within the west side can also maintain their own unique character. An example of how this can work is The Village of West Greenville brand. The logo, created by Joshua Blankenship, speaks to the unique character of the community and its commercial district, but it will also be considered when creating the brand system for the west side.

If you want to learn more about the benefits of branding, the Sustainable Cinema and Speaker series in March will feature plenty of information about what you can expect from the west side branding workshop.



The Village of West Greenville's new logo helps it stand out as a unique neighborhood and arts district within the west side of Greenville. It will be one of several identities considered in the branding workshop conducted in March.

Meet The Branding Team



Tripp Muldrow

Tripp is one of three partners at Arnett Muldrow & Associates and has been working in Greenville for over a decade. He will be leading the lunch-and-learn on March 13 at noon at the Kroc Center.



Ben Muldrow

Ben, younger brother of Tripp, is another partner at Arnett Muldrow. While the brothers were born and raised in Greenville, Ben now works out of Delaware and leads the firm's branding projects.



Tee Coker

Tee Coker has been involved with Connections for Sustainability since 2011. In addition to being a Greenville native, he has experience on many other branding projects.



Kristen Wyche

Kristen, another Greenville native, is the newest member of the team. She became familiar with the Connections project while at Clemson, and she officially joined the project team last summer.

Upcoming Events

Look for many special events in March for Connections for Sustainability as seen below. Make sure you can join us, especially for the highlighted presentations. For more information on the project or events, please visit our website: www.connections.greenvillesc.gov

Date	Day	Time	Location	Event
March				
3/6	Thursday	6 - 7:30 PM	Kroc Center	Bob Lewis Market Study Presentation
3/13	Thursday	12 - 1:30 PM	Kroc Center	Sustainable Conversation - Community Branding
3/17	Monday	6 - 7:30 PM	Kroc Center	Sustainable Cinema - Benefits of Branding
3/19	Wednesday	10:30 AM - 5:30 PM	City Hall, 1st Floor	Branding Workshop
3/19	Wednesday	6 - 7:30 PM	Kroc Center	Branding Presentation
3/20	Thursday	8 AM - 5:30 PM	City Hall, 1st Floor	Branding Workshop
3/21	Friday	Lunch at Noon	Kroc Center	Branding Presentation