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Application of Heritage Tourism Development Frameworks to Jenkins County, Georgia

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*Application of Heritage Tourism Development Frameworks
to Jenkins County, Georgia*

An Honors Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Honors in the
School of Human Ecology, College of Health and Human Sciences

By

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Under the mentorship of Dr. Svitlana Iarmolenko and Dr. James D. Bigley

ABSTRACT

With the decline of traditional agriculture and extraction industries, many small towns in the Southeast US are facing challenges of economic decline and looking for alternative development trajectories. The city of Millen in Jenkins County, Georgia is one of such small towns. With the discovery of a large Civil War heritage resource, Millen's administration became interested in developing the town's tourism potential. However, the community possesses neither the resources nor knowledge to develop and promote this potential. In this project, the combination of Gunn's functioning tourism system model as a conceptual framework and Jamal and Getz's three-step collaborative community tourism development method was used to create a heritage tourism promotion and development strategy for the town Millen. In the course of this study we conducted an assessment of tourism resources, held planning meetings with the community, as well as collected oral histories and engaged residents in the heritage tourism promotion process. A self-guided brochure of downtown Millen, day-trip itineraries to Millen, and a strategic tourism development plan were the project deliverables provided to the community. Theoretically, this study demonstrates whether simultaneous use of two tourism frameworks results in an effective community-scholar collaborative process.

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Introduction

With the increasing use of interstates for faster travel and business' need to be accessible, the cities that are avoided by the interstate are experiencing a sharp economic decline (Chandra & Thompson, 2000; U.S. Department of Transportation, 2012). The Georgia cities where the interstates begin, end, or pass-through have thrived since the interstates were built in the 1950s-1980s. This has caused the rural cities to have fewer visitors and residents, which leads to a decline of the economy in those cities and the surrounding areas. Since heritage tourism attracts over 118 million adults per year in the U.S. and the tourists spend an average of \$994 per trip, this seems a viable option to help the rural cities build their economies (Georgia Department of Natural Resources, 2013). In order to develop a successful and sustainable tourism industry, the host community must be involved in the planning process and left fully equipped to keep the established plan going. An example of such a rural city in a state of economic decline would be Millen, GA in Jenkins County.

Millen, GA is the county seat with a population just over 3,000 (State of Georgia, 2014) and the only incorporated city within Jenkins County, which has a population of just over 9,000 (United States Census Bureau, 2014). It has a long and tumultuous history and is rich in historical accounts. In the 1830s the City of Millen was known as "79" because of its distance from Savannah which is 79 miles. Through the 1850s, the utility of both north-south and east-west rail lines fostered the growth of the city and it took the name "Millen's Junction" from the railway superintendent at the time, McPherson B. Millen.

With the outbreak of the Civil War, a prison camp called Camp Lawton was established just outside Millen (Cox, 2011), in an area that is now Magnolia Springs State Park. Most of Millen was burned during Sherman's March to the Sea in 1864, but the city was rebuilt and continued to grow. In 1881, Millen was incorporated by an act of state legislature, but was positioned in such a way that its residents lived in 4 different counties. So, in 1905, Jenkins County was created from the 4 surrounding counties and Millen was named the county seat (Brantley, 2005; Hilliard, 2013; Screven-Jenkins Regional Library System, n.d.).

The 2010 archaeological discovery of significant features and artifacts related to Camp Lawton has resulted in nation-wide attention and awareness of the region's Civil War heritage (Nolen, 2010). With this exposure, county officials and residents have become aware of the potential economic prosperity that may be derived through planned tourism development. In recent years, Millen and Jenkins County have been known mainly for being the location of Magnolia Springs State Park and Camp Lawton; however, the county has so much more to offer. The historical significance of the city and surrounding communities are enough to promote Jenkins County as a destination on its own.

However, there are numerous challenges on the path to small town or rural area tourism development, one of them being that Jenkins County is labeled as a "Tier 1" county (Georgia Department of Community Affairs (GDCA), 1999). This means that the income of the majority of Jenkins County residents is below the poverty line. The county has consistently received low job tax credit rankings by GDCA since then, moving from rank 28 in 1999 (GDCA, 1999) to rank 3 in 2014 (GDCA, 2014) – a reflection of a sharp

deterioration of the county's economy. In addition, the unemployment rate in the county is 13.9% (Georgia Department of Labor Statistics, 2014). The traditional industries that brought prosperity to Millen and other small towns in the Southeast (e.g. railway industries, agriculture, cotton production) are in decline, hence there is a need for economic diversification and an alternative source of sustainable income in Jenkins County. Many towns and counties have turned to tourism as a new promising trajectory for economic development, as studies show that tourism has the potential to not only be a source of stable income (Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD), 2014), but also promote cultural awareness among residents (Yang, 2012); foster successful involvement of the resident input (Morais et al., 2006); and bring a sense of empowerment to the local community (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2005). However, to ensure a successful outcome careful planning and extensive consultations with the community are necessary (Schneider, Deale, & Iarmolenko, 2014).

In 2005, the United States Department of Commerce (USDC) conducted a study on the economic impact of cultural and heritage tourism. According to that report, "eighty-one percent of the 146.4 million U.S. adults who took a trip of 50 miles or more away from home in the past year can be considered cultural and heritage tourists" (USDC, 2005, p. 5). Based on additional data the USDC collected, cultural and heritage tourists tend to spend more time in the destination region, which results in spending significantly more money while there.

The GDEcD reports that tourism is a \$53.6 billion industry in Georgia (GDEcD, 2014). This revenue is generated from all regions of the state, urban and rural. These facts, coupled with the availability state funded tourism promotion and development

support, provide an incentive for counties with economic challenges such as Jenkins to closely examine their tourism potential. Additionally, the National Trust for Historic Preservation has determined that “an area that develops its potential for cultural heritage tourism creates new opportunities for tourists to gain an understanding of an unfamiliar place, people or time” (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2011). With this understanding, visitors often develop connections to destination attractions which can foster additional growth and vitality in the region.

Jenkins County is home to numerous historical attractions that help tell the story of Georgia’s heritage. Some of these attractions are the Big Buckhead Baptist Church, the third oldest Baptist church in the state; two railroad depots that were built in the 1850s; Magnolia Springs State Park, as well as many others. Millen obtained the National Main Street accreditation in 2001 (National Main Street Center, 2015), and with this program the Main Street volunteers are working to improve the community. The community is aware of the tourism potential in the region; however, there are no community members who possess the knowledge or resources to effectively promote this potential.

Problem Statement

Millen, GA and Jenkins County have been facing an economic decline for many years. The community has become aware of the need for substitute trajectories of development and the use of alternative resources for economic growth. Tourism, and especially heritage tourism, has emerged as a viable option for Millen and Jenkins County. However, the community leaders and those involved do not have the resources or knowledge to develop that potential. The current study will address this problem by

developing materials to enhance the interpretation and promotion of Millen's cultural and heritage tourism.

Literature Review

A study completed by Georgia Southern University's Introduction to Tourism Management class in 2010 determined that Millen, GA is a community with many attractions in it. The study resolved that there is tourism potential in Millen for the Civil War and their heritage, but there is a need for enhanced interpretation and promotion.

Tourism has the potential to turn rural, economically-challenged cities back into flourishing cities with high quality of life (Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004). According to one study, "there is certainly potential for tourism to contribute to poverty-alleviation" but it also addresses the "need to carefully scrutinize the approaches of the agencies concerned to see whose interests are central to their agenda" (Scheyvens, 2008, p. 250; Morais et al., 2006). When the community's needs are not considered, it becomes more difficult to create a sustainable tourism system (Jordan, Vogt, Kruger, & Grewe, 2013). Another study suggests that "the more significant income stream is that from direct tourist expenditures on souvenirs, food and drink, local transport and accommodation" (Hampton, 2005, p.749). So, looking at the resources available will help the community determine what kind of impact tourism will make on their economy. Since studies have found that the cultural and historical characteristics are the foundation for tourism in rural regions, it is necessary that we account for those resources when developing materials for promotion (Wilson, Fesenmaier, D., Fesenmaier, J., and Van Es, 2001, p. 132; Gunn, 1988, p.265).

Heritage tourism has become more popular in recent years partly due to the 150th anniversary of the Civil War in 2014. Research has found that “cultural and heritage tourism is one of the fastest growing segments of the travel industry” which further shows that Millen is trying to get involved at the right time (USDC, 2005, p. 2). There has also been a shift from taking one long vacation to taking multiple shorter vacations each year (Leones, Colby, & Crandall, 1998). This shift has effected a shift from commercial to cultural and heritage tourism (Leones, Colby, & Crandall, 1998). In 2013, the GDEcD had market research conducted and they found that 14 percent of day trip travelers visited a Civil War site and 31 percent were intending to visit one in the coming year (Longwoods Travel USA, 2013).

The purpose of this study is to find ways for enhanced interpretation and promotion of regional heritage. To complete this task, we need to know exactly what tourism resources are available in Millen (Millar, 1989; Long & Nuckolls, 1994) and determine the community’s interests and needs (Long, Perdue, & Allen, 1990; Morais et al., 2006; Choi & Sirakaya, 2005). We chose to employ Gunn’s “The Functioning Tourism System” (Gunn, 1988) as the basis for determining the available resources in the region, and Jamal and Getz’s community collaboration model (Jamal & Getz, 1995) to coordinate the understanding of community needs. Jenkins County and Millen is a region with multiple attractions in it. Those attractions can be a myriad of things, but this study is focusing primarily on the cultural and heritage attractions.

Gunn’s Functioning Tourism System

As a framework for guiding theoretical considerations, this study utilizes development framework developed by C.A. Gunn (1988). Gunn's "The Functioning Tourism System," or FTS, paradigm (*Figure 1*) neatly presents five critical macro-level components that must be studied and addressed to ensure that a region can develop and operate as a viable tourism destination.

Gunn's FTS examines the population, transportation, attractions, services, and information promotion of a tourism system. For a tourism system to function all five of these components must be present. There needs to be a population of people who are interested and able to travel. The population will then need transportation to the destination, which includes the highways, waterways, and vehicles available. The destination will consist of both attractions and services – the attractions draw the population there and the services allow them to stay. The last thing in the model is the information promotion, which is the information available and accessible to the population. Tourists visit a destination then information travels by word-of-mouth to more of the population which allows the information promotion to grow. The FTS is continuous and, as long as all components are present, will continue to function.

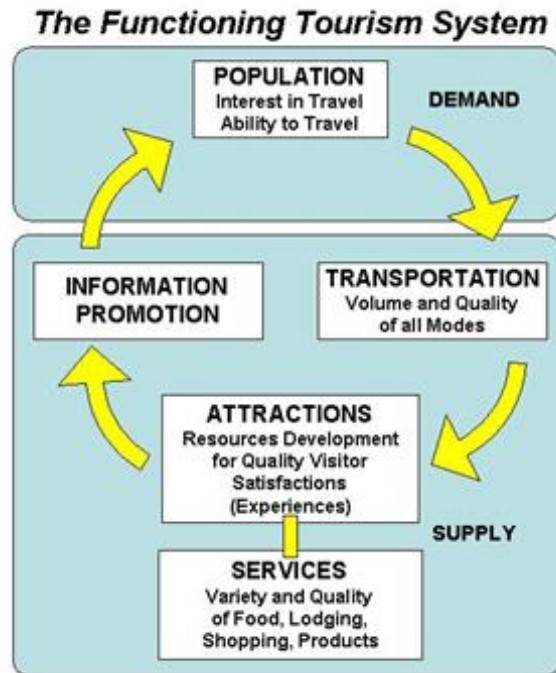


Figure 1. The Functioning Tourism System. From *Tourism Planning* by C.A. Gunn, 1988. *Tourism Planning*, p. 68.

Gunn provides steps to ensure that resources are not overlooked in the process of evaluating. Those steps include the evaluation of the market situation, the attraction potential, the transportation system available, the tourist-oriented businesses in the region, the tourism information available, how it's being promoted, and the infrastructure's ability to support more visitors.

Gunn's model has become a staple in tourism research because it has been so reliable and proven to work. Some studies used the FTS model to determine what creates a successful tourism destination (Wilson, Fesenmaier, D., Fesenmaier, J., & Van Es, 2001), as well as to evaluate the tourism systems to determine the functionality (Leiper, 1990) and if tourism can be considered an industry (Smith, 1994). Others have used Gunn's work to look at how tourism can affect communities in both a positive and

negative manner (Ruhanen, 2004; Reid, Mair, & George, 2004; Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004; Ap & Crompton, 1998). Though the link between tourism and transportation has been debated among researchers (Prideaux, 2000; Gunn, 1988), the definition of tourism from the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is “a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes” (UNWTO, 2015). We will be assessing the transportation resources as part of the tourism resource inventory in order to decide if tourists have a way to visit. Several studies have used Gunn’s work to discuss ecologically sustainable tourism which, while it’s not the main focus of this study, it is important when considering how tourism can affect the economy (Moscardo, 1996). One study actually researched the tourism literature available and determined that Gunn’s work is one of the most effective frameworks for tourism development (Harrill, 2004).

From the FTS framework, a tourism needs (or development) assessment aimed at each of the five components was conducted. This assessment drew on the methods established by Gunn to evaluate Jenkins County as a potential tourism destination.

Collaborative Theory

While Gunn’s FTS is serving as the framework for evaluating Millen as a tourist destination, he says himself that “integrative, not segregative, planning is needed for tourism” (Gunn, 1988, p. 272). So, this study will be applying a second theory that will be the basis for the integrative planning, also called collaboration theory (Jamal & Getz, 1995).

The collaboration theory (*Figure 2*) consists of 3 stages that will be utilized in this study: the Problem-Setting Stage, the Direction-Setting Stage, and the Implementation Stage. Each stage has its own facilitating conditions and steps to complete before one can move to the next stage. The problem-setting stage requires the community and leadership to determine the problem(s) that need to be resolved and define the stakeholders who are/will be affected by it. Once the problem is known and discussed with the stakeholders, the community can begin the second stage which consists of developing a plan of action for solving the problem. This will involve spreading the power among the stakeholders and creating a list of alternatives from which to choose. Once a solution has been reached and is shared by all of the stakeholders stage three can begin. Stage three is the implementation stage which will involve delegation of tasks and creating reasonable goals that can be completed by each stakeholder. Throughout the implementation stage, the progress will need to be monitored to ensure that the stakeholders and community are following the guidelines that were set previously.

Stages and Propositions	Facilitating Conditions	Actions/Steps
<p><i>Stage I:</i></p> <p>Problem-Setting</p> <p><i>Propositions applicable:</i></p> <p>P1, P2, P3, P4, P5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognition of interdependence ➤ identification of a required number of stakeholders ➤ perceptions of legitimacy among stakeholders ➤ legitimate/skilled convener ➤ positive beliefs about outcomes ➤ shared access power ➤ mandate (external or internal) ➤ adequate resources to convene and enable collaboration process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Define purpose and domain ➤ identify convener ➤ convene stakeholders ➤ define problems/issues to resolve ➤ identify and legitimize stakeholders ➤ build commitment to collaborate by raising awareness of interdependence ➤ balancing power differences ➤ addressing stakeholder concerns ➤ ensuring adequate resources available to allow collaboration to proceed with key stakeholders present.
<p><i>Stage II:</i></p> <p>Direction-Setting</p> <p><i>Propositions applicable:</i></p> <p>P1, P2, P3, P6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Coincidence of values ➤ dispersion of power among stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Collect and share information ➤ appreciate shared values, enhance perceived interdependence ➤ ensure power distributed among several stakeholders ➤ establish rules and agenda for direction setting ➤ organize subgroups if required ➤ list alternatives ➤ discuss various options ➤ select appropriate solutions ➤ arrive at shared vision or plan/strategy through consensus.
<p><i>Stage III:</i></p> <p>Implementation</p> <p><i>Propositions applicable:</i></p> <p>P1, P2, P6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ High degree of ongoing interdependence ➤ external mandates ➤ redistribution of power ➤ influencing the contextual environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discuss means of implementing and monitoring solutions, shared vision, plan or strategy ➤ select suitable structure for institutionalizing process ➤ assign goals and tasks ➤ monitor ongoing progress and ensure compliance to collaboration decisions.

Figure 2. A Collaboration Process for Community-Based Tourism Planning. From “Collaboration Theory and Community Tourism Planning,” by T. Jamal and D. Getz, 1995, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 22(1), p.190.

Research has found that “small destinations that grow slowly and include heavy involvement of the local community are more likely to result in sustainable forms of tourism development” (Morais et al., 2006). However, small destinations and local communities are less likely to possess the knowledge or resources needed to develop their tourism (Morais et al., 2006; Victurine, 2000; Tosun, 2000). A study in Shangri-La found that the community-based tourism approach was accepted and preferred when it came to development in the region (Morais et al., 2006), but the community still needs guidance with the ideas and development of the plans (Tosun, 1999; Timothy, 1998). It is

recommended that the community play a large part in defining the goals for their region, as opposed to the government on its own or an outside contractor (Timothy, 1998; Simpson, 2008). It is necessary for the community to partner with the government and outside help in order to develop a tourism plan that will benefit the community and all of its stakeholders (Simpson, 2008; Timothy, 1998; Jordan, Vogt, Kruger, & Grewe, 2013). A study in the Philippines was conducted to determine what level of participation the community had and developed a model to evaluate the level of participation (Okazaki, 2008), which could prove helpful when working with the community in Millen. Research has also been done to determine how useful community collaboration actually is and some have learned that the community likes to provide input, but the community itself is uncertain about the usefulness of their input (Okazaki, 2008; Keogh, 1990).

Following the completion of the tourism resource inventory based on Gunn's FTS, this study will utilize Jamal and Getz's community collaboration model. The three-step process demands that we work with the community to determine the problem, the solution alternatives, and the implementation of the solution.

The combined use of Gunn's FTS and Jamal and Getz's community collaboration theory will address the need for enhanced interpretation and promotion of the heritage and Civil War resources that the region possesses. The models will also provide the information needed to produce tangible materials which will be given to the city at the conclusion of this study.

Study Purpose

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate the application of a theoretical framework in tourism and an applied collaborative model to a small, rural Southern town context. This study aims to provide Millen and Jenkins County with tangible materials to stimulate tourism in the region.

This study will be guided by several questions including the following:

1. What elements of the FTS are available in the study area and how can they be combined into a tourism product offering?
2. How can we adapt the collaborative tourism framework to apply it successfully in a small, Southern rural community?
3. How will the implementation of the collaborative tourism strategy result in enhanced visitation to the target community?

Methods

Tourism Resource Inventory

As adapted from Gunn's work, the following outline provided a design for the study (Gunn, 1988, pp. 250-256). The following specifies the items that were inventoried to determine Jenkins County's tourism potential:

Evaluate market situation.

The market situation involved collecting data from regional market research being conducted in order to establish market segments towards whom the promotional materials will be developed.

Evaluate the attraction potential.

The attraction potential is dependent upon many things, but the main question that was asked is “What will bring people here?”

Evaluate transportation.

In this step we needed to evaluate the accessibility (by various modes of transportation) of Jenkins County and the attractions within it.

Evaluate the tourist-oriented businesses.

Such businesses are those that are needed by people who visit, such as gas stations, lodging, food, restrooms, etc.

Evaluate the information available.

The search for available information was reviewed in this step. Questions were asked and answered to decide if the information is viable and current, such as: Is the information descriptive? Will it guide a visitor, or solely a native resident? Is the information clear and the ability to ask questions given?

Evaluate promotion.

The evaluation of promotion in Jenkins County involved researching into what promotions would be useful, and if there is money to create such promotions. Research was done to find effective ways to communicate Jenkins County as a tourist destination.

Evaluate the infrastructure.

The water and waste systems were evaluated to decide if they can handle an influx of newcomers for short periods of time. If the basic needs of people cannot be met, then a tourism plan will not be sustainable.

Extensive fieldwork was conducted to identify and document the available tourism resources in Millen. Most of this information was collected by personal visits to

the community of Millen and by talking to people in Millen to confirm some businesses' locations and accessibility. Otherwise, the information about tourism businesses or sights was obtained from online sources such as Jenkins County's official website, ExploreGeorgia.org, and The Yellow Pages. The information was organized using Microsoft Office Excel worksheets and then confirmed and approved by the Chamber of Commerce in Millen (Appendix A).

Interviews/Oral Histories

The research team began by meeting with Millen's city officials and the local historian to identify avenues of resident recruitment. These meetings are where the team began collecting contact information and distributing announcements about this research to get the community interested.

We identified several avenues for recruiting participants, as well as research steps to collect and use the information. These steps are listed below:

1. Flyers were placed in the Main Street Millen/Chamber of Commerce office and distributed to the community at the Main Street Millen booth at Fair-on-the-Square in October of 2014 (Appendix B).
2. An advertisement was run in the Millen News (www.themillennews.com) which is the local newspaper. (Appendix C).
3. We hosted a community forum in the community room of the Jenkins County Memorial Library to begin talking about this project in Millen. We briefed the community on the project and asked for volunteers who would be interested in sharing what they know.

4. Names and contact information were collected to schedule appointments with informants to share their knowledge of the community's history and heritage.
5. We obtained a map from the Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission (<http://csrarc.ga.gov/>). The team was using maps of the downtown area with numbered and already-identified buildings that helped organize the information (Appendix D). The participants were able to point out the buildings they were speaking of at each point in time, linking the information to certain buildings.
6. We scheduled appointments and conducted the interviews using the following:
 - a. Calls were made using the contact information we previously collected in order to schedule appointments with the interviewees.
 - b. We met the participants in the Community Room of the Jenkins County Memorial Library at the appointed time to interview in a quiet and public place to make the interviewees comfortable about speaking with us.
 - c. Each interview was recorded with a camera and a voice recorder to make sure that we can see each building the participants speak about, and to confirm the transcriptions later on.
 - d. The team used a semi-structured interview to help guide the interview towards the information we need to learn about the buildings (Appendix E).

7. We used a Georgia Southern University research lab computer with the Express Scribe program with the pedal to transcribe the interviews verbatim. Each interview was transcribed within a few days of the interview and stored on a password-protected university computer.
8. The interviews were then analyzed for themes and information that is not universally available (Wikipedia, Google, history books, etc.). We were looking for unique facts about the buildings that could make a walking tour more interesting and memorable. We got the idea from the “If this house could talk...” project that was designed and implemented in Cambridge, Massachusetts (Zusy, 2010) where the community found interesting information about the homes and created a sign about it to put in each house’s lawn.
9. We created a tri-fold brochure in Microsoft Office Publisher to illustrate the information we learned about the buildings. It included a map with each building numbered to be linked to the corresponding information about it. It also included a sequence that we suggest the visitors use when taking the walking tour through downtown Millen.
10. The brochures were handed out at the culminating event in National Historic Preservation Month in May to get the project started. Surveys were handed out to determine the impact of this walking tour.

Results

Tourism Resource Inventory

Market situation.

The 2010 study conducted by Georgia Southern University students found that Millen is on a corridor between Savannah, GA and Augusta, GA. This means that a large number of people travel between those two cities, which requires the commuters to pass through Millen frequently. On a daily basis, around 7,000 people drive through Millen on U.S. Highway 25 (Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), 2013), 1,500 on Georgia State Route 17 (GDOT, 2013), and around 1,700 on Georgia State Route 21 (GDOT, 2013). There is potential for people to stop and visit Millen during a commute; however, there is also potential for a day trip to the city. Augusta is 51 miles from Millen and Savannah is 85 miles from Millen, both of these are within easy driving distance to take a trip for a day or a weekend.

With the Travel Market Report saying that sixty-four percent of adults intend to take leisure trips in the next six months, travel intentions are higher now than they have been since 2007 (Travel Market Report, 2014). In 2013, tourists in Georgia took almost 5,000 overnight trips and 2,731 day trips (Longwoods Travel USA, 2013). Thirty-five percent of the overnight travelers were going for no other reason than leisure, which the study labels as “marketable” (Longwoods Travel USA, 2013). Forty percent of the overnight leisure travelers (OLT) were either touring or heading to a special event (Longwoods Travel USA, 2013). Seven percent of the OLT visited the Classic South, as designated by the GDEcD, which includes Millen, Georgia (Longwoods Travel USA, 2013). Eleven percent of the OLT visited historic tours, rivers, or state parks and outdoor recreational areas, all of which Millen can claim. Twenty-four percent of the OLT visited a Civil War Site/Interpretation Center during their trip and another thirty percent intend to visit one within the next year (Longwoods Travel USA, 2013).

Now, out of the day trip travelers (DTT), forty-six percent of them are marketable (Longwoods Travel USA, 2013) and thirty-eight percent of the marketable travelers were touring or going to a special event (Longwoods Travel USA, 2013). Eight percent of the DTT had a main destination of the Classic South, but sixteen percent visited during their trip (Longwoods Travel USA, 2013). Fourteen percent of the DTT visited a Civil War Site/Interpretation Center during their trip and thirty-one percent intend to visit one in the next year (Longwoods Travel USA, 2013).

This data shows that the market is thriving. There are people who are interested in traveling and who are able to travel, which qualifies the population from Gunn's model.

Attraction potential.

Jenkins County hosts one of fourteen scenic byways in the state of Georgia, which gives the region an edge in competing for short-trip visitation. Millen claims the third oldest Baptist church in the state, one of the prison camps from the Civil War, a Georgia State Park, and a functioning and well-kept downtown historic district. With multiple other attractions in the region that can be found on the tourism resource inventory in Appendix A, Millen has the ability to draw people who are interested in the culture and heritage of a region, as well as people who enjoy Civil War history.

Transportation.

The main access into Millen is via highways. While the county does have a small airport and multiple railways, neither is accessible to the public. The highways leading into Millen are primarily four-lane divided highways, U.S. Hwy 25 and SR Hwy 21, which make for easy commuting between some attractions such as Magnolia Springs and

the Downtown Historic District of Millen. Some of the attractions, including part of the scenic byway, are accessible via smaller, two-lane roads like Perkins-Greenfork Rd and Big Buckhead Church Rd, so the speeds do have to decrease in order to travel safely.

Tourist-oriented businesses.

Though Millen is quite a small town, it does have several tourist-oriented businesses within it. There are a few of local restaurants that are always recommended to keep the local economy going (e.g. Honey Café, Rounds, Café on Cotton, etc.), but there are several chain eateries such as McDonald's and Popeye's, as well. Millen also has a couple of gas stations like the Enmark and Citgo; places to buy groceries or supplies like Bi-Lo, Rite Aid, and Dollar General; as well as gift shops and antique stores such as The Charm Barn and Eagle Pharmacy and Gifts. Jenkins County has the ability to keep a visitor entertained for quite some time.

As far as lodging goes, there are two privately-owned motels called Sunset Inn and Regency Inn, and the cottages and the tent camping sites at Magnolia Springs State Park. Because of the Millen motel reviews found on Trip Advisor and Google it is apparent that Millen is not currently prepared for numerous overnight travelers. So, the itineraries that were prepared are primarily focused on day trip travelers.

Information and Promotion.

It was discovered during this study that Millen did not have much information readily available. The only brochure about Jenkins County was ten years old and the Chamber of Commerce only had a few of them left (Appendix F). This was one of the items the city told us they needed desperately when we began the research. While

ExploreGeorgia.org does have some information about Millen and Jenkins County, it is eminent that they have more.

Jenkins County recently took the time and money to completely redesign the county website (www.jenkinscountyga.com), which makes the information more easily seen and read. The city also received a grant in 2014 that allowed all of the road signage to be replaced with new, brighter signs to help direct the traffic into the historic area of Millen.

Itineraries.

Since there is a population interested and able to travel, the transportation system to get to and around Millen exists, and there are numerous attractions and services available to the visitors, we decided that Millen has plenty of tourism potential. However, the community is in need of better lodging in order for people to stay overnight, and the Chamber of Commerce barely has any information to give to visitors. So, the itineraries were developed for tourists who are visiting for the day and want to know what to see and do. The itineraries were given a place on the new Jenkins County website, as well as sent to ExploreGeorgia.org. (Appendix G)

Interviews/Oral Histories

Through informal conversations with community stakeholders, we identified the primary problem the community has, which is the need for proper promotion of the regional tourism resources. Since we were able to formally interview some of the community members, interesting and unique facts about the community were not hard to find.

The community members we interviewed were happy to tell us about their lives growing up in Millen. One participant told us that the community building used to be a teenager hangout spot called Teen Town.

Like, you know, and we would go to work at 8 o'clock in the morning as a teenager...and we would uhm, stay there until uhm, 8 o'clock at night. And they had what we called Teen Town in the present community house that's over there. Oh, and what we would do is we would bathe in the back of the store. There was just a little tiny faucet and all, and then we would go and enjoy Teen Town.
(Interviewee #001)

We asked the participants guiding questions about places in Millen that are significant to the area, whether the place is currently accessible or not.

Some of my fondest memories on that side of the family are going to the river and going to the lake. And off from the river is, uhm, Blue Lake, it's on Fairfield Road...when the weather turned chilly, these huge white rock fish that are, like, this big, will migrate up into that Blue Lake and it turns just a blue as can be. It's something about the way the water is. And we would always have to go on Sunday afternoons around in September, you know, to see that blue water and to try to see some of those white rock fish. And we used to eat a lot of those at my grandmother's. (Interviewee #001)

We learned about several places that used to be in the area, as well as buildings that have been torn down.

We've got the Calaboose [prison] where the city locked up their collectors on weekends when they were drunk. Cause we had a lot of people in town, I mean, people swarmed to town on Saturdays. You couldn't walk on the streets for the people on Saturdays. But working a good many people as we did in our business, we were called all night long on Saturday night about so and so's locked up in jail, he was in a fight. And so and so, he was drunk, he was so and so. But I've never been in the Calaboose, but it still remains back on Kirkland's Funeral Home down there.
(Interviewee #002)

A lot of things are gone. There was a marvelous hospital building here. Very well built. In fact, George W(?) was in the bulldozing business when they tore the hospital down where this library is. I would have to say that we do not have people in Millen, as a whole, that are interested in preserving anything that has to do with the past. This wasn't a very old hospital. It was built in '46 or something

like that, but it was built well. And it would've served just as well for a library as this does. Better. Because they've had to replace windows and everything else in this new structure. (Interviewee #002)

Some of the community members live in homes that have been in their family for years, and some people have only left the community for the time in college and then moved back to Millen.

But see, my folks, my grandfather got the house I'm living in now, he got it before World War 1, or about that time. Couldn't too many people have lived in it by that time. My brother lives in the one next to me that was our childhood home. And I've got another brother who lives farther up the street, but that's his wife's people's home. So, that's that. Yeah, all of us live on Harvey Street except one brother that lives in Wadley. (Interviewee #002)

The community also claims to have several celebrities who grew up in Millen or have residents who are friends of celebrities. We were told that one of Millen's residents was Babe Ruth's roommate in college. We were also told a story about Elvis Presley before he was super famous.

This used to be a hospital right here on this block. Elvis Presley was crossing the river bridge. That's when he first got famous. He got a bug in his eye in his convertible. He came back up here and Ms. W took the uh, took the bug out of his eye. So she was very famous there for a while. (Interviewee #003)

With these interviews, we have been able to collect the unique facts and stories about the buildings and houses in Millen, which will help us develop the self-guided brochure. These facts will be what attracts tourists to stop and walk through the downtown historic district of Millen.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to demonstrate the application of a known tourism model (Gunn, 1988) and the action planning steps involving the community (Jamal & Getz, 1995). We already knew from previous studies that Millen and Jenkins County are

a region rich in cultural and heritage tourism. We also knew that Millen has a need for enhanced interpretation and promotion. So, we applied Gunn's FTS to determine exactly what resources are available and how they apply to heritage and cultural tourism. We also met with the community to examine the problem at hand, derive a set of alternative solutions, and develop a plan to implement the solutions in the near future.

We started at the top of Gunn's FTS model with the population. We found that there is a population willing and able to travel to the region and who is interested in cultural and heritage attractions. While the cultural tourist population may not currently be the largest, it is one of the fastest growing tourist populations. Cultural tourism is becoming increasingly more popular in the same way Civil War tourism has in the past few years. This population consists of people who commute through the region frequently, as well as people who seek out tourism attractions to visit. There is definitely potential to attract tourists to the region.

We then looked into the transportation available. There is no public transportation system, so the best way to access Millen and its attractions is via the highways. Georgia State Routes 23, 21, and 17, and U.S. Route 25 are the main highways that go through Millen. While all are north-south bound highways, SR 23 travels only through the southern part of Georgia, SR 17 starts on Interstate 16 and travels north to the North Carolina state line, and U.S. Hwy 25 starts on the coast of Georgia and goes all the way to Lexington, Kentucky. State Route 21 is part of the Savannah River Parkway that travels from Savannah to Millen. It is currently in the works to become Interstate 3. Millen is not currently located on an interstate which is partially the cause of the region's economic decline, but people frequently travel south through Millen to reach Interstate 16

which is found southeast in neighboring Bulloch County. So, while it may be useful to have other ways to get to Millen in the future, the current transportation availability will suffice for now.

Millen is home to several cultural and heritage attractions as mentioned before. While the region does not have the commercial attractions people typically think of when a tourist destination is mentioned, it does have places and significant landmarks that can attract tourists. Just the fact that the city was formed around the trains in the 1800s attracts tourists. Jenkins County is designated a Georgia Camera Ready Community by the GDEcD, which means that the county is on a list of places in Georgia that is ready to be filmed in a movie or television show (GDEcD, 2014). The fact that the county is on that list, though, makes it a great community to send photographers looking for historic or rustic backgrounds. Millen's Cotton Avenue is where the historic downtown area is based. The Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Downtown Development Authority, Chamber of Commerce, and Main Street Millen office is located in the old train depot attached to the train-watching platform by the railroad. This old depot also holds the museum full of historical artifacts from the region. All of the buildings on Cotton Avenue are on the National Register of Historic Buildings, along with the Jenkins County Courthouse and Big Buckhead Baptist Church and a few others in the area. Jenkins County's plethora of cultural and heritage attractions have the ability to stimulate tourists' drive to visit the region.

While Millen's services are sufficient currently, it may be difficult for the city to support an increasing tourism industry. The community members and online reviewers do not recommend staying in either of Millen's two motels, which makes it more difficult to

invite people to stay overnight. Magnolia Springs State Park has recently renovated the cottages on the property and there are several tent-camping sites, but hotels and motels are the typical overnight search for tourists visiting an area. Even with the hotel rooms, though, there are only 70 of them. If the city hosted a large event that brought more than 100 people, Millen's lodging would not have the capacity for the visitors to stay. Lodging is not the only tourism service needed, however; tourists also need gas stations, places to eat, and places to buy supplies. Millen has several gas stations immediately off of Highway 25, but the prices are almost always higher than the gas prices in the surrounding cities. So, commuters will likely wait to get gas unless they absolutely need it. If the visitors were staying overnight at Magnolia Springs State Park and did not bring all of their supplies, they would have several options to remedy the situation since Millen does have a Bi-Lo grocery store, Dollar General, Rite Aid and a few others. It may be difficult to find extremely specific items since Millen does not have specialty stores, but general needs can be fulfilled.

As far as Millen's dining options go, the city has several options, but none that are very large. Generally, it is better for the economy for tourists to eat at a locally-owned restaurant because then the money that is spent stays local. The main problem that we found is that the local restaurants are not open on Saturdays, which is when day trip travelers would primarily be traveling. Along with that, the local restaurants are not open at consistent times. Some are open for lunch time Tuesday through Friday, some are open for lunch and dinner Monday through Friday, while others are open only on Thursday and Friday nights. These inconsistent times makes it difficult for tourists to eat locally because a tourist wouldn't know that these restaurants are only open at odd times. The

size of these restaurants could pose a problem later, as well. When Millen does start attracting larger groups of tourists, there is no local restaurant that could handle a bus load full of people. The buildings do not have the capacity to host that many people. So, Millen's dining options have been working for the city, thus far, but if there is motivation to gain the visits of larger groups (e.g. schools, family reunions, sports tournaments, etc.) then the city will need to reassess the need for restaurants.

While all of these things play a part in the tourism system, Millen's most prominent issue is the lack of interpretation and promotion of the resources in the region. So, it was determined from the current resource availability that we would develop a few day-trip itineraries that would be used to guide visitors' trips when in Millen and Jenkins County. The city needs more information to give to tourists when visiting. So, since most of the population has smartphones, the city is able to publish information online and it is still easily accessible. Millen does not have a lot of money designated for printing brochures, so the city applies for grants to have that need fulfilled. The brochure that the Chamber of Commerce currently has is in need of being redesigned since it is over ten years old. The population who is interested and able to travel needs to know about the region in order to visit it, so this is the first need on which we suggest Millen focus.

After we assessed what the region currently has, we met with the community members to learn what they believe could be improved. As previously mentioned, the community members identified the region's potential for tourism as a stimulant for the economy; however, the need for promotion of the tourism resources was also recognized. We were able to identify the problem through meetings with community stakeholders as suggested in the community collaboration theory (Jamal & Getz, 1995).

As a team working with the community, we developed several alternatives that could begin improving the city. The primary solution alternative is the development of a walking tour in the downtown historic district of Millen that will allow tourists to develop a stronger connection to the community. The connection the tourists will make with the community will drive the word-of-mouth promotion and multiple visitations to the region. The implementation of this project is currently underway.

Even though we could have taken an inventory of the community and designed a plan for tourism development on our own, consulting the community and working in collaboration allowed for a better, more sustainable plan.

Conclusion and implications

Even knowing that Millen wants to bring the tourism industry into their region, the community is not just standing by waiting for things to happen. The Downtown Development Authority along with many other development organizations in Millen has implemented several quality of life initiatives since September 2014 when the plan was first introduced (personal communication with Mandy Underwood, Director of Downtown Development Authority, 2014). The citizens of Millen want to better the city for the local community before focusing on bringing in visitors. So, the Jenkins County Recreation Department has rebuilt all recreational sports fields/courts to tournament regulation size so that the local teams have the ability to participate. The local businesses are offering internships for local high school students to learn work ethic and other things by working with local business owners in the community. The Downtown Development

Authority and the Chamber of Commerce are planning to convert some of the historic downtown buildings into loft apartments so that some of the people employed in Millen can actually live there. There are several other initiatives that the city is working on that will make the lives of the community members better.

As previously mentioned, Millen is on the list to become part of the interstate system in the next 10 years. If that happens, the city's infrastructure will need to be reassessed to determine what will have to be upgraded in order to handle that many more people in the city. The Scenic Byway Welcome Center should be opening by the year 2016, which would be an attractor for anyone traveling through or to Millen. If there is an interstate running to the city, there will be an influx of people commuting through the region, which will give the city even more opportunities to promote the community.

With the increase of tourism in the region, Millen will need to evaluate how to handle the overnight stays in their city. We suggest that the city contact a larger chain hotel brand and work out a deal with them. The city may have to sell some land at a very low price, or lower the price of some utilities, but there are empty standing warehouses in Millen currently that are not bringing any money into the community. The community would have to make this decision and determine how much and what can be given up, but this has worked in other small, rural cities and it can work in Millen too.

While Gunn's FTS has been around and used for almost forty years, the community collaboration theory is just getting to be twenty years old. With that said, the community collaboration model is in a linear form, which generally suggests there is no re-evaluation. The model does suggest monitoring the solution implementation in stage three of the process, however; things change and may not go as planned. I recommend a

circular model where it loops back to the problem-setting stage. This would allow the users of this model think back through the process as they are implementing the solutions with the community.

Millen and Jenkins County have the potential to bring tourists to the region and for these tourists to help make the local economy better. We evaluated the regional tourism resources and helped the community members understand what is available and how the resources can be used. We met with the community stakeholders throughout the process of identifying the problem in the community and finding solution alternatives, as well as through the implementation. The community has been and will continue to be involved in the decision-making processes in the city, especially when it comes to tourism because that can affect everyone. We learned through these evaluations that the region is in need of enhanced interpretation and promotion of their resources and that is what the itineraries and the walking tour aim to fix.

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Appendix A. Tourism resource inventory

Category	Subcategory	Business Name	Address
Attraction	Cultural	The Charm Barn	553 Cotton Avenue
Attraction	Cultural	The Cotton Gin	717 Cotton Avenue
Attraction	Cultural	Butts Community	Hwy 23
Attraction	Cultural	Perkins Community- Post Office	
Attraction	Cultural	Scarboro Community	
Attraction	Cultural	Big Dukes Pond Heritage Preserve	Old Louisville Road
Attraction	Cultural	Millen-Jenkins County Scenic Byway	548 Cotton Avenue
Attraction	Cultural	MSSP Group Pavillions	Magnolia Springs State Park
Attraction	Cultural	Old Pal Theater	Cotton Avenue
Attraction	Cultural	Jenkins County Museum	548 Cotton Avenue
Attraction	Cultural	Train Viewing Platform	548 Cotton Avenue
Attraction	Cultural	Collectibles on Cotton	611 Cotton Avenue
Attraction	Historic	Big Buckhead Baptist Church	West of Perkins off Hwy 25
Attraction	Historic	Carswell Grove Church (Burned)	Near Big Buckhead
Attraction	Historic	Camp Lawton	Magnolia Springs State Park

Attraction	Historic	Historic District - Cotton Avenue	Cotton Avenue
Attraction	Historic	Jenkins County Courthouse (NRHB)	611 E. Winthrope Avenue
Attraction	Historic	Birdsville Plantation (Private Home)	
Attraction	Historic	Jenkins County Post Office (NRHB)	608 E. Winthrop Avenue
Attraction	Historic	MSSP Camp Lawton Museum	Magnolia Springs State Park
Attraction	Natural	MSSP Hiking Trails	Magnolia Springs State Park
Attraction	Recreation	Ogeechee River	Hwy 25 South of Millen
Attraction	Recreation	B&B ATV Family Ride Park	2023 Hiltonia Road
Attraction	Recreation	Ogeechee River Boat Ramps	Hwy 25 South of Millen
Attraction	Recreation	Hanging Rocks Plantation	1012 Hwy 23 N
Attraction	Recreation	MSSP Canoeing/Kayaking	Magnolia Springs State Park
Attraction	Recreation	MSSP Fishing	Magnolia Springs State Park
Attraction	Recreation	Magnolia Country Club -- Golf	2014 Hwy 25 N
Attraction	Recreation	MSSP Splash Pad / Playground	Magnolia Springs State Park
Attraction	Special Event	Millen's Fair-on-the-Square (October)	Courthouse Lawn
Attraction	Special Event	Heritage Day (November)	Magnolia Springs State Park

Attraction	Special Event	Children's Fishing Rodeo (June)	Magnolia Springs State Park
Attraction	Special Event	8K Cross-Country Run (November)	Magnolia Springs State Park
Attraction	Special Event	Christmas in Millen (December)	Recreation Department
Attraction	Special Event	Patriotic Celebration (July 4th)	442 Recreation Drive
Attraction	Special Event	Harvest of Fun (Halloween)	Cotton Avenue
Attraction	Recreation	Baseball Fields (Recreation Dept.)	
Attraction	Recreation	Tennis Courts (Recreation Dept.)	
Attraction	Recreation	Running Track (Recreation Dept.)	
Attraction	Recreation	Football Fields (Recreation Dept.)	
Attraction	Recreation	Basketball Courts (Recreation Dept.)	
Facilitator	Tourist	Jenkins County Chamber of Commerce	548 Cotton Avenue
Facilitator	Tourist	The Millen News	856 Cotton Avenue
Facilitator	Tourist	Jenkins County Extension Services	434 Barney Avenue
Facilitator	Tourist	Scenic Byway Welcome Center (2015)	Winthrope Avenue
Hospitality	Accommodations	Magnolia Springs State Park (Lodging)	Magnolia Springs State Park
Hospitality	Accommodations	Regency Inn	424 Hwy 25 N
Hospitality	Accommodations	Sunset Inn	637 Hwy 25

Hospitality	Amenities	Jenkins County Hospital	931 East Winthrope Avenue
Hospitality	Amenities	Eagle Pharmacy and Gifts	936 E. Winthrope Avenue
Hospitality	Amenities	Rite Aid Pharmacy	804 E. Winthrope Avenue
Hospitality	F&B	Cindy's Café on Cotton	535 Cotton Avenue
Hospitality	F&B	Dairy Queen	123 Gayle Drive
Hospitality	F&B	Krystals Taste of Kountry (Sundays)	624 Perkins Rd
Hospitality	F&B	Pizza Hut	110 E. Winthrope Avenue
Hospitality	F&B	Panda Express	332 E. Winthrope Avenue
Hospitality	F&B	Subway	104 E. Winthrope Avenue
Hospitality	F&B	Round's Fishin' Hole	537 E. Winthrope Avenue
Hospitality	F&B	Brinson's Bar B Que	3924 W. Old Savannah Rd
Hospitality	F&B	Papa's Pizza To Go	537 E. Winthrope Avenue
Hospitality	F&B	Popeye's Chicken	315 US Hwy 25 N
Hospitality	F&B	McDonald's	227 Hwy 25 N
Hospitality	F&B	Huddle House	415 Hwy 25
Hospitality	F&B	The Den	
Hospitality	F&B	Honey Café	741 Hwy 25
Transportation	Highway	Civil War Heritage Trail	Jenkins County is part of it.
Transportation	Highway	Woodpecker Trail	Jenkins County is part of it.

Appendix B. Flyers distributed to community

If you have some interesting or unique stories to tell about Millen,
we want to hear them!

We are looking for people who can tell us about the history of this community.

If you are one of those people or would like more information, please contact

Art Johnson at the Chamber of Commerce office at

478-982-5595 or ahometown@bellsouth.net.

You can also contact the Georgia Southern University representative to learn more
about the project at hand.

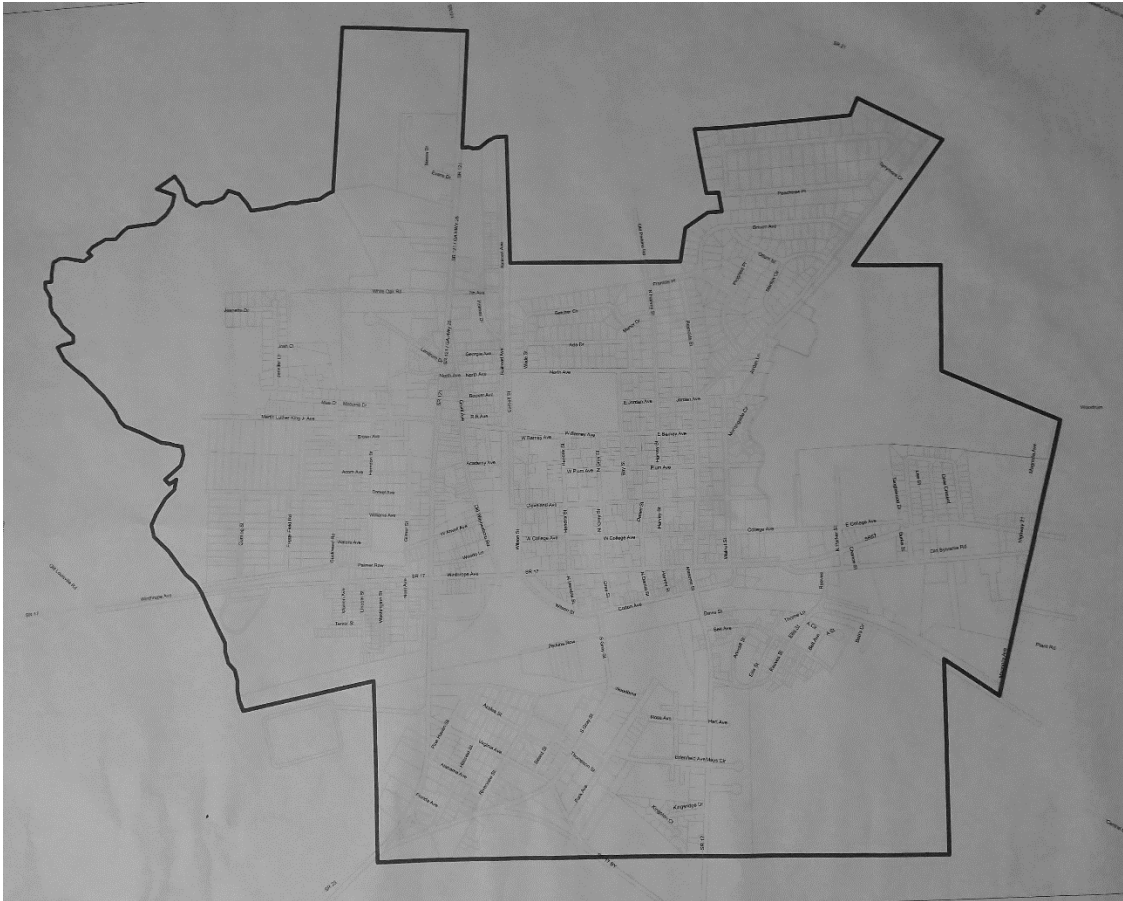
Svitlana Iarmolenko

252-375-1971 or siarmolenko@georgiasouthern.edu.

Appendix C. Advertisement in The Millen News

Does Millen hold a special place in your heart? We want to hear your stories! The Chamber of Commerce and Georgia Southern University have partnered to develop a historic tour of Millen called "The Stories They Tell." If you are interested in sharing your stories or history of Millen, please contact Svitlana Iarmolenko (siarmolenko@georgiasouthern.edu , [\(252\)375-1971](tel:(252)375-1971)) or Art Johnson (ahometown@bellsouth.net , [\(478\)982-5595](tel:(478)982-5595))

Appendix D. Map of the City of Millen



Appendix E. Semi-structured interview conversational guide

Introductions

Good afternoon, I appreciate you agreeing to meet with me and share your knowledge of the area. It shouldn't take more than an hour of your time. We wanted to take a minute to remind you what we are doing for this study and why. We are trying to gather interesting information about Millen and its past, especially the information connected with certain landmarks, buildings, and houses. We have a map of downtown Millen here with us so we can try to refer to this map as we are talking about your memories. Ultimately, we will use this information to create a brochure with a guided tour through downtown that visitors to Millen can use to explore the historic treasures in Millen.

Obtaining consent

I would like to also remind you that your participation in this interview is completely voluntary, and you are free to stop at any time if you do not wish to continue. Also if you do not feel comfortable with any of the questions you can refuse to answer them. I will be recording this interview but if you would like to keep any of your statements off the record you can let me know and the recorder can be turned off.

Warm up question

Please tell me how long have you lived in Millen/Jenkins county area?

Main question 1. If not whole life: Please tell us what were the circumstances and reasons that made you decide to move to Millen?

Main question 2. What were your first impressions after you arrival? Please tell us a little bit about your first couple years: things that stood out and are memorable.

Main question 3. Please tell us a little bit about your life in Millen now. What do you do in your spare time, what of those things are here in Millen?

Main question 4. If you brought a friend to Millen, what places and houses would you definitely show him or her? What about these places stands out to you?

Follow-up question 4.1: What would you tell a visitor about those places?

Main question 5: Are there houses or buildings in Millen that you know interesting stories about? Maybe some rumors or old timey tales? Could you please share some of them?

Probing questions: Probing questions can be aimed at steering the focus group member back to the topic (Could you go back to the events that you just described for a moment?), confirming the information (So this is the house you are talking about?), clarification probes (Can you explain what you mean by “weird neighbors”?), etc.

Conclusion

I believe we have touched upon most memories and landmarks you have that are from Millen. Again, we truly appreciate your time and meeting with us for this conversation. Your experience has greatly contributed to our understanding and provided us with great examples.

Appendix F. Old Jenkins County brochure



location Strategically located between the mountains and the shore, Jenkins County is in the Classic South region of Georgia. Located fifty miles south of Augusta and thirty miles north of Statesboro on US Highway 25, Millen and county residents are in the perfect location to enjoy quiet, relaxed, hassle-free living while being within a half-hour or hour's drive from quality restaurants, shopping, entertainment opportunities, movies, museums, leading edge medical facilities, and any other "city" things one could want. South Carolina and Georgia beaches are only two hours away; Atlanta and Jacksonville are three hours away and the north Georgia and North and South Carolina mountains are a four hour drive.

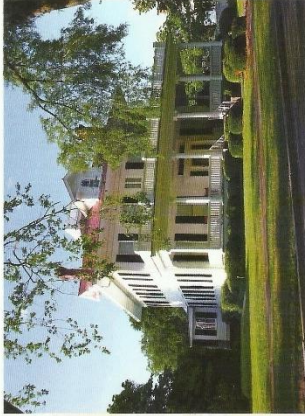
history Founded in 1905, Jenkins County is one of the smallest counties in Georgia with a population of about 8500. Millen, the county seat and only metropolitan area in the county, has a population of 3500. Millen grew into a town because of its proximity to major railroads. Cotton Avenue is an excellent example of a railroad commercial district. The Central Railroad Company built a line between Savannah and Macon via Millen in the 1830's; a north-south line from Millen to Augusta built by the Savannah Railroad in 1852 turned Millen into a major trade post. Two major depots located along Cotton Avenue indicate the significance of rail transportation in Millen. Both built in the early 1900's, one is currently in use

by Norfolk Southern and the other houses the Millen/Jenkins County Museum and Chamber of Commerce. Railroad activity continues to be important in Millen. The terminal serves as a switch station where trains are made up. As many as fifteen trains pass through Millen daily. Train watching is an attraction for train enthusiasts.

attractions Jenkins County is home to an abundance of diverse natural and historic resources: the Ogeechee River, Magnolia Springs State Park, Dukes Pond, Hanging Rocks Plantation, Civil War Heritage Trail, Woodpecker Trail, Millen/Jenkins County Museum, National Register Historic Buildings (Jenkins County Court House, Jenkins County Post Office, Millen Downtown Commercial District, Fort Lawton, Big Buckhead Church, Carswell Grove Church, Millen High School), and historic communities (Perkins, Hemdon, Four Points, Elam, Seaboro, Butts, Red Hill).

annual events Millen Better Hometown, Inc. and Millen Jenkins County Chamber of Commerce annually sponsor several family-oriented events: Community Easter Egg Hunt, Patriotic

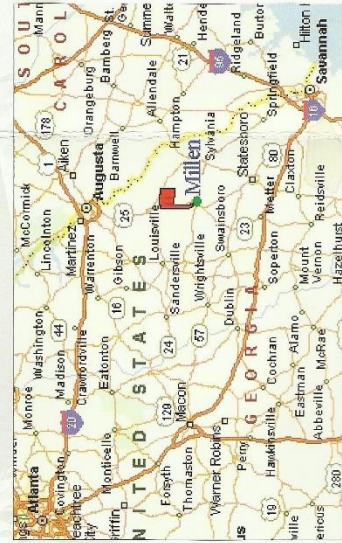
Celebration, Fair on the Square (local craft fair), Harvest of Fun (Halloween), and Christmas in Millen.



amenities Millen and Jenkins County offer great real estate bargains, affordable housing, a local hospital, a county library, a recreation complex, more than 60 churches, civic involvement in Rotary Club, Woman's Club, garden clubs, Lions Club, Millen Millers, and Optimist Club; employment opportunities in industry, agriculture, manufacturing, and textiles; and a variety of local shops, restaurants, and accommodations.

recreation Jenkins County's rural location offers recreational opportunities in hunting, fishing, golfing, sporting clays, biking, and hiking the swimming, camping, and hiking facilities of Magnolia Springs State Park.

education Millen has quality local schools, a local adult education center and is within reasonable driving distance of ten colleges and technical schools.



“Off the beaten path, near the action”
 Welcome to Millen and Jenkins County

Do you want the benefits of small town living, but not want to be isolated from modern conveniences? Do you want an ideal place to rear a family or to retire? Millen and Jenkins County are safe and accessible places where residents enjoy a moderate climate, clean air, and a minimum of traffic.



For more information visit:
 The Millen/Jenkins County Chamber of Commerce
 548 Cotton Avenue, Millen, Georgia 30442
 478-982-5595
 www.millenjenkinscounty.org
 e-mail: pauladepor@bellsouth.net or ahometown@bellsouth.net



Appendix G. Day trip itineraries

Scenic Byway Trip

1. Get to town by noon and visit the Café on Cotton, Rounds, or Honey Café on Hwy 25 for lunch. If you're here for breakfast, Honey Café is the place to be. Café on Cotton for lunch and Rounds for dinner. Fantastic local choices.
2. Cotton Avenue in the downtown Historic District is where you want to go to get a map or more information. Maybe watch a train go by on the train-watching platform. If you're visiting on a weekday, be sure to step into the museum located in the Chamber of Commerce office in the old train depot.
3. Once you've explored the lovely historic area, be sure to head out to get on the Millen Jenkins County Scenic Byway – it's 1 of 14 in the state and 35 miles of beautiful land and historic buildings.
4. You'll take SR 23 to Perkins-Greenfork Rd where you will see the Perkins Community. Quaint little buildings which have been recently restored. This community does have its own post office.
5. You'll continue onto Big Buckhead Rd where you will find Big Buckhead Baptist Church, the 3rd oldest Baptist church in the state of Georgia. Just 200 yards down the road you will see the site where Carswell Grove Baptist Church stood until a December 2014 fire burned it to the ground. Carswell Grove was one of the oldest African-American Baptist churches in Georgia.
6. The rest of your drive will be full of beautiful countryside for you to enjoy on your way back into town.

Downtown Trip

1. Come on in to the historic downtown district of Millen, GA. All of the buildings, including the PAL Theatre and the old train depot are on the National Register of Historic Places.
2. Be sure to stop into the charming shops and visit the people who make this community great.
3. The train viewing platform is a great place to get off your feet and enjoy the weather in this southern town.
4. While you're there, if on a weekday, visit the museum filled with interesting artifacts from the area. It's located within the Chamber of Commerce office in the old train depot.
5. If you're up for a walk, grab the Historic Walking Tour brochure and take a stroll through the district and learn about the buildings as you go.
6. The Jenkins County Courthouse is just a hop and a skip away if you go up a block from the railways. Its magnificent exterior was once outshined by the fully marble interior of the historic building; however, changes took place and that marble is no longer there.

Magnolia Springs State Park

1. Magnolia Springs is one of Georgia's many state parks, but it is a unique one. Home to quite a few alligators, turtles, birds, and other wildlife, Magnolia Springs is a place to remember.
2. Be sure to take a walk on the boardwalk overlooking the springs, you'll usually find an alligator or two relaxing in the water or on the banks.
3. We suggest bringing a picnic lunch on nice days since there are plenty of picnic tables with a view.
4. If you want, you can take a walk around the lake to see what else you can find. You can easily spend a day here without even realizing it.