Dalton Considers Plans for Downtown and Crown Mill Village
Prepared by: Melissa Lu, Sue Chapman & Felicia Harris

Two Archway Partnership student interns from UGA’s College of Environment and Design spent the summer working on various design projects throughout the city of Dalton, including a series of proposed redesigns to Crown Mill Village. The two students, Cameron Yates and Casey Marbut, worked under the direction of Dalton City Administrator Ty Ross and City/County Planner Kevin Herritt.

The downtown historic area, which is home to some of the town’s antique architecture, residential areas, and businesses, has undergone minor renovations in previous years. Now, local officials hope to see more development, turning the neighborhood into an arts and culture district. The students proposed designs that included a linear park for Crawford Street, a mixed use district near the historic Manly Jail Works building, a pedestrian bridge, skate park, playground, and urban plaza.

“This isn’t a fantasyland, these elements have been tried and been successful in other communities throughout the country,” stated Ty Ross in the Daily Citizen.

Ross and Herritt also directed the interns as they developed three design options for the Crown Mill Village area. The proposals ranged in scope from “very realistic” to “no limits,” and included design elements such as an expansive amphitheater, a nature center, and a ridge walk. Along with architectural elements, the students also suggested complementary ideas such as trolley routes and various entertainment venues that would allow the area to become a space suitable to live, work, and play.

The Dalton-Whitfield Planning Office hosted a community event in July at the Freight Depot that displayed the interns’ work to more than 40 people. Community members and elected officials showed up in support of the project and to offer their critiques and suggestions.

“I think they’re a good idea for quality of life for the community at Crown Mill and for the Dalton Community,” a local resident told the Daily Citizen.

Using the feedback they received while presenting their first three designs, Marbut and Yates developed a fourth proposal for the Crown Mill Village that was presented to the City Council. Plans for implementation are currently being considered.

Advancing Community Priorities: Community members identified the need for a vibrant downtown and expanded greenways, parks and trails as part of the community’s vision for the future. The proposals prepared by the interns will be used as starting points for community conversation about possible changes and as a stepping stone for funding.