



Economic &
Community
Development

Presenter Bio

Kerry S. Waldron

Executive Director

Cook County Economic Development Commission

Kerry is presently serving as the Economic Developer for Cook County, Georgia. A community of 18,000, Cook County is the choice due to its leadership, location, and land. Since forming the Economic Development Commission in October 2001, Cook County has been successful in landing over \$5 million in federal and state grants; locating 13 companies with over 498 jobs created with an investment of \$64 million and 9 expansions from existing companies totaling 174 plus new jobs.

The EDC is currently developing a 3,000-acre mega-industrial corridor. Phase I is completed and consists a 350-acre new industrial park creating 1,750 jobs at projected build-out. Cook County is the #1 producer of turf grass in Georgia and the Steel Building Capital of the South. Cook County is home to the newest tourism venue in the state with South Georgia Motorsports Park- a ½ mile paved oval track and ¼ mile paved drag strip. With over 90 events planned, over 200,000 people are expected annually generating a \$37 million regional impact. Cook County is home to JM Eagle pvc pipe company; Sanderson Farms; FinishMaster distribution; Xella International; BASF-Sparks to name a few.

Prior to relocating to Adel, Kerry served as the City Manager of Quitman, Georgia for 6.5 years and Thomaston, Georgia 5.5 years. During his tenure, Kerry spearheaded the construction of a city owned cable TV system; the purchase of a private water/wastewater treatment facility and reservoir doubling capacities of the city's infrastructure; and worked to increase service to citizens while reducing costs.

Kerry is serving his 10th year as one of nine board of directors for the Electric Cities of Georgia. ECG represents 49 public power communities in Georgia. In his spare time, Kerry has taught as an adjunct instructor for Columbus State University in the Masters in Public Administration program and is currently teaching American Government for Abraham Baldwin College. A motivational speaker and author, Kerry's book *Loving Life and Living Large: A Common Sense Approach to Successful Living* was recently published by PublishAmerica. Kerry is a graduate of the University of Florida with a BA in Political Science and holds a Master in Public Administration from Valdosta State University.

With his enthusiasm and go-getter attitude that produces results, Kerry was selected as one of the most 25 influential people in South Georgia. A graduate of Leadership Georgia, Kerry was born in Lake City, Florida and grew up in White Springs on the banks of the Suwannee River.