

# ARC's Green Communities: Leading the Way to a Sustainable Region

## PROJECT SUMMARY

The **Atlanta Regional Commission's (ARC) Green Communities Program** is a technical assistance and voluntary certification program for jurisdictions in the ARC 10-county planning area. The goals of the ARC's Green Communities Program are to:

- Encourage local governments to lessen their environmental impacts through their policies, practices, buildings and fleets
- Assist local governments in encouraging their communities to reduce their environmental impacts
- Provide assistance in public education and outreach on sustainability

The program is intended to foster greater environmental stewardship in metro Atlanta by providing technical assistance to local governments and recognizing those communities that invest in programs leading to a more sustainable region. Certified Green Communities set an example by conserving energy, investing in renewable energy, conserving water, reducing waste and protecting and restoring the community's natural resources. The program spotlights best-in-class examples of sustainability, encourages innovation and salutes cities and counties that make a strong commitment to environmental stewardship.

While some statewide programs exist around the U.S. and many individual governments have developed sustainability programs to reduce their environmental footprint, **ARC's Green Communities program is the first regional "green" certification program in the country.** Since its official kick-off in 2009, 16 local governments in the region have been certified as Green Communities and are making great strides towards reducing their impact on the environment. In addition, several other state-level sustainability certification programs across the U.S. have been modeled after ARC's Green Communities program.