

In the REGION

SGRC Assists the City of Waycross with Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Substandard Housing

The City of Waycross was awarded \$611,113 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to address substandard housing throughout the city. To date, the city has completed two rehabilitation units and one reconstruction. The construction contractor for all three units was Day Construction of Ambrose.

The reconstruction consisted of the demolition of an existing dilapidated home and reconstruction of 1,190 square feet - 3 bedroom, 2 bath home for an elderly woman and her grandchild. One rehabilitation project consisted of a 1,400 square foot 3 bedroom and 2 bath home for a senior citizen.



Reconstruction Before Photo #1



Reconstruction After Photo #1

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The Southern Georgia Regional Commission proudly serves Atkinson, Bacon, Ben Hill, Berrien, Brantley, Brooks, Charlton, Clinch, Coffee, Cook, Echols, Irwin, Lanier, Lowndes, Pierce, Tift, Turner, and Ware Counties.

Community and Economic Development

SGRC Assists the City of Waycross with Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Substandard Housing (continued)



Reconstruction Before Photo #2



Reconstruction After Photo #2



Rehabilitation Before Photo #1



Rehabilitation After Photo #1



Rehabilitation Before Photo #2



Rehabilitation After Photo #2

Community and Economic Development

SGRC Community Economic Development Division Reminds City and County Governments of CDBG Planning Time

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs will be accepting applications for its Annual Competition for 2024 Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) on April 1, 2024, and the time to begin planning those applications is NOW! Threshold requirements implemented by DCA have necessitated getting an early start on CDBG applications in order to be eligible to submit an application.

CDBG funds are federal dollars allocated to the State of Georgia by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and are earmarked to benefit primarily low to moderate income people. In fact, the beneficiaries of a CDBG project must be at least 70% low to moderate income.

Examples of eligible public facilities and improvements activities include, but are not limited to: water and sewer facilities, flood and drainage improvements, streets, and neighborhood revitalization. Other activities may include the development of shelters/facilities for homeless, elderly, mentally ill, abused, and impaired persons. Public facility activities may also include the development of medical, community, senior, and handicapped centers, or centers for literacy training.

For the 2024 CDBG application round, the maximum funding amount for a single-activity public facilities grant is \$1,000,000. Local governments are required to provide a 5% cash match of amounts from \$300,001 to \$750,000 in CDBG funds, and 10% cash match of amounts from \$750,001 to \$1,000,000 (not required for single-activity neighborhood revitalization grants). Multi-Activity projects are eligible for up to \$1,250,000 in CDBG funds; a 15% cash match is required for amounts of \$1,000,001 or more.

Development of a quality, competitive, and eligible CDBG application is time consuming, and therefore the process should begin immediately. If your community is interested in applying for CDBG funds and you would like to discuss a potential project, contact Tonia Hendricks at 912-285-6097, or by email at trhendricks@sgrc.us.

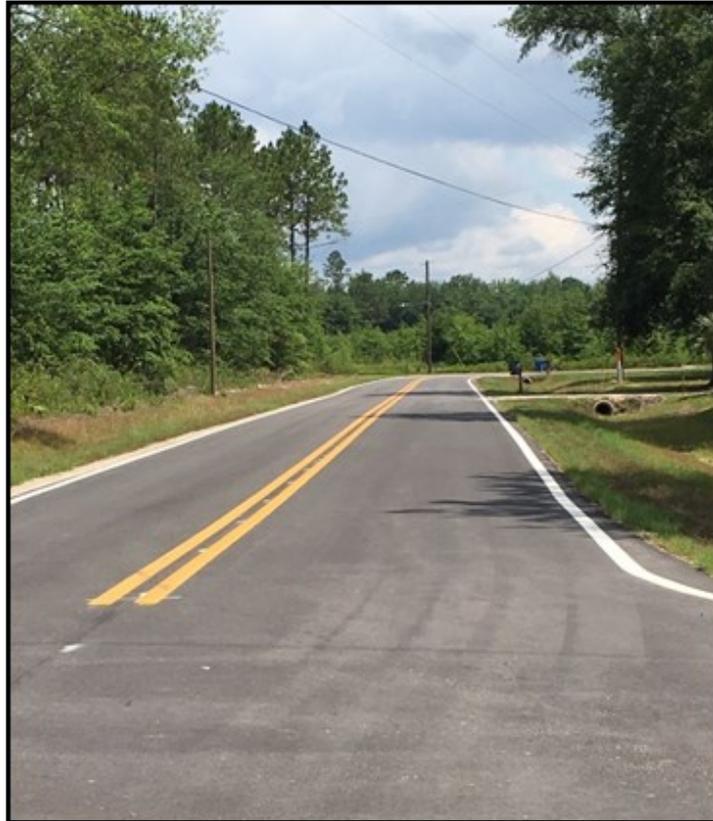


Neighborhood Revitalization

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Community and Economic Development

SGRC Community Economic Development Division Reminds City and County Governments of CDBG Planning Time (continued)



Street, Flood, and Drainage Improvements



Public Facility Improvements

Workforce Development

WorkSource Southern Georgia Staff Attend Georgia Chambers 2023 Rural Prosperity Forum

On Wednesday, July 26th, Amy Jones, Business Services Program Manager, and Savannah Bennett, Business Services Program Coordinator, attended the Georgia Chamber's 2023 Rural Prosperity Forum in Tifton. The annual event, held at the Georgia Museum of Agriculture & Historic Village, focused on the Future of Rural Workforce by providing data, local panel speakers sharing best practices, student opportunities, and healthcare workforce solutions.

Data shared during the event included a stark reality that 3.2 million working-age Georgians are not working. Additionally, the top three (3) industries for Georgia are Education, Healthcare, and Tourism. These fields are traditionally staffed by women, and childcare has been a massive barrier for working mothers. Childcare workers are also mainly female and many households weighed the cost of childcare versus the income that could be made by working. As a result, many women made the choice to leave the workforce, during the pandemic.



Ware County was represented (left to right) by Dr. Trudy Smith, Program Manager for Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) at the Georgia Department of Education, Eva Byrd, Project Manager with Coastal Pines Technical College, Dr. Lynn Barber, Asst Superintendent and CTAE Director for Ware County Schools, Savannah Bennett and Amy Jones with SGRC/ WorkSource Southern Georgia, Jason Rubenbauer, President & CEO with Waycross-Ware County Development Authority, Kim Bennett Callahan, Work-Based Learning (WBL) Coordinator with Ware County High School, and Paige Taylor, Executive Director with Waycross-Ware County Chamber of Commerce.

Numerous community partners from Region 11 participated in the forum to understand how to better serve our communities including two speakers; Eva Byrd with Coastal Pines Technical College, and Amy Carter with Southern Regional Technical College. To learn more about WorkSource Southern Georgia, including information on workforce issues and relevant data, please contact Amy Jones at ajones@sgrc.us or visit www.sgrc.us/workforce.html.

Workforce Development

Joint Healthcare Sector Partnership Meeting Hosted by Southern Regional Technical College

On Monday, July 24th, the South Georgia Healthcare Group (SGHG) held a joint sector partnership meeting with Region 10. The SGHG was created in Region 11 in 2018 through a WorkSource Georgia grant focusing on collaboration and communication within the healthcare sector across our eighteen (18) county area. Healthcare employers share best practices, recurring open positions, and workforce skills needed as K-12 and post-secondary educators and community partners work together to reduce the gaps by identifying short and long-term goals. The two regions shared this sector focus and came together for this joint meeting at Southern Regional Technical College's Tifton campus. Presenters for the meeting were Ben McCumber and Joseph Echols from the Technical College System of Georgia's Secondary Education Initiatives team.

McCumber shared information and data about Georgia's College & Career Academies, including academies with healthcare pathways. In the second part of the presentation, Echols shared information about updated Dual Enrollment Eligibility and how to best serve high school students utilizing new Senate and House bills through Accelerated Career/Dual Achievement pathways. To learn more, contact Amy Jones, Business Services Program Manager, at ajones@sgrc.us.



Members of Region 10 and Region 11 healthcare sector partnerships come together to discuss ways to increase the pathways for high school students. Pictured (left to right) are Jerry Chapman, Claudia Grooms, Joseph Echols, Latasha Marshall, Ben McCumber, Shirley Ingram, Crystal Livingston, Rosalind Neal, Donna Haman, Kim Bennett Callahan, Charlene Brinson, Patricia Harris, Zinda McDaniel, Amy Carter, Heather Corbett, Melody Pierce, Laura Calhoun, Angela Ammons, Lori Eubanks, Darrell Moore, Courtney Proctor, Sandra Martin, and Amy Jones.

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Workforce Development

Joint Healthcare Sector Partnership Meeting was Hosted by Southern Regional Technical College (continued)



Ben McCumber, Executive Director of the Technical College System of Georgia's Secondary Education Initiatives spoke at the SGHG Joint Healthcare Sector Partnership Meeting hosted by the Southern Regional Technical College Tift Campus.



Joseph Echols, Dual Enrollment Director of the Technical College System of Georgia's Secondary Education Initiatives, presented updates for high school students struggling to graduate at the SGHG Joint Healthcare Sector Partnership Meeting hosted by the Southern Regional Technical College Tift Campus.

Planning & Transportation

SGRC Planning Division Announces it's Time to Start Planning for Rural Zone Designation

It is time to start planning for the Rural Zone Designation's August 2024 deadline. To be eligible, communities must have a population of 15,000 or fewer, have a concentration of historic commercial structures, and must be economically distressed as defined by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Additionally, communities should comply with the state requirements, submit a feasibility study or market analysis, and must submit a master plan or strategic plan.



Rural scene with cows and chickens

Interested communities must perform a Downtown SWOT Analysis, document the current state of the downtown infrastructure, discuss and document the distressed areas of downtown, list the goals to achieve the revitalization outcomes, and determine the type of businesses to attract.

The Rural Zone program targets rural downtown areas by offering economic development incentives when local economic conditions have been adversely impacted. It also adds in retail opportunities, which were once excluded from job tax credits. Further, multiple sources can benefit – for instance, a single new coffee shop might provide job tax credits for the local business owner and an investment and rehabilitation credit to a downtown investor.

The Job Tax Credit (JTC) will be \$2,000 per new full-time equivalent job per year, up to 5 years, and not to exceed \$40,000 per year. At least two net, new full-time equivalent jobs must be created to qualify. This credit is for the small business owner who opens a storefront within a designated Rural Zone and creates jobs.

The Investment Credit is equivalent to 25% of the purchase price, not to exceed \$125,000 total or \$25,000 per year. At least two net, new full-time equivalent jobs must be created and maintained to qualify for the investment credit. This credit is for investors who purchase a building within the designated Rural Zone.

The Rehabilitation Credit is equivalent to 30% of the qualified rehabilitation, not to exceed \$150,000 total or \$50,000 per year. At least two net, new full-time equivalent jobs must be created and maintained to qualify for the rehabilitation credit. This credit offsets development costs associated with rehabilitating a property within a designated Rural Zone.

For further information, you may contact Loretta Hylton, Senior Planner, at the Valdosta SGRC office at lhylton@sgrc.us or by phone at 229-333-5277.

Area Agency on Aging

SGRC-AAA Staff and Aging Contractors Attend Georgia Gerontology Society Annual Conference

Southern Georgia Regional Commission's Area Agency on Aging (SGRC-AAA) staff and aging contractors were pleased to attend the Georgia Gerontology Society (GGS) 2023 Annual Conference at The Ritz-Carlton Reynolds, Lake Oconee from July 24th – 26th. The theme for this year's conference was Design Your Vision for Aging: Connecting Goals Through Collaboration.

According to their website, GGS reaches across the state to connect, support, and educate those working with older adults and their families. GGS's focus areas are education, training, advocacy, and promotion of careers in gerontology. Shawn Taylor, Assistant Director of Aging Services, serves on the GGS Board of Directors with the awards and communications committees. For more information on GGS, go to www.georgiagerontologysociety.org.



From left to right above: Shawn Taylor, Assistant Director of Aging Services; Patti Gordon, Director of the Lanier County Senior Center; Lynn Platt, Director of the Pierce County Senior Center operated by Action-Pact; Leisha Matthews, Aging Program Manager; and Scott Courson, Director of Aging Services.



Pamela Thompson, RDN, LDN of Food Fitness, LLC, and Shawn Taylor, Assistant Director of Aging Services presenting a GGS Conference session on nutrition and wellness for seniors.



Norman Graves, CEO of Middle Flint Council on Aging, received the John Tyler Mauldin Award from GGS for outstanding achievements in gerontology. He is pictured here with Pamela Thompson, RDN, LDN.

Geographic Information Services (GIS)

SGRC-GIS Division Shares Projects Delivered to the SGRC Region in FY 23

With the start of each fiscal year, the GIS program at SGRC looks back over the previous 12 months to measure its success and progress. GIS program staff are constantly striving to create opportunities to serve SGRC regional governments.

Often, these opportunities are in the form of project innovations such as online GIS editing tools, new data capture methods, and other ways to assist governments stretch their dollar. To accomplish this, the GIS Division is also continuously learning about the latest tools and finding ways to put them to work.

Beyond the ever-present, ad-hoc support services delivered to the region, GIS also completed some significant larger-scaled projects in FY 23.

Here is a summary of recent projects completed by the GIS Division:

- 8 Tax parcel mapping projects
- 4 Utility infrastructure projects
- 12 Lidar/Environmental projects
- 7 Elections web maps
- 4 Cemetery web mapping applications
- 2 Statewide GIS data/analysis projects
- 20 unique Land Use/Zoning, Permitting clients supported
- 28 Census related projects
- 3 Public safety-related projects
- 3 Addressing/ 911 support projects
- 4 Countywide web mapping applications
- 6 Regionwide web mapping applications
- 3 Statewide web mapping applications

Governments in the market for process improvements and innovations to make their work easier and quicker should consult the SGRC GIS Division for assistance.

For questions about any of these projects or how SGRC GIS can help, contact GIS Division Director Rachel Strom at rstrom@sgrc.us.



SGRC-GIS Aerial Map

Small Business Lending

SGRC SBA 7a Loan Program Assists Nurtured Roots Learning Center

Nurtured Roots Learning Center is a childcare facility located at 518 S. Elm St. in Adel that accommodates children from infancy to preadolescents. The center is staffed with qualified employees who not only serve as facilitators but also as teachers. The education curriculum is based on the principle that preschoolers learn and develop best through carefully supervised play with educational materials. Their goal is to create a learning atmosphere that will provide stimulating experiences along with challenging materials for the children to learn in the best possible environment. The mission is that every child will have the opportunity to grow emotionally, socially, intellectually, creatively, and physically in a safe and controlled setting to provide the children with the best possible learning experience. The facility has a capacity to serve 71 children.



Nurtured Roots Learning Center playroom

The owners of Nurtured Roots Learning Center are Ty and Sara Sumner, born and raised locally in Cook County. Ty is currently employed by a local insurance company where he can serve the people of Adel by helping them insure their assets. Sara has a Master of Arts in Teaching, specializing in Business and Computer Science. Sara recently completed her sixth year of teaching middle school and decided to work full-time at Nurtured Roots allowing her to continue her desire to teach.



Nurtured Roots Learning Center classroom

The Sumners sought assistance with funding for working capital to aid in the start-up costs for running the business. Commercial Banking Company partnered with SGRC and the SBA 7a Loan Program for financing the project. Nurtured Roots Learning Center opened its door on January 11, 2023, and created twelve jobs.

For more information on SGRC Lending and the programs offered, contact Lance Wilcher at (229) 333-5277 or lwilcher@sgrc.us.

Contact the SGRC

SGRC Council 2023 Meeting Schedule

September 28, 2023 – 11:00 am
SGRC Waycross Office

~No Meeting - October~

*Area Officials Appreciation Dinner -
October 18, 2023
5:00 PM @ The Farm in Adel, GA

~ November- No meeting ~
(combined with December meeting)

December 7, 2023 – 11:00 am
SGRC Valdosta Office
(subject to change)



**SOUTHERN GEORGIA
REGIONAL COMMISSION**

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