

In the REGION

SGRC Welcomes New Council Members

During the Southern Georgia Regional Commission's (SGRC) Council meetings in Waycross on January 25th and in Valdosta on February 22nd, Chairman Lee Gowen swore in the following new members:

Chairman Ronnie Gaskins - Berrien County

Chairman Jimmy Kitchens - Coffee County

Chairman Nick Denham - Turner County

Mayor Marty Lee - City of Nahunta/Brantley Co.

Lindsey Parrish - Cook County



Welcome to the Council and thank you for your service.



Picture above (L to R): Chairman Ronnie Gaskins, Chairman Jimmy Kitchens, Chairman Nick Denham, and Mayor Marty Lee.



Picture above is Lindsey Parrish.

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.

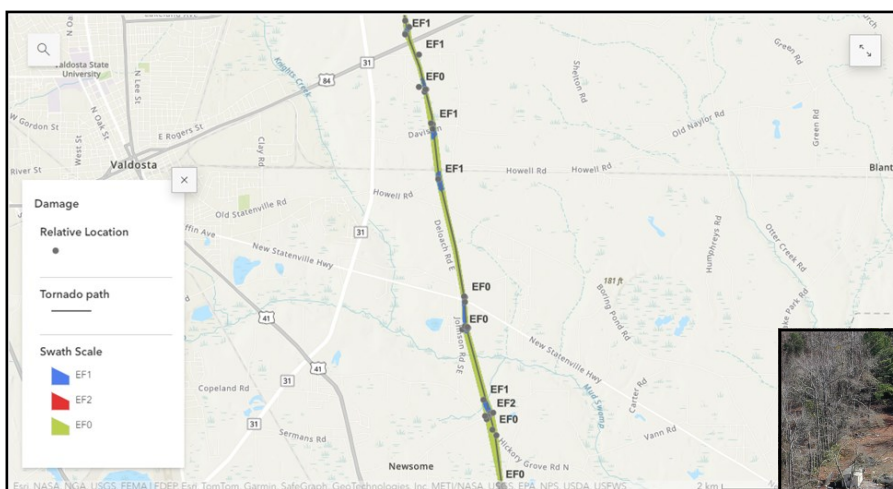
Geographic Information Systems

SGRC UAV Assists Lowndes County in Aftermath of EF-2 Tornado

With a path over 200 yards wide, 6.2 miles long and with peak winds reaching 120 mph, a powerful tornado devastated Lowndes County residents on Sunday, February 4th. The tornado touched down just east of Dasher and then moved north-northwest, finally lifting off the ground east of Valdosta and north of Highway 84. The tornado caused damage to trees, powerlines, homes, and outbuildings.

In the following days SGRC-GIS staff dispatched the UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle/drone) team to the debris path and collected photographic details of damaged structures, destruction of timber, and other areas of damage directly caused by the tornado. The images collected were requested by Lowndes Emergency Management Agency (EMA) and the National Weather Service in Tallahassee. In addition, the SGRC created a story map of the event.

[Lowndes County Tornado https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/c7b8ab0e1e2a49a5b4883b1be2368775](https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/c7b8ab0e1e2a49a5b4883b1be2368775)

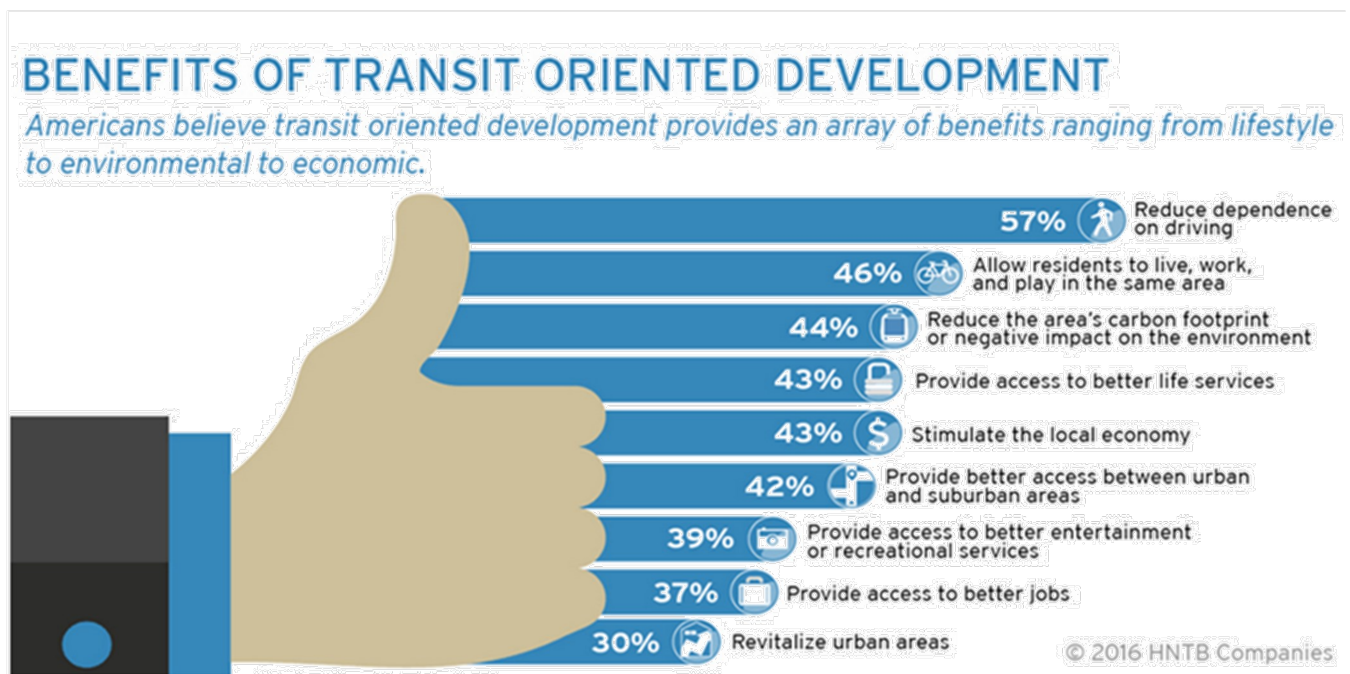


Transportation Planning/VLMPO

Transit-Oriented Development Guide for Urban and Rural Communities

Transportation Planning staff are currently in the initial phases of crafting a guide for Transit-Oriented Development tailored to both urban and rural settings. Transit-oriented development is a form of transit-centric urban planning that aims to cultivate lively, sustainable, and equitable neighborhoods by establishing compact, pedestrian-friendly areas close to public transportation hubs. These developments encompass a blend of commercial, residential, office, and recreational amenities.

This guide will offer a comprehensive examination of how transit-oriented development can be applied in both urban and rural areas of the Southern Georgia Region based on the makeup of the existing rural and urban transit systems that are in place. Implementing transit-oriented development yields a variety of public benefits, which can be seen on the graphic below.



The transportation planning team, alongside local and state collaborators, remains dedicated to advancing diverse transportation projects and crafting essential planning materials aimed at enhancing the Southern Georgia Region's overall quality of life. For inquiries regarding this document or any other transportation endeavors, please reach out to Amy Martin, Transportation Director, via email at amartin@sgrc.us or by phone at (229) 300-0922.

Area Agency on Aging

SGRC-AAA Donates to Harborview Health Systems of Pierce County

The Dementia Care Specialist (DCS) Program of Southern Georgia Regional Commission's Area Agency on Aging (SGRC-AAA) donated to Harborview Health System of Pierce County. Doll and pet therapy is a known resource in helping those with Dementia. Using a robotic pet or a baby doll can be a very effective way for a person with dementia to decrease stress and agitation. Doll therapy can be used for dementia patients as a way to put responsibility, caring, and structure back into the lives of those afflicted.

Christy Joyner is the Dementia Care Specialist (DCS) for the SGRC-AAA. The mission of the DCS Program is to increase dementia education and awareness, build strong community partnerships, and support care partners in expanding their skills and resources while caring for persons living with dementia. If you want more information on the DCS Program, you can reach Christy at 912-285-6097 or 1-888-732-4464 / 888-73-AGING.



Pictured here are Animated Therapy Pets—with realistic fur and pet-like sounds and sensors that respond to petting and hugs with familiar pet-like actions.

Workforce Development

SGRC Workforce Development Staff Attend Untapped Workforce Summit

SGRC staff members Amy Jones, Business Services Manager, and Savannah Bennett, Business Services Coordinator, attended the Untapped Workforce Summit on February 6-7th at the Infinite Energy Center in Duluth, Georgia.

The Untapped Workforce Summit, presented in collaboration with Career Rise Inc and WorkSource Georgia, focused on ways to tap into Georgia's Untapped Workforce including individuals with disabilities, justice-involved individuals/second chance hiring, opportunity youth, immigrants and refugees and veterans.



Pictured Above (L to R): Savannah Bennett, SGRC Business Services Coordinator, Amy Jones, SGRC Business Services Manager and Elton Dixon, Southern Georgia Workforce Development Board Member and President of Enay Coaching (Valdosta, GA).

Staff Highlights

Welcome

GIS Welcomes New
Staff Member
Becca Fisher



Planning Welcomes New
Staff Member
Marcus McConico



Promotion!



Amy Martin
Transportation Planning/
VLMPO Director



Megan Fowler
Regional Transit Director



Tonia Hendricks
Community and Economic
Development Director

Congratulations!

Contact the SGRC

Upcoming Events

SGRC Council Meeting

March 28, 2024 – 11:00 am
SGRC Waycross Office

Valdosta-Lowndes MPO

Citizens Advisory Committee
March 5, 2024 – 3:00 pm
SGRC Valdosta Office

Technical Advisory Committee

March 6, 2024 - 9:00 am
SGRC Valdosta Office

Policy Committee

March 6, 2024 - 10:30 am
SGRC Valdosta Office

Workforce Development Board

May 15, 2024 – 11:00 am
SGRC Waycross Office



**SOUTHERN GEORGIA
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