

# In the REGION

## Ware County CDBG Project to Construct Magnolia House Youth Development Center Complete

Construction of the new Magnolia House Youth Development Center is complete, and the 4,830 square foot facility is providing support and continued care to child, adolescent, and adult victims of domestic violence. Construction of this facility was made possible by a \$750,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) that was awarded to Ware County in November 2017.

The work that the staff of Magnolia House does is critical in the healing of domestic violence victims, and the amount of stability they experience during this crucial time plays an important role in their recovery process. Even during these precarious times of COVID-19, the Youth Development Center facility is safely providing both youth and adults a productive space to make positive changes towards recovery, focusing on therapy, important job/school tasks, informative classes, and recreation. The needs of the child and adult victims of domestic violence were



***Magnolia House Youth Development Center*** carefully considered and the design of this new facility reflects that.

Architectural services were provided by Richard Sasser of Waycross, and construction of the facility was carried out by Craft Development located in Waycross. The SGRC Community & Economic Development division assisted Ware County in the development of the successful CDBG application, and administered the project after it was awarded.

***Continued on the next page***

*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

## Ware County CDBG Project to Construct Magnolia House Youth Development Center Complete (continued)



*The Youth Development Center facility is safely providing both youth and adults a productive space to make positive changes towards recovery.*

# Information Technology (IT)

## SGRC-IT Division Offers Helpful Advice on Safety and Security While Video Conferencing with Zoom

When Covid-19 spread globally last spring, Zoom immediately became a household name.

The demand for Zoom products has increased as millions of Americans staying at home during the coronavirus crisis



have relied on the service to stay connected with family, friends, classmates, and co-workers.

But while the Zoom platform offer's a lifeline for the socially distanced, reports of video-conferencing (VTC) hijacking (also called "Zoom-bombing") have emerged nationwide. The FBI has received multiple reports of conferences being disrupted by pornographic and/or hate images and threatening language.

This does not mean that Zoom is unsafe to use. Unless users are discussing state or corporate secrets, or disclosing personal health information, Zoom should be fine. Also, for education classes, after-work get-togethers, or even workplace meetings that limit content to routine business, there is not much risk in using Zoom.

Zoom has fine-tuned its video conferencing software and has upgraded security features to help prevent "Zoom bombing" and other privacy intrusions.

The following are safety tips for using Zoom:

- ◇ Join Zoom meetings through a web browser rather than using the Zoom desktop software. The web browser version gets security enhancements faster.
- ◇ When joining a meeting, a browser will open a new tab and give a prompt to use or install the Zoom desktop software. In the fine print, there is a link to "join from your browser" and users should click that instead.
- ◇ Links to a teleconference or classroom should be sent directly to individual participants and never be publicly available on a social media post.
- ◇ When hosting a Zoom meeting, ask that meeting participants sign in with a password. This sign in method makes Zoom-bombing much less likely.
- ◇ Users managing a conference in Zoom should change the screen sharing option to "Host Only."

Zoom is making improvements all the time, so users should continue to use it, but should also consider these tips to improve security. To learn more, contact Larry Adams at [ladams@sgrc.us](mailto:ladams@sgrc.us).

# Transportation and Environmental

## Valdosta's Pinevale Community Report

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission is wrapping up a community report for Valdosta's Pinevale community on behalf of the Valdosta-Lowndes Metropolitan Planning Organization. This report provides an overview of the community's overall demographics and transportation infrastructure. The Pinevale community is a historic community that is idyllic for housing and infrastructure rehabilitation and revitalization initiatives. This community report is comprised of data from staff site visits, the U.S. Census, ESRI, and future year 2045 Socioeconomic Data.



***Pinevale Community in Valdosta***

The Pinevale Community Report focuses on information and recommendations needed to pursue various opportunities for economic development, transportation investments, and overall community revitalization. The information and data within the report focuses on the history of the community as well, which was once the center of African American commerce within the City of Valdosta. It is an old community and there is detailed information about the age of the housing stock and a clearly demonstrated need for revitalization. Also documented are opportunities and recommendations to address the needs of the community through Community Development Block Grants.

Another characteristic of this community that impacts the ability to create opportunities is the importance of a safe, efficient, well thought out multimodal transportation network. Within this community there is low vehicle ownership and a high percentage of persons who walk and bicycle to work or various community businesses and recreational facilities. Improving the overall transportation network through installing sidewalks, bike lanes, and other safety road improvements will provide residents within the community a safer way to commute to various businesses within the community. One such improvement was South Troupe Street, which recently underwent drainage improvements, as well as sidewalk and bicycle lane installment. These improvements will make the community more desirable for economic development initiatives.

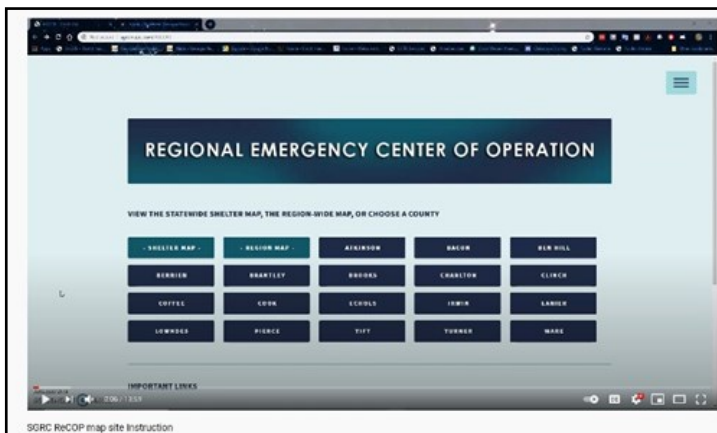
This type of report can be created for any community within the Southern Georgia Region. For more information about the Pinevale Community Report or to inquire about having a report completed in a community, please feel free to contact Amy Martin at [amartin@sgrc.us](mailto:amartin@sgrc.us) or by phone at 229-333-5277.

# Geographic Information Services

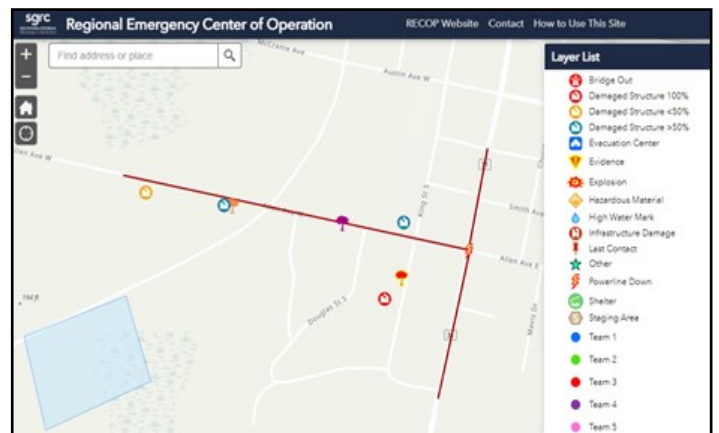
## Severe Weather Season Already in Full Swing in South Georgia

Georgia's tornado season is typically the months of March, April, and May. March is the wettest of the spring months and severe weather is a common occurrence during the rainy season. Coordinating damage assessment after a weather event can be daunting, but the SGRC GIS Department has a free online mapping application that is available to all of its communities for use during and after disasters. Officials can input data from a command center during an event or while conducting damage assessments in the field after the event has passed. The map can help with planning coordinated responses by highlighting priority locations and needs.

The app is accessible from a computer or any mobile device that has internet access by visiting <https://www.sgrcmaps.com/recop>. A link to an online tutorial is available at the top of the map, or those interested may email SGRC GIS Director Rachel Strom at [rstrom@sgrc.us](mailto:rstrom@sgrc.us) for more information.



**County list page to view the Regional Emergency Center of Operation map**



**SGRC Regional Emergency Center of Operation map**

# Local Government Services

## Local Governments Must Conduct Hazard Mitigation Planning Every Five Years

Local governments are required to update their Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) every five years. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines mitigation as “the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters.” HMP’s are required to be in compliance with the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA).

An approved plan is a necessity to be eligible to receive federal pre- and post-disaster assistance. A plan should identify existing vulnerabilities and the preparedness of suitable response and recovery operations in the near term.

The Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS) has multiple resources for understanding pre-disaster hazard mitigation planning requirements. These can be found on the following website: <https://gema.georgia.gov/hazard-mitigation-resources>.

Additionally, FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute offers virtual training for the hazard mitigation plan development process with a 12-hour interactive web-based course found at the following site: <https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-318>.

On the following page is an example of information provided during the training; this is part of the evaluation tool used by FEMA/GEMA/HS plan reviewers during the evaluation phase of the plan submittal process.

SGRC planning staff are presently assisting Lowndes County with the completion of its HMP update. The hazards chosen for the update as the most applicable to Lowndes County are: natural hazards including flood, high winds (hurricane/tornadoes/thunderstorms), lightning, wildfire, extreme heat/cold, drought, sinkholes, dam failure, hail, and public health emergency and man-made hazards including chemical, biological, radiological, and explosive incidents (CBRNE), civil disturbances, active shooter, cyberattacks, aircraft accidents (military and civilian), and traffic crashes.

Following the evaluation of each hazard, the plan includes goals and objectives for addressing the risks imposed by the hazards. The goals and objectives include action recommendations for the five year time horizon to serve as mitigation strategies addressing each hazard. Each action recommendation includes an estimate of cost, identification of funding sources and applicable jurisdiction, as well as relevant timeframe, prioritization, and status.

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# Local Government Services

## Local Governments Must Conduct Hazard Mitigation Planning Every Five Years (continued)

Through the process of updating hazard mitigation plans, it is an objective to mitigate (as one can not prevent) the destruction that occurs with hazards with the goal of saving lives and property. Updating the mitigation strategy and the implementation plan enables local leaders to utilize current and accurate information and recommendations when allocating community funding and applying for grant opportunities as they arise. For additional details on Hazard Mitigation Plans, SGRC Planning staff are available at 229-333-5277.

LOCAL MITIGATION PLAN REVIEW TOOL SUPPLEMENT			
1. REGULATION CHECKLIST	Location in Plan (section and/or page number)	Met	Not Met
Regulation (44 CFR 201.6 Local Mitigation Plans)			
<b>ELEMENT A. PLANNING PROCESS</b>			
A1. Does the Plan document the planning process, including how it was prepared and who was involved in the process for each jurisdiction? (Requirement §201.6(c)(1))			
<i>Does the plan include the schedule or timeline that was followed for the update process?</i>			
<i>Does the plan list the jurisdictions participating?</i>			
<i>Does the plan list who represented each jurisdiction (position or title)?</i>			
<i>Does the plan document how each jurisdiction participated?</i>			
<i>Does the plan include documentation of the current plan update process?</i>			
A2. Does the Plan document an opportunity for neighboring communities, local and regional agencies involved in hazard mitigation activities, agencies that have the authority to regulate development as well as other interests to be involved in the planning process? (Requirement §201.6(b)(2))			
<i>Does the plan identify all stakeholders involved or given an opportunity to be involved?</i>			
<i>Does the list of stakeholders include local and regional agencies involved in hazard mitigation, agencies that have the authority to regulate development AND neighboring communities?</i>			
<i>Does the list of involved stakeholders include the agency and the person's position or title?</i>			
<i>Does the plan identify how stakeholders were invited to be part of the process?</i>			
A3. Does the Plan document how the public was involved in the planning process during the drafting stage? (Requirement §201.6(b)(1))			
A4. Does the Plan describe the review and incorporation of existing plans, studies, reports, and technical information? (Requirement §201.6(b)(3))			
<i>Does the plan document what existing plans, studies, etc. were reviewed?</i>			
<i>Does the plan document how relevant information was incorporated?</i>			
A5. Is there discussion of how the community(ies) will continue public participation in the plan maintenance process? (Requirement §201.6(c)(4)(iii))			

# Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

## SGRC-AAA Aging Contractors Partner with Georgia State University for *BE WITH* Grant

Scott Courson, Director of Aging Services for the SGRC-AAA, said, “We are excited to announce that several of our contracted senior center providers have partnered with Georgia State University (GSU) to be a part of the BE WITH Grant, which targets social isolation, loneliness, and elevated suicide risk among senior citizens during COVID-19 and even beyond.”



The BE WITH (Belongingness and Empathy With Intentional Targeted Helping) initiative will result in participating seniors receiving eight caring calls and four surveys over eight months from GSU students or specially trained GSU volunteers.

The team leader, Dr. Laura Shannonhouse, has administered a similar program in Metro-Atlanta and reported great success. She indicated the evidence-informed initiative will be beneficial not only to the seniors who participate, but also to GSU.



## SGRC-AAA Offers Telephone Reassurance Service

The SGRC-AAA's Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) is offering a new service for people age 60 and above who are living alone or are isolated.

The new service is called Telephone Reassurance and it consists of interaction with individuals by telephone to reduce social isolation, provide support, and ensure health and safety. For more information, please call the ADRC at: 1-888-732-4464 or 1-888-73AGING.

## *Bacon County Senior Center News*



*Thank you, Tasha Hill, for donating goodie bags for seniors on behalf of Christ Cathedral Apostolic Church*



# Area Agency on Aging

## SGRC-AAA Recognizes Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) Social Workers

March is National Social Work Month and is a time to celebrate social work as a profession. The theme for Social Work Month 2021 is *Social Workers Are Essential*. Social Workers have long been viewed as an essential component to community well-being and effective community service programs. Social workers are trained to help people address barriers to optimal living and they are tasked with effecting positive change with individuals, families, groups and entire communities.

In honor of Social Work Month, the SGRC-AAA recognized two employees credentialed as social workers who work in the ADRC and extended a warm and heartfelt “thank you” to these dedicated, professional, and compassionate social workers.

Scott Courson, Director of Aging Services for the SGRC-AAA said, “Our social workers have a long history of excellence in service, always going above and beyond when serving clients, family members, and caregivers. We are grateful for each of them and we want them to know that their exceptional knowledge is appreciated and that the thoughtful care with which they treat clients and family members does not go unnoticed.”



*Connie Miss, BSW*



*Haylee Metts, BSW*



# Workforce Development

## Southern Georgia WorkSource Announces Healthcare 2021 Virtual Workforce Development Summit

Worksource offers on-the-job training, work experience, and much more! For more information, contact Amy Jones at 912-285-6097 or via email at [ajones@sgrc.us](mailto:ajones@sgrc.us).



**Healthcare 2021**  
A VIRTUAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT

**WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

*A forum on workforce issues in the age of COVID*

**Thursday, April 1 | 9-11:30 am (EST)**  
*Registration is free, but reserved for first 500*

For healthcare leaders, workforce developers, business executives, economic developers, educators, elected officials, community leaders... anyone who cares about what happens next.



**Keynote:** *Derek Carpenter, VP/Strategic Partnerships  
Hueman*

**The WORKFORCE ALLIANCE**  
*North Florida | South Georgia | Southeast Alabama*  
*Great talent knows no boundaries*

**SAVE THE DATE.**  
CLICK [HERE](#) TO PRE-REGISTER  
AND RESERVE YOUR SPOT.

*For more information —  
[mterbrueggen@careersourcenefl.com](mailto:mterbrueggen@careersourcenefl.com)*

# Small Business Lending

## SGRC Small Business Lending Participates in Economic Aid Act with Second Round of Covid-19 Relief

The Small Business Lending Department has been busy assisting local small businesses and its partner lenders with various pieces of the Economic Aid Act in the second-round response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As part of the Economic Aid Act, a second round of Paycheck Protection Program loans were allocated. This allows for NEW first round applicants as well as second round applicants who have already received forgiveness for the first round to be eligible for a second round PPP loan. The applicant must show a 25% revenue reduction from one quarter in 2020 compared to 2019. Eligible applicants can receive a loan in the amount of 2.5x average monthly payroll and those in the accommodation and food services industry are eligible for 3.5x. The program is implemented through banks acting as SBA Lenders.

As a Lender Service Provider (LSP) for many banks in the Southern Georgia region, the SGRC Small Business Lending Department has assisted several banks in the processing of these loans. To date, the lending department has processed over 50 applications for participating banks totaling just under \$2.5 million dollars in approved loans.

In addition to PPP loans, the Economic Aid Act extended the small business debt relief

to existing SBA 504 and 7a borrowers. The SGRC Small Business Lending has an SBA 504 portfolio of 25 loans which will all receive another round of debt relief. As part of the Act, SBA will give these borrowers subsidy payments for an additional 3 months and hardest hit industries will receive 2 more months after the initial 3. This has had a positive impact on borrowers since most received 6 months of subsidy payments last Spring. In addition, as part of this Act, any NEW SBA 504 loan approved between February 1, 2021, and September 30, 2021, is eligible for 3 months of subsidy payments when that loan is funded. SGRC Small Business Lending Director Rex Dorsey said, “Keep in mind that this has changed already once due to the amount of allocated funds and it may change again.”

For more information on SBA Lending or any other assistance available to small businesses, please contact the SGRC Lending Division at [rdorsey@sgrc.us](mailto:rdorsey@sgrc.us).



# Contact the SGRC

## SGRC Council 2021 Meeting Schedule

Meeting Locations TBD

April 22, 2021 – 11:00 am

May 27, 2021 – 11:00 am

June 24, 2021 – 11:00 am

**July - No Meeting**

August 26, 2021 – 11:00 am

September 23, 2021 – 11:00 am

**October - No Meeting**

October 28, 2021 -

Area Officials Appreciation Dinner  
(subject to change)

**November – No meeting**  
(combined with December meeting)

December 9, 2021 – 11:00 am  
(subject to change)



**SOUTHERN GEORGIA**  
REGIONAL COMMISSION

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