



**REGIONAL SERVICES • COMMUNITY FOCUSED** 

ANNUAL REPORT | FY2020

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission (SGRC) is a regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency which serves 45 municipalities and 18 counties in Southern Georgia. For more than 57 years, the SGRC has provided a comprehensive array of services and resources in response to the needs of member local governments. SGRC has a dedicated staff of over 60 professionals, including technical experts in a number of specialized fields. The SGRC utilizes its valuable combination of commitment, passion, and expertise to benefit our communities and partner agencies through programs that improve the quality of life in Southern Georgia.



#### SGRC REGION

Atkinson, Bacon, Ben Hill, Berrien, Brantley, Brooks, Charlton, Clinch, Coffee, Cook, Echols, Irwin, Lanier, Lowndes, Pierce, Tift, Turner, and Ware Counties

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Lisa Cribb

ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Chris Strom

OFFICE ADDRESSES: Valdosta Office 1937 Carlton Adams Drive Valdosta, Georgia 31601 (229) 333-5277

Waycross Office 1725 South Georgia Parkway, West Waycross, Georgia 31503 (912) 285-6097

WEBSITE www.sgrc.us







### A MESSAGE FROM CHAIRMAN JOYCE EVANS

On behalf of the Southern Georgia Regional Commission council and staff, I am pleased to present the FY2020 Annual Report. This report documents the accomplishments of the Lending, Community and Economic Development, Planning and Government Services, Transportation and Environmental, Workforce Development, Area Agency on Aging, GIS, Finance, and Information Technology divisions during the previous fiscal year. Despite the numerous challenges posed by the unprecedented Coronavirus pandemic, the SGRC staff rose to meet them to continue serving our local governments and their constituents.

As you review this annual report, it will be evident that each division of the SGRC is providing a variety of valuable professional services to meet the myriad of needs throughout the region. The Lending division participated in 170 CARES Act Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans to businesses totaling \$9.4 million. The Community and Economic Development division garnered over \$8.7 million in grant funds. In response to COVID-19, the Planning and Government Services division drafted a model ordinance to assist local governments in addressing outdoor restaurant seating. Over 38,000 trips were provided to senior citizens through the Transportation and Environmental division. The Workforce Development division provided services to 1,404 adults, youth, and dislocated workers. The Area Agency on Aging provided more than 302,000 congregate and home delivered meals to seniors in the region. A COVID-19 Regional Information Hub was designed and maintained by the GIS division to provide up-to-date information about the virus infection rate as well as valuable resources for citizens seeking assistance during the pandemic. The Finance division oversaw revenues in excess of \$14.6 million.

To further the SGRC's ability to serve its local governments, construction of a new 15,000 square foot facility in Valdosta commenced in October 2019. The state-of-the-art facility is slated to be complete soon, and the SGRC staff is excited to call the new building their home.

Even though fiscal year 2020 was fraught with the unexpected trials of the pandemic, it was also a year full of many successes for the Southern Georgia Regional Commission. These successes are the direct result of the hard work of the SGRC staff who are dedicated to serving the 18 counties and the 45 municipalities in the region. This commitment to excellence will be carried into the coming year, positioning the SGRC to address the new opportunities and challenges that arise.

### LENDING | FY2020

The SGRC's Lending division provides financing to small business owners for development of new businesses or expansion of existing businesses through several different loan programs. Lending is setup as two separate non-profit agencies governed by one Loan Board of Directors. The Southern Georgia Area Resource Development Agency (ARDA) operates an over \$6 million-dollar EDA/USDA Rural Development funded revolving loan fund (RLF) and the Southern Georgia Area Development Corporation (ADC) is a Certified Development Corporation with the Small Business Administration charged with making SBA 504 loans for commercial businesses and packaging SBA 7(a) Guaranteed loans on behalf of local lending institutions.

11 Loans from Traditional Programs (5 SBA 504, 2 SBA 7A, 4 RLF)

\$18,821,916

181 Loans

\$28,309,783

170 CARES Act Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Loans

\$9,487,867

Private Investment (without including PPP Loans)

\$12,058,951

SGRC Portion of all Loans

\$16,250,832

LENDING







### **INDUSTRIES SERVED**

Hotel/Hospitality

Restaurant

Bowling Alley/Entertainment

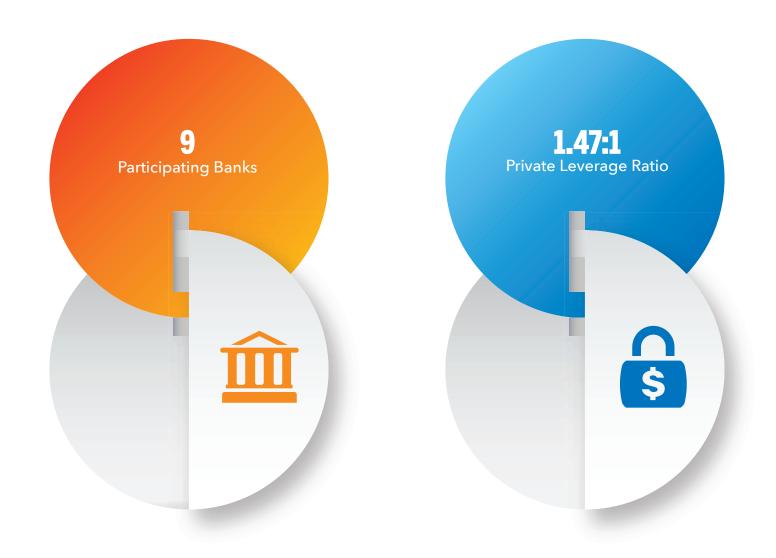
Land Clearing Business

Modular Home Manufacturer

Agritourism Retail Store

Mini Storage Facilities

**Medical Professional Office** 



The SGRC's Community and Economic Development division provides technical assistance to local governments in identifying projects to improve community programs and facilities, developing related grant and loan applications, and administering funded projects. Community and Economic Development activities are designed to promote regional economic development, to assist local communities in increasing their economic development capacity, to identify funding to assist with the location and expansion of new and existing industry, and to facilitate activities which encourage business development and job creation in order to enhance the standard of living for area residents.

# COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | FY2020

### **ALL GRANTS RECEIVED IN FY20**

(9 Community Development & 4 Economic Development)

Total Grant Amount **\$8,762,588** 

Community Development \$4,203,653

\$4,558,935

Total Project Cost **\$149,243,533** 

Community Development **\$5,767,069** 

**\$143,476,464**\*

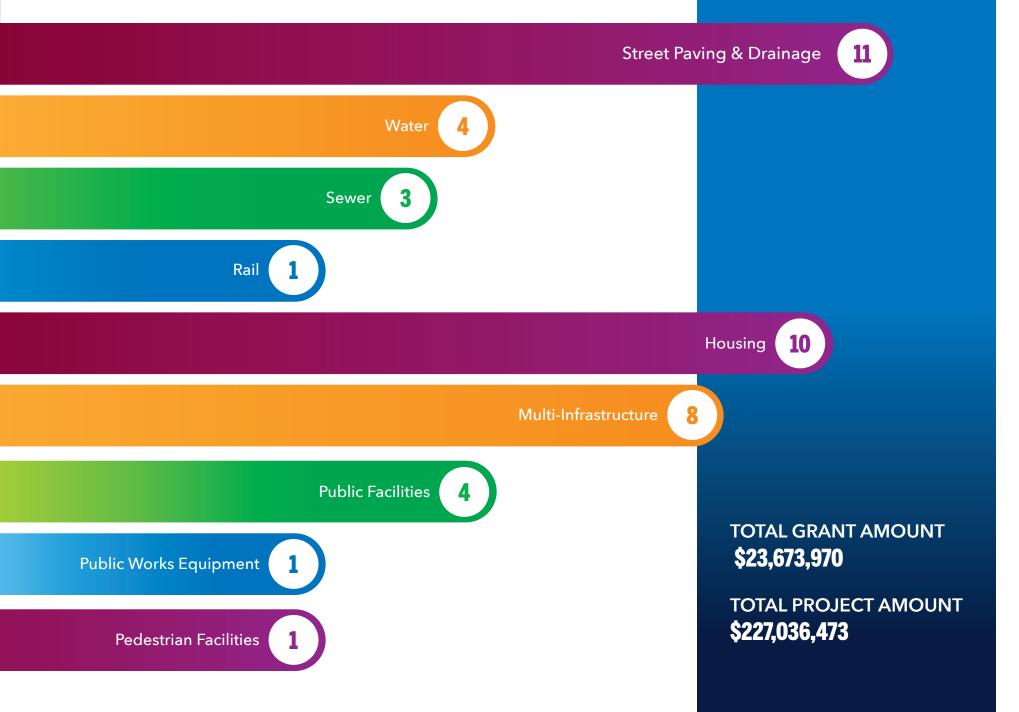
Total Beneficiaries/ Jobs Created 1,843

Community Development **1,531** Beneficiaries

**312** Jobs Created

<sup>\*</sup> With private investment

### **FY20 PROJECT ADMINISTRATION: 43 PROJECTS**



### **FY20 PROJECT ADMINISTRATION: 43 GRANTS BY PROGRAM**

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

22

CDBG-Employment Incentive Program

4

CDBG-Redevelopment Fund

1

**EDA Public Works** 

1

**OneGeorgia Equity** 

6

**USDA Community Facilities** 

1

Community HOME Investment Program (CHIP)

7

Transportation Enhancement

# **FUNDING AGENCIES**

Georgia Department of Community Affairs

Economic Development Administration

United States Department of Agriculture

Georgia Department of Transportation

The SGRC's Planning and Government Services division assists local governments in completing comprehensive plan updates, drafting local development regulations, updating Hazard Mitigation Plans, and providing other specialized planning studies. In addition, planning staff assists with needs identified in adopted Community Work Programs and by hosting training and development workshops. Planning and Government Services provides information and public policy options to local governments based on sound research and analysis. Through continuous outreach, this division helps local governments maintain Qualified Local Government status which allows them to receive state and federal funding. Planning activities focus on fulfilling community and regional visions and goals as well as protecting the region's environmental and cultural resources.

# PLANNING AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES | FY2020

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATES AND AMENDMENTS**

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATES COMPLETED

2

Berrien County and the Cities of Nashville, Ray City, Enigma, and Alapaha

Cook County and the Cities of Adel, Cecil, Lenox, and Sparks COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATES IN PROGRESS

2

**Echols County** 

Charlton County and the Cities of Folkston and Homeland COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS COMPLETED

2

Ben Hill County and the City of Fitzgerald Added a Broadband Element

Charlton County Added a new Work Program Item COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE AND AMENDMENT ACTIVITIES

22

10 Public Hearings

12 Workshops

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION ASSISTANCE

24 Local Governments received Comprehensive Plan Implementation Assistance

### MODEL ORDINANCES AND MODEL ORDINANCE WORKSHOP

SGRC planning staff drafted six (6) model ordinances, and presented them during an afternoon workshop held on February 19, 2020.

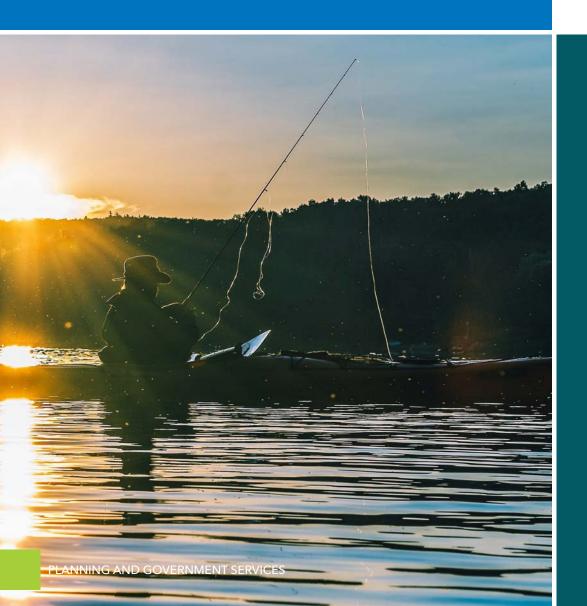
### The topics for the 6 model ordinances included:



### **ECOTOURISM GUIDE**

Planning and GIS staff worked together to create a regional ecotourism guide with a dedicated website:

www.sgrcmaps.com/ecotourism



The ecotourism guide includes an interactive map of ecotourism resources throughout the 18-county region.

- Boat Ramps
- Water Bodies
- State Parks
- Wildlife Refuges
- Preserves/Hunting Areas
- Public Fishing Areas
- Regional Recreation Areas
- Lodges
- Nature Trails
- Education Centers
- Off Road Parks
- RV Parks/Campgrounds



### **SOUTHERN GEORGIA ECOTOURISM GUIDE**



### **HAZARD MITIGATION PLANS**

Through a series of four meetings, Hazard Mitigation Plans were completed for Ben Hill County and the City of Fitzgerald.

### PLANNING & ZONING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Planning & Zoning Technical Assistance provided to seven local governments. Activities included:

Staff Reports

Presentation of Zoning Cases

Planning Guidance

Site Plan Review

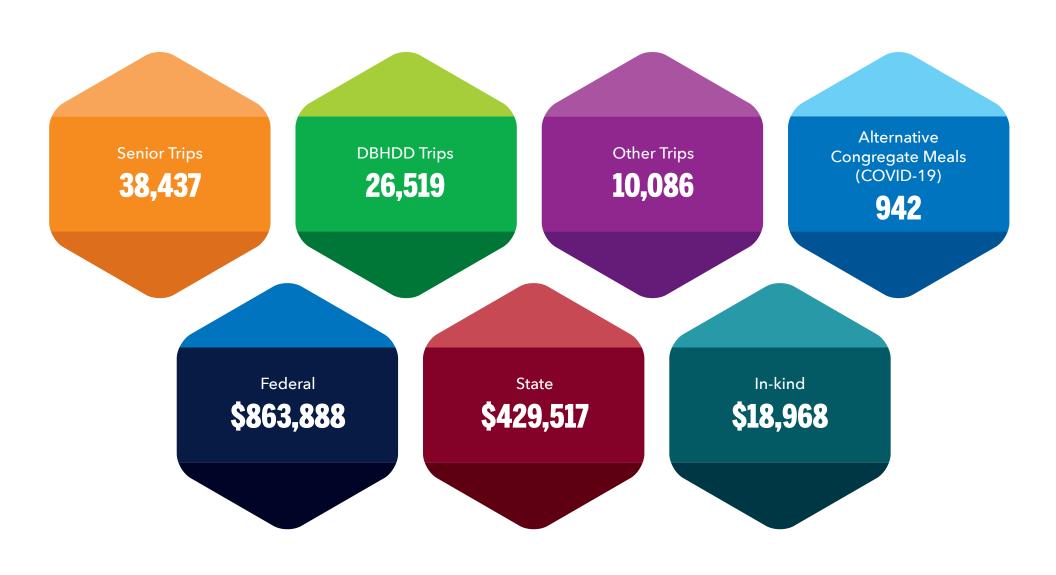
## ADDITIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- City of Adel Adoption of an Urban Redevelopment Plan & Enterprise Zone
- City of Nicholls Adoption of a Zoning Ordinance
- City of Quitman Update to Zoning Ordinance and Map

The SGRC's Transportation and Environmental division serves local governments in planning activities, delivering vital transportation services to clients, and promoting activities that both protect and promote the region's natural resources. The SGRC is the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Valdosta Urbanized Area, carrying out various long- and short-range transportation planning activities around metropolitan Valdosta. This division also provides transportation planning services to rural counties in the region that are primarily focused on rural transit and bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure planning. The Coordinated Human Service Transportation Program serves, on average, 500 trips per day for clients of GA Department of Human Services and other state agencies. The Environmental program partners with the GA DNR-Environmental Protection Division, local governments, and private landowners to develop and implement water quality best management practices along rivers and streams throughout the region.

# TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL | FY2020

### **COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION**





### **DOCUMENTS PRODUCED**

Vision2045 Valdosta-Lowndes Metropolitan Transportation Plan

FY2020 Lowndes County Annual Crash Report

Douglas Sidewalk Master Plan

Valdosta-Lowndes MPO Complete Streets Policy

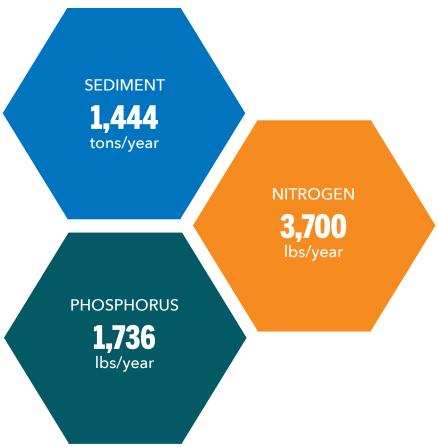
School Area Crash Trend Reports: Echols, Cook, Charlton, Lowndes Counties

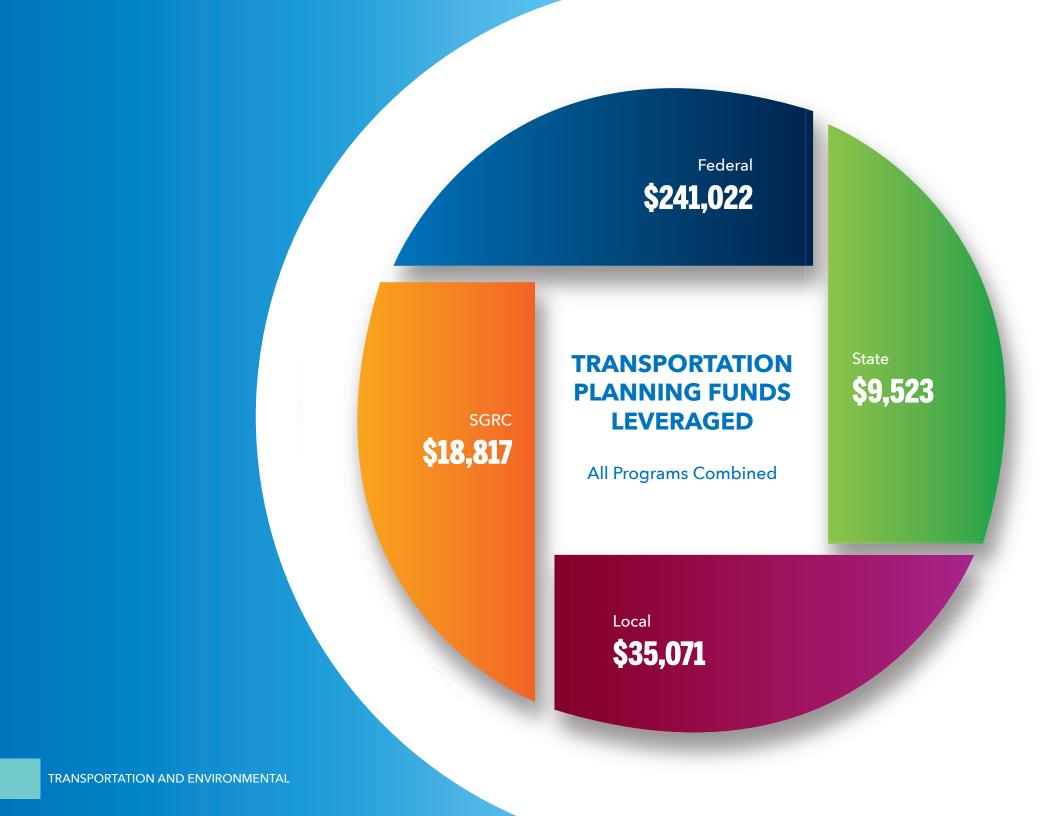




### New River Watershed Improvement Program

- Implementation of Best Management Practice (BMP)
   Estimated Load Reductions of sediment, nitrogen, and phosphorus, all of which lead to potential water quality impairments, in the New River Watershed.
- Two projects, totaling \$129,000 in federal and private funds, resulted in these load reductions:

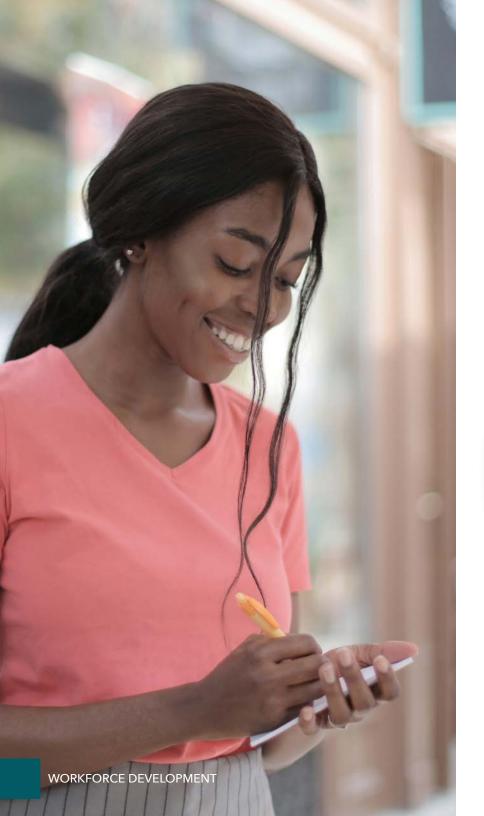




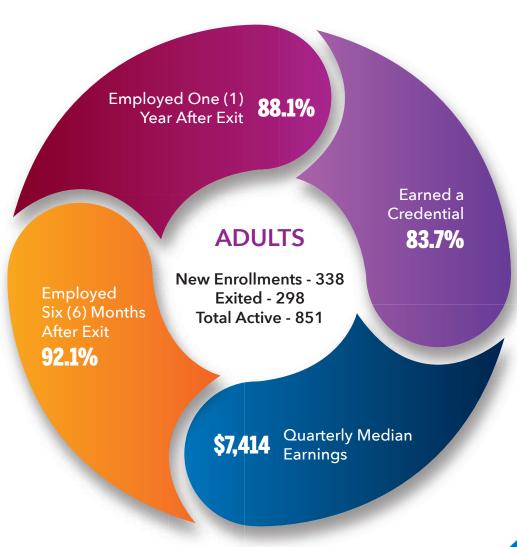
The SGRC's Workforce Development division's vision is to empower Southern Georgia employers, individuals, and communities to prosper and grow the region's economy through a workforce development system that is inherently customer-centered, seamless, and effective. This division administers the federally funded Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program. WIOA is landmark legislation that is designed to (1) strengthen and improve our nation's public workforce system, (2) help get Americans, including youth and those with significant barriers to employment, into high-quality jobs and careers and (3) help employers hire and retain skilled workers.

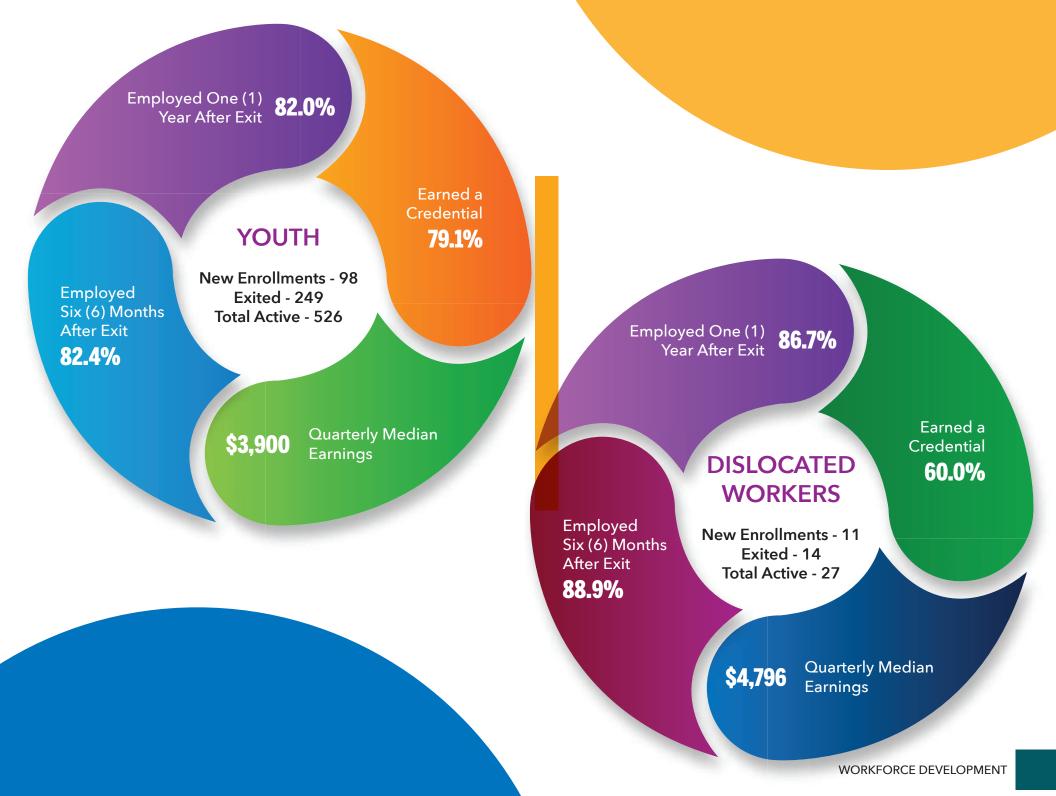
# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT | FY2020





### **PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES**





# AREA AGENCY ON AGING | FY2020

The SGRC's Area Agency on Aging (AAA) develops, provides, coordinates, and advocates for services that assist older individuals, at-risk adults, persons with disabilities, their families, and caregivers. The vision of the AAA is to assist these individuals in Living Longer, Living Safely, and Living Well. AAA programs and services receive federal and state funding through a contract between the SGRC and the GA Department of Human Services and between the SGRC and the GA Department of Community Health. While some services are provided by AAA staff, most programs are sub-contracted to cities, counties, and other organizations that contribute local monies to provide services directly in their communities.

### AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE CONNECTION OUTREACH



#### INFORMATION DISSEMINATION THROUGH COLLABORATION

Over 1,000 SGRC-AAA Community Resource Flyers were distributed via the Family Connection Collaborative Organizations in the region.

### **SENIOR HUNGER COALITION ACTIVITIES**

400+

400+ seniors attended a Nutrition Health Fair during which 35 community vendors provided information on nutrition and health resources. A Senior Hunger Coalition food drive garnered enough donations that each senior attendee received a bag of nutritious food to take home.

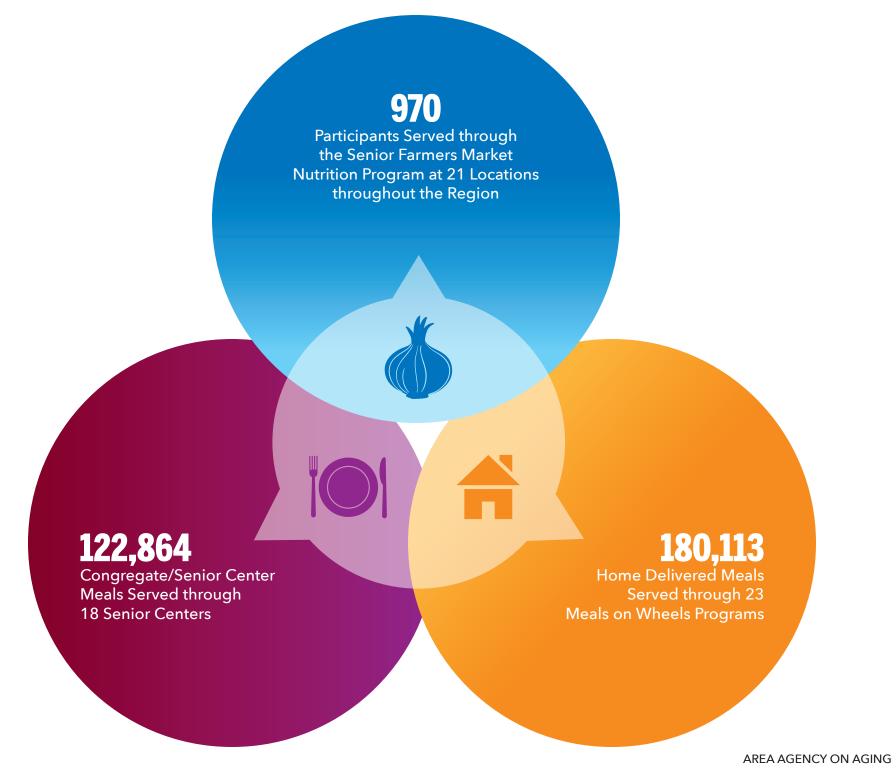
150

Over 150 people attended 9 regional Senior Hunger Coalition meetings that were held in Nashville and Waycross during FY20 - strengthening community partnerships throughout the region.

8,609

## EXPANDED AGING SERVICES

Provided 8,609 Home Delivered Meals to 69 clients in previously un-served areas of Lowndes County.



### **HOURS PROVIDED**





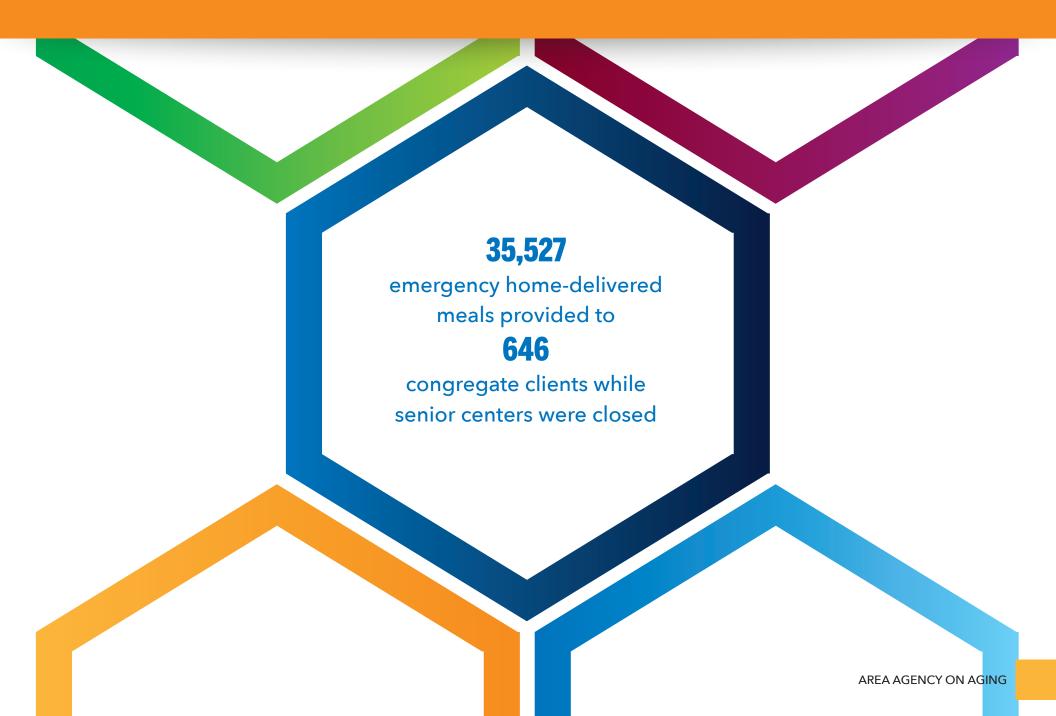
### **CREATIVE FUNDRAISING**

Wear Jeans to Work Fundraiser

Spring Wreath Auction Fundraiser

**\$1,851**Collected for Aging Emergency Fund

### **RAPID RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC**



### **COVID-19 FUNDING FOR AGING SERVICES**



\$18,000 Emergency Fund Grant from the Community Foundation of South Georgia to purchase emergency food, essential items, and personal protective equipment for seniors



\$1,196,648 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act COVID-19 emergency Federal funding to serve additional clients and provide additional aging services in the region



\$371,434 Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) emergency Federal funding for meals

Trips Provided through the Georgia Department of Human Services Coordinated Transportation Program

38,437

1,112

Active Elderly and Disabled Waiver (EDWP) Community Care Services Program Clients Hours of Alzheimer's Adult Day Care Services through the Valdosta State University "My Friend's House" Program

3,919

254

Elderly and Legal Assistance Program Cases Represented by Georgia Legal Services for 174 Clients

### GIS | FY2020

The SGRC's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) division develops and maintains GIS data and applications for governments in Southern Georgia and other areas. GIS technology is all about making better decisions through query and analysis of spatial data and is used extensively in the Southern Georgia region. Local governments utilize GIS technology and data developed by SGRC to handle everything from monitoring growth and parcel assessment to crime analysis and emergency response planning.









### **DRONE SERVICES TAKE OFF**



### WEB MAPS, APPS, AND MOBILE GIS SOLUTIONS

**VALOR GIS** 

30 interactive web maps for 20 different departments in Valdosta and Lowndes County. Departments include Public Works, Engineering, Permitting, Utilities, Fire, Tax Assessor, Emergency Management, EMS, Elections, Transportation, and other city and county governmental needs.

ADMIN SOLUTION

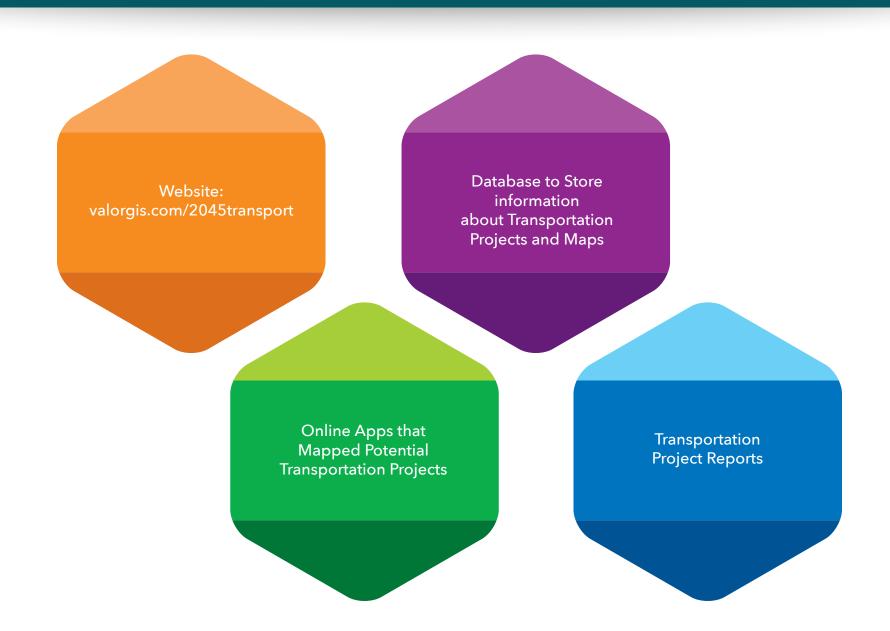
Custom-made admin solution for Sunset Hill Cemetery **REGION** 

100 web maps for 21
different communities
for Elections, Utilities,
 Environmental,
 Transportation,
 Ecotourism, Public
Works, and Emergency
 Management.

STATE

Three statewide maps and one area-focused web map for the GA Department of Public Health: WelSTROM, Coastal WelSTROM, Chemical Hazards, and Public Facilities.

# VISION2045 VALDOSTA-LOWNDES METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN



## **2020 CENSUS**

Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) and Boundary Annexation Survey (BAS)



The SGRC Finance division oversees a multi-million dollar budget comprising funds from over a dozen Federal and State agencies. The Finance department is responsible for the maintenance of accounting records and financial reporting in compliance with complex government rules, regulations, and contractual requirements for every dollar received by the SGRC.

## FINANCE | FY2020

#### **SGRC EXPENDITURES**

PLANNING AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES | \$575,937

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | \$646,652

TOTAL \$14,602,768

TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL | \$1,741,777

GIS | **\$647,927** 

AGING | **\$6,283,074** 

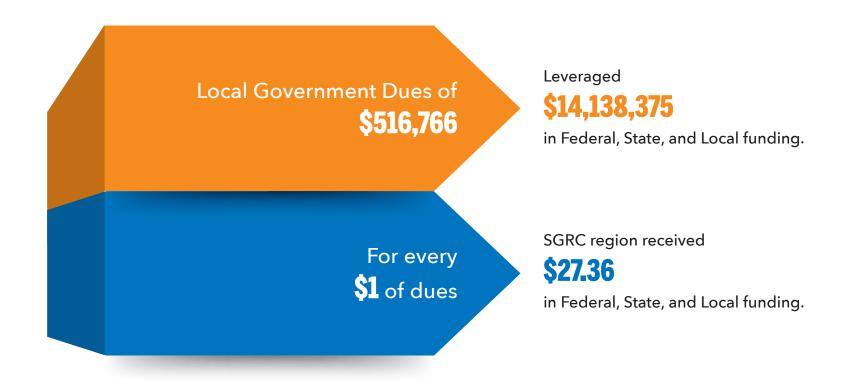
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT | \$3,883,998

LENDING | **\$225,378** 

ITS | **\$558,405** 

MISCELLANEOUS | \$39,620

## **RETURN ON INVESTMENT**



The Information Technology (IT) division provides valuable services to local governments in the region. This division offers professional support for computers, servers, and networks. In addition, IT can assist local governments with the purchase of hardware and software at State contract pricing.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY | FY2020



#### SGRC COUNCIL MEMBER LIST

The SGRC leadership and staff are thankful for the excellent guidance and unfailing support of our Council. The dedicated service of each Council member enables the accomplishments of the SGRC's programs and activities throughout the region.

#### **ATKINSON**

Lace Futch Robert Johnson Janice McKinnon

#### **BACON**

Andy Hutto Larry Taylor Lisa Coley

#### **BEN HILL**

Steve Taylor Jim Puckett Jason Dunn

#### **BERRIEN**

Ronnie Gaskins Taylor Scarbrough Lisa Smart

#### **BRANTLEY**

Skipper Harris Barbara Maefield Vacant

#### **BROOKS**

James Maxwell Nancy Dennard Zurich Deshazior

#### **CHARLTON**

James Everett Lee Gowen Vacant

#### **CLINCH**

Roger Metts Willie Hardee, Jr. Vacant

#### **COFFEE**

Johnny Wayne Jowers Robert Moore Adam Smith

#### СООК

Jeff Lane Buddy Duke Derry Bennett

#### **ECHOLS**

Kenneth Petty Cheryl Garner

#### **IRWIN**

Joey Whitley Matt Seale Mona Paulk

#### **LANIER**

Dennis Fender Bill Darsey John Fitton

#### **LOWNDES**

Joyce Evans Vivian Miller-Cody Anthony Payton

#### **PIERCE**

Neal Bennett Kevin Grissom Andy Brannen

#### TIFT

Grady Thompson Julie Smith Brian Marlowe

#### **TURNER**

Nick Denham Sandra Lumpkin Vacant

#### **WARE**

Vacant Michael-Angelo James Barbara King

#### **GOVERNOR'S OFFICE**

Norman "Bo" Lovein III Guy Daughtrey Jonathan Jones

#### LT. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Keith Stone

#### **SPEAKERS OFFICE**

Vacant

## **SGRC'S 2019 NADO IMPACT AWARDS**

The Impact Awards program honors NADO members for their creative approaches to advancing regional community and economic development and improved quality of life.

Improved Communication through a Regional Mapping Portal

Healthy Living for Southern Georgia Seniors

City of Nicholls Zoning Ordinance

