

In the REGION

SGRC Small Business Lending Still Accepting Applications for CARES Act Revolving Loan Funds

The SGRC Small Business Lending Division received funding in July from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in the amount of \$750,000 to capitalize a new Revolving Loan Fund (RLF), specifically for recovery assistance. The new RLF has more flexible terms than other loans and will assist the lending division to respond to the economic injury to businesses, as a result of coronavirus, in a very concrete and measurable way. EDA allows the following flexibilities for loans that are made from these new funds:

- ◇ Waiving the minimum interest rate requirement for one year.
- ◇ Waiving the leveraged capital requirement for one year (leveraged capital refers to the normal requirement for two private dollars lent for every one dollar of RLF funds.)
- ◇ Waiving the requirement to demonstrate that credit is not otherwise available.

As of mid-September, the SGRC Small Business Lending Division has closed one loan and has two other loans approved. These three loans represent nearly \$400,000 of the \$750,000 granted, which leaves around \$350,000 in funds unallocated. Rex Dorsey, Director of SGRC's Small Business Lending Division stated, "We are still accepting applications and continuing to get the word out about these available funds. With over half of the funds already allocated, we believe that the remaining funds will go fast." To locate the application on the SGRC website, visit www.sgrc.us/lending and click on the yellow link that reads "Click Here for EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance Loan Application."

For more information on the CARES Act or other COVID-19 relief for small businesses, please contact the SGRC Small Business Lending Division at (229)-333-5277.

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

Over \$6 Million in CDBG Funds Awarded to Ten Southern Georgia Communities

On September 3rd, Governor Brian Kemp announced that 58 Georgia communities were the recipients of \$40.7 million in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) for infrastructure projects, such as neighborhood revitalization, construction of community facilities, and water, sewer, drainage, or street improvements.

“Year after year, local governments across Georgia collaborate with citizens to address their needs regarding the places they call home,” said Governor Brian Kemp. “This year’s CDBG awards reflect how a unified and solutions-based approach can help communities to thrive and build towards a sustainable future.”

DCA Commissioner Christopher Nunn echoed Gov. Kemp’s sentiment: “It is extremely fulfilling to see the long-term impact CDBG funds have in Georgia. Investments this year will provide essential resources that benefit communities for years to come.”

Just over \$6.3 million in CDBG funds were awarded to local governments in the Southern Georgia Regional Commission’s region. The CDBG monies were granted to Berrien, Pierce, and Tift counties, and to the cities of Ambrose, Douglas, Fitzgerald, Ocilla, Omega, Sycamore, and Tifton. The following is a description of the awards in Southern Georgia:

- City of Ambrose - \$424,560 – Water Improvements
- Berrien County - \$500,000 – Street Paving and Drainage Improvements
- City of Douglas - \$750,000 – Mental Health Center
- City of Fitzgerald - \$750,000 – Multi-Purpose Center
- City of Ocilla - \$486,447 – Neighborhood Revitalization
- City of Omega - \$493,998 – Street Paving and Drainage Improvements
- Pierce County - \$750,000 – Street Paving and Drainage Improvements
- City of Sycamore - \$697,938 – Multi-Infrastructure Improvements
- Tift County - \$750,000 – Street Paving and Drainage Improvements
- City of Tifton - \$750,000 – Youth Center

The Southern Georgia RC’s Community & Economic Development Division prepared seven of the ten approved CDBG applications in this region. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) will host a virtual Fall Conference on October 5-8, during which the grant recipients will be recognized.

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Community and Economic Development

Over \$6 Million in CDBG Funds Awarded to Ten Southern Georgia Communities (continued)



Pictured here is the street that will be improved with CDBG funds in Berrien County. Upon completion of the project, residents will no longer be endangered by this frequently flooded roadway.



The Monitor Enrichment Center in Fitzgerald, pictured here, will be renovated with the CDBG funds.



The City of Ocilla's Neighborhood Revitalization CDBG will fund the rehabilitation and reconstruction of dilapidated homes, including the one pictured here.

Transportation and Environmental

Permeable Pavement Best Practices, Grants, and Resources

The asphalt surface of a typical parking lot is not permeable, meaning that the water that falls on it will flow into drains, gutters, or the areas at the edges of the parking lot. Permeable pavement, by contrast, is a porous type of pavement that allows all of the water that falls on it to flow through it and infiltrate downward. There are several permeable parking lots in the Southern Georgia region, including the lot at the newly constructed Ware County Administration Building (pictured on page 5).

Permeable pavement has many benefits. Since water that falls on the parking lot surface goes directly down into the ground, permeable pavement lowers the risk of flooding in the streets and reduces the burden on urban stormwater systems. It helps to recharge groundwater (aquifers) because the water goes straight into the ground instead of flowing into a stream, river, or lake. It is also good for the quality of the water in those streams, rivers, and lakes because pollutants (such as oil from cars) get trapped in the permeable layer of the parking lot instead of getting washed into bodies of water.

Although the materials and maintenance for permeable parking lots can be more expensive (however, innovations have driven the cost down significantly) than non-permeable materials, the overall cost can still be lower. That's because permeable parking lot surfaces can reduce or eliminate the need for retention basins and water collection areas, as well as annual maintenance costs. When implemented citywide, there can be substantial savings in infrastructure costs for stormwater management systems.

Last year the SGRC looked at parking issues in Valdosta and recommended permeable pavements to be installed to improve water quality and reduce runoff in new commercial parking lots. This study can be found on the SGRC website.

Communities interested in incentivizing or requiring permeable pavements in commercial, industrial, or even residential parking areas, may call Elizabeth Backe or Ariel Godwin with the SGRC at (229)-333-5277 to discuss how to amend their local land development regulations.

The SGRC Environmental staff regularly looks for communities interested in improving water quality. Permeable pavement installations could be eligible for up to 50% grant funds for a community or local business through federal grant funds. Communities interested in collaborating with the SGRC on a 319 Grant may contact Corey Hull or Megan Parker to discuss applying for this grant at (229)-333-5277.

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Transportation and Environmental

Permeable Pavement Best Practices, Grants, and Resources (continued)



Pictured above: permeable parking lot at the new Ware County Administration Building.



The SGRC is pleased to welcome Michael Williams as an Environmental Projects Intern. Michael is a senior at Highland Christian Academy in Valdosta.

“I am passionate for environmental studies and science, and I am very thankful for this opportunity. I hope to gain working experience as well as knowledge about water testing and different projects with the environmental division at the RC,” Michael stated.

Michael hopes to attend Kennesaw State University to study Environmental Science.

In his spare time, Michael enjoys hunting and fishing.

Geographic Information Services

SGRC Geographic Information Services (GIS) Verifies Local Road Information

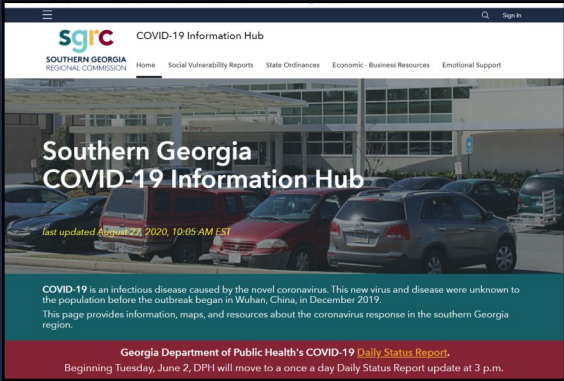
Rachel Strom, Director of the SGRC-GIS Division reported that new road and sign data is available in the region. According to Strom, the SCRC-GIS Division began working with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), as part of the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions (GARC), on the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (Map-21) program in 2016. The initial goal of the project, was to verify local road information for GDOT, and to collect new features in the form of traffic control devices in this region. The SGRC-GIS staff completed this for the SGRC region in 2019, and moved on to assist other regional commissions. The success of the project led to a new name, Roadway Element Validation And Mapping Program (REVAMP), and a second phase of the project that is slated to begin in early 2021.

Strom stated that the following information is now available for community roads across the region:

- Road Names
- Operation (one-way or two-way)
- Ownership (city/county/private/state park, etc)
- Through Lanes (number of lanes, excluding turn lanes)
- Surface Type (asphalt, concrete, brick, gravel, unpaved, etc)

- Medians (location and type, like concrete or grass, etc)
- Traffic Control Devices
- Traffic Lights and sub-types (fixed time, traffic actuated, or real-time adaptive)
- Flashers/Beacons – yellow or red flashing lights at intersections
- Stop Signs
- Yield Signs

For more information, please contact Rachel Strom via email at rstrom@sgrc.us or via telephone at (229) 333-5277.



The SGRC GIS Division continues to maintain the COVID-19 hub. The Hub is a one-stop-shop for COVID-19 information in Southern Georgia. Access the hub at:

<https://sgrc-covid-19-information-hub-valorgis.hub.arcgis.com/?fbclid=IwARowUxFNHJoXzfn4o6e9oBFHQ4N6XZcsRsFXUHNsRAGmTtEBA5Ma-YJ00-w>

Local Government Services

SGRC Local Government Services Reports Due Dates for Surveys and Reports

Local governments and authorities in Georgia have a series of annual reporting requirements. In order to maintain eligible status for grant funding and to be in compliance with the performance standards established in the Regional Plan, the following information regarding financial, service delivery, and administrative practices is required to be submitted annually. In addition to updating local government contact information, this also includes the Government Management Indicators (GOMI) Survey and Report of Local Government Finance (RLGF) for all local governments. Submitting the Wage & Salary Survey is voluntary with an annual due date of June 30. The Hotel/Motel Tax Report is only required for local governments who impose a Local Hotel-Motel Excise Tax. Lastly, the Debt Issuance Report is due within 60 days of debt issuance by a local government. Planning staff are available at (229)-333-5277 to answer any questions regarding these required surveys and reports.

Report/Survey	O.C.G.A. Reference	Primary DCA Contact Person*	Date Due to DCA
Local Government Contact Information Link to DCA Local Government Officials Contact Update	N/A	Norma Allen (404) 679-3132 norma.allen@dca.ga.gov	As-Needed – Available year-round, to be updated as changes occur
Government Management Indicators Survey (GOMI) Link to GOMI Survey	§ 36-81-8	Norma Allen (404) 679-3132 norma.allen@dca.ga.gov	Annually on June 30th
Wage & Salary Survey Link to Wage & Salary Report	N/A (voluntary)	Norma Allen (404) 679-3132 norma.allen@dca.ga.gov	Annually on June 30th
Hotel/Motel Tax Report (FY19/FY20) <i>Only required for Local Governments imposing a Local Hotel-Motel Excise Tax</i> Link to Hotel-Motel Tax Report	§ 48-13-56	Jackson Lilly (404) 679-3105 jackson.lilly@dca.ga.gov	Within six (6) months of local government's fiscal year end
Report of Local Government Finances (FY19/FY20) Link to RLGF Documents	§ 36-81-8	Jackson Lilly (404) 679-3105 jackson.lilly@dca.ga.gov	Within six (6) months of local government's fiscal year end
Debt Issuance Report Link to Debt Issuance Documents	§ 36-82-10	Jackson Lilly (404) 679-3105 jackson.lilly@dca.ga.gov	Within 60 days of debt issuance (Applies to all debt issues >\$1M)

*Officials needing a local government's CICOID & Password to access reports should email DCA.Research@dca.ga.gov

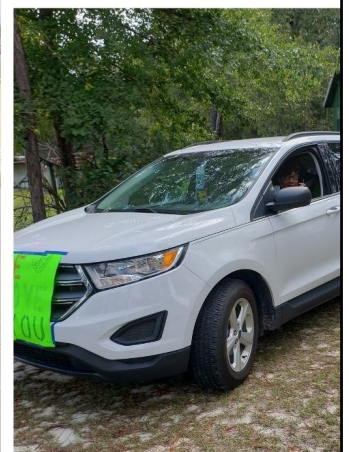
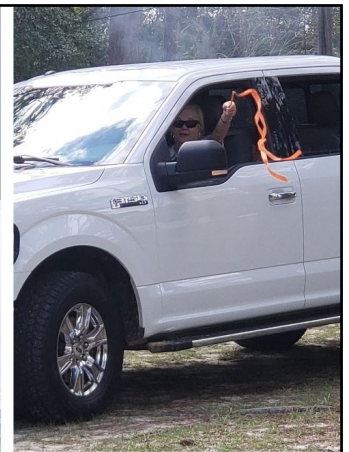
Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

Ben Hill County Holds Parade for Senior Citizens

The Ben Hill County Senior Center held a parade for a number of its participants on September 11, 2020. Senior citizens, like the lady shown sitting on her front porch below, were greeted with big smiles, friendly waves, balloons, and signs reminding them that they are missed and loved.

Most senior centers in the SGRC-AAA service area have been closed since late March due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Because of the heightened risk of the virus, many senior citizens have had to shelter in place at home to avoid contact with others. This isolation has been very difficult for some participants who are accustomed to seeing their friends at congregate meal sites. The SGRC-AAA is grateful to the staff and friends of Ben Hill County for their kindness.

To volunteer to deliver meals or make telephone reassurance calls, please contact Lead Program Manager Shawn Taylor at (912) 285-6097 or via email at staylor@sgrc.us.



Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

SGRC-AAA Observes Falls Prevention Awareness Week

Scott Courson, Director of Aging Services for the SGRC-AAA, stated that he, his staff members, and contracted aging service providers were pleased to participate in Falls Prevention Awareness Week held September 21-25, 2020. Courson reported that this campaign is designed to spread a very critical public health message regarding both the prevalence and preventability of falls.

According to the National Council on Aging (NCOA), one in four Americans aged sixty-five and older falls every year, falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries for older Americans, and falls are costly—in dollars and in quality of life. However, falling is not an inevitable part of aging. Through practical lifestyle adjustments, evidence-based programs, and community partnerships, the number of falls among seniors can be reduced substantially.

The NCOA offers a number of resources on their website for the prevention of falls such as; live and recorded webinars, webinar slides, and handouts, including the handout shown to the right titled “6 Steps to Prevent a Fall”.

For more information on aging services, please contact the AAA’s Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) at (912)-287-5888 or 1-888-732-4464; view the AAA website at: www.sgrc.us/aaa.html; and please like the SGRC-AAA Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/SouthernGeorgiaAreaAgencyonAging.

Take Control of Your Health: 6 Steps to Prevent a Fall

Every **11 seconds**, an older adult is seen in an emergency department for a fall-related injury.

Many falls are preventable.

Stay safe with these tips!

- 1** Find a good balance and exercise program
Look to build balance, strength, and flexibility. Contact your local Area Agency on Aging for referrals. Find a program you like and take a friend. 
- 2** Talk to your health care provider
Ask for an assessment of your risk of falling. Share your history of recent falls. 
- 3** Regularly review your medications with your doctor or pharmacist
Make sure side effects aren't increasing your risk of falling. Take medications only as prescribed. 
- 4** Get your vision and hearing checked annually and update your eyeglasses
Your eyes and ears are key to keeping you on your feet. 
- 5** Keep your home safe
Remove tripping hazards, increase lighting, make stairs safe, and install grab bars in key areas. 
- 6** Talk to your family members
Enlist their support in taking simple steps to stay safe. Falls are not just a seniors' issue. 


National Council on Aging

To learn more, visit ncoa.org/FallsPrevention.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON AGING

Information Technology (IT)

The SGRC-IT Division Cautions Users Regarding the Use of Microsoft Windows 7

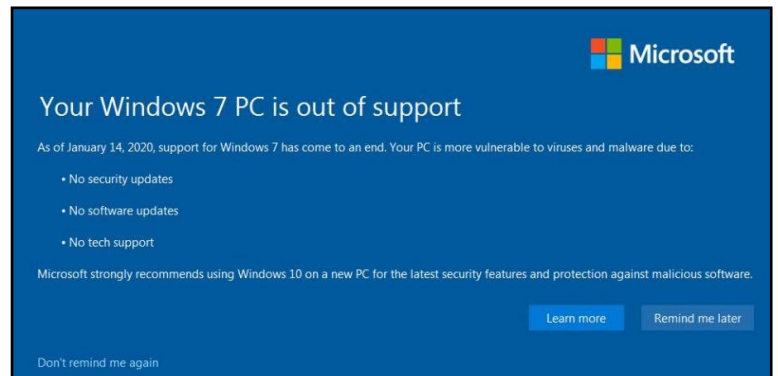
According to Larry Adams, Director of the SGRC-IT Division, Windows 7 is an operating system that was produced by Microsoft Corporation for use on personal computers (PCs), including home and business desktops, laptops, and tablet and media center PCs. Computers that use Windows 7 have been around for about eleven years in the computer world.

As of January 2020, Microsoft is no longer supporting or releasing security updates for the Windows 7 operating system. As a result of this, any computer using Windows 7 does not have updated virus protection that was formerly provided for in security updates from Microsoft. More specifically, these computers are more susceptible to hackers and other scammers, who could perpetuate computer viruses for which Microsoft is no longer offering solutions to avoid nor ways to correct. Finally, unprotected and outdated operations systems could easily result in personal or business information being stolen and/or office networks being accessed without authorization.

The security risks associated with Windows 7 are serious enough, but functional limitations also exist. Windows 7 does not support all of the latest computer hardware properly, in fact, some new hardware such as printers and scanners will not run on computers using Windows 7. Additionally, the newest version of Microsoft Office software and some other vendor software products are not compatible with Windows 7 and will not run on computers using Windows 7.

Adams warns, “In a nutshell, Windows 7 is old. Anyone who is still using computers with this operating system has not only reached the end of the road, but they are now also traveling into dangerous territory.” In fact, any SGRC-IT customer who has computers with Windows 7 in use and connected to the internet and to their office network(s) is strongly encouraged to replace those computers with ones that have updated operating systems that are secure and functional.

For more information on operating systems, Windows 7, and the newer upgrade product Windows 10 please contact the SGRC-IT Division or Larry Adams by telephone at (229)-242-1988 or via email at ladams@sgrc.us.




Pictured above is a message that a Windows 7 user could likely get on their computer.

Workforce Development

SGRC-Workforce Development Division WIOA Participant Receives Scholarship

There are many paths to success in Region 11. The SGRC Workforce Division extends its congratulations to William Exum as he enters the next phase of his journey. For more information on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), call Workforce Development at (912)-285-6097.



**REGIONAL
RECOGNITION**

Southern Georgia
**WORK
SOURCE
GEORGIA**
Connecting Talent with Opportunity
A proud partner of the American Job Center network

William Exum, left, Wiregrass Georgia Technical College (WGTC) Welding student and WIOA participant, received a scholarship from Coyote Manufacturing, Nashville, GA. William completed his Welding and Joining Technology program in August 2020 earning his diploma. He is pictured here with WGTC President, Dr. Tina K. Anderson.

WIREGRASS
GEORGIA TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Contact the SGRC

SGRC 2020 Council Meetings Schedule

October 22, 2020 – 11:00 am – Location TBD

December 10, 2020 – 11:00 am – Location TBD
(date subject to change)



**SOUTHERN GEORGIA
REGIONAL COMMISSION**

Valdosta Office

327 W. Savannah Ave.
Valdosta, GA 31601

You can reach us by phone:
(229)-333-5277

You can reach us by fax:
(229)-333-5312



Waycross Office

1725 South Georgia Parkway West
Waycross, GA 31503

You can reach us by phone:
(912)-285-6097

You can reach us by fax:
(912)-285-6126

Email:

sgrc@sgrc.us

Web Address:

www.sgrc.us

Facebook:

[https://www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/SouthernGeorgiaRC)

[SouthernGeorgiaRC](#)

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9/30/20

HAVE YOU COMPLETED THE 2020 CENSUS?

Self-Response Rates for Our Region

Atkinson County: 34.8%	Berrien County: 50.7%
Bacon County: 52.8%	Brantley County: 43.0%
Ben Hill County: 45.9%	Brooks County: 44.1%

Charlton County: 45.3%	Cook County: 51.4%
Clinch County: 43.1%	Echols County: 40.8%
Coffee County: 46.7%	Irwin County: 49.0%

Lanier County: 43.0%	Tift County: 55.5%
Lowndes County: 53.3%	Turner County: 49.2%
Pierce County: 58.4%	Ware County: 54.8%

**SOUTHERN
GEORGIA
COUNTS**



The Census is quick, easy, safe, and secure. Learn more at 2020census.gov