

In the REGION

City of Patterson Awarded CDBG-RDF Grant For Downtown Renewal Project

The City of Patterson recently received \$258,612 in Community Development Block Grant Redevelopment Funds (CDBG-RDF) to assist with the elimination of slum and blight in the downtown area. Portions of two dilapidated buildings, located on Railroad Avenue and owned by the City, will be demolished and rebuilt while several existing walls will be stabilized. Completion of this work will enable the City to construct a pocket park with public seating and a concert space as well as restrooms within the building shells. The total cost for this downtown renewal project is \$718,752. The final design work is underway and construction should be completed by next spring in time for the concert season.

The successful CDBG-RDF grant application was written and submitted by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission. SGRC Community and Economic Development staff will administer the project.



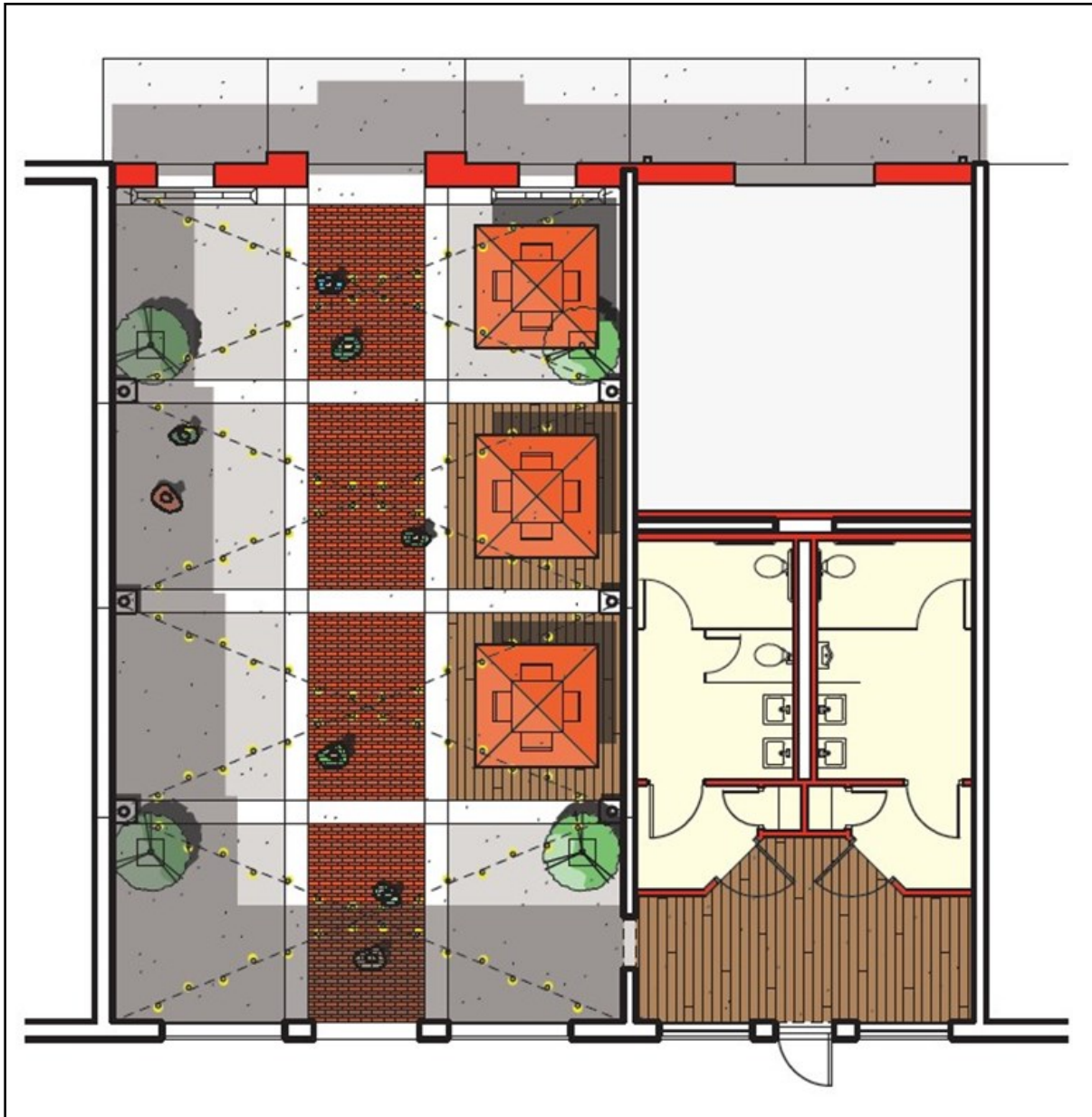
The CDBG-RDF project site in downtown Patterson.

The CDBG-RDF program is administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). This program provides local governments access to flexible financial assistance to help them implement projects that cannot be undertaken with the usual public sector grants and loans. Unlike other DCA CDBG programs, the RDF uses the CDBG national objective of “eliminating slums or blight.” As a result, many smaller scale projects (in downtown areas or blighted industrial areas) may be competitive for RDF financing.

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

City of Patterson Awarded CDBG-RDF Grant For Downtown Renewal Project (continued)



Overall Pocket Park Concept

Local Government Services



The Cities of Douglas and Alma participate in Planning Commission training
(Photo Courtesy of City of Douglas)

SGRC Local Government Services Provides Training to Planning Commission Members

The SGRC Local Government Services Division offers training for newly appointed Planning Commission members within the region. Local Government Minimum Performance Standards require that all Planning Commissioners receive training within one year of their appointment. The training is also offered as a refresher course, is available for any community in the SGRC region, and usually takes about two hours. The training can be held at either SGRC office location (Valdosta or Waycross), or can be conducted on-site in any community within the SGRC region.

During the training, participants learn about Zoning Procedures Law, Robert's Rules of Procedures, and how to conduct a formal meeting. Time is allotted to answer questions and discuss issues that each community may have. Also covered in the training are the roles of the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and elected officials. The training can be combined with any other municipality or county government in the SGRC region.

Anyone interested in the training, may contact Local Government Services at 229-333-5277.

Geographic Information Services (GIS)

SGRC GIS Completes Baseline in Twenty Georgia Jurisdictions

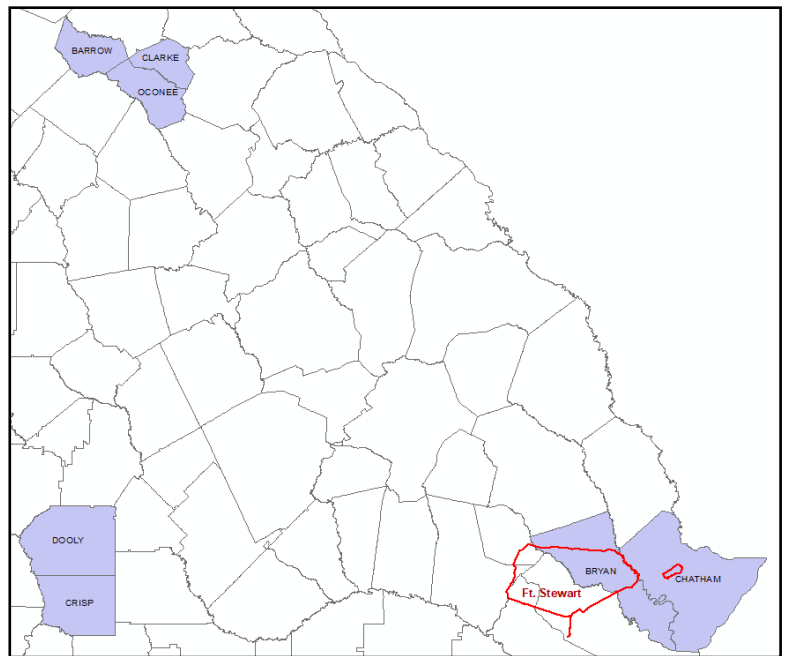
In cooperation with the Georgia Geographic Information Office (GIO), the SGRC GIS Division completed a process known as “baselining” for twenty jurisdictions in the state, eight of which were in pilot areas. The baselining process measures the readiness of the area to support the core functionality of Next Generation 911. Over time, it helps to track progression toward standardized, seamless state datasets. Using data from the baselining process allows each jurisdiction to determine how close it is to being able to route calls and validate locations, both collectively as well as community by community.

The datasets baselined include addresses, road centerlines, and the following administrative boundaries: PSAP (Public Safety Answering Points) and emergency service boundaries (Law, Fire, EMS).

Attribute validations were checked on all of the layers. Most layers had geometry checks, road centerlines also went through network checks. Address points were checked against addresses and roads. All of the baselining took around a day per jurisdiction. Multi-county data was then combined and baselining was completed on that combination. The GIS Division produced maps for the pilot areas.

The GIO office held meetings in each pilot area and service providers were invited. Providers could see each fire boundary, for example, along county boundaries and work to make them align. Specific comments were added as bookmarks in a database. The GIS Division then corrected the boundaries per the comments held at the meetings. The three pilot project areas where workshops were held are: the Greater Athens Pilot area (including Athens-Clarke County, Barrow County, Oconee County), the Coastal Pilot area (including Chatham County, Bryan County, and Ft. Stewart), and the Crisp-Dooly Pilot area (including Crisp County and Dooly County).

For more information on GIS services, contact GIS Director Rachel Strom at rstrom@sgrc.us.



SGRC-GIS Baselining Pilot Project Areas

Small Business Lending

SGRC Small Business Lending Division Shares Loan Program Benefits

The SGRC Loan Program works in conjunction with the banking industry to provide “gap” financing (capital) for new and expanding businesses. The goal of the program is to create jobs, improve the tax base, and create public/private partnerships.

There are three federal agencies which provide funding for the SGRC Loan Program: the Small Business Administration (SBA), the Economic Development Administration (EDA), and the Rural Development (RD) Department of Agriculture.

Eligibility of the project, loan amount, and collateral requirements may vary from program to program, and the SGRC Small Business Lending Division can assist with most commercial businesses.

The SGRC is a Certified Development Corporation (CDC) under the SBA-504 Loans program. This loan program is for fixed asset financing only. The Bank funds fifty percent, the SGRC/SBA funds forty percent, and the borrower invests an amount ranging from ten to fifteen percent. The maximum amount of a loan is \$5 million for the SBA portion and the SBA-504 loan is often used for real estate financing.

Some advantages offered by the SBA-504 are low down payments, fixed interest rates, and longer terms on the portion financed by SGRC/SBA. Allowing the borrower to make a lower down payment may provide an advantage by freeing up working capital for the borrower. There is also protection from rate increases, which makes it easier for the bank to loan more to the business as it grows.

The SGRC is the lender for the EDA and RD Revolving Loan Fund, which is primarily fixed asset financing. The SGRC has an internal pool of \$6 million in EDA and USDA Rural Development funded revolving loan funds. The maximum loan amount is \$500,000 and loans must be leveraged with other sources. For example, the loan can consist of forty percent Revolving Loan funds, fifty percent bank funds, and ten percent funds invested by the borrower. There are limited funds available.

For more information, contact Michelle Frey at mfrey@sgrc.us.



Workforce Development

SGRC Workforce Development Staff Attend 2022 WorkSource Georgia Academy

On April 5-7, the Workforce Development team attended the 2022 WorkSource Georgia Academy in Jekyll Island. The Academy allowed all regions of the state to come together to learn best practices, share successes, and collaborate on opportunities to upskill and train the workforce in Georgia. Roberta Lovett, SGRC Workforce Development Director, was part of the Local Board Session panel that discussed the work the local board does to strengthen South Georgia's talent pipeline. The 3-day event provided workforce team members "Birds of a Feather" tracts to gain knowledge in areas of expertise.

Amy Jones, SGRC Business Services/Sector Partnership Coordinator, was part of the closing session panel titled, "Storytelling/Best Practices: A Pivot to Greatness." Roberta shared, "I'm proud of the representation our team had at the Academy, the successes we've had over the past years during the pandemic, and the ability to make a difference in the lives of South Georgians."



Far right is Roberta Lovett, Workforce Development Director, participating in the Local Board Session panel



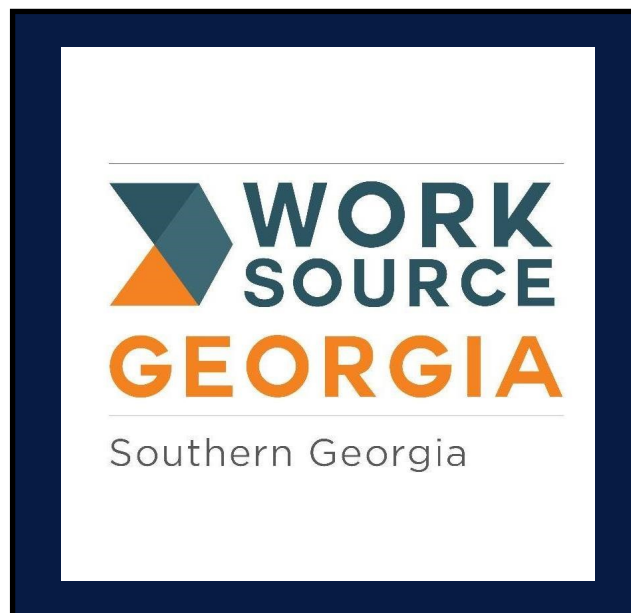
Far right is Amy Jones, Business Services/Sector Partnership Coordinator, participating in the closing session panel

Workforce Development

SGRC Workforce Development Staff Attend 2022 WorkSource Georgia Academy (continued)



The SGRC Workforce Development team members at the 2022 WorkSource Georgia Academy in Jekyll Island (left to right): Amy Jones, Cathy Daniels, Director Roberta Lovett, Felices King, Pam Popham, Evi Estep, and Bonnie Howard



Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

SGRC-AAA Division Staff Wear Orange to Bring Awareness to Senior Hunger

On Friday, April 8, members of the SGRC AAA team wore orange to bring awareness to Senior Hunger and to invite everyone to join in the fight against senior hunger. Nearly 16% of older Georgians age 60 and older do not have enough food and/or are unsure if the food they have will be adequate or enough to meet their needs. Visit feedingamerica.org/research/senior-hunger-research/senior for more information. Call the Southern Georgia Area Agency on Aging to find out more about the Senior Hunger Coalition for Southern Georgia, learn how to help in the community, and identify resources for seniors who are food insecure. For information, call 1-888-73AGING or 1-888-732-4464.



Pictured above (left to right) Tyler Hayes, Laura Smith, Director of Aging Services Scott Courson, Angie Swinford, Shawn Taylor, Linda Walker, Phyllis Ritter, Donna McIntosh, Christy Joyner, and Simone Popham (seated)

Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

IT'S FARMER'S MARKET SEASON!

May 2022 Market Schedule

*Senior
Farmer's
Market*

May 4th @ Brantley Co. Senior Center call 912-462-6525
May 10th @ Atkinson Co. HDM Site call 229-422-3391
May 12th @ Brooks Co. Senior Center call 229-263-9409
May 16th @ Ashley House Apt. Valdosta call 229-247-4834
May 18th @ Clinch Co. Senior Center call 912-487-2893
May 19th @ Berrien Co. Senior Center call 229-686-5648
May 24th @ Cook Co. Senior Center call 229-549-6989



**FOR MORE INFORMATION,
CONTACT SHAWN TAYLOR
AT (912) 285-6097**

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission's Area Agency on Aging (SGRC-AAA) coordinates with local approved farmers to provide fresh produce to area seniors across the region through the Georgia Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP).

- Low-income seniors are provided \$30 worth of vouchers to purchase fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables from certified Georgia farmers at local farmers' markets events in the area.
- The SGRC-AAA administers the program through a partnership with the Georgia Department of Human Services - Division of Aging Services and the Georgia Department of Public Health.
- The program also provides nutrition education regarding the importance of eating healthy fruits and vegetables.

***EVENTS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Applicants must be age 60 or older and meet certain income guidelines.**

sgrc

SOUTHERN GEORGIA
REGIONAL COMMISSION

AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Need Aging Services?

Contact us today, the call is free!

1-888-73AGING/1-888-732-4464

www.sgrc.us/aaa.html



Transportation and Environmental

TIA In the Southern Georgia Region: GDOT TIA Staff Presents TIA Impacts on Transportation Investment

The Transportation Investment Act (TIA) Referendum, locally known as T-SPLOST, allows the implementation of a one-percent sales tax for 10 years. Funds raised by the tax are used solely for transportation purposes. In 2018, TIA was passed by voters in the Southern Georgia Region. This one-percent sales tax increase is being used to fund various transportation projects that are located throughout the region.



Capital equipment purchased with TIA discretionary funds.

TIA has been actively collecting

revenue for over three years in the Southern Georgia Region. The revenue collected from October 2018 through February 2022 has remained above projected estimates and currently totals \$207,199,057. Of this total, \$155,399,293 is being applied to projects on the transportation investment list. The investment list has a total of 151 transportation projects that are located throughout the region, of which 62 projects have been completed and 21 are in construction and scheduled to be completed within the next few months.

Also, discretionary TIA funds distributed to all local governments in the SGRC region total \$51,799,764. These funds are being used to help local governments maintain the transportation network as well. Many local governments are improving local roads, building multi-modal facilities, and purchasing capital equipment for maintaining the roads. Included in this article are pictures of capital equipment purchased by Pierce County and Irwin County with TIA discretionary funds.

Due to TIA revenue being higher than estimated and projects being completed sooner than expected, there is a possibility that the current TIA may end 1-2 years earlier than anticipated. For this reason, there has been a request by the Citizens Review Panel to consider kicking off the TIA-2 process

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Transportation and Environmental

TIA In the Southern Georgia Region: GDOT TIA Staff Presents TIA Impacts on Transportation Investment (continued)

sooner rather than later.

Kenneth Franks of the GDOT TIA office and his staff will present current TIA revenue and project information at the Southern Georgia Regional Commission Council meeting in April to provide an overall update. Franks' presentation will highlight the impact of TIA in the region, especially in the areas of improving transportation safety, network reliability, and regional connectivity.

Please continue to share with the SGRC your local government transportation projects and equipment that are being paid for with discretionary funding. For further information about TIA, please visit the GDOT TIA website at www.ga-tia.com or contact Kenneth Franks at (404) 631-1568 or kfranks@dot.ga.gov. The Southern Georgia TIA investment list as well as other pertinent information and documents can also be found on the Southern Georgia Regional Commissions' website at <https://www.sgrc.us/southern-georgia-tia.html>.



Capital equipment purchased with TIA discretionary funds.

Contact the SGRC

SGRC Council 2022 Meeting Schedule Meeting Locations TBD

May 26, 2022 – 11:00 am

June 23, 2022 – 11:00 am

No Meeting - July

August 25, 2022 – 11:00 am

September 22, 2022 – 11:00 am

No Meeting - October

Area Officials Appreciation Dinner -
October 27, 2022
(subject to change)

November – No meeting (combined
with December meeting)

December 8, 2022 – 11:00 am



**SOUTHERN GEORGIA
REGIONAL COMMISSION**

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