

In the REGION

2022 Area Officials Appreciation Dinner

On November 9, the SGRC hosted the very well-attended 2022 Area Officials Appreciation Dinner at The Farm in Adel. Attendees enjoyed good food in a relaxed atmosphere during the annual evening of fellowship. The SGRC is grateful for its partnerships with community leaders and looks forward to future collaboration and cooperative work to benefit the region.



The 2022 SGRC Area Officials Appreciation Dinner at The Farm in Adel

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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.

SGRC News

2022 Area Officials Appreciation Dinner (cont.)



Senator Russ Goodman at the 2022 SGRC Area Officials Appreciation Dinner



The 2022 SGRC Area Officials Appreciation Dinner at The Farm in Adel

Planning & Transportation

Coffee County and the Cities of Ambrose, Broxton, Douglas, and Nicholls Pre-Comprehensive Plan Update workshop

The SGRC Planning Department held a Pre-Comprehensive Plan Update Workshop in Douglas on October 24. Staff explained the Comprehensive Plan Update process for Coffee County and the cities of Ambrose, Broxton, Douglas, and Nicholls. The Comprehensive Plan update process will begin after January 1 and is due to be adopted by October 31, 2023. SGRC planners Loretta Hylton and James Horton presented information on the comprehensive plan update process to attendees. Topics included the required elements for the plan, stakeholders' participation expectations, and the importance of public involvement.



Participants of the Pre-Comprehensive Plan Update Workshop

Additionally, the requirements for listing Community Work Program projects for a five-year time horizon were discussed. SGRC staff stressed to workshop participants that any project, for the next five years, that may include grant funds, such as CDBG, must be included in the plan and Work Program. These projects must include detailed information to enable the grant application to be competitive.

The next pre-update workshop will be held for Irwin County and the City of Ocilla. Invitations will be sent out in early 2023.



James Horton addresses participants of the Pre-Comprehensive Plan Update Workshop

Community and Economic Development

SGRC Community and Economic Development Division Reminds City and County Governments of CDBG Planning Time

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs will be accepting applications for its Annual Competition for 2023 Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) on June 2, 2023, and the time to begin planning those applications is NOW! Threshold requirements implemented by DCA have necessitated getting an early start on CDBG applications in order to be eligible to submit an application.

CDBG funds are federal dollars allocated to the State of Georgia by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and are earmarked to benefit primarily low to moderate income people. In fact, the beneficiaries of a CDBG project must be at least 70% low to moderate income.



Neighborhood Revitalization

Examples of eligible public facilities and improvements activities include, but are not limited to: water and sewer facilities, flood and drainage improvements, streets, and neighborhood revitalization. Other activities may include the development of shelters/facilities for homeless, elderly, mentally ill, abused, and impaired persons. Public facility activities may also include the development of medical, community, senior, and handicapped centers, or centers for literacy training. For the 2023 CDBG application round, the maximum funding amount for a single-activity public facilities grant is \$1,000,000. Local governments are required to provide a 5% cash match of amounts from \$300,001 to \$750,000 in CDBG funds, and 10% cash match of amounts from \$750,001 to \$1,000,000 (not required for single-activity neighborhood revitalization grants). Multi-Activity projects are eligible for up to \$1,250,000 in CDBG funds; a 15% cash match is required for amounts of \$1,000,001 or more.

Development of a quality, competitive, and eligible CDBG application is time consuming, and therefore the process should begin immediately. If your community is interested in applying for CDBG funds and you would like to discuss a potential project, please contact Kimberly Hobbs at 229-333-5277, or by email at kkhobbs@sgrc.us.

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Community and Economic Development

SGRC Community and Economic Development Division Reminds City and County Governments of CDBG Planning Time (cont.)



Street, Flood, and Drainage Improvements



Public Facility Improvements

Area Agency on Aging

Shawn Taylor Speaks at 2022 National Association of Farmers Market Nutrition Programs (NAFMNP) Conference

On Friday, September 30th, Lead Aging Program Manager for the Southern Georgia Area Agency on Aging, Shawn Taylor spoke at the 2022 National Association of Farmers Market Nutrition Programs (NAFMNP) Conference held from September 28th through 30th at the Embassy Suites Plainfield Conference Center in Plainfield, Indiana. The theme of the 2022 NAFMNP Conference was “Local Produce Sets the Pace” and Taylor spoke on maximizing opportunities through successful WIC and Senior FMNP collaborations between the Local Agency, Senior Centers, Farmers, and the community in the state of Georgia.

According to their website, the NAFMNP is the nation’s only organization that links States, the District of Columbia, Indian Tribal Organizations, Territories and others with a stake in USDA’s Farmers’ Market Nutrition Programs (including local fruit and vegetable growers and low-income families and seniors) with a shared mission to cultivate access for consumers to buy fresh produce from local growers. Find out more at their website: <https://nafmnp.org>.



Shawn Taylor, Lead Aging Program Manager speaking at the 2022 NAFMNP Conference in Plainfield, Indiana

Area Agency on Aging

Aging Advisory Council Meeting

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission's Area Agency on Aging (SGRC-AAA) held its quarterly Aging Advisory Council meeting on November 9. Scott Courson, Director of Aging Services welcomed the Aging Advisory Council members, SGRC staff, and guests to the meeting. Courson also gave an update on funding for aging services and introduced the guest speaker, Mrs. Lovett.

Roberta Lovett, Deputy Executive Director of Human Services for the Southern Georgia Regional Commission was the guest speaker and shared information and updates on Regional Transit Services.

Shawn Taylor, Lead Aging Program Manager, gave updates on senior centers and the Senior Hunger Coalition, as well as the Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP). Taylor reported that the Southern Georgia Area Agency on Aging once again utilized the most vouchers in the State of Georgia in the 2022 SFMNP season. Kimberly Rodgers, Aging Communications and Outreach Specialist, reported on aging updates and local community involvement and outreach.



Roberta Lovett, Deputy Executive Director of Human Services



Aging Advisory Council Meeting November 9 in Nashville at the Nashville Community Center

Small Business Lending

Small Business Lending Program welcomes new Loan Board Member for FY 2023

The SGRC Small Business Lending Division would like to welcome Morris Johnson as the newest member of the Loan Board of Directors for the Southern Georgia Area Resource Development Agency and the Southern Georgia Area Development Corporation. The SGRC council appointed Morris to the board at the August 25th meeting.

Morris Johnson is the Vice President of FNB Bank of Alma, Georgia where he has been employed for over twenty-one years. During his tenure at FNB, Morris has worked in all areas of operations from collections to human resources to information technology to the Bank Board Directors. Morris is a 2003 Georgia Banking School Graduate from the Georgia Bankers Association. He has a Bachelor's of Science Degree from the University of Georgia where he majored in Agricultural Economics, (2000). Lance Wilcher, Director of the SGRC Small Business Lending Division said, "We look forward to Morris' expertise in the Alma market and input he will bring to the board!"



Morris Johnson

Water Quality Monitoring Results Now Available on Adopt a Stream (AAS) Website

After almost a year of water quality monitoring, SGRC has completed an in-depth review of water quality from 172 sites throughout the region. All 18 counties, and 6 surrounding counties have had water quality samples collected based on need identified in the Georgia Environmental Protection Division's 305(b)/ 303(d) List of Impaired Waters. Follow the link below to view water quality data collected in your area:

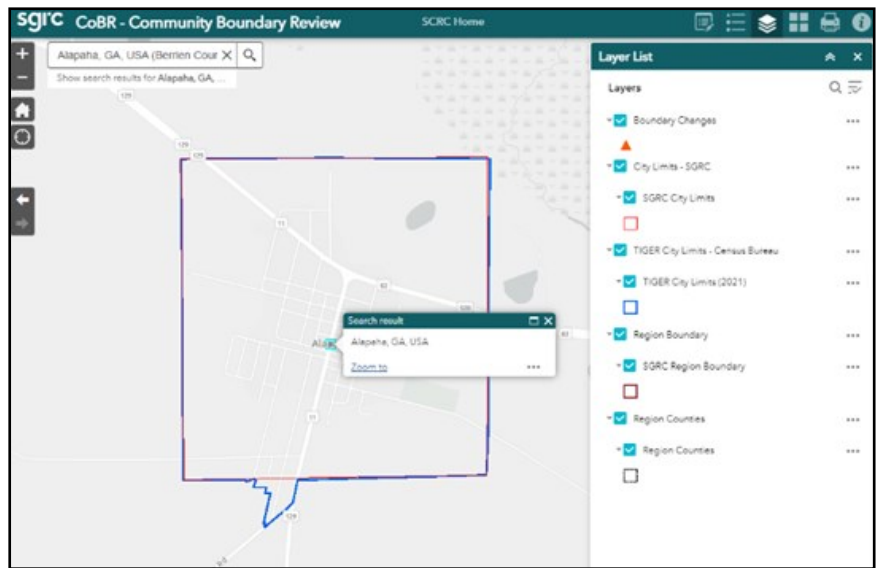


<https://adoptastream.georgia.gov/.../Reg.../view-data-region>

Geographic Information Services (GIS)


SGRC GIS Reminds Local Cities of Time to Check City Limits

Each year, the SGRC contracts with the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) in order to communicate local information and progress to the state level. This year, as part of the contract, the SGRC is tasked to review city limits. This review is also in preparation for the upcoming Census Bureaus' Boundary and Annexation Survey (BAS), and will therefore be a comparison between the information the community has, the SGRC has, and the Census data. The best way to accomplish such a task is to use GIS. In an effort to reach as many communities as possible, SGRC-GIS developed an interactive map site that allows communities to review its information, and make comments, independent of meeting schedules. This interactive map can be found at:



<http://www.sgrcmaps.com/CoBR/>

To review City Limits Boundaries, cities may visit the link above. Simply type in the name of the city in the search box. When the display zooms to the desired city, examine the boundaries. The blue lines represent the boundaries currently held by the Census office, and the red lines represent the boundaries currently held by the SGRC.

After reviewing the boundaries, click on the edit tool  in the upper right-hand corner. Click on the Boundary Changes point. Then click on the map, at any place, to give feedback. Please list a name, job title, contact information and in the comments, and complete additional information as needed.

For questions regarding any of these projects or how the SGRC-GIS Division can help to meet goals in 2022, contact SGRC-GIS Division Director Rachel Strom at rstrom@sgrc.us.

Workforce Development

SGRC is Community Sponsor of the 2022 American Rural Prosperity Summit

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission was a proud Community Sponsor of the 2022 American Rural Prosperity Summit, held October 4th through the 6th at the beautiful Classic Center located in Downtown Athens. Leaders from across the state heard from Chris Clark, President and CEO of the Georgia Chamber of Commerce and Fitzgerald native. America is experiencing a rural renaissance. More and more people are moving back to rural areas, but what does this renaissance mean for business and community leaders? Is there opportunity in rural America, or is it all just talk?

Three of the regions leaders shared best practices and highlights from their communities across Southern Georgia.

Darrell Moore spoke on the Future of Rural Innovation & Higher Education—Creating Opportunities for Success. During this session the panelist discussed how Universities play a big role in spurring rural innovation and economic growth. By developing new technologies, incubating businesses, and educating community leaders, universities are helping create opportunities for rural students and residents.

Melissa Dark spoke on the Future of Entrepreneurship in Rural Places—Developing an Ecosystem for Growth. During the afternoon session on day two, Melissa and her fellow panelists spoke about how majority of businesses in the country are less than five years old, meaning most are new businesses being led by someone with an entrepreneurial spirit. Entrepreneurs play a vital role by creating dynamic and innovative economies.

Jason Dunn spoke on the USDA Rural Partners Network—“Building Stronger Futures Together”. On the morning of day 3, we heard Jason and his associate panelists discuss that when federal agencies and civic partners unite, good things happen. This is especially true for communities selected to participate in the Rural Partners Network. This was created to improve access to government resources, staffing, and tools. These network communities work to develop meaningful rural strategies and improve visibility and attention to rural issues.



Workforce Development

SGRC is Community Sponsor of the 2022 American Rural Prosperity Summit (cont.)



Pictured above (left to right) Darrell Moore, Executive Director, Center for South Georgia Regional Impact at Valdosta State University, Michelle Elliott, Director, UGA Archway Partnership, Debra Lam, Founding Executive Director, Partnership for Inclusive Innovation



Pictured above (left to right) Scott Purvis, Community & Economic Development Manager, Georgia Power, Melissa Dark, President & CEO, Fitzgerald/Ben Hill County Chamber of Commerce and Workforce Development Board Member, Michele Johnson, President, Greater Vidalia Chamber, and Moderator Chris Clark



Pictured above (left to right) Moderator Reggie Taylor, State Director, Georgia USDA Rural Development, Matt Donaldson, Mayor, Twin City, and Jason Dunn, Executive Director of the Fitzgerald/Ben Hill County Development Authority

Contact the SGRC

**SGRC Council 2022
Meeting Schedule
Meeting Locations TBD**

December 8, 2022 – 11:00 am
(subject to change)



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Welcome, Jill Cunningham!



The SGRC is pleased to welcome Jill Cunningham to the Area Agency on Aging Division. She has been hired as an Aging and Disability Resources (ADRC) Counselor.

Prior to coming to work with the SGRC, Cunningham worked 23 years as an Occupational Therapy Assistant. She worked over a decade in home healthcare services and worked with Amedisys Home Health Care in both Kentucky and Georgia. She has lived in Georgia for eight years and said she is really enjoying working at the SGRC and that everyone is so friendly!

ADRC Supervisor Laura Smith said, "We are delighted to have Jill working with us. She has considerable experience in home healthcare services and she will be such an asset to the ADRC with her training, skills, and knowledge as an Occupational Therapist Assistant."