

NADO/DDAA ANNUAL TRAINING CONFERENCE

A joint Training Conference hosted by the Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) was held in Washington, D.C. on March 18-21. The conference was attended by Executive Director **Jim Dove** and Planning & Government Services Director **Burke Walker**. The DDAA includes 73 Local Development Districts in a 13-state region extending from New York to Mississippi, and NADO represents more than 500 Economic Development Districts throughout the country. The conference featured presentations by officials from USDA-Rural Development, the Economic Development Administration, and the University of Virginia Center for Politics. There were several concurrent sessions focusing on infrastructure, the addiction crisis, disaster recovery and resilience, community development, workforce and research development, and broadband. Attendance at the conference was in excess of 300 persons. Dove is a Past President of DDAA and is currently serving a 10th term on the NADO Board of Directors.



(L-R) Dove, Neff, Walker

HISTORIC LEXINGTON

Lexington, the seat of Oglethorpe County, is located 17 miles east of Athens on U.S. 78. The present day population is estimated at 249. The Town was incorporated on November 24, 1806, although the community was given its current name in July 1797. Its name commemorates the battle between Massachusetts patriots and British soldiers in April 1775 at the beginning of the Revolutionary War.

In the heart of Lexington stands the County Courthouse constructed in 1887. The Romanesque Revival structure, listed in the National Register of Historic Places, was renovated during the 1990's. It is the oldest courthouse of this architectural style remaining in Georgia.

Visitors are welcome to take a walking tour of the town that includes numerous historic buildings and homes. The Joseph Lumpkin House, c. 1790, is the oldest documented house, and the home of the first Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court. The Lexington Presbyterian Cemetery contains the graves of former Georgia Governors **George Gilmer** and **Wilson Lumpkin**; and **Joseph Henry Lumpkin**, founder of the University of Georgia's Lumpkin School of Law.

Mayor **Rick Berry**, a member of the NEGRC Council, serves as Lexington's chief elected official, and City Councilmembers include **Jason Booth**, **Greg Reese**, **Chris Riser**, **Jill Severn**, and **Anita Turenne**. Lexington resident **Ronnie Boggs** serves as the Private Sector Representative from Oglethorpe County to the NEGRC Council.



Historic Courthouse



Meson Academy



Historic Presbyterian Church



Mayor Rick Berry

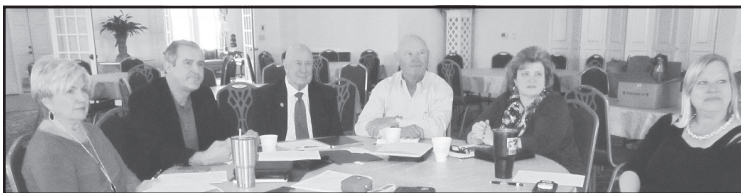
BRASELTON STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT HELD

The Town of Braselton held its Strategic Planning Retreat on March 18th at the Braselton Event Center facilitated by Executive Director **Jim Dove** and Executive Assistant **Mott Beck**. This marks the 13th consecutive year the retreat has been held. The Mayor and Council heard an extensive report by the Town Manager regarding projects undertaken in 2017, in addition to an overall discussion of various departments. Attendees participated in a SWOT Analysis prior to concentrating on short-term goals. Priorities to be addressed during the next 12-18 months include:

- Initiation of efforts to improve overpasses on I-85 with fencing/signage.
- Improvements to website including a mobile app.
- Comprehensive Plan and Development Code updates.
- Efforts to provide street lights in the Spout Springs area.
- Efforts related to GEFA stormwater project serving Keys Crossing.
- Provide clarity regarding Planning Commission expectations and enforcement of current ordinances.

The Mayor and Council also identified some longer-term priorities for further investigation including:

- State Route 53 Truck Route.
- Braselton Parkway Extension.
- Second entrance to the Vineyards residential area.
- Remainder of Braselton Parkway West.
- Jesse Cronic Interchange.
- Future water sources.
- Re-use water marketing campaign.



Retreat Participants

REMINDER

The next meeting of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Council will be held on **Thursday, May 17th at Noon at the Athens Holiday Inn**. This is the meeting where we incorporate the Annual Meeting and present annual awards. Additional information on this meeting will be forthcoming.

RURAL TRANSIT GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING

In October 2017, Deloitte Consulting was selected to assist in analyzing Georgia's transit needs and methods to be utilized by the state in addressing them. The firm was chosen by the Georgia House of Representatives Commission on Transit Governance and Funding, chaired by Representative **Kevin Tanner**. Jim Dove was among approximately 30 attendees at a "Green House Lab" in Macon on April 10th that engaged in further discussion on the matter. Those in attendance were briefed on transit objectives, and gained a better understanding of current data. Those present were given an opportunity to discuss strengths and improvement opportunities, and to explore current governance and funding. Consultants shared lessons from other successful programs across the nation, along with best practices and design principles. Finally, the group helped to identify the desired elements/shape of future system governance. Deloitte will be providing a summary of the meeting and future reports as the planning effort continues.



ENGAGE AT EVERY AGE: MAY 2018

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH 2018: ENGAGE AT EVERY AGE

Across the country, older Americans – a rapidly growing population – are taking part in activities that promote wellness and social connection. They are sharing their wisdom and experience with future generations, and they are giving back to enrich their communities. They're working and volunteering, mentoring and learning, leading and engaging.

For 55 years, Older Americans Month (OAM) has been observed to recognize older Americans and their contributions to our communities. Led by the Administration for Community Living's Administration on Aging, every May offers opportunities to hear from, support, and celebrate our nation's elders. This year's OAM theme, "Engage at Every Age," emphasizes the importance of being active and involved, no matter where you are in life. You are never too old (or too young) to participate in activities that can enrich your physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

It is becoming more apparent that remaining socially engaged can improve the quality of life for older adults. Northeast Georgia Area Agency on Aging will use OAM 2018 to focus on how older adults in our area are engaging with friends and family, and through various community activities. Throughout the month, activities will be conducted and information will be shared to highlight local programs and resources.

For additional information, visit the Official OAM Website: <https://oam.acl.gov/>. Contact the Northeast Georgia Area Agency on Aging by visiting <http://www.eldercare.gov/> or call **1-800-474-7540** to find ongoing opportunities to celebrate and support older Americans.

EDA ANNOUNCES FY18 FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Last month, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) announced availability of funding for communities affected by natural disasters in 2017. Local governments in the NEGRC region are eligible for this funding.

The announcement was made by U.S. Secretary of Commerce **Wilbur Ross** who indicated \$587 million is available through the Disaster Supplemental Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Ross said, "The funding will support the long-term recovery of countless local communities devastated by hurricanes, wildfires, and other disasters in 2017." The funding is made through EDA's regional offices and can be used to support both construction and non-construction projects. Projects proposed for funding should be based on long-term, regionally-oriented strategies that foster economic growth and resiliency.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until a new NOFO is released, is cancelled, or all funds are expended. Information about EDA's disaster recovery can be found on its website at <https://www.eda.gov/programs/disaster-recovery> and general information can be found at www.eda.gov.

For further information about EDA, please contact **Burke Walker**, NEGRC Director of Planning & Government Services, at **(706) 369-5650** or email: bwalker@negrc.org.

OCONEE COUNTY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN NEARS COMPLETION

The Joint Comprehensive Plan Update for Oconee County and its four municipalities is nearly complete. The planning process reached an important milestone last month when NEGRC staff conducted a final public hearing before the Oconee County Planning Commission. The purpose of the hearing was to present the contents of the Plan Update to the Planning Commission and the nearly 100 citizens in attendance.

After a brief presentation describing the process used to develop the plan, the plan's recommendations, and the next steps, staff heard public comments and answered questions about how the land use strategy the Plan Update proposes would impact the largely rural and agricultural land that makes up a large portion of southern Oconee County. Specifically, the plan recommends very limited development at an intersection along US 441 where the Town of Farmington was previously located. The recommendation came from the consensus opinion of the Plan's Steering Committee, and is intended to allow small scale, commercial or agri-business

uses that would primarily serve the residents close-by. After hearing public comments, the Planning Commission voted to recommend that the



Public Hearing Group

Board of Commissioners transmit the Plan Update, as presented, to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for their review. The NEGRC's Planning & Government Services (PGS) staff assisted Oconee County in this effort over many months that, among other things, provided wide community and stakeholder involvement.

WORKFORCE SPRING SNAPSHOT

Things are blooming in WorkSource Northeast Georgia! Nine persons including staff, service providers and board members attended the Southern Employment & Training Association (SETA) meeting in Memphis in March. SETA is a professional development organization providing training and professional development on an array of topics including: "Building Partnerships with Business and Industry"; "Latest News from the Nation's Capital"; "Revolutionizing Youth Services through Integrated Education and Training Services"; "Over 40 and Looking for Work", and many more. Those attending returned with information and techniques that will help us assist our clients become gainfully employed.

Workforce Development Director **Carol Cofer** attended the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) Annual Conference in Washington to discuss workforce policies and learn how new laws will impact WIOA. Of particular interest were workshops on AARP services and client relationship management systems.

Be on the watch for a WIOA/WorkSource Northeast Georgia representative in Clarke, Elbert or Walton County every month sharing information on Tuesdays at Athens Technical College. Live in Barrow County? Staff was at Lanier Technical College on April 24th for new student registration. Residents in Newton County met with WorkSource Northeast Georgia staff on April 16th & 19th at Georgia Piedmont Technical College during open house.

Congratulations to the five men & women who graduated from the ManufactureReady Program in Walton County, each earning crucial certifications that will assist them in finding employment. This program is operated by Athens Technical College with funds provided by the Northeast Georgia Workforce Development Board.

The Youth Division is getting ready to offer the Summer Work Experience Program to over 100 youth served through the area's year-round in-school youth provider. WIOA partners with multiple agencies, businesses and organizations every year. Worksite Solicitation packets were mailed in early April. If your organization is interested in being considered as a worksite, please contact youth staff at **(706) 369-5703**.

We offer assistance in all 12 counties, so if you are unemployed and need additional training, or need resources, contact our office at **(706) 369-5703** for eligibility requirements! Check us out on Facebook and Twitter WorkSource Northeast Georgia!



Conference Attendees

Update

REGIONAL MEETINGS MAY

3	10:00 a.m.	Youth Committee	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
8	8:30 a.m.	Workforce Development Board	NEGRC Atrium
9	12:30 p.m.	Solid Waste Management Authority	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
16	10:00 a.m.	NEGA Joint Development Authority	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
17	Noon	NEGRC Council	Athens Holiday Inn
17	3:00 p.m.	Firefly Trail Advocacy Group	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
23	9:30 a.m.	Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room



Sincerely & Respectfully,

