

STATHAM – THE SUNFLOWER CITY

Statham, located in Barrow County between Winder and Athens, provides small-town southern charm and hospitality without inconveniences associated with metropolitan areas. State Route 316 provides quick access to major interstate highways, and places the City in the center in one of the fastest growing areas in the country.

Statham was first known as the Talasee Colony which included a Native American village named Calamit. In 1784, settlers purchased a part of Calamit for 14 pounds of beads and named it Beadland. The City grew from a combination country store/post office owned and operated by Mr. and Mrs. J.C. Statham. The post office was first known as Barber's Creek, then DeLay and changed to Statham in 1892. The building of the railroad in 1890-91 marked the beginning of Statham, and it was incorporated on December 20, 1892. The first bank in the City was organized in April 1904, and the City at one point included ten mercantile establishments, a hardware and furniture store, drug store, meat market, hotel, dentist's office, cotton ginneries, livery stables, blacksmith shops, three churches, and a free public school system. Due to the advent of the automobile, better roads, and the Great Depression, many of the business establishments closed as people began traveling to larger towns for shopping.

Today, Statham is a thriving and growing community of approximately 2200 persons. The active City Government includes Mayor **Robert Bridges** and Councilmembers **Perry Barton, Eddie Jackson, Betty Lyle, Dwight McCormic, and Hattie Thrasher.**



Statham Scenes

OXFORD OFFICIALS VISIT BOGART BUILDING

The City of Oxford is in the process of considering potential, future uses of their historic Yarborough House for its reuse as a community facility. Mayor **Jerry Roseberry** previously appointed a Building Committee to oversee the project and recommend improvements and uses to the City. The Mayor recently asked NEGRC staff to meet with the Committee to provide technical assistance in the areas of project development and building rehabilitation. Last month, the Building Committee members, comprised of Councilmembers **Jim Windham, Jeff Wearing, Mike**

Ready, and City Manager **Matt Pepper**, traveled to Athens to meet with NEGRC Director of Planning & Government Services **Burke Walker** and **Jordan Shoemaker**, NEGRC Project Specialist. After a meeting at NEGRC Headquarters, the group was given a tour of the Bogart building by **Nikki Gambill**, Bogart Assistant City Clerk, who oversees the building's rentals, maintenance and operations.

The NEGRC assisted the Town of Bogart (www.cityofbogart.com) in the rehabilitation of the *Historical Agricultural Center* starting in 2012. We provided direct assistance in seeking a qualified architect to prepare concept plans, construction and bid documents. As a completed project, it serves as a good example of a similar effort and potential uses to the Yarborough House. The group was particularly interested in how interior and exterior spaces were adapted into special-event spaces. Mayor **Terri Glenn** worked with the NEGRC on the *Historical Agricultural Center* and was glad to accommodate the group and arrange for Oxford's visit. NEGRC staff expect to continue working with Oxford and make a site visit to the Yarborough House to understand the building and site for further advisement on project planning, rehabilitation, and funding sources.



Shoemaker, Windham, Walker, Ready, Pepper and Wearing

NEWTON WORKS MANUFACTUREADY PROGRAM

Georgia Piedmont Technical College recently held its 1st graduation associated with the Newton Works ManufactuReady six-week program. This class had persons from Newton and Rockdale Counties. Funding was provided through the WorkSource Northeast Georgia (WIOA) funds for eligible persons.

For information on this and other ManufactuReady courses being offered in the region, contact the NEGRC Workforce Development Division at **(706) 369-5703**.



ManufactuReady Graduates

LOCAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

According to the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, all of the state's cities and counties are required to adopt and maintain comprehensive plans to be certified as Qualified Local Governments (QLG). The existing five-year update schedule ensures that local plans are current, useful, and, critically, implementable.

The Community Work Program, a required element for every comprehensive plan in Georgia, includes a five-year list of projects called the Short-Term Work Program (STWP), accompanied by a Report of Accomplishments on the previous plan's STWP. The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) requires work program elements to be both specific and implementable. Projects that incorporate facility construction, specific-area or content plan development, or ordinance adoption are exactly in line with DCA's goals for local plan implementation.

The Planning & Government Services Division is available to provide direct assistance to cities and counties in Northeast Georgia for comprehensive plan implementation. Our staff is experienced in developing:

- Plans for bicycling and walking, economic development, historic preservation, housing, natural resources, public transportation, recreation, tourism, and other areas
- Design guidelines for downtowns, historic districts, etc.
- Ordinances (and ordinance amendments)
- Grant applications
- Maps and GIS-related products
- Other efforts upon request

When these projects are included in the local government's STWP, we are often able to share project costs with state planning funds, accompanied by local fees. Local governments initiate the process of obtaining NEGRC assistance through a project request letter (template online at negrc.org/local-services.php); we recommend discussing the project with PGS staff prior to submitting a formal request.

For additional information on local comprehensive plan development and implementation, please contact Principal Planner **John Devine**, AICP, at jdevine@negrc.org.

PLANNING RETREATS HELD

Executive Director **Jim Dove** and Executive Assistant **Mott Beck** facilitated multiple retreats during February. The first of these was held in the City of Winterville Community Center on February 12th with the Mayor and Council and several staff. The retreat began with revisiting 2018 goals and accomplishments...it was estimated that approximately 75% of the 2018 goals were met. The Mayor and Council identified a number of potential goals for 2019, which were discussed and utilized in finalizing the year's strategic goals.

Plan Implementation Meetings

PGS staff is required to meet with local governments on a biennial basis to discuss local and regional plan implementation. Chief Elected Officials from **Elbert, Greene, Jackson, Jasper, Madison, and Oglethorpe Counties, as well as the municipalities within those counties**, should expect to attend a Plan Implementation Meeting this spring.

A similar retreat was held for the Walton County Board of Commissioners at the Historic Courthouse on February 14th. The session focused on several discussion items including SPLOST III, SPLOST IV, Property Acquisition, Various Ordinances, Economic Development, Financial Status, Tax Assessment, Roads and System Improvements, and Commissioners' Insurance. In addition to the Board of Commissioners, key staff members from various departments were also in attendance. Wide-ranging discussion on the topics resulted in consensus being reached as to future direction.

The City of Madison Mayor and Council held its annual Planning Retreat on February 18th at the Public Safety Building Meeting Hall. All elected officials were present, along with key staff. After a review of the 2018 retreat summary, attendees focused on a lengthy list of topics. These included City Charter Review, Annexations, Council Salaries, Storm Water Concerns, Beautification Projects, and Sidewalk Projects and Street Names. NEGRC has facilitated the Annual Planning Retreat for Madison for 10 consecutive years.

Retreats were also facilitated for the Elbert County Board of Commissioners and the City of Jefferson Mayor and Council during February after this newsletter went to press. A report on those sessions will be included in the next edition.



Madison Mayor and Council and Staff



*Above: Retreat Participants
Left: Mayor Ferrelle*



Walton County Participants

MARCH FOR MEALS

The month of March mobilizes hundreds of local Meals on Wheels programs across the country to reach out to their communities and build the support that will sustain them all year long. With 12,000 Americans turning 60 each day, Meals on Wheels programs collectively serve a nutritious meal, a warm smile and the safety check that keep over two and a half million seniors a year healthy and living in their own homes in the United States but another 9 million seniors are in need. This effort is the product of a dynamic and effective partnership between a national network of local Meals on Wheels programs and the businesses, organizations, governments and volunteers who give so generously in their communities.

The March for Meals campaign is an effort led by the Meals on Wheels Association of America and presents a variety of opportunities for people to learn more about and experience the efforts at filling the plates of the older adults within their own community who are home-bound or without the resources to prepare a healthy meal for themselves. So choose what's right for you. And, in doing so, know that your contribution will make a difference to, and touch the hearts of, many courageous aging Americans.

Athens Community Council on Aging is partnering with the national March for Meals campaign by holding their 9th Annual March for Meals 5K Run/Walk and Anywhere 5K on Saturday, March 23, 2019 to help end senior hunger in Northeast Georgia and to support their local Meals on Wheels Program.

For more information on the national March for Meals Campaign go to the Meals on Wheels Association of America website located at <https://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/take-action/march-for-meals>. For additional information on Athens Community Council on Aging's 5K Run/Walk and Anywhere 5K event call **(706) 549-4850**.



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Update

REGIONAL MEETINGS MARCH

5	8:30 a.m.	Workforce Development Board	Atrium at Headquarters
14	10:00 a.m.	Joint Development Authority of NEGA	E. H. Culpepper Conference Room
19	1:30 p.m.	Northeast Georgia EMS	E. H. Culpepper Conference Room
21	Noon	NEGRC Council	Athens Holiday Inn
21	3:30 p.m.	Firefly Trail Advocacy Group	E. H. Culpepper Conference Room
27	9:00 a.m.	Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority	E. H. Culpepper Conference Room



Sincerely & Respectfully,