

## FIREFLY TRAIL DEDICATION

The Firefly Trail, a multi-use bicycle and pedestrian facility, celebrated the completion of a new section in Clarke County on October 16, 2020 with a dedication ceremony held in the City of Winterville. The project was made possible by 2018 TSPLOST funds and other supporting efforts and funds. When complete, the Clarke County segment of the trail will extend from downtown Athens into the City of Winterville and to the Oglethorpe County line.

The Firefly Trail is ultimately proposed to extend 39 miles from downtown Athens to the City of Union Point in Greene County, following the historic Georgia Railroad's former route. It is intended to provide a unique recreational and transportation alternative to residents and visitors while also offering economic-development opportunities.

The concept and planning of the trail in Clarke County began many years ago with an appointed Rails-to-Trails Committee. The dedication included remarks from **ACC Commissioner Andy Herod**, whom served as Chairman of the Rails-to-Trails Committee. Athens-Clarke County's **Mayor Kelly Girtz** opened the dedication followed by a welcome and presentation from the hosting City of Winterville's **Mayor Dodd Ferrelle**.

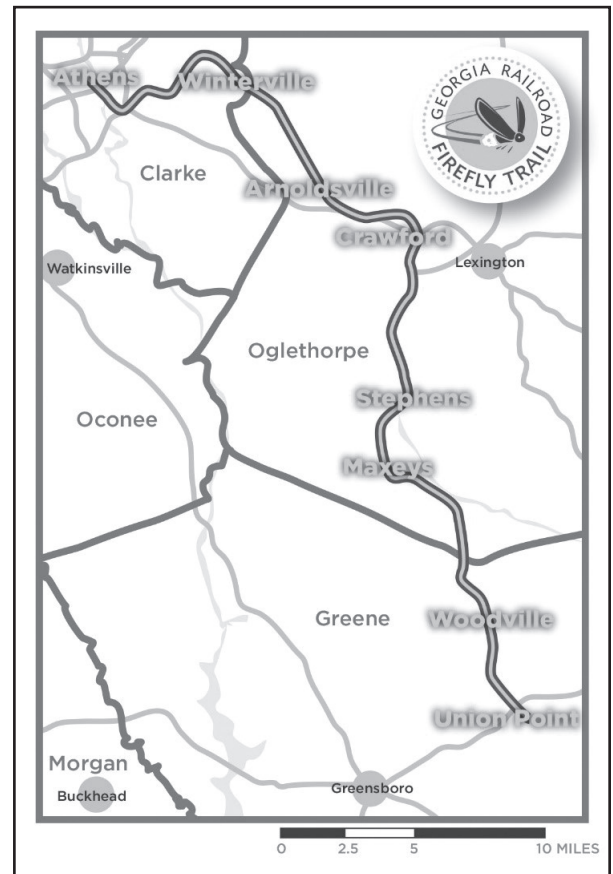
A non-profit organization was formed to support the Firefly Trail and guide its future development and operation. For further information visit: [www.fireflytrail.com](http://www.fireflytrail.com). For information about bicycle and pedestrian trails planning, contact **John Devine**, NEGRC Principal Planner, at [jdevine@negrc.org](mailto:jdevine@negrc.org).



*Ribbon cutting of the Firefly Trail with Mayors Kelly Girtz (right) and Dodd Ferrelle (center) with Commissioner Andy Herod (left).*



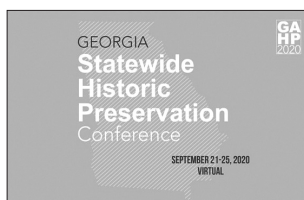
*Mayors Girtz and Ferrelle speaking to attendees at the historic Winterville depot with the Firefly Trail in foreground*



*Georgia Railroad route and planned route of the Firefly Trail.*

## GEORGIA STATEWIDE HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONFERENCE GOES VIRTUAL IN 2020

The 2020 Georgia Statewide Historic Preservation Conference was held virtually September 21-25, 2020. The annual conference provides local governments, historic preservation commissions, and other entities with an interest in historic preservation with an opportunity to receive information about new tools and methods in the field. The conference also provides updates about new laws and economic conditions affecting preservation in our state. The 2020 week-long virtual event was hosted by the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation in conjunction with the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office.



The keynote speaker for the conference was Donovan D. Rypkema, Principal of PlaceEconomics and lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania. He has been involved in preservation projects around the globe and spoke on the effects that challenging times can have on preservation efforts; specifically, the challenges that the preservation field faces due to the coronavirus pandemic, economic climate, and divided political climate. Rypkema's keynote set the tone for the conference's focus on confronting the challenges the nation currently faces, including disparities between rural and urban areas, downtown economic development, and equal access to resources.

Many of the sessions focused on inclusivity and diversity in approaches to preservation. Preservation can be a method to heal communities by bringing people together and bringing marginalized groups to the forefront. Dr. Lisa Bratton, Assistant Professor of History at Tuskegee University spoke about her work with Historic Brattonville, a former plantation in South Carolina where her ancestors were enslaved and lived even after their freedom. She was able to research her ancestors and use archived records to develop programming and exhibits about their story to educate visitors to the historic site. Jamie Credle, Director of the Davenport House in Savannah, also participated in this session to discuss the utilization of research into the African American inhabitants to drive preservation planning and the interpretation of the plantation home. Both speakers highlighted the efforts of heritage tourism to be more inclusive and representative of the history of all. In another session, members of Historic Atlanta discussed efforts to preserve LGBTQ history in Atlanta.

New tools utilized by local municipalities were showcased in a session on Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Representatives of the City of Rome and the City of Thomasville discussed GIS tools such as Web Map Apps and Storymaps. Communities are using GIS to help communicate to the public where heritage resources are located within the built environment through layered maps of local historic districts and historic properties. These tools help in making informed decisions on development and land use and can also assist landowners in identifying the type of permitting they may need for a project.

The conference also provided training for Historic Preservation Commissions (HPCs) including a review of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and their implementation in a community, a session including a review of typical decisions that HPCs make and also a session with suggestions for HPCs to avoid legal complications. The conference will be digitally archived and Preservation Commissions can utilize these webinars to train new staff or HPC commissioners. Members of the Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions (GAPC) have free access to a repository of past conferences, including those from the 2020 conference, through the GAPC website: <http://www.georgiahpc.org/>. Information on how to join GAPC is also available there.

For assistance with a local historic preservation project or for questions about historic preservation in Northeast Georgia, contact Lydia Joffray, NEGR Project Specialist, at [ljoffray@negrc.org](mailto:ljoffray@negrc.org).

## 2020 ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT PROGRAM - COVID-19 SUPPLEMENTAL

The FY 2020 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program – COVID-19 Supplemental Round 2 (AFG-S 2) is a supplemental funding opportunity under the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG). AFG focuses on enhancing the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire and fire-related hazards. The objective of the program is to provide critically needed resources that equip personnel to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency and support community resilience. The grant funding can be used to purchase PPE and supplies to prevent, prepare, or respond to COVID-19. The grant also includes reimbursements for expenditures made since January 1, 2020. The grant must be completed and submitted on the new FEMA GO portal, which is the new one-stop-shop for all FEMA grant submissions.

The deadline to submit an application is **November 13, 2020 at 5 p.m. ET**. If you have any questions about this or other FEMA grant programs, or would like to request assistance, please contact **Jon McBrayer**, NEGR GIS Specialist, at [jmcbayer@negrc.org](mailto:jmcbayer@negrc.org) or by phone at 706-369-5650.



## US ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES NEW FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: SPRINT CHALLENGE

The Department of Commerce has issued EDA's newest funding opportunity, the **Scaling Pandemic Resilience through Innovation and Technology (SPRINT) Challenge**. EDA's efforts to support America's response to the coronavirus pandemic continues through the SPRINT Challenge - a **\$25 million** national grant competition funded through the CARES Act that will enable organizations

to address the economic, health, and safety risks caused by the pandemic through **innovation and entrepreneurship**.

The **SPRINT Challenge** will fund organizations that support the development, creation, or expansion of programs that accelerate technology-based economic development and respond to the challenges caused by the pandemic. Applicants can apply for up to \$750,000 for an 18-month project or up to \$500,000 for a 12-month project. We hope this initiative will give entrepreneurial communities the support they need to innovate and build economic resilience. Applications are due December 3, 2020 by 11:59 pm EST. For more information, refer to the Notice of Funding Opportunity, available here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=329419>.

EDA's Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship is offering a live webinar, "Building Resilience through Innovation: EDA's SPRINT Challenge" on October 28th, 2020 at 2:00 pm EST. This webinar will provide a strategic overview and highlight program goals as well as address technical application questions. To register, visit: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/8069372321608416013>.

The NEGRC is available to assist in preparing applications for EDA funding. For questions or to request technical assistance, contact **Eva Kennedy**, NEGRC Director of Planning & Government Services, at [ekennedy@negrc.org](mailto:ekennedy@negrc.org).

## NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION AWARDED \$600K GRANT TO CREATE SHORT-TERM TRAINING



The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission's (NEGRC) Workforce Development Division, WorkSource NEGA, is one of two regions in Georgia to receive funding to create short-term certification training that ultimately leads to employment for unemployed and underemployed residents living in the Appalachian areas of Barrow, Elbert, Jackson and Madison Counties. Earlier this year NEGRC/WorkSource NEGA submitted a proposal to create training cohorts in the four ARC counties by utilizing the recently purchased occupational skills training trailers and offering associated short-term industry targeted training. The proposal, which was supported by multiple partners and industries in the four-county service area, includes plans to train emerging, dislocated, and incumbent workers.

Grant winners were announced Tuesday by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), and the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). Funds are to be utilized to support initiatives that create economic prosperity and

gainful employment opportunities in counties included in the Appalachian region. <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/eta/eta20200929>.

NEGRC/WorkSource NEGA anticipates that the first cycle of training will begin in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2021. Additional information on these training opportunities and other training supported through WorkSource Northeast Georgia funding may be obtained by contacting NEGRC Workforce Development Division at (706) 359-5703.

## NEGRC WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT RECEIVES UNITED WAY OF NORTHEAST GEORGIA 2021 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GRANT

The NEGRC Workforce Development Division/WorkSource Northeast Georgia has been selected as one of the recipients of the United Way of Northeast Georgia's 2021 Workforce Development Grants. The grant will provide youth, ages 16-24 in the Northeast Georgia service region, access to short-term welding training during the calendar year 2021.

For further information on this grant and other services available through WorkSource Northeast Georgia, please contact the NEGRC Workforce Development Division/WorkSource Northeast Georgia at (706) 369-5703.



The Northeast Georgia  
Regional Commission Council  
and Staff Wish You a  
Happy and Safe Thanksgiving!



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## REGIONAL MEETINGS NOVEMBER

5 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Georgia Association of Regional Commissions (GARC)	Telephonically
6 <sup>th</sup>	1:00 pm	ACCG District 5 Meeting	Telephonically
18 <sup>th</sup>	9:00 am	UOBWA	NEGRC Atrium
19 <sup>th</sup>	11:00 am	NEGRC Council	Telephonically
26 <sup>th</sup> – 27 <sup>th</sup>	All Day	Thanksgiving Holiday	NEGRC Closed

Please check the NEGRC website for the latest information concerning meetings in November or call the NEGRC at (706) 369-5650.