

COUNTY MANAGERS DISCUSS LATEST RESEARCH AND TRENDS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission hosted the quarterly County Managers Roundtable on August 18th, at the NEGRC headquarters in Athens. We were joined by **Dr. Eric Zeemering** and **Mr. Mark Knowles**, both of the University of Georgia. They educated attendees about the latest research and trends in local government contracting, and how to judge whether a local government should contract out for a service or perform it in-house. Dr. Zeemering covered the research on local governments' experience with contracting and what lessons could be drawn from them, while Mr. Knowles covered trends in digitalization, supply chain management, and their impact on decision-making. They concluded that if local governments decide to contract for services, they should diligently pay attention to contract details to ensure a satisfactory experience. **Noah Roenitz**, NEGRC Economic Resilience Coordinator, provided information and clarity on federal and state funding opportunities for local governments through the American Rescue Plan Act. If interested in NEGRC assistance in applying for state or federal funding or to learn more about available programs, contact **Noah Roenitz**, nroenitz@negrc.org.

A recording of the presentations is available through the NEGRC_PGS YouTube Channel here: <https://youtu.be/jFrdm6wr3tE>. For more information on the County Managers Roundtables, contact **Stephen Jaques**, NEGRC Project Specialist, at sjaques@negrc.org.



Dr. Eric Zeemering (left) of the University of Georgia and Noah Roenitz (right), NEGRC Economic Resilience Coordinator.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF GEORGIA'S COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) AWARDS

On September 27th, Governor Brian Kemp announced the award of more than \$43 Million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to 60 Georgia communities. Georgia's CDBG grant program is funded by allocations from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

The CDBG program focuses on “benefiting low- to moderate-income people by providing resources for livable neighborhoods, economic empowerment, and decent housing.” DCA received over 100 applications for 2021. NEGRC Planning & Government Services staff assisted in preparing three applications, all of which were awarded: a family and nutrition resource center in Jasper County and water expansion and improvement projects in the City of Oxford and Madison County. Overall, five Northeast Georgia communities were awarded 2021 CDBG funding. More information regarding Georgia’s 2021 CDBG awards is available on DCA’s website under “Newsroom.”

Requests for NEGRC assistance with preparing CDBG applications are due in October of each year. To request technical assistance or for more information on CDBGs, contact **Eva Kennedy**, NEGRC Director of Planning & Government Services, at ekennedy@negrc.org. Congratulations to the **City of Danielsville, Jasper County, Madison County, City of Madison**, and **City of Oxford**!

GOVERNOR KEMP SIGNS PROCLAMATION

Last month on September 23, 2021, **Governor Brian Kemp** signed a Proclamation for the Georgia General Assembly to convene for a Special Session on November 3, 2021. The Special Session will, among other things, consider reapportionment based on the 2020 Census.

This process occurs once every ten years and coincides with the decennial Census.

NEW REQUIREMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL IMPACT (DRI) REVIEWS

As of September 16, 2021, the NEGRC’s Council approved a new policy requiring the submittal of a site plan for all Development of Regional Impact (DRI) Reviews. DRIs are large-scale developments likely to result in regional effects beyond a single jurisdiction in which they occur. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) established DRI review procedures with the intent to improve communication between affected governments and provide a means of revealing and assessing the potential impacts of large developments. Any project that meets or exceeds DRI thresholds must undergo a DRI Review, conducted by the Regional Commission, prior to local-government action.

Site plans provide added context and information beyond what is captured by the two required DRI information forms. The intent of adding this required element is to improve DRI Review consistency, enhance the ability of potentially affected parties to properly assess how a proposed project might impact

their jurisdictions, and to expedite the DRI application process by reducing follow-up information requests from NEGRC staff.

More information on the DRI Review process, thresholds, and requirements is available on DCA’s DRI website, here: <https://apps.dca.ga.gov/DRI/default.aspx>.

For questions regarding DRI Reviews in Northeast Georgia, contact **Stephen Jaques**, NEGRC Project Specialist, at sjaques@negrc.org.

NEGRC-AAA OFFERS ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY CENTER

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission’s Area Agency on Aging (NEGRC-AAA) provides an Assistive Technology (AT) lab at the Elbert County Senior Center for the 12-county planning and service area that’s available for visitors to visit and view AT items/equipment. The goal of the AT program is to provide a demonstration and education site for assistive devices and equipment available to help those in need to maintain independence or reduce dependence on others by improving functional capabilities.

AT items or equipment can be offered to individuals from the lab if they will delay wait-list- placement, nursing-home placement, or remove a safety concern. If the item is not available at the lab, the AT support staff can make a referral to Friends of Disabled Adults and Children (FODAC) in which the client can pay a membership fee to receive the equipment or the NEGRC-AAA can submit a request through its partnership with FODAC. If the item is available, FODAC will deliver the item to the NEGRC-AAA that will make arrangements with the client and/or family member to complete contactless delivery. The NEGRC’s AT Specialists, Toshia Lewis and Katurah Patterson, can also make referrals to “Tools for Life” at Georgia Tech for AT items or equipment. “Tools for Life” can identify grants or small loans to provide financial assistance towards the cost of needed AT equipment.

In July, the NEGRC’s-AAA AT lab donated a rollator to Mr. Joseph Frix, a 64-year-old client in Newton County. Mr. Frix was referred to the NEGRC-AAA by a Piedmont Hospital Social Worker. After receiving the referral, Toshia Lewis completed a telephone consultation with Mr. Frix to assess his needs. Mr. Frix and Ms. Lewis discussed the referral and available equipment. He felt as though the rollator would be the best equipment to assist with his mobility needs. Arrangements were made to have the rollator picked up after his hospital discharge.

One he was discharged, Mr. Frix arranged transportation to the NEGRC to receive the rollator. The NEGRC’s AT Specialist provided a socially-distanced demonstration of the rollator to ensure that he knew how to operate the equipment and utilize its brakes. He was very appreciative to receive the rollator.

The next day, Mr. Frix called and stated that the rollator improved his quality-of-life instantly. He reported that he felt safe again in his home and he could even go outside. He said, "I no longer worry about falling because I can sit on the rollator when I am tired or feel my legs getting weak".

If you would like more information about the NEGRC's-AAA AT items/equipment or would like to schedule a telephone or in-person consultation, please contact the the NEGRC-AAA AT Specialists at **1-800-474-7540 extension 103 for Toshia Lewis, NEGRC-AAA Options Conselor** or **extension 211 for Katurah Patterson, NEGRC-AAA Options Counselor**.



Mr. Joseph Frix using his new rollator.

NEGRC'S WORKFORCE DIVISION RECEIVES MINI GRANT

The NEGRC's Workforce Development Division was selected as one of the recipients of the **Georgia Chamber of Commerce** Foundation's Innovative and STEM Education Mini Grant. This \$5,000 grant will be used in collaboration with the Athens Community Career Academy (ACCA) to purchase drone and robotics application materials and software. These materials will be used to increase STEM awareness in our community through demonstrations to middle and high school students. These demonstrations will expose these students, as part of tours to the ACCA, to STEM careers and how to access training to prepare for STEM careers. These materials may also be made available to other school districts in the region.

For further information on this or other NEGRC Workforce Development initiatives or programming, contact the **NEGRC Workforce Development Division** at **(706) 369-5703**.

NEGRC STAFF NEWS

Mr. Mark Beatty was promoted to the Senior Community Planner position with the Planning and Government Services Division. Mark joined the NEGRC in 2017 after earning his Masters in Environmental Planning + Design from the University of Georgia. Mark has assisted Northeast Georgia communities with a variety of projects, including comprehensive and bicycle/pedestrian planning, community development, and grant applications and administration. As Senior Community Planner, Mark will lead long-range planning, bicycle and pedestrian planning, and community-development efforts at the NEGRC. He looks forward to continuing to assist local governments throughout the region. Congratulations to Mark!



Mark Beatty, NEGRC Senior Community Planner



The City of Winterville along with the Winterville Civitan Club invite you to the dedication of **CHANDLER PARK**, 101 Marigold Lane in Winterville, Georgia. The event will be held on **Thursday, October 14, 2021 at 4:00 in the afternoon.**

Immediately following this ceremony, there will be a memorial reception in the Depot for George H. Chandler who passed away on **October 15, 2020.**

(For additional information, please contact **Dodd Ferrelle** at wintervillemayor@gmail.com)



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Update

REGIONAL MEETINGS
OCTOBER

12 th	8:30 a.m.	Workforce Development Board Meeting	TBD
20 th	1:30 p.m.	Aging Advisory Council Meeting	Virtual
21 st	11:00a.m.	NEGRRC Council Meeting	TBD