

## ELBERT COUNTY RECEIVES TOP RANKING

Site Selection™ magazine, an economic development and corporate real estate publication, recently named Elbert County among the top fifty (50) performing rural communities across the United States. Elbert County is the only NEGRC county named in the ranking and was joined by six other counties across Georgia.

The magazine credits Georgia's business-friendly environment and the collaboration provided through Governor Kemp's "Rural Strike Team," created in 2019. The Team leverages state resources such as the Georgia Department of Economic Development's (GDEcD) Global Commerce team, the Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) regional team, UGA's Carl Vinson Institute, the Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College's (ABAC) Rural Prosperity Center, and others to craft a marketing plan specific to the site, develop a target list on specific industries, and provide and provide training to local leaders who are actively recruiting business prospects.

In describing the program's success, Pat Wilson, Georgia Commissioner of Economic Development, said "We love it when we can have regional cooperation and one point of contact for multiple communities. When a company comes in, it knows that those jobs don't stop at the county line. Those jobs are going to come from all across the region. That is a selling point in itself."

Site Selection™ magazine is also available online at: [www.siteselection.com](http://www.siteselection.com)

## W.O.W. COMMUNITY OUTREACH CENTER SENIOR HUNGER EXPO

The Northeast Georgia Area Agency on Aging Senior Hunger Coalition awarded Word of Worship (W.O.W.) Community Outreach Center one of its 2022 Mini Grants. W.O.W. received a \$2,500 grant to address senior hunger in the Northeast Georgia Region. W.O.W. Community Outreach Center will address two of the five Senior Hunger Focus areas and have a plan to sustain their efforts to end senior hunger in the Northeast Georgia Region.

W.O.W.'s proposal included addressing Food Access and Meeting the Needs of the Community. On Saturday, June 25, 2022, W.O.W. hosted a Senior Hunger Expo to educate seniors from Clarke and surrounding counties on food resources, preventative care, mental health, and general healthy living. In addition, W.O.W. provided opportunity for the seniors to express their needs so future events can be planned to address those needs. W.O.W. also provided a hot meal, fresh produce, and nonperishable items for each of the 100+ seniors in attendance.

To make this event a success, W.O.W. partnered with several community agencies which included, **NEGRC's Area Agency on Aging (AAA), Farm Rx, ACCA, Humana Medicare Advantage, Veteran Affairs, and iServe Ministries**. Each partner had booths set up to educate the seniors on their agency and services available. In addition, the AAA provided information on the aging and disability services and included the Senior Hunger Resource Guides and RAC cards so the seniors can have a quick reference to information to address hunger needs. W.O.W. also partnered with **Harvest Time Produce** of Comer, Georgia to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to the seniors.

The event was described as highly informative and fun. Seniors left this event knowing more about how hunger can affect their health, how certain foods can improve or negatively affect their health, and why preventative and mental health are important. W.O.W. plans to continue similar events so that seniors in the community can stay informed and can access hunger resources available to them.

The Five Focus Area of Senior Hunger includes: Today's Seniors, Health Impact of Senior Hunger, Food Access, Food Waste and Reclamation, and Meeting the Community's Needs. To learn more about the Northeast Georgia Senior Hunger Coalition or Georgia's Senior Hunger State Plan, please contact **Toshia Lewis or Katurah Patterson** at **1-888-808-8020**.



*Katrina Ogbe Shares Information on Services Offered at NEGA-AAA*



Fruits and Vegetables from Harvest Time Produce of Comer, GA



Volunteers Assist with Distributing Produce



Senior enjoying treats, fruits, vegetables, and information on services in Northeast Georgia.



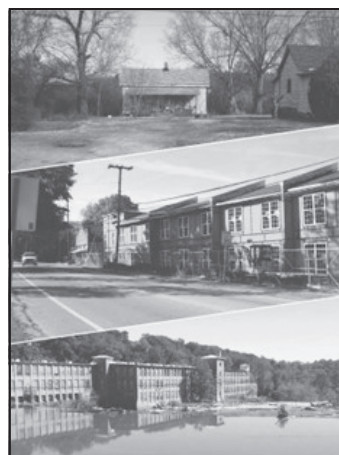
ACCA and the Veterans Administration Participates in NEGA Senior Expo

## NEGRC'S PGS DIVISION COMPLETES HOUSING GUIDELINES FOR THE REGION

Staff members of the NEGRC's Planning and Government Services (PGS) Division have recently completed a Housing Guidelines Report for Northeast Georgia. This report includes a detailed analysis of housing issues in the region and provides recommendations to local governments on how to implement and influence local housing development. The report can be accessed on the NEGRC website under the Planning & Government Services - News tab (visit: [www.negrc.org](http://www.negrc.org))

Like much of the country, the Northeast Region of Georgia is facing a housing shortage, and the challenge of creating and maintaining a sufficient housing stock is having an adverse impact on many of our residents. Our planning staff has identified existing and innovative planning tools that can be utilized by our region's local governments to help fill the housing gaps in their communities. These tools include introducing "missing-middle" housing, amending local zoning ordinances to allow higher housing density in targeted areas, and utilizing local partnerships with private, public, and non-profit organizations. While this pressing issue is complicated, the information provided in this report can help governments in Northeast Georgia approach the topic of housing in a more informed and strategic way at the local level.

NEGRC staff who contributed to the project include **Mark Beatty**, NEGRC Planning & Government Services Director, and **Phillip Jones**, NEGRC Community Planner. If you have any questions about the report or would like to discuss housing strategies for your local community, please contact **Mark Beatty** at [mbeatty@negrc.org](mailto:mbeatty@negrc.org) or (706) 369-5650.



(left) Various housing forms found throughout the region: (1) historic single-family housing in rural Jackson County, (2) a mixed-use development including multi-family rental options under construction in the City of Monroe's Mill District; (3) an example of an adaptive-use project providing owner-occupied loft units in the City of Porterdale.

(below) A new townhome development under construction located on Research Drive in Athens-Clarke County.



## PLANNING AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES DIVISION UPDATES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Moving forward, the Planning and Government Services Division will begin requiring comprehensive plan submissions to be accompanied with GIS layers of either the Future Land Use Map or the Character Area Map, depending on the format used by the local government. This requirement is meant to align with state regulations per the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning (Chapter 110-12-1) Mapping Requirements.

Minimum Standards and Procedures state that, "if either a Character Areas Map or Future Land Use Map is included in the plan, this must be submitted to the appropriate regional commission and



the Department in a GIS digital vector data format simultaneously with the comprehensive plan.”

For future submissions of comprehensive plan adoption resolutions, local government staff should submit a shapefile and layer file (for symbology) of their future development map by email to **Jon McBrayer**, NEGRC GIS Planner. If you have any questions regarding this new requirement, please contact Jon at **jnbrayer@negrc.org** or **(706) 369-5650**.

## GEORGIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION (EPD) ANNOUNCES RECYCLING, WASTE REDUCTION, AND DIVERSION (RWD) GRANT

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) has recently announced the Recycling, Waste Reduction, and Diversion (RWD) Grant as part of the Solid Waste Trust Fund (SWTF) Grant Program. The amount of available funding is \$2,000,000 for state fiscal year 2023. The RWD Grant furthers the goals for the SWTF by providing financial support to projects in Georgia to reduce solid waste, recover valuable materials, support manufacturing, and encourage innovation. Eligible applicants and recipients include counties, municipalities, or any combination of the same, or public authorities, agencies, commissions, or institutions. The RWD grant guidelines and application are available for review at the following URL: <https://epd.georgia.gov/recycling-waste-reduction-and-diversion-grant>.

*The application period will open August 1, 2022. The deadline for submitting applications is September 30, 2022.* EPD will host two virtual meetings on August 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. to review eligibility and application requirements, and to answer any questions. Both meetings will be recorded and posted to the RWD Grant webpage, with questions and answers posted to the FAQs. If you would like links to these virtual meetings or would like to discuss further how to apply to the grant program, please contact **Mark Beatty**, Director of Planning & Government Services, at **(706) 369-5650** or **mbeatty@negrc.org**.

## WELDREADY GRADUATION MORGAN COUNTY COHORT

Congratulations to the nine young men and women who recently completed the 4-week WeldReady program which took place at the Morgan County High School location.

The students are: P. Boswell, J. Delgado, J. Etchison, M. Hicks, L. Holloway, J. Lacey, W. McCart. The welding program positions students to earn American Welding Society (AWS) certifications that align closely with local employer needs.

All nine of the students passed and received the American Welding Certification. Other certifications that were also earned are: OSHA 10, CPR/AED, First Aid, and Fork Lift, in addition to professional skills training.

This cohort of the program was a partnership between United Way of Northeast Georgia, Workforce Innovators, Inc. and the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (WorkSource Northeast Georgia). The goal is to prepare recent high school graduates for jobs through intense short-term skills training. A training curriculum is developed after consulting with employers and staffing agencies to understand the local workforce needs and then prepares students through the short-term skills training to meet those needs. Training was delivered on the WorkSource Northeast Georgia/NEGRC 8 bay welding training trailer. This group represents the first WeldReady Cohort at the Morgan County campus.



*Class graduates pictured with representatives from Workforce Innovators, Inc.*

## NEGRC WIOA DIRECTOR REACHES 40<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

Last month, the NEGRC's Workforce Development Director, **Carol Cofer**, reached her 40<sup>th</sup> year of service to the NEGRC. To help recognize and honor Ms. Cofer's accomplishments and tenure, NEGRC staff enjoyed a Chic-fil-A™ breakfast gathering at the NEGRC's headquarters on July 18<sup>th</sup>.

Carol started her career at the NEGRC as an intern in June 1982, when it was known as the Northeast Georgia Area Planning & Development Commission (APDC). At the time, she was completing her undergraduate degree in political science at the University of West Georgia (formerly known as West Georgia College) where she graduated in August 1982. She was hired full time on July 16, 1982, and first worked in the Planning Department until eventually moving to Workforce Development in 1983—in those days known as Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) Program.

Professionally, Carol has served as former President of the Southeastern Employment and Training Association (SETA) Board. SETA is an organization that provides professional opportunities for all workforce development partners. She is a lifelong member and Deacon at First Baptist Church in Athens.

Carol is a native of Oconee County where she continues to live with her husband, Stuart. She is the mother of two grown children, Catherine and Jacob, and proud mother of two grandchildren. Congratulations to Carol! The NEGRC appreciates your many years of service and many accomplishments over your long tenure.

*NEGRC's Workforce Development Director,  
Carol Cofer*





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*Update*

**REGIONAL MEETINGS**  
**AUGUST**

3 <sup>rd</sup>	9:30 a.m.	UOBWA TPE Committee Meeting	NEGRC
9 <sup>th</sup>	8:30 a.m.	Workforce Development Board Meeting	NEGRC
10 <sup>th</sup>	1:00 p.m.	Solid Waste Authority Meeting	NEGRC
18 <sup>th</sup>	Noon	NEGRC Council Meeting	Trumps Catering