

REGIONAL TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN KICKS OFF

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) has partnered with the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission and Blue Cypress Consulting to develop a Transit Development Plan (TDP) for the region. This plan aims to identify the transit needs and opportunities within the area, serving as a guide for future investments in transit systems by local governments. By actively participating in the TDP process, communities can shape their transit vision and evaluate various transportation alternatives that align with their aspirations. Typically, TDPs have a 20-year scope and undergo updates every five years. While they provide a long-term outlook, TDPs also prioritize feasible transit projects that can be implemented within a 5-year timeframe.

In the past, TDPs in Georgia were predominantly created for individual counties. However, it became evident that the transportation needs of Georgians often extend beyond county boundaries; necessitating a regional approach. To address these transportation needs effectively, it is crucial for TDPs to adopt a strong regional focus and serve as the groundwork for fostering partnerships across county boundaries. Potential strategies for such partnerships include collaborative planning agreements, contractual arrangements between transit providers to offer intercounty services, or the consolidation of smaller systems into a comprehensive regional transit network.

The NEGRC will host the first TDP Project Advisory Committee meeting on **October 11, 2023, at 1:00 pm**. Additionally, a TDP Public Input meeting will be held on the same day at 4:00 pm, allowing the public to contribute their insights and suggestions.

REGIONAL WATER PLANNING SEED GRANTS ANNOUNCED

From State Fiscal Year 2024 funds appropriated by the Georgia General Assembly for Regional Water Planning, EPD announced the SFY2024 Regional Water Plan Seed Grant program. The Regional Water Plan Seed Grants are being provided to support and incentivize local governments and other water users as they undertake their Regional Water Plan implementation responsibilities.

Eligible recipients of the Regional Water Plan Seed Grant funds include local, regional, and state units of government, local authorities which operate local government service delivery programs, regional commissions, resource conservation and development councils, local school systems, State colleges and universities, and state agencies. Project proposals must specifically address the implementation of management practice(s) or other recommendation(s) from one or more Regional Water Plans, and applications must include a letter of endorsement from the Water Planning Council(s) Chair or designated representative. All Regional Water Plans for the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission area have recently been adopted and can be found here: <https://waterplanning.georgia.gov/>.

Grant awards are limited to \$75,000, and the project period is limited to thirty (30) months. Applicants must attend a pre-application meeting with EPD by **October 17, 2023** and applications must be submitted online via the Grants Administration Portal by **October 31, 2023**.

To inquire about the Seed Grant program, contact Jackie Encinas at jacqueline.encinas@dnr.ga.gov or **470-524-0620**. To request assistance for grant writing or project planning for this program, contact **Mark Beatty** at mbeatty@negrc.org or **(706) 369-5650**.

NEGRC HOSTS USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

The Planning & Government Services Division hosted a staff training on July 24th for programs within the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA-RD). Representatives from the state and federal USDA-RD offices presented on the following programs:

- Water and Environmental Programs Loans and Grants, wells, water treatment plants, solid waste, and water and sewer lines for cities under 10,000 population;

- Water and Environmental SEARCH grants for cities with less than 2,500 people to fund feasibility studies and pay for engineering costs;
- Community Facilities Loans for real estate, i.e., hospitals, police stations, fire stations, city halls, senior centers, agriculture centers
- Loans and grants for equipment, fire trucks, EMS vehicles, police cars, dump trucks, and track hoes for areas with populations of 20,000 or less;
- Rural Business Enterprise and Opportunity Grants for municipalities and nonprofits.

Staff from four other Regional Commissions participated in the training, serving as a great example of how the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions (GARC) can continue collaborating across regional borders.

To inquire how the NEGRC may assist local governments through USDA-RD funding programs, please contact **Mark Beatty** at **mbeatty@negrc.org** or **(706) 369-5650**.

IN MEMORY OF CHARLES RICHMOND CRAWFORD, JR., 1929-2023



Charles "Charlie" Crawford, a long-time member of the NEGRC Council, passed away last month on July 15, 2023 at the age of 94.

He was a veteran of the Korean conflict serving in the U.S. Air Force, a twenty-year member as a City of Lexington Councilmember, and former NEGRC Council Chairman. In 2002, he received the NEGRC's "Chairman's Award" from the NEGRC's Council. He served as a longstanding member of the Rotary Club of Oglethorpe County.

He is fondly remembered for his deep commitment to community service and especially in his hometown of Lexington, Georgia where he was born on March 22, 1929. A graduate of the University of Georgia with a degree in business management, his career included fifteen years as an investment broker and later for fifteen years as the Manager for Clarke County's Solid-Waste

Department. He also was a member for many years of the NEGRC's Regional Solid Waste Management Authority and provided its ten-member board with both guidance and wealth of knowledge. By his own admission, Charlie often quipped, "I went from Wall Street to the garbage heap."

Many NEGRC current and former NEGRC Councilmembers will remember Charlie for his dedication, limitless humor, and fondness of fried chicken at NEGRC Council meetings. He was preceded in death by his wife, Mary Ann Bost Crawford, in 2010. Funeral services were held on July 26, 2023 at the Lexington Baptist Church in Lexington, Georgia, where Charlie served as a lifelong member and deacon.

The NEGRC expresses its deepest sympathies to the entire Crawford family and especially his two surviving daughters, Leslie and Kim. His steadfast service and contributions to Northeast Georgia will have a lasting impact to the region and will be remembered for years to come.

NEGA CONNECTS EDUCATORS AND BUSINESSES THROUGH EXTERNSHIPS

As the school year ended for students in Northeast Georgia, the last week of May and the first week of June were all about NEGA CONNECTS. Connecting 108 educators in the 12 Northeast Georgia counties with 46 businesses and industries through a week-long educator-externship program. Educators and businesses in Barrow, Clarke, Elbert, Greene, Jackson, Jasper, Madison, Morgan, Newton, Oconee, Oglethorpe, and Walton counties connected with the educators being on-site at the participating businesses for three days combined with an orientation/kickoff day and a project report day at the conclusion. During the final day, the educators shared what they learned at the businesses and their plans for sharing the information on employment opportunities and lessons learned with their students and colleagues. The externships also allowed the educators and the businesses to establish relationships which they both indicated would be continued throughout the school year in various ways. This includes the businesses speaking to students and staff during the school year and serving as worksites for student work-based learning. The educators were paid a stipend for their participation during the week.

The occupational areas of the externships were manufacturing, hospitality, and healthcare. Information by county is listed below:

Regional Externship Report:

Barrow County: 2 Externs - Sponsored by WorkSource NEGA/NEGRC

Employer: Stepan

Clarke: 27 Externs - 6 sponsored by WorkSource NEGA (NEGRC), 15 sponsored by Georgia Power, four sponsored by Athens Clarke County Economic Development

Employers: ABB, Accurus, Athentic Brewing, Alloy Therapeutics, Boehringer Ingelheim, Classic Center, Engineered Fabrication Inc (EFI), Piedmont Health Athens, Pilgrim's Pride

Elbert County: 6 Externs- Sponsored by WorkSource NEGA/NEGRC
Employers: Matthews International, Pilgrim's Pride, Lewis Transcontinental

Greene County: 4 Externs - Sponsored by WorkSource NEGA/NEGRC

Employers: A2B Fulfillment, BSP Boiler & Steam Performance, Westlake Pipes and Fitting, St. Mary's Good Samaritan Hospital

Jackson County: 8 Externs - Sponsored by WorkSource NEGA (NEGRC)

Employers: Kubota, Takeuchi, TICA, SK Battery

Jasper County: 3 Externs- Sponsored by WorkSource NEGA/NEGRC
Employers: Permatherm, Water Wind and Soil

Madison County: 8 Externs - Sponsored by WorkSource NEGA (NEGRC)

Employer: SMI, SPG, Georgia Metals, Columbia Feed Mill

Morgan County: 4 Externs - Sponsored by WorkSource NEGA (NEGRC)

Employers: BARD Manufacturing, Mannington Flooring, Morgan Medical Center

Newton County: 24 Externs - Sponsored by Newton County School District

Employers: Michelin, Versence, Takeda, Nisshinbo, SGR Global, Bridgestone Golf, General Mills, McKinley Packaging

Oconee County: 6 Externs- Sponsored by WorkSource NEGA (NEGRC)

Employers: EFI, Chalmers

Oglethorpe County: 2 Externs - Sponsored by WorkSource NEGA (NEGRC)

Employer: Select Trees

Walton County: 14 Externs – 10 sponsored by WorkSource NEGA (NEGRC), four sponsored by the Development Authority of Walton County

Employers: Takeda, Leggett and Platt, Holder Construction, Walton EMC

Thank you to the 46 businesses for engaging in the Summer 2023 NEGA CONNECTS! With your help, we are educating our youth for today's careers.

For further information on the Educator Externship Program or other WorkSource NEGA (NEGRC) programs/initiatives, please contact NEGRC, Workforce Development at **(706) 369-5703**.

APPRECIATION DAY FOR BARROW'S MAGEE

On July 7, 2023, the NEGRC's Area Agency on Aging (AAA) staff, Barrow County Seniors, and guests celebrated and gave warm wishes to **Dan Magee** as he began a new journey. Mr. Magee served as Barrow County Senior Center Director for over eight years. Mr. Magee always went beyond his duties to serve the seniors in Barrow County. He served as the Senior Center Director and the Director of the Parks and Recreation for Barrow County. Mr. Magee would often help with meal delivery, activities, trips, and anything else that benefited the senior citizens of Barrow County. Mr. Magee strongly advocated for the seniors and promised to continue advocating on their behalf. Although Dan decided to pursue another career, he promised to stay connected to the Senior Center and NEGRC's AAA. In addition, he also agreed to volunteer at the Senior Center. The NEGRC's AAA appreciates Dan's dedicated service and wishes him the best in future endeavors.

Candice Hardie is the interim Senior Center Director. Mrs. Hardie has been with the senior center for two years and is committed to serving seniors. To learn more about Barrow County Senior Center, please visit the Center at **80 Lee St. Winder, GA 30680, or call (770)307-3025**.



Dan McGee was presented a slice of cake (on the face!)



James Chapman (senior center participant) presented a pool stick to Dan and said, "Dan needed to practice while he is away so that he can come back to visit the seniors and actually beat them for once"

Update

REGIONAL MEETINGS AUGUST

8 th	8:30 a.m.	Workforce Development Board	NEGRC Atrium
9 th	1:00 p.m.	NEGA Solid Waste Management Authority	NEGRC Atrium
17 th	Noon	NEGRC Council Meeting	Trumps Catering
18 th	10:00 a.m.	Senior Center Directors' Meeting	NEGRC
22 nd	10:00 a.m.	ADRC CareNet Meeting	NEGRC