

## NEGRC RECEIVES ORIGINAL BUILDING PLANS

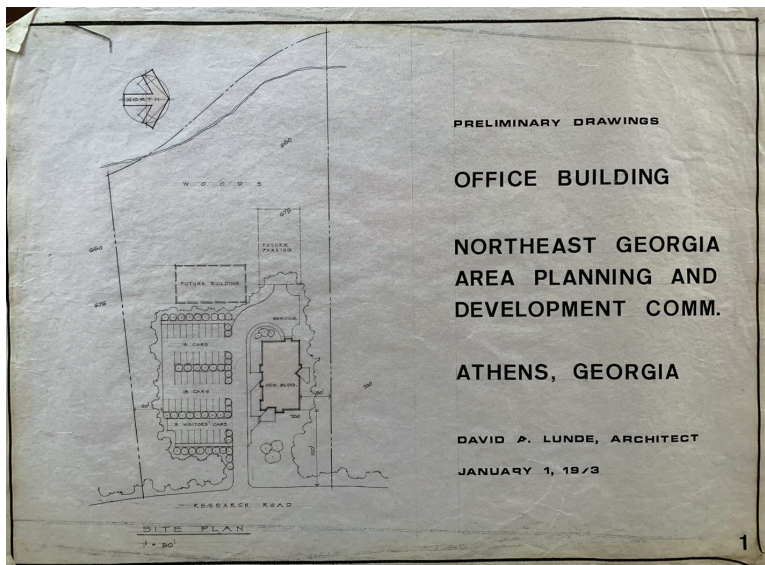
Earlier this year in March, the NEGRC enjoyed a surprise visit to its headquarter's building. Mr. **David A. Lundy**, Architect, visited our offices and delivered the original architectural drawings to our headquarters' building. Mr. Lundy designed the NEGRC's (then known as Area Planning & Development Commission (APDC)) original building in January and March 1973. At that time, the APDC contracted with him to design a new building. His visit coincidentally marked 51 years, to the month, from the original drawings.

During his visit, Dave Lundy met with **Burke Walker**, NEGRC Executive Director, and had the opportunity to tour the existing building, reflecting on his design choices and construction methods. The nineteen sheets of drawings he provided are drawn in pencil on vellum paper—something of a rarity and from a bygone era. The visit was serendipitous as the NEGRC recently completed conceptual, architectural plans in partnership with the architectural firm Goodwin, Mills, Cawood (GMC). The new, conceptual drawings propose both rehabilitation and new construction for the current NEGRC headquarters to accommodate its renewed use.

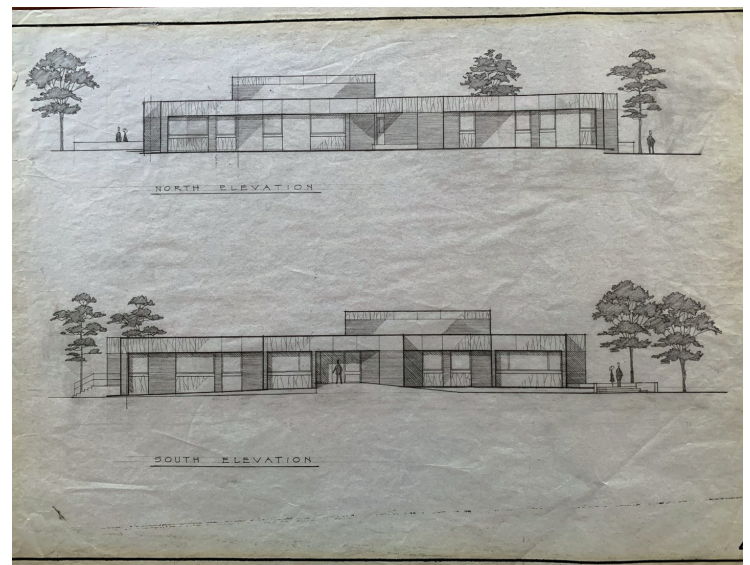
Since last year, the NEGRC's Building Committee, appointed by the NEGRC Council with **Mayor Kelly Girtz** serving as its Chairperson, has overseen the conceptual design process with GMC. The NEGRC is now researching funding and financing options for implementation of the rehabilitation and new construction concepts.

Mr. Lundy graciously left the original drawings with the NEGRC. Copies of these 'as-built' drawings were never available onsite but sought after for many years. Mr. Lundy himself enjoyed a long career as Campus Architect at UGA. He previously received his architectural degree from the University of Pennsylvania. Over his long career, he designed many public, private, and secular buildings in the Athens area—many of which still survive. Lundy was invited and attended the March NEGRC Council meeting and addressed the Councilmembers with reflections on his experiences as an architect and the history of the NEGRC building.

The NEGRC expects to donate the original drawings to the Athens-Clarke County Library's Heritage Room where they can be used for research and viewed by the public. Mr. Lundy commented that architects today don't hand draw plans and they might be interested in seeing how it was done 53 years ago. The NEGRC will also reproduce a sheet for display in its Atrium room.



*"Preliminary Drawing" cover page, January 1, 1973 by David A. Lunde, Architect*



*View of north and south elevations drawing (1973) by David A. Lunde, Architect*

## JACKSON COUNTY NAMED FOURTH-FASTEST GROWING COUNTY IN THE NATION FROM 2022-2023

In March, the U.S. Census Bureau published a press release providing an overview of population changes from 2022-2023. In their review, more U.S. counties experienced population gains than losses in 2023, as counties in the South saw faster growth and more Northeast and Midwest counties had population losses turn to gains. Of counties with a population greater than 20,000, Jackson County was named fourth fastest growing in the nation, experiencing a growth of 5.5% in a single year.

NEGRC is currently assisting Jackson County and the cities of Commerce, Talmo, and Arcade with their comprehensive-plan updates. We are looking forward to facilitating discussions for how to plan the future of these rapidly-growing communities.

To access the U.S. Census Bureau's report, you may click on the following link: **More Counties Saw Population Gains in 2023 (census.gov)**.

## PGS STARTS WORK ON GRANT WRITING FOR COVINGTON'S HISTORIC CONYERS STREET GYM

The Planning & Government Services (PGS) Division has begun work on a Community Development Block Grant Redevelopment Fund (CDBG-RDF) application for the rehabilitation of the historic Conyers Street Gym in Covington, Georgia. The building is a contributing structure within the locally and nationally designated Covington Historic District. The gymnasium was built in 1935 by the Federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) and has been a centerpiece of the community since then. The City hopes to return it to its previous use as a community center.

The CDBG-RDF program is a set-aside of Georgia's non-entitlement, competitive CDBG Program. The RDF provides local governments access to flexible financial assistance to help them implement projects that cannot be undertaken with the usual public sector grant and loan programs. The program is focused on the "elimination of slum or blight", per CDBG national objectives, and can be a unique tool for the rehabilitation of historic buildings. If awarded, the transformation of this building from its current state will add much value to the surrounding neighborhoods of Covington.



Conyers Street Gym side entrance as seen on a site visit on March 6, 2024

## NEGRC WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT WORKSOURCE NORTHEAST GEORGIA IN THE REGION

'Spring has sprung' in Northeast Georgia and that also means many of the local schools have been hosting career/job fairs for their students. Below are career training/fair events held across Northeast Georgia:

- On April 11<sup>th</sup> the Monroe Comprehensive High School hosted a career fair in the gym and **Vickie Scotland**, NEGRC/WorkSource Northeast Georgia Business Services and Outreach Representative, and **Renee Spires**, Northeast Georgia One Stop Coordinator attended with students from the Walton County and Social Circle City Schools participating. Approximately 600 students attended the fair.



Vickie Scotland, NEGRC/WorkSource Northeast Georgia Business Services and Outreach Representative and Renee Spires, Northeast Georgia One Stop Coordinator

- On April 12<sup>th</sup>, the Commerce High School in Jackson County. The Industrial Mechanical Training Trailer and the welding simulator were used to provide over 275 9th-12th graders the opportunity to tour the trailer and try out the welding simulator. The students also got to hear about great job opportunities and how to get trained for jobs in manufacturing in Jackson County and the region.



Commerce High School students

# Update

- On April 18<sup>th</sup> - Madison County High School Career Day took place with 250 plus students touring the Industrial Mechanical Trailer. They learned about careers in manufacturing including welding as well as where related training was available.



*Madison County High School students*

- On April 19<sup>th</sup> - Morgan County High School hosted the Welding Trailer with over 150 students touring the trailer. They also heard about job opportunities and where training was available.



*Morgan County High School students*

'And that's a wrap' for this year's Career Fairs! For information on the training trailers or other Workforce Development resources, please contact the NEGRC Workforce Development Division/ WorkSource Northeast Georgia at (706) 369-5703.

## **NEW AAA STAFF MEMBER - LENA MASON**

**Lena Mason** joined the Northeast Georgia Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) in March 2024 as an Information and Referral Specialist. Lena Mason is a native of Jefferson, GA. She has a BA in Sociology from Paine College in Augusta, GA. Lena draws on her years of experience providing professional social services within the community to prepare for her new role with the ADRC. She advocated for HeadStart children and families, served as a foster parent, and previously assisted homeless persons gain access to housing. Lena's previous occupations include several years of case management and providing resources to individuals.

Lena is an active grandmother, and her free time is overflowing with activities for her granddaughter. They enjoy cooking, art

projects, riding bikes, collecting rocks, hiking, and swimming. Lena enjoys traveling and driving down country roads.



Lastly, Lena believes in the quote: "Whenever there is a human in need, there is an opportunity for kindness, and to make a difference" (Kevin Heath).

*Lena Mason, NEGRC AAA Information and Referral Specialist*



# Update

## REGIONAL MEETINGS

### MAY

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5 <sup>th</sup> - 7 <sup>th</sup>	All Day	GARC Economic Development Conference	Lanier Islands
14 <sup>th</sup>	8:30 a.m.	NEGA Workforce Development Board Meeting	NEGRC
16 <sup>th</sup>	Noon	NEGRC Council Meeting	Trumps Catering
22 <sup>nd</sup>	9:00 a.m.	UOBWA Meeting	NEGRC
27 <sup>th</sup>	All Day	Closed for Memorial Day	