

AUBURN – A CITY OF CHARM AND VISION

This is the second in a series highlighting municipalities in the region. A similar effort devoted to counties appeared in the past.

The City of Auburn was incorporated in 1892 and got its name from the special red clay that was used to dye cloth auburn-red. Today its location provides easy access to major travel arteries to both Athens and Atlanta and makes the City a wonderful place to live, work, and enjoy life. The progressive city government is led by Mayor **Linda Blechinger**, a member of the NEGRC Council and the GMA Board of Directors; and has developed a Downtown Overlay District, Downtown Development Authority, and is a certified Mainstreet Community.

The City was surveyed, and the original plat drawn in 1891 by the Seaboard Railroad Company. The rail line bisects the Auburn center and extends in an east-west direction. The Town served as the terminus for railroad crews operating the four daily trains to Athens to the east and Atlanta to the west. Eight warehouses were built initially on the railroad siding, and with the influx of people to the town, many new homes and stores were built. Business establishments included a tanning yard, livery stable, and a bank.

Today Auburn is an active community of 7,000 persons. Its many activities and community festivals make it a destination for thousands of visitors annually. The Auburn Whistlestop Shops provide a unique shopping experience. This new concept of shopping was introduced in 2016. These cottage-style shops offer small businesses the perfect opportunity to market products and services in a public setting while keeping the costs within their budgets. There are eleven Whistlestop Shops offering a wide variety of gifts, custom crafts, coffee, baked treats, ice cream, truffles, candy, quilts, and more. Stop in for a visit...you will enjoy the friendly atmosphere in Auburn.



Auburn Scenes



GARC ANNUAL CONFERENCE A SUCCESS

The Annual Training Conference of the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions was held November 8th -10th at St. Simons Island. NEGRC attendees included Council Members **Lamar Houston, Kevin Little, Tommy Lyon, Billy Pittard** and **Jerry Roseberry**, and staff members **Mott Beck, Carol Cofer, John Devine, Jim Dove, Michele Kelly, Alicia Page, and Burke Walker**. Attendance from Regional Commissions throughout the state was outstanding. Participants heard from DCA Commissioner **Christopher Nunn**, Economist **Roger Tutterow**, GDOT Board Member **Tim Golden** and Commissioner **Russell McMurry**, Political Analyst **Todd Rehm**, **Justin Kirnon** of GMA and **Clint Mueller** of ACCG. A highlight of the Conference was a presentation by U.S. Senator **David Perdue** on Friday morning. In addition, there were several breakout sessions of interest to Council Members and staff.



(L-R) Golden, Dove, McMurry



(L-R) GARC President Dove & Vice President Cullen presenting award to Terrell & Alice Hudson



Nunn



Perdue

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING CENTER RIBBON CUTTING

Jim Dove and Mott Beck were among the many guests of President **Jabari Simama**, Vice President **Irvin Clark**, Community

Outreach and Engagement Director **Joel Alvarado**, and the faculty and staff of Georgia Piedmont Technical College at the Ribbon Cutting of the Advanced Manufacturing Center at the Newton County Campus. Since its founding, the college has offered courses and programs that train skilled technicians to fuel growing business and industry workforce needs. In addition to a computer lab and general classrooms, the center will feature laboratories equipped with the latest technology: electronics lab, mechanical training lab, industrial wiring and motor controls lab, automation and process control lab, and machine tools lab. Georgia Piedmont has adopted an advanced manufacturing curriculum that incorporates insights provided by global manufacturers who are using networked systems and robotics to drive their businesses forward. A keynote speaker at the event was **Gretchen Corbin**, Commissioner of the Technical College System of Georgia.



Dignitaries at Ribbon Cutting

LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRAINING: THE 2020 CENSUS LOCAL UPDATE OF CENSUS ADDRESSES (LUCA)

The US Census Bureau, Georgia DCA, and the Georgia Regional Commissions will be hosting Local Government Trainings on the 2020 Census Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA). The NEGRC will host a training session in the Atrium of its headquarters on January 11, 2018, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Recommended attendees include Local government staff, interns, and consultants that will be working on your 2018 LUCA update.

NEGRC is assisting the U.S. Census Bureau and Georgia DCA in overseeing the 2020 LUCA for the Northeast Georgia Region. It is important to have 100% participation in this important initiative. LUCA reviews directly affect the decennial census, which affects the number of Georgia seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and distribution of federal and state funds. Highest elected officials should have already received materials from the Census Bureau; the deadline to register is **December 15th, 2017**.

If you have already identified NEGRC as the liaison or a reviewer for your community's LUCA, or you have questions or would like NEGRC assistance with LUCA reviews for your county or municipality, please contact NEGRC's **LUCA Coordinator Eva Kennedy** at ekennedy@negrc.org. You may also contact Ms. Kennedy to RSVP for the December 15th training.

WINTERVILLE RECEIVES FOX THEATER GRANT

The City of Winterville recently received \$55,476 in funds from the Fox Theater Institute's (FTI) Grant Program. The funds will be used to make needed upgrades to the interior of the Community Theater and the building's mechanical systems. The City, over the past several years, has made incremental improvements to the building largely through volunteer efforts and donations. With this grant award, the City can accelerate needed improvements and return the Community Theater to full operations and community use. The building itself was constructed in the 1950s and is located within the City's National Register District. It is part of a small community-commons that also includes the historic Winterville High School building that was recently rehabilitated as a Senior Center and Community Center using Community Development Block Grant funding (CDBG) from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The combination of these two community facilities--in a shared location--gives Winterville a community center and focal point.

The Community Theater has received great public support and volunteer assistance in the building's clean-up and remedial repairs. Some of the original, wooden theater seats remain and have been repaired and reinstalled. Volunteers have also installed temporary lighting, stage sets, and donated chairs to allow limited use. The Fox Foundation grant will provide for broader improvements in installing an acoustical ceiling, theater lighting, and new electrical and mechanical systems. While the Theater has been used in the past year in a limited fashion, the new improvements will allow its full operation as a performing arts and theatrical-performance venue. The Theater's location, within a residential neighborhood, provides an intimate and small-town setting that is unique to the City. Many other communities in the NEGRC region have similar community theaters (e.g., Union Point, Elberton, Elbert County, Athens-Clarke, and Winder). Mayor **Dodd Ferrelle** helped assemble volunteers within the community to assist with the Theater's re-use. Mayor Ferrelle also requested the technical assistance of **Burke Walker**, NEGRC Director of Planning & Government Services, and **Jim Moneyhun**, NEGRC Project Administrator, to review the FTI grant application prior to its submission. The NEGRC will continue to provide project-management assistance and guidance on historic preservation. The FTI Grant Program provides funding for theaters

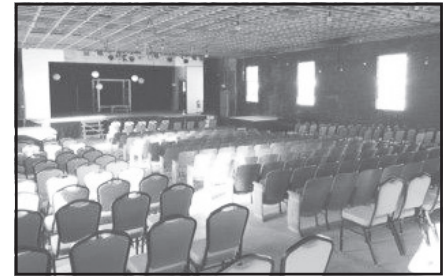
through a variety of activities including emergency funding, preservation plans and studies, and restoration (construction) grants. Information about the FTI program can be found on their website at: <https://foxtheatre.org/the-fox-theatre-institute/fti-pres-grant-program/>.



Grant Award Recipient

For questions or direct assistance, contact **Leigh Burns**, Director of the Fox Theater Institute, at leigh.burns@foxtheatre.org or (404) 872-2972.

The Winterville grant is the third FTI award in the NEGRC region, Athens-Clarke's Morton Theater and Morgan County's Madison-Morgan Cultural Center also received previous grants. Congratulations to the City of Winterville!



Theater Interior

OXFORD ANNUAL PLANNING RETREAT HELD

The City of Oxford Mayor and Council held its Annual Planning Retreat on Friday, October 27th at City Hall. Principal Planner **John Devine** joined Executive Director **Jim Dove** and Executive Assistant **Mott Beck**, as NEGRC facilitated the retreat for the ninth consecutive year. After a presentation on NEGRC activities and services, attendees were briefed and took part in a discussion regarding the Regional Comprehensive Plan, the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, and the Local Comprehensive Plan. A SWOT analysis was conducted for several City activities and departments including Government Fund, Electric Fund, Water Fund, Solid Waste Fund, Financial, and Government Functions. The Mayor and Council identified short/intermediate and long-term action priorities and ended the session with deliberation regarding a Vision Statement and Mission Statement. In addition to Mayor **Jerry Roseberry** and Councilmembers **Melvin Baker**, **Sara Davis**, **George Holt**, **Michael Ready**, and **Jim Windham**, Oxford staff including **Mathew Pepper**, **Lauran Willis**, **Jody Reid**, and **Dave Harvey** also participated.



Retreat Participants



Have a Safe and Happy
Holiday Season!



305 Research Drive
Athens, GA 30605

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

PRSRT. STD.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ATHENS, GA
PERMIT NO. 502

Update

REGIONAL MEETINGS
DECEMBER

12	11:00 a.m.	CARE-NET	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
12	2:00 p.m.	NEGA Emergency Medical Services	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
13	12:30 p.m.	NEGA Solid Waste Management Authority	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
19	10:00 a.m.	ARDC Advisory Committee	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
21	2:00 p.m.	Firefly Trails Advocacy Group	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room



Sincerely & Respectfully,