

October 2022

PINNACLE

Georgia Mountains Regional Commission

In This Issue:

From Our Executive Director

Pg. 2

Economic Development

Pg. 3

Planning

Pg. 3

LiDAR

Pg. 4

WorkSource

Pg. 5

Events Around the Region

Pg. 6

Annual Meeting Notice

Pg. 7

Council Spotlight!

Pg. 8

Save the Date:

Calendar of Upcoming Meetings
and Trainings

Cover Photo of :

Preacher's Rock, Lumpkin County GA

Executive Director's Report



Heather Feldman
Executive Director

- Congratulations to the **City of Toccoa** and the **City of Hiawassee** for receiving Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant funding. The **City of Toccoa** received \$750,000 in ARC funding for an annex addition to the Ritz Theatre in downtown. The **City of Hiawassee** received \$690,148 in ARC funding for the construction of a boardwalk from Mayors Park to Lloyd's landing. A huge thank you to Patrick Larson who assisted the cities with these successful applications!
- Laurin Yoder and I attended the Appalachian Regional Commission's annual conference in Flintstone, MD. The conference was appropriately titled One Appalachia – Connection and Collaboration where we had an opportunity to connect with peers from the other 12 ARC states. We had great sessions on entrepreneurial ecosystems, broadband, tourism development, and leveraging thriving downtowns for economic and community development.

- The economic development department just submitted a Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program pre-application on behalf of the **City of Demorest**. If approved, funds would be used to make improvements to the Demorest Springs Park.

- The U.S. Department of Transportation released a Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Thriving Communities Program to provide technical assistance for transportation and community revitalization initiatives. Applications are due on **November 22, 2022**. If you are interested in applying or learning more about the program, please contact our office.



- USDA is now accepting applications for ReConnect Program loans and grants to expand access to high-speed internet for millions of people in rural America nationwide. The application deadline is **November 2, 2022**. Please contact our office if you have any questions or would like additional information.

- Thank you to GMRC Planning Director, Adam Hazell for providing this month's program at the Council Meeting. Thank you to **Dahlonega** and **Lumpkin County** for hosting the GMRC meeting this month.



- **SAVE THE DATE:** The Annual Meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 2nd at the Dillard House. It is GMRC's 60th Anniversary and we are planning for a great celebration that evening! We are still in need of sponsors for this event. Reach out to Gina Kessler at (770) 538-2607 for more information.

Sincerely,

Heather Feldman



Economic Development

- On behalf of the **City of Demorest**, a Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program pre-application was submitted in the amount of \$500,000 to assist with improvements to Demorest Springs Park. The total project cost is \$675,000 and improvements will include springs and stream restoration, stormwater drainage improvements, ADA renovations to the restroom facility, additional walking paths, and ADA accessible parking.
- Congratulations to the **City of Hiawassee** on being awarded an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant in the amount of \$690,148 to assist with the construction of a boardwalk connecting Mayor's Park and Lloyd's Landing.
- The Economic Development Department recently participated in the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce Small Business Resource Fair held at Lanier Tech. This well attended event featured other exhibitors for new and expanding small businesses as well as keynote speaker, Casey Ryals.



Planning

Developments of Regional Impact

- With the region back in high-growth mode, the number of large-scale developments is both growing and reaching into more and more communities. Such development brings not only economic opportunity but also change and the possibility of impacts on infrastructure, the environment, and local character.
- Developments that exceed a certain threshold are considered Developments of Regional Impact (DRI's) - large-scale developments that may possibly have effects outside the jurisdiction in which they are located. In accordance with state law, local governments must notify the GMRC about potential DRIs in their jurisdiction. Projects that are confirmed as exceeding these thresholds must undergo a regional review process designed to inform neighboring jurisdictions and various state agencies about these projects so they can offer comments and prepare for any possible impacts. All findings are purely advisory, and this process is intended to be done simultaneously along with the local review, so as not to interrupt the development process, but the process helps potentially impacted communities and agencies see what's happening in the event serious concerns are discovered. To date, the GMRC has performed 17 DRIs in 2022 alone, in five different counties.

To learn more about the process, download a copy of the DRI rules, or contact GMRC staff with any questions, go to the [DRI page](#) on our web site.



LiDAR Series

This installment of the LiDAR series is all about building footprints. “What is a building footprint and why would anyone need them?” A building footprint is a polygon or polygons (digital in our case) that represent a specified building in the physical world. It provides a 2D, and sometimes 3D, visual representation of a specific buildings shape, size, and location.

Building footprints are used for estimating the susceptibility of a building during a threat from natural disasters, such as floods and fire. The usefulness of building footprints is not constrained to risk assessment. They are also useful in planning, from knowing the exact location of surrounding building to being able to visualize sight lines. Tax assessors have been known to use building footprints to find new buildings that haven’t previously been disclosed. Building footprints are useful to public works and public safety departments, as they are able to discern the accessibility of firetrucks or other personnel. There are many other benefits of knowing the spatial location of the buildings in your area. Once the building footprints are created then attributes can be added, such as, the building type, the occupancy, and the number of floors.

Speaking of creating building footprints, how is that done? Well, building footprints are created from point cloud data. Each point (LiDAR) has an intensity of which it returned to the instrument. These intensity values are then classified. Many GIS programs will classify the point clouds during the loading of the data. The intensity values of the surrounding points are also taken into consideration during classification of the point clouds. Since light is refracted by water, the surface to ground LiDAR collection units do not collect a value for the pulses (points) directed at bodies of water. Point clouds directed over vegetation will have varying intensity values due to the light returning from different materials, such as, leaves, branches, and rocks; as well as the height of said material. This is one of the main characteristics used by the software to separate building footprints and vegetation. The flatness of a roof and the height of a building cause the intensity values of points returning off of buildings to differ in intensity from those returning from vegetation, and hence identifiable.

If you have any questions about building footprints or would like to inquire about having building footprint data created for your local government, please contact Faith Bryan at fbryan@gmrc.ga.gov or Brandon Carlock at bcarlock@gmrc.ga.gov at GMRC.

To close out this LiDAR series of articles, we will be hosting a [LiDAR workshop on November 30th in the JB Jones Training Room at the GMRC office.](#) Stay tuned for more information and registration details.



- Staff attended community meetings in **Banks, Hall, Lumpkin, and Stephens Counties** reaching 100 community partners, and a Resource Fair at Lanier Technical College - Gainesville speaking with over 150 students and advisors.
- Application assistance and overview sessions were held at the Department of Labor in **Habersham, Hall, and Stephens Counties** assisting over 30 people in the first step to meeting their training goals.
- North Georgia Technical College hosted a “lunch ‘n’ learn” meeting for the Having Equity Resources and Opportunities Equal Success (HEROES) Club and invited Catherine Allen to speak with the students and teachers. Two students began applications for WIOA assistance after the meeting. This club is for special population students to develop leadership, and teamwork, and assist students in reaching their educational goals through peer support and community resources. Special population students are persons who meet one of the following criteria:

- ◇ 27 years of age or older
- ◇ a single parent
- ◇ a single pregnant woman
- ◇ a displaced homemaker
- ◇ a dislocated worker
- ◇ a language other than English is their primary language
- ◇ has a disability
- ◇ enrolled in a program in which they are of a minority gender



Overhead Cover hosts a weekly shower event for the homeless in **Hall County**. WorkSource staff visits monthly to assist individuals who are ready to take the next step in getting a job or training. Thanks to a partnership with Ninth District Opportunity Inc, WIOA participants with substantial barriers that exceed WorkSource capability have been able to receive subsidized lodging and additional transportation assistance while in training.



- Youth Staff attended Lanier Tech GED Graduation with 24 Participants walking. Students were given a gold cord to wear during graduation for their participation in the WIOA program.

Events Around the Region

<p>Jingle Mingle and Lighting of the Chicken</p> <p>November 19 from 4pm-8pm</p> <p>We LIGHT IT UP, (the 25 foot metal chicken sculpture on top of Main Street Market) on the Downtown Gainesville Square!</p> <p>12 MainStreet, SW Gainesville, GA 30501</p> <p>For more information please visit: https://www.gainesville.org/Calendar.aspx?EID=1835&month=10&year=2022&day=25&calType=0</p>	<p>Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds— Towns County</p> <p>Mountain Country Christmas in Lights November 24 - December 23, 2022 6 pm - 9 pm</p> <p>Christmas Light Show runs every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday until December 17th.</p> <p>Every night from December 17 - 23, 2022.</p> <p>Craft Show starts at 4 pm on Saturdays</p> <p>For more information please visit: Georgiamountainfairgrounds.com</p>	<p>Ritz Theatre Toccoa</p> <p>Bernie Wheels: Walkin' the Line Johnny Cash Tribute Historic Ritz Theatre November 5th , 2022 Show starts at 7pm Call (706) 244-0039 for more information www.ritztheatretoccoa.com</p>
<p>Of These Mountains Marketplace</p> <p>November 5, 2022 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Free Admission</p> <p>Rabun County Civic Center 201 West Savannah Street Clayton, GA 30525</p> <p>Shop and discover over 100 local artists, makers, vendors, and small businesses from the surrounding areas</p> <p>Call (706) 754-8863 for more information</p>	<p>Veteran's Day Parade</p> <p>The Lumpkin County Veteran's Affairs Committee will host the 2022 Veteran's Day Parade which will begin at the Old Courthouse in Dahlonega, Saturday, The route will be from the old Courthouse to the historic Dahlonega square.</p> <p>November 5, 2022, at 11:00 AM.</p>	<p>15th Annual Chriskindlmarkt on the Marktplaz</p> <p>November 26 - 27, 2022</p> <p>Edelweisse Strasse, Helen, GA</p> <p>The Helen Chamber of Commerce is holding the 15th Annual Christkindlmarkt on the Marktplatz on November 26 - 27, 2022. https://helenchamber.com/</p>
<p>GMRC Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner</p> <p>Friday, December 2, 2022 The Dillard House 768 Franklin St. Dillard, GA 30537</p> <p>Reception starts at 4p.m. Dinner served at 6p.m. **Black Tie Optional**</p> <p>For more information contact: Gina Kessler Phone: 770-538-2607 gkessler@gmrc.ga.gov</p>	<p>Christmas in Downtown Dawsonville</p> <p>10th Annual Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting</p> <p>November 19, 2022 4 00-8:00 p.m.</p> <p>Dawsonville City Hall 415 Hwy 53 #100, Dawsonville</p>	<p>Want your event listed? Please send all regional events with date, time and location the month before the event to bulbricht@gmrc.ga.gov .</p> <p>We will do our best to have it featured!</p>



Georgia Mountains Regional Commission

Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner

December 2, 2022 at The Dillard House

Reception Starts at 4:45 p.m.

Dinner served at 6:00 p.m.

Black Tie Optional

For More Information Contact Gina Kessler

Phone: 770-538-2607 Email: gkessler@gmrc.ga.gov



GMRC COUNCIL MEMBER SPOTLIGHT!

Rebecca Mincey, Executive Director, Lumpkin County Development Authority



Rebecca Mincey joined the **Lumpkin County** Development Authority as the Executive Director in 2019. She has 14 years of local government experience, primarily in the fields of economic development, planning, community engagement, and marketing. Her hopes for the future include targeted commercial, multi-family growth and lodging options along Georgia State Route 400. Prior to her work with the Lumpkin County Development Authority, Rebecca served in several positions with the **City of Dahlonega**, including the Executive Director of the Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority. She also served eight years in the US Army Reserve as an Engineer and Public Affairs Officer. Rebecca is a certified Georgia Economic Developer from the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government, and

holds a BA from the University of Georgia and an MPA from the University of North Georgia. Her favorite thing about the Georgia Mountains Region is the national forests which she enjoys trail running in here spare time. Rebecca and her family reside in **Dahlonega** with their dog,

UPCOMING GMRC COUNCIL MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS



⇒ November 17, 2022 **City of Dawsonville - GMRC Audit; Rushton and Company**

⇒ December 2, 2022 **The Dillard House - GMRC Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner**

GMRC Council Meetings begin at 6:00 PM; Executive Committee meets prior at 5:00 PM.

*** Workforce Development Board Meeting at 4:00 PM**



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