



**Georgia Mountains
Regional Commission**

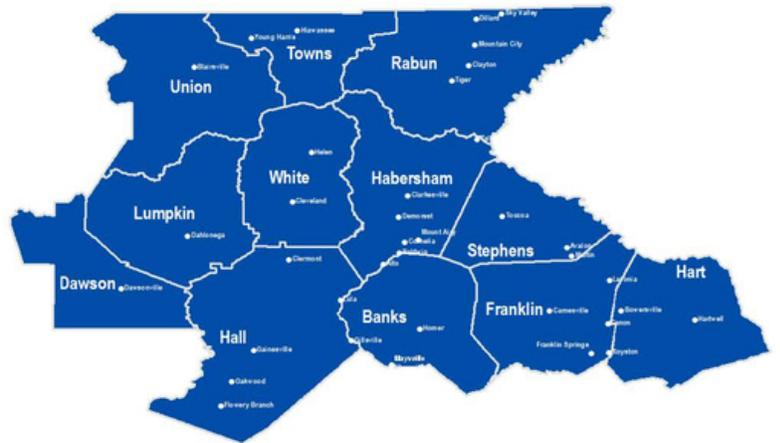
2022 ANNUAL REPORT

TEAMWORK. COMMUNITY. CONNECTION.



Situated in the northeast corner of Georgia, the Georgia Mountains Region is comprised of **12 counties** covering almost 3,200 square miles. At a total estimated **population of 495,278**, the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission serves the following 12 counties: Banks, Dawson, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union, and White and **37 municipalities** within these counties.

Since its inception 60 years ago, GMRC works with its member communities to formulate goals and strategies for area growth and development. Upon request, the GMRC provides a variety of technical assistance that will improve community services and the quality of life for Georgia Mountains residents. The GMRC focuses its broad scope of responsibility through the following departments: Planning, Economic Development, Workforce Development, Information Services, Finance and Administration.





TO OUR FELLOW STAKEHOLDERS,

What a difference a year makes!

Just as we thought we were on the back-end of the COVID-19 pandemic, new variants emerged, and our organization and communities once again had to adapt. One resounding fact we learned from 2020, is that adaptability is a must! I can say that the team at GMRC and all of our Councilmembers responded favorably to that challenge.

As a result of COVID-19, new funding opportunities emerged on the federal and state levels. Our talented staff at GMRC worked on an exceptional number of projects this year, navigating new programs, many of which had quick turnarounds. It is no wonder that once again, our team has garnered national attention by being awarded three (3) National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Impact Awards.

The GMRC is truly an extension of each one of our local governments. Whether it is packaging grant applications, facilitating a retreat, leading planning efforts, updating zoning maps or getting a citizen in your community the resources needed to enter the workforce, GMRC is a valuable resource! Tools such as the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) have been an excellent alternative financing source for many small business owners, yielding many new jobs and capital investment throughout our region.

I am thoroughly proud of the great work being done by the staff at GMRC. I'm even more proud of the collaborative efforts ongoing with our council, cities, counties, and partners. We continue to see unprecedented growth in the region which is a direct result of responsive leadership and a talented workforce. Let's continue to march on, working together for the betterment of our region!

All the best,



George Wangemann

George Wangemann
Chairman

GMRC COUNCIL

FY 22

BANKS COUNTY

Danny Maxwell
Jerry Payne
Vicki Boling

RABUN COUNTY

Kent Woerner
Michelle Duquette *
Althea Bleckley *
Douglas Wayne

DAWSON COUNTY

Billy Thurmond
Mike Eason
Betsy McGriff *

STEPHENS COUNTY

Dean Scarborough
David Austin
Connie Tabor

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Jason Macomson
Courtney Umbehant
Wayne Randall

TOWNS COUNTY

Cliff Bradshaw
Andrea Gibby *
Liz Ordiales *
Denise McKay

HABERSHAM COUNTY

Bruce Palmer
Audrey Turner *
Ken Schubring

UNION COUNTY

Lamar Paris
Jim Conley
Mitch Griggs

HALL COUNTY

Richard Higgins
George Wangemann
Deborah Mack

WHITE COUNTY

Travis Turner
Nan Bowen
Carly Adam

HART COUNTY

Ricky Carter *
Tray Hicks
William Chafin

GOVERNOR'S APPOINTMENT

Angela Whidby

* Served partial year

LUMPKIN COUNTY

Chris Dockery
Sam Norton *
Johnny Ariemma *
J.B. Jones

George Wangemann - Chairman
Ken Schubring - Vice-Chairman
Courtney Umbehant - Secretary

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Over the past year, GMRC became stronger by working harder, being flexible, and maintaining a community focus in our partnerships and programs. GMRC's performance in Fiscal Year 2022 demonstrated another year of increased activity with pandemic response and ecosystem rebuilding efforts throughout the Georgia Mountains Region. Looking back at the last year, not only did we secure more federal investments than we have seen in previous years, but through the staff's efforts, helped position communities for upcoming investments to support community growth in the future.

As part of this endeavor, GMRC strengthened partnerships with federal, state, and local governments to help businesses and communities as evidenced by the completion of the regional disaster resiliency plan. Additionally, through Economic Development Administration (EDA) CARES Act funding, the GMRC was able to expand the scope and impact of our lending program. In FY 22, four loans were made leveraging over \$4 million in investment for the region.

Another opportunity that presented itself with the release of the 2020 census data was the Census Count Question Resolution (CQR). GMRC staff was instrumental in working with several communities on challenging the Decennial Census. The importance of an accurate count results not only in the potential for additional funding for member communities, but assists in planning for future community services, such as fire protection, hospitals, schools, and infrastructure.

Through our work, we emphasize fostering collaboration in efforts that focus on accelerating our communities' quality of life and increasing our region's competitiveness. The GMRC was the recipient of three National Association of Development Organization (NADO) Impact Awards. These projects included: Quality Control Apprenticeship Program and Weld Ready Bootcamp for WorkSource and Depot Street Infrastructure Improvement project for Economic Development.

On behalf of the Regional Commission staff, I would like to thank this year's Council for its hard work and dedication. We are indebted to them for our success in providing services to our local governments and residents in the 12-county region.

Our job is not complete. It is an ongoing process, and the staff along with the council's leadership will continue to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future. We look forward to carrying on the tradition of bringing quality service to the members and residents of the Georgia Mountains Region!

Heather Feldman

Heather J. Feldman
Executive Director

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



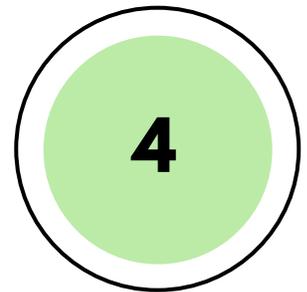
**GRANTS
PREPARED**



**GRANTS
AWARDED**



**GRANTS
ADMINISTERED**



**RLF
CLOSINGS**



The Economic Development Department provides assistance to local governments in identifying projects to improve community programs and facilities, packaging grant and loan applications, and administering funded projects. Through partnerships like the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and the Economic Development Administration (EDA), GMRC is able to provide assistance to member governments. Additionally, the department oversees the GMRC Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) and coordinates the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs).

Appalachian Regional Commission

- City of **Hiawassee**: Paris Business Center Rehab - \$600,000

Economic Development Administration

- City of **Hartwell**: Waste Water Treatment Plant - \$902,500

Community Development Block Grants

- City of **Clayton**: Water System Improvements - \$750,000
- **Hall County**: Boys and Girls Club of Lanier Expansion - \$750,000
- **Hall County**: Georgia Mountain Food Bank Expansion - \$2,213,697

Assistance to Firefighters Grant

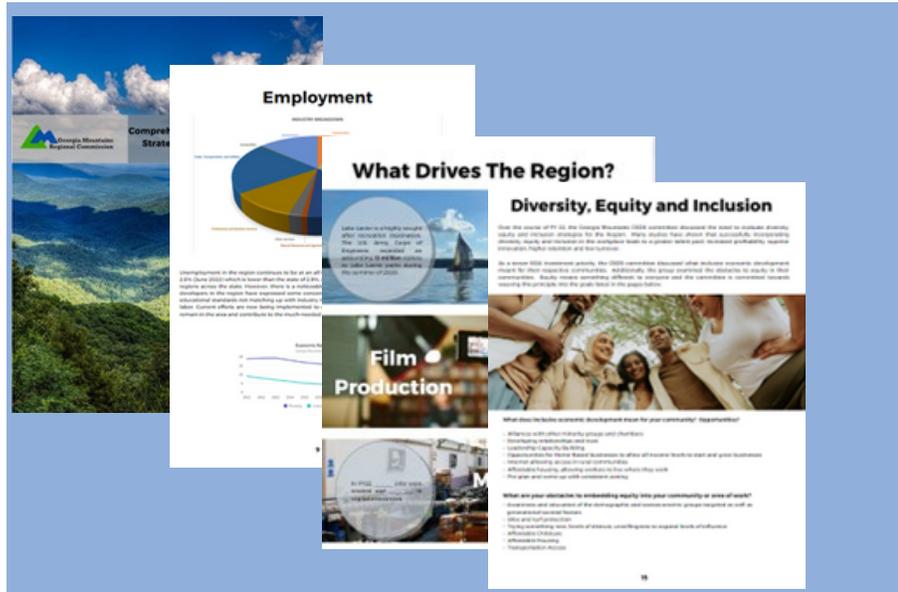
- **Double Churches** Volunteer Fire Department - \$60,000

Community Home Investment Program

- City of **Hartwell**: Rehab in Rome Neighborhood - \$400,000

CEDS

In partnership with the Economic Development Administration (EDA), GMRC coordinates and updates the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region. The CEDS contributes to effective economic development in America's communities and regions through a locally-based, regionally-driven economic development planning process. Additionally, this document provides the capacity-building foundation by which the public sector, working in conjunction with other leaders, creates the environment for regional economic prosperity. In 2022, the CEDS Committee completed a 5-year rewrite of this document.



Dahlonega based, Accent Cellars, is successfully growing their business through tools such as the GMRC Revolving Loan Fund.

Revolving Loan Fund

Small business development is a cornerstone of the Georgia Mountains Region. Resources such as the Georgia Mountains Region Commission Revolving Loan Fund (GMRC-RLF) has been a vital tool for small businesses for many years. The program works in partnership with the Economic Development Administration (EDA) and allows GMRC to assist Region 2 in creating and retaining jobs. Since inception, the program has loaned out almost **\$6 million** to **66** businesses throughout the Georgia Mountains Region.

Disaster Recovery Initiative

In 2022, GMRC successfully completed a regional Disaster Recovery Initiative, funded through a CARES Act Recovery Assistance grant to update economic development plans and fortify programs to assist communities in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. This included the delivery of a Disaster Recovery Business Toolkit, Pandemic Transmission Assessment, County Resiliency Plan templates and a Pre-Disaster Mitigation component to the CEDS.

For more information, please visit :

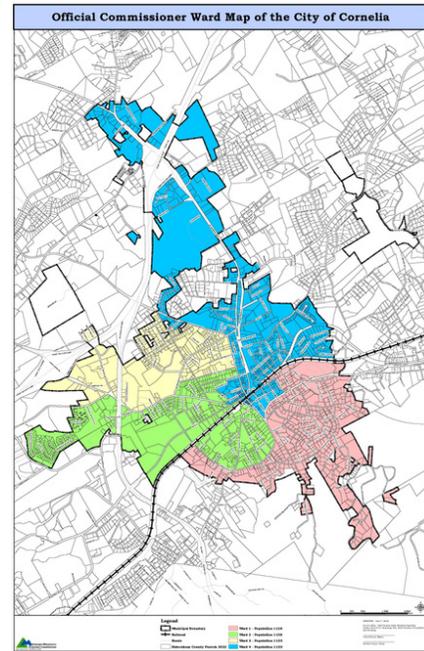
<https://www.gmrc.ga.gov/economic-development-rdri>



INFORMATION SERVICES

Municipal Redistricting

With the release of the 2020 U.S. Census population count in September 2021, it became necessary for local governments to review and evaluate defined election districts, posts, or wards if there was an increase in population. GMRC begins the process by downloading the 2020 Census State Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File for Georgia. We take into consideration any annexations or de-annexations that have taken place during the ten-year timeframe for the local government. Previous district maps, paper or digital, are reviewed and used as a template. Using the districting tool in ArcGIS and the census data, new maps are created and presented to the local government and attorney for consideration. It is of utmost importance to make sure each election district is contiguous and no more than +/- 5% deviation from any other. When the election district map is agreed upon by local government and attorney, the adopted map and associated data is sent to the state apportionment office. GMRC assisted the following communities: **Clermont, Cornelia, Dawsonville, Homer, Lula and Maysville.**

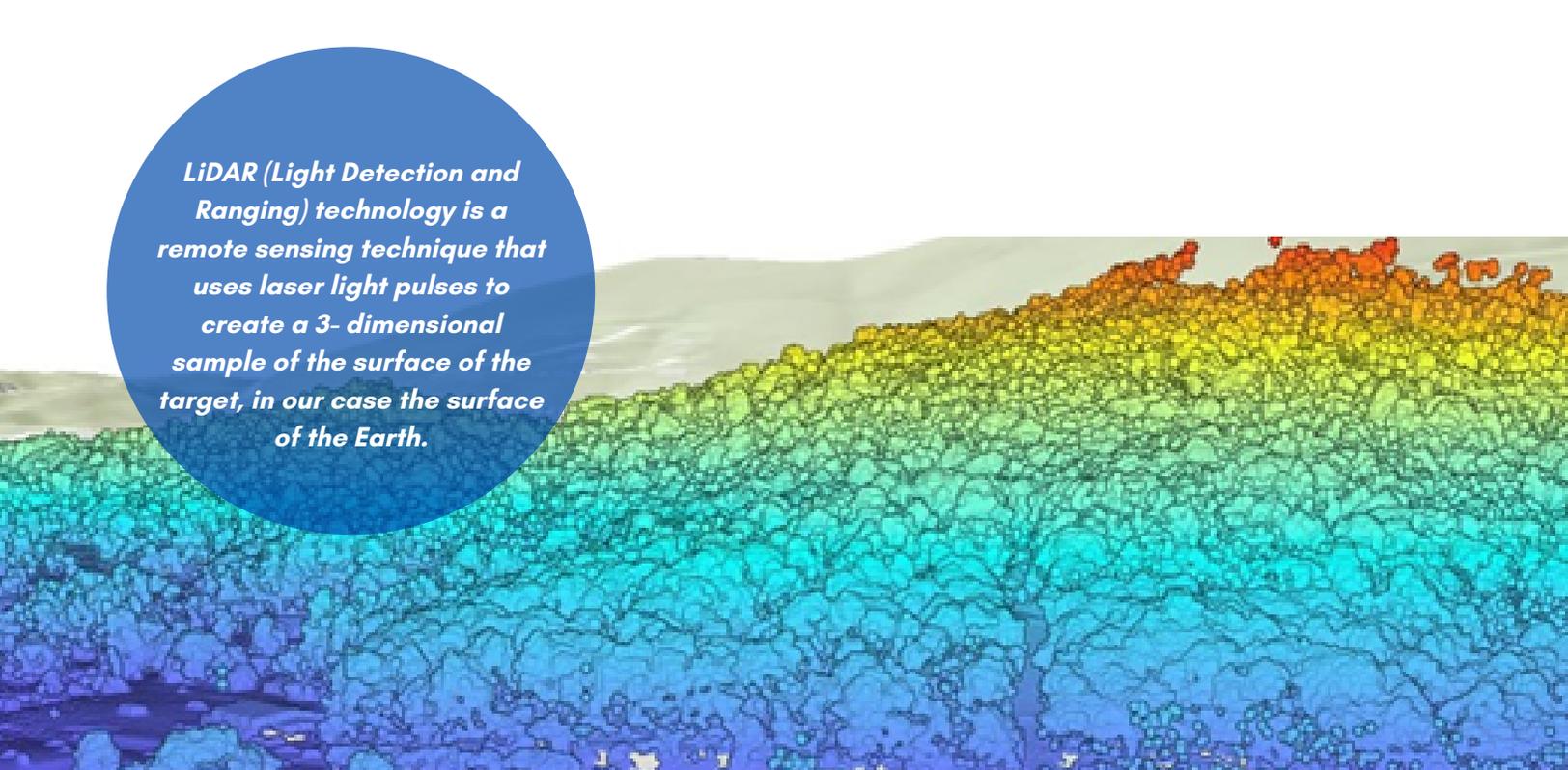


Census Count Question Resolution

Every. One. Counts. But what about during a pandemic? On April 1, 2020, the decennial census was slated to begin; however, the deadline was extended several times. If the household did not respond to the census via the internet, a census taker was to come to the house and count all those inside. Fast forward to the release of the census population numbers in September of 2021.

Many local governments found the numbers to be low according to previously published estimates. **White County** is one example in the GMRC Region. The Census Count Question Resolution (CQR) is in place for this reason. The program gives the local government a chance to challenge the population numbers based on two case types; housing and boundary. White County chose housing count. GMRC compared the White County residential addresses as of April 1, 2020, to the housing count found in the 2020 census block group data. Of the 913 census tabulation blocks within the county there were 463 with incorrect housing counts. Overall, the 2020 census total housing count of 13,535 is below the total residential count of 15,286. White County's CQR was submitted on January 3, 2022 and the **first in the nation to do so!**





LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) technology is a remote sensing technique that uses laser light pulses to create a 3- dimensional sample of the surface of the target, in our case the surface of the Earth.

LiDAR data measures the distance from the device sending a pulse of the laser to the surface of the target and the distance is reflected from the surface back to the device. The lasers are shot at a high density per area with some LiDAR devices sending multiple pulses within a square meter or even smaller. This can give elevation data that is accurate to within a few centimeters in some cases.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) partnered with GMRC and multiple municipalities to complete the 3DEP or 3D Elevation Program for the entire Region. The 3DEP data provides the region with enhanced 3-dimensional surface data that has a horizontal accuracy under a meter and a vertical accuracy of nearly half a meter. The 3DEP data provided contains the bare earth LiDAR data, as well as point cloud and intensity rasters. Point cloud data is the collection of all the points returning to the LiDAR device, this includes points reflecting off vegetation and other objects above the surface. The intensity raster data categorizes the intensity or the returning strength of the laser pulse that generated the point. This enables the ability to decipher between types of materials or even between types of vegetation. All of this data is used to produce a multitude of models and maps.

There are a few different types of models in LiDAR data. A Digital Elevation Model (DEM) is a bare earth elevation model which takes things into consideration like permanent structures. A Digital Terrain Model (DTM) is basically a DEM without any structure or vegetation, it is the geodesic surface of the earth. A Digital Surface Model (DSM) is similar to a DEM, but it includes all structures, trees, and anything else that are on the earth's surface.

LiDAR data can be used in many areas of a municipality from planning and development, agricultural, environmental, social, and emergency planning just to name a few. The digital elevation models are used to create a 3D representation of the earth's surface, whereas we previously had to rely on ground surveys and/or photogrammetry, saving time and money. Contours can also be created from the data, using any contour interval that is desired. LiDAR, when used in conjunction with imagery can determine both land-use and land cover. Using the data to determine slope when used with land cover and other data can help with erosion. LiDAR data can help with stormwater, gravity sewer, and water system management. There are Federal and State agencies currently launching initiatives to use the data collected for the mapping of wireless signals and improving broadband access to rural locations. Building footprints are another benefit of using LiDAR data. Road planning, wildfire management, landslide analysis are also benefits. This leads us to one of my personal favorite uses of LiDAR, archeology. LiDAR has been used to discover ancient villages, roads, and other structures that have been hiding in plain sight under trees and dirt.

PLANNING

Everyone wants the best for their community, so the core mission of the Planning Department is to help member governments chart a practical course forward, toward a vision for each community established by the residents and stakeholders that call these places home.

Local Comprehensive Plans define a consensus vision for the community which is intended to generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of the community, thereby making citizens invested in seeing the plan implemented. These plans provide the basis for coordinated improvement programs, support grant applications, and guide policy updates that will ensure future changes in the community are in line with the outlined vision.



Building local comprehensive plans involves a high degree of public input through online surveys, public meetings, stakeholder committees, and more. In working with our member governments, GMRC seeks as much stakeholder input as possible to ensure the documents represent a fair and accurate depiction of what is wanted by the local community. Armed with this knowledge, local leaders can then feel better informed about how to act in the interest of their constituents.

During the past year, the GMRC authored six local Comprehensive Plans, assisted with another plan update, and performed several other small studies that helped communities examine specific issues at a deeper level. Highlights included:

- The 2022 **Oakwood** Comprehensive Plan includes the community's vision for the future, key issues, and opportunities to address during the planning period. Additionally, it has an implementation program for achieving this vision and addressing the identified issues and opportunities.
- The Joint Comprehensive Plan for **Union County** and **Blairsville** outlined the communities' commitment to preserving rural character, improving communications policies, and striving to maintain a low cost of living.
- The Town of **Clermont** used their planning process to identify needed transportation improvements and assess ways to manage the growth expected to impact northern Hall County.

The GMRC is always seeking unique ways and special projects to enhance the region, as requested by member communities.

The update to the **White County** Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan will help local governments and their partners organize efforts regarding roads, trails, and sidewalks in a fashion that allows people to walk, bike, and run across many parts of the county. Stakeholders met monthly since late 2021, and gathered information and feedback from more than 160 responses. This document builds upon previous processes to ratify a comprehensive system of bicycle/pedestrian routes and facilities designed to serve a variety of users, integrate this system with the overall transportation systems, and identify design standards, specific projects, and potential funding sources.



The GMRC is working with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and their consultants to develop a pilot Regional Transit Plan. GMRC happened to be one of two regional commission's selected. This will eventually be done for other regions across Georgia and the information gathered will help shape future policy and programming for state support of local transit systems. To date the process has developed a profile of existing systems and county demands through interviews and surveys with local stakeholders to understand what is and isn't working about transit services in our region. They have completed a draft of a vision and series of goals which will be used for guiding the development of recommendations in the final document.

The GMRC performs many regional reviews over the course of a year, ensuring proposed projects are compatible with service delivery strategies, State and federal regulations, and to minimize potential negative impacts on local resources and infrastructure. These reviews are done in coordination with our member communities, project developers, and various other governmental agencies.

During FY 22, the GMRC conducted **20** Development of Regional Impact reviews, with a strong trend toward warehousing facilities or residential subdivisions. Most of the industrial type facilities were proposed for south Hall County or along the I-85 corridor.

The GMRC also conducted **seven** Intergovernmental (A-95) Reviews and **11** Resource Impact Assessments (Section 106) to ensure capital improvement projects were compatible with local plans and state natural and historical resource plans.

The GMRC also continues to support the **three** different state water planning councils within our region, with GMRC staff participating in council events and ensuring local plans are compliant with state requirements.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



WorkSource Georgia Mountains (WSGM) administers the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for the Georgia Mountains Region and serves Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth who have been laid off, are unemployed, underemployed, or face significant barriers to employment. Assistance with training programs in a Growth and Demand Occupation for the Georgia Mountains area allows participants to participate in Occupational Skills Training and work toward earning a certificate, diploma, or degree at a participating college, technical school, GED, or professional license. WSGM enrolled 161 new participants in occupational skills training this year. Services received include the cost of tuition, books, and supplies, along with supportive services such as gas and childcare reimbursements while attending classes and job search or follow-up support once training is completed. During the last year, WSGM paid \$543,333 towards tuition, books, and supplies for students and \$58,320 towards the costs of supportive services.

Eligible applicants ages 16-24 who have dropped out of school may be offered assistance, including obtaining a GED through funding for test fees, work skill or employment training, and internships. More than 75 GED students participated in the GED /Career Pathways Program, and 17 graduated with their GED.

Credit Recovery assists youth who have dropped out of high school or withdrawn from a credit recovery program to retrieve credits for diploma completion. Eligible Youth receive incentives for each credit recovered, while assistance with transportation costs and daycare may also be provided.

Overview sessions are available for potential participants to learn about the benefits and eligibility requirements of WIOA services. To best meet the needs of individuals in the region, Overviews are offered in person throughout the region, at partner schools, or through a self-guided session available online and at the WSGM office.

BUSINESS SERVICES

On-the-Job Training

Two area businesses received reimbursements for their employees this year through our On-the-Job (OJT) Training Program. These businesses received a combined \$15,500 to offset new employee wages. OJT provides wage reimbursements to employers, which helps compensate for the costs associated with training a new employee. It may also be a good fit for job seekers who are unable to or want to attend school full-time but are looking for a way to "earn while they learn."

Incumbent Worker Training

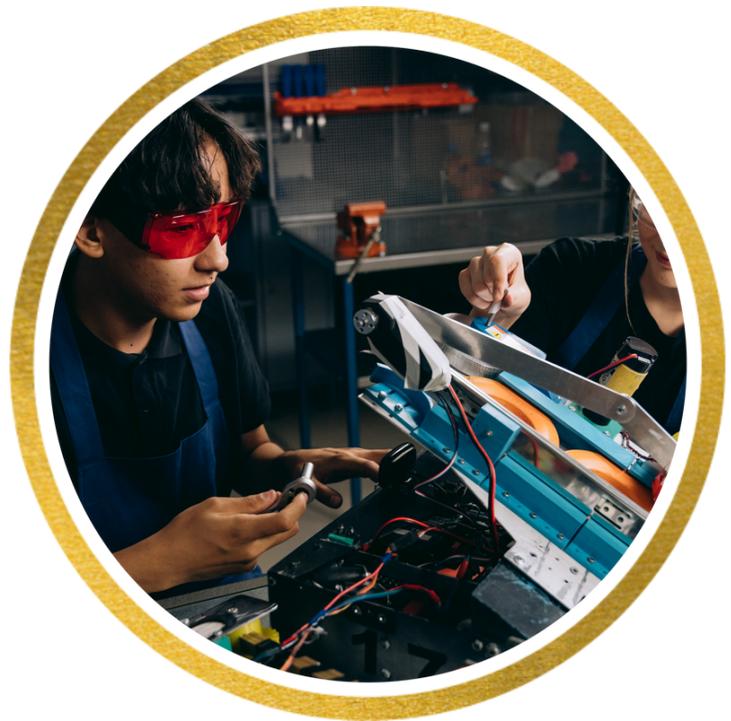
A total of five companies benefited from the Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Program this year. Participating employees were trained by their employer, increasing the employee's knowledge level and potentially their wages. IWT provides a way for businesses to upscale their current workforce allowing the company to grow and meet demand while also providing the employee with the possibility of higher wages and promotion opportunities.

Work Experience

Thanks to a National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) with a focus on COVID-19 mitigation and response, WSGM was able to offer assistance to multiple community-based organizations by providing paid work experiences. These individuals worked to ensure the organization could serve as many people in their community as possible by providing support like sanitizing public spaces, assisting in the set-up and delivery at food banks, and more. In total, \$105,000 was paid directly to these participants, and organizations received 7,270 hours of assistance at no cost.

Internships

One area company participated in the paid internship program this year. Internships are an excellent fit for a business that wants to offer hands-on experience and assistance with special projects to a soon to be graduating student. Students earn work experience and wages and are exposed to the company culture, helping the student and employer determine if they would be a good fit for a permanent position. Several previous internship participants credited their experience with landing permanent jobs quickly after graduation.



Registered Apprenticeships

Registered Apprenticeships commonly consist of a combination of On-the-Job or Incumbent Worker training and a classroom component. WorkSource helped fund training for four Registered Apprentices at four small manufacturing businesses in the Georgia Mountains Region.



Project Search

WSGM, in partnership with the **Hall County** School system, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and Northeast Georgia Medical Center, offers the Project Search program to students with disabilities. The program provides real life work experience and helps Youth with disabilities transition from school to adult life. Students who graduated from Project Search were prepared for their careers through the Project Search blend of classroom and hands on training. For example, one Project Search participant graduated from high school, attended a WorkSource Welding Bootcamp, and is currently employed full-time with a local manufacturing company.

Bootcamps

Thirty-four students graduated from WorkSource-funded skills-based boot camps in last year. These boot camps, which focused on welding and electromechanical skills, gave participants in-demand skills while fulfilling the needs of area employers. They were a great success, with **92%** of participants employed at the time of this publication.

Sector Strategy

The Advanced Manufacturing & Technology Sector Strategy initiative collaborates with over 100 employers, educators, and community stakeholders to align education and workforce training programs with the needs of manufacturing businesses. This year, the collaboration funded ten visits from Be Pro, Be Proud to area high schools supporting trade Career Paths and Work Based Learning. They also developed a first of its kind in Georgia Quality Control Apprenticeship and employability skill lesson plans for classroom use, among other projects.

Transition Programs

The Transition Welding Program aims to allow participants to earn a skill with which they can make a living wage upon release and help lower recidivism rates. Transition programs were hosted at **Hall County** Correctional Institution in partnership with Lanier Technical College and Arrendale Transitional Center in partnership with North Georgia Technical College and Kubota. Kubota was new to the partnership this year and allowed participants to begin work while receiving training and then be promoted once they received their welding certification. WorkSource has offered occupational and job skills training to 30 soon to be-released incarcerated individuals this year.

Participants ages 16-24, who are currently incarcerated in the Regional Youth Detention Center, on probation, or under court supervision are offered specific WSGM services to assist them in completing and furthering their educational and employment goals. WSGM had twelve SHIFT participants this year, with five earning their GED during the program year.



FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

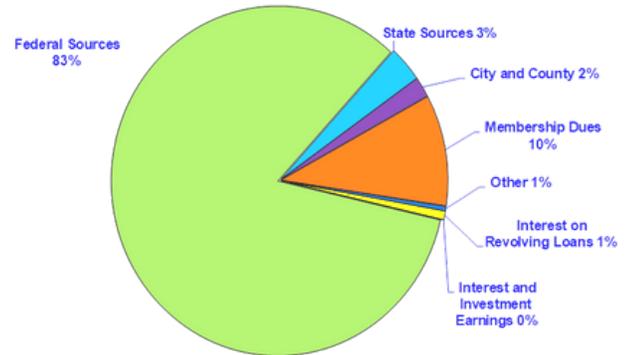
The Finance Department oversees all financial aspects of GMRC. The Finance Director has a close working relationship with the Executive Director, Department Heads, Audit and Finance Committee, federal and state agencies, and local member governments.

GMRC's fiscal year begins July 1 each year and goes through June 30. An annual Financial Budget and Work Scope are prepared by the Executive Director and Finance Director, who works closely with the GMRC Finance Committee and Department Heads, for presentation to the GMRC Council for their review at the regular monthly Council meeting. After the Council has reviewed the document, the Financial Budget and Work Scope is voted on and adopted for implementation July 1.

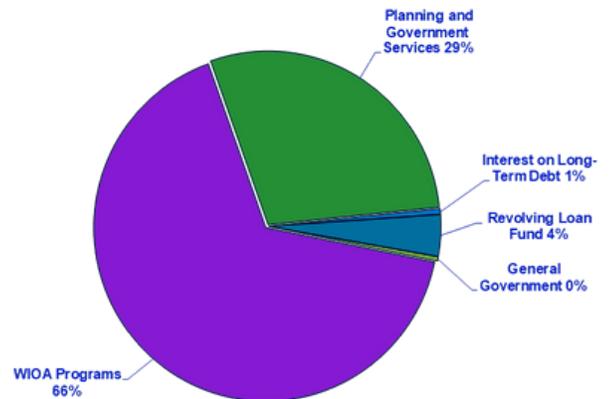
The GMRC is funded by federal, state, and local governments. For FY 22, the GMRC received \$4,502,591 in grant funding from federal and state agencies. The leveraging effect for local governments is for every \$1.25 paid in member dues, GMRC received \$6.24 in grant funding for program services in the region.

The Administrative Services Department provides public relations activities to our member cities and counties that include our monthly newsletter, news releases, meeting announcements, flyers and brochures, City/County Directory, organizing and scheduling meetings and reserving the Regional Commission training and meeting rooms. Additionally, the Department provides a wide array of internal support services that ensure the proficient daily operations of the GMRC. Administrative services are provided to the GMRC and Council by a staff that consists of the Executive Assistant and the Administrative Secretary.

Revenues by Source



Expenditures by Source



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Retreats and Facilitation

Local governments seeking effective results from their policies and actions need a sense of organization and informed decision making. This means doing strategic planning and making time to routinely educate and train the elected and appointed personnel involved. GMRC facilitated four retreats in FY 22.



Job Fairs and Expos

GMRC participated in numerous job fairs and business expos in FY 22. Outreach is an important part of the GMRC scope of work.



City and County Manager Meetings

GMRC facilitated quarterly City and County Manager meetings which have provided a forum where Administrators in the region can focus on issues that can most effectively be addressed through regional action. This peer-to-peer interface allows these Administrators to learn from each other and strategize on needs for their respective communities.



Training

GMRC's skilled team regularly hosts training events on various topics. Pictured here, Joe Rothwell, Historic Preservation Planner, facilitates a seminar on Preservation in the Georgia Mountains Region,

NADO AWARDS



The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Aliceann Wohlbruck Impact Award honors significant advances in community and economic development, including but not limited to small business finance, energy and infrastructure projects, housing and human services, sustainable development, workforce development, and more. Award winners leverage their awards to provide regions with additional resources and to help explain the important work they do. NADO staff uses the award-winning projects to share these collective works on Capitol Hill and with federal agencies.



Depot Street - Hartwell

GMRC assisted the City of **Hartwell** with applying for \$304,360 in Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant funding to provide significant infrastructure upgrades for Hartwell's arts and entertainment district on Depot Street to support existing businesses, attract new businesses, and to revitalize a deteriorating part of the city.



Weld Ready Bootcamp

The Weld Ready Bootcamp was designed to get recent high school graduates the skills needed to begin their careers while meeting a critical need of area employers looking to hire entry level welders. Workforce Innovators of America provided the training, while WorkSource provided mentoring and employability skills along with the Business Services team organizing employers for an interview day once the participants earned their welding certification.



Quality Control Apprenticeship

Industry leaders needed an innovative way to reach new, highly motivated talent and an avenue to reenergize their existing workforce to be as productive and successful as possible. The Quality Control Apprenticeship (QCA) offered existing employees, incumbent workers, and new applicants the opportunity to gain in-demand skills necessary to succeed in the Advanced Manufacturing Sector through On-the-Job Learning,

ANNUAL AWARD RECIPIENTS



**ELECTED OFFICIAL
OF THE YEAR
COURTNEY UMBEHANT**



**APPOINTED OFFICIAL
OF THE YEAR
DENISE MCKAY**



**COUNCIL MEMBER
OF THE YEAR
SAM NORTON**



**CHAIRMAN'S AWARD
WILLIAM CHAFIN**



**EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR
LAURIN YODER**

TALENTED WORKFORCE

At GMRC, our employees are more than a resource – they are a true capital asset to the organization and its stakeholders. Our team has an unparalleled passion for service, communities, and innovation. We strive to employ the best talent, ensuring that our people are engaged, safe, healthy, and supported for the best performance possible.



*Staff Photos - John Seibel Photography
*Terra Incognita Vineyards - Location

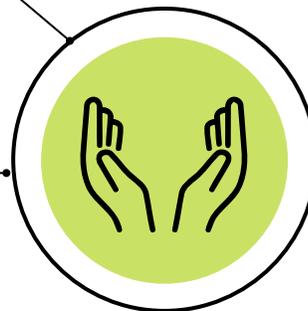
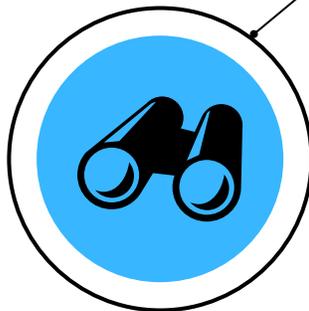
OUR VISION

THE GMRC ENVISIONS THE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS REGION AS AN AREA THAT VALUES ITS DIVERSE COMMUNITIES AND RESOURCES, FOSTERS ECONOMIC VITALITY AND INNOVATION, AND PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET LOCAL AND REGIONAL NEEDS. THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH MAXIMUM COOPERATION BETWEEN THE GMRC STAFF, COUNCIL, MEMBER GOVERNMENTS, AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS.



OUR MISSION

TO SERVE THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS OF THE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS REGION BY IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMUNITY PLANNING, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT AND ENHANCE THE REGION'S PROSPERITY.



OUR VALUES

COLLABORATION. SERVICE.
TRUST. INNOVATIVE. SUSTAINABILITY. REWARDING.

Georgia Mountains Regional Commission
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 **GeorgiaMountainsRC**