

September 2022

PINNACLE

Georgia Mountains Regional Commission

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Save the Date:

**Calendar of Upcoming Meetings
and Trainings**

Cover Photo Courtesy of:

*CeNita Venue at CeNita Vineyards &
Winery, White County GA*

Executive Director's Report



Heather Feldman
Executive Director

- GMRC held their annual staff retreat on September 15th at Terra Incognita Vineyards. It was an extremely productive day of cross-training, team building, and learning. Thank you to GMRC Vice-Chairman, Ken Schubring and Secretary, Courtney Umbehant for attending and speaking to the staff.



- GMRC hosted additional meetings this month on the Regional Transit Development Plan (TDP). On September 13th, the Project Advisory Committee met virtually to discuss community highlights, goals, needs analysis, and alternatives for improving support to local transit programs. Additionally, the GMRC held the second round of public hearings to allow the public to provide input into the development of the plan. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Adam Hazell at ahazell@gmrc.ga.gov or 770-538-2617. It is anticipated that the TDP will be completed in late December/early January.

- Congratulations to Council Member Mike Eason who has recently been named to the Georgia Peace Officers Standards and Training Council by Governor Kemp.



- I am very excited to announce that GMRC is once again the recipient of three National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Impact Awards for the following projects:

- ◇ Hartwell Depot Street Infrastructure Improvements Project (Patrick Larson)
- ◇ Quality Control Apprenticeship – Workforce Development (Adult Division)
- ◇ Weld Ready Boot Camp – Workforce Development (Youth Division)

Congratulations to all staff who worked on these impactful projects for the region!

- Thank you to Kathy Papa, Region 2 Field Representative for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for speaking at the September council meeting. Kathy gave a great update and overview on the programs and services offered by DCA that are beneficial to local governments.



- The Technical College System of Georgia conducted their annual performance and financial monitoring of WorkSource Georgia Mountains the week of September 26th. Thank you to both the WorkSource and Finance teams for pulling together the information and working with TCSG staff on a productive monitoring.

- GMRC is currently planning for the 2023 council meeting calendar! If your community is willing to host a monthly GMRC council meeting, please reach out to Gina Kessler at gkessler@gmrc.ga.gov or 770-538-2607.

- **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!

Sincerely,

Heather Feldman



Economic Development



- Thank you to Rope Roberts and Georgia Power for hosting the recent Good News Gathering at Lanier Tech. Good News Gathering is an opportunity for our talented Economic Developers to share their victories and accomplishments in Northeast Georgia. A special congratulations to Rope on his retirement and 44 years of service with Georgia Power!

- The Georgia Mountains Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and Regional Plan was formally adopted by the GMRC Council on September 29th. Thank you to the entire CEDS

Committee and participants who helped form this 5-year plan for our Region! Visit the [GMRC website](#) for more information.

- On behalf of the City of **Hartwell**, a GDOT Transportation Alternatives Program grant application in the amount of \$80,000 was submitted for preliminary engineering to guide downtown streetscaping and overall pedestrian connectivity.
- Congratulations to the **City of Toccoa** on being awarded a \$750,000 Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant for the construction of an annex addition to the Ritz Theatre!



Planning

Regional Brownfields Assessment is a Go !!

The GMRC was recently awarded \$500,000 toward a regional brownfield project aimed at updating inventories of potential sites and, most critically, performing site assessments for 15 - 30 properties. This work will allow targeted properties to understand the full scope of any potential contamination issue and what's needed to achieve complete mitigation. This information not only helps landowners know exactly what's needed to bring the property back to viable use but also enables them to access funds for the actual cleanup efforts.

While specialized consultants will perform the formal assessments, the GMRC staff will work with locals to create an updated inventory of potential sites, so that more properties can be cleared of any contaminant issue and be made available for future reuse and economic development.

If you wish to nominate a site for consideration under this process, or if you wish to participate in the committee meetings, please contact Adam Hazell at ahazell@gmrc.ga.gov or 770-538-2617.



Information Services

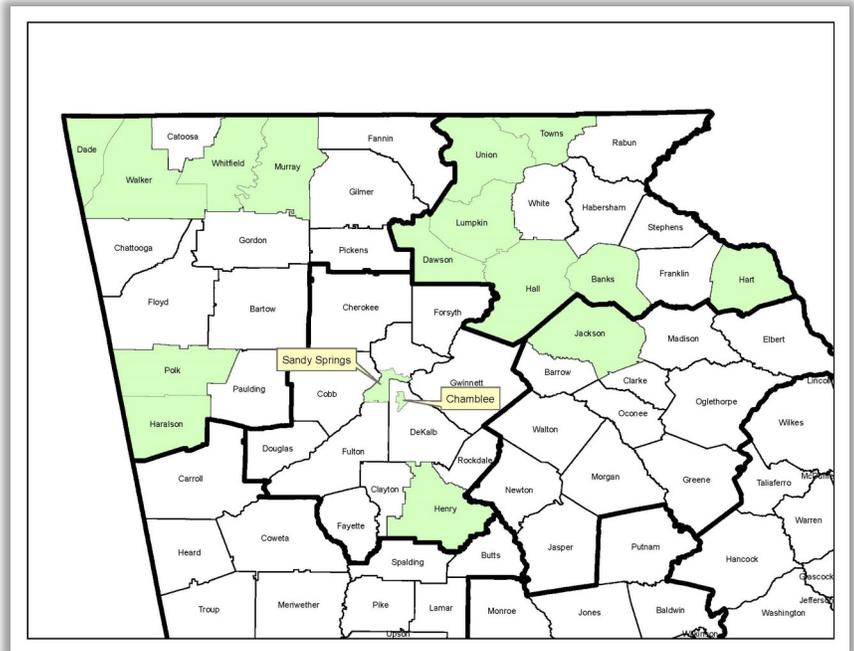
- **Annexation Law Change**

The General Assembly amended the law governing how annexation (and de-annexation) of territory is documented and recorded with the State earlier this year. Effective July 1, 2022, HB 1385 requires municipalities that have (de)annexed territory to file a report identifying any property annexed with the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), the Legislative and Congressional Reapportionment Office of the General Assembly, and the appropriate county-level government. The requirement to file with the Reapportionment office is new. As a component of this report, the municipality must include a digital shapefile (i.e., a GIS file) of the (de)annexed area. This is also a new requirement.

In order to assist local governments in meeting the requirement to provide a GIS file when (de)annexing territory, the law now also requires Georgia's regional commissions to assist any municipality in producing the required file if the local government, itself, lacks the ability to complete that task on its own. Please contact fbryan@gmrc.ga.gov or bcarlok@gmrc.ga.gov for annexation reporting assistance.

- **2023 GMRC Aerial Photography/LiDAR Project Vendor Chosen**

On September 29th, the GMRC Council approved NV5/Quantum Spatial as the chosen vendor for the 2023 Aerial Photography and LiDAR project. This flight will take place during the leaf-off season from late December 2022 through early February 2023. Letters of Intent will be emailed to interested parties during the first week of October. If you are interested in participating in our collaborative flight, please contact fbryan@gmrc.ga.gov for additional information.



Potential 2023 Project Participants

- **REVAMP Phase III**

Phase III of the Roadway Element Validation and Mapping Program (REVAMP) kicked off with a training session on collection and validation of the new features. In addition to expanding the sidewalks, pedestrian signals, and crosswalks to the county boundaries, we will be adding curb ramps, bike lanes and cement shoulders (curbs). GMRC will begin this phase in **Dawson, Banks, and Lumpkin counties**.



- Staff attended community meetings in **Banks, Hall, Lumpkin, Rabun, and Stephens counties**. This event reached 150 community partners and Resource Fairs at North Georgia Technical College campuses in Clarkesville, Currahee, and Blairsville speaking with over 150 students.
- Application assistance and overview sessions were held at the Department of Labor in **Habersham, Hall, and Stephens counties** as well as Lanier Technical College in Hall. WorkSource assisted 45 people in their desire to start a career training program.

- The Gainesville Day Reporting Center (outpatient rehab for those under felony parole/probation), the Friends of Recovery Board, and the Georgia Council on Substance Abuse, held the 3rd Annual Hall/Dawson Recovery Rally on Saturday, September 17th at Laurel Park in **Gainesville**. This celebration during National Recovery Month honors people in recovery from mental and substance abuse disorders. WorkSource staff attended and shared information regarding training opportunities with over 450 attendees.



- Would you like to train new employees without it affecting your bottom line? WorkSource Georgia Mountains can help! Take advantage of our On-the-Job Training Program (OJT). OJT can assist companies who are looking to expand their business and need additional staff trained with specialized skills by providing wage reimbursements to employers. This will help compensate the costs associated with training and loss of production for newly hired employees. Employers interested in partnering with WorkSource Georgia Mountains for Temporary Work Experiences, Internships, or On-the-Job Training or that need Incumbent Worker Training, should contact Niki McPherson at 770-538-2734 or nmcpherson@gmrc.ga.gov. More information can be found on the [GMRC website](http://www.gmrc.ga.gov).

WorkSource Georgia Mountains: **Business Services**

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING (OJT)

- Get reimbursed 50% - 75% of wages earned while training your new employee(s)
- Maximum of 800 hours or \$12,000 of WIOA reimbursement per new employee
- Quick & simple - WorkSource Georgia Mountains handles ALL the paperwork
- You refer candidates to us to see if they qualify and you decide who to hire

CONTACT:

Niki McPherson, OJT Coordinator
P: 770-538-2734
E: nmcpherson@gmrc.ga.gov
W: www.gmrc.ga.gov/employers

Daniel Thornton, Business Services
P: 770-538-2697
E: dthornton@gmrc.ga.com
W: www.gmrc.ga.gov/employers

 WORK SOURCE GEORGIA
Connecting Talent with Opportunity

Events Around the Region

<p style="text-align: center;">Tallulah Gorge State Park Trunk and Treat</p> <p>October 31, 2022 5p.m.-7p.m. Tallulah Gorge State Park 338 Jane Hurt Yarn Drive Tallulah Falls, GA 30573</p> <p>Walk from decorated car-to-car as the owners hand out candy and treats to the kids!</p> <p>Call (706) 754-7981 for more information.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds Towns County</p> <p>Georgia Mountain Fall Festival October 7-15, 2022 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. Appalachian Brew, Stew & Que Saturday, October 22, 2022 11 a.m.– 5 p.m.</p> <p>Tickets: \$40 at the gate or \$35 in advance online</p> <p>For more information please visit: Georgiamountainfairgrounds.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Toccoa Harvest Festival</p> <p>Toccoa Harvest Festival Historic Downtown Toccoa October 29th 10am - 5 pm and October 30th 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.</p> <p>Children’s Costume Parade October 31, 2022 Historic Downtown Toccoa 10:00 a.m.</p> <p>www.mainstreettoccoa.com</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Hiwassee Night Market</p> <p>First Fridays May—October 5 p.m.—10 p.m. Free Event</p> <p>Town Square 19 S. Main Street Hiwassee, GA,</p> <p>Family friendly, open-air night artist and artesian market with fresh produce, food trucks, games, and live music.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Foxfire Mountaineer Festival</p> <p>Saturday, October 1, 2022</p> <p>Old timey events, food, music.</p> <p>Tickets are \$8, kids 5 & under are free! With a festival wristband, you’ll also receive 30% off admission to the Foxfire Museum at 98 Foxfire Lane, Mountain City, Georgia.</p> <p>www.foxfire.org/events.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Currahee Military Weekend</p> <p>September 29 - October 2, 2022</p> <p>Historic Downtown Toccoa</p> <p>This event is a weekend that honors the military history of Toccoa. Events will be held throughout the weekend such as a banquet, reenactment, Currahee Mountain run, a parade, and more.</p> <p>www.mainstreettoccoa.com</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">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 style="text-align: center;">Weekends in Dawsonville</p> <p>FOOD TRUCK FRIDAY</p> <p>October 7, 2022 5:00-8:00 p.m.</p> <p>Farmers Market Pavilion 86 Allen St., 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!

Travis Turner, Chairman, White County Board of Commissioners



Mr. Travis Turner is a lifelong resident of White County. He graduated from White County High School, received an Associate's Degree in business from Truett McConnell University, and a Bachelor's Degree in Finance from North Georgia College and State University. Mr. Turner worked in the financial industry for approximately 17 years with lastly having served as a Senior Vice-President and Senior Lender. Afterwards, he took lead in reorganizing his family's lumber company until its sale and is now involved in local business ventures and enterprises. He is actively involved in the community. He and his family attend the Cleveland Worship Center where he has served on the Board of Deacons. He is also a member of the White County Rotary Club along with various organizations locally. Mr. Turner was elected Chairman of the White County Board of Commissioners in 2009. He is also a representative on the Board of Commissioners for the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission. Mr. Turner currently serves both on the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority Board and as Vice-Chair of ACCG Worker's Compensation Board of Trustees. He previously served on the State and Local Workforce Investment Board.

Thank you Travis for your service to the region!

UPCOMING GMRC COUNCIL MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

- ⇒ October 27, 2022* **Dahlonega/Lumpkin County - Speaker, Ms. Samanta Carvalho Director, Office of Community Housing at the Georgia Department of Community Affairs**
- ⇒ 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**

