

JUNE 2020

# PINNACLE

*Georgia Mountains Regional Commission*

## *In This Issue:*

**From Our Executive Director**

*Pg. 2*

**Planning**

*Pg. 3*

**Information Services**

*Pg. 3*

**Economic Development**

*Pg. 4*

**Finance Department**

*Pg. 4*

**WorkSource:**

**Adult Programs Success Story**

*Pg. 5*

**Youth Program Success Stories**

*Pg. 5*

**Save the Date:**

**Calendar of Upcoming Meetings  
and Trainings**

*Pg. 6*

*Cover Photo:  
Summer Blooms  
Dahlonega, GA*



Heather Feldman  
Executive Director

- Happy Fourth of July!!! GMRC will be back to our normal schedules beginning the week of July 6<sup>th</sup>. We are all excited to be getting back to our routines, and we look forward to continuing to serve you and your communities.
- We were saddened to learn of the passing of Bill Kokaly, Aide to Congressman Doug Collins. He was a true public servant and advocate for rural Georgia. We appreciate all of the support that he showed the 9<sup>th</sup> Congressional District and the GMRC over the years, and he will be missed tremendously.
- I had the great opportunity to participate in Georgia Municipal Association's (GMA) virtual meeting for the district. It was a great event with 61 participants on the call. Congratulations to **Hiwassee** Mayor Liz Ordiales for becoming our next district president!!
- I am excited to report that we are fully staffed! Our new Grants Administrator, Audrey Camp, started her employment with us on June 16<sup>th</sup>. Audrey brings a wealth of knowledge with her. She previously worked with the Technical College System of Georgia where she served as a Programs Specialist. She also has worked for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Please welcome Audrey to our team! She can be reached at 770-538-2612 or [acamp@gmrc.ga.gov](mailto:acamp@gmrc.ga.gov)
- Congrats to the Economic Development Staff for their hard work on getting four EDA CARES Act grant applications submitted on behalf of the City of **Cornelia**, City of **Hartwell**, City of **Toccoa**, and the **Lumpkin** County Water & Sewer Authority. There was a short turnaround time on these applications, and the staff put in extra hours to get these submitted.
- GMRC has submitted our application to EDA for CARES Act supplemental funding for a new RLF. Our application was for \$2,101,000 with \$1.9 million in funds to be loaned out and \$191,000 in funds for administrative costs. Please contact Andrea Newsom for more information or to discuss a potential project at [anewsom@gmrc.ga.gov](mailto:anewsom@gmrc.ga.gov) or 770-538-2624.
- On June 8<sup>th</sup>, DCA Commissioner, Christopher Nunn signed a resolution on planning variances. For any community whose Comprehensive Plan or other planning activity is due in February 2021, the city or county may provide DCA a written request for an extension. DCA upon consideration will issue a variance to the comprehensive planning deadline extending their QLG status through June 30, 2021 and resetting the local government's deadline to that date. For more information or to check your local government's due date, please contact Adam Hazell at 770-538-2617 or [ahazell@gmrc.ga.gov](mailto:ahazell@gmrc.ga.gov)
- Thank you to Public Service Commissioner Tim Echols for presenting at our virtual Council Meeting last week. He gave a great presentation on Georgia's Energy Landscape and we thank him for his efforts in regulating energy efficiency in Georgia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Heather Feldman". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Heather Feldman  
Executive Director



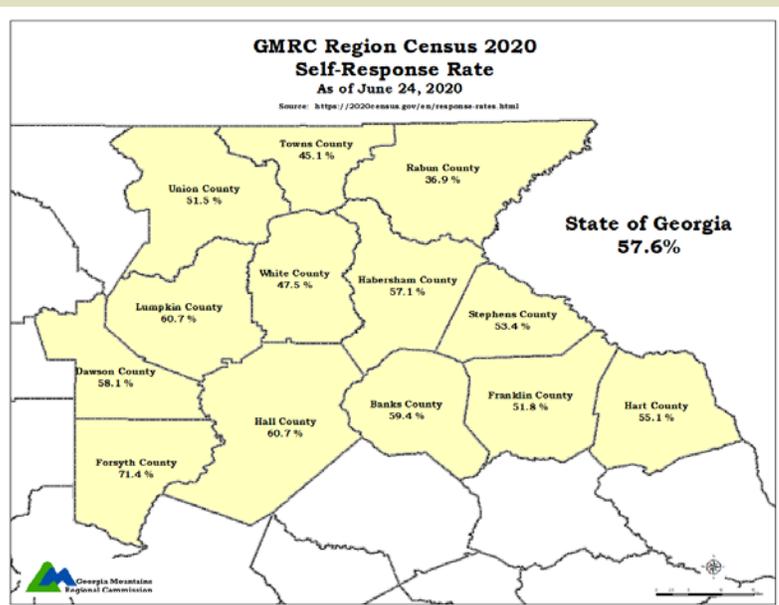
## Planning

- The GMRC is assisting **Forsyth** County with documentation for archaeological resource assessments for the State Historic Preservation Division (HPD) regarding a project at Eagles Beak Park. The County received a two million dollar grant for various park improvements, but must first address HPD's concerns for potential archeological resources that could be affected. The GMRC is supporting the County's efforts to document the site and present any required mitigation plans to HPD so that work on the park improvements can begin in November.
- The GMRC is preparing to assist the City of **Cumming** with another corridor study along Canton Road/ GA 20. Following up on the award winning Atlanta Highway Corridor Study completed two years ago, the GMRC will assist the City in evaluating development objectives and public improvement options along the City's northwest corridor, linking the historic downtown square with the City Center project currently under development. The study will present ways the City can enhance the corridor's pedestrian accessibility, design aesthetics, and traffic flow so that this arterial corridor can meet many demands while still in keeping with Cumming's character.



## Information Services

- GMRC will be preparing a request for proposal for the purposes of acquiring aerial photography for our Region during the months of January, February, and March of 2021. Counties interested in a cost estimate are as follows: **Hall, Banks, Towns, Hart, Dawson, and Franklin**. For additional information, please contact Faith Bryan at (770) 538-2614 or [fbryan@gmrc.ga.gov](mailto:fbryan@gmrc.ga.gov)
- GMRC staff will be working with the City of **Dahlonega** to collect, using GPS, all water, wastewater and storm water infrastructure maintained by the City.



**Fill out your 2020 Census online today.**

Respond online at  
**2020CENSUS.GOV**

Shape your future  
START HERE >

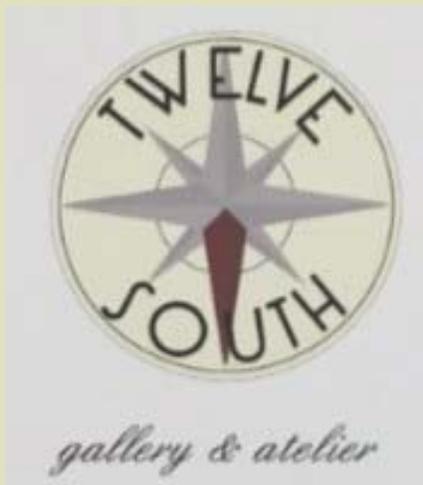
United States  
**Census 2020**

## Economic Development

- On behalf of the City of **Hiawassee** an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) pre-application was submitted in the amount of \$500,000 to assist with the redevelopment of two buildings in downtown Hiawassee.
- The following Economic Development Administration (EDA) CARES Act grant applications were recently submitted:
  - \* City of Cornelia - An application for \$4,521,840 was submitted to assist with the extension of a road, roundabout, and sewer infrastructure which will support new development along Chase Road in Cornelia.
  - \* Lumpkin County Water & Sewer Authority – An application for \$2,000,000 was submitted to support water and sewer improvements benefiting a manufacturer and new developments near Georgia 400.
  - \* City of Toccoa – An application for \$2,548,000 was submitted to support the rehabilitation of the **Eastanollee** Creek Water Pollution Control Plant.
  - \* City of Hartwell – An application for \$1,444,000 was submitted to assist with construction of a 6-million-gallon flow equalization basin to the City of **Hartwell's** Wastewater Treatment Facility. It will help the City address issues with resiliency and additional flow that are a result of sheltering-in-place, increased sanitization measures and increased hospital capacity because of COVID-19 or future pandemics.
- Our department is proud to welcome Ms. Audrey Camp who recently joined the team as Grants Administrator. Audrey is a graduate of Kennesaw State University and previously held positions with the Technical College System of Georgia and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Welcome aboard!
- On June 24 the ED Department hosted a Virtual Funding Workshop via Zoom. Copies of the presentations can be found on the GMRC website at: <http://www.gmrc.ga.gov/Documents.htm>

## Finance Department

- In June, GMRC closed a loan with Chocolate Hill Interiors. They are doing business on the square in **Hartwell** as Twelve South Artisan Market. The market will feature a design studio, classroom, and a gallery. Paintings by Taylor Dubeau will be on display, as well as works from other local artists. Vendors are able to rent booths in the space as well. If you are in **Hartwell** please take time to stop by Twelve South Artisan Market at 48 Carolina Street.



- We are quickly approaching year end. We have scheduled time in July and August with the auditors from Rush-ton and Company. The audit will be presented at the November council meeting.

## WorkSource Adult Programs Success Story

### KATHRYN SMITH

Kathryn Smith, a recent graduate from Lanier Tech’s Health Information Management Technology Program, had been struggling to find full-time employment in the medical coding field. Lanier Technical College Instructor Annette Baker suggested Kathryn look into WSGM’s Paid Internship Program. This opportunity allowed Kathryn to gain experience in medical coding at Specialty Clinics in Hall County and still earn an income. Upon completing her internship, she has obtained full-time, meaningful employment in the job field of her dreams!

## WorkSource Youth Program Success Stories

### RACHEL GEARIN

Rachel Gearin recently received her GED after taking classes at Lanier Technical College's Adult Education program at the Hall Campus. Rachel is a participant in the WIOA Out-of-School Youth grant which helped pay for her GED tests, daycare, and transportation expenses. She also participated in a paid internship at Family Promise in **Oakwood** that was made possible by WIOA grant funds. Rachel is currently attending college at Lanier Technical College using WIOA grant funds and hopes to become a Radiologist Technician. About her experience, Rachel said:

*"My mom passed in 2018. I dropped out of high school in 2016 and it really disappointed her. I promised her, before she passed that I would make her proud of me in heaven. So, about two months after everything settled down from her passing, I pushed myself hard to get my GED. I did it for her."*

Rachel's GED instructors and the WIOA Out-of-School grant team members cannot say enough about how proud they are of her accomplishments.



WIOA participant Rachel Gearin with her son, Elijah.

### TRINITY BROWN

WIOA participant Trinity Brown graduated recently from MEC- **Union**. This is what she wrote in:

*"The WIOA program has helped me get through school when I thought it was getting impossible because I got pregnant & had a child in high school. And I am so thankful to have the chance to make our lives better by being able to get a good job."*

## Region 2 Broadband Webinar

### Do you want to know about Broadband Ready Community and Site Designations?

Join the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for a Regional Broadband Webinar! This informative and engaging online event will provide an update on efforts to expand broadband access in the state and region and how your community can benefit through Broadband Community and Sites designations. This includes the following:

- Local elected officials
- Development authority directors
- Planning staff

**What: Broadband Workshop**

**When: Wednesday, July 22 at 2:00PM**

**Where: Webinar**

[Register Here](#)

For More Information:

Kathy Papa, Region 2 Representative: [kathy.papa@dca.ga.gov](mailto:kathy.papa@dca.ga.gov)

### UPCOMING GMRC COUNCIL MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

- 
- ⇒ July 30, 2020\* Zoom Meeting - Union County - *State Road & Tollway Authority, David Cassell*
  - ⇒ August 27, 2020 Stephens County - *Georgia's Rural Center, Janet Cochran*

**GMRC Council Meetings begin at 5:00 PM; Executive Committee meets prior at 4:00 PM.**

**\*WD Board Meeting at 3:00 PM**