

MAY 2020

PINNACLE

Georgia Mountains Regional Commission

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*Cover Photo:
View of the Mountains
Dillard, GA*



Heather Feldman
Executive Director

- GMRC has started a slow opening of the offices. Staff is working on alternating schedules so as to minimize the number of people in the office. We are here for you and ready to serve, so please reach out to any staff member if you are in need of any assistance. I want to thank the entire staff for their cooperation and the impressive job they did while working from home!

- On May 20th, the Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA) held their annual Business Meeting. I am honored to have been elected as Secretary of the Board for DDAA. I am excited to represent Georgia and look forward to assisting the DDAA Board any way possible.
- We are very pleased to report that WorkSource Georgia Mountains received a \$550,000 COVID Emergency Dislocated Worker Grant from Technical College System of Georgia and US DOL. Funds will be used for disaster relief unemployment activities. If you are interested in this program for your community's labor force, please contact John Phillips at jphillips@gmrc.ga.gov
- Congratulations to Jason Cobb, who is the new County Manager for **White** County. We are excited to have him in the Georgia Mountains Region and look forward to working with him in his new capacity.
- GMRC will be hosting our next City and County Managers meeting on Wednesday, June 3, 2020 at 10:00am. This will be our first ever virtual meeting and will be conducted via Zoom Meeting. Please join us by using the link provided if you would like to participate.
- Thank you to Frank Norton, Jr. for presenting our first-ever virtual program for a Council Meeting. Frank gave a regional update in response to COVID-19 at our May 28th Council Meeting. We appreciate all of the efforts of Frank and his team on preparing this economic forecast for the region.

Sincerely,

Heather Feldman

Heather Feldman
Executive Director



Planning

- The GMRC Planning Department is programming its work scope for FY21 and is still available to perform local assistance covered through our DCA contract. The GMRC is available to help local governments implement projects within their own local comprehensive plan, and we can leverage our DCA funding to cover most/all of this work. If you have a project such as a housing assessment, small area study, amendments to local codes, or some other task for which you'd like outside assistance please contact ahazell@gmrc.ga.gov to see how we can fit you into our schedule of FY21 projects.
- **Hall** County, the City of **Gainesville**, and the City of **Cumming** have all submitted their annual *Capital Improvement Element (CIE)* updates for regional review.
- The GMRC's regional application for a Community Brownfield Assessment Grant was not among those awarded in FY20, however the GMRC will be moving forward with their Regional Brownfield Assessment Program to ensure every community is aware of local potentially contaminated properties and what resources are available to assist with remediation. This is part of the economic development strategy within the GMRC's CEDS/Regional Plan to help communities and landowners restore brownfield properties and make them once again economically viable for reuse. As every local plan is updated over the next five years, the GMRC will assist every member government with incorporating a brownfield assessment into their plans and help establish a local liaison that can coordinate any local action needed to seek Federal and State assistance.

Economic Development

- On behalf of the City of **Cumming**, a Roadside Enhancement and Beautification Council (REBC) grant application for \$50,000 was submitted to the Georgia Department of Transportation to perform landscape improvements to Canton Highway at the intersection of Kelly Mill Drive.
- On behalf of the Downtown Development Authority of the City of **Dahlonega**, an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant application for \$109,232 was submitted to assist with improvements to the Historic Holly Theatre in downtown **Dahlonega**.
- **Hart** County Industrial Building Authority (IBA) was awarded \$1,000,000 in Regional Economic Business Assistance (REBA) grant funds for the Haering project in the Gateway II Industrial Park. Congrats to **Hart** County and the IBA!

WorkSource Adult Programs

- Our Mobile Training Unit (MTU) Instructors, Jason Norsworthy and Micah Thomas, are going to begin offering one-on-one virtual resume sessions. They can help build a new resume, work on targeting a current resume to a particular job, or just polish up an existing one. This service is available to anyone in Region 2. Interested individuals can find more information and sign up for a meeting time on the COVID resource page of the GMRC website - www.gmrc.ga.gov
- SpeciCare, a small company providing alternative customized treatments for cancer patients in **Hall** County, has been working with WorkSource's On the Job Training (OJT) Program. We are happy to announce that SpeciCare has hired an intern through the OJT program and has begun training them as a full-time Patient Advocate and Operations Assistant. With a background in biology and chemistry their new employee is a perfect fit.

WorkSource Youth Program

- Six GED students are transitioning to technical colleges
- Ten Students completed their GED or short term Occupational Skills Certification
- Three Participants earned an Occupational Skills Degree/Diploma

CONGRATULATIONS TO SAMUEL WELBORN!

Samuel Welborn recently received his GED after taking classes at Lanier Technical College's Adult Education program at the **Banks** County Campus. He is a participant in the WIOA Out-of-School Youth Program, which helped pay for his GED tests and transportation expenses. Sam participated in a paid internship at Treads Automotive in **Gillsville** that was made possible by WIOA grant funds. He also participated in short-term training courses and received certifications in industrial forklift operation and MIG welding. Sam was recently accepted into the U.S. Navy to continue his training. About his experience, Sam said, "I'm joining the Navy, and I would not have been able to do it without my GED". Sam's GED instructors and the WIOA Out-of-School grant team members cannot say enough about how proud they are of his accomplishments.

UPCOMING GMRC COUNCIL MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

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- ⇒ June 25, 2020 City of Hiawassee (via Zoom Meeting) - *Georgia Public Service Commission, Commissioner Tim Echols*
 - ⇒ July 30, 2020* Union County - *State Road & Tollway Authority, David Cassell*
 - ⇒ August 27, 2020 Stephens County - *Georgia's Rural Center, Janet Cochran*