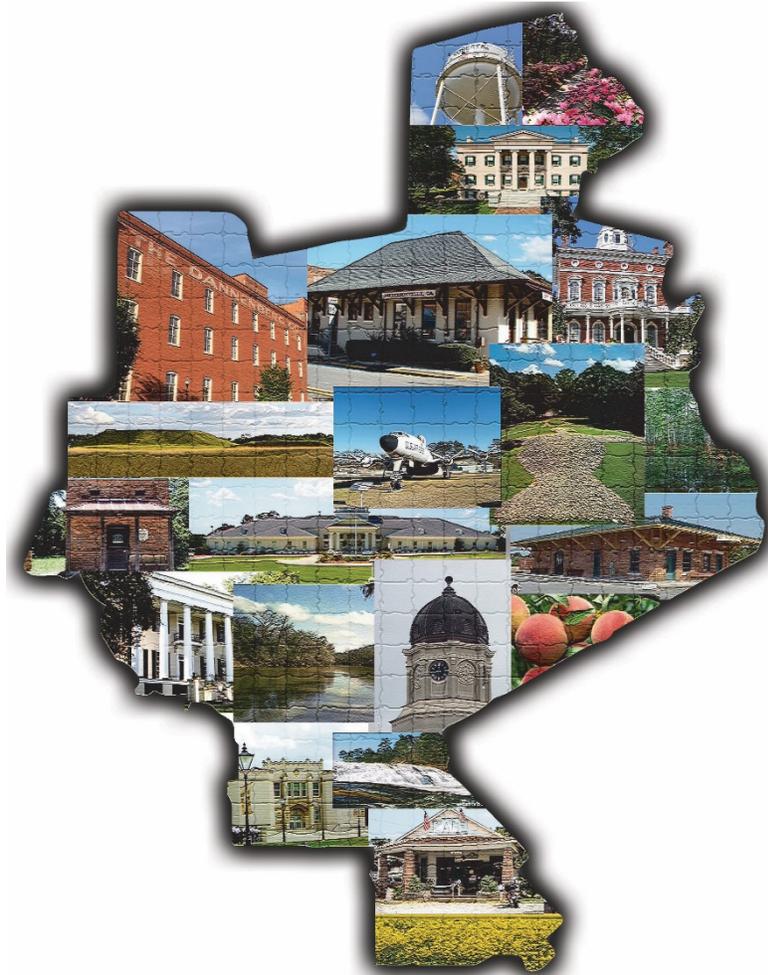


# 2016-2036

*Plan for . . .*

## **A THRIVING MIDDLE GEORGIA**



### **2021 ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT**



# Middle Georgia Regional Commission

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Richard L. Bazemore, Chairman

Laura M. Mathis, Executive Director

## RESOLUTION OF THE MIDDLE GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION To Adopt the 2021 Regional Plan Annual Implementation Report

**WHEREAS**, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs requires every Regional Commission in the state to regularly maintain their Regional Plan in accordance with the state's Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning and Schedule for Regional Planning; and

**WHEREAS**, the Middle Georgia Regional Commission has completed technical work on an annual report of progress in accordance with the Regional Planning Requirements provided by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs; and

**WHEREAS**, the Middle Georgia Regional Commission held a required public hearing prior to submission of the Annual Implementation Report to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2021 Annual Implementation Report has been subsequently accepted by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of June 2021, the Middle Georgia Regional Commission Council, meeting in regular session, hereby adopts the 2021 Regional Plan Annual Implementation Report, for transmittal to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

Chairman: Richard L. Bazemore  
Richard L. Bazemore

Attest: Laura M. Mathis  
Laura M. Mathis

Date: 6/10/2021

## REPORT ON PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The Middle Georgia Regional Commission (MGRC), through the Regional Agenda process, is given the responsibility and authority to set achievement levels for local governments of the region. In doing so, MGRC recognizes that all local governments of the region are different and that some standards may be quite easily attainable for larger, well-funded governments, but more difficult to meet for other cities and counties. For this reason, MGRC has set Essential Standards, as well as Excellence Standards for the local governments of Middle Georgia. Essential Standards are differentiated from Excellence Standards, which may require increased planning, coordination, and financial commitment.

The Middle Georgia Regional Commission is dedicated to ensuring that every local government is able to meet all Essential (minimum) Standards of the Regional Agenda. Regional Commission staff will assist local governments with any tasks necessary to attain the Essential Standards at minimal or no cost. As of March 26, 2021, twenty-nine of the thirty-one local governments have achieved either the Essential or Excellence Standards. Throughout FY 2022, MGRC will provide technical assistance to the remaining three local governments to achieve the Essential Standard.

### *2021 Report of Regional Performance Standard Attainment – Effective 3/5/2021*

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Standards Met</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Baldwin County	Essential Standards	
City of Milledgeville	Community of Excellence	
Crawford County	Essential Standards	
City of Roberta	Essential Standards	
Houston County	Essential Standards	
City of Centerville	Community of Excellence	**PlanFirst Designee; Current GICH Participant
City of Perry	Community of Excellence	**PlanFirst Designee
City of Warner Robins	Community of Excellence	
Jones County	Community of Excellence	**PlanFirst Designee
City of Gray	Essential Standards	
Macon-Bibb County	Community of Excellence	
Monroe County	Essential Standards	
City of Culloden	Essential Standards	
City of Forsyth	Community of Excellence	
Peach County	Essential Standards	
City of Byron	Community of Excellence	
City of Fort Valley	Community of Excellence	
Pulaski County	Essential Standards	
City of Hawkinsville	Community of Excellence	
Putnam County	Essential Standards	
City of Eatonton	Community of Excellence	
Twiggs County	Essential Standards	
Town of Danville	Essential Standards	
City of Jeffersonville		Delinquent on FY17, FY18, & FY19 RLGf
Wilkinson County	Essential Standards	
City of Allentown	Essential Standards	
City of Gordon	Essential Standards	
City of Irwinton	Essential Standards	
City of Ivey		Local government lacks an updated website
City of McIntyre	Essential Standards	
Town of Toombsboro	Essential Standards	

RLGF: Report of Local Government Finance; GOMI: Government Management Indicators survey

*MGRC Assistance to Local Governments not Currently Meeting Essential Standards:*

The 2017 changes to the Regional Planning Requirements (Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia Chapter 110-12-6) eliminated penalties associated with communities that do not reach the Essential Standards set forth in the Regional Plan. However, MGRC still recognizes a responsibility to assist local governments however possible in the attainment of these standards. MGRC is currently undertaking the following activities to assist local governments in the attainment of the Essential Standards:

- MGRC staff transmits regular messages to all local governments that are delinquent on Department of Community Affairs (DCA) reports, including the Report of Local Government Finance (RLGF) and Government Management Indicators (GOMI) survey. MGRC also serves as a liaison between local communities and the DCA Office of Research and Surveys, as necessary.
- MGRC has offered website development services to the City of Ivey.

REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Middle Georgia Regional Implementation Program contains action items for the Middle Georgia Regional Commission and its regional partners for the purpose of promulgating the opportunities and vision developed by stakeholders for the Regional Plan. The report on the following pages details accomplishments of the Regional Implementation Program through March 5, 2021. Projects are either listed as **complete**, **underway**, **canceled**, or **ongoing** (items that represent a continuous process for MGRC rather than a one-time project). Additional comments are provided in some areas where available.

# Middle Georgia Regional Work Program (2021-2025)



Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Implementation Status Update
<b>Leverage state and federal assets for economic development projects, specifically in areas that are eligible for additional need-based assistance.</b>	Appropriate funding opportunities should be pursued where possible to support economic development initiatives, locally and regionally.	Provide technical assistance to local governments, authorities, and chambers for economic development and industrial recruitment.	MGRC, EDA, GDEcD	Ongoing
		Pursue funding avenues to aid in providing infrastructure to industrial parks/sites.	MGRC, DCA, USDA, CGJDA	Ongoing – Administering a OneGeorgia Equity award for Putnam County. OneGeorgia Equity project was completed for the future Midway Distribution site in Twiggs County, and additional OneGeorgia Equity applications are planned for the I-16 Industrial Park.
		Research, prepare and administer grants/loans to support economic development.	MGRC	Ongoing – Assisting Jointly Owned Natural Gas with and EDA Disaster Recovery grant application. MGRC is also continuing to administer EDA and OneGeorgia EDGE grants for the City of Hawkinsville, Macon-Bibb County, and Monroe County.
	Local communities should work with state and federal partners in economic development to better meet their needs.	Develop and aid in the implementation of projects/activities identified in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region.	MGRC, EDA	Ongoing – CEDS reviewed annually.
		Build on the findings of the Middle Georgia... Growing Strong project to identify new opportunities to grow regional economic diversification.	MGRC, OLDCC, MGEA	Underway – Project deadline extended by OLDCC to December 2021. Most work is already complete.
<b>Implement local incentives to assist new and existing businesses.</b>	Long-term planning should be developed to ensure the availability of resources for economic development.	Conduct economic impact analysis to determine cost-benefit for economic development projects.	MGRC	Ongoing
	Local communities should work with state and federal partners in economic development to better meet their needs.	Provide technical assistance for the creation of state Opportunity Zones, Rural Zones, local Enterprise Zones, and Redevelopment Plans.	MGRC, DCA	Ongoing – Hawkinsville received Rural Zone designation in 2020. MGRC is assisting several communities with new OZ designations.
<b>Work with Middle Georgia Economic Alliance and other local partners to support and market region to potential economic investors.</b>	Local governments should coordinate marketing strategies for tourism and industry recruitment.	Assist in a joint economic development initiative to market the region.	MGRC, MGEA, Local Governments	Ongoing
		Promote, encourage and engage in economic development initiatives of joint development authorities.	MGRC, CGJDA, FLRDA, MGRDA	Ongoing
<b>Redevelop blighted or vacant buildings</b>	Downtown revitalization plans	Prepare grant applications for remediation of brownfield sites.	MGRC, EPA, Local Governments	Ongoing

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Implementation Status Update
<b>and brownfield sites to help strengthen local economies.</b>	should be promoted and encouraged as a means for promoting job creation and entrepreneurship.	Assist with the development of downtown development or redevelopment plans and special tax districts.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing – Assisted Macon-Bibb County with TAD boundary updates in 2020 and completed downtown planning efforts in Perry and Hawkinsville.
<b>Invest in the region's technological infrastructure to attract makers, entrepreneurs, and young professionals.</b>	Local communities should work with state and federal partners in economic development to better meet their needs	Implement the Digital Economy Plan for the Middle Georgia region.	MGRC, GTA, OLDCC, Local Governments	Ongoing
		Facilitate the ongoing operation of Makerspaces in Middle Georgia.	MGRC, GTA, OLDCC, Local Governments	Ongoing – Completed support programs for SparkMacon and Firestarter Fab Lab provided through OLDCC Phase II grant.
	Long-term planning should be developed to ensure the availability of resources for economic development.	Develop plans for retention of top talent within the region to prevent "brain drain."	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
<b>Address the needs of RAFB and aerospace assets to attract new development and expansion of current industries.</b>	Appropriate businesses should be identified and targeted for industry recruitment and expansion efforts, based on the strategic assets of the community.	Provide assistance to the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Partnership and its efforts to support Robins Air Force Base activities, expansion efforts, and new missions.	21st Century Partnership, MGRC	Ongoing
		Continue implementation of plans to remediate encroachment issues near RAFB.	MGRC, DOD, CGJDA, DNR, Local Governments	Underway – MGRC continues to support CGJDA acquisition project. Georgia Power is actively constructing the solar power facility on the encroachment lands, and the facility is expected to be operational in early 2021.
<b>Use natural and cultural resources, especially Ocmulgee Mounds National Historic Park, to help grow tourism and economic prosperity in the region.</b>	Appropriate businesses should be identified and targeted for industry recruitment and expansion efforts, based on the strategic assets of the community.	Promote Middle Georgia tourism industry.	MGRC, GDEcD, Local Governments	Ongoing – The National Park Service is currently undertaking a Special Resource Study on future expansion potential for the Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park. MGRC is participating as needed as an agency involved with land use planning in the corridor. This project would have significant benefits for attraction of outdoor recreational tourists to Middle Georgia.
		Provide assistance with the promotion of the film industry in Middle Georgia.	MGRC, GDEcD	Ongoing
<b>Use EB-5 designation to encourage foreign investment.</b>	Appropriate funding opportunities should be pursued where possible to support economic development initiatives, locally and regionally.	Promote and provide technical assistance with the Foreign Trade Zone and EB-5 Foreign Investor Program in eligible areas of Middle Georgia.	MGRC	Ongoing
<b>Assist local government participation in the programs designed to promote</b>	Promote and encourage development that provides a variety of residential options, including affordable housing opportunities.	Provide technical assistance to local Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) communities.	MGRC, DCA, UGA	Ongoing – currently assisting Centerville as a Junior in the GICH program.
		Promote affordable housing options.	MGRC, DCA, Housing Authorities Local Governments	Ongoing

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Implementation Status Update
<b>affordable and accessible housing options.</b>		Promote and provide safe, clean, and affordable housing choices.	Housing Authorities, Local Governments	Ongoing
	Address substandard and dilapidated housing in Middle Georgia communities.	Assist local governments with preparing Community Home Investment Program (CHIP) and CDBG grant applications.	MGRC, DCA, Housing Authorities Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC preparing to assist City of Gray with housing grant in 2022.
<b>Create urban redevelopment plans and strengthen local code enforcement activities to alleviate substandard housing conditions and blight.</b>	Address substandard and dilapidated housing in Middle Georgia communities.	Perform Housing Assessments, focusing on both urban and rural areas, and data collection, as requested.	MGRC, DCA, Local Governments	Ongoing – Completed assessment of Gordon in 2020. Finalizing an in-depth blight plan for the city in early 2021. MGRC also completed a blight plan for unincorporated Jones County in 2020.
		Assist local governments with the preparation of housing-focused Urban Redevelopment Plans.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing – assisted City of Forsyth with an update to their URP in 2020.
		Assist local governments with the creation and management of Land Bank Authorities.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
		Provide technical assistance to local governments in reviewing and updating zoning codes to remove barriers to appropriate housing development.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing – currently assisting several local governments with updates to zoning codes. Completed zoning work with Putnam County.
<b>Support local public and non-profit agencies to meet housing needs and provide homebuyer education services.</b>	Promote and encourage development that provides a variety of residential options, including affordable housing opportunities.	Promote, encourage, and participate in housing-related workshops, conferences, and symposiums.	MGRC, Local Governments, Housing Authorities	Ongoing
		Prioritize lending opportunities for housing developments focused on low- or mixed-income, elderly, or residents with disabilities.	MGRC	Ongoing
		Partner with local governments, housing authorities, social service agencies, non-profits, etc. to promote housing options for those most in need.	MGRC	Ongoing
<b>Leverage the availability of vacant storefronts in downtown areas for new housing developments.</b>	Promote and encourage development that provides a variety of residential options, including affordable housing opportunities.	Consider town centers as housing destinations for potential "pioneer" populations, such as baby boomers and college students.	MGRC, DCA, Local Governments, Housing Authorities	Ongoing
<b>Assist local governments that lack technological or Geographic Information Systems (GIS) capabilities to improve the efficiency of their services.</b>	Local governments should evaluate options for lowering the cost of service delivery and improving efficiency.	Create, maintain, promote, and host web pages for local governments, development authorities, and other regional entities.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC continues to host nearly 50 websites for local governments, authorities, and nonprofits.
		Create, maintain, and promote internet-based map services.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
		Create road and structure point data layers to support E-911 mapping services.	MGRC, GEMA, Local Governments	Ongoing
		Explore the feasibility of acquiring highly accurate elevation (LiDAR) data and region-wide ortho-aerial photography.	MGRC, USGS, NOAA, FEMA,	Ongoing

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Implementation Status Update
			GIO, Local Governments	
		Provide tax parcel maintenance service.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC continues to provide for four counties. Peach County will be added later in 2021.
		Develop strategies for enhancing social media and communications capabilities for MGRC and local governments	MGRC	Ongoing
<b>Develop plans for local infrastructure maintenance and improvements, including planning for capital to support continued growth.</b>	Local governments should evaluate options for lowering the cost of service delivery and improving efficiency.	Assist with land development ordinances or implementation of impact fees to reduce potential losses from new service provision.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
		Assist local governments with the development and preparation of Solid Waste Management Plans, as requested.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
		Develop risk assessment reports and assist in the local hazard mitigation and pre-disaster mitigation planning processes.	MGRC, GEMA, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC currently working with Pulaski County and Monroe County on PDMPs and FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grants.
<b>Apply for state and federal grant and loan funding for improvements to community facilities throughout the region, specifically in areas of high need.</b>	Local governments should monitor infrastructure to make repairs or upgrades as necessary and follow best management practices.	Assist local governments in efforts to upgrade and/or extend water/sewer infrastructure.	MGRC, DCA, USDA, GEFA, Local Governments	Ongoing – received two CDBG awards in 2020 for water and sewer projects in the Cities of Ivey and Hawkinsville. Three applications are underway in 2021 (Twiggs County and Cities of Hawkinsville and Roberta)
		Assist local governments with improvements to stormwater management and drainage infrastructure.	MGRC, DCA, USDA, EPD, Local Governments	Ongoing – received a CDBG award in 2020 for drainage improvements in the City of Eatonton.
	Pursue funding sources for maintenance and new construction of community facilities.	Assist local efforts to upgrade or develop new community facilities, such as Senior Centers, Head Start, Workforce Development, Boys and Girls Clubs, Libraries, etc.	MGRC, DCA, USDA, Local Governments	Ongoing – received a CDBG award in 2020 for Health Department improvements in Crawford County. An application for 2021 funding is currently being prepared for the Pulaski County Senior Center.
		Assist local governments in efforts to upgrade or develop new government administration facilities.	MGRC, USDA, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC is assisting Hawkinsville in their ongoing project for a new City Hall.
	Develop and preserve recreational programs.	Assist local efforts to upgrade or develop new recreational facilities and services.	MGRC, DNR, NPS, Local Governments	Ongoing – City of Forsyth and Monroe County are currently working to complete LWCF-funded improvements. Applications for five communities are currently being prepared for NPS consideration.
	Local communities should focus on lowering ISO ratings and supporting law enforcement agencies.	Assist local efforts to upgrade or develop new public safety facilities and services.	MGRC, FEMA, DOJ, USDA, DCA, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC regularly assists with various FEMA and DOJ grants to aid firefighting and police activities.
	Natural gas service should be considered as an important asset for economic development.	Assist local governments in efforts to upgrade and/or extend natural gas infrastructure.	MGRC, USDA, EDA, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC working on an EDA grant with Jointly Owned Natural Gas to expand capacity.
	<b>Collaborate with historical societies, historic preservation commissions, and similar groups to protect areas where</b>	Promote development practices that do not negatively impact natural, cultural, and historic resources.	Conduct and comment on Section 106 undertakings involving historic resources.	MGRC, HPD
Provide outreach, training, and technical assistance on Historic Preservation to local governments and other interested parties.			MGRC, HPD	Ongoing – assisted Town of Toombsboro with a nomination to the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation's "Places in Peril" list.
Capitalize on the natural, cultural, and		Conduct historic resources inventories for local governments	MGRC, HPD	Ongoing – a resource survey is currently underway in the City of Hawkinsville with grant funding.

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Implementation Status Update
<b>culturally-important resources are at risk</b>	historic resources that are present within the region, utilizing their presence to tell the region's story.	Provide technical assistance to local Historic Preservation Commission, Historical Societies, and other organizations.	MGRC, HPD, Local Governments	Ongoing
		Assist local governments with activities related to the Certified Local Government program; assist in the preparation and adoption of local preservation ordinances.	MGRC, HPD	Ongoing
	Promote and support existing Main Street communities and encourage new cities.	Assist communities with state and federal historic preservation initiatives and programs including the Main Street Program and the Preserve America Institute.	MGRC, HPD, DCA	Ongoing
<b>Extend and enhance regional trail system, including Ocmulgee Heritage Trail, Lower Oconee Water Trail, Ocmulgee Water Trail, and Central Georgia Rail Trail to improve green connectivity, economic activity, and recreation opportunities.</b>	Promote additional avenues of access to natural, cultural, and historic resources for recreation, education, and tourism, as a driver of economic activity	Provide technical assistance to the Ocmulgee Water Trail Partnership, the Lower Oconee Water Trail group, and other blueway-focused organizations.	MGRC, HPD, DCA, Local Governments	Ongoing
		Provide technical assistance to the Central Georgia Rail to Trail Association for the development of the rail trail between Macon-Bibb and Milledgeville.	MGRC, OWTP, LOWT, GDOT	Ongoing
<b>Agritourism can promote the economy and the preservation of agricultural lands.</b>	Enhance existing natural, cultural, and historic resources with appropriate development.	Provide assistance to local governments and other community organizations in promoting small farms and small communities through the "Georgia Grown" and "Celebrating Rural Georgia" programs.	MGRC, DCA, Georgia Dept of Agriculture, Local Governments, Community Organizations	Ongoing
<b>Ensure safe and secure parks, campgrounds, river access, and boat ramps, particularly in where they can be economic drivers.</b>	Enhance existing natural, cultural, and historic resources with appropriate development.	Assist local governments with preparing and administering Land and Water Conservation Fund grants.	MGRC, DNR, NPS, Local Governments	Ongoing – City of Forsyth and Monroe County are currently working to complete LWCF-funded improvements. Applications for five communities are currently being prepared for NPS consideration.
<b>Update and promulgate the Regional Resources Plan to encourage tourism and help preserve resources.</b>	Promote the protection and utilization of the region's natural, cultural, and historic resources.	Prepare update to the Regional Resources Plan.	MGRC, DCA	Underway – Project start was initially delayed due to changes in the regional planning timeline, but is being actively informed by comprehensive plans for the next two-three years.

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Implementation Status Update
<b>Enhance mobility management programs for residents who are elderly, disabled, or need of reliable transit services.</b>	Encourage street connectivity and improved access and mobility for all persons and using forms of transportation	Provide assistance to local governments with Transit Development Plans.	MGRC, GDOT, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC completed plan for Pulaski County in 2020 and the Twiggs County plan will be updated by 6/30/21.
		Facilitate the Middle Georgia Regional Mobility Manager program	MGRC, GDOT, Local Governments	Ongoing
		Pursue expanded transit service and options for special population groups, including senior citizens (through 5311 programs), veterans, adult students, and workforce program participants.	MGRC, GDOT, Local Governments	Ongoing – Baldwin County and Putnam County have requested an analysis of regionalization options.
		Administer the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) Coordinated Transportation Program in the Middle Georgia region.	MGRC, DHS, Third-Party Operators	Ongoing
<b>Develop and implement local bicycle and pedestrian plans, with an emphasis on complete streets, particularly in downtown areas and near educational facilities</b>	Promote alternative transportation choices, such as walking, biking, carpooling, and taking public transportation.	Maintain and update the Middle Georgia Bicycle and Pedestrian website.	MGRC, GDOT	Ongoing
		Update WRATS Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.	MGRC, GDOT, WRATS	Ongoing
		Prepare Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans for interested communities.	MGRC, Local Governments, GDOT, Bike-Ped Advisory Committees	Ongoing
		Perform Safe Routes to School walk safety audits or travel plans for elementary and middle schools.	GDOT, MGRC, Local Schools	Ongoing
		Facilitate Complete Streets and other training for local communities.	GDOT, MGRC, Local Stakeholders	Ongoing
	Promote the logical connectivity of the regional transportation network	Continue phased construction of Oconee River Greenway and the Fishing Creek Community Trail in Milledgeville and Baldwin County.	FHWA, DNR, Oconee River Greenway Authority, Local Governments,	Ongoing
		Provide technical assistance to bicycle and pedestrian stakeholder groups, including CGRTA, OWTP, LOWT, Wilkinson County Bike Friendly Committee, etc.	GDOT, MGRC, Local Stakeholders	Ongoing
<b>Investment in maintenance and improvement of regional transportation infrastructure.</b>	Coordinate with the Georgia Department of Transportation, Georgia Ports Authority, State Road and Tollway Authority, and other state agencies, as appropriate, on funding improvements for the transportation network.	Serve on Macon Area Transportation Study Technical Coordinating and Policy Committees.	MGRC, MATS	Ongoing
		Serve on Warner Robins Area Transportation Study Technical Coordinating and Policy Committees.	MGRC, WRATS	Ongoing
		<i>Assist in updates of the WRATS socio-economic database.</i>	<i>MGRC, WRATS</i>	<i>Complete. FY2020 was final year of contractual deliverables.</i>
		Provide assistance to local governments, MPOs, and other entities in understanding funding opportunities under the FAST Act and the Transportation Funding Act of 2015.	MGRC, Local Governments, MATS, WRATS	Ongoing

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Implementation Status Update
	Improve the condition of the region's road network, with attention to the condition of high-priority bridges, roads, and culverts.	Support local governments in finding innovative solutions for transportation investments.	MGRC	Ongoing
		Assist local governments with identifying and prioritizing bridges, culverts, and unimproved roads for future investment.	GDOT, MGRC, Local Stakeholders	Ongoing
<b>Address areas where rapid, development has strained the transportation grid.</b>	Coordinate land use planning activities with transportation network improvements.	Incorporate policies and strategies in local comprehensive plans that link land use and transportation improvements.	MGRC, DCA, GDOT, Local Governments,	Ongoing
<b>Pursue development of an inland port, container yard, or intermodal hub to facilitate freight movement.</b>	Promote the planning for, construction of, and movement on regional and inter-regional freight routes.	<i>Promulgate the Middle Georgia Freight and Logistics Study and provide technical assistance for the creation of an inland port, container yard, or multi-modal industrial park in Middle Georgia.</i>	<i>MGRC, OLDCC, GPA, MGEA, Local Governments</i>	<i>Complete. Final updated plan with a focus on an inland port or container yard was completed in January 2021.</i>
		Identify opportunities for improving the east-west connectivity across the Ocmulgee River for a more efficient flow of goods, services, and people.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
<b>Development of a multi-modal transportation hub with passenger rail and bus service.</b>	Communicate the importance and feasibility of passenger rail service.	Promote passenger rail and bus service between Macon-Bibb and Atlanta; inclusion as a priority in the State of Georgia Rail Plan.	MGRC, Local Governments, Georgians for Passenger Rail	Ongoing – I-75 Central Corridor Coalition and Middle Georgia Clean Air Coalition have been closely involved in promoting these efforts. Project has been included in State of Georgia Rail Plan.
<b>Beautification and enhancement of key transportation corridors.</b>	Improve the condition of the region's road network, with attention to the condition of high-priority bridges, roads, and culverts.	Assist local governments with efforts to beautify transportation corridors, particularly community gateway entrances, including wayfinding and placemaking.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing – Byron received funding for interchange improvements in 2020.
<b>Explore joint use of the runway at Robins Air Force Base and other opportunities for partnerships related to aerospace industries.</b>	Coordinate with the Georgia Department of Transportation, Georgia Ports Authority, State Road and Tollway Authority, and other state agencies, as appropriate, on funding improvements for the transportation network.	Explore opportunities to take advantage of the region's existing airfields, such as public-private partnerships and expansion needs.	MGRC, OLDCC, Airport Authorities, RAFB, Local Governments	Ongoing

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Implementation Status Update
<b>Pursue a reduction in sprawl through infill development, adaptive reuse of existing structures, and open space protection measures in places of rapid growth.</b>	Smart Growth principles should be promoted throughout the region, especially in urban and suburban communities. This includes the promotion of infill development and greyfield or brownfield redevelopment.	Assist local governments in the preparation/ modification and adoption of local land use ordinances, zoning ordinances, and/or development regulations.	MGRC, DCA	Ongoing – currently working with numerous communities on zoning ordinance updates.
		Promote growth and development in areas that can be efficiently served by existing infrastructure.	MGRC, I-75CCC, MGCAC	Ongoing
		Encourage the placement of new schools near existing infrastructure.	MGRC	Ongoing
<b>Undertake inter-jurisdictional land use planning to promote cohesive development and efficient movement of people, goods, and services.</b>	Local governments should coordinate their land use planning across jurisdictional boundaries.	Administer and manage the Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) program in the Middle Georgia region.	MGRC, DCA	Ongoing
		Provide Geographic Information Systems (GIS) digital mapping and Global Positioning System (GPS) data collection services to local governments	MGRC, GIO	Ongoing
<b>Promote dialogue between businesses and educational institutions to ensure that students receive the necessary skills for success.</b>	Promote collaboration between school systems, private schools, technical colleges, colleges, and universities and local industry.	Provide employer- specialized recruiting services to regional industries.	MGRC, MGC, GDEcD, TCSG, colleges/univ.	Ongoing
		Coordinate applicant certification services for job seekers.	MGRC, MGC, GDEcD, TCSG, colleges/univ.	Ongoing
		Encourage the development of targeted, innovative workforce development programs in public K-12 schools.	MGRC, MGC, GDEcD, TCSG, school districts, colleges/univ.	Ongoing
<b>Grow collaboration between workforce development agencies.</b>	Provide tools to develop the workforce for the region’s existing industries.	Provide technical assistance to job seekers.	MGRC, MGC, GDEcD, TCSG, colleges/univ.	Ongoing
		Promote collaboration between workforce development agencies throughout the region.	MGRC, MGC, GDEcD, TCSG, colleges/univ.	Ongoing- In 2020, MGRC and Middle Georgia Consortium collaborated to jointly fund a position at CGTC for workforce development career services.
<b>Expand registered apprenticeship programs, work-based learning, and on-the-job training opportunities.</b>	Promote collaboration between school systems, private schools, technical colleges, colleges, and universities and local industry.	Undertake and support workforce development and implementation initiatives.	MGRC, MGC, GDEcD, TCSG, colleges/univ.	Ongoing
		Coordinate and promote on-the-job training and apprenticeship opportunities.	MGRC, MGC, GDEcD, TCSG, colleges/univ.	Ongoing, although opportunities were adversely impacted by COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.
<b>Expand job training and transitional support for those</b>	Provide tools to develop the workforce for the region’s existing industries.	Promote awareness of transitional support, on-the-job training, and veterans’ preference opportunities for veterans seeking employment.	MGRC, MGC, VECTR Center, GDEcD, TCSG, colleges/univ.	Ongoing

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Implementation Status Update
<b>leaving military service.</b>				
<b>Provide job training for the incarcerated and formerly-incarcerated.</b>	Provide tools to develop the workforce for the region's existing industries.	Promote awareness of state-level criminal justice reform among job seekers.	MGRC, MGC, GDEcD, TCSG, colleges/univ.	Ongoing
<b>Publicize and promote counseling and advocacy services available to seniors.</b>	Encourage person-centered approach to service provision.	Conduct wellness-related activities through the Wellness Program, providing education, health screenings, nutrition information, exercise, disease management and prevention, and safe usage of medication to seniors and persons with disabilities.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing – includes CDSM, Tai Chi, A Matter of Balance, PSMP, and Senior Farmers Market programs. Due to the Public Health Emergency Declaration, alternative plans were developed to allow these programs to continue in a safe manner.
	Promote and encourage more effective ways to communicate with the senior population.	Market the Area Agency on Aging in all counties in the Middle Georgia region through community education programs and health fairs.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
		Plan, sponsor and conduct a region-wide annual event in support and recognition of the U.S. Administration on Aging's Older American month activities.	MGRC, Vendors	Ongoing – 2019 event had 876 participants. Due to the Public Health Emergency Declaration, the 2020 and 2021 Senior Expo events were cancelled.
<b>Provide assistance tailored to older residents to help them age in place while contributing to the local economy.</b>	Provide resources to help seniors age-in-place.	Operate as fully functioning Aging and Disability Resource Connection and No Wrong Door System.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
		Administer a Medicaid Waiver Service that helps elderly and/or individuals with disabilities remain in their homes and communities and prevents seniors from being prematurely institutionalized.	DCH, MGRC	Ongoing – includes services through the CCSP, SOURCE, and Elderly and Disabled waiver programs.
		Administer an in-home case management program for non-Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services clients.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing – AAA targets to serve 51 individuals per year.
		Function as Local Contact Agency for nursing home residents seeking to transition to the community. Offer Options Counseling to assist residents in locating community resources.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing – currently working with 32 long-term care facilities.
		Administer the Money Follows the Person (MFP) funds for the Department of Community Health. These funds enable funding to follow a person from a nursing home back to their home and/or community.	DCH, DHS, MGRC	Ongoing – working with 17 individuals per year.
	Encourage person-centered approach to service provision.	Administer the Chronic Disease Self-Management Education (CDSME) program.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
		Administer the Matter of Balance fall prevention program.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
		Administer the Elder Abuse Prevention Program by providing public education and outreach to identify and prevent elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Implementation Status Update
	Focus on the long-term sustainability of aging services programs.	Administer the National Family Caregiver Support Program.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing – AAA provides workshops in care consultation, PTC, and dealing with dementia.
		Develop and implement the AAA Sustainability Business Plan, a private-pay service within the Area Agency on Aging.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
<b>Expand the regional network of community-based services with coordination between public, private, and non-profit organizations.</b>	Focus on the long-term sustainability of aging services programs.	Maintain, update, and secure new resources for inclusion in the statewide Empowerline Pro database.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing – AAA continues to maintain database with over 3100 resources identified in Middle Georgia.
		Provide programmatic and fiscal training, technical assistance, and monitoring to Area Agency on Aging subcontractors.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
	Encourage person-centered approach to service provision.	Create and maintain Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan to serve as lead as notified by Department of Human Services, Division of Aging Services, or by a localized emergency team in the Middle Georgia counties, to assist seniors and/or persons with disabilities.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
<b>Assist local governments with innovation to meet the changing needs of the senior population.</b>	Remain cognizant of the quickly growing senior population during planning efforts.	Encourage local governments to incorporate universal design concepts and account for their aging populations in their local comprehensive plans.	DCA, MGRC	Ongoing
		Provide local governments with information regarding grant funding opportunities for senior housing.	DCA, MGRC	Ongoing
<b>Increase cooperation and support of economic growth and prosperity, regardless of the exact location where growth and development occur.</b>	Promote and encourage ongoing relationship building between local and regional leaders.	Facilitate the Middle Georgia Regional Leadership Champions program.	MGRC, UGA, Georgia Power	Ongoing – 5 <sup>th</sup> cohort was completed in 2020. Program will resume in late 2021 or 2022 due to COVID-19. Georgia Power was the 2020 program sponsor.
	Promote and encourage cooperation and collaboration between jurisdictions in developing solutions for shared regional issues.	Provide technical assistance and training opportunities for the Middle Georgia Economic Alliance.	MGRC, MGEA	Ongoing
		Provide technical assistance and staff support to the Central Georgia Joint Development Authority.	MGRC, CGJDA	Ongoing
		<i>Coordinate implementation of action items from 2004 Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) and update and revise JLUS as needed.</i>	<i>MGRC, OLDCC, RAFB, Local Governments</i>	<i>Complete – 2004 JLUS is in process of being updated.</i>
		Promote and provide technical assistance for P4 partnerships between Robins Air Force Base and the surrounding communities.	MGRC, 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Partnership	Ongoing
Encourage mutual aid and sharing of services between jurisdictions, for mutual benefit.	<i>Support efforts to enhance and develop the I-75 Corridor throughout the Middle Georgia region.</i>	<i>MGRC, I-75 Corridor Council, Local Governments</i>	<i>Cancelled – corridor council meetings are no longer regularly occurring.</i>	

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Implementation Status Update
<b>Coordinate planning related to the region's shared natural and cultural resources in support of tourism and economic development.</b>	Promote and encourage cooperation and collaboration between jurisdictions in developing solutions for shared regional issues.	Assist local governments in supporting the Ocmulgee National Park and Preserve Initiative.	MGRC, DCA, DNR, Local Governments	Ongoing – <i>project consolidated with action items under Economic Development category on revised RWP.</i>
		Coordinate with other Regional Commissions and local governments in determining US Bike Routes through Middle Georgia.	MGRC, GDOT	Ongoing
		Assist GDOT in implementing the state's Complete Streets Policy throughout the region.	MGRC, GDOT	Ongoing
	Coordinate communication between affected jurisdictions and public entities on decisions likely to impact them.	Provide technical assistance and staff support to the Middle Georgia Clean Air Coalition and take actions to improve air quality.	EPA, GDOT, EPD, MGCAC, MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
		Assist local governments with coordinating TMDL and Watershed Improvement Plans.	MGRC, EPD	Ongoing
	<i>Continue renewal and revision of service delivery strategies to identify areas where cost savings or increased efficiency can occur.</i>	<i>Continue placing emphasis on collaboration in local and regional planning.</i>	<i>Encourage local governments to regularly update Service Delivery Strategy agreements and provide technical assistance.</i>	<i>MGRC, Local Governments</i>
<b>Facilitate communication and dialogue among regional leaders to help create a regional approach to solving problems.</b>	Coordinate communication between affected jurisdictions and public entities on decisions likely to impact them.	Conduct Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs (Executive Order 12372) to ensure consistency of proposed projects with regional and local planning documents.	MGRC	Ongoing
		Review and comment on long-range transportation plans for consistency with the Regional Plan.	MGRC	Ongoing
		Review and comment on developments in close proximity to resources identified in the Regional Resource Plan.	MGRC	Ongoing
		Review all Developments of Regional Impact submitted by Regional Commissions that adjoin Middle Georgia.	MGRC	Ongoing
		Review statewide plans and programs for local and regional application.	MGRC	Ongoing
		Review local comprehensive plans and service delivery strategies.	DCA, MGRC	Ongoing

# Middle Georgia Regional Work Program (2021-2025)



Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
<b>Leverage state and federal assets for economic development projects, specifically in areas that are eligible for additional need-based assistance.</b>	Appropriate funding opportunities should be pursued where possible to support economic development initiatives, locally and regionally.	Provide technical assistance to local governments, authorities, and chambers for economic development and industrial recruitment.	MGRC, EDA, GDEcD			Staff Time
		Pursue funding avenues to aid in providing infrastructure to industrial parks/sites.	MGRC, DCA, USDA, CGJDA			Staff Time
		Research, prepare and administer grants/loans to support economic development.	MGRC			Staff Time
	Local communities should work with state and federal partners in economic development to better meet their needs.	Develop and aid in the implementation of projects/activities identified in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region.	MGRC, EDA			Staff Time
		Build on the findings of the Middle Georgia... Growing Strong project to identify new opportunities to grow regional economic diversification.	MGRC, OLDCC, MGEA	YR 1 \$1.9 Million		
		Assist the State of Georgia, Department of Economic Development, with administration and implementation of a regional charette planning process focused on growing innovative capacity in Middle Georgia.	MGRC, OLDCC, MGEA	YR 1 \$300,000		
		Administer an EDA CARES Act recovery planning project to supplement the regional CEDS with a focus on economic recovery and resilience throughout the region.	MGRC, EDA	YR 1-2 \$400,000		
Administer an EDA CARES Act revolving loan fund to provide much-needed capital to businesses in Middle Georgia affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.	MGRC, EDA	YR 1-2 \$3.3 Million				
<b>Implement local incentives to assist new and existing businesses.</b>	Long-term planning should be developed to ensure the availability of resources for economic development.	Conduct economic impact analysis to determine cost-benefit for economic development projects.	MGRC			Staff Time
	Local communities should work with state and federal partners in economic development to better meet their needs.	Provide technical assistance for the creation of state Opportunity Zones, Rural Zones, local Enterprise Zones, and Redevelopment Plans.	MGRC, DCA			Staff Time
<b>Work with Middle Georgia Economic Alliance and other local partners to support and market region to potential economic investors.</b>	Local governments should coordinate marketing strategies for tourism and industry recruitment.	Assist in a joint economic development initiative to market the region.	MGRC, MGEA, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Promote, encourage and engage in economic development initiatives of joint development authorities.	MGRC, CGJDA, FLRDA, MGRDA			Staff Time

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
<b>Redevelop blighted or vacant buildings and brownfield sites to help strengthen local economies.</b>	Downtown revitalization plans should be promoted and encouraged as a means for promoting job creation and entrepreneurship.	Prepare grant applications for remediation of brownfield sites.	MGRC, EPA, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Assist with development of downtown development or redevelopment plans, and special tax districts.	MGRC, Local Governments			Staff Time
<b>Invest in the region's technological infrastructure to attract makers, entrepreneurs, and young professionals.</b>	Local communities should work with state and federal partners in economic development to better meet their needs	Implement the Digital Economy Plan for the Middle Georgia region.	MGRC, GTA, OLDCC, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Assist communities with implementation of Smart city technologies to improve service delivery and attract high-skill workers to the region.	MGRC, OLDCC, MGEA, GTA, GaTech, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Facilitate the ongoing operation of Makerspaces in Middle Georgia.	MGRC, GTA, OLDCC, Local Governments			Staff Time
	Long-term planning should be developed to ensure the availability of resources for economic development.	Develop plans for retention of top talent within the region to prevent "brain drain."	MGRC, Local Governments			Staff Time
<b>Address needs of RAFB and aerospace assets to attract new development and expansion of current industries.</b>	Appropriate businesses should be identified and targeted for industry recruitment and expansion efforts, based on the strategic assets of the community.	Provide assistance to the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Partnership and its efforts to support Robins Air Force Base activities, expansion efforts, and new missions.	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Partnership, MGRC			Ongoing \$30,000 Annual
		Continue implementation of plans to remediate encroachment issues near RAFB.	MGRC, DOD, CGJDA, DNR, Local Governments			Staff Time
<b>Use natural and cultural resources, especially Ocmulgee Mounds National Historic Park, to help grow tourism and economic prosperity in the region.</b>	Local communities should work with state and federal partners in economic development to better meet their needs.	Engage in planning processes and funding opportunities that support the expansion of the Ocmulgee Mounds National Historic Park along the corridor from Macon-Bibb County to Hawkinsville.	MGRC, DOD, DNR, NPS, ONPPI, Local Governments			Staff Time
	Appropriate businesses should be identified and targeted for industry recruitment and expansion efforts, based on the strategic assets of the community.	Promote Middle Georgia tourism industry.	MGRC, GDEcD, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Provide assistance with the promotion of the film industry in Middle Georgia.	MGRC, GDEcD			Staff Time
<b>Use EB-5 designation to encourage foreign investment.</b>	Appropriate funding opportunities should be pursued where possible to support economic development initiatives, locally and regionally.	Promote and provide technical assistance with the Foreign Trade Zone and EB-5 Foreign Investor Program in eligible areas of Middle Georgia.	MGRC			Staff Time

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
<b>Assist local government participation in the programs designed to promote affordable and accessible housing options.</b>	Promote and encourage development that provides a variety of residential options, including affordable housing opportunities.	Provide technical assistance to local Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) communities.	MGRC, DCA, UGA			Staff Time
		Promote affordable housing options.	MGRC, DCA, Housing Authorities Local Governments			Staff Time
		Promote and provide safe, clean, and affordable housing choices.	Housing Authorities, Local Governments			Staff Time
	Address substandard and dilapidated housing in Middle Georgia communities.	Assist local governments with preparing Community Home Investment Program (CHIP) and CDBG grant applications.	MGRC, DCA, Housing Authorities Local Governments			Staff Time
<b>Create urban redevelopment plans and strengthen local code enforcement activities to alleviate substandard housing conditions and blight.</b>	Address substandard and dilapidated housing in Middle Georgia communities.	Perform Housing Assessments, focusing on both urban and rural areas, and data collection, as requested.	MGRC, DCA, Local Governments			Ongoing Contract amounts TBD
		Assist local governments with the preparation of housing-focused Urban Redevelopment Plans.	MGRC, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Assist local governments with the creation and management of Land Bank Authorities.	MGRC, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Provide technical assistance to local governments in reviewing and updating zoning codes to remove barriers to appropriate housing development.	MGRC, Local Governments			Staff Time
<b>Support local public and non-profit agencies to meet housing needs and provide homebuyer education services.</b>	Promote and encourage development that provides a variety of residential options, including affordable housing opportunities.	Promote, encourage, and participate in housing-related workshops, conferences, and symposiums.	MGRC, Local Governments, Housing Authorities			Staff Time
		Prioritize lending opportunities for housing developments focused on low- or mixed-income, elderly, or residents with disabilities.	MGRC			Staff Time
		Partner with local governments, housing authorities, social service agencies, non-profits, etc. to promote housing options for those most in need.	MGRC			Staff Time
<b>Leverage availability of vacant storefronts in downtown areas for new housing developments.</b>	Promote and encourage development that provides a variety of residential options, including affordable housing opportunities.	Consider town centers as housing destinations for potential "pioneer" populations, such as baby boomers and college students.	MGRC, DCA, Local Governments, Housing Authorities			Staff Time
		Assist local governments with identifying resources and funding options (such as the LIHTC, DDRLF, and CDBG programs) to support affordable infill housing development.	MGRC, DCA, GMA, Local Governments, Housing Authorities			Staff Time

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
<b>Assist local governments that lack technological or Geographic Information Systems (GIS) capabilities to improve efficiency of their services.</b>	Local governments should evaluate options for lowering the cost of service delivery and improving efficiency.	Create, maintain, promote, and host web pages for local governments, development authorities, and other regional entities.	MGRC, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Create, maintain, and promote internet-based map services.	MGRC, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Create road and structure point data layers to support E-911 mapping services.	MGRC, GEMA, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Explore the feasibility of acquiring highly accurate elevation (LiDAR) data and region-wide ortho-aerial photography.	MGRC, USGS, NOAA, FEMA, GIO, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Provide tax parcel maintenance service.	MGRC, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Develop strategies for enhancing social media and communications capabilities for MGRC and local governments	MGRC			Staff Time
<b>Develop plans for local infrastructure maintenance and improvements, including planning for capital to support continued growth.</b>	Local governments should evaluate options for lowering the cost of service delivery and improving efficiency.	Assist with land development ordinances or implementation of impact fees to reduce potential losses from new service provision.	MGRC, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Assist local governments with development and preparation of Solid Waste Management Plans, as requested.	MGRC, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Develop risk assessment reports and assist in the local hazard mitigation and pre-disaster mitigation planning processes.	MGRC, GEMA, Local Governments			Staff Time
<b>Apply for state and federal grant and loan funding for improvements to community facilities throughout the region, specifically in areas of high need.</b>	Local governments should monitor infrastructure to make repairs or upgrades as necessary and follow best management practices.	Assist local governments in efforts to upgrade and/or extend water/sewer infrastructure.	MGRC, DCA, USDA, GEFA, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Assist local governments with improvements to stormwater management and drainage infrastructure.	MGRC, DCA, USDA, EPD, Local Governments			Staff Time
	Pursue funding sources for maintenance and new construction of community facilities.	Assist local efforts to upgrade or develop new community facilities, such as Senior Centers, Head Start, Workforce Development, Boys and Girls Clubs, Libraries, etc.	MGRC, DCA, USDA, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Assist local governments in efforts to upgrade or develop new government administration facilities.	MGRC, USDA, Local Governments			Staff Time
	Develop and preserve recreational programs.	Assist local efforts to upgrade or develop new recreational facilities and services.	MGRC, DNR, NPS, Local Governments			Staff Time
	Local communities should focus on lowering ISO ratings and supporting law enforcement agencies.	Assist local efforts to upgrade or develop new public safety facilities and services.	MGRC, FEMA, DOJ, USDA, DCA, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Assist communities with grant funding to support critical infrastructure and disaster resilience.	MGRC, FEMA, Local Governments			Staff Time

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
	Natural gas service should be considered as an important asset for economic development.	Assist local governments in efforts to upgrade and/or extend natural gas infrastructure.	MGRC, USDA, EDA, Local Governments			Staff Time
<b>Collaborate with historical societies, historic preservation commissions, and similar groups to protect areas where culturally-important resources are at risk</b>	Promote development practices that do not negatively impact natural, cultural, and historic resources.	Conduct and comment on Section 106 undertakings involving historic resources.	MGRC, HPD			Ongoing \$5,000 Annual
		Provide outreach, training, and technical assistance on Historic Preservation to local governments and other interested parties.	MGRC, HPD			Staff Time
	Capitalize on the natural, cultural, and historic resources that are present within the region, utilizing their presence to tell the region's story.	Conduct historic resources inventories for local governments	MGRC, HPD			Staff Time
		Provide technical assistance to local Historic Preservation Commission, Historical Societies, and other organizations.	MGRC, HPD, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Assist local governments with activities related to the Certified Local Government program; assist in the preparation and adoption of local preservation ordinances.	MGRC, HPD			Staff Time
	Promote and support existing Main Street communities and encourage new cities.	Assist communities with state and federal historic preservation initiatives and programs including the Main Street Program and the Preserve America Institute.	MGRC, HPD, DCA			Staff Time
<b>Extend and enhance regional trail system, including Ocmulgee Heritage Trail, Lower Oconee Water Trail, Ocmulgee Water Trail, and Central Georgia Rail Trail to improve green connectivity, economic activity, and recreation opportunities.</b>	Promote additional avenues of access to natural, cultural, and historic resources for recreation, education, and tourism, as a driver of economic activity	Provide technical assistance to the Ocmulgee Water Trail Partnership, the Lower Oconee Water Trail group, and other blueway-focused organizations.	MGRC, HPD, DCA, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Provide technical assistance to the Central Georgia Rail to Trail Association for the development of the rail trail between Macon-Bibb and Milledgeville.	MGRC, OWTP, LOWT, GDOT			Staff Time
		Assist local governments with preparation of applications and grant administration for the Recreational Trails Program.	MGRC, DNR, Local Governments			Staff Time
<b>Agritourism can promote the economy and the preservation of agricultural lands.</b>	Enhance existing natural, cultural, and historic resources with appropriate development.	Provide assistance to local governments and other community organizations in promoting small farms and small communities through the "Georgia Grown" and "Celebrating Rural Georgia" programs.	MGRC, DCA, Georgia Dept of Agriculture, Local Governments, Community Organizations			Staff Time

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
<b>Ensure safe and secure parks, campgrounds, river access, and boat ramps, particularly in where they can be economic drivers.</b>	Enhance existing natural, cultural, and historic resources with appropriate development.	Assist local governments with preparing and administering Land and Water Conservation Fund grants.	MGRC, DNR, Local Governments			Staff Time
<b>Update and promulgate the Regional Resources Plan to encourage tourism and help preserve resources.</b>	Promote the protection and utilization of the region's natural, cultural, and historic resources.	Prepare update to the Regional Resources Plan.	MGRC, DCA	YR 2-3 \$25,000		
<b>Enhance mobility management programs for residents who are elderly, disabled, or need of reliable transit services.</b>	Encourage street connectivity and improved access and mobility for all persons and using forms of transportation	Provide assistance to local governments with Transit Development Plans.	MGRC, GDOT, Local Governments			Ongoing \$20,000 Annual
		Facilitate the Middle Georgia Regional Mobility Manager program	MGRC, GDOT, Local Governments			Ongoing \$75,000 Annual
		Pursue expanded transit service and options for special population groups, including senior citizens (through 5311 programs), veterans, adult students, and workforce program participants.	MGRC, GDOT, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Administer the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) Coordinated Transportation Program in the Middle Georgia region.	MGRC, DHS, Third-Party Operators			Ongoing \$70,000 Annual
<b>Develop and implement local bicycle and pedestrian plans, with an emphasis on complete streets, particularly in downtown areas and near educational facilities</b>	Promote alternative transportation choices, such as walking, biking, carpooling, and taking public transportation.	Maintain and update the Middle Georgia Bicycle and Pedestrian website.	MGRC, GDOT			Ongoing \$5,000 Annual
		Update WRATS Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.	MGRC, GDOT, WRATS	YR 3-4 \$30,000		
		Prepare Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans for interested communities.	MGRC, Local Governments, GDOT, Bike-Ped Advisory Committees			Ongoing \$15,000 Annual
		Perform Safe Routes to School walk safety audits or travel plans for elementary and middle schools.	GDOT, MGRC, Local Schools			Ongoing \$12,000 Annual
		Facilitate Complete Streets and other training for local communities.	GDOT, MGRC, Local Stakeholders			Ongoing \$5,000 Annual

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
	Promote the logical connectivity of the regional transportation network	Continue phased construction of Oconee River Greenway and the Fishing Creek Community Trail in Milledgeville and Baldwin County.	FHWA, DNR, Oconee River Greenway Authority, Local Governments,	YR 1-5 \$5 Million		
		Provide technical assistance to bicycle and pedestrian stakeholder groups, including CGRTA, OWTP, LOWT, Wilkinson County Bike Friendly Committee, etc.	GDOT, MGRC, Local Stakeholders			Ongoing \$10,000 Annual
<b>Investment in maintenance and improvement of regional transportation infrastructure.</b>	Coordinate with the Georgia Department of Transportation, Georgia Ports Authority, State Road and Tollway Authority, and other state agencies, as appropriate, on funding improvements for the transportation network.	Serve on Macon Area Transportation Study Technical Coordinating and Policy Committees.	MGRC, MATS			Staff Time
		Serve on Warner Robins Area Transportation Study Technical Coordinating and Policy Committees.	MGRC, WRATS			Staff Time
		Provide assistance to local governments, MPOs, and other entities in understanding funding opportunities under the FAST Act and the Transportation Funding Act of 2015.	MGRC, Local Governments, MATS, WRATS			Staff Time
	Improve the condition of the region's road network, with attention to the condition of high-priority bridges, roads, and culverts.	Support local governments in finding innovative solutions for transportation investments.	MGRC			Staff Time
		Assist local governments with identifying and prioritizing bridges, culverts, and unimproved roads for future investment.	GDOT, MGRC, Local Stakeholders			Staff Time
<b>Address areas where rapid, development has strained the transportation grid.</b>	Coordinate land use planning activities with transportation network improvements.	Incorporate policies and strategies in local comprehensive plans that link land use and transportation improvements.	MGRC, DCA, GDOT, Local Governments			Staff Time
<b>Pursue development of an inland port, container yard, or intermodal hub to facilitate freight movement.</b>	Promote the planning for, construction of, and movement on regional and inter-regional freight routes.	Identify opportunities for improving the east-west connectivity across the Ocmulgee River for more efficient flow of goods, services, and people.	MGRC, Local Governments			Staff Time
<b>Development of a multi-modal transportation hub with passenger rail and bus service.</b>	Communicate the importance and feasibility of passenger rail service.	Promote passenger rail and bus service between Macon-Bibb and Atlanta.	MGRC, TRRC, ARC, I-75CCC, MGCAC, MATS, WRATS, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Promote and support the efforts of the I-75 Central Corridor Coalition, including planning for smart growth and transit-oriented development—highlighted by passenger rail service opportunities within the corridor.	MGRC, TRRC, ARC, I-75CCC, MGCAC, MATS, WRATS, Local Governments	YR 1-2 \$500,000		

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
<b>Beautification and enhancement of key transportation corridors.</b>	Improve the condition of the region's road network, with attention to the condition of high-priority bridges, roads, and culverts.	Assist local governments with efforts to beautify transportation corridors, particularly community gateway entrances, including wayfinding and placemaking.	MGRC, Local Governments			Staff Time
<b>Explore joint use of the runway at Robins Air Force Base and other opportunities for partnerships related to aerospace industries.</b>	Coordinate with the Georgia Department of Transportation, Georgia Ports Authority, State Road and Tollway Authority, and other state agencies, as appropriate, on funding improvements for the transportation network.	Explore opportunities to take advantage of the region's existing airfields, such as public-private partnerships and expansion needs.	MGRC, OLDCC, Airport Authorities, RAFB, Local Governments			Staff Time
<b>Pursue a reduction in sprawl through infill development, adaptive reuse of existing structures, and open space protection measures in places of rapid growth.</b>	Smart Growth principles should be promoted throughout the region, especially in urban and suburban communities. This includes the promotion of infill development and greyfield or brownfield redevelopment.	Assist local governments in the preparation/ modification and adoption of local land use ordinances, zoning ordinances, and/or development regulations.	MGRC, DCA			Staff Time
		Promote growth and development in areas that can be efficiently served by existing infrastructure.	MGRC, I-75CCC, MGCAC			Staff Time
		Encourage the placement of new schools near existing infrastructure.	MGRC			Staff Time
<b>Undertake inter-jurisdictional land use planning to promote cohesive development and efficient movement of people, goods, and services.</b>	Local governments should coordinate their land use planning across jurisdictional boundaries.	Administer and manage the Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) program in the Middle Georgia region.	MGRC, DCA			Staff Time
		Prepare the Middle Georgia - Robins Air Force Base Sustainability Plan as an update and expansion of the 2004 Joint Land Use Study for Robins Air Force Base.	MGRC, RAFB, OLDCC, Local Governments, 21st Century Partnership	YR 1-2 \$437,000		
		Provide Geographic Information Systems (GIS) digital mapping and Global Positioning System (GPS) data collection services to local governments	MGRC, GIO			Staff Time
<b>Promote dialogue between businesses and educational institutions to ensure that students receive the necessary skills for success.</b>	Promote collaboration between school systems, private schools, technical colleges, colleges, and universities and local industry.	Provide employer- specialized recruiting services to regional industries.	MGRC, MGC, GDEcD, TCSG, colleges/univ.			Staff Time
		Coordinate applicant certification services for job seekers.	MGRC, MGC, GDEcD, TCSG, colleges/univ.			Staff Time
		Encourage the development of targeted, innovative workforce development programs in public K-12 schools.	MGRC, MGC, GDEcD, TCSG, school districts, colleges/univ.			Staff Time

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
<b>Grow collaboration between workforce development agencies.</b>	Provide tools to develop the workforce for the region's existing industries.	Provide technical assistance to job seekers.	MGRC, MGC, GDEcD, TCSG, colleges/univ.			Staff Time
		Promote collaboration between workforce development agencies throughout the region.	MGRC, MGC, GDEcD, TCSG, colleges/univ.			Staff Time
<b>Expand registered apprenticeship programs, work-based learning, and on-the-job training opportunities.</b>	Promote collaboration between school systems, private schools, technical colleges, colleges, and universities and local industry.	Undertake and support workforce development and implementation initiatives.	MGRC, MGC, GDEcD, TCSG, colleges/univ.			Staff Time
		Coordinate and promote on-the-job training and apprenticeship opportunities.	MGRC, MGC, GDEcD, TCSG, colleges/univ.			Staff Time
<b>Expand job training and transitional support for those leaving military service.</b>	Provide tools to develop the workforce for the region's existing industries.	Promote awareness of transitional support, on-the-job training, and veterans' preference opportunities for veterans seeking employment.	MGRC, MGC, VECTR Center, GDEcD, TCSG, colleges/univ.			Staff Time
<b>Provide job training for the incarcerated and formerly-incarcerated.</b>	Provide tools to develop the workforce for the region's existing industries.	Promote awareness of state-level criminal justice reform among job seekers.	MGRC, MGC, GDEcD, TCSG, colleges/univ.			Staff Time
<b>Publicize and promote counseling and advocacy services available to seniors.</b>	Encourage person-centered approach to service provision.	Conduct wellness-related activities through the Wellness Program, providing education, health screenings, nutrition information, exercise, disease management and prevention, and safe usage of medication to seniors and persons with disabilities.	DHS, MGRC			Staff Time
	Promote and encourage more effective ways to communicate with the senior population.	Market the Area Agency on Aging in all counties in the Middle Georgia region through community education programs and health fairs.	DHS, MGRC			Staff Time
		Plan, sponsor, and conduct a region-wide annual event in support and recognition of the U.S. Administration on Aging's Older American month activities.	MGRC, Vendors			Staff Time
<b>Provide assistance tailored to older residents to help them age in place, while contributing to the local economy.</b>	Provide resources to help seniors age in-place.	Operate as fully functioning Aging and Disability Resource Connection and No Wrong Door System.	DHS, MGRC			Staff Time
		Administer Community Care Services Program - a Medicaid Waiver Service that helps elderly and/or individuals with disabilities remain in their homes and communities and prevents seniors from being prematurely institutionalized.	DHS, MGRC			Staff Time
		Administer in-home case management program for non-Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services clients.	DHS, MGRC			Staff Time
		Function as Local Contact Agency for nursing home residents seeking to transition to the community. Offer Options Counseling to assist residents in locating community resources.	DHS, MGRC			Staff Time

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
	Encourage person-centered approach to service provision.	Administer the Money Follows the Person (MFP) funds for the Department of Community Health. These funds enable funding to follow a person from a nursing home back to their home and/or community.	DCH, DHS, MGRC			Staff Time
		Administer Chronic Disease Self-Management Education (CDSME) program.	DHS, MGRC			Staff Time
		Administer the Matter of Balance fall prevention program.	DHS, MGRC			Staff Time
		Administer the Elder Abuse Prevention Program by providing public education and outreach to identify and prevent elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.	DHS, MGRC			Staff Time
	Focus on long-term sustainability of aging services programs.	Administer the National Family Caregiver Support Program.	DHS, MGRC			Staff Time
		Develop and implement the AAA Sustainability Business Plan, a private-pay service within the Area Agency on Aging.	DHS, MGRC			Staff Time
<b>Expand regional network of community-based services with coordination between public, private, and non-profit organizations.</b>	Focus on long-term sustainability of aging services programs.	Maintain, update, and secure new resources for inclusion in the statewide Enhanced Services Program (ESP) database.	DHS, MGRC			Staff Time
		Provide programmatic and fiscal training, technical assistance, and monitoring to Area Agency on Aging subcontractors.	DHS, MGRC			Staff Time
	Encourage person-centered approach to service provision.	Create and maintain Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan to serve as lead as notified by Department of Human Services, Division of Aging Services, or by a localized emergency team in the Middle Georgia counties, to assist seniors and/or persons with disabilities.	DHS, MGRC			Staff Time
<b>Assist local governments with innovation to meet the changing needs of the senior population.</b>	Remain cognizant of the quickly growing senior population during planning efforts.	Encourage local governments to incorporate universal design concepts and account for their aging populations in their local comprehensive plans.	DCA, MGRC			Staff Time
		Provide local governments with information regarding grant funding opportunities for senior housing.	DCA, MGRC			Staff Time
<b>Increase cooperation and support of economic growth and prosperity, regardless of the exact location where growth and development occur.</b>	Promote and encourage ongoing relationship building between local and regional leaders.	Facilitate the Middle Georgia Regional Leadership Champions program.	MGRC, UGA, Georgia Power			Ongoing \$50,000 Annual
	Promote and encourage cooperation and collaboration between jurisdictions in developing solutions for shared regional issues.	Provide technical assistance and training opportunities for the Middle Georgia Economic Alliance.	MGRC, MGEA			Staff Time
		Provide technical assistance and staff support to the Central Georgia Joint Development Authority.	MGRC, CGJDA			Staff Time
		Promote and provide technical assistance for P4 partnerships between Robins Air Force Base and the surrounding communities.	MGRC, 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Partnership			Staff Time
		Provide technical assistance and staff support to the I-75 Central Corridor Coalition.	MGRC, I-75CCC			Staff Time

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
<b>Coordinate planning related to the region's shared natural and cultural resources in support of tourism and economic development.</b>	Promote and encourage cooperation and collaboration between jurisdictions in developing solutions for shared regional issues.	Assist local governments in supporting the Ocmulgee National Park and Preserve Initiative.	MGRC, DCA, DNR, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Coordinate with other Regional Commissions and local governments in determining US Bike Routes through Middle Georgia.	MGRC, GDOT			Staff Time
		Assist GDOT in implementing the state's Complete Streets Policy throughout the region.	MGRC, GDOT			Staff Time
	Coordinate communication between affected jurisdictions and public entities on decisions likely to impact them.	Provide technical assistance and staff support to the Middle Georgia Clean Air Coalition and take actions to improve air quality.	EPA, GDOT, EPD, MGCAC, MGRC, Local Governments			Staff Time
		Assist local governments with coordinating TMDL and Watershed Improvement Plans.	MGRC, EPD			Staff Time
<b>Facilitate communication and dialogue among regional leaders to help create a regional approach to solving problems.</b>	Coordinate communication between affected jurisdictions and public entities on decisions likely to impact them.	Conduct Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs (Executive Order 12372) to ensure consistency of proposed projects with regional and local planning documents.	MGRC			Staff Time
		Review and comment on long-range transportation plans for consistency with the Regional Plan.	MGRC			Staff Time
		Review and comment on developments in close proximity to resources identified in the Regional Resource Plan.	MGRC			Staff Time
		Review all Developments of Regional Impact submitted by Regional Commissions that adjoin Middle Georgia.	MGRC			Staff Time
		Review statewide plans and programs for local and regional application.	MGRC			Staff Time
		Review local comprehensive plans and service delivery strategies.	DCA, MGRC			Staff Time

**MINUTES**

Middle Georgia Regional Commission

Council Meeting

Thursday, March 11, 2021, 5:30 p.m.

175 Emery Highway, Suite C, Macon, Georgia

\*Meeting held via Zoom due to Public Health Emergency Declaration\*

MEMBERS PRESENT

BALDWIN COUNTY

Lee Slade  
Johnny Westmoreland  
Derek Williams

CRAWFORD COUNTY

Brent Lowe

HOUSTON COUNTY

John Harley  
Clifford Holmes  
George Slappey  
Randall Walker

JONES COUNTY

Francis Adams  
Ed Barbee  
Frank Duke  
Chris Weidner

MACON-BIBB COUNTY

Seth Clark  
Juwan Jackson  
Darius Maynard  
Lester Miller

MONROE COUNTY

Eric Wilson

PEACH COUNTY

Alonzo Allen  
Barbara Williams

PULASKI COUNTY

James Colson

PUTNAM COUNTY

Daniel Kelhoffer  
John Reid  
Lyn Romine  
Gary Sanders  
Billy Webster

TWIGGS COUNTY

Kathryn Epps  
Ken Fowler  
Shannon Hart  
Judy Sherling  
Charles Williams

WILKINSON COUNTY

Marty Dominy  
Daniel Starley

MIDDLE GEORGIA

James Vaughn  
Bubber Epps  
Nancy Nash

GUESTS PRESENT:

David Beurle – Future iQ

Jamie Cook – 21<sup>st</sup> Century Partnership

Scott Cox – Georgia Power

Michelle Delaney - Field Representative for Representative Austin Scott

Liz Fabian – Center for Collaborative Journalism

Angie Gheesling – Houston County Development Authority

Amy Hudnall – Georgia Center of Innovation for Aerospace

Andy Lucas – Cochran Bleckley Industrial Authority

Tonya Mole - Field Representative for DCA

Dan Rhoades – 21<sup>st</sup> Century Partnership

Artiffany Stanley – Georgia Municipal Association

Greg Ziesenhene – Field Representative for Congressman Jody Hice

STAFF PRESENT:

Tiffany Andrews – Director of Workforce

Greg Boike – Director of Public Administration

Carol Bunn – ADRC Counselor

Kevin Brown – Attorney

Tracy Franklin – ADRC Community Options Counselor

Matt Garvin – Director of Finance

Michelle Grembowski – Director of Technology Services

Julie Hall - Director of Area Agency on Aging

Andrea Jones – Career Development Specialist

David Lane – Government Services Specialist

Brent Lanford – Deputy Director

Laura Mathis – Executive Director

Kim Stanton – Executive Assistant

Taylor Stickels - Government Services Specialist

CALL TO ORDER

Council Vice Chairman John Harley called the March 11, 2021, meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Chairman Dick Bazemore was unable to attend due to illness.

ROLL CALL

Executive Assistant Kim Stanton reviewed the attendance log and indicated that a quorum was present with 20 voting and 15 non-voting members.

## OPENING CEREMONIES

### a. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Monroe County Council Member Eric Wilson gave the invocation and the Council followed with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### b. Introduction of New Members/Guests

Council Vice Chairman John Harley acknowledged the following guests at the Regional Commission Council Meeting:

David Beurle – Future iQ  
Jamie Cook – 21<sup>st</sup> Century Partnership  
Scott Cox – Georgia Power  
Michelle Delaney - Field Representative for Representative Austin Scott  
Liz Fabian – Center for Collaborative Journalism  
Angie Gheesling – Houston County Development Authority  
Amy Hudnall – Georgia Center of Innovation for Aerospace  
Andy Lucas – Cochran Bleckley Industrial Authority  
Tonya Mole - Field Representative for DCA  
Dan Rhoades – 21<sup>st</sup> Century Partnership  
Artiffany Stanley – Georgia Municipal Association  
Greg Ziesenhene – Field Representative for Congressman Jody Hice

## GUEST SPEAKER

Laura Mathis reported that in 2017, the State of Georgia received a grant from the Department of Defense, Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) for assistance to military communities on a statewide level. Among the proposed projects was a regional planning process in each community with a major military installation. Throughout 2018 and 2019, Middle Georgia participated in a Charette and Regional Planning Initiative, which provided several recommendations for next-action steps. With the remaining available funding from OEA, the State of Georgia, through the Department of Economic Development, Center of Innovation for Aerospace, contracted with the Middle Georgia Regional Commission (MGRC) in December 2019 for project management of a phase II regional planning and implementation initiative.

In August 2020, Middle Georgia Regional Commission contracted with Future iQ to conduct an innovation gap analysis and ecosystem development project for the region. Tasks included mapping the existing framework of innovative capacity within the region, conducting a

performance and gap analysis of the region's strengths and opportunities, and establishing working groups of local stakeholders to promote the development of an innovation ecosystem within the region.

Laura Mathis introduced David Beurle, the founding member of Future IQ, a global foresight research and consulting firm, which he founded in 2003. David Beurle thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak about the research, analysis reporting, and regional planning methodologies that assist clients with a vision for future planning. More information can be found at <https://lab2.future-iq.com/middle-georgia-innovation>.

Laura Mathis introduced Angie Gheesling, Executive Director for the Development Authority for Houston County. Ms. Gheesling thanked the Council for the partnership, fellow economic developers in the region, and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Partnership. Ms. Gheesling talked about the Georgia Innovation Project, an initiative that is designed to attract businesses and skilled workers to Middle Georgia, which would encourage growth and innovation.

Council Vice Chairman John Harley thanked Mr. Beurle and Ms. Gheesling for their informative presentations.

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

- a. Approval of Minutes of February 11, 2021, Council meeting

There were no corrections to the minutes of the February 11, 2021, Council meeting. They were unanimously approved on a motion by Clifford Holmes and second by Eric Wilson.

- b. Crawford County Appointments

Council Vice Chairman John Harley reported that Council appointments were received from Crawford County.

Justin Spillers  
Jay Andrews  
Charlie Westberry  
Brent Lowe  
Hill Bentley

- c. Report of Executive Committee

John Harley reported that the Executive Committee met earlier today to discuss two loan recommendations for the EDA CARES Act Revolving Loan Fund – TGW Garden Design in Macon-

Bibb County and Fringe Market in Putnam County. Mr. Harley reported that the loan applications for TGW Garden Design and Fringe Market were approved.

Mr. Harley reported that no action is required, this is being provided for informational purposes only. He also expressed his appreciation for the hard work of the committee members.

d. New Business

1. Local Assistance Requests

Greg Boike presented the following local assistance requests that have been received since the February Council meeting:

**Community:** Baldwin County  
Project Description: Assistance with applying for a CJCC Law Enforcement Training Grant.

**Community:** City of Forsyth  
Project Description: Assistance with a PlanFirst application.

**Community:** City of Fort Valley  
Project Description: Assistance with a PlanFirst application.

**Community:** Monroe County  
Project Description: Assistance with applying for a FEMA SAFER Grant.

**Community:** Putnam County  
Project Description: Assistance with a zoning map update.

The local assistance requests were unanimously approved on a motion by Johnny Westmoreland and second by Billy Webster.

2. Public Hearing on 2021 Regional Plan Annual Implementation Report

Greg Boike reported that as of October 1, 2017, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) updated the rules pertaining to Regional Planning Requirements (Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia Chapter 110-12-6). The updated rules are designed to provide a helpful framework for the preparation and implementation of regional plans. Previously, Regional Commissions were required to complete a full update to the work program contained within their regional plan on an annual basis. The updated rules have replaced this requirement with an annual Report of Accomplishments related to the regional work program and update local governments based on the performance standards outlined in the current regional plan.

Under the new rules, MGRC is required to hold a public hearing on the draft report to brief the region on the contents of the plan and provide notification of when the report will be submitted for DCA review. The annual report will be submitted to DCA by March 31, 2021. Council Vice Chairman John Harley opened the public hearing for discussion.

Greg Boike reported on accomplishments since the last update:

- Completion of Middle Georgia Intermodal Hub Master Plan.
- Completion of DoD grant-funded support for FireStarter Fab Lab and SparkMacon.
- New downtown plans or redevelopment plans for Macon-Bibb County, Jones County, cities of Forsyth, Hawkinsville, and Perry.
- Assisted Putnam County with updates to land use and zoning regulations.
- Four communities received 2020 CDBG awards and five received 2021 LWCF grant awards.
- Collaboration with Middle Georgia Consortium to jointly fund a CGTC position for Workforce Development Career Services.
- Significant progress on Robins AFB solar project in coordination with CGJDA.

Council Vice Chairman John Harley asked for any comments or questions on the Regional Plan Annual Implementation Report. There were none, and Council Vice Chairman John Harley called the public hearing to a close. The comment period on the Regional Plan documents ends March 26, then the draft will be submitted to DCA and the final document will be presented at a future Council meeting for approval.

#### GOOD OF THE ORDER

a. DRI #3244

Greg Boike reported that since the last MGRC Council meeting, the regional review process was completed for DRI #3244, Sardis Church Road Truck Stop, located in Macon-Bibb County. MGRC received two comments anticipating impacts from the project. The Macon Water Authority commented that a sewer line extension would be required. The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) provided comments on the need to coordinate timing and phasing needs of intersection signalization, as well as the need for additional information on the final plans and permit applications.

b. Executive Director's Report

Laura Mathis presented the Executive Director's report with updates since the February meeting.

Ms. Mathis reported that there may be interest from some of the counties in the region to initiate the TSPLOST process. She noted that several counties have a single county TSPLOST in place or

up for consideration. In order to initiate the regional TSPLOST process, a majority of the counties could need to pass a resolution.

Prior to the meeting, Ms. Mathis sent out information on the Georgia Rental Assistance Program that provides relief to individuals, families, and landlords whose finances have been negatively impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. More information can be found at [www.georgiarentalassistance.ga.gov](http://www.georgiarentalassistance.ga.gov).

Ms. Mathis gave an update on the following topics discussed at the General Assembly.

- Behavioral Health Case Management Pilot Proposal

The MGRC was asked to participate in an expansion of case management services for individuals who have behavioral health issues and are at risk of eviction. It would also be an opportunity to partner with RiverEdge Behavioral Health. The program would be funded through the Department of Community Affairs. If the General Assembly does not appropriate the funds, the program will not be offered in Middle Georgia.

- County transfer from Georgia Mountains Regional Commission to Atlanta Regional Commission (HR 130)

Ms. Mathis reported that Forsyth County went through the petition process to be transferred from one Regional Commission to another. This would be the first time since the legislation was put in place in 2009. This process identified amendments that are needed to the new rules and regulations for this process. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs plans to release the draft rules soon.

- Rural Development Council (HR 185)

Ms. Mathis reported that the House Rural Development Council was reauthorized for two years to continue to work on rural issues.

Ms. Mathis reported that the MGRC has launched the program mentioned at the last meeting where the Middle Georgia Regional Commission was asked to assist in registering individuals for vaccine appointments, arranging transportation for vaccine appointments, and coordinating mobile vaccination events across the region.

The MGRC issued two requests for proposals for the financial audit, due March 17, and for Workforce services that is due March 19.

The Pension Committee consists of members of the Council and two MGRC staff. The staff members are elected by MGRC staff; Tiffany Andrews and Howard Scott were selected as the employee representatives.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Shavonda Hill reported that GMA will host the Cities Connect Call on March 16 to discuss the American Rescue Plan Act that will provide general information and guidelines included in the bill.

The next MGRC Council meeting will be on April 8, 2021, via Zoom.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the March Council meeting was adjourned.

DRAFT