

2021 Regional Plan Implementation Program Annual Report



Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
1 Jackson Hill Drive
Rome, Georgia 30162- 1798
503 West Waugh Street
Dalton, Georgia 30720
www.nwgrc.org



A RESOLUTION
TO ADOPT THE NORTHWEST GEORGIA REGIONAL PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021

WHEREAS, the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission has prepared a Regional Plan Implementation Program Annual Report for 2021 on the NWGRC Regional Plan, as required by the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has reviewed and approved the 2021 Regional Plan Implementation Program Annual Report;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

That the Regional Plan Implementation Program Annual Report for 2021 is hereby adopted by the Northwest Georgia Regional Council.

SO RESOLVED, THIS 20th Day of May, 2021.



Ted Rumley,

Chairperson

Northwest Georgia Regional Commission

2021 Regional Plan Implementation Program Annual Report

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Regional Plan Implementation Program Annual Report

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE REGIONAL PLAN

In 2019, the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission Council (Steering Committee) updated the Regional Plan with input from a Technical Advisory Committee, stakeholders, and the public via survey (1,860 responses). The Regional Plan includes Regional Goals and Policies; Regional Development Maps including the Regional Land Use Map, Conservation and Development Map, and Areas Requiring Special Attention Map; Regional Needs and Opportunities; and the Implementation Program including Performance Standards (Minimum and Excellence), Regional Work Program (2019-2023), and the Report of Accomplishments on the previous five-year work program. The Regional Plan meets Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Regional Planning Requirements. The Plan aligns with the Regionally Important Resource Plan, local Comprehensive Plans, state plans, and regional plans of the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission, Atlanta Regional Commission, and Three Rivers Regional Commission.

1.2 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

NWGRC prepared this 2021 Regional Plan Implementation Program Annual Report according to Georgia Department of Community Affairs Regional Planning Requirements. It includes an annual Report of Accomplishments for FY 2020, a report on Local Government Minimum Standards, and additions or deletions to the current work program. This 2021 Report has been reviewed by the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission Council and regional stakeholders including representatives of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and Georgia Department of Economic Development. The Annual Update is in alignment with these state and regional plans:



NWGRC Council Meeting, Regional Plan Update February 2019

- Georgia Plan for Outdoor Recreation 2017-2021
- Coosa-North Georgia Regional Water Plan (2017)
- Metro NGA Water Planning District Water Resource Mgmt. Plan (2017) (amended Dec. 2020)
- Middle Chattahoochee Regional Water Plan (2017)
- Northwest Georgia's Economic Development Strategy 2017-2022 (CEDS),
- Greater Dalton Metropolitan Planning Organization FY2018-2021 Adopted TIP, 2045 Regional Transportation Plan Update Chattanooga Hamilton County-North Georgia TPO & 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Plan, Cartersville-Bartow County FY 2021-2024 TIP, Floyd County- Rome 2018-2021 TIP, Atlanta Regional Commission MPO FY 2018-2023 TIP Project List, Georgia DOT Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan 2018-2021 & 2021-2024 Draft
- Georgia Mountains Regional Commission 2019 CEDS & Regional Plan
- Three Rivers Regional Plan Update 2019 & FY20 Annual Implementation Report

1.3 REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS FY 2020

The Report of Accomplishments for FY 2020 presents an annual status update on each project listed in the 2019-2023 Regional Work Program. Each project must be listed as either Ongoing, Completed, Dropped or Postponed. If the project is shown as Dropped or Postponed, a reason must be given to show the circumstances and changes that occurred. If the project is shown as Completed, the date completed is also shown. If a project is shown as Ongoing, it means it is currently in progress by the Regional Commission or another agency.

**Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Report of Accomplishments FY2020**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing	Status
Economic Development							
Ensure infrastructure is in place across region to meet needs of existing and new business and industry.	Implement regional and local plans and strategies for infrastructure improvements needed to support job creation/retention and private investment	1. Assist 10-15 communities as identified annually to improve or expand infrastructure to support economic development through grant writing, planning, and document/plan updates	NWGRC	2020-2023 \$10,000/ YR			Ongoing
		2. Update the Northwest Georgia Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)	NWGRC	2022 \$10,000			Ongoing, annual updates
		3. Apply for Cares Act Supplemental Assistance for EDD Partnership Planning Grant Funds	NWGRC	2020 \$400,000			Completed in 2020
Focus on improvement of skills for jobs in Northwest Georgia (specific training and skill development for the jobs and industries in our region).	Improve local and regional partnerships between industry/ business, workforce development providers, and educational institutions both K-12 and post-secondary, and community leadership.	4. Develop and implement education, training, and employment opportunities for unemployed/ underemployed individuals in Northwest Georgia; provide leadership training and work ready skills for ages 14-21 by funding and monitoring approved training providers and technical colleges, and providing layoff support services, under direction of Workforce Development Board.	WIOA, Local Governments			\$7M/ yr annual program budget	Ongoing
		5. Review and update 2014 Northwest Georgia Advanced Manufacturing Strategic Plan; identify 5-6 top priorities for region and prepare a plan of action to address those priorities	NWGRC	2020 \$5,000			Dropped due to private industry, WIOA work in this area: IWorks and Alliance for Innovation & Sustainability

**Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Report of Accomplishments FY2020**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing	Status
Improve competitiveness of Northwest Georgia communities to attract and retain business and industry	Provide planning and funding assistance to increase economic competitiveness in coordination with state and federal agencies	6. Provide loan packaging to assist 5-10 businesses each year to expand operations or add jobs, including assessment of need, preparation of loan packages and financial planning in partnership with SBDC, SBA, EDA, and lending institutions, and with COVID-19-related loan assistance	NWGRC, North Georgia CDC, Lenders, Businesses	2020-2023 \$95,000			Ongoing, revised in 2021 to include EDA RLF only administered through NWGRC
Healthy Communities							
There is a lack of access to healthy food options; high poverty rates contribute to unhealthy lifestyles- cheap food, lack of health insurance.	Expand agritourism and agribusiness opportunities; invest in local food systems	7. Implement 2013 North Georgia Local Food Assessment: Assist 1-3 communities/ year with planning, project development and grant writing to support local food systems	NWGRC, local govts and growers	2020-2023 \$5,000			Dropped due to change in priority, will provide assistance on request
		8. Work with Center for Rural Prosperity & Innovation to develop project parameters, identify local agritourism, growers and producers, and farmers markets interested in participating in a Highway 27 agritourism trail, and provide grant writing assistance for the project (similar to Hwy 41 Georgia Grown Trail or North Georgia Farm Trail)	NWGRC, ARC, Center for Rural Prosperity & Innovation	2020-2021 \$5,000 (est)			Completed, including monthly newsletter/ updates
There is a need for additional resources and services for low-income, disabled, homeless individuals and those with	Work with local governments and community organizations to improve services to low-income, disabled, homeless individuals and those with	9. Provide planning and grant writing assistance for 1-3 local governments/ year to address needs regarding services for homeless, low income and disabled persons as identified	NWGRC	2020-2023 \$5,000/ YR			Dropped due to change in priority, will provide assistance on request

**Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Report of Accomplishments FY2020**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing	Status
mental health and substance abuse needs.	mental health and substance abuse needs.	in comprehensive plan or other local or regional plans.					
		10. Provide planning and grant writing assistance for 1-3 local governments/ year to address needs regarding services for mental health and substance abuse as identified in comprehensive plan or other local or regional plans	NWGRC	2020-2023 \$5,000/ YR			Dropped due to change in priority, will provide assistance on request
Housing							
There is a lack of safe, affordable housing and a lack of mid to high range housing investment in downtowns	Incentivize redevelopment of blighted or vacant areas for residential use; provide assistance for range of local government housing needs	11. Work with housing agencies, state agencies to hold 1-2 Housing Resource Workshops between 2020-2023 to provide resources and training for local governments and agencies on regional housing issues and needs	NWGRC, DCA, UGA, GICH, GA Conservancy, GA Power	2020- 2023 \$3,000			Ongoing
		12. Conduct a regional inventory of housing needs and prepare recommendations to address identified needs	NWGRC	2020-2021 \$5,000/ YR			Completed in 2020
		13. Assist 1-2 communities/ YR to apply for GA Initiatives for Community Housing (GICH), to prepare housing inventories and to implement GICH action plans	NWGRC, local governments	2020-2023 \$7,500/ YR			Ongoing
		14. Survey local governments to determine interest in “circuit-riding” or shared assistance program for code	NWGRC	2020-2021 \$1,000/			Postponed in 2020 due to COVID

**Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Report of Accomplishments FY2020**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing	Status
		enforcement, zoning and related assistance					
		15. If enough communities express interest, develop local government pilot program for “circuit-riding” or shared assistance with code enforcement, zoning, and related assistance	NWGRC, DCA, local governments	2022-2023 \$5,000			Ongoing not yet begun
Natural and Historic Resources							
More people need to connect with Northwest Georgia’s natural resources so they will enjoy and protect its diversity and beauty	Identify, protect, preserve, and promote identified Regionally Important Resources	16. Update the Regional Resource Plan per Section 110-12-4-, 02(4) of Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs including recommended actions to address critical resources and improve access to natural resources	NWGRC	2019-2021 \$15,000			Ongoing, expected completion in 2021
		17. Implement RIR plan: Develop publicly accessible GIS database and maps highlighting region’s historic, cultural, and natural assets	NWGRC	2022-2023 \$7,500/ YR			Ongoing, not yet begun
	Promote trails, greenways and blueways; Improve safety, visibility, and access to trails and blueways and add access points	18. Provide planning and grant writing assistance to 1-3 communities/ year to improve safety and accessibility of trailheads/ put-ins on Pinhoti Trail, Etowah River, Appalachian Trail, and other river and trail corridors in region	NWGRC, local governments, DNR and grant agencies, SORBA, SETPL, other groups	2019-2023 \$7,500/ YR			Ongoing (NWGRC also provides grant writing assistance for parks and recreation areas)
Preserve irreplaceable historic and cultural resources through	Identify and preserve historic and cultural resources	19. Prepare 1-2 National Register preliminary determinations and nominations for regionally	NWGRC, HPD	2019-2023 \$15,000/ YR			Ongoing, assisted Bremen, Dallas and Cohutta in 2020

**Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Report of Accomplishments FY2020**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing	Status
inventory, citizen engagement, planning and funding assistance		significant historical assets each year (Grant Farm, LaFayette, Tunnel Hill, Cohutta/ St Andrews Chapel, Dallas Historic District, Cedartown Historic District, Bremen, others)					
		20. Digitize NWGRC historic resource documents including National Register listings, historic resource surveys	NWGRC, Bandy Heritage Center	2020-2023 \$6,000			Ongoing
		21. Assist 1-2 local governments/ YR to prevent loss of HPD Certified Local Government (CLG) status through technical assistance or grant writing to update ordinances, surveys, etc.	NWGRC, HPD, local govts	2019-2023 \$10,000/ YR			Ongoing
Maintain surface and groundwater quality throughout the region to meet federal and state regulations	Apply for funding to improve water quality, manage stormwater, restore streambanks, and protect water resources in the region	22. Serve as stakeholder with McCaysville and Fannin County on 319h grant project for Toccoa River watershed	NWGRC, McCaysville, Fannin County, Limestone Valley RC&D	2020-2021 \$1,000			Dropped- implementing National Water Quality Initiative watershed projects
		23. Apply for funding to prepare Dozier Creek Watershed Management Plan	NWGRC, Limestone Valley RC&D	2021-2023 \$5,000			Completed- received funding in 2020, writing plan in 2021 with Limestone Valley RC&D
		24. Apply for funds to implement the 2019 Woodward Creek Watershed Management Plan	NWGRC, Floyd County	2020-2023 \$5,000			Ongoing, partnering with Limestone Valley RC&D
		25. Administer finances and grant funds and provide staff support for monthly and annual meetings of the North Georgia Water Resources Partnership, a regional	NWGRC	2019-2023 \$5,000/yr			Ongoing

**Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Report of Accomplishments FY2020**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing	Status
		organization of utility providers which advises the Coosa-North Georgia Water Council and assists the Council to implement the CNG Water Plan					
		26. Assist the North Georgia Water Resources Partnership, Coosa-North Georgia Water Council, or local governments and utilities to apply for state and federal funding to implement Regional Water Plans and related studies including the Grid Transmission Study and Redundancy and Emergency Interconnectivity Study	NWGRC	2020-2023 \$7,500/yr			Ongoing
		27. Work with GA EPD to develop a tool to prioritize delisting impaired streams in the Coosa-North Georgia Region and recommended implementation measures to delist these streams	Coosa-North Georgia Water Council, N GA Water Resources Partnership, NWGRC, GAEPD	2020-2022 \$5,000			Ongoing
Land Use							
Develop a coordinated long-term land use vision for Northwest Georgia that respects local land use plans and that balances conservation with development needs	Assist local governments to comply with current Georgia Zoning Procedures Law (O.C.G.A. 36-66-1, et seq.; 36-67-1, et seq.; and, 36-67A-1, et seq. as amended) and provide necessary technical assistance.	28. Assist 2-5 local governments each year with review and update of zoning ordinance and/or map	NWGRC, local governments	2020-2023 \$20,000/yr			Ongoing, assisted Ellijay, Pickens Co., Lookout Mtn, Chatsworth in 2020
		29. Work with training providers including UGA CVIOG, DCA, GAZA and GPA to provide at least one annual planning and zoning training in the region, and local training as requested	NWGRC, local governments, Training providers (GAZA, GPA, DCA, UGA CVIOG)	2020-2023 \$1,000/ yr			Ongoing, limited/ virtual due to COVID

**Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Report of Accomplishments FY2020**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing	Status
Planning and Local Government Assistance							
Develop a coordinated long-term land use vision for Northwest Georgia that respects local land use plans	Assist local governments to prepare and implement Comprehensive Plans and service delivery strategies in accordance with the Georgia Planning Act and Service Delivery Strategy Act, to implement projects and initiatives in the comprehensive plan, and to apply for PlanFirst designation.	30. Assist 2-3 local governments/ year to prepare scheduled updates to local comprehensive plans	NWGRC, local governments	2020-2023 \$60,000/yr			Ongoing, asst. Catoosa and municipalities, Chattooga and municipalities in 2020
		31. Assist 1-2 communities each year with PlanFirst applications	NWGRC, local governments	2020-2023 \$5,000/ yr			Ongoing, asst. Bartow Co. in 2020
		32. Meet with approx.15 governments each year to discuss implementation of the local comprehensive plan and regional plan, reporting requirements and other topics related to planning and implementation; assist with amendments as needed to reflect emerging priorities	NWGRC, local governments	2020-2023 \$7,500/yr			Ongoing
		33. Provide assistance as requested to 1-3 communities/ year to review and update Service Delivery Strategy agreements either on the 10-year Comprehensive Plan update schedule or as service changes demand	NWGRC, local governments	2020-2023 \$3,500/ yr			Ongoing, asst. Catoosa and Chattooga Counties with updates in 2020
	Update the Regional Plan according to Georgia Department of Community Affairs' Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning	34. Update the <i>Northwest Georgia Regional Plan, 2019-2023</i> annually.	NWGRC	2023 \$7,500			Ongoing
Provide resources to assist local governments to meet	Provide outreach, training and technical assistance on	35. Digitize legacy Developments of Regional Impact	NWGRC	2020-2023 \$1,000/ yr			Completed in 2020

**Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Report of Accomplishments FY2020**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing	Status
demands of growth, reinvestment, needs of rural areas	planning and development needs of local governments	36. Prepare 20-30 local plan reviews, transportation plan review, environmental reviews, and Section 106 reviews, other coordinated reviews each year	NWGRC	2020-2023 \$5,000/ yr			Ongoing
		37. Develop marketing, branding, media, training and outreach materials for Regional Commission services and assistance; provide same assistance to 1-5 smaller local governments each year	NWGRC, local governments	2020-2023 \$5,000/ yr			Ongoing, newsletters and FaceBook page

Transportation

Provide safe, efficient movement of people and goods through Northwest Georgia to enhance economic growth;	Improve coordination between local governments, GDOT, MPOs and federal agencies to implement regionally significant transportation projects	38. Participate in meetings of federal and state transportation agencies, Atlanta MPO, Chattanooga/Hamilton County/North Georgia TPO, Rome-Floyd County MPO, Greater Dalton MPO, Cartersville-Bartow County MPO; provide quarterly planning and coordination between these agencies and the NWGRC Council and non-MPO governments on regionally significant projects	NWGRC, GDOT, MPOs			Ongoing \$20,000/ yr	Ongoing
		39. Participate in GDOT Transit Plan update and GDOT 2050 Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan/ Statewide Transportation Plan and updates by attending public and stakeholder meetings, reviewing draft plan documents, and preparing comments, both as NWGRC	GDOT, NWGRC	2019-2020 \$5,000/ yr			Completed in 2020

**Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Report of Accomplishments FY2020**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing	Status
		and as members of GAMPO and GA Transit Association					
		40. Prepare Regional Transit Study/ Assessment	GDOT, NWGRC	2020-2021 \$40,000			Ongoing
		41. Participate in FHWA Nat'l Economic Partnership Grant freight and truck parking study and THRIVE transportation initiatives, representing NWGRC Counties of Dade, Walker, Catoosa, Whitfield, Murray	NWGRC	2019-2022 \$5,000/yr			Completed study in 2020, implementation ongoing
Improve connectivity of bike and pedestrian pathways throughout the region.	Implement bike & pedestrian safety plans, GA Bicycle/ Pedestrian Safety Action Plans, Safe Routes to School, implement Complete Streets design	42. Incorporate all local bike/ ped plans into a regional database; identify favorable connection corridors between bike/ ped infrastructure	NWGRC, GDOT, local govts and Bike! Walk! NWGA	2020-2021 \$10,000			Ongoing
		43. Assist local governments to prepare for regional TSPLOST/ TIA referendum: Reconvene TIA roundtable; hold regular meetings; assist with development of priorities, project list and data; Citizen Review Panels	NWGRC, GDOT, local govts, legislative delegation	2020-2023 \$5,000			Postponed in 2020 due to other priorities, still interest
		44. Staff and administer and update website for Bike! Walk! Northwest Georgia to implement the Regional Bike and Pedestrian Safety Plan and local plans.	NWGRC, GDOT, local govts and Bike! Walk! NWGA	2020-2023 \$5,000/ yr			Ongoing
		45. Participate in 1-2 Safe Routes to School Resource Center walk safety audits per year and assist 1-2 schools and local governments/ year to implement audit recommendations and GDOT	NWGRC, GDOT, Safe Routes Resource Center	2020-2023 \$5,000/ yr			Ongoing but limited, virtual due to COVID

**Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Report of Accomplishments FY2020**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing	Status
		Complete Streets policies through planning, training, and grant writing assistance					
	Develop more trails and trails systems that connect to parks, neighborhoods, retail centers, libraries, workplaces, and downtowns	46. Assist Floyd County, Cave Spring, Cedartown and Polk County with planning and grant writing to implement the Cave Spring to Cedartown Trail Study	NWGRC, Floyd County, Cave Spring, Cedartown and Polk County, funding agencies	2020-2023 \$5,000			Ongoing
		47. Assist Catoosa, Dade, and Walker Counties and Cities with planning and grant writing to implement the 2015 NW GA Feasibility Study for Bikeway & Pedestrian Multi-Use Trails	NWGRC, Catoosa, Dade, and Walker Counties and Cities, funding agencies, Chick-Chatt Greenway Association, THRIVE2055	2019-2023 \$7,500			Ongoing
Broadband							
Improve broadband and telecommunication services	Partner with the Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative, local governments, providers, and other agencies and initiatives, and participate in the Georgia Broadband Ready Program.	48. Assist 1-5 communities/ year to apply for Broadband Ready designation	NWGRC, DCA, local governments, providers	2019-2023 Staff Time			Ongoing
		49. Assist 1-3 local governments/ year to amend their comprehensive plans to include a Broadband Element	NWGRC, local governments	2019-2020 Staff Time			Ongoing
		50. Implement key priorities of the 2014 Northwest Georgia Digital Economy Plan through the Regional Broadband Committee and GA Broadband Deployment Initiative, through grant writing and planning assistance	NWGRC, DCA, local governments, providers	2019-2023 Staff Time			Ongoing
		51. Regional Broadband Committee of NWGRC Council and NWGRC staff: With GA Broadband	NWGRC, DCA, local governments, providers	2020-2021 \$7,500/ yr			Ongoing

**Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
Report of Accomplishments FY2020**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing	Status
		Deployment Initiative and providers, assist 5-10 local governments/ year to identify and prioritize service and speed demand, identify gaps in infrastructure and costs to address those gaps, and to develop local and/or regional plans of action or feasibility study to address priority gaps in service					
		52. Provide planning and grant-writing assistance to 1-10 local governments/year to implement local broadband action plans or feasibility assessments	NWGRC, local governments, providers	2020-2021 \$7,500/ yr			Ongoing
	Assess needs regarding 5G, provide assistance and resources	53. Attend 2-3 workshops and trainings/ year, and provide training, planning, and zoning, ordinance update and historic preservation assistance to 1-5 local governments per year concerning regulation and review of 5-G technologies; provide information to NWGRC Regional Council on quarterly basis	NWGRC, DCA, local governments, providers, GMA, ACCG	2020-2021 \$5,000/ yr			Ongoing but virtual due to COVID

1.4 LOCAL GOVERNMENT MINIMUM STANDARDS UPDATE

To encourage implementation of the Regional Plan, realize the Regional Vision and address the Regional Issues and Opportunities, the NWGRC set Minimum and Excellence thresholds for local governments as required by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Regional Planning Requirements. The Minimum Standard includes essential activities for consistency with the Regional Plan.

In 2020 NWGRC met with 26 local governments for Plan Implementation Meetings, to review the comprehensive plan, regional plan, and regionally important resource plan, including assessment of minimum and excellence standards. These included Bartow County, Adairsville, Cartersville, Kingston, Emerson, Euharlee, White, Dalton, Tunnel Hill, Varnell, Gilmer County, Ellijay, East Ellijay, Pickens County, Nelson, Jasper, Talking Rock, Murray County, Chatsworth, Eton, Gordon County, Calhoun, Fairmount, Plainville, Ranger, and Resaca. Due to COVID-19, a 90-day extension on Plan Implementation Meeting deadlines was given.

The Minimum Standard requirements are the same for all local governments in the region, as follows:

Number	Minimum Standard Requirement	Not Meeting	Action to assist
Min1	The local government has a comprehensive plan that complies with the <i>Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-12-1, Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning</i> and has been officially adopted by the local governing authority.	None	
Min2	The local government has a Service Delivery Strategy (O.C.G.A. 36-70-22) that is verified by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and has been officially adopted by the local governing authority.	None	
Min3	The municipal/county clerk meets the mandated orientation training as specified in State law (O.C.G.A. sections 36-1-24 and 36-45-20).	None	
Min4	Newly elected municipal/county officials participate in training sponsored by the Georgia Municipal Association or the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia.	None	
Min5	The local government uses the Guiding Principles contained in the Northwest Georgia Regional Plan as guidance for making decisions consistent with achieving the Regional Vision or addressing the Regional Priorities and Strategies.	None	
Min6	The local government uses the General Policies and Protection Measures in the <i>Northwest Georgia Regionally Important Resource Plan</i> when making decisions that affect Regionally Important Resources.	None	
Min7	The local government complies with the <i>Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-12-3, for Developments of Regional Impact</i> .	None	

Min8	A hazard mitigation plan approved by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency has been officially adopted by the local governing authority.	None	
Min9	The local government has the ability to send and receive electronic communications.	None	
Min10	The local government meets state financial reporting requirements.	As of October 5, 2020, according to state reports, Aragon, Braswell, Ranger and Taylorsville were delinquent in previous year state financial reports (RLF and GOMI) and did not meet standard 10.	NWGRC forwarded reporting notifications to Aragon, Braswell, Ranger and Taylorsville. At Feb. 2021 Planning Implementation Meeting, Aragon indicated they were following through on required reporting. NWGRC will continue to forward state reminders.
Min11	The local government meets E-Verify requirements through Department of Audits.	None	

1.5 REGIONAL WORK PROGRAM REVISIONS

COVID-19 caused changes in operations for local governments, Regional Commissions and state agencies which affected local and regional priorities, timeframes, and the ability to schedule and hold meetings and hearings. COVID-19 variances were given for Catoosa and Chattooga Counties' comprehensive plan and service delivery strategy update deadlines and for Regional Commission contract requirements. CARES Act Supplemental EDA funding is now in place for NWGRC Community and Economic Development including preparation of a regional resiliency plan and identifying local and regional projects. COVID-related SBA and EDA loan funding assistance was also provided by NWGRC.

Regional Work Program FY 2021-2024						
Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
Economic Development						
Ensure infrastructure is in place across region to meet needs of existing and new business and industry.	Implement regional and local plans and strategies for infrastructure improvements needed to support job creation/retention and private investment	1. Assist 10-15 communities as identified annually to improve or expand infrastructure to support economic development through grant writing, planning, and document/plan updates	NWGRC	2021-2024 \$10,000/ YR		
		2. Update the Northwest Georgia Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)	NWGRC	2022 \$10,000		
		3. Implement Cares Act Supplemental Assistance for EDD Partnership Planning Grant Funds to identify potential resiliency, mitigation, and economic recovery projects in NW Georgia.	NWGRC	2021-2022 \$400,000		
Focus on improvement of skills for jobs in Northwest Georgia (specific training and skill development for the jobs and industries in our region).	Improve local and regional partnerships between industry/ business, workforce development providers, and educational institutions both K-12 and post-secondary, and community leadership.	4. Develop and implement education, training, and employment opportunities for unemployed/ underemployed individuals in Northwest Georgia; provide leadership training and work ready skills for ages 14-21 through approved training providers; and provide layoff support services, under direction of Workforce Development Board.	WIOA, Local Governments			\$7M/ yr annual program budget

**Regional Work Program
FY 2021-2024**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
Improve competitiveness of Northwest Georgia communities to attract and retain business and industry	Provide planning and funding assistance to increase economic competitiveness in coordination with state and federal agencies	5. Provide loan packaging to assist 5-10 businesses each year to expand operations or add jobs, including assessment of need, preparation of loan packages and financial planning in partnership with EDA and lending institutions, and with COVID-19-related loan assistance	NWGRC, EDA, Lenders, Businesses	2021-2024 \$95,000		
Housing						
There is a lack of safe, affordable housing and a lack of mid to high range housing investment in downtowns	Incentivize redevelopment of blighted or vacant areas for residential use; provide assistance for range of local government housing needs	6. Work with housing agencies, state agencies to hold 1-2 Housing Resource Workshops to provide resources and training for local governments and agencies on regional housing issues and needs	NWGRC, DCA, UGA, GICH, GA Conservancy, GA Power	2021-2024 \$3,000		
		8. Assist 1-2 communities/ YR to apply for GA Initiatives for Community Housing (GICH), to prepare housing inventories, and to implement GICH action plans	NWGRC, local governments	2021-2024 \$7,500/ YR		

**Regional Work Program
FY 2021-2024**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
		9. Survey local governments to determine interest in “circuit-riding” or shared assistance program for code enforcement, zoning, and related assistance	NWGRC	2021-2022 \$1,000/ YR		
		10. If enough communities express interest, develop local government pilot program for “circuit-riding” or shared assistance with code enforcement, zoning, and related assistance	NWGRC, DCA, local governments	2022-2024 \$5,000		
Natural and Historic Resources						
More people need to connect with Northwest Georgia’s natural resources so they will enjoy and protect its diversity and beauty	Identify, protect, preserve, and promote identified Regionally Important Resources	11. Update the Regional Resource Plan per Section 110-12-4-, 02(4) of Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs, including recommended actions to address critical resources and improve access to natural resources	NWGRC	2021 \$5,000		
		12. Implement RIR plan: Develop publicly accessible GIS database and maps highlighting region’s historic, cultural, and natural assets	NWGRC	2022-2023 \$7,500/ YR		

**Regional Work Program
FY 2021-2024**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
	Promote trails, greenways and blueways; Improve safety, visibility, and access to trails and blueways and add access points	16. Provide planning and grant writing assistance to 1-5 communities/ year to plan for expansion of and safety improvements to land and water trails, parks and recreation areas, trailheads, and water access/ put ins	NWGRC, local governments, DNR and grant agencies, SORBA, SETPL, other groups	2021-2024 \$7,500/ YR		
Preserve irreplaceable historic and cultural resources through inventory, citizen engagement, planning and funding assistance	Identify and preserve historic and cultural resources	17. Prepare 1-2 National Register preliminary determinations and nominations for regionally significant historical assets (Grant Farm, LaFayette, Tunnel Hill, Cohutta/ St Andrews Chapel, Dallas Historic District, Cedartown Historic District, Bremen, others)	NWGRC, HPD	2021-2024 \$15,000/ YR		
		18. Digitize NWGRC historic resource documents including National Register listings, historic resource surveys	NWGRC, Bandy Heritage Center	2021-2024 \$6,000		
		19. Assist 1-2 local governments/ YR to prevent loss of HPD Certified Local Government (CLG) status through technical assistance or grant writing to update ordinances, surveys, etc.	NWGRC, HPD, local govts	2021-2024 \$10,000/ YR		
Maintain surface and groundwater quality throughout the	Apply for funding to improve water quality, manage stormwater,	20. Prepare Dozier Creek, Dykes Creek, Woodward Creek, Etowah River (Hwy 411-Coosa	<u>NWGRC,</u> <u>Limestone Valley</u> <u>RC&D</u>	<u>2021</u> <u>\$20,000</u>		

**Regional Work Program
FY 2021-2024**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
region to meet federal and state regulations	restore streambanks, and protect water resources in the region	R.), Watershed Management Plans for USDA NRCS NWQI				
		21. Apply for funds to implement the 2019 Woodward Creek Watershed Management Plan	NWGRC, Limestone Valley RC&D	2021-2024 \$5,000		
		22. Administer finances and grant funds and provide staff support for monthly and annual meetings of the North Georgia Water Resources Partnership, a regional organization of utility providers which advises the Coosa-North Georgia Water Council and assists the Council to implement the CNG Water Plan	NWGRC	2021-2024 \$5,000/yr		
		23. Assist the North Georgia Water Resources Partnership, Coosa-North Georgia Water Council, or local governments and utilities to apply for state and federal funding to implement Regional Water Plans and related studies	NWGRC	2021-2024 \$7,500/yr		
		24. Work with GA EPD to develop a tool to prioritize delisting impaired streams in the Coosa-North Georgia Region and recommended	Coosa-North Georgia Water Council, N GA Water Resources Partnership, NWGRC, GAEPD	2021-2024 Staff time		

**Regional Work Program
FY 2021-2024**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
		implementation measures to delist these streams				
Land Use						
Develop a coordinated long-term land use vision for Northwest Georgia that respects local land use plans and that balances conservation with development needs	Assist local governments to comply with current Georgia Zoning Procedures Law (O.C.G.A. 36-66-1, et seq.; 36-67-1, et seq.; and, 36-67A-1, et seq. as amended) and provide necessary technical assistance.	25. Assist 2-5 local governments each year with review and update of zoning ordinance and/or map	NWGRC, local governments	2021-2024 \$20,000/yr		
		26. Work with training providers including UGA CVIOG, DCA, GAZA, and GPA to provide at least one annual planning and zoning training in the region, and local training as requested	NWGRC, local governments, Training providers (GAZA, GPA, DCA, UGA CVIOG)	2021-2024 \$1,000/ yr		
Planning and Local Government Assistance						
Develop a coordinated long-term land use vision for Northwest Georgia; provide assistance to local governments to meet state planning requirements	Assist local governments to prepare and implement Comprehensive Plans and service delivery strategies in accordance with the Georgia Planning Act and Service Delivery Strategy Act, to implement projects and initiatives in the comprehensive plan,	27. Assist 2-3 local governments/ year to prepare scheduled updates to local comprehensive plans – Catoosa, Chattooga, Haralson, Polk, and Walker in 2021	NWGRC, local governments	2021-2024 \$60,000/yr		
		28. Assist 1-2 communities each year with PlanFirst applications	NWGRC, local governments	2021-2024 \$5,000/ yr		
		29. Meet with approx. 15 governments each year to discuss implementation of the local comprehensive plan and regional plan, reporting requirements and other topics	NWGRC, local governments	2021-2024 \$7,500/yr		

**Regional Work Program
FY 2021-2024**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
	and to apply for PlanFirst designation.	related to planning and implementation; assist with amendments as needed to reflect emerging priorities				
		30. Provide assistance as requested to 1-3 communities/ year to review and update Service Delivery Strategy agreements as required- Catoosa, Chattooga, and Walker in 2021	NWGRC, local governments	2021-2024 \$3,500/ yr		
	Update the Regional Plan according to Georgia Department of Community Affairs' Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning	31. Update the <i>Northwest Georgia Regional Plan, 2019-2023</i> in 2023; prepare annual implementation reports.	NWGRC	2021-2024 \$7,500		
Provide resources to assist local governments to meet demands of growth, reinvestment, needs of rural areas	Provide outreach, training and technical assistance on planning and development needs of local governments	32. Prepare 20-30 local plan reviews, transportation plan review, environmental reviews, Section 106 reviews, and other coordinated reviews each year	NWGRC	2021-2024 \$5,000/ yr		
		37. Develop training and outreach materials, newsletter, and Facebook page for Regional Commission services and assistance; local government assistance as requested	NWGRC, local governments	2020-2023 \$5,000/ yr		

**Regional Work Program
FY 2021-2024**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
Transportation						
Provide safe, efficient movement of people and goods through Northwest Georgia to enhance economic growth.	Improve coordination between local governments, GDOT, MPOs and federal agencies to implement regionally significant transportation projects.	33. Participate in meetings of federal and state transportation agencies, Atlanta MPO, Chattanooga/Hamilton County/North Georgia TPO, Rome-Floyd County MPO, Greater Dalton MPO, Cartersville-Bartow County MPO; provide quarterly planning and coordination between these agencies and the NWGRC Council and non-MPO governments on regionally significant projects	NWGRC, GDOT, MPOs			Ongoing \$20,000/yr
		34. Prepare Regional Transit Study/ Assessment	GDOT, NWGRC	2021-2022 \$40,000		

**Regional Work Program
FY 2021-2024**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
		35. Implement FHWA Nat'l Economic Partnership Grant freight and truck parking study and THRIVE2055 transportation initiatives, representing NWGRC Counties of Dade, Walker, Catoosa, Whitfield, Murray	NWGRC, THRIVE2055	2021-2022 \$5,000/yr		
		36. Incorporate all local bike/ ped plans into a regional database; identify favorable connection corridors between bike/ ped infrastructure	NWGRC, GDOT, local govts and Bike! Walk! NWGA	2021-2022 \$10,000		
Improve connectivity of bike and pedestrian pathways throughout the region.	Implement bike & pedestrian safety plans, GA Bicycle/ Pedestrian Safety Action Plans, Safe Routes to School, implement Complete Streets design	37. Assist local governments to prepare for regional TSPLOST/ TIA referendum: Reconvene TIA roundtable; hold regular meetings; assist with development of priorities, project list and data; Citizen Review Panels	NWGRC, GDOT, local govts, legislative delegation	2021-2024 \$5,000		
		38. Staff and administer and update website for Bike! Walk! Northwest Georgia to implement the Regional Bike and Pedestrian Safety Plan and local plans.	NWGRC, GDOT, local govts and Bike! Walk! NWGA	2021-2024 \$5,000/ yr		

**Regional Work Program
FY 2021-2024**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
		39. Participate in 1-2 Safe Routes to School Resource Center walk safety audits per year and assist 1-2 schools and local governments/ year to implement audit recommendations and GDOT Complete Streets policies through planning, training, and grant writing assistance	NWGRC, GDOT, Safe Routes Resource Center	2021-2024 \$5,000/ yr		
	Develop more trails and trails systems that connect to parks, neighborhoods, retail centers, libraries, workplaces, and downtowns	40. Assist Catoosa, Dade, and Walker Counties and Cities with planning and grant writing to implement the 2015 NW GA Feasibility Study for Bikeway & Pedestrian Multi-Use Trails	NWGRC, Catoosa, Dade, and Walker Counties and Cities, funding agencies, Chick-Chatt Greenway Association, THRIVE2055	2021-2024 \$7,500		
		41. Assist Floyd County, Cave Spring, Cedartown, and Polk County with planning and grant writing to implement the Cave Spring to Cedartown Trail Study	NWGRC, Floyd County, Cave Spring, Cedartown and Polk County, funding agencies	2024 Staff time		
Broadband						
Improve broadband and telecommunication services	Partner with the Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative, local governments, providers, and other agencies and initiatives, and	42. Assist 1-5 communities/ year to apply for Broadband Ready designation	NWGRC, DCA, local governments, providers	2021-2024 \$5,000		
		43. Assist 1-3 local governments/ year to amend	NWGRC, local governments	2021-2024 \$5,000		

**Regional Work Program
FY 2021-2024**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
	participate in the Georgia Broadband Ready Program.	their comprehensive plans to include a Broadband Element				
		44. Implement key priorities of the 2014 Northwest Georgia Digital Economy Plan through the Regional Broadband Committee and GA Broadband Deployment Initiative, through grant writing and planning assistance	NWGRC, DCA, local governments, providers	2021-2024 \$5,000		
		45. Regional Broadband Committee of NWGRC Council and NWGRC staff: With GA Broadband Deployment Initiative and providers, assist 5-10 local governments/ year to identify and prioritize service and speed demand, identify gaps in infrastructure and costs to address those gaps, and to develop local and/or regional plans of action or feasibility study to address priority gaps in service	NWGRC, DCA, local governments, providers	2021-2022 \$5,000		
		46. Provide planning and grant-writing assistance to 1-10 local governments/year to implement local broadband action plans or feasibility assessments	NWGRC, local governments, providers	2021-2022 \$7,500/ yr		

**Regional Work Program
FY 2021-2024**

Priority	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs)	Ongoing
	Assess needs regarding 5G, provide assistance and resources	47. Attend 2-3 workshops and trainings/ year, and provide training, planning, and zoning, ordinance update, and historic preservation assistance to 1-5 local governments per year concerning regulation and review of 5-G technologies; provide information to NWGRC Regional Council on quarterly basis	NWGRC, DCA, local governments, providers, GMA, ACCG	2021-2022 \$500-1,000/ yr		

Bottleneck expected as Ga. courts reopen

By Stanley Dunlap
The Georgia Recorder

Georgia courts can't reopen for jury trials after the state's top judge lifted a ban on trying cases inside courthouses to avoid spreading COVID-19 during the pandemic.

Georgia Supreme Court Chief Justice Clifford Minton lifted the restrictions on jury trials Tuesday in his latest statewide judicial emergency order extension, giving court officials across Georgia the discretion to hear cases in person if they can follow health and safety guidelines. Many challenges to a judge and court administrator as late as thousands of cases have backed up since the coronavirus limited the number of people who could gather in courthouse atria last March.

It also means a balancing act for prosecutors, who will have to decide which cases go before a judge first and which ones to dismiss because of the intense caseload and defendant demands for a speedy trial.

Tens of thousands of people have waited in Georgia jails for longer than was common a year ago as justice slowed to a crawl in the pandemic with virtual hearings providing some relief, but a significant bottleneck has built up.

Judges have also warned that the health guidelines will severely hamper how many cases can be taken up at a time. In Fulton County, for example, the courthouse usually can handle as many as 10 hearings at a time but will be limited to two as it slowly reopens.

Minton recently outlined the importance of everything from temperature checks to masks requirements to socially distanced seating arrangements that must be accepted for as people return. A more limited jury pool makes it even more important that people are willing to serve, which in the end better ensure that defendants are getting their due process, he said.

"We've directed our courts to come up with those plans, but also to push those plans out to the public, so that when someone sitting on their couch receives a summons to come be a juror, they can go onto the court website and see what the court has planned for their duty," Minton said. "They shouldn't have to get in their car and wonder what it's going to be like."

And we're going to be making a push for jurors, in particular, to come out and serve because it is absolutely critical," Minton said.

The National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers said its members are worried about a potentially

diminished jury pool and whether jurors who are uncomfortable with COVID-19 protocols might have their verdict influenced.

A study conducted this year by Debra Research and Consulting found that 24% of people who answered a survey said they would worry about their health if called upon to serve on a jury.

"As much as the courtroom must be made safe for jurors, court systems also need to create physically safe and compliant deliberation spaces," the lawyers association said in a report. "Otherwise, there is a great risk that jurors will speed through deliberations to escape the courthouse as soon as possible."

Last week, the Georgia Senate voted in favor of a bill to temporarily suspend the state's speedy trial requirements, to give judges and prosecutors more leeway to process civil and criminal cases through the system.

But even if the bill becomes law on an expedited basis, defendants would still have the right to challenge their lengthy delay since the legislature only proposes to lift some state trial timing provisions and doesn't affect the federal constitutional right to a speedy trial.

The Georgia Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers has also said the pace of cases will be affected by the number of judges, attorneys, and other court officials available to handle the caseload.

Defense attorneys are working through ways to help clients make progress in the court system, said Jill Travis, executive director of the state defense lawyers association. Many people accused of crimes are still waiting in jail to see a judge long after their arrest and all parties are coping with the pandemic's unique challenges, she said.

"We know that everybody's going to have difficulty once the gates are open again, but we know there has to be some way to resolve the backlog," she said. "Even private lawyers can only take on so many cases."

For Georgia State Courts, the extensive number of cases could make it difficult for a prosecutor to prioritize them. That could influence whether they press forward or dismiss charges that may involve a person's livelihood or someone accused of theft, said Fulton County State Court Judge Wade Melton.

By the end of 2020, more than 60,000 people had cases pending across the majority of Georgia's judicial circuits, said Peter Skandlakis, executive director, Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of Georgia.



Pipeline construction starts on Charlton Street, beginning to install at Ridge Ferry Park

Above: About 25% of the Atlanta Gas Light pipeline work has been completed on Ebenezer Parkway, leading to the dog park side of Ridge Ferry Park. Left: Atlanta Gas Light construction workers are beginning to install the pipes on the dog park side of Ridge Ferry Park.

Photos by Ulrike Marley

United Way announces emergency food, shelter program allocations

From the United Way

Through its United Way affiliate, four local organizations have been awarded \$20,000 each for delivering emergency food and shelter services: Boone-Floyd YMCA, Salvation Army Rome, Open Door Children's Home and Hospitality House for Women.

Floyd County was also located \$31,000 for Phase II to support local programs. The allocation was made by a national board chaired by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency, and consists of representatives from the United Way Worldwide, American Red



of Rome & Floyd County

ment of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency, and consists of representatives from the United Way Worldwide, American Red

Cross, Catholic Charities, Salvation Army, National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. and the Jewish Federation of North America.

United Way of Rome & Floyd County administers the county's funding, assembling a local board of community representatives charged with distributing those funds appropriated by Congress to help expand the capacity of local food and shelter programs. The local board determines allocations through a competitive application process.

HOMETOWN



GNTC nominates 7 instructors for 2021 Rick Perkins Award

From Georgia Northwestern Technical College

Faculty and staff of Georgia Northwestern Technical College have nominated seven of their peer instructors for state recognition.

The Rick Perkins Award of Excellence in Technical Instruction competition is hosted annually by the Technical College System of Georgia. GNTC nominees for the award are: • Jeremiah Cooper, Welding and Joining Technology; • Brittany Elrod, General Education Technology;

• Claudio Lopez, Emergency Medical Services and Paramedic Technology; • Crista Beach, Vascular Technology; • Kimberly Temple, Respiratory Care Technology; • Mark Upton, Marketing Management; and • Dwight Watt, Computer Information Systems Technology.

"These instructors give 100% of the time to make sure students have all the tools they need to be successful in their chosen careers," said coordinator Beverly Padgett.

A screening committee reviewed each of the nominated instructors and conducted personal interviews. The winner — who will represent the college at the regional competition — will be announced at the GNAI and Rick Perkins Presentation Awards Luncheon set for March 25 at the Gordon County campus. The luncheon is sponsored by the Simon Hill Rotary Club, Rome Floyd Chamber and GNTC.

Rome News-Tribune's Almonson is looking for more good news. Send submissions to Executive Editor John Almonson at 706-290-2282 or by email at almonson@tribune.com.

Georgia tax collections are way up, but there's a catch

By Diane Wagner
dwagner@tribune.com

Georgia's net tax collections for February totaled over \$1.03 billion — up \$41 million compared to February 2020.

But much of the increase stemmed from federal guidance to delay processing income tax refunds until Feb. 15.

"This will cause the next month or two to take a hit on tax refunds," said state Sen. Chuck Haddadin, who chairs that chamber's Finance Committee.

Still, the Rome Republican said the news is good overall. State tax revenue continues to be strong, rising 13.1% over February 2020. Collections for the fiscal year period be-

tween July 1, 2020, and the end of February brought in \$76.4 million more than in the same period the previous fiscal year.

Another factor was among the state's heavy hitters that passed through a bill last year requiring online retailers like Amazon to collect sales tax on Georgia sales. Gov. Brian Kemp signed it into law on April 1, 2020.

Statewide, sales tax revenue for local governments increased by \$1.7 million in February, up 11.6% from January 2020, according to a release from Kemp's office.

Collections were down in several categories, including corporate income tax. Refunds for the month were

up \$8.0 million while payments declined by \$5.7 million. All other corporate taxes — including estimated payments — were down by \$2.6 million from last February.

Motor fuel tax collections fell slightly, by about \$10,000, compared to fiscal year 2020. And while bag and title fees increased by \$2.6 million in February, title and valuations tax revenue fell by \$3.7 million.

Overall, though, Georgia's total tax collections are up 9.3% year to date for the fiscal year that began July 1, 2020.

"The 50 states' average as a whole is down, on state revenue compared to the previous year, so Georgia is strongly outperforming the national average," Haddadin said.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE NORTHWEST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION

The Northwest Georgia Regional Commission has prepared a draft Annual Report on the Implementation of the 2019 Northwest Georgia Regional Plan, in accordance with the Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning, Chapter 100-12-6. The draft annual report includes a report of accomplishments on projects completed in FY2020, a local government performance standards update, and updates to the regional work program.

The draft annual report has been prepared with review and consideration of the Northwest Georgia Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, Regional Water Plans, Georgia's Plan for Outdoor Recreation: SCORP 2017-2021, Metropolitan Planning Organization transportation plans, and adjacent Regional Commissions' regional plans.

A public hearing is scheduled for the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission to accept comments on the draft annual report. After the public hearing, the draft annual report will be transmitted to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for approval.

The public hearing on the draft annual report will be held on Thursday, March 18, 2021, at the meeting of the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission Council beginning at 11:00 am, at the Rome Civic Center, located at 400 Civic Center Drive, Rome, Georgia 30161.

The draft annual report can be viewed on the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission website, www.nrgcr.com.

TENTATIVE AGENDA

NORTHWEST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION COUNCIL

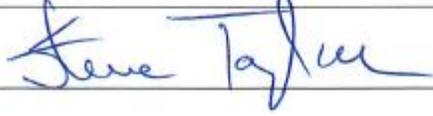
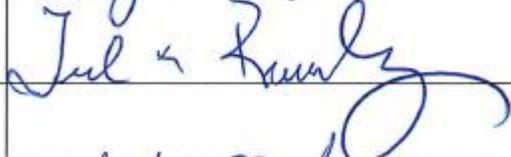
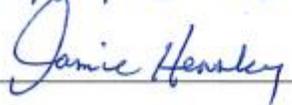
11:00 A. M.
Thursday, March 18, 2021

Civic Center - 400 Civic Center Drive - Rome, Georgia

1. Call to Order – Commissioner Ted Rumley, Chairperson
 - Invocation
 - Pledge of Allegiance
2. Establishment of Quorum – Commissioner Greg Hogan, NWGRC Secretary
3. Approval: Minutes of the February 18, 2021, Northwest Georgia Regional Commission (NWGRC) Council Meeting – Ted Rumley
4. Department of Finance – Joey Cumbie, Director
 - Update on Financial Status
5. Department of Regional Planning – Julianne Meadows, Director
 - Approval of 2021 Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Administration Grant Award – Delmos Stone, Community and Economic Development Manager
 - Approval of Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2020 Annual Update – Delmos Stone
6. Department of Workforce Development – Lesia Lambert, Director
7. Area Agency on Aging – Lynne Reeves, Director
8. Executive Director’s Report/Update – Lloyd Frasier
9. Public Hearing on Draft Annual Report on the Implementation of the 2019 Northwest Georgia Regional Plan – Julianne Meadows
10. Old/New Business
11. Adjournment/Lunch

Northwest Georgia Regional Commission Council Meeting
 Thursday, March 18, 2021 11:00 A.M.
 Civic Center, Rome, Georgia
 Sign-in Sheet (Page 1)

COUNCIL MEMBERS

County/City/Nonpublic	Name	Please Sign Below
Bartow County	Steve Taylor	
City of Cartersville	Jayce Stepp	
Bartow County (Nonpublic)	Karl Lutjens	
Catoosa County	Steven Henry	
City of Fort Oglethorpe	Rhonda James	
Catoosa County (Nonpublic)	Vacancy	
Chattooga County	Blake Elsberry	
City of Summerville	Harry Harvey	
Chattooga County (Nonpublic)	Jim Henry	
Dade County	Ted Rumley	
City of Trenton	Alex Case	
Dade County (Nonpublic)	Peter Cervelli	
Fannin County	Jamie Hensley	
City of Blue Ridge	Donna Whitener	
Fannin County (Nonpublic)	Joe Cipolla	

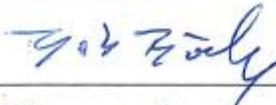
Northwest Georgia Regional Commission Council Meeting

Thursday, March 18, 2021 11:00 A.M.

Civic Center, Rome, Georgia

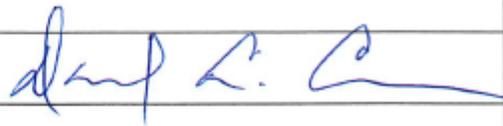
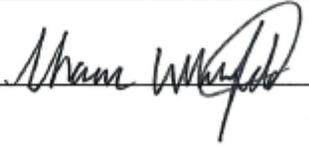
Sign-in Sheet (Page 2)

COUNCIL MEMBERS

<i>County/City/Nonpublic</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Please Sign Below</i>
Floyd County	Wright Bagby	
City of Rome	Bill Collins	
Floyd County (Nonpublic)	Chris Butler	
Gilmer County	Charlie Paris	
City of Ellijay	Al Hoyle	
Gilmer County (Nonpublic)	Kent W. Sanford	
Gordon County	M.L. Bud Owens	
City of Calhoun	George Crowley	
Gordon County (Nonpublic)	Dewayne Bowen	
Haralson County	Ronnie Ridley	
City of Bremen	Vacancy	
Haralson County (Nonpublic)	Bob Birky	
Murray County	Greg Hogan	
City of Chatsworth	K.W. Gong	
Murray County (Nonpublic)	Steve Noland	

Northwest Georgia Regional Commission Council Meeting
 Thursday, March 18, 2021 11:00 A.M.
 Civic Center, Rome, Georgia
Sign-in Sheet (Page 3)

COUNCIL MEMBERS

<i>County/City/Nonpublic</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Please Sign Below</i>
Paulding County	David Carmichael	
City of Dallas	James Kelly	
Paulding County (Nonpublic)	David Austin	
Pickens County	Kris Stancil	
City of Jasper	Steve Lawrence	
Pickens County (Nonpublic)	Gary Reece	
Polk County	Linda Liles	
City of Cedartown	Vacancy	
Polk County (Nonpublic)	Alan Dean	
Walker County	Shannon Whitfield	
City of LaFayette	Andy Arnold	
Walker County (Nonpublic)	Chip Catlett	
Whitfield County	Jevin Jensen	
City of Tunnel Hill	Ken Gowin	
Whitfield County (Nonpublic)	Mike Babb	

Northwest Georgia Regional Commission Council Meeting

Thursday, March 18, 2021 11:00 A.M.

Civic Center, Rome, Georgia

Sign-in Sheet (Page 4)

COUNCIL MEMBERS

<i>County/City/Nonpublic</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Please Sign Below</i>
Governor's Appointee	Nicholas Chester	
Governor's Appointee	David Guldenschuh	
Governor's Appointee	Michele Taylor	
Lieutenant Governor's Appointee	Vacancy	
Speaker of the House's Appointee	John Marshall	

Northwest Georgia Regional Commission Council Meeting

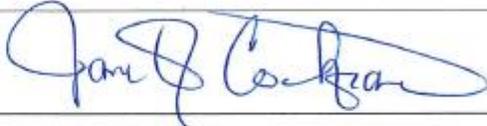
Thursday, March 18, 2021 11:00 A.M.

Civic Center, Rome, Georgia

Sign-in Sheet (Page 8)

VISITOR

7

<i>County, City or Organization</i>	<i>Name (Please Print)</i>	<i>Please Sign Below</i>
GA'S RURAL CTR.	Janet Cochran	
Congressman Loudermilk	William Anderson	
Dade County IDA	Wm. A. Back	
Floyd	Allison Watters	
Rome Floyd Chamber	Jeanne Krueger	

RE: NWGRC Regional Plan: Draft 2021 Annual Implementation Report

 Tamara Brock <tbrock@georgia.org>
To Julianne Meadows

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771 KB

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Mon 3/8/2021 12:03 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

This looks good. The list of accomplishments is incredible.

Tamara Brock
Project Manager, Region 1
Georgia Department of Economic Development
 678-858-3538

From: Julianne Meadows [<mailto:jmeadows@nwgrc.org>]
Sent: Thursday, March 4, 2021 2:17 PM
To: patrick.vickers <patrick.vickers@dca.ga.gov>; Tamara Brock <tbrock@georgia.org>
Cc: Elizabeth Smith <elizabeth.smith@dca.ga.gov>; Lloyd Frasier <lfrasier@nwgrc.org>; Ethan Calhoun <ecalhoun@nwgrc.org>
Subject: NWGRC Regional Plan: Draft 2021 Annual Implementation Report

Good afternoon,

Each year, NWGRC prepares the annual report on the implementation program of the Northwest Georgia Regional Plan. It includes an annual Report of Accomplishments for FY 2020, a report on Local Government Minimum Standards, and additions or deletions to the current work program (2021-2024).

We are sending the draft FY21 Annual Report on the Implementation Program for your review and comment, and would be glad of any suggestions or input. Please send any comments to Julianne Meadows, jmeadows@nwgrc.org. Thank you!

The Annual Update is in alignment with these state and regional plans:

- *Georgia Plan for Outdoor Recreation 2017-2021*
- *Coosa-North Georgia Regional Water Plan (2017)*
- *Metro NGA Water Planning District Water Resource Mgmt. Plan (2017) (amended Dec. 2020)*
- *Middle Chattahoochee Regional Water Plan (2017)*
- *Northwest Georgia's Economic Development Strategy 2017-2022 (CEDS)*,
- *Greater Dalton Metropolitan Planning Organization FY2018-2021 Adopted TIP, 2045 Regional Transportation Plan Update Chattahoochee Hamilton County-North Georgia TPO & 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Plan, Cartersville-Bartow County FY 2021-2024 TIP, Floyd County- Rome 2018-2021 TIP, Atlanta Regional Commission MPO FY 2018-2023 TIP Project List, Georgia DOT Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan 2018-2021 & 2021-2024 Draft*
- *Georgia Mountains Regional Commission 2019 CEDS & Regional Plan*
- *Three Rivers Regional Plan Update 2019 & FY20 Annual Implementation Report*

The [2019 Northwest Georgia Regional Plan](#) was prepared by the NWGRC Regional Council (Steering Committee) with input from a Technical Advisory Committee, stakeholders, and the public via survey (1,860 responses) according to the DCA Regional Planning Requirements. The Regional Plan includes Regional Goals and Policies; Regional Development Maps including the Regional Land Use Map, Conservation and Development Map, and Areas Requiring Special Attention Map; Regional Needs and Opportunities; and the Implementation Program including Performance Standards (Minimum and Excellence), Regional Work Program (2019-2023), and the Report of Accomplishments on the previous five-year work program.

Julianne Meadows



NWGRC Council Meeting, Regional Plan Update February 2019



Northwest Georgia Regional Commission is proud to be recognized as a Certified Organization of Ethics by the Georgia Municipal Association.

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Mission Statement: To improve the quality of life for every Northwest Georgia resident, through orderly growth, conservation of the region's natural and historic resources, and care and development of the region's human resources.

The Northwest Georgia Regional Commission is a multi-county organization consisting of 15 Northwest Georgia counties and 49 municipalities. Major responsibilities of the Regional Commission include: (1) implementation of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; (2) administration of the Area Agency on Aging; (3) administration of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; and (4) providing planning and development assistance to member governments in areas they could not otherwise afford.

[READ MORE ▸](#)



Ted M. Rumley
2020/2021 Chairperson

About the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission

Area Agency On Aging

Planning, Community & Economic Development

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Program

Meetings & Announcements

NWGRC Council Meeting – March 18, 2021

NWGRC Council Meeting – February 18, 2021

Public Service Announcement: No January 2021 Council Meeting

[SEE PAST MEETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS](#)

Recent Publications

DRAFT Catoosa County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2021-2031 *posted on March 17th, 2021*

DRAFT 2021 Annual Report on the Implementation Program, Northwest Georgia Regional Plan 2019-2023 *posted on March 4th, 2021*

Serving the following counties



Brian P. Kemp
Governor



Christopher Nunn
Commissioner

May 5, 2021

Mr. Lloyd Frasier
Executive Director
Northwest Georgia RC
Post Office Box 1798
Rome, Georgia 30162-1798

Dear Lloyd:

Thank you for submitting your commission's Regional Plan Implementation Program Annual Report. Our staff has completed its review and has determined the report adequately addresses the requirements of the Minimum Standards and procedures for Regional Planning. Additionally, we did not receive any comments during our interested parties review period.

Please let us know when the adoption of the report has taken place. Within seven days of adoption, provide a digital copy of the final version of the report with adoption resolution by saving the file into your commission's folder on SharePoint.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with your commission. Please let us know if and how we can assist you in this important planning effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tyler Reinagel".

Tyler Reinagel, Ph.D.
Director, Office of Planning and Research
Georgia Department of Community Affairs

TR/es

cc: Julianne Meadows