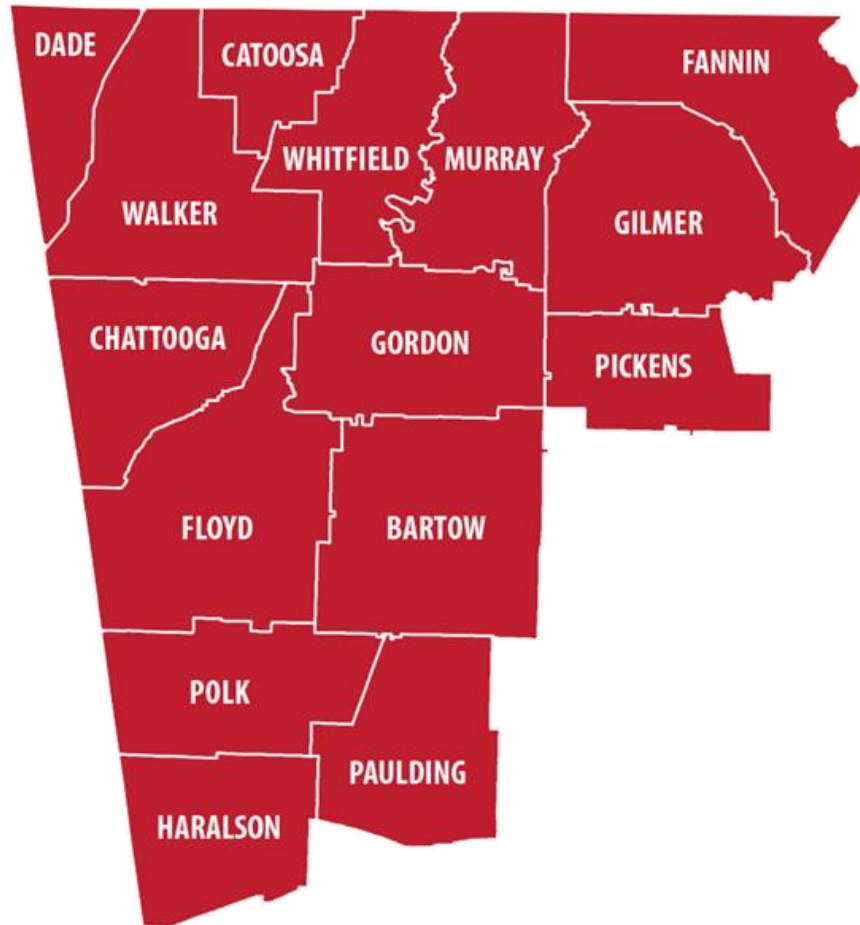


2025 Regional Plan Implementation Program

DRAFT Annual Report



Northwest Georgia Regional Plan 2024-2028

DRAFT 2025 Regional Plan Implementation Program Annual Report

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Regional Plan Implementation Program Annual Report

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE REGIONAL PLAN

In 2024, the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission Council (Steering Committee) updated the Regional Plan with input from a Technical Advisory Committee, stakeholders, and the public via public meetings, public hearings, and the Regional Priorities Survey which garnered 549 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 (2024-2028), 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 Regional Resource Plan was also updated in 2024. The Plan aligns with the 2024 NWGRC Regional 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 2025 Annual Report on the Regional Plan Implementation Program according to Georgia Department of Community Affairs Regional Planning Requirements. It includes an annual Report of Accomplishments for FY 2024, a report on Local Government Minimum Standards, and additions or deletions to the current work program for 2025-2026. This 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:

- Georgia Plan for Outdoor Recreation SCORP 2022-2026
- Coosa-North Georgia Regional Water Plan (2023)
- Metro Water District 2022 Water Resources Management Plan
- Middle Chattahoochee Regional Water Plan (2023)
- Northwest Georgia's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 (CEDS),
- Greater Dalton Metropolitan Planning Organization FY2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Plan, Chattanooga Hamilton County-North Georgia MPO 2050 Regional Transportation Plan & TIP as amended, Cartersville-Bartow County FY 2023-2026 TIP, Rome/Floyd County 2024-2027 TIP and 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Atlanta Regional Commission MPO Regional Transportation Plan and TIP, Georgia DOT FY 24-27 STIP
- Georgia Mountains Regional Commission CEDS & Regional Plan 2022-2027
- Three Rivers Regional Plan & FY22 Annual Implementation Report

1.3 REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS FY 2024

The Report of Accomplishments for FY 2024 presents an annual status update on each project listed in the 2024-2028 Regional Work Program, for the 2024 fiscal year. Each project must be listed as 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

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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.

#	Action	Partners	Short Term (1-5 yrs)	Long term (6-10 yr)	Ongoing	Project Status
Community and Economic Development						
Priority Need: Ensure infrastructure is in place across the region to meet the needs of existing and new businesses and industries.						
Strategy: Implement regional and local plans and strategies for infrastructure improvements needed to support job creation/retention and private investment						
1	Assist 10-15 communities/ year to improve or expand infrastructure to support downtown and economic development through grant writing and planning; assist with projects related to IJJA/BIL funds	NWGRC	2024-2028 \$70,000/ YR			Ongoing- 10 applications/ projects in 2024
2	Partner with neighboring regions to assist in the transition to Electric Vehicle (EV) manufacturing; assist with EV infrastructure	NWGRC, ARC ARISE	2024-2028 \$15,000/ yr			Ongoing- 2 projects
3	Update the Northwest Georgia Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)	NWGRC	2027 \$10,000			
4	Implement Economic Resiliency Plan (EDA) in NW Georgia.	NWGRC	2024-2028 \$10,000/			Ongoing- multiple projects
Priority Need: Improve the competitiveness of Northwest Georgia communities to attract and retain business and industry						
Strategy: Provide planning and funding assistance to increase economic competitiveness in coordination with state and federal agencies						
5	Provide EDA RLF loan packaging to assist 3+ small 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	NWGRC, EDA, Lenders, Businesses	2024-2028			Ongoing: Total assets of \$1.5 million+. Over \$23 million in financing for 97 businesses since 1981, creating/ retaining 1,300+ jobs in Northwest Georgia. In 2020, NWGRC was awarded an additional EDA RLF which to date has funded 10 small businesses totaling over \$250,000.

#	Action	Partners	Short Term (1-5 yrs)	Long term (6-10 yr)	Ongoing	Project Status
6	Participate in and implement recommendations of Georgia's Artificial Intelligence in Manufacturing (GA-AIM) project	NWGRC	2024-2026			Ongoing: 3 workshops held in 2024
Priority Need: Provide resources and assistance to support community development projects						
Strategy: Provide project development and application assistance for projects that improve public services, infrastructure, and tourism						
7	Assist with water, sewer, broadband, and other infrastructure improvements, fire and police services, parks, recreation, and trails, and other community development needs	NWGRC, DCA, ARC, GEFA, LWCF, Recreational Trails, AFG, others	2024-2028 \$80,000/yr			Ongoing: 25 projects
8	Provide 1-5 training workshops/ year for local governments on project development, funding assistance, compliance, and related topics	NWGRC, DCA, ARC, others	2024-2028 \$10,000/yr			Ongoing: 2 workshops
9	Provide technical assistance to local governments in meeting compliance requirements for grants received	NWGRC	2024-2028 \$20,000/yr			Ongoing, multiple
Housing						
Priority Need: There is a lack of safe, affordable housing and a lack of housing investment						
Strategy: Incentivize redevelopment of blighted or vacant areas for residential use; assist local governments with housing needs						
10	Partner with state agencies to hold 1-3 regional workshops per year for resources and training for local governments on housing needs	NWGRC, DCA, state agencies and partners	2024-2028 \$5,000			Ongoing: 1 workshop
11	Provide data and resources to communities to identify housing needs	NWGRC	2024-2028 \$10,000/yr			Ongoing: multiple

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#	Action	Partners	Short Term (1-5 yrs)	Long term (6-10 yr)	Ongoing	Project Status
12	Assist 1-2 communities/ YR to apply for GA Initiatives for Community Housing (GICH); serve on community teams	NWGRC, local governments	2024-2028 \$7,500/ YR			Ongoing: 2 communities
Land Use						
Priority Need: Develop a coordinated long-term land use vision for Northwest Georgia that respects local land use plans and balances conservation with development needs						
Strategy: Assist local governments to comply with the 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.						
24	Assist 2-5 local governments each year with Zoning and Land Use Ordinance authoring and adoption and amendment; develop local service contracts with 5-10 local governments for zoning and land use assistance	NWGRC, local governments	2024-2028 \$20,000/yr.			Ongoing: 10 communities
25	Administer the Dalton-Whitfield- Varnell Unified Development Ordinance	NWGRC	\$40,000/yr			Ongoing
26	Work with training providers including UGA CVIOG to provide 1- 2 annual planning and zoning training and related training	NWGRC, local governments, Training providers (GAZA, GPA, DCA, UGA CVIOG)	2024-2028 \$1,000/ yr.			Ongoing: 2 workshops
Strategy: Assist local governments to prepare and implement Comprehensive Plans, update and implement the regional plan, meet other requirements of the Georgia Planning Act and related laws, and apply for PlanFirst designation.						
27	Assist with the preparation of scheduled updates to joint comprehensive plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gilmer County and municipalities (2024), 	NWGRC, local governments	2024-2028 \$60,000/yr.			Ongoing: Gilmer joint comprehensive plan completed, Catoosa and Chattooga in progress

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#	Action	Partners	Short Term (1-5 yrs)	Long term (6-10 yr)	Ongoing	Project Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chattooga and Catoosa Counties and municipalities (2026), • Dade, Fannin, Haralson, Polk, Walker Counties and municipalities (2027), • Bartow, Gordon, Murray, and Whitfield Counties and municipalities (2028) 					
28	Prepare 10+/year Development of Regional Impact reviews and reports for projects meeting DRI thresholds; prepare regional map of DRI projects	NWGRC, local governments	2024-2028 \$7,500/year			Ongoing: 13 DRIs processed
29	Assist 1-2 communities each year with PlanFirst applications	NWGRC, local governments	2024-2028 \$5,000/ yr.			Ongoing: 3 communities assisted, none submitted
30	Update the <i>Northwest Georgia Regional Plan</i> in 2028-2029; prepare annual implementation reports.	NWGRC	2024-2028 \$7,500			Ongoing
31	Prepare 20-30 local plan reviews, transportation plan reviews, environmental reviews, Section 106 reviews, and other coordinated reviews each year	NWGRC	2024-2028 \$5,000/ yr.			Ongoing: 32 prepared
Natural and Cultural Resources						
Priority Need: Connect more people with Northwest Georgia’s natural resources so they will enjoy and protect its diversity and beauty						
Strategy: Identify, preserve, and promote identified Regionally Important Resources						
13	A complete update of the Regional Resource Plan per Section 110-12-4-, 02(4) of Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs, including recommendations to preserve critical resources	NWGRC	2024 \$5,000			Completed June 2024
14	Implement RIR plan: Develop publicly accessible GIS database and maps highlighting the region’s historic, cultural, and natural assets	NWGRC	2024-2028 \$7,500/ YR			Ongoing

#	Action	Partners	Short Term (1-5 yrs)	Long term (6-10 yr)	Ongoing	Project Status
Strategy: Improve trails, greenways, water trails/ blueways, and trail connections within and to adjoining regions; Improve safety, visibility, and access to trails and water trails/blueways; provide improved recreational opportunities for all						
15	Assist 1-5 communities/ year to improve water trails/ blueways and put-ins, parks and recreation areas, trails, and trailheads	NWGRC, local governments, state partners and agencies, SORBA, TPL, Limestone Valley RC&D, Thrive Regional Partnership, and others	2024-2028 \$7,500/ YR			Ongoing: 4 applications
16	Assist Catoosa, Dade, and Walker Counties and Cities to implement the 2015 NW GA Feasibility Study for Bikeway & Pedestrian Multi-Use Trails including the development of Chick-Chatt greenway, trail, and Lookout Mountain trail connections	NWGRC, Catoosa, Dade, and Walker Counties and Cities, funding agencies, Chick-Chatt Greenway Association, Thrive Regional Partnership	2024-2028 \$7,500			Ongoing: 2 applications
Priority Need: Preserve irreplaceable historic and cultural resources through inventory, citizen engagement, planning, and funding assistance						
Strategy: Identify and preserve historic and cultural resources						
17	Provide resources to local governments for historic National Register nominations for regionally significant historical assets	NWGRC, HPD	2024-2028 \$10,000/ YR			Ongoing: 2 communities assisted

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#	Action	Partners	Short Term (1-5 yrs)	Long term (6-10 yr)	Ongoing	Project Status
18	Support historic resource surveys and digitize NWGRC's historic resource documents	NWGRC, Bandy Heritage Center	2024-2028 \$6,000			Ongoing
19	Assist region's Certified Local Governments (CLGs) to maintain eligibility; assist in updating local ordinances	NWGRC, HPD, local govts	2024-2028 \$5,000/ YR			Ongoing
Priority Need: Maintain surface and groundwater quality throughout the region to meet federal and state regulations						
Strategy: Apply for funding to improve water quality, manage stormwater, restore streambanks, and protect water resources in the region						
20	Provide resources to local governments to implement Watershed Management Plans and water quality plans, with Limestone Valley RC&D as a partner when possible.	NWGRC	2024-2028 \$5,000/yr.			Ongoing: Served on Dalton's Resilient Community team planning for the conservation of Rocky Face Ridge
21	Provide staff support to the North Georgia Water Resources Partnership including administration of Regional Water Plan Seed Grants and annual educational seminar	NWGRC	2024-2028 \$5,000/yr.			Ongoing: 7 monthly mtgs; 1 annual mtg with 111 attendees
22	Administer FY2023 Regional Water Plan Seed Grant funds to prepare the Lake Lanier Pilot Nutrient Trade project, and FY2024 RWP seed grant funds for resiliency study	Coosa-North Georgia Water Council, N GA Water Resources Partnership, NWGRC, GAEPD	2024-2028 \$2,000/ yr			Ongoing: 2023 grant completed, 2024 grant in process
23	Assist 2-3 local governments/ year to implement recommendations of Coosa-North Georgia Water Plan, resiliency	NWGRC, GAWP, DCA, others	2024-2028 \$5,000/ yr			Ongoing

#	Action	Partners	Short Term (1-5 yrs)	Long term (6-10 yr)	Ongoing	Project Status
	study, other plans through green infrastructure, culvert redesign and improvement, green space, and conservation design projects					
Transportation						
Priority Need: Provide safe, efficient movement of people and goods through Northwest Georgia to enhance economic growth						
Strategy: Improve coordination between local governments, GDOT, MPOs, and federal agencies to implement regionally significant transportation projects						
32	Prepare Regional Transit Development Plan in partnership with GDOT and consultant agencies	GDOT, NWGRC, Modern Mobility, AECOM	2024 \$40,000			Completed October 2024
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 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
34	Implement THRIVE2055 transportation and freight mobility initiatives, representing NWGRC Counties of Dade, Walker, Catoosa, Whitfield, Murray	NWGRC, THRIVE2055	2024-2028 \$5,000/yr.			Ongoing: attended 5 meetings or forums
35	Add transit page with GDOT transit materials and links to NWGRC website; update regularly	NWGRC	2024-2028 \$5,000/yr.			Postponed to 2025-2026
36	Coordinate with GDOT District 6 and/or Office of Planning and with local governments and MPOs in needs related	NWGRC, GDOT, local governments	2024-2028 \$5,000/ yr.			Ongoing

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#	Action	Partners	Short Term (1-5 yrs)	Long term (6-10 yr)	Ongoing	Project Status
	to BIL/IIJA funding, incl. training, technical assistance, etc.					
Priority Need: Improve connectivity of bike and pedestrian pathways throughout the region						
Strategy: Implement bike & pedestrian safety plans, GA Bicycle/ Pedestrian Safety Action Plans, Safe Routes to School, implement Complete Streets design						
37	Migrate Bike! Walk! Northwest Georgia website materials to NWGRC website to implement the Regional Bike and Pedestrian Safety Plan and local plans.	NWGRC, GDOT, local govts, and Bike! Walk! NWGA	2024-2028 \$5,000/ yr.			Postponed to 2025-2026
38	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	2024-2028 \$5,000/ yr.			Ongoing: 2 communities assisted; 8 projects submitted
39	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	2024-2028 \$10,000			Postponed to 2025-2026

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. The report on local government performance in achieving the minimum standards is shown below.

Number	Minimum Standard Requirement	Status	Action to assist
Min1	The local government has an updated, adopted comprehensive plan and uses the future development map or land use map to guide development.	All local governments have met	
Min2	The local government has an approved, adopted Service Delivery Strategy which is updated as required.	All local governments have met	
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).	All local governments have met	
Min4	Newly elected municipal/county officials participate in training sponsored by the Georgia Municipal Association or the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia.	All local governments have met	
Min5	The local government uses the Guiding Principles, Regional Vision, and Regional Priorities of the Northwest Georgia Regional Plan in making local planning decisions.	All local governments have met	
Min6	The local government uses the General Policies and Protection Measures in the Northwest Georgia Regional Resource Plan when making decisions that affect Regionally Important Resources.	All local governments have met	
Min7	The local government complies with requirements regarding Developments of Regional Impact.	All local governments have met	
Min8	A hazard mitigation plan approved by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency has been officially adopted by the local governing authority.	All local governments have met	
Min9	The local government meets state financial reporting requirements and E-Verify requirements.	Not met: Braswell (E-Verify, Sanctuary reporting); Aragon (RLGF); Cohutta (RLGF); Resaca (RLGF)	Will contact & assist in completing reports as needed
Min10	The local government shares updated Tax Assessor's data tables and parcel data with NWGRC annually or as needed.	All local governments have met	
Min11	The local government reports annexations and deannexations to the Department of Community Affairs and the US Census Bureau and participates in the annual Census Boundary and Annexation Survey.	All local governments have met	

1.5 REGIONAL WORK PROGRAM REVISIONS

Needs, funding opportunities, and projects may change from year to year, and the regional work program is adjusted to reflect those updates. New projects are indicated with an underline, while projects that were completed or dropped are shown in ~~striethrough~~.

#	Action	Partners	Short Term (1-5 yrs)	Long term (6-10 yr)	Ongoing
Community and Economic Development					
Priority Need: Ensure infrastructure is in place across the region to meet the needs of existing and new businesses and industries.					
Strategy: Implement regional and local plans and strategies for infrastructure improvements needed to support job creation/retention and private investment					
1.	Assist 10-15 communities/ year to improve or expand infrastructure to support downtown and economic development through grant writing and planning; assist with projects related to IJJA/BIL funds	NWGRC	2025-2028 \$70,000/ YR		
2.	Partner with neighboring regions to assist in the transition to Electric Vehicle (EV) manufacturing; assist with public EV infrastructure	NWGRC, ARC ARISE	2025-2028 \$15,000/ yr		
3.	Update the Northwest Georgia Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)	NWGRC	2027 \$10,000		
4.	Implement Economic Resiliency Plan (EDA) in NW Georgia.	NWGRC	2025-2028 \$10,000/		
Priority Need: Improve the competitiveness of Northwest Georgia communities to attract and retain business and industry					
Strategy: Provide planning and funding assistance to increase economic competitiveness in coordination with state and federal agencies					
5.	Provide EDA RLF loan packaging to assist 3+ small 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	NWGRC, EDA, Lenders, Businesses	2025-2028		
6.	Participate in and implement recommendations of Georgia's Artificial Intelligence in Manufacturing (GA-AIM) project	NWGRC	2025-2026		
Priority Need: Provide resources and assistance to support community development projects					
Strategy: Provide project development and application assistance for projects that improve public services, infrastructure, and tourism					
7.	Assist local governments with applications for funding for water, sewer, broadband, and other infrastructure	NWGRC, DCA, ARC, GEFA, LWCF,	2025-2028 \$80,000/yr		

#	Action	Partners	Short Term (1-5 yrs)	Long term (6-10 yr)	Ongoing
	improvements, fire and police services, parks, recreation, and trails, and other community development needs	Recreational Trails, AFG, others			
8.	Provide 1-5 training workshops/ year for local governments on project development, funding assistance, compliance, and related topics	NWGRC, DCA, ARC, others	2025-2028 \$10,000/yr		
9.	Provide technical assistance to local governments in meeting compliance requirements for grants received	NWGRC	2025-2028 \$5,000/yr		
Housing					
Priority Need: There is a lack of safe, affordable housing and a lack of housing investment					
Strategy: Incentivize redevelopment of blighted or vacant areas for residential use; assist local governments with housing needs					
10.	Partner with state agencies to hold 1-3 regional workshops per year for housing-related training and resources	NWGRC, DCA, state agencies and partners	2025-2028 \$5,000		
11.	Provide data and resources to communities to assess housing needs	NWGRC	2025-2028 \$10,000/yr		
12.	Assist 1-2 communities/ year to apply for GA Initiatives for Community Housing (GICH); serve on community teams	NWGRC, local governments	2025-2028 \$7,500/ YR		
13.	<u>Prepare regional Housing and Transportation analysis and growth scenario study</u>	<u>NWGRC</u>	<u>2025-2026</u> <u>\$7,500</u>		
14.	<u>Prepare and update annual report for the region, and data reports</u>	<u>NWGRC</u>	<u>2025-2026</u> <u>\$7,500</u>		
Land Use					
Priority Need: Develop a coordinated long-term land use vision for Northwest Georgia that respects local land use plans and balances conservation with development needs					
Strategy: Assist local governments to comply with the 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.					
15.	Assist 2-5 local governments/ year with Zoning and Land Use Ordinance authoring, adoption, and amendment; develop local service contracts with local governments for zoning and land use assistance	NWGRC, local governments	2025-2028 \$20,000/yr.		
16.	Administer the Dalton-Whitfield- Varnell Unified Development Ordinance	NWGRC	\$40,000/yr		

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#	Action	Partners	Short Term (1-5 yrs)	Long term (6-10 yr)	Ongoing
17.	Work with training providers including UGA CVIOG to provide 1- 2 planning and zoning workshops/ year	NWGRC, training providers (GAZA, GPA, DCA, UGA CVIOG)	2025-2028 \$1,000/ yr.		
Strategy: Assist local governments to prepare and implement Comprehensive Plans, update and implement the regional plan, meet other requirements of the Georgia Planning Act and related laws, and apply for PlanFirst designation.					
18.	Assist with the preparation of scheduled updates to joint comprehensive plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gilmer County and municipalities (2024), • Chattooga and Catoosa Counties and municipalities (2026), • Dade, Fannin, Haralson, Polk, Walker Counties and municipalities (2027), • Bartow, Gordon, Murray, and Whitfield Counties and municipalities (2028) 	NWGRC, local governments	2025-2028 \$60,000/yr.		
19.	Prepare 10+/year Development of Regional Impact reviews; prepare regional map of DRI projects	NWGRC, local governments	2025-2028 \$7,500/year		
20.	<u>Prepare regional solid waste needs assessment including landfill siting map; prepare a feasibility study of waste-to-energy facility</u>	<u>DNR</u>	<u>2025-2026</u> <u>\$10,000</u>		
21.	Assist 1-2 communities each year with PlanFirst applications	NWGRC, local governments	2025-2028 \$5,000/ yr.		
22.	Update the <i>Northwest Georgia Regional Plan</i> in 2024 and 2028-2029; prepare annual implementation reports.	NWGRC	2025-2028 \$7,500		
23.	Prepare 20-30 local plan reviews, environmental reviews, Section 106 reviews, and other coordinated intergovernmental reviews each year	NWGRC	2025-2028 \$5,000/ yr.		
Natural and Cultural Resources					
Priority Need: Connect more people with Northwest Georgia’s natural resources so they will enjoy and protect its diversity and beauty					
Strategy: Identify, preserve, and promote identified Regional Resources					
24.	A complete update of the Regional Resource Plan per Section 110-12-4-, 02(4) of Rules of Georgia Department	NWGRC	2024 \$5,000	<u>Completed</u>	

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#	Action	Partners	Short Term (1-5 yrs)	Long term (6-10 yr)	Ongoing
	of Community Affairs, including recommendations to preserve critical resources				
25.	Implement the 2024 Regional Resource Plan: Develop publicly accessible GIS database and maps highlighting the region’s historic, cultural, and natural assets including Civil War and Native American history	NWGRC	2025-2028 \$7,500/ YR		
Strategy: Improve trails, greenways, water trails/ blueways, and trail connections within and to adjoining regions; Improve safety, visibility, and access to trails and water trails/blueways; provide improved recreational opportunities for all					
26.	Assist 1-5 communities/ year to improve water trails/ blueways and put-ins, parks and recreation areas, trails, and trailheads	NWGRC, local governments, state partners and agencies, SORBA, TPL, Limestone Valley RC&D, Thrive Regional Partnership, and others	2025-2028 \$7,500/ YR		
27.	Assist Catoosa, Dade, and Walker Counties and municipalities to implement the 2015 NW GA Feasibility Study for Bikeway & Pedestrian Multi-Use Trails including the development of Chick-Chatt greenway, trail, and Lookout Mountain trail connections	NWGRC, Catoosa, Dade, and Walker Counties and Cities, funding agencies, Chick-Chatt Greenway Association, Thrive Regional Partnership	2025-2028 \$7,500		
Priority Need: Preserve irreplaceable historic and cultural resources through inventory, citizen engagement, planning, and funding assistance					
Strategy: Identify and preserve historic and cultural resources					
28.	Provide resources to local governments for National Register nominations for regionally significant historical assets	NWGRC, HPD	2025-2028 \$10,000/ YR		

#	Action	Partners	Short Term (1-5 yrs)	Long term (6-10 yr)	Ongoing
29.	Provide support and assistance for historic resource surveys; digitize NWGRC's historic resource documents	NWGRC, Bandy Heritage Center	2025-2028 \$6,000		
30.	Assist region's Certified Local Governments (CLGs) to maintain eligibility; assist in updating local ordinances	NWGRC, HPD, local govts	2025-2028 \$5,000/ YR		
Priority Need: Maintain surface and groundwater quality throughout the region to meet federal and state regulations					
Strategy: Apply for funding to improve water quality, manage stormwater, restore streambanks, and protect water resources in the region					
31.	Provide resources to local governments to implement Watershed Management Plans and water quality plans, with Limestone Valley RC&D as a partner when possible.	NWGRC	2025-2028 \$5,000/yr.		
32.	Provide staff support to the North Georgia Water Resources Partnership including administration of Regional Water Plan Seed Grants, annual educational seminar	NWGRC	2025-2028 \$5,000/yr.		
33.	Administer FY2023 Regional Water Plan Seed Grant funds to prepare the Lake Lanier Pilot Nutrient Trade project, and FY2024 RWP seed grant funds for resiliency study	Coosa-North Georgia Water Council, N GA Water Resources Partnership, NWGRC, GAEPD	2025-2028 \$5,000/ yr		
34.	Assist 2-3 local governments/ year with funding and technical assistance to implement recommendations of Regional Water Plans, resiliency studies, related plans	NWGRC, GAWP, DCA, others	2025-2028 \$5,000/ yr		
Transportation					
Priority Need: Provide safe, efficient movement of people and goods through Northwest Georgia to enhance economic growth					
Strategy: Improve coordination between local governments, GDOT, MPOs, and federal agencies to implement regionally significant transportation projects					
35.	<u>Implement Regional Transit Development Plan in partnership with GDOT and region's transit providers, including convening 1-2 meetings of transit providers/ year</u>	<u>GDOT, NWGRC</u>	<u>2025</u> <u>\$10,000</u>		
36.	<u>Prepare feasibility study for regional transit operation</u>	<u>GDOT, NWGRC</u>	<u>2025-2026</u> <u>\$10,000</u>		

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#	Action	Partners	Short Term (1-5 yrs)	Long term (6-10 yr)	Ongoing
37.	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.
38.	Implement THRIVE2055 transportation and freight mobility initiatives, representing NWGRC Counties of Dade, Walker, Catoosa, Whitfield, Murray	NWGRC, THRIVE2055	2025-2028 \$5,000/yr.		
39.	Add transit page with GDOT transit materials and links to NWGRC website; update regularly	NWGRC	2025 \$5,000/yr.		
Priority Need: Improve connectivity of bike and pedestrian pathways throughout the region					
Strategy: Implement bike & pedestrian safety plans, GA Bicycle/ Pedestrian Safety Action Plans, Safe Routes to School, implement Complete Streets design					
40.	Migrate Bike! Walk! Northwest Georgia website materials to NWGRC website to implement the Regional Bike and Pedestrian Safety Plan and local plans.	NWGRC, GDOT, local govts, and Bike! Walk! NWGA	2025-2028 \$5,000/ yr.		
41.	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	NWGRC, GDOT, Safe Routes Resource Center	2025-2028 \$5,000/ yr.		
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	2025-2028 \$10,000		
43.	<u>Use GDOT Complete Streets Manual, Bike and Pedestrian Guide, and Vulnerable Road Users Action Plan to assist communities with bike and ped safety projects, provide training</u>	<u>NWGRC</u>	<u>\$1,000/ year</u>		

1.6 PUBLIC HEARING AND STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION DOCUMENTATION

NWGRC 2025 Annual Regional Plan Implementation Update

March 20, 2025, Public Hearing

Held at the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission Council meeting, Dalton State College, Gignilliat Memorial Hall, Room 101 A-B, 656 College Drive, Dalton, Georgia 30720

Posted on Northwest Georgia Regional Commission website

NWGRC 2025 Annual Regional Plan Implementation Update

Submitted to Georgia Department of Community Affairs and Georgia Department of Economic Development Regional Representatives for review.

1.7 TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

1.8 GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS APPROVAL LETTER

1.9 ADOPTION RESOLUTION