



## Capitol Connection E-Newsletter- August 2016

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### *Meetings*

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#### **Second Round of ACCG Policy Committee Meetings Underway**

The second round of summer policy committee meetings is now underway. It's not too late to register for any of the remaining meetings as ACCG encourages all county officials to become involved in the association's policy development process. Policy committee meetings allow county officials to provide their input and share their perspective on the issues that the ACCG policy staff will pursue during the 2017 legislative session. The meetings are a significant part of the association's policy process and engaging the membership is not only critical, but highly valued.

Click [here](#) to register and to obtain meeting details and an agenda.

#### **Registration Now Open for the 2016 Legislative Leadership Conference**

The Legislative Leadership Conference is heading back to the coast. Glynn County will once again serve as the host county of ACCG's fall policy conference that will take place on September 28-30 at the Jekyll

Island Convention Center. County officials are encouraged to attend this event as the 2017-2018 County Platform will be finalized during the business session. The County Platform will guide the ACCG policy staff's advocacy efforts before the General Assembly and Congress.

Contact your county clerk to register! The housing August 28<sup>th</sup> housing deadline is approaching soon!

Click [here](#) for more information.

### **Save the Date: 2016 District Meetings**

Save the date for this year's Fall District Meetings! Taking place in each of ACCG's 12 districts throughout the state, these meetings allow county officials to engage in candid town hall discussions with some of Georgia's state legislators. Meeting attendees will also receive information on key county issues as well as an update from the ACCG policy staff on what to expect for the upcoming legislative session. So, mark your calendar and prepare to get engaged by attending the meeting(s) of your choice!

**November 9** – Districts 9 and 12

**November 10** – Districts, 8, 10 and 11

**November 14** – Districts 6 and 7

**November 16** – Districts 2 and 5

**November 17** – Districts 3 and 4

**November 18** – District 1

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### *Resources*

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### **SPLOST Guide is Available**

ACCG is pleased to announce the arrival of the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax Guide. This digital guide allows the user to easily navigate the contents by either scrolling through the text or by clicking on individual page numbers or frequently asked questions to view specific information. It also has been formatted to be printed on 8.5X11 paper if the user intends to use it in a hard copy format. The guide contains model resolutions, sample reports, a checklist, timeline, and a copy of the latest SPLOST law. To access the guide, please click on the following link: [ACCG 2016 SPLOST Guide](#).

### **DOR Changes to 2016 Tax Digest Submission Manual**

The Georgia Department of Revenue, also known as DOR, has made two changes to the 2016 Local Tax Digest Submission Manual since its initial release.

The original submission instructions adjusted the manner in which Forest Land Protection Act assistance grants would be calculated and disbursed. Specifically, the instructions provided for a cap in the current year value loss under FLPA which limited the amount of the grant for which counties would be eligible. This change has been reversed, and based on guidance provided by DOR on July 15, 2016, DOR will be utilizing the previous formula that has historically been used for the calculation of the FLPA grants.

Furthermore, the original submission instructions also included a new requirement for counties to submit a list of properties owned by development authorities or located within local enterprise zones. Since the release of those instructions, DOR has reconsidered that requirement, and according to DOR guidance issued on August 4, 2016, this requirement may be disregarded.

Please contact ACCG Legislative Associate Brad Vaughan at [bvaughan@accg.org](mailto:bvaughan@accg.org) or (404) 522-5022 if you have any questions about these changes to the submission manual.

### **New Report of Local Government Finances Form Released**

Last month, the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) distributed the new Report of Local Government Finances (RLGF) Form to counties. The updated form is the consolidated efforts of a task force made up of accounting professionals and staff from DCA, ACCG, the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA), and the Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG). This form is available on the [DCA website](#) and should be provided to the finance officer for your county. Not every finance officer may be currently receiving or maintaining financial data to the detail level now required on the new form. However, they must be proactive in obtaining the details necessary and adjusting their particular accounting system to record this level of detail going forward.

The due date for the annual RLGF submission has also been changed to six months following the end of your county's fiscal year. Due to this change, counties with fiscal years ended in the months of January through May, 2016, will have automatic extensions of the due date until November 30, 2016, for their 2016 report only. Reports for future years need to be submitted within the six-month due date.

Questions about the new form can be directed by email to DCA at [rlgf@dca.ga.gov](mailto:rlgf@dca.ga.gov).

### **FY 2017 Georgia Rural and Suburban Transit Service Directory Now Available**

The Georgia Transit Association and the Georgia Department of Transportation have published a transit service directory for rural and suburban areas. The directory is organized by district and provides the names of transit systems for each county, days and hours of operation, addresses and phone numbers, fare box rates, applicable websites, number of available vehicles, including vehicles with lifts, and seating capacity. In addition to the directory information, maps of each district are provided that show the various types of transit services (rural, urban, rural and urban, or city only) available by county throughout the state and identifies those counties that do not currently have any type of transit service.

[FY 2017 Georgia Rural and Suburban Transit Service Directory](#)

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### *Grants and Training Opportunities*

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#### **GAEPD Grant Opportunities**

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division recently announced two grant opportunities in which counties are eligible to apply.

Counties may apply for the Owens-Brockway Supplemental Environmental Project Funding will assist counties retrofit vehicles and/or equipment with pollution control equipment, and/or purchase new alternative fuel vehicles.

More information on the Owens-Brockway Supplemental Environmental Project Funding can be found in the following memorandum: [Owens-Brockway Request for Applications Memorandum](#). Click [here](#) to obtain the application. **Applications are due on Monday, August 29, 2016.**

Counties may now also apply for the Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant provided under the Clean Water Act to help prevent, control, and/or abate nonpoint pollution in support of Georgia's Nonpoint Source Management Program. Eligible applicants include public entities such as city or county governments with Qualified Local Government status; regional and State agencies; authorities that operate public service or delivery programs (e.g. sewer, water); regional commissions; resource conservation and development councils; county extensions; and local school systems and state colleges and universities.

**The application deadline is Monday, October 31, 2016.** Access the following links for more information.

[Grant Information](#)

[Guidelines](#) and [Application Materials](#)

#### **GEFA to Host Free Workshop on Biogas Technical Assistance Program**

Georgia Environmental Finance Authority is hosting a one-day workshop on its Biogas Technical Assistance Program. The workshop will help educate local governments and authorities that operate landfills or wastewater treatment plants on the biogas potential of their facilities, provide an overview of biogas technical solutions, and discuss available grant funding for biogas feasibility studies.

The workshop will take place on **Thursday, October 27, 2016**, at the Wyndham Peachtree Hotel and Conference Center in Peachtree City (Fayette County).

Click [here](#) for more information.

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#### *Federal News*

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#### **U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Proposes New Website Accessibility Rules**

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) plans to revise Americans with Disabilities Act (ACA) regulations to require state and local government websites to adhere to enhanced accessibility requirements. Those requirements include coding websites to allow for the use of screen readers and providing captioning for video content.

The public comment period for this proposed change is open until **Friday, October 7, 2016**. The National Association of Counties encourages all counties to submit comments to DOJ. Additional information on this matter can be found on the [NACo website](#).

County officials may contact ACCG Legislative Associate Kathleen Bowen at [kbowen@accg.org](mailto:kbowen@accg.org) with questions regarding this topic.