ACCG
Advancing Georgia's Counties.

GeorgiaTrend
The Magazine Of Georgia Business, Politics & Economic Development Since 1985

Georgia County Excellence Awards

ACCG, Georgia's county association, and Georgia Trend, the state's leading business publication, have partnered once again to offer the Georgia County Excellence Awards. Designed to accentuate the innovative and cost-effective work of county government, this program provides a way to recognize the outstanding efforts of county commissioners, staff and community partners through programs and initiatives that positively impact the lives of county residents.

The 2027 Georgia County Excellence Awards will highlight counties' innovative approaches to addressing various community needs and challenges.

This awards program seeks to honor programs that can be replicated by counties of all sizes. Applicants are encouraged to identify which population category their county belongs when completing the nomination form to help ensure all counties are represented. See the Eligibility Standards & Award Criteria for more information.

BENEFITS OF SELECTION:

Counties that are selected as a Georgia County Excellence Program recipient will be recognized as follows:

- Feature article in the June issue of Georgia Trend magazine, the state's leading business publication which reaches more than 50,000 subscribers monthly
- Website links to the Georgia Trend article to feature on your county's website and other communications outlets and to share with community partners
- Recognition on the ACCG website and in the association's Annual Conference & Awards Wrap-Up newsletter
- Custom award plaque
- Localized news release

Also, all counties that submit a nomination will have a short description of their project included in the special ACCG Annual Conference & Awards Wrap-Up E-Newsletter. This will allow your county to potentially serve as a resource to counties facing similar opportunities and challenges.

County Excellence Submission Guidelines

DEADLINE: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2026

Nominations for the Georgia County Excellence Awards Program **must include**:

- Completed Application Form
- Program/Initiative Description
- 2–3 High Resolution Digital Photographs (at least 300 dpi)
- Up to two (2) Supplemental Attachments (see below for more information on supplemental attachments)

PROGRAM/INITIATIVE DESCRIPTION

The program/initiative description may not exceed four double-spaced pages in length and must address the following items:

1. Brief summary of the program/initiative, including:
   - Main purpose and goals
   - *What specific community need or challenge it addresses
   - How and when it was developed and implemented
   - Cost of the program and how it is financed
   - Staffing
2. What is the current and expected future impact of the program/initiative (include specific results)?
3. How is the program/initiative innovative? Does it apply new methods, techniques, or procedures that are not commonly used?
4. Are citizens, community groups, or other governmental entities, nonprofit organizations or businesses involved in its development and implementation?
5. Can the program/initiative be adapted and replicated in other counties?

SUPPLEMENTAL ATTACHMENTS

The nomination may include up to two (2) supplemental materials, such as:

- Videos or screenshots of social media posts
- Press clippings, brochures, or other promotional materials
- Reports or fact sheets documenting results/data
- Please share supplemental materials through file sharing services such as Dropbox, WeTransfer, or Microsoft OneDrive, etc.

Nominations must include one copy of the completed application form, the program/initiative description, digital photographs and any supplemental materials and be *received* no later than:

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2026
NO LATE ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED.
Email applications to Benjamin Grady at bgrady@accg.org

The application and its accompanying materials may also be accessed at www.accg.org.

Eligibility Standards & Selection Criteria

AWARD DESIGNATIONS

In an effort to ensure counties of all sizes are considered and recognized, applicants are asked to identify the population category to their to which their county belongs. Please see the nomination form for the population category breakdown.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

- Any county in the state is eligible to submit an awards application.
- Individual counties may submit a maximum of two (2) applications each year. When possible, counties are encouraged to combine several projects into one application. A county is eligible for only one award per year.
- A county may submit a regional program for consideration that includes multiple counties within one program/initiative. For the purpose of the population designation, the regional program will be placed into the population category of the largest county within the program/initiative.
- **Any county elected or appointed official may submit the application with the signature of the chief elected official i.e., county chair, CEO, or mayor of a consolidated government.**
- The application must demonstrate that county officials and/or staff had a vested involvement in developing and implementing the program/initiative.

SELECTION CRITERIA

An independent panel of judges will score applications based on the six criteria for a maximum of 100 points.

(Criteria 1: Up to 5 points can be awarded for each objective met for a maximum of 25 points)

1. The program/initiative meets one or more of the following objectives:
   - Improves the quality or the administration of county programs
   - Addresses important problems and/or meets specific needs in the community
   - Offers improved services to county residents
   - Enhances the overall community quality of life
   - Can be adapted or replicated in other counties

(Criteria 2–6: Will be scored on a scale of 1 to 15 (for a maximum of 75 points))

2. The program/initiative was cost effective and/or utilized creative funding sources.
3. The program/initiative is innovative and applies new methods, techniques or procedures that are not commonly used.
4. The program/initiative has produced measurable results (e.g. cost savings, improved service delivery, etc.) and promises to have a long term, sustainable benefit for the community.
5. The development and implementation of the program/initiative involved community members and/or engaged nongovernmental groups and organizations as partners.
6. The program/initiative promotes intergovernmental cooperation and coordination in addressing shared problems.