Upcoming Events

https://www.narcog.org/news-meetings-events/meetings-events

SE4A Conference
DATE: September 21-24
LOCATION: Williamsburg, VA

Masters Games
DATE: October 5-8
LOCATION: Trussville, AL

AARC Conference
DATE: October 11-14
LOCATION: Montgomery, AL

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NARCOG Day Brings Community Partners Together

NARCOG Day was a great opportunity to connect with local leaders and share more about the programs and services available throughout our Region. NARCOG partnered with Cullman County Economic Development to bring this special event to Cullman County, inviting local elected officials and municipal and county staff to learn more about how NARCOG can support their communities.

The vendor-style event created a welcoming, hands-on opportunity for attendees to meet with NARCOG staff, ask questions, gather information, and discover resources that can benefit their communities and residents. From economic development and planning to programs supporting older adults, individuals with disabilities, and families, attendees learned firsthand about the many ways NARCOG serves North Central Alabama.

NARCOG Day featured representatives from a variety of programs, including:

- Revolving Loan Fund
- Planning and Economic Development
- Aging and Disability Resource Center
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- State Health Insurance Assistance Program
- Senior Medicare Patrol
- Ombudsman Program
- Elderly Nutrition Program
- Senior Community Service Employment Program
- Legal Services of Alabama
- SenioRx
- Alabama Cares
- Medicaid Waiver

Cullman County Economic Development was also on hand to answer questions and provide information about grant opportunities available to Cullman County's towns and cities.

By working with local leaders and community partners, we can better understand our communities' needs and ensure residents have access to the resources and services available to them.

We are incredibly grateful to everyone who took the time to attend, ask questions, and learn more about the resources available through NARCOG. We are especially thankful to Cullman County Economic Development for partnering with us and helping make NARCOG Day possible.

A Lifetime of Advocacy: Honoring W.F. "Noopie" Cosby, Jr.

NARCOG is proud to recognize W.F. "Noopie" Cosby, Jr. for his induction into the Alabama Department of Senior Services Alabama Senior Citizens Hall of Fame and for the lasting impact he has made on communities and older adults throughout Alabama. For several years, Mr. Cosby has been a strong champion and supporter of NARCOG and the work we do across Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan counties.

Mr. Cosby served 16 years in the Alabama House of Representatives, representing communities throughout the Black Belt and advocating for legislation designed to strengthen protections and improve the quality of life for Alabama's seniors. His work included supporting measures related to senior housing and care, retiree benefits and cost-of-living adjustments, senior abuse protections, and the removal of the prescription drug tax.

His commitment to older adults has extended well beyond his legislative career. As President of The Cosby Company, Mr. Cosby helped lead the development of pilot programs through four Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Councils. These efforts eventually evolved into major statewide services, including SenioRx, Meals on Wheels, and Medicaid Waiver Programs, programs that continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of older adults and individuals with disabilities today.

Through his leadership and advocacy, Mr. Cosby has helped influence billions of dollars in community funding, including American Rescue Plan Act investments and support for senior centers. His work has also contributed to more than 15,000 RC&D grants over 27 years, leaving a significant mark on communities across Alabama.

"We're grateful for the years he has championed NARCOG and all of the Regional Council in this great State. We are proud to call him a friend and a partner in serving our Region. Personally, he's like a member of the family, and I am thankful for what he has taught me about state government and building relationships," NARCOG Executive Director Robby Cantrell reflected.

His lifetime of service has earned him numerous honors, including induction into the Alabama and Southeastern RC&D Councils Halls of Fame, Jaycee of the Year, Golden Key Society recognition, and Marion Military Institute Alumnus of the Year.

For NARCOG, Mr. Cosby's legacy is particularly meaningful. His vision and advocacy helped shape many of the programs and services that regional organizations like NARCOG continue to provide today. We greatly appreciate the many years he has championed our work and for his unwavering dedication to improving the lives of Alabama's seniors and their communities.

Working Together to Strengthen North Alabama

Several NARCOG team members joined business leaders, elected officials, entrepreneurs, and community partners from across North Alabama for Launch Regional Partnership's eighth annual State of the Region gathering on August 19 at the Point Mallard Event Center in Decatur.

The event brought together representatives from 13 North Alabama counties to celebrate Launch's work, discuss regional priorities, and look toward the future. Launch focuses on strengthening collaboration across communities and aligning efforts in three key areas: land use, workforce development, and entrepreneurship.

Leaders shared updates on initiatives including the Singing River Trail, regional workforce development, Launch Tank entrepreneurship competitions, and efforts to address transportation and connectivity needs. The event also introduced the inaugural cohort of The Exchange, Powered by TVA, which will bring together 28 leaders from across North Alabama for a series of sessions focused on building relationships and creating opportunities for regional collaboration.

The upcoming transition of U.S. Space Command headquarters to Redstone Arsenal was also highlighted, with Col. Raymond Ruscoe discussing the potential workforce and economic opportunities the transition could bring to North Alabama.

The gathering concluded with the presentation of the inaugural Spirit of Regionalism Award to the late John Seymour, former President and CEO of the Decatur-Morgan County Chamber of Commerce. Seymour was recognized for his decades of leadership and commitment to regional collaboration. Moving forward, the honor will be known as the John Seymour Spirit of Regionalism Award.

NARCOG is proud to participate alongside regional partners who share a commitment to collaboration and continued growth across North Alabama.

Planning Department Events and Deadlines

September 1, 2026
DesignAlabama DesignPlace Application Deadline

September 14, 2026
North Alabama Regional Transportation Summit in Huntsville, AL

September 25, 2026
Appalachian Regional Commission Application Deadline

September 29, 2026 - October 1, 2026
Alabama Chapter of the American Planning Association Annual Conference in Auburn, Alabama

October 1, 2026
Alabama Brownfields Association Annual Conference in Pelham, Alabama

October 11 - 14, 2026
Alabama Association of Regional Councils Annual Training Conference in Montgomery, AL

October 19 - 22, 2026
National Association of Development Organizations Annual Training Conference in Reno, Nevada

November 16 - 19, 2026
GIS Association of Alabama Annual Meeting in Gulf Shores, Alabama

Building Connections Through Community Outreach

NARCOG team members recently began participating in a recurring community outreach event serving individuals experiencing homelessness in the Decatur area. In partnership with Hands Across Decatur, ShowerUp Huntsville, St. John's Episcopal Church, and Central Methodist Church, ShowerUp Huntsville brings its mobile outreach services to Hands Across Decatur on the third Monday of each month. This collaboration demonstrates the positive impact that can result when organizations work together to meet people where they are.

The outreach provides an opportunity for members of the homeless community to receive necessities and connect with caring community organizations and service providers. Services and resources offered at the August event included hot showers, hygiene resources, personal care items, haircuts, and a hot meal.

NARCOG team members Deann Saint and Cynthia Smith participated in the outreach over the past two months and will continue to be on-site to provide information about NARCOG services and available resources. Their presence gives attendees an opportunity to ask questions, learn about programs that may be available to them, and connect directly with staff who can help identify resources based on their individual needs. These connections can also help individuals access additional resources and support within the community.

NARCOG is grateful for the opportunity to be part of this collaborative effort and looks forward to continuing to connect with community members and partner organizations through this outreach.

Stronger Communities Start With Collaboration

Strong communities are built through collaboration, communication, and connection. NARCOG team members participate in monthly and bimonthly meetings with community resource partners, nonprofits, churches, government agencies, and other professionals across Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan counties. These gatherings provide opportunities to share resources, identify community needs, and connect residents with the services that can help them.

NARCOG's Community Service Planning Committee meets every other month on the fourth Thursday, except in November due to Thanksgiving. The committee brings community resource partners together to share information about services and community needs. Those interested in attending should contact Kylie Bolyard Sanchez at kbolyard@narcog.org.

Aging professionals in Morgan and Cullman counties also meet regularly through Caring Connections and Caring Hearts. Caring Connections meets on the second Thursday of each month and provides an opportunity for Morgan County professionals serving older adults to share resources and discuss ways to better serve the community. For Caring Connections, contact Lisa Burns at lburns@morgancounty-al.gov for more information. Caring Hearts meets every third Tuesday and brings together professionals serving older adults in Cullman County to share program updates, resources, and information. Professionals interested in joining should contact Sonya Ploshay at sonya@rahsouth.com.

The Lawrence County Interagency Meeting brings together local organizations, nonprofits, churches, and government agencies to share resources and learn more about services available throughout the county. The meeting is held on the second Tuesday of each month and is hosted by Angela Percle with the Lawrence County Health Department. Inquiries can be directed to angela.percle@adph.state.al.us.

Through these connections, NARCOG stays informed about the needs of our communities while helping our partners better understand the resources we offer.

Growing Through Collaboration and Professional Development

NARCOG staff will soon have opportunities to connect with professionals from across the Southeast and Alabama as team members attend two upcoming conferences focused on strengthening the work of regional councils and the aging network.

The Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging (SE4A) Annual Conference brings together Area Agency on Aging professionals from across the Southeast to share knowledge, discuss emerging issues, and learn from one another. SE4A represents Area Agencies on Aging across nine southeastern states and hosts an annual training conference designed to promote professional development, best practices, and information exchange throughout the aging network.

The SE4A conference provides an opportunity to learn about new approaches and best practices that can strengthen services for older adults, caregivers, and individuals with disabilities throughout Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan counties.

NARCOG will also participate in the Alabama Association of Regional Councils (AARC) Annual Training Conference, scheduled for October 11–14. The conference brings together Alabama's 12 regional councils for training, collaboration, and discussion of issues affecting communities across the state.

AARC provides a statewide network for Alabama's regional councils, allowing them to share ideas, coordinate initiatives, and strengthen their ability to serve local governments and citizens. The annual training conference offers track-specific and general sessions designed to encourage information sharing and develop regional solutions to local and statewide challenges.

For NARCOG, attending these conferences is about more than professional development. It is an opportunity to bring new knowledge, ideas, and connections back home and put them to work for the communities we serve.

August Anniversaries

Justin Graves
Director of Aging
5 years of service

Kim Dove
Deputy Director
10 years of service

The North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments, or NARCOG, is your local elected officials and community leaders working together to make your community a better place to live, work, play, and do business. The compassionate team at NARCOG is continuously searching for new ways to positively impact the quality of life for individuals and the vibrancy and livability of communities with the three-county region of Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan Counties.

AGING SERVICES

The Area Agency on Aging is part of a nationwide network of aging services under the direction of the U.S. Administration for Community Living and is funded through the Alabama Department of Senior Services (ADSS). This partnership with ADSS, working under the authority of the Older Americans Act, is to plan and carry out a comprehensive, coordinated service delivery system to address the needs of people over 60, or persons with disabilities of any age, and help them maintain their independence. Services include:

- In-Home Services
- Prescription Drug Coverage
- Caregiver Support
- Long-Term Care Advocacy
- Senior Legal Assistance
- Senior Employment (55+)
- Food Assistance
- Nutrition Options
- Health Promotion Activities
- Wellness Programs
- Medicare and Medicaid Counseling
- Hospital-to-Home Transitions
- Referral Help and Support Services (any age)
- Fraud Prevention
- Home and Community Based Services

IMPACT GIVING

The NARCOG Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that assists older adults or disabled clients to meet the unmet needs of other programs or services. 100% of the funds or items donated are used for client assistance. The Foundation can help retrofit homes, including wheelchair ramps, steps, handrails, grab bars, purchase AC and heat resources, and provide batteries for a power scooter with monetary donations. Several different types of donations are accepted, including:

- Monetary donations
- Cleaning Supplies
- Personal Hygiene Items
- Canned of Shelf-Stable Food
- Kleenex
- Bath Tissue
- Incontinence Supplies
- Mobility Aids
- Adult Diapers
- Group and Individual Volunteering

PLANNING SERVICES

The NARCOG Planning Department provides community and economic development planning services for our member governments and municipalities. These services support developmental efforts in our three-county region. Services include:

- Comprehensive Planning
- Downtown, Corridor, and Trails Planning
- Grant Technical Assistance and Preparation
- Grant Administration
- Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
- Rural Planning Organizations (RPO) - Rural Transportation Planning
- Zoning Ordinances and Maps
- Subdivision Regulations

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The NARCOG Transit Agency operates an urban public transportation system within the Decatur Urban Area. The purpose of this service is to provide mobility opportunities to individuals of all ages and abilities in collaboration with the City of Decatur and the Federal Transit Administration.

- Call 256-580-2088 to schedule a ride at least 24 hours in advance
- Wheelchair-accessible vehicles are available
- Each one-way ride costs $2
- Connect Cards (prepaid punch cards) can be purchased at the main office or on a transit vehicle for $20
- Ride Operations are Monday through Friday from 7 AM to 5 PM
- Ride Scheduling is Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 4 PM

BUSINESS LOAN FINANCING

The NARCOG Accelerate Business Growth Fund is a local lending resource to support business start-ups, or expansions that result in job creation, leverage private sector investment, and reduce unemployment in Cullman, Lawrence, or Morgan Counties.

- Traditional or Microloan Funding Options
- Competitive Interest Rates
- Business financing used to purchase or renovate real estate, machinery, equipment, inventory, or working capital
- Business loan requirements must be met for consideration
- Loan amounts from $10,000 to $250,000

NARCOG is governed by a fourteen member Board of Directors. The members of the Board are chosen by the respective County Commissions of Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan counties. The officers of NARCOG are elected by the Board annually in November of each year. The officers serve as the Executive Committee along with the Executive Director who serves on the committee in an ex-officio capacity.

NARCOG Leadership - 2026 Board of Director Members

Kelly Duke
Chairman
Cullman County Commission

Amard Martin
First Vice Chairman
Lawrence County Commission

Randy Vest
Second Vice Chairman
Morgan County Commission

Carla Hart
Secretary/Treasurer
Cullman Mayor Association

Jeff Clemons
Cullman County Commission

Garry Marchman
Cullman County Commission

Bobby Burch
Lawrence County Commission

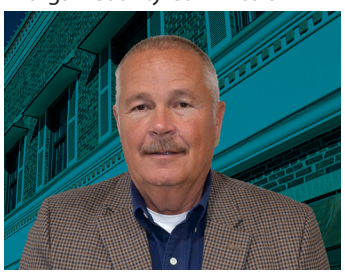
Norman Pool
Lawrence County Commission

Ray Long
Morgan County Commission

Greg Abercrombie
Morgan County Commission

Kent Lawrence
Mayor of Decatur

Missy Evans
Mayor of Hartselle



Vaughn Goodwin
Mayor of Trinity

Blake White
Morgan County Appointee

Advisory Committees

Area Agency on Aging, Advisory Committee

Ombudsman Advisory Committee

Economic Development District, Strategy Committee

Business Growth Fund, Advisory and Loan Review Committee

Rural Planning Organization, Rural Transportation Policy Board

Transportation Steering Committee