

Upcoming Events

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

Masters Games

DATE: Several Days in June

LOCATION: North Alabama

Morgan County Health Fair

DATE: July 18

LOCATION: Hartselle, AL

CSPC Meeting

DATE: July 24

LOCATION: Decatur, AL

Agency Contacts

Robby Cantrell
Executive Director
rcantrell@narcog.org

Kim Dove
Director of Administration
kdove@narcog.org

Justin Graves
Director of Aging
jgraves@narcog.org

Joey Hester
Director of Planning
jhester@narcog.org

Crystal Julien
Director of Finance
cjulien@narcog.org

Falguni Patel
Director of Transportation
fpatel@narcog.org

ON THE WEB
www.narcog.org

SOCIAL MEDIA
Facebook:
facebook.com/narcogal
LinkedIn:
linkedin.com/company/narcogal/

Seniors Celebrate at Annual NARCOG Luau



More than 600 seniors filled the Ingalls Harbor Pavilion on Wednesday, May 14, for NARCOG's annual luau, a vibrant celebration held each May in honor of Older Americans Month. With festive leis, colorful shirts, music, and laughter, the event offered an afternoon of fun, connection, and community spirit for seniors from Morgan, Lawrence, and Cullman

counties.

At NARCOG, our mission is rooted in service—providing essential programs like nutrition support, legal assistance, and fraud prevention. But the luau allows us to give back in a different way. It's a chance to show our appreciation for the individuals who have contributed so much to our communities, and to offer them a space

to simply enjoy themselves.

"This is our event to say thank you back to the community that raised us, and an opportunity to just have some fun and be in a fun environment," said Robby Cantrell, NARCOG's executive director, in a quote published by The Decatur Daily.

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Berlin Awarded \$250K Grant for Road Upgrades

The Town of Berlin is set to make critical infrastructure upgrades thanks to a \$250,000 Rebuild Alabama Act grant, awarded with the support of NARCOG and St. John & Associates. This funding will go toward much-needed road improvements aimed at enhancing safety, accessibility, and long-term community development.

The project includes widening and resurfacing Mt. Carmel Drive from US 278 to its intersection with County Roads 1614 and 1615, with additional improvements extending a few hundred feet along CR 1614. A 191-foot section of CR 1615—the only alternate route around US 278—will be realigned and improved to accommodate growing traffic and ensure safer travel.

Currently, these roads are too narrow for two-way traffic, creating hazards for motorists and emergency responders alike. The Berlin Volunteer Fire Department, in particular, has faced challenges navigating the area, especially with increased traffic following the opening of the new CEC Berlin Substation.

In addition to improving safety, the project will enhance access to key community resources including the town hall, farmers market, and storm shelter. The upgrades also support future plans for the Berlin Municipal Complex, which will feature parks, recreational facilities, and a senior center—pending a separate Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application. Redevelopment of

the farmers market is already underway.

We are proud to have partnered with the Town of Berlin and St. John & Associates on this successful grant effort, which will bring lasting benefits to residents and support the town's continued growth and vitality.



Robby Cantrell | Executive Director

North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments | PO Box C • 216 Jackson St. SE • Decatur, AL 35602

256-355-4515 | rcantrell@narcog.org

May Anniversaries

Jan Kennedy
 RN Clinical Coordinator
 3 years of service

Linda Jones
 Program Admin
 3 years of service

Monica Shannon
 Personal Choices Case
 Manager II
 10 years of service

Ronette Gravitt
 Nutrition Coordinator
 12 years of service

Cullman Annual Senior Fishing Day

Veterans Memorial Park in Hanceville was the place to be on Friday, May 23, as seniors from across the area gathered for the 2025 Senior Fishing Day. Hosted by the Commission on Aging, the event brought together fishing, fellowship, and friendly competition in a relaxed, outdoor setting.

NARCOG was proud to attend and cheer on the anglers while sharing resources and connecting with community members. Events like this reflect our mission to support older adults not just through services, but by showing up to celebrate life with them.

Fishing kicked off at 8 a.m., and

trophies were awarded for First Place, Big Fish, Oldest Man, Oldest Woman, and even a special "Turtle Trophy." For those who didn't fish, the day still offered plenty—shade tents, good company, and the simple joy of being outdoors.

Lunch, sponsored by Circuit Clerk Lisa McSwain, was served under the pavilion, where door prizes from People's Bank and others added to the fun. The event was a great success, and NARCOG thanks the Commission on Aging and all sponsors for making it happen. We look forward to casting a line again next year!



Pryor Field Airport Impacts Economic Development

NARCOG was proud to attend the Decatur-Morgan Chamber of Commerce's Emerging Leaders event on April 2 at Pryor Field Regional Airport. It was a great opportunity to connect with fellow professionals and gain valuable insight into one of the region's key economic engines.

Airport Director Adam Fox gave

an engaging overview of Pryor Field's history, its growing role in regional development, and exciting plans for the future—including the announcement of an upcoming air show scheduled for September 13–14. His presentation highlighted how strategic investments and partnerships are helping the airport expand and

better serve North Alabama.

Attendees took part in a guided bus tour of the airport, where we saw the newly completed taxiway, expanded corporate hangar space, and ongoing terminal renovations. Fox also discussed Pryor Field's collaboration with Calhoun Community College, plans for a new ramp, and the addition of

two aviation maintenance companies that will further boost local job growth.

We appreciated the opportunity to learn more about the airport's impact and growth, and we're thankful to the Decatur-Morgan Chamber of Commerce for hosting such a meaningful event.

Lawrence County Annual Job Fair Was A Success

NARCOG proudly participated in the second annual Lawrence County Job Fair, hosted by the Lawrence County Community of Churches (LCCC) on April 29 at Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Moulton.

The event drew hundreds of job seekers from across the region and provided an important opportunity for residents to connect with meaningful employ-

ment and workforce resources.

Throughout the day, NARCOG staff spoke with students, young adults, and job seekers about available services and open career opportunities within our organization and across the region.

The morning sessions were dedicated to high school juniors and seniors, bused in through a partnership with the Lawrence County Board of Education. The

afternoon was open to the public, and attendance remained strong through the evening. The energy was high, with participants eager to explore the many paths to employment and career growth.

Events like the Lawrence County Job Fair are essential in connecting the community with real opportunities, and NARCOG was honored to be part of a collab-

orative effort that continues to make a positive impact. We're grateful to the LCCC for creating space for connection and empowerment, and we look forward to supporting more initiatives like this across our region.

CDBG Application Preparation

Communities across the NARCOG Region are preparing to submit Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications to address essential infrastructure needs, including water, sewer, and road improvements. With grant writing support from the NARCOG Planning Team, the towns of North Courtland, Lawrence County, Garden City, Hillsboro, Moulton, and Falkville are collectively requesting over \$2 million in funding to support these vital community projects.

In North Courtland, a water improvements project is being proposed in partnership with the WMELWSA to address persistent issues such as low water pressure and insufficient volume. The project area is located on the western side of town, and the estimated grant request is \$400,000.

A road improvement project is planned for a county road in the Red Bank Community in Lawrence County. While the total amount of the grant request is still being finalized, the estimated request is \$250,000. The project aims to improve public safety, enhance transportation conditions, and ensure better access for residents in underserved areas.

Garden City is in the early stages of developing a sewer improve-

ment project. Though the final funding request is not yet determined, it is estimated at approximately \$400,000. This project reflects the town's commitment to upgrading aging infrastructure and protecting public health.

A road improvement project in Hillsboro is planned with an estimated grant request of \$250,000. The project includes patching and resurfacing 1,100 feet of Owens Road, resurfacing 960 feet of Beatrice Boulevard, and paving 280 feet of Horton Road. These improvements are expected to enhance safety and mitigate risks from deteriorating road conditions. The project will directly benefit 37 residents, all of whom are classified as low- to moderate-income households.

Moulton is proposing a \$500,000 sewer improvements project that includes hydraulic and mechanical cleaning of 65 service reconnections, 3,500 linear feet of pre- and post-video inspection, 900 linear feet of 4-inch PVC sewer laterals, 35 new laterals at the main, 30 cured-in-place pipe gravity lateral linings, and 65 two-way PVC cleanout assemblies. This project will benefit 244 residents, including 155 low- to moderate-income individuals, by improving sewer service and

overall quality of life. The area served is in south-central Moulton, near Moulton Elementary and Middle Schools.

Finally, Falkville seeks an estimated \$400,000 to upgrade the town's wastewater infrastructure. The project will begin with replacing Apple's Lift Station wet well, which is a key component of the system and serves nearby residential and commercial areas along Buster Road and Culver Road. Depending on available funding, the project may include improvements to the sewer main crossing Highway 31 at the intersection of 1st Street and East Main Street. Surveying and engineering work is currently underway to determine exact costs and eligibility.

For questions or to discuss potential grant opportunities for your community, please get in touch with Joey Hester, Director of Planning, at (256) 355-4515 or jhester@narcog.org.



Singing River Trail Launch Tank

NARCOG's Director of Administration, Kim Dove, and Director of Finance, Crystal Julien, attended the 2025 Singing River Trail Launch Tank Competition on Wednesday at the Scottsboro Civic Center, joining regional leaders to support North Alabama's growing entrepreneurial community.

Hosted by Singing River Trail, the event featured nine finalists competing for \$27,000 in non-dilutive funding. Participants were judged on business viability, innovation, and regional impact.

"This competition is a celebration of the spirit of collaboration and innovation that defines North

Alabama," said Lydia Pennington, Launch Tank Co-Chair and Executive Director of Tourism for the Mountain Lakes Chamber of Commerce, in an interview with WHNT 19.

Winners included Relax and Release Shampoo & Sleep Spa (first place, \$10,000), Welcome Home Magazine (second place, \$5,000), and Bare Bottom Farms (third place, \$3,000). Six additional finalists each received \$1,500.

"This year's competition was our biggest and most competitive yet," said Misti Potter, Executive Director of Singing River Trail, to WHNT 19. "The level of innovation

we saw today proves that North Alabama is a rising hub for entrepreneurship."

Dove and Julien were proud to represent NARCOG and support the region's continued growth and innovation.



Planning Department Events and Deadlines

June 3, 2025

Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Grant Deadline

June 5, 2025

Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan Public Involvement and Rural Planning Organization Committee Meeting in Cullman

June 11, 2025

Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan Public Involvement and Rural Planning Organization Committee Meeting in Hartselle

June 11, 2025

Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan Public Involvement and Rural Planning Organization Committee Meeting in Moulton

July 23, 2025

Community Development Block Grant Deadline

July 27, 2025 - July 30, 2025

Economic Development Association of Alabama (EDAA) Summer Conference in Point Clear, AL

July 30, 2025 - August 1, 2025

Alabama Transportation Planners Association (ATPA) Conference in Florence, AL



FROM PAGE 1: Seniors Celebrate at Annual NARCOG Luau



The morning was packed with activities including a catered meal, games, door prizes, and an exciting new addition—live music by The Cadillacs, a Florence-based band that brought the crowd to their feet with hits from the 1950s and 60s. Seniors danced, laughed, and caught up with old friends, making memories that we hope will last long after the music faded.

With the support of around 25 sponsors, NARCOG raised more than \$8,000 to make this event possible. Nearly 340 attendees pre-registered through local senior centers, and by midday, seating was at capacity, a testament

to how beloved the luau has become in the community.

As Cantrell also told The Decatur Daily, "We connect people to services to help make their lives better. Even if we don't provide the service directly, we can connect them to people that do." That spirit of connection and care was at the heart of every detail of the luau.

We are so thankful to everyone who attended, volunteered, and helped bring this special day to life. Celebrating our seniors is one of the greatest joys of what we do, and we can't wait to welcome everyone back next year.



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 or 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