

General Information

Meal Tickets

Tickets are required for the following events:

- Municipal Training Luncheon (Friday and Saturday)
- Sunday Luncheon
- Monday Breakfast

Tickets for guests may be purchased at the registration desk for the Sunday Awards Luncheon and the Monday Legislative Breakfast.

Registration Desk Hours

The GMA Registration Desk is located on the Second Level and will be open during the following hours:

Friday, January 24 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, January 25 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 26 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Monday, January 27 Closed - Morning Breakfast to be held at Georgia Freight Depot

Schedule of Events

Friday, January 24

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Registration

Second Level

8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

Continental Breakfast (for morning training participants)

9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Municipal Training Institute - Training class descriptions can be found on the Cities United Summit Mobile App, GMA website, and the 2020 training brochure.

These classes are located on the Third Level.

Conflict Resolution* (6-hour class, lunch included)

Room 304

Economic Development* (6-hour class, lunch included)

Room 303

Governing the Commons: Collective Decision Making in Complex Systems**** (6-hour class, lunch included)

Room 305

9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Municipal Training Institute - Training class descriptions can be found on the Cities United Summit Mobile App, GMA website, and the 2020 training brochure.

These classes are located on the Second Level.

*(Lunch is **not** included for the 3-hour morning classes)*

Beyond the Beltway: Influencing Federal Policy Through Grassroots Engagement (3-hour class)

Room 208-209

Current Issues - Understanding, Funding and Fighting the New Face of Homelessness (3-hour class)

Room 206-207

Economics of Education (3-hour class)

Room 212-213

Public Policy Development and Implementation* (3-hour class)

Room 210-211

2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Municipal Training Institute - Training class descriptions can be found on the Cities United Summit Mobile App, GMA website, and the 2020 training brochure.

These classes are located on the Second Level.

*(Lunch is **not** included for the 3-hour afternoon classes)*

Funding and Programming New Transportation Projects (3-hour class)
Room 204-205

Municipal Courts Post-Ferguson I: Promoting Justice, Protecting City Assets* (3-hour class)
Room 206-207

Practices for Successful Meetings* (3-hour class)
Room 208-209

Public Works Services* (3-hour class)
Room 210-211

*Classes with an**
are on the "required" list for the Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Certificate Program.

*Classes with an****
are part of the Advanced Leadership Track and are needed to complete the Certificate of Dedication. Completion of the Certificate of Achievement is a pre-requisite for the Advanced Leadership classes.

5:15 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.
Municipal Training Board Meeting
Room 214

Saturday, January 25

7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Registration
Second Level

8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Municipal Training Institute - Training class descriptions can be found on the Cities United Summit Mobile App, GMA website, and the 2020 training brochure.

(Breakfast and lunch are included for these 6-hour classes)

Building a Hometown Connection: GMA Lobbying 101
Room 303

Current Issues: Workforce Development
Room 311-312

Downtown Development Authority Basic Training (ends at 4:30 p.m.)
Room 212-213

Emergency Management*

Room 204-205

Ethics*

Room 206-207

How Shall We Live? Practical Ethics for Public Life***

Room 203

Human Resources*

Room 305

Making Citizen Engagement Work in Our Communities*

Room 210-211

Money, Money, Money ... Money! Funding City Projects and Programs Through Grants and Loans

Room 301-302

Municipal Law*

Room 313-314

Municipal Long-Term Budgeting

Room 208-209

Revitalizing Neighborhoods – Tools for Local Officials

Room 309-310

Water Management – An introduction for Local Governments

Room 304

Clerks' Course: Athenian Dialogue: Hidden Figures

Galleria 1

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Completion of the Certificate of Achievement is a pre-requisite for the Advanced Leadership classes.

12:00 p.m.

Training Luncheon

(This luncheon is for people registered for a training course on Saturday only. Assigned times will be announced in each class)

Grand Ballroom (located on the Second Level)

3:45 p.m. - 5:45 p.m.

GMA Board of Directors' Meeting

Salon West

Presiding:

Phil Best, Mayor, Dublin - GMA President

Sunday, January 26

All events are located on the Second Level.

7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Registration

Second Level

7:15 a.m. - 7:45 a.m.

Worship Service

Room 204-206

8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

Federal Policy Council Meeting

Salon West

The Federal Policy Council (FPC) is GMA's federal legislative advocacy group. The primary purpose of the FPC is to maintain communications with the Georgia congressional delegation in support of GMA's federal municipal policies. At this meeting, FPC members are pleased to welcome Congressman Sanford Bishop (GA-02). Congressman Bishop will update FPC members on federal FY2020 funding bills; workforce development initiatives at the federal level, including the BUILDS Act, bipartisan, bicameral legislation to create a pipeline of skilled and trained workers in targeted infrastructure industries; as well as provide an update on the status of disaster relief for Middle and Southwest Georgia that sustained devastating losses from Hurricane Michael in 2018. Congressman Bishop is the Chairman of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee. In addition, he serves on the Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee and is Vice Chair of the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Subcommittee. He has represented the Second Congressional District of Georgia in the U.S. House of Representatives since 1993.

Chair:

Jim Thornton, Mayor, LaGrange - GMA Second Vice President

Speaker:

Congressman Sanford Bishop, Georgia's Second Congressional District

Staff Contact:

Becky Taylor, Director, Federal Relations & Research

8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

Orientation for First-Time Attendees

(Light breakfast included)

Grand Ballroom

Newly elected officials and first-time attendees are encouraged to attend.

Staff Contacts:

Pam Helton, Director, Member Services
Terrell Jacobs, Member Services Consultant

Special thanks to the Georgia Restaurant Association, Home Depot, Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia, Municipal Electric Authority of Georgia, New South Construction Company, Ruffneck Scarves and Turnipseed Engineers, Inc. for sponsoring this event.

9:15 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Policy Committee Meetings

The purpose of policy committee meetings is to discuss legislative issues of interest to cities being debated during the 2020 legislative session. The membership will use the meetings to review legislative priorities as they impact policy items adopted by city officials during the GMA Annual Convention. In addition, the committee members will hear from local and state elected and appointed officials regarding their thoughts on the 2020 legislative session.

Municipal Government

Room 204-206

Daily national headlines read, “*Urgent Infrastructure Needs are Straining Public Resources,*” and “*State Preemption of Local Legislation is Getting Worse.*” Securing local funding sources and fighting preemption of municipal powers is a constant battle in every state legislature. Local governments are facing significant capital improvement needs. To help address these needs, GMA will ask the General Assembly to provide more ways to fund infrastructure projects, public facilities and broadband projects. Attendees will also hear from Georgia General Assembly members on the many looming battles local governments face to maintain control over the establishment of residential building design standards to regulating vaping products within cities.

Chair:

Randall Walker, Mayor, Perry

Presenters:

Representative Shaw Blackmon, Chair, Governmental Affairs Committee

Representative Deborah Silcox, Chair, MARTOC Committee

Representative Matthew Wilson, Member, House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee

Staff Contact:

Charlotte Davis, Senior Governmental Relations Associate

Environment and Natural Resources

Room 209-211

Georgia is home to a robust commercial recycling industry with facilities that accept old carpet, glass, plastic, paper/paperboard, aluminum and even ceiling tiles. As value has dropped dramatically for certain streams of recyclables, the cost of transportation is not being recouped, resulting in price increases. The problems don’t end with recycling. Biosolids are being turned away by some landfills causing systems to have to transport sludge to distant locations. Though the economy of municipal waste is under pressure, solutions can be found. The committee will hear from Abbey Patterson with Pratt Industries with the commercial perspective. Michelle Wiseman, Director of the Waste Diversion and Outreach for the City of Atlanta, will discuss opportunities in diversion and reuse. Sarah Visser from the Georgia Environmental Protection Division will give a departmental update. The Chairs of the House and Senate committees on Natural Resources and the Environment, Representative Lynn Smith and Senator Tyler Harper, have both been invited to offer insights into the legislative session.

Chair:

Steve Edwards, Mayor, Sugar Hill

Presenters:

Representative Lynn Smith, Chair, House Natural Resources & Environment Committee
Senator Tyler Harper, Chair, Senate Natural Resources & Environment Committee
Sarah Visser, Assistant Chief, Land Protection Branch, Georgia Environmental Protection Division
Michelle Wiseman, Director of Waste Diversion & Outreach, City of Atlanta
Abbey Patterson, Pratt Industries

Staff Contact:

Michael McPherson, Intergovernmental Coordinator

10:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**Policy Committee Meetings**

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Revenue and Finance***Room 204-206***

The 2019 session saw several pieces of legislation with a significant impact on municipal revenues. While House Bill 61 positioned the State of Georgia to begin collecting sales tax from remote sellers in January of 2019, much of this revenue is still not being collected. Representative Brett Harrell introduced House Bill 276 to collect sales tax on platforms that serve as online marketplaces or facilitators of online sales. The bill would bring in an estimated \$90 million in local taxes. The legislation made it through the House but was unable to gain final passage in the 2019 session. Representative Harrell, who serves as the House Ways and Means Chair, will be on hand to discuss this key piece of legislation as well as other priorities of the committee. His Senate counterpart, Chair Chuck Hufstetler of the Senate Finance committee will share the perspectives and priorities of his committee. Finally, Chair Shaw Blackmon, who has authored multiple bills dealing with the Title Ad Valorem Tax (TAVT) will be on hand to discuss how the changes in the statute have impacted local governments.

Chair:

Jim Elliot, City Attorney, Hawkinsville and McDonough

Presenters:

Representative Brett Harrell, Chair, House Ways and Means Committee
Representative Shaw Blackmon, Chair, House Governmental Affairs Committee
Senator Chuck Hufstetler, Chair, Senate Finance Committee

Staff Contact:

Joel Wiggins, Senior Governmental Relations Associate

Community Development***Room 209-211***

Ensuring that there are skilled workers for every job available in our state has become a challenge. In years past, Georgia experienced a job shortage that left many able-bodied workers out of the workforce. Presently, however, due to the economic growth Georgia has experienced, our state now has more jobs than workers to fill them. As a result, developing a workforce equipped with both technical skills and interpersonal skills has become a major focus for our legislature, Georgia industries, and our technical college system. Our state needs 21st century employees to fill 21st century jobs, and are actively pursuing solutions to address the challenges not only with our workforce, but also in education, housing and transportation. Representative Sam Watson, Co-Chair of the House Rural Development Council, and Senator Tonya Anderson will discuss the issues and give an update on the legislative session. Dr. Tina Anderson, President of Wiregrass Georgia Technical College, will discuss how technical schools are working to produce employees who meet industry needs. Amy Carter, Deputy Director for Rural Initiatives at the Georgia Department of Economic Development, will provide a departmental update.

Chair:

Michelle Cooper Kelly, Councilmember, Marietta

Presenters:

Representative Sam Watson, Co-Chair, House Rural Development Council
Senator Tonya Anderson, Ex- Officio Member, Senate Economic Development and Tourism Committee
Dr. Tina Anderson, President, Wiregrass Georgia Technical College
Amy Carter, Deputy Commissioner, Rural Initiatives, Georgia Department of Economic Development

Staff Contact:

Thomaesa Bailey, Governmental Relations Associate

12:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Awards Luncheon

Grand Ballroom

Presiding

Phil Best, Mayor, Dublin – GMA President

Pledge of Allegiance

National Anthem

Kentaiwon Durham, Commissioner, Douglas

Invocation

Mark Fitzpatrick, Councilmember, Commerce

Lunch

Acknowledgements

Phil Best, Mayor, Dublin – GMA President

Update on GMA Building Project

Keith Brady, Mayor, Newnan – GMA Property Committee Chair

Larry Hanson, Executive Director, GMA

Recognition of GMA's 20 Under 40

Larry Hanson, Executive Director, GMA

GeorgiaForward/Young Gamechangers

Presentation of Visionary City Awards

Ben Young, Editor in Chief and Publisher, Georgia Trend

Kushi Mehta, Youth Mayor, Sugar Hill Youth Council

Recognition of Certified Cities of Ethics

Julie Smith, Mayor, Tifton – GMA Third Vice President

Municipal Training Institute Certificate Presentation

Matt Donaldson, Mayor, Twin City – Municipal Training Board Chair

Dr. Laura Meadows, Director, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia

Aileen Harris, Training Manager, GMA

Individual photos of training certificate recipients will be taken outside the ballroom following the luncheon.

Special thanks to Verizon for sponsoring this event.

2:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Policy Committee Meetings

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Transportation

Room 204-206

The U.S. Congress is readying an attempt to reauthorize federal funding for the nation's transportation infrastructure. The 2020 session of the General Assembly will consider legislation carried over from the previous year, including transit legislation aimed at coordination outside of metro Atlanta, regulation of alternative transportation options such as ride share and micromobility/e-scooters. In the interim, a few legislators have discussed freight mobility within and throughout Georgia and the anticipated increase in truck traffic. Increasing truck weight limits is also being promoted by some legislators, and this idea and other legislation will be on the table for discussion. Presenters will discuss state transportation policy initiatives and ideas to prepare to meet future mobility needs.

Chair:

Isaiah Hugley, City Manager, Columbus-Muscogee Consolidated Government

State Transportation Policy Discussion Presenters:

Georgia Department of Transportation Representative

Senator Steve Gooch, Majority Whip, Member of Senate Transportation Committee and the Joint Freight & Logistics Commission

Cindy Mills, Regional Director, Coalition Against Bigger Trucks (CABT)

Jeff Short, Vice President, American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI)

Federal FAST Act Reauthorization Legislation Presenter:

Derick Corbett, Chief of Staff, Office of Congressman Rob Woodall

Staff Contact:

Tom Q. Gehl, Director, Governmental Relations

Public Safety

Room 209-211

Whether it impacts municipal courts, law enforcement, or local government budgets, public safety issues broadly effect our municipal leaders. In the summer of 2019, Representative Carl Gilliard chaired the House Study Committee on Gang and Youth Violence Prevention, which comprehensively examined ways to combat the epidemic that is gang violence. Representative Scott Holcomb will also be on hand to discuss his perspective on public safety issues that will be heard in the House Public Safety committee, and Senator Randy Robertson will provide a perspective on issues in the Senate committee.

Chair:

Fred Perriman, Mayor, Madison

Presenters:

Representative Carl Gilliard, Chair, House Study Committee on Gang and Youth Violence Prevention

Representative Scott Holcomb, Member, House Public Safety Committee

Senator Randy Robertson, Member, Senate Public Safety Committee

Staff Contact:

Joel Wiggins, Senior Governmental Relations Associate

4:15 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Legislative Policy Council Meeting

Salon West

The Legislative Policy Council (LPC) is the focal point of GMA's legislative policy process, combining the recommendations of the Association's six policy committees with input received from city officials throughout the state. At this meeting, the LPC will receive reports from the six policy committee meetings held earlier in the day and discuss any pressing issues impacting GMA's 2020 Legislative Policies.

Chair:

Vince Williams, Mayor, Union City - GMA First Vice President

Staff Contact:

Tom Q. Gehl, Director, Governmental Relations

4:15 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

IT Security: A Discussion on Current Issues Facing Georgia's Cities

Room 212

This session will include a brief presentation on key IT security challenges facing cities and recommended practices for mitigating threats. In addition, city officials will have an opportunity to learn about GMA's new IT Security and Strategic Consulting Service.

Opening Remarks:

Julie Smith, Mayor, Tifton – GMA Third Vice President

Presenters:

Darin Jenkins, Director, Financial and Operational Services, GMA
Ryan Wilson, IT Services Consultant

Staff Contact:

Darin Jenkins, Director, Financial and Operational Services

United We Count: Cities and the 2020 Census

Room 202

What can you do to make sure that everyone counts? As Census Day 2020 approaches, this session provides information on why the census matters, how it will be conducted and what cities can do to conduct outreach for an accurate count.

Presenters:

Deana Holiday Ingraham, Mayor, East Point
Royce J. Hall, City of Dublin Engineering Department, Dublin Local Complete Count Committee
Thurmond N. Tillman, Partnership Coordinator, U. S. Census Bureau

Staff Contact:

Holger Loewendorf, GMA Research Manager

5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Networking Reception

Grand Ballroom

Special thanks to Comprehensive Program Services, Goodwyn/Mills/Cawood, Atlas and Schneider Electric for sponsoring this event.

Monday, January 27

The registration desk will not be open Monday morning.

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Shuttles run from the Hilton to the Georgia Freight Depot

Buses will pick up in front of the Hilton

There is a pay to park lot on site, if you prefer to drive. 65 MLK Jr. Dr. SW, Atlanta, GA 30303

7:30 a.m. - 8:15 a.m.

Legislative Networking and Buffet Breakfast

Georgia Freight Depot

8:15 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Legislative Breakfast Program

Georgia Freight Depot

Opening Remarks

Phil Best, Mayor, Dublin – GMA President

Pledge of Allegiance

National Anthem

Senator Tonya Anderson

Invocation

Willie Edmondson, Councilmember, LaGrange

Welcome

Keisha Lance Bottoms, Mayor, Atlanta

Recognitions

Larry Hanson, Executive Director, GMA

Remarks

Honorable Governor Brian Kemp

Honorable Lieutenant Governor Geoff Duncan

Honorable Speaker of the House David Ralston

Special thanks to The Coca-Cola Company, Elarbee, Thompson, Sapp & Wilson, LLP., Georgia Power, Verizon and Wells Fargo for sponsoring this event.

9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Cities United Day at the Capitol

With the Georgia General Assembly underway, it is vitally important that legislators see that municipal officials are speaking with one voice through the Georgia Municipal Association. After the Legislative breakfast, city officials are asked to walk up to the state Capitol building to visit with their senators and representatives. An announcement will be made at the close of the breakfast indicating where inside the Capitol city officials will be asked to assemble for a photo and guidance on contacting legislators. GMA staff will be on-hand to assist in directing city officials through Capitol Hill.

Shuttles will continue to run from the Depot to the Hilton until 1:00 p.m.

Youth Leadership Program

Throughout the state, city leaders are beginning to see their younger citizens as a resource for community problem-solving. In these cities, youth councils are working with elected officials and other city leaders to tackle important issues and discovering that their voice matters to their city leaders. More than 30 cities currently have youth councils and seven of them are participating in this year's Cities United Summit.

Saturday, January 25

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Icebreaker Session

Galleria 4

Sunday, January 26

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Diversity and Inclusion Make for a Better Team

- Chief Freddie Broome, City of South Fulton Fire Department

9:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Youth Advisors Roundtable

Salon West

12:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.

Lunch on Your Own

2:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

How Can You Help with the 2020 Census?

Galleria 4

- Holger Lowendorf, Research Manager, GMA

2:45 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Panel of Young City Officials and Staff for Q&A on the Importance of Municipal Service

- Facilitated by Kelli Bennett, Director of Communications, GMA

Panelists:

- Tiffany Walraven, Councilmember, Pembroke
- Emily Davenport, Mainstreet Manager, Hahira
- Booker Gainer, Mayor, Cairo
- Teresa Taylor, Assistant Manager, Decatur

5:30 p.m.

Bus pick up for dinner plans

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Game-X for dinner and games

Monday, January 27

7:00 a.m.

Shuttle buses will start pick up, going to the Georgia Freight Depot for the Capitol Connections Breakfast

7:30 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.

Breakfast Buffet Open

8:15 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. Capitol Connection Legislative Networking Program

9:30 a.m. Cities United Day at the Capitol

Return shuttle service (to Hilton) will be available from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.