

2011 GMA Annual Convention Schedule of Events

Friday, June 24

4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Registration

Saturday, June 25

7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Registration

8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Municipal Training Institute

Attendees are required to present the appropriate training ticket at the door of their assigned room to receive training registration information and be admitted into the class. Roll call will be taken at the beginning of class and following lunch. Credit will not be given to attendees who are more than 30 minutes late for the class. At the end of the class, attendees will need to complete an attendance verification form and have it signed by the instructor. Attendees will be given one copy for their files and the instructor will keep a copy to ensure that credit is confirmed. To limit distractions, cell phones should be turned off while classes are in session. We also ask that you limit side conversations and unnecessary comments during training.

CHANGING COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS AND BEST PRACTICES

Room 200

Formerly entitled "Cultural Diversity and Best Practices", this course examines the immigration and aging trends in Georgia and explores the implications of these changing demographic for cities, both in terms of challenges and opportunities. Time is allocated for representatives from communities that have been significantly impacted by these trends to share their insights and suggestions.

CLERKS' CERTIFICATION COURSE: Public Records Technology/Leadership
(elective)

Harbor Ballroom A, Westin

COUNCIL-STAFF RELATIONSHIPS

Room 100/101

This course explores the unique perspectives of municipal elected officials and staff and how a greater understanding of each other's perspectives can reduce friction and misunderstanding and result in improved public service delivery. The distinction between policy making and administration and other council-staff related issues are explored using exercises, case studies and group discussion.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITIES

(8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

Grand Ballroom A, Westin

This course is primarily directed at those who serve on Downtown Development Authorities but is open to all elected officials. Topics include management of downtown as a valuable resource; the role of the authority and of board members and staff; DDA laws; and the day-to-day operations of an authority.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*On Required List

Room 202

This course provides a basic overview of the economic development process, with a focus on the strategies, resources and programs employed by the state of Georgia to assist communities in achieving success in today's global economy. Topics such as community development building blocks, business development strategies, regional cooperation, and the role of local leadership in economic development are covered.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Room 203

This course will explore the environmental issues citizens and elected officials of Georgia currently face such as water quality and quantity, energy conservation, air quality and the handling of solid and hazardous waste. Participants will learn from municipal elected and appointed officials what cities are doing to address these environmental challenges, how to get citizens engaged and how to communicate and promote the environmental message. Participants will also learn how to respond to the challenges of working with state agencies. In addition, resource materials related to state law, state policy and state resources will be provided for officials to take home in CD format.

HOUSING SOLUTIONS FOR CITIES: A KEY ELEMENT TO THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Grand Ballroom D, Westin

This course provides officials with information about housing needs and issues, as well as programs and resources available to assist communities. Participants learn how their respective counties compare with the state as it relates to housing, family size, and income data, as well as how other cities have used available financing to leverage their housing efforts. Afternoon roundtable discussions provide answers to questions and a toolbox of ideas and resources, including names and phone numbers of persons who can help solve housing problems.

HUMAN RESOURCES II

Room 102

This course focuses on areas of human resource management such as performance appraisal systems; recruiting, interviewing, hiring and retaining staff; employee benefits; and employee training. The course builds on information provided in Human Resources I, but it is not a prerequisite for Human Resources II.

MUNICIPAL FINANCE I

Harbor Ballroom B

This course is intended to serve as a basic primer on municipal finance issues that all mayors and councilmembers should understand. Included in this general overview is a discussion of the budget process, the revenue sources available to cities, purchasing policies and financing capital improvements.

MUNICIPAL LAW

Room 103/104

This course reviews the sources and limitations of authority granted to municipal governments by the federal and state constitutions, as well as statutes enacted by the U.S. Congress and Georgia General Assembly. The role and function of the municipal charter is also discussed. Other key topics covered during this course include municipal contracts, annexation and the personal liability of public officials.

RECREATION AND PARKS: INNOVATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES

Room 204/205

This course will expose municipal officials to some of the innovations and creative solutions that some of Georgia's cities have initiated in the development of outdoor and indoor recreation facilities and parks, both active and passive. Participants will also learn how cities are taking advantage of creative ways of generating revenues to fund new and existing facilities and outdoor areas. Attendees will gain a better understanding of the recreation and parks opportunities for their cities and ways to build community support.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCE

Grand Ballroom E

Is your city at risk? This course focuses on the importance of loss control and safety training as a way of reducing insurance claims, and also provides a general introduction of risk management and insurance. Alternative ways to cover municipal risks are also discussed.

STRENGTHENING YOUR COMMUNITY BY STRENGTHENING YOUR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Room 201

This course examines how the well-being of children and families affects the success of community and economic development. The course reviews trends in Georgia and identifies specific strategies that officials can implement in their own communities. "Family Connections" and other state-run programs aimed at reducing the number of at-risk youth and juvenile delinquents are addressed. Problem issues such as teen pregnancies, truancy and teen drug and alcohol use are also discussed.

TAXATION 101-THE BASICS

*On Required List

Oglethorpe Auditorium

This course provides municipal elected officials with a broad understanding of the fundamentals of local government taxation including property tax, occupation tax, hotel-

motel tax, sales and use tax. Participants will gain an understanding of tax language, appropriate usage of revenues and will be better prepared to communicate tax issues to constituents and make prudent decisions related to expenditures.

TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS FOR CITIES: INNOVATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES

Room 105/106

Municipalities must look to new and emerging technologies as one of the primary ways of becoming more efficient and effective, especially in this challenging economic environment. The course will highlight some of the interesting and creative uses of technology that have enabled a number of Georgia's cities to improve service delivery and responsiveness, as well as make their operations more transparent to the public. The costs and challenges of implementing these technological solutions will be examined. Participants will also learn about new technologies to anticipate in the future and how they may be applicable to municipal operations.

11:30 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.

Training Luncheon

Chatham Ballroom in Trade Center, Or Ballroom C in the Westin

Lunch times will be staggered and your exact time will be announced by your instructor. You must have a training luncheon ticket for this event. We are at maximum capacity with our training, so please no spouses or guests.

3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Exhibit Hall Grand Opening and Refreshment Break

3:45 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.

Chatham Ballroom A

GMA Board of Directors' Meeting

Presiding: Kenneth Steele, Mayor, Fayetteville – GMA President

5:00 p.m.

Door Prize Drawing

Exhibit Hall

Sunday, June 26

7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Registration

7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

City Attorneys' Session and Breakfast

Harbor Ballroom, Westin

Presiding: Dennis Still, City Attorney, Dacula and President, GMA City Attorneys Section

This year's seminar topics will include updates on the state's new immigration law and regulating billboards as well as information on how to regulate the use of golf carts on city streets. Due to rising interest in returning tax delinquent property to productive use, there will be a presentation on how land banks do and could function under Georgia law. There will also be a presentation on the hidden legal risks of green building and a comprehensive legislative update. The seminar will conclude with an open forum for city attorneys to discuss legal issues with other members of the section and a brief meeting of the GMA City Attorneys Section.

Presenters:

Rusi Patel, Associate General Counsel, GMA

Frank S. Alexander, Professor, Emory University School of Law; General Counsel, Center for Community Progress

Laurel Henderson, Henderson & Hundley, PC; City Attorney, Morrow

Theodore Meeker, Sumner Meeker LLC; City Attorney, Greenville, Haralson, Luthersville and Peachtree City

James K. Bidgood, Jr., Partner, Smith, Currie & Hancock, LLP

Susan J. Moore, General Counsel, GMA

Special thanks to Alston & Bird, Freeman, Mathis & Gary, Murray Barnes Finister and Gallagher Bassett for their support of our convention

Staff Contact:

Susan Moore, General Counsel

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

City Managers' Session and Breakfast

Grand Ballroom B, Westin

Presiding:

Kenneth Howard, Assistant Manager, Hinesville;

Director-at-Large, Georgia City-County Management Association

Presenters:

Alan Ours, Manager, Glynn County; President, Georgia City-County Management Association

Paul Radford, Deputy Director, Georgia Municipal Association

Laura Meadows, Associate Director, Carl Vinson Institute of Government

Ted Baggett, Local Government Program Manager, Carl Vinson Institute of Government

Special thanks to MEAGPower for their support of our convention

Staff Contact:

Paul Radford, Deputy Director

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

**Georgia Municipal Clerks and Finance Officers Meeting and Breakfast
Room 200/201**

Presiding: Ursula Lee, Clerk, Richmond Hill; President, GMC/FOA

Staff Contact:

Steve Durden, Marketing and Field Services Manager and Pam Helton, Local Government Marketing Manager

9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Exhibit Hall Open

9:30 a.m.

Door Prize Drawing

Exhibit Hall

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

**Annual Meeting of the RMEBS Membership and
GMEBS/WCSIF/GIRMA Boards of Trustees Meeting
Grand Ballroom D/E, Westin**

Presiding: Mickey Thompson, Mayor, Douglasville

11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Policy Committee Meetings (working lunch)

The purpose of committee meetings is to discuss legislative issues of interest to cities. The membership will use the meetings to review policy items suggested by city officials during the GMA spring listening sessions and recommended by the Legislative Policy Council. The committees will also discuss recently passed legislation of interest to cities and what issues are on the horizon.

Municipal Government

Room 100/101

Chair: Keith Brady, Mayor, Newnan

The committee will hear a brief overview of the 2011 Municipal Government legislative policies and take action to adopt the policies for consideration by the membership. Also, a panel of legislators will discuss recent legislation and issues pertinent to a city's operation. Issues to be discussed are illegal immigration, annexation, service delivery strategy with baseball arbitration to resolve disputes and the erosion of home rule.

Presenters:

Representative John Meadows, Chair, House Rules Committee

Representative Wendell Willard, Chair, House Judiciary Committee

Representative Matt Ramsey, Vice Chair, Legislative and Congressional Reapportionment Committee

Representative Winfred Dukes, State Planning and Community Affairs Committee

Staff Contact:

Lamar Norton, Director, Governmental Relations

Public Safety

Room 103/104

Chair: Willie Burns, Mayor, Washington

The committee will hear a brief overview of the recommended 2011 Public Safety legislative policies and take action to adopt the policies for consideration by the membership. Sweepstakes Cafes have become prolific throughout the state, especially in cities, and many cities are struggling to quell their influx into their communities. Officials from the City of Valdosta will discuss their approach to placing a moratorium on the zoning of such establishments and the effect such action has had in the City of Valdosta. These officials will discuss the problems created by such establishments and possible actions cities can take to minimize the negative impact of such establishments.

In addition, the General Assembly has passed comprehensive immigration and security legislation during the 2011 Legislative Session. An official from the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police will discuss the implications of the new law on local law enforcement. Finally, an official from the City of Rome will discuss the impact of having a pawnshop transaction ordinance and the beneficial results in reduction of property crimes. Discussion will include how the program works and how it benefits all parties involved.

Additionally, the committee will honor its outgoing chairman, Mayor Willie Burns of Washington, for his two years of service to GMA.

Presenters:

Larry Hanson, City Manager, Valdosta

Frank Simons, Chief of Police, Valdosta

David Lyons, Chief of Police, Garden City, 3rd Vice President, Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police

Pete Sailors, Detective, Rome

Staff Contact:

Rusi Patel, Deputy General Counsel

Transportation

Room 105/106

Chair: John Fretti, Mayor, Valdosta

City officials across the state have spent the past year working through the steps outlined in the Transportation Investment Act of 2010, a task which included identification of an unconstrained list of transportation projects to be considered for funding through the regional one-cent sales tax. GDOT Planning Director Todd Long will be on hand to

update committee members on his progress in narrowing down the list, which will be completed later this summer. The committee will also hear from Josh Waller, Governor Nathan Deal's Transportation Policy Advisor, regarding the Governor's key transportation policy objectives. Also on hand will be Senator Doug Stoner, member of the Senate Transportation Committee and Chair of the Intermodal Rail and Transit Subcommittee, regarding his thoughts on the 2012 regional T-SPLOST elections around the state, and about transit governance in Metro Atlanta. Committee members will also receive a brief overview of the recommended GMA 2012 Transportation legislative policies and take action to adopt the policies for consideration by the membership.

Presenters:

Senator Doug Stoner, Senate Democratic Caucus Chairman
Josh Waller, Transportation Policy Advisor, Office of Governor Nathan Deal
Todd Long, Planning Director, Georgia Department of Transportation

Staff Contact:

Becky Taylor, Manager, Research & Federal Relations

1:15 p.m.

**Door Prize Drawing
Exhibit Hall**

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Policy Committee Meetings (working lunch)

The purpose of committee meetings is to discuss legislative issues of interest to cities. The membership will use the meetings to review policy items suggested by city officials during the GMA spring listening sessions and recommended by the Legislative Policy Council. The committees will also discuss recently passed legislation of interest to cities and what issues are on the horizon.

**Community Development
Room 100/101**

Chair: Linda Blechinger, Mayor, Auburn and Chair, GMA Community Development Policy Committee

The committee will be briefed on the recommended 2012 legislative policies on community development and take action to adopt the policies for consideration by the membership. Professor Frank Alexander will discuss how land banks can help communities return tax delinquent property to productive use, Tonza Clark will explain DeKalb County's foreclosed property registry and Sophie Winkler will discuss the interactive tool she designed to help city officials model the effectiveness of tax exemptions to attract new business.

Presenters:

Sen. Frank Ginn, State and Local Government Operations Committee.

Frank S. Alexander, Professor, Emory University School of Law; General Counsel,
Center for Community Progress
Tonza Clark, Foreclosure Registry Manager, DeKalb County
Sophie Winkler, MPA Candidate, University of Georgia

Staff Contact: Marcia Rubensohn, Legislative and Regulatory Affairs Counsel

Environment and Natural Resources

Room 105/106

Chair: Deke Copenhaver, Mayor, City of Augusta

Regional water planning recommendations have been finalized across the state, many communities continue to struggle with water and wastewater infrastructure costs, and regulatory challenges are making headlines and impacting municipal budgets. Special guests will debrief officials on recent legislative accomplishments, such as Senate Bill 122 which established an option for public-private partnerships on water supply and reservoirs, and talk about the new interbasin transfer rules adopted by the Department of Natural Resources in January. These guests will also look at possible next steps on water planning efforts and give their views on the tri-state water wars litigation.

In addition, many cities are grappling with changing water and wastewater rates as a result of aging infrastructure expenses, regulatory and water management planning cost and supply and demand pressures. A finance expert will present the findings of the 2011 water and wastewater rates survey and showcase the interactive Georgia Rates Dashboards which are designed to help city officials prepare reasonable rates based upon factors like socioeconomic conditions, system size and water sources, and the overall financial health of the city's utility.

This meeting is also a good opportunity to review GMA's Environment & Natural Resources policies and discuss the ways city officials can influence how the General Assembly tackles tough environmental issues next year.

Presenters:

Allen Barnes, Director, Georgia Environmental Protection Division.

Stacey Isaac Berahzer, Senior Project Director, Environmental Finance Center.

Ross Tolleson, Chairman, Senate Natural Resources & the Environment Committee.

Staff contact: Tom Gehl, Deputy Director, Governmental Relations

Revenue and Finance

Room 103/104

Chair: Mike Bodker, Mayor, Johns Creek

The committee will hear a brief overview of the recommended 2012 Revenue and Finance policies and take action to adopt the policies for consideration by the membership. Tax Reform is still a top priority under the Gold Dome. How will the proposed changes to the tax code affect your municipality? The committee will hear

from legislators that co-chair and serve on the Special Joint Committee on Tax Reform. Also, an expert tax professor will discuss why drastic limitations to the property tax can have a significant impact on citizens and local governments.

Presenters:

Senator Bill Heath, Chairman of Senate Finance and Co-chair of the Special Joint Committee on Tax Reform

Stacey Abrams, House Minority Leader and Member of the House Ways and Means Committee and Special Joint Committee on Tax Reform

David E Brunori, Research Professor of Public Policy, George Washington University

Staff Contact:

Mark Baggett, Government Relations Associate

3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Opening General Session

Chatham Ballroom

Presiding: Kenneth Steele, Mayor, Fayetteville-GMA President

Parade of Flags

National Anthem: Sidra Sams, Songstress

Invocation: Dr. Larry Guido, President of Guido Evangelistic Association and the Guido School of Evangelism, Metter

Welcome to Savannah: Otis Johnson, Mayor, Savannah

Keynote Speaker: Andy Andrews, Speaker and Novelist

The Butterfly Effect

Andrews lived a relatively normal life until the age of 19, when both his parents died — his mother from cancer, his father in an automobile accident. “I took a bad situation and made it much worse,” Andrews says with a rueful smile, referring to choices he made during this tragic period of his life. Within a span of several years, the young man found himself literally homeless (“before that was even a word!” he says), sleeping occasionally under a pier on the Gulf Coast or in someone’s garage.

It was then that Andrews asked the question that would focus his search for what would ultimately affect millions of people. The question?

“Is life just a lottery ticket, or are there choices one can make to direct his future?”

Special thanks to Gas South for their support of our convention

Special thanks to Georgia Power for being our sustainability sponsor

4:45 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.
Legislative Policy Council Meeting
Grand Ballroom A/B, Westin

Presiding: John Reid, Mayor, Eatonton- GMA Second Vice President

Monday, June 27

8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Registration

8:15 a.m.
Door Prize Drawing
Chatham Ballroom

8:30 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.
General Session: Growing Forward-The RISE of Excellence
Chatham Ballroom

Presiding: Billy Trapnell, Mayor, Metter-GMA First Vice President

Keynote: Lt. Governor Casey Cagle

Renaissance Award Presentation: Mike Starr, President and CEO of the Georgia Cities Foundation and Lt. Governor Casey Cagle

Special Task Force Recommendations:

At Mayors' Day 2010, a session was held that initiated a comprehensive 12-month study of downtown development. The Fanning Institute at the University of Georgia was engaged to lead this study. At Mayors' Day 2011, Dr. Joe Whorton of UGA presented the findings of the study of the study to the GMA membership. Shortly thereafter, a Special Downtown Development Task Force was appointed to review the findings of the study and make specific recommendations for the GMA membership to consider at the GMA Annual Convention. Mike Starr, President and CEO of the Georgia Cities Foundation, will present the task force recommendations.

Panel Discussion: This panel of developers, economic development professionals and city officials will focus on the recommendations of the Special Downtown Development Task Force as well as the opportunities and obstacles ahead for cities all across the state. Craig Lesser, Managing Partner of the Pendleton Consulting Group and the former Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Economic Development, will moderate the panel discussion.

Moderator: Craig Lesser, Managing Partner, Pendleton Consulting Group

Panelists: Drew Ferguson, Mayor, West Point
Walt Huntley, President, Huntley Partners

Donavan Rypkema, President, Heritage Strategies International
Pam Sessions, Founder & Co-owner, Hedgewood Properties
Deidra White, Councilmember, Valdosta

Special thanks to AT&T for their support of our convention

Staff Contact:

Paul Radford, Deputy Director

10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Saving Money . . . Living Greener . . . What Could Be Better?

Room 100/101

As a society we are becoming more concerned about our limited resources and beginning to explore sustainability initiatives to conserve our natural resources. In addition to saving the planet, many of these efforts result in the added benefit of saving precious budget dollars. At this session you will learn how cities incorporate ideas of sustainability into their policies and programs, involve their citizenry in the process and use energy audits and other changes in internal policies and procedures to decrease costs.

Moderator:

Peter Floyd, Partner, Alston & Bird LLP

Presenters:

Rebecca Keefer, Planning Coordinator, Dunwoody

Ross Kaul, Councilmember, Norcross

Paul Wolfe, Councilmember, Tybee Island

Staff Contact:

Chris Higdon, Energy Program Manager, Georgia Cities Foundation

Lou Comer, Director, Local Government Services

Breathing New Life into Your Municipal Cemetery

Room 105/106

Nearly every community in the state has at least one municipally owned and operated cemetery. Some of these cemeteries have dilapidated structures, are overgrown with weeds and wild growth and have become havens for vandalism and other undesirable activities. Many of these cemeteries are seen as liabilities. But what if you could turn that around and bring these cemeteries back to life as recreational, cultural and tourism destinations? A panel of experts will discuss municipal cemeteries as treasures in our communities. Cemeteries are prime destinations for cultural and heritage tourism, attracting dollars to the local economy. A well-maintained cemetery can be the crown-jewel of the community – a true asset, and not a liability.

Moderator: Jerry Flemming, Director, Park & Tree/Cemeteries, Savannah

Presenters:

Stan Rogers, President, Georgia Municipal Cemetery Association
Rachel Black, Cemetery Specialist, Georgia Department of Natural Resources,
Historic Preservation Division
Bruce Green, Director, Tourism Product Development, Georgia Department of
Economic Development

Staff Contact:

Amy Henderson, Public Information Manager

**Downtowns: If You Lived Here, You'd Be Home!: Leveraging Economic
Development Efforts Through Construction and Revitalization of Residential Areas
Adjacent to Downtown
Oglethorpe Auditorium**

Economic Development efforts often focus on attracting industry to the outskirts of cities, with communities investing heavily in infrastructure that may bring large-scale employers to town. While industrial development outside the city's core is important, local leaders should not overlook the unique economic development potential in downtowns. Downtowns are often home to small businesses that collectively equal the job force of a large employer outside the downtown area. Additionally, as the historic centers of most cities, downtowns already have in place the water, sewer, and transportation facilities that investors and employers desire. Cities that invest in residential areas near or adjacent to downtowns give a boost to existing downtown businesses and make downtown a more attractive location for new private investment, bringing a critical mass of people who will walk downtown to visit restaurants, go shopping, and go to work. During this session, participants will learn best practices from experts in cities around the state that have placed a priority on building or rehabilitating residential areas adjacent to downtown. Each panelist will explain how public investment in residential infrastructure near downtown has worked as an economic development strategy for the downtown and the city as a whole.

Moderator: Michael L. Starr, President and CEO, Georgia Cities Foundation Board of Directors

Presenters:

Barbara Bacon, Community Development Manager, Washington
Monica H. Callahan, Planning Director, Madison
Kim Carter, Mayor, Covington
Martin Fretty, Director, Savannah Housing Authority

Staff Contact:

Becky Taylor, Manager, Research & Federal Relations

**Becoming a Golf Cart City – Best Practices
Room 103/104**

With gas prices going sky-high and an increased focus on reconnecting neighborhoods in cities across Georgia, many community leaders are looking at adopting ordinances to

become golf cart cities. This session will focus on best practices and a model ordinance for cities which decide to establish regulations for operating golf carts on city streets. Presentations will be made about the latest safety features on golf carts, many of which are made in Georgia, and a representative of Peachtree City will discuss the quality of life benefits offered by this city's embrace of golf carts as a transportation mode.

Moderator: Deke Copenhaver, Mayor, Augusta;

Presenters:

Michael Alexander, Club Car

Joel Cheek, Yamaha Golf-Car Company

Ted Meeker, Esq., City Attorney, Peachtree City

Jon Pyszczynski, E-Z-GO

Staff Contact:

Tom Gehl, Deputy Director, Governmental Relations

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Networking Luncheon

Room 200-202

1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Pitch Perfect: Hitting the Right Note When Engaging the Community, the Media and Legislators

Room 100/101

With the many communication platforms and messages competing for everyone's attention in our fast-paced, plugged in a world, how does a city effectively get its message across to those who need hear it? In this session, presenters will discuss how they put together a Georgia Cities Week program to engage the community, a Hometown Connection session to engage state legislators and a public relations effort to engage the media. Come see what they have done to play up their community strengths and accomplishments, overcome communication challenges and identify outreach opportunities.

Moderator:

Keith Brady, Mayor, Newnan

Presenters:

Krystal R. Britton, Public Relations Manager, Hinesville

Don Cannon, Mayor, Walnut Grove

Bret Bell, Public Information Director, Savannah

Staff Contact:

Brian Wallace, Manager Online Communications

Aileen Harris, Communication Associate

Drawing Crowds by Promoting Your City's "Must-Sees"

Room 103/104

Your city, like all cities in Georgia, has a talent pool, unique attractions and a story to tell. Don't be shy, promote those "must-sees" in your city! Did you know that arts and culture is a \$166.7 billion industry in the US? You might not have a symphony hall, an art museum or the Slosheye Trail BIG PIG JIG ®; however, your town can be an arts and destination town. Charleston is "All Aboard!" with the cruise ship industry – should Savannah be next? We'll hear the latest on efforts to bring a cruise ship line to Georgia. This session will also discuss ways your city can "re-sculpt" its one-of-a-kind assets, "cruise" into prosperity, and be as enticing as cotton candy at a carnival.

Moderator: Joseph Mosley, City Manager, Metter

Presenters:

Bruce Green, Director, Tourism Product Development, Georgia Department of Economic Development

Joe Bankoff, Director, Woodruff Arts Center

Sarah Verner, Director, Blue Ridge Mountains Arts Association

Tony Thomas, Alderman, Savannah

Staff Contact:

Mark Baggett, Governmental Relations Associate

Turning Vacant Spaces into Vibrant Places – Put a Land Bank in Your City's

Toolbox

Room 105/106

The recession, the credit crunch and high unemployment have all helped contribute to a sharp rise in the number of tax delinquent properties across Georgia. These properties strain public services at the same time that they drain the tax digest. Many of these properties are vacant and derelict. For over twenty years cities and counties in Georgia have had the ability to create land banks to help address this serious problem. But the effectiveness of the existing state law is limited. Now there is state legislation proposed that will provide additional powers to land banks and give local governments the flexibility to set up a land bank that meets the needs of their community now and in the future. Across the state cities of all sizes are establishing land banks. Come learn about how a land bank can help transform your city.

Moderator: Larry Hanson, City Manager, Valdosta

Presenters:

Frank S. Alexander, Professor, Emory University School of Law; General Counsel, Center for Community Progress

Chris Norman, Executive Director, Fulton County/City of Atlanta Land Bank Authority

Alison Souther, Executive Director, Macon-Bibb County Land Bank Authority

Staff Contact: Susan Moore, General Counsel

**Local Government Effectiveness and Transparency: Are They Mutually Exclusive?
Proposed Changes to Open Meetings/Open Records**

Oglethorpe Auditorium

The new state Attorney General campaigned on a pledge to promote open and transparent government. At his request, legislation was introduced this past session by State Representative Jay Powell, a former President of the Georgia Municipal Association, that proposes significant changes to the many and sometimes confusing provisions of current law regarding Open Meetings and Open Records. Attendees will have the opportunity to hear an overview of the changes, why these changes are being proposed and to get reactions from a diverse cross-section of panelists, including a seasoned city attorney, local newspaper editor, the Attorney General's office and the author of the bill. Attendees will also be given opportunities to ask questions of the panelists to help frame the real-life impact of proposed changes on city government operations.

Moderator:

Ken Usry, Mayor, Thomason

Presenters:

Susan Catron, Editor, Savannah Morning News

Dennis Dunn, Deputy Attorney General, Office of Attorney General

Representative Jay Powell, Vice Chair, House Appropriation

Drew Whalen, City Attorney, Griffin

Staff Contact:

Lamar Norton, Director Governmental Relations

2:45 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Credentials Pick Up

Outside Chatham Ballroom

City officials designated by their cities to serve as the official voting delegate for the annual business meeting should pick up their voting credentials before entering the business meeting.

3:00 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.

Closing General Session

Chatham Ballroom

Presiding: Kenneth Steele, Mayor, Fayetteville – GMA President

Annual Business Meeting

- **Report from the Legislative Policy Council & Adoption of the 2012 Legislative Policies**
John Reid, Mayor, Eatonton – GMA Second Vice President

- **Nominating Committee Report & Election of 2011-2012 Officers and Board of Directors**

Mayor Mickey Thompson, Mayor, Douglasville; Chair, Nominating Committee

Awards and Installation Program

Installation of Officers and Board of Directors

Drew Whalen, City Attorney, Whalen Law Firm, LLP

Certified Cities of Ethics

Beth English, Councilmember, Vienna-GMA Third Vice President

Municipal Government Hall of Fame

Jeffrey Smith, Mayor Pro Tem, Sandersville

Chair, GMA Awards Committee

Training Certificates

Jennifer Frum, Interim Director, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia

Laura Meadows, Associate Director, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia

Special thanks to Coca Cola for their support of our convention

6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Taste of Savannah

Exhibit Hall Area, Savannah International Trade and Convention Center

Enjoy some of Savannah's finest restaurants from 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

Russo's Seafood: Low country boil

Sandfly BBQ: Pork sandwiches, cole slaw and Brunswick stew

Crystal Beer Parlor: Hot dogs and chili

The Lady and Sons: Fried chicken, mac & cheese and greens

Savor Savannah Catering: Black Angus Sliders

Savannah Candy Kitchen: Pralines

Two Smart Cookies: Cookies

Open Bar: 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

8:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Cavalcade of Stars

Chatham Ballroom

Cash Bar: 8:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

“Cavalcade of Stars” is a legendary, Sunburst Award Winning, “Best of Show” Las Vegas show group.

You will hear a variety of musical impersonators including **Elton John, Tina Turner, Elvis, Aretha Franklin, Shania Twain, Roy Orbison, Reba McEntyre, The Beatles, Cher, The Blues Brothers, and Jessica Simpson**, ending with a wild rendition of Retro-1970’s & 80’s Disco! Come prepared to watch, or dance, whichever mood strikes you.

8:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Puppet People Puppet Show and Workshop

For Kids of All Ages

Please accompany your child to Room 105/106 between 8:00 and 8:30 pm for check in and then you may proceed to the Chatham Ballroom for the Cavalcade of Stars performance.

Room 105/106

Tuesday, June 28

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Registration

8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Municipal Training Institute

BUSINESS DIPLOMACY AND PROTOCOL

Room 202

This course exposes city officials to the fundamental elements of professional business etiquette and protocol. As part of the course, participants will be taught how to make an entrance and work a room, handle introductions, remember names, and treat business prospects, as well as proper seating and dining protocol.

COMMUNITY AND MEDIA RELATIONS

Room 200

This course examines the importance of building effective working relationships with the media and the role the media plays in informing the public and shaping their opinion of municipal governments. Advice for repairing poor relationships is provided, along with insights on when and how to speak with reporters, especially during times of crisis.

EXCELLENCE IN UTILITIES

Room 204/205

This course provides a general overview of the operation of municipal utilities such as gas, electric, water/sewer/stormwater and cable. Topics include principles for effective utility process and people management, a model for utility planning, tips for managing an enterprise fund, meeting regulatory requirements, hiring and retaining competent employees, setting and maintaining competitive rates, creating fiscal responsibility, and

building customer service. Participants will also explore the latest issues facing municipal utilities and enterprise funds.

MAKING CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT WORK IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Room 201

This course explores the importance of getting citizens engaged in a positive way to contribute to the process of governance. Participants will hear from city elected and appointed officials who are learning how to do it well. The course also exposes officials to the concept of deliberative forums, a method of citizen engagement that brings diverse community interests together to explore policy options and share insights, ideas, and suggestions in a structured setting. Participants will receive tips, tools, and other resources for recruiting citizens, creating productive conversations, and encouraging citizens to be involved in local problem solving.