



Appalachian
Regional
Commission



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Appalachian Regional Commission Awards Chattooga County \$1,000,000
for The Tooga Renovation Project**

Funding will allow Chattooga County to renovate the Tooga Theater

Summerville, Georgia February 18, 2025 – Chattooga County is a proud recipient of a **\$1,000,000** financial grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission. The funds will allow Chattooga County to renovate the exterior entrance, interior lobby and auditorium, roof over the staging area, as well as replace building systems and finishes of the lower level.

The theater was acquired under former Commissioner Winters. Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, Cindy McGraw, and former Commissioner Ellsberry applied for the grant. Commissioner Andy Allen has continued to be diligent in making this project a priority benefit the whole community. Also, a huge thank you to the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission for helping with this project. To ensure renovations are historically appropriate and architecturally sound, Chattooga County followed federal procedures to procure an architectural firm to prepare a renovation master plan for the historic Tooga Theater.

“The Tooga’s renovation is not merely a matter of preserving bricks and mortar, but of revitalizing a vital part of our community’s history and identity” said Eugene McGinnis, President, Chattooga County Historical Society

Once complete, the Tooga Theater will be a multi-purpose indoor facility. It will cover broad scope activities ranging from community gatherings, school plays, weddings, receptions, movie showings, conferences, business meetings, concerts, and many other private and public events to be managed by the Chattooga County Chamber of Commerce. The theater’s centralized location makes it an ideal tourism and industry development meeting place. Chattooga County expects to see an initial 10% increase in tourism and visitors to the area, with an annual increase over time.

“I am honored to be a part of the Tooga renovations. I love historical projects and excited to see the end product. I am local and available to answer any questions” said Gary Lowery, Lead Project Manager, LDG Design Management

About Appalachian Regional Commission

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is an economic development partnership entity of the federal government and 13 state governments focusing on 423 counties across the Appalachian Region. ARC’s mission is to innovate, partner, and invest to build community capacity and strengthen economic growth in Appalachia. ARC invests in Appalachia’s economic future by providing grants, publishing research, and sponsoring learning experiences – all to help Appalachia’s communities seize their opportunities, address economic disparity and advance prosperity.

“We expect this to mark the start of an exciting journey that will build community capacity and strengthen economic growth in Appalachia.” Appalachian Regional Commission