



## **NORTH GEORGIA COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.**

1344 Talking Rock Road • P. O. Box 760

Jasper, Georgia 30143-0760

706-692-5623 • 706-692-5644 • 1-800-440-1642 • Fax 706-692-2804

April 11, 2016

Ms. Becky Hood, Chairperson  
Gordon County Board of Commissioners  
P.O. Box 580  
Calhoun, Georgia 30703

RE: Public Transportation Proposal for Fiscal Year 2016/2017

---

Dear Ms. Hood:

I am hereby transmitting a fully executed original and two (2) copies of the North Georgia Community Action, Inc. proposal to operate the Section 5311 Rural Public Transportation Program in Gordon County for Fiscal Year 2016/2017.

You will also find enclosed two (2) copies of the Exhibit 2, Service Agreement for Operations, please sign both copies and retain one for your files and forward one back to us.

This agency is currently serving as the Third Party Operator for the provision of this transportation service. Our current contract will end on June 30, 2016. The attached proposal seeks to continue providing this service from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.

I would like to point out two major areas in the proposal which will reduce the cost to the county unit of government for the provision of this service, in terms of both monetary savings and the elimination of additional audit and staff costs to satisfy the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Georgia Department of Transportation auditing and reporting requirements.

Since North Georgia Community Action, Inc. was the pioneer transportation provider in this area, both the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Georgia Department of Transportation conducted a review of our accounting practices and audit requirements. Since we must comply with OMB Circular A-128 and OMB Circular A-133, both the State Department of Transportation and the U.S. Department of Transportation have agreed to continue to permit this Agency to maintain the total accounting records for the provision of this service to provide audits on behalf of the counties from our financial records.

Ms. Becky Hood, Chairperson  
April 11, 2016  
Page 2

This additional service is incorporated in our proposal at no additional cost to the county unit of government.


The Agency proposes to operate the system on a cost reimbursement basis with no profit factored into the budget; therefore, this proposal for operating the Gordon County Transportation Program should result in substantial savings to the taxpayers.

North Georgia Community Action, Inc., is currently operating three (3) 5311 vehicles in Gordon County. During the past year the demand for transportation has dramatically increased and looking at the additional revenues generated from the increased demand, the actual cost to Gordon County should be minimal. As I indicated earlier in my letter we will operate the system on a cost reimbursement basis and will make every effort to stay within the operating budget adopted by the county and Georgia DOT.

I appreciate your cooperation and assistance in allowing this Agency to provide these much needed services to the residents of Gordon County.

Sincerely,

NORTH GEORGIA COMMUNITY  
ACTION, INC.



Jonathan Ray  
Executive Director

JR/rw

Enc.

**PROPOSAL**  
**PROVIDING RURAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**  
**SERVICES**  
**FOR**  
**RESIDENTS OF GORDON COUNTY**  
**JULY 1, 2016 THRU JUNE 30, 2017**



## NORTH GEORGIA COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.


1344 Talking Rock Road • P. O. Box 760

Jasper, Georgia 30143-0760

706-692-5623 • 706-692-5644 • 1-800-440-1642 • Fax 706-692-2804

### PROPOSAL TRANSMITTAL MEMORANDUM

TO: BECKY HOOD, CHAIRPERSON  
GORDON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
P. O. BOX 580  
CALHOUN, GEORGIA 30703

FROM: JONATHAN RAY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR   
NORTH GEORGIA COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.

SUBJECT: PROPOSAL FOR THE PROVISION OF RURAL PUBLIC  
TRANSPORTATION FOR THE RESIDENTS OF GORDON  
COUNTY

DATE: APRIL 11, 2016

---

Please find attached the original and 2 copies of the proposal from North Georgia Community Action, Inc. to provide rural public transportation under the Section 5311 Program funded through the Gordon County Commission.

Please note that this proposal is for Fiscal Year July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.

If awarded this contract, North Georgia Community Action, Inc. agrees to comply with the contents of the Scope of Work (Attachment A) and the Scope of Services (Attachment B) as outlined in the proposal packet.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

JR/rw

Enc.

**NAME:**

North Georgia Community Action, Inc.

**ADDRESS:**

1344 Talking Rock Road  
Post Office Box 760  
Jasper, Georgia 30143

**CONTACT PERSON:**

Jonathan Ray, Executive Director

**TELEPHONE NUMBERS:**

(706) 692-5623 and (706) 692-5644

**LEGAL STATUS OF ORGANIZATION:**

North Georgia Community Action, Inc. is a private, non-profit organization duly incorporated under Georgia law in May of 1974.

**DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATION:**

This corporation was formed to operate Office of Economic Opportunity Programs and other human service programs within a ten-county service area. The service area consists of Catoosa, Chattooga, Cherokee, Dade, Fannin, Gilmer, Murray, Pickens, Walker and Whitfield Counties. The policymaking body of the organization consists of a thirty (30) member Board of Directors. One-third of the membership of the Board of Directors is composed of the respective County Commission(er) or designee from each of the member counties; one-third of the membership is composed of duly elected low-income persons from each of the ten counties in the area; and the final third of the Board is filled by private group representatives duly elected from their respective counties.

The day-to-day operations of the organization are vested in the Executive Director as the Chief Executive Officer of the corporation. The Chief Executive Officer, in turn, manages the operational functions of the organization through the Program Directors and staff of the various programs.

An organizational chart is attached.

**1. General experience in transportation service; delivery experiences with specialized service for the elderly and handicapped.**

North Georgia Community Action, Inc., a 501©3 non-profit corporation formed in May of 1974, initially began providing transportation to the low-income, elderly, and handicapped residents of Cherokee County under Section 16(b)(1) of the Federal Surface Transportation Act.

In the fall of 1975, through the purchase of 6 vans, transportation service was expanded to 6 counties in the service area (Cherokee, Fannin, Gilmer, Murray Pickens and Whitfield). In 1978, additional vehicles were acquired by the organization under Section 16(b)(2) of the Surface Transportation Act. These additional vehicles allowed an expansion of the transportation system to provide transportation for elderly individuals to nutrition programs and handicapped individuals to nutrition programs and specialized services.

In 1980, funds were made available through Section 18 of the Federal Surface Transportation Act, and additional vehicles were purchased by each of the county units of government through a contract with the Georgia Department of Transportation. North Georgia Community Action, Inc. was named as the third party operator of these vehicles in each of the counties except Gilmer County. Gilmer County elected to operate its own transportation system.

North Georgia Community Action, Inc. continued to provide this service in all 5 of its service area counties through December 31, 1989 when Whitfield County awarded the contract to another third party operator. The Agency continued operating Section 18 rural public transportation through December 31, 1990 in Cherokee, Fannin, Murray, and Pickens Counties. Murray County awarded the transportation contract to another third party operator effective January 1, 1991. North Georgia Community Action, Inc. has continued to serve as the third party operator for rural public transportation in Cherokee, Fannin and Pickens Counties. North Georgia Community Action, Inc. also began serving as the Third Parry Operator for Gilmer County effective January 1, 1997.

Although the split of what had been a regional system through awarding separate individual contracts to other third party operators greatly diluted the ability to coordinate an effective multi-county system, North Georgia Community Action, Inc. continued to very effectively operate the system in the 4 counties contracting with the Agency for services at the most competitive rate available through the contract period January 1, 2002 – December 31, 2002.

In January 2002, North Georgia Community Action, Inc. entered into a contract with the Gordon County Commission and the Whitfield County Commission to provide transportation services under the Section 5311 Program as the "Third Party Operator."

A part of the service which is being provided for the county units of government in the six counties where NGCA, Inc. serves as the Third Party Operator is the total administrative/record keeping and development of reports both for Medicaid and the Georgia Department of Transportation.

The Agency also has an accountable financial management system and the audit of records meets the requirements of the Georgia Department of Transportation without the necessity of an additional county expenditure or the provision of staff to maintain the required transportation reports or additional audit costs.

Although this cost is not separated in the budget for the proposed operation of service, the estimated additional cost to the county for any other third party operator providing this service which does not totally assume the responsibility for developing the data required by the Georgia DOT, preparation of reports, and arranging for audits would be a minimum of \$10,000 per contract.

## **2. Qualifications and experience of key project personnel.**

The County Transportation Coordinator/Dispatcher is well qualified with 13 years experience with the Gordon County Transportation System. All drivers have received Mountain Area Transportation System (M.A.T.S.) training and currently possess the appropriate licenses to continue as drivers under the program.

Drivers receive training from the M.A.T.S. driver-training program on a regularly scheduled basis. All drivers are First Aid/CPR certified. All M.A.T.S. personnel, in addition to the regular training, receive training in drug abuse. A motor vehicles license check and criminal record check are completed on all M.A.T.S. personnel.

## **3. Fleet management capability (maintenance, dispatching, etc.).**

If awarded this contract, North Georgia Community Action, Inc. expects to continue utilizing the current maintenance providers to perform those maintenance services required other than routine maintenance performed by staff.

Transportation program staff would be responsible for the regular routine vehicle checks and ensuring that all vehicles are in safe operable condition prior to being placed in service. The Agency proposes to use a County Transportation Coordinator/Dispatcher who would be responsible for the day-to-day management of the system. The County Transportation Coordinator/Dispatcher, along with the Transportation Program Director or the Executive Director of the Agency, would closely coordinate the activities with the County Commission or its designee.

The agency would continue purchasing fuel to operate the vehicles through the county unit of government.

If awarded this contract, it would be necessary for the county unit of government to provide a fixed base of operations (i.e., office space, parking area for vehicles, etc.) which would adequately support a central location to house the operation.

Since this Agency has been involved with rural public transportation for more than 41 years and has been the third party operator for Section 5311 Rural Public Transportation in several of the counties in its service area for more than 32 years, it proposes to continue providing the same high level of service for each county electing to utilize NGCA as its third party operator.

**4. Projected level of service for 2016/2017:**

<u>Vehicle</u>	<u>One-Way Pass. Trip/Month</u>	<u>Hrs./ Month</u>	<u>Miles/ Trip/Mile</u>	<u>Passenger Trip/Mile</u>
3381	500	150	1,500	.40
3382	500	150	1,500	.40
3383	500	150	1,500	.40

North Georgia Community Action, Inc. is committed to taking the necessary steps to attempt to reach the projected performance level. The cost of this service relative to the level of service hinges on a number of factors including actual number of one-way passenger trips, the number of passengers per vehicle mile, increased utilization of the system, the cost of maintenance and gasoline, staffing patterns and salaries, etc.

Although the county budget is based on the Section 5311 funds available for Gordon County, North Georgia Community Action, Inc. does not anticipate 100% expenditures in all categories. Any budgeted funds not actually expended would proportionately reduce the county's local share for providing transportation as well as the Federal share under Section 5311.

The Agency proposes to operate the system on a cost reimbursement basis with no profit factored into the budget; therefore, this proposal for operating the Gordon County Transportation Program should result in substantial savings to the taxpayer.

5. **Financial Stability.** See attached letter Attachment C.



## ATTACHMENT A

### SCOPE OF WORK

Gordon County will provide to the successful contractor:

- upon inception of contract performance, up-to-date information on patrons, points of origin and destination, and schedules;
- upon inception of contract performance, three (3) vehicles in good condition;
- throughout the contract period, technical assistance in:
  - obtaining purchasing of service contracts,
  - marketing the system,
  - required record keeping and reports.
- the vehicles are radio-equipped, and a base station is available if needed.

The successful contractor shall:

- manage and operate a complete rural public transportation service for residents of Gordon County (see Scope of Services for specific details and requirements).
- pick up, and take custody of and responsibility for, maintaining (including preventive maintenance, cleaning, repair and component replacement as necessary), and use three (3) county-owned vehicles in providing services, and shall return vehicles to Gordon County in good condition upon termination of services;
- implement such service expansions or improvements as may be proposed by the contractor and accepted by Gordon County, or as may otherwise be agreed between the parties from time to time.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

PART 1: OVERVIEW

General

The contractor shall provide route-deviation, demand response, and charter transportation for residents of Gordon County. In general, the service shall include reservation and scheduling functions, maintaining and operating county vans and/or minibuses, picking up, transporting and dropping off patrons and documenting and reporting operations. Particulars of the services shall conform to the requirements that follow.

Length of Contract

The contract shall be for one year.

Types of Service

The service will be curb-to-curb, shared-ride, route-deviation, demand-response, and charter transportation for residents of Gordon County.

Route-Deviation Service:

Deviation from routes with points of origin and destination to temporary points for pick-up and drop-off of passengers.

Demand –Response Service:

Service with 24-hour advance notice. Less than 24-hour advance notice should be worked into the regular schedule when feasible.

Charter Service:

Prearranged service after regular operating hours or on weekends. Three working day advance reservation required.

Days of Service

Route-deviation and demand-response service will be provided Monday through Friday. Charter service will be provided after regular operating hours on weekdays and on weekends.

### **Hours of Service**

Monday through Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### **Passengers**

Any resident of Gordon County

### **Definition of a Trip**

Transporting one passenger one-way between two locations.

## **PART 2: RESERVATION AND SCHEDULING FUNCTIONS**

The contractor is to provide all reservation and scheduling functions as outlined in the following sections.

### **General Tasks**

- The contractor shall respond to telephone requests from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.
- The contractor shall maintain a daily record of calls received.

### **Reservation and Scheduling Procedures**

Requests will be evaluated by the contractor to determine if they can be added to existing routes. If the request necessitates the addition of new routes or additional vehicles, the contractor shall be responsible for submitting a revised budget to the Gordon County Commission. The Commission will be responsible for deciding if the request can be granted.

#### **Demand-Response Reservation Procedures**

- The contractor shall accept reservations for demand-response service between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Reservations should be made one working day in advance of the trip.
- The dispatcher shall maintain a demand-response reservation log, recording the name, address and telephone number of the caller and the requested pick-up times and locations for both the originating and return trips.
- If the trip can be accommodated, the dispatcher will make the reservation, record the method of payment, type of trip, and other information as warranted.

### **PART 3: SERVICE DELIVERY PROCEDURES**

- The operator shall accept all trip requests relayed to him from the dispatcher so long as they are within his specified service area and within the specified service times. There shall be no right of refusal based on vehicle availability (except the passenger maximum load factor) or any consideration other than verifiable catastrophic mechanical failure of more than 75% of the vehicles in the operator's fleet.
- Vehicles must be on time, unless there are extenuating circumstances, beyond the contractor's control. A 95% on-time performance rate is required. Notification must be given by the contractor to the patron in the event of unavoidable delays.
- For social service clients, drivers must wait five minutes after the appointed pick-up time before a passenger can be considered a no-show (a passenger who is not at the appointed pick-up location at the scheduled time and who has not informed the contractor in advance that they would be absent). There is no minimum waiting time for general public passengers.
- Drivers should offer assistance to all passengers as needed to board and depart from the vehicle; secure all wheelchairs to the vehicle; and request that all passengers buckle their seatbelts.
- Drivers shall refrain from smoking, eating and drinking while passengers are in the vehicle. Drivers shall request passengers to refrain from smoking, eating and drinking in the vehicle.
- Contractor shall inform the appropriate social service agency representative regarding any difficulties experienced in transporting an agency client, whether related to safety, behavior, or other reasons.
- Tipping by riders is allowed, but should be discouraged by the operator because of the expected socio-economic status of such participants.

### **PART 4: TYPES OF VEHICLES**

The contractor shall use Gordon County's existing fleet of vans/minibuses.

## **PART 5: MAINTENANCE OF VEHICLES**

The contractor must adhere to the following maintenance guidelines:

### **General Guidelines**

Provide the personnel, parts, equipment, supplies and supervision necessary to perform all cleaning, preventive and maintenance to keep the vehicles clean and in good working order and to maintain the continuity of service.

### **Vehicle Safety and Inspection**

All Vehicles utilized under the agreement must be maintained in safe and good mechanical condition. Each vehicle shall be subject to inspections by GDOT representatives. GDOT inspections of vehicles will occur on a semi-annual basis and in accordance with the Vehicle Monitoring Form.

## **PART 6: PERSONNEL**

The following qualification and training guidelines are recommended:

### Director/Manager Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in related field or equivalent experience in the operation of a transportation system
- Supervisory and management skills
- Marketing skills and experience
- Writing and verbal communications skills
- Knowledge of the community, including social service agency transportation needs.

### Driver Qualifications

- Have, or be able to obtain, a valid Georgia Driver's License of the class necessary to operate the system vehicles, (may require a C.D. L.)
- Ability to read, write and make correct change.
- Ability to physically assist in the loading and unloading of elderly and handicapped passengers when necessary.
- Minimum of three years driving experience.

- Thorough knowledge of traffic safety and excellent driving record.
- 20/20 vision (corrected) and be in good physical health.
- Ability to deal effectively with the elderly, handicapped, and the general public.
- Ability to arrive at work on time.
- Favorable job history and satisfactory references.

### **Driver Training**

The contractor should design a driver training program that includes the following:

- Use of equipment
- Defensive driving techniques
- Emergency first aide procedures and CPR training
- Passenger assistance techniques for proper care and handling of disabled riders
- Fare structure
- System information (reservations, telephone numbers, etc.)
- Preventive maintenance requirements
- Record keeping

### **Dispatcher Qualifications**

- Knowledge of county and city roads
- Verbal communication skills (good telephone manners)
- High School graduate or equivalent experience in dispatching
- Favorable job history and satisfactory references
- Ability to coordinate variable routing needs

## **Dispatcher Training**

The contractor should design a dispatcher training program that includes the following:

- Use of dispatching equipment
- Grouping of trips for more effective utilization of vehicles and resources
- Fare structure
- System information
- Record keeping
- Knowledge of special needs of social service agency clients

## **PART 7: REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

The contractor shall be responsible for submitting GDOT reports by the tenth of each month to the county unit of Government for approval and forwarding to Georgia DOT District Six Office, Cartersville, Georgia.

## **PART 8: AUDIT REQUIREMENTS**

The contractor shall maintain an acceptable accounting system in accordance with federal and state requirements. The contractor will be required to provide for an independent audit at the end of the contract period. This end-of-year audit also constitutes the final financial report. The audit shall be performed by a certified or licensed independent auditor. Further details are included in OMB Circular A-128 and A-133.

**PART 9: REVENUE REPORTING AND INVOICING**

General public riders are required to pay a fare as follows:

Ambulatory	
Under 10 miles .....	\$ 2.00 per one-way trip
Over 10 miles .....	\$ 3.00 per one-way trip
Wheelchair .....	
Same rates as above	

Social service agency riders can be subsidized by the social service agency, Medicaid, or another funding source. Purchase of Service Agreements will recover fully-allocated costs.

The contractor shall be responsible for billing social service transportation expenses to the appropriate party on a monthly basis. All fares and purchases of service income received shall be documented on the invoice submitted to Gordon County. The contractor shall submit monthly invoices to the Gordon County Board of Commission at the end of each month. Gordon County shall reimburse the contractor by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the following month.

**PART 10: ACCIDENTS**

The contractor shall report any accidents to the Gordon County Commission and the Georgia DOT District Six Representative within one hour of the occurrence or, if the offices are closed, by 9:00 am. of the following workday, and shall submit to Gordon County and GDOT a copy of the accident report.



**PART 11:      CIVIL RIGHTS ASSURANCE**

The operator must agree as a condition to receiving Federal Assistance under Section 5311 of the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964, as amended, that:

1. No person shall on the grounds of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, or handicap be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any project, program, or activity for which this recipient receives Federal financial assistance from the Urban Mass Transportation Administration.
2. The Operator shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, and shall take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed, and that employees are treated during employment, without regard to their race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.
3. The Operator will conduct any program or operate any facility that receives or benefits from Federal financial assistance administered by the Department of Transportation in compliance with all requirements imposed by or pursuant to 49 CFR, Part 27, Nondiscrimination on the basis of Handicap in Federally Assisted Programs and Activities receiving or Benefiting from Federal Financial Assistance.

**PART 12:      SERVICE CRITERIA**

The contractor shall use the following service criteria as a guide for evaluation of vehicle utilization:

1. The service should be complementary and not duplicate other transportation services.
2. Monthly ridership should exceed 500 person trips per active vehicle in service.
3. Vehicle utilization should exceed 120 hours per month per active vehicle.
4. Vehicles should be available for service on a daily basis.
5. Vehicle trips for contract or charter service should at a minimum recover all costs.
6. Regular service ridership should exceed 0.5 passengers per vehicle service mile.
7. Total system utilization should at a minimum achieve 10 percent of its ridership from fare-paying non-agency passengers.

Exhibit (A)

GORDON COUNTY

DOT Vehicle

BUS NO.	YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	PASS	LIFTS
					CAPACITY	
3381	2013	FORD	Elkhart Coach	1FDEE3FS2DDB29126	12	
3382	2013	FORD	Elkhart Coach	1FDEE3FS4DDB29130	12	*
3383	2013	FORD	Goshen Coach	1FDEE3FS8DDB29129	14	*



**STEARNS  
BANK**<sub>N.A.</sub>

*We get the job done!*<sup>™</sup>

100 Mark Whitfield Street – Jasper, GA 30143  
Ph: 706-253-7070 ♦ Fax: 706-253-7090

1449 West Church Street – Jasper, GA 30143  
Ph: 706-253-7130 ♦ Fax: 706-253-7141

March 7, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

North Georgia Community Action Agency, Inc., a private, non-profit corporation chartered under Georgia law in May of 1974, has utilized Stearns Bank N.A., formerly known as Jasper Banking Company, as its depository institution since the date of incorporation.

North Georgia Community Action Agency, Inc. has had no financial difficulties that were apparent to this bank from the date of its incorporation to the present.

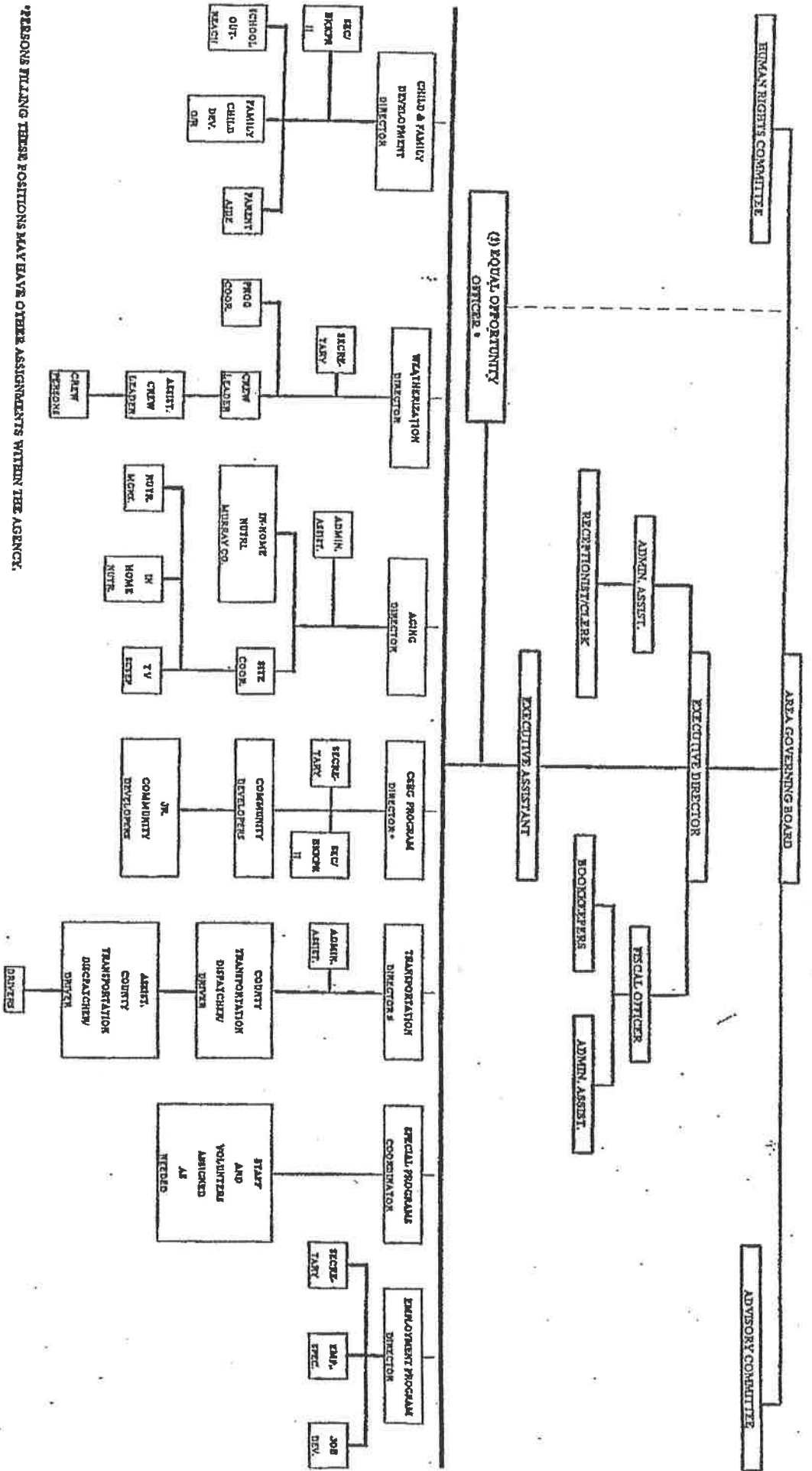
Stearns Bank N.A. would be pleased to discuss any loan requests with North Georgia Community Action Agency, Inc. to be used as operating funds while awaiting reimbursement under purchase of service contracts and other contracts operated by the Agency. North Georgia Community Action Agency, Inc. has always managed their deposit accounts properly and we look forward to continuing to serve their needs.

This bank has conducted business with North Georgia Community Action Agency, Inc. for more than 37 years. Based on our dealings with and knowledge of key staff in the Agency, and the corporation, the Agency has managed their banking relationship appropriately.

Sincerely,

Carol L Caywood  
Georgia Market President

WORLD GEORGIA COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.  
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



\*PERSONS FILING THESE POSITIONS MAY HAVE OTHER ASSIGNMENTS WITHIN THE AGENCY.

(1) THE EEO REPORTS DIRECTLY TO THE AREA GOVERNING BOARD.  
THE EEO REPORTS DIRECTLY TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON NON-EEO MATTERS.

# THIS POSITION IS CURRENTLY VACANT.