



UPPER SAVANNAH

Council of Governments

ACTIVITY REPORT

FEBRUARY 2026

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

USCOG
to submit

2

CDBG grant
applications
in spring round

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

There are

12

active CDBG
projects in region,
totaling almost
\$10 million

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

\$11.27 million

EDA

PTC Health Sciences
Building project
construction
under way

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LCWSC
\$5.4 million

EDA

Metric Road
water upgrade
is completed

AGING

More than

42,700

meals served
to seniors
in Region in
October through
January

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Transportation

Feasibility
study for transit
in Abbeville,
Laurens, Saluda
counties draft
report is available

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Virtual Engagement Center

available
for job search
assistance
from home

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Job Fair

set for
March 25
at Piedmont
Technical College

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Completed
BEST
project
in
Promised Land
Community

See
DETAILS
on these and
other activities
in this report



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ACTIVE PROJECTS:

APPLICANT	PROJECT NAME	GRANT AMOUNT
Greenwood County.....	Department of Public Health Building Improvements.....	\$923,890
Abbeville County.....	DSS Parking Lot Improvements.....	\$445,328
Saluda County.....	EMS Station Blood Storage Equipment.....	\$65,872
Laurens County.....	Joanna Sewer Rehab.....	\$1,321,050
Saluda County.....	Library Improvements.....	\$750,000
Laurens County.....	Clinton-Joanna WWTP Upgrade Phase II.....	\$1,618,000
Greenwood County.....	DSS Building Improvements.....	\$1,278,510
City of Abbeville.....	Chestnut Street Park.....	\$250,000
Town of Ridge Spring.....	Town of Ridge Spring Sewer Rehab.....	\$1,700,000
Town of Saluda.....	N. Main/W. Church Streetscape.....	\$721,212
Town of McCormick.....	N. Main/Augusta Streetscape.....	\$750,000
Greenwood County	Regional Planning	\$50,000
TOTAL		\$9,873,862

CDBG GRANT APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED

APRIL 2026 SPRING ROUND

City of Clinton: Florida Street Sewer Rehabilitation – A total of approximately \$2,374,300 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) funding are being requested for sewer improvements for residents and businesses on East Ferguson Street, East Florida Street, East Main Street, Ferguson Street Ext, Hays Street, North Holland Street and Prather Circle in City of Clinton. Approximate project cost \$2,734,300.

Laurens County: Beards Fork Force Main Improvements – Requesting CDBG funding to replace approximately 6,920 feet of 10-inch force main installed in 1979. (Engineering still developing necessary details).

There are **12** active CDBG projects in the region, totaling

\$9,873,862

Greenwood County Department of Public Health Building Improvements - Greenwood County was awarded \$923,890 in December 2025 for both interior and exterior building improvements, which will cover exterior and interior ADA accessibility enhancements, sidewalk and parking lot renovations, asbestos abatement, HVAC system replacement and installation, installation of drop ceilings, door and flooring replacements, and updated lighting. Project is in start-up phase.

Abbeville County DSS Parking Lot Improvements - Abbeville County was awarded \$445,328 in December 2025 for parking lot improvements, addressing substantial cracks in parking lot foundation, uneven surfaces, and need for ADA parking signage markings and ramps. The project will include asphalt replacement, striping, signage, sidewalk, curb stop and speed bumps. Project is in start-up phase.

Saluda County EMS Station Blood Storage Equipment - Saluda County was awarded \$65,872 in December 2025 to provide residents and visitors with life-saving pre-hospital blood to aid in medical trauma calls. The County does not have any emergency medical facilities to aid in trauma calls, relying on the availability of air medical services and ambulance transportation to the nearest emergency medical facility. Medical facilities can range from 40 mins to an hour and a half depending on the extent of the medical needs. Funds would purchase equipment to store, transport, and administer blood while on scene or during transport to the nearest medical trauma facility. The funds will provide for an autonomous portable refrigerator unit, cables, adaptors, vehicle mount, blood warmer, backup battery, and blood. Project is in start-up phase.

Laurens County Joanna Sewer Rehabilitation - Laurens County was awarded \$1,321,050 in June 2025 to upgrade water and sewer in the Joanna community. Improvements are proposed on W. Calhoun Street, E. Calhoun Street, Reeder Street across Workman Street, across N. Main Street (Hwy 76), along Taylor Street, and crossing under the railroad to Sumter Street. Water construction will consist of 1,600 linear feet (LF) of 6" water line, 70 LF of 12" steel casing pipe (bored and jacked under SC Hwy 76), four fire hydrants assemblies, re-connection to the existing water mains, and 43 water service re-connections. Sewer construction will consist of 1,850 LF of 8" gravity sewer line (remove and replace), 580 LF of HDPE pipe bursting, 180 LF of 20" steel casing pipe (bored and jacked under SCDOT roads and railroad), six manholes, rehab of approximately eight existing manholes and 33 sewer service re-connections. The project will require no acquisition and is estimated to cost approximately \$1,688,300, including \$367,280 from Laurens County Water & Sewer Commission. Bid package going out this week.

Saluda County Library Improvements - Saluda County was rewarded \$750,000 in December 2024 to renovate the new Saluda County Library location at 307 W. Butler Ave. The current library behind the courthouse consists of approximately 2,000 square feet of space, whereas the new library location consists of approximately 6,900 square feet. Improvements to include interior construction, parking improvements, ADA accessibility, and new HVAC unit. Improvements will provide residents with a much larger facility, allowing for more educational materials, resources, and space for free library-hosted activities and programs. Bid package is ready for review, and project should go out to bid in February/March 2026.

Clinton-Joanna WWTP Upgrade Phase II: Laurens County was awarded \$1,618,000 in July 2024 for the Clinton-Joanna Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade Phase II. This will help Laurens County continue the project that was awarded in August 2022. In June 2023, the project for the plant was bid for construction, including installation of a second 750,000-gallon sludge holding tank as an alternate bid item. However, due to the high bids the second tank was unable to be funded. As a result, the project was awarded with the construction of only one 750,000-gallon tank. In the spring 2024 CDBG application round, funds were requested to continue upgrading the plant including the purchase and installation of the second sludge holding tank, aeration, mixers, pumps, controls, and other necessary fittings. Project cost is estimated to be \$1,780,000, with \$1.618,000 in CDBG funds and \$162,000 in matching funds provided by the Laurens County Water & Sewer Commission. The improvements consist of installing the 750,000-gallon tank. The drying beds were removed as part of the original scope in Phase I. This additional tank will be the completion of the 2022 original scope, providing the Clinton-Joanna plant its necessary capacity to not only sustain its increasing wastewater volume, but to handle the facility's max capacity. The second 750,000 gallon holding tank has been installed, project is expected to be completed in March 2026.

Greenwood County DSS Building Improvements: Greenwood County was awarded \$1,278,510 in CDBG funding in December 2023 to improve the Department of Social Services building. The building needs a new roof, HVAC, improved restrooms, asbestos abatement, ADA accessibility, lobby/waiting area improvements, flooring, lighting, repainting, and parking lot and safety improvements. The engineers are working on the bid package, interior asbestos has been removed, and exterior asbestos is being removed.

City of Abbeville Chestnut Street Park: City received \$250,000 in CDBG funds in December 2022 to upgrade Chestnut Street Park, which is owned by the City and located at 400 Chestnut St. Improvements include playground equipment, picnic tables, mulch, and open-air pavilion. Additional work to include site preparation, installation of purchases, designated American Disabilities Act parking, and concrete work. Project estimated at \$275,000. The playground equipment, pavilion and picnic tables have been installed, and park-style grills will be added. The project is expected to be completed in February/March 2026.

Town of Ridge Spring Sewer Rehab: Town received \$1,700,000 in CDBG funds in August 2022 to rehabilitate three major sections of the Town's main sewer trunkline. A study completed in 2005 indicated excessive inflow and infiltration within the Town's system. Recent inspections indicated conditions significantly worsened. Project includes approximately 2,541 linear feet (LF) of 8" gravity sewer, 2,151 LF of 10" gravity sewer, 200 LF of 16" steel encased pipe (bore), 3,361 LF of CIPP and installation of approximately 42 manholes. Project costs are estimated to be \$2,086,090, including \$386,090 from Town. Right of way acquisition is complete and the engineers are working to complete the bid package. Project expected to go out to bid in March 2026.

Town of McCormick Streetscape Phase II: A total of \$750,000 in CDBG funds were requested to continue the Town's streetscape efforts. Phase I was completed in 2020. Phase II includes improvements to W. Augusta St in front of Town Hall to include sidewalks, curbing, speed table, and Veterans Memorial. Additional improvements were made to the parking area behind Town Hall and the Fire Department, including new parking, alternative exit and entrance, and required underground retention pond. The Town committed an additional \$215,637 towards the completion of the project. The alternate exit from Town Hall parking to SC Works parking involved the removal of several large trees and required relocation of the Town's Emergency Services generator. Project provides an additional 23 parking stalls. Construction of sidewalks, Veterans Memorial and speed table will result in eliminating the majority of existing parking out front of Town Hall. Crews are working on landscaping, are waiting on a few bricks, grouting and the medallions to be installed, followed by clean up. Project to be completed March 2026.

Town of Saluda Streetscape: Town received \$721,212 in CDBG funding in November 2021 for streetscape at North Main and West Church streets. Project focused on downtown beautification in hopes of providing a welcoming atmosphere for economic development. Improvements would encourage foot traffic, potentially stimulating business opportunities within the available storefronts. Project included a \$102,562 local match for total cost of \$823,774. Construction complete, waiting on cameras to be installed.

Regional Planning Grant: Community Development staff is continuing to provide assistance to local governments in project development, needs assessments and technical assistance in the CDBG program.

Projects Closed out in 2025: City of Greenwood Waller Avenue Streetscape, City of Greenwood Booker T. Washington Sewer Upgrade, Greenwood County Mathews Mill Sewer Phase II.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ACTIVE PROJECTS:

APPLICANT	PROJECT NAME	GRANT AMOUNT
Laurens County Water & Sewer Commission.....	Laurens County Metric Rd. Water Upgrades.....	\$5,422,800
Piedmont Technical College	Health Sciences Building.....	\$11,271,697
TOTAL.....		\$16,694,497

Laurens County Water and Sewer Commission was awarded grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to fund water system improvements to serve Malouf Companies and generally upgrade water services in the area around the Interstate 385 and US 221 interchange. The grant amount is \$5,422,800 and the total project cost is \$6,778,500. The grant will fund 29,500 linear feet of 16-inch water line and a 500,000-gallon elevated water tank on Metric Road. Construction was completed in December 2025. Start-up operations and water tank certifications will need to be performed before the project is fully operational.

Piedmont Technical College has received an \$11,271,697 grant award from EDA for its Health Sciences Building project. This project consists of the construction of a new 27,000 square foot building for the Health Science programs. The building is to be constructed on 1.5 acres on the Piedmont Technical College Greenwood Campus adjacent to the existing Science Building. This project will provide spaces that simulate real-world conditions which align with industry standards to prepare the students to be work-ready upon graduation. The project cost is estimated at \$14,089,621. Piedmont Tech opened bids on July 10. Eleven bids were received. A contract with the low bidder, Hogan Construction, has been signed and the project is underway. Construction is 15 percent complete.



Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program

The RLF is a locally controlled source of capital used to assist in financing start-up and expanding businesses. To be eligible, a potential borrower’s project must result in the creation of permanent jobs and leverage private sector investment.

	Active Loans	All Loans
Loans Closed	6	64
Total Dollars Loaned	\$200,000	\$4,543,620
Private Investment	\$983,710	\$32,206,448
Other Public Investment	\$0	\$2,140,500
Jobs Created and Retained	23	715
Cost Per Job	\$8,696	\$6,355
Private Investment Ratio	\$4.92: \$1	\$7.09 : \$1

CARES Revolving Loan Fund (CARES RLF) Program

Funded by the CARES Act, this locally controlled source of small business capital was established to help the region recover from the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

	Active Loans	All Loans
Loans Closed	13	22
Total Dollars Loaned	\$691,546	\$1,004,096
Private Sector Investment	\$2,201,450	\$2,250,450
Other Public Investment	\$14,470	\$14,470
Jobs Created and Retained	81.5	112.5
Cost Per Job	\$8,485	\$8,925
Private Investment Ratio	\$2.95 : \$1	\$2.24 : \$1



AGING

Upper Savannah Area Agency on Aging/Aging & Disability Resource Center Activity Report October - January

Number of Clients/Month	October	November	December	January
Assessments	129	102	81	97
Caregiver Support	15	17	18	13
Assistive Technology	17	17	17	16
Home/Personal Care	31	31	30	26
Minor Home Repair	6	6	3	4
Seniors Raising Children	10	2	2	1
Transportation	173	166	158	154
Legal Assistance	7	11	13	7
Caregiver Respite	42	38	33	20

Congregate Meals Report | Oct. 2025 - Jan. 2026

	October	November	December	January
Abbeville	430	342	369	331
Edgefield	314	213	244	231
Greenwood	914	719	801	665
Laurens	166	172	163	160
McCormick	357	280	274	260
Saluda	572	426	498	468

Home-Delivered Meals Report | Oct. 2025 - Jan. 2026

	October	November	December	January
Abbeville	1,458	1,129	1,127	1,172
Edgefield	1,332	1,033	1,082	975
Greenwood	3,990	3,385	3,389	3,153
Laurens	1,655	1,280	1,300	1,300
McCormick	776	698	669	476
Saluda	549	398	520	503

Other highlights - Area Agency on Aging staff took part in more than 18 outreach events throughout the region during the months of October, November, December and January. These events included networking opportunities such as Lunch and Learns, Coffee and Connect, and Senior Network of Greenwood County. Other events included presentations at local churches. On November 11, 2025, AAA staff participated in Ashley Square 4th annual Veteran's Appreciation Lunch. This is a special event our staff looks forward to every year in serving our Veterans. During the month of December, AAA staff along with COG staff donated various items for our Home-Delivered meals clients to receive during the holiday.

More than

42,700

MEALS

served to seniors
in Region in

October through
January

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

- Continued working with the Promised Land community through the SC Brownfields Environmental Site Testing (BEST) program to fund removal of a 7,500-gallon underground diesel fuel tank at the Promised Land school site. Project is complete and is the final SC BEST project in Upper Savannah region.
- Met with SCDOT to evaluate the potential to improve safety at the intersection of SC Highway 121 and Fruit Hill Road and the intersection of SC Highway 121 and Rocky Creek Road.
- Met with SCDOT representatives to review four potential intersection improvement projects in Laurens County – Lisbon Rd and US 221; SC 49 and SC 308; Owings Parkway and SC 14; and Durbin Road and Gulliver St near Fountain Inn.
- Continued working with a group from the Western Transportation Institute to update transportation feasibility studies for Abbeville, Laurens, and Saluda counties. A draft is available and has been distributed to interested parties for comment. Those three counties do not have public transportation.
- Continued work on Economic Development Administration (EDA) grants administration on one current grant in Laurens County and one for Piedmont Technical College.
- Continued work on an EDA grant application for Edgefield County Water and Sewer Authority.
- Continued work on an EDA grant application for Laurens County Water and Sewer Commission.
- Attended Town of McCormick Economic Development Strategic Plan meetings.
- Continued meetings with SC Office of Resilience staff assigned to work the Saluda, Savannah, and Edisto watersheds.
- Responded to several city planning and zoning requests for information from across the region.
- Participated in statewide discussion group on encouraging more sidewalks, bike paths, and other non-motorized means of transportation in rural parts of SC. Edgefield is a potential future meeting site for this group.
- Met with the statewide Drought Committee to evaluate drought status across the region and state.
- Met with the Town of Gray County Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals to discuss state-mandated training requirements.
- Oversaw state-mandated planning commissioner training to 15 commission members from Edgefield County and the towns of Edgefield and Trenton.
- Researched a potential development site in Laurens County for a Textile Communities Act area of economic distress determination letter.
- Met with a state legislator from Edgefield County to review the SCDOT and COG planning partnership program.
- Continued grant administration of the SC Infrastructure Investment Program (SCIIP). COG administration is required for nine grants totaling \$26,598,719. Participated in monitoring for the Ware Shoals SCIIP planning project.
- Continued meeting with the Resiliency and Sustainability planning program in Greenwood County.
- Attended a Saluda County Planning Commission meeting to review a draft of the Comprehensive Plan update.
- Met with the three newest county administrators in our region to present an Upper Savannah COG activities overview.
- Will host all regional public administrators in the region for a lunch meeting.
- Continued working with the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission to support community development projects across the region.
- Continued administration of a grant on behalf of the Greenwood County and McCormick County SC 250 committees to update and install signs commemorating Revolutionary War events across the county line.
- Continued work on environmental reviews for CDBG and EDA projects.
- Attended Vision Greenwood board meetings.
- Attended a United Way of the Lakelands board meeting.
- Attended a meeting on the Greenwood Genetic Center Master Plan.
- Continued assisting the Upper Savannah Land Trust with various planning activities including coordinating the annual meeting.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Upper Savannah Workforce Board Update

The Upper Savannah Workforce Development Board continues to evolve to better serve our six-county region. During our February meeting, we officially welcomed three new leaders to the Board, bringing valuable expertise from the healthcare, manufacturing, and senior care sectors:

Sherri Gordon (Laurens County), Assistant Vice President, Self Regional Healthcare

Chris Milstead (Newberry County), Sr. Manager of Operations, Komatsu America Corporation

Caleb Polatty (Saluda County), Director of Human Resources, Saluda Nursing & Rehab Center

In addition to expanding our leadership, the Board is actively pursuing new resources to enhance our local centers, including a \$95,000 SC DEW Security Grant request and a \$52,500 Rapid Response Incumbent Worker Training Grant to support Alupress employees.

Driving Connections

Our October 2025 activities showcased significant engagement across the region:

Greenwood County: A record 601 job seekers received services at the Greenwood SC Works Center in October 2025.

Abbeville County: 46 job seekers attended the Aerofoam hiring event, with another 47 individuals served through the local center.

Laurens County: Successfully supported 142 job seekers with in-person and online services.

2026 Regional Job Fair Schedule

Mark your calendars! We are excited to announce our upcoming Job Fair circuit in partnership with Piedmont Technical College (PTC). Whether you are looking for a new career or looking to hire local talent, these events are designed for you:

Date	County	Location	Time
Feb. 25	Edgefield	PTC Edgefield campus	10 a.m.-noon
Mar. 25	Greenwood	O'Dell Center, PTC	10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Apr. 22	Laurens	PTC CAM Center	1-3 p.m.
May 21	Saluda	PTC Saluda campus	10 a.m.-noon

Opportunities for Partners: PY '26 Request for Proposals

Upper Savannah is now seeking innovative service providers for the upcoming program year. The Request for Proposals (RFP) was released on February 10, 2026. Key deadlines include:

February 27, 2026: Deadline for written questions.

March 26, 2026: Proposal submission deadline (12:00 PM EST).

Stay Connected: For more information on job seeker services, business grants, or to view full reports, visit www.uploadsavannah.com or www.upperscworks.com.

Connect with a **LIVE representative online** for job search help, employer services, and more - right from your device

SC Works - WIOA Success Story - Amber was introduced to the WIOA program through SC Works, seeking a second chance at education and a pathway to meaningful employment. Traditional public school had not been the right fit for her, and she faced several barriers including limited work experience, and the lack of the credentials needed to advance her career. Despite these challenges, Amber remained determined, and the WIOA team supported her every step of the way. With WIOA's guidance, Amber enrolled in Greenwood Adult Education to pursue her GED. The program provided her with the encouragement, structure, and supportive services she needed to stay motivated and on track. Her hard work paid off when she successfully earned her GED. This was an important milestone that opened new doors for her future. Building on that success, Amber took the next step by enrolling in Greenwood Medical Academy, where she completed Phlebotomy training with the help of WIOA funding. When employment opportunities remained limited, WIOA supported her with additional training through Greenwood Medical Academy in their Certified Medical Assistant course. Her persistence soon turned into success. Following graduation, Amber secured employment with Greenwood Nephrology, where she now works passionately and confidently in her chosen field. She is currently a CMA making \$17.17 per hour and working 40 hours per week. Amber's story is a powerful reminder that success is possible when determination meets opportunity. With perseverance and the right support system, she overcame barriers and built a career she loves. Amber stands as proof that with resilience, resources, and belief in yourself, any challenge can be turned into a new beginning.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

