



# UPPER SAVANNAH

Council of Governments

## ACTIVITY REPORT

### APRIL 2026

#### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

USCOG submits

# 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 making progress

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LCWSC \$5.4 million

# EDA

Metric Road water upgrade is completed

#### AGING

More than

# 22,000

meals delivered to seniors in Region in January through March 2026

#### GOVERNMENT SERVICES

### Transportation

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

#### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

### Virtual Engagement Center

available for job search assistance from home

#### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

242 job seekers attended Upper Savannah Regional

# Job Fair

#### GOVERNMENT SERVICES

USCOG helps celebrates Revolutionary War event in **TROY**

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
<b>TOTAL .....</b>		<b>\$9,873,862</b>

## CDBG GRANT APPLICATIONS TO BE SUBMITTED

APRIL 2026 SPRING ROUND

### City of Clinton: Florida Street Sewer Rehabilitation

– A total of approximately \$924,300 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and \$1,500,000 in Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) funds are being requested for sewer improvements for residents and businesses on East Ferguson, East Florida, East Main, Hays, North Holland, and Jones streets, and Prather Circle in City of Clinton. The deteriorating sewer lines installed around 1970 are in need of immediate rehab. The project proposes CIPP and sections of dig and replace. No acquisition is anticipated. All work will take place in an existing easement or public right of way. Approximate project cost \$2,374,300. Additional funds from RIA are currently pending for the completion of this project.

### Laurens County: Beards Fork Forcemain Replacement

– Requesting \$999,970 in CDBG funding to replace Beards Fork Sewer Forcemain. This portion of line receives and transports wastewater from approximately half of the City of Clinton. This trunkline and 10" forcemain receives approximately 273,500 gallons of wastewater per day. The ductile iron pipe was installed in 1981 and has deteriorated beyond repair. The proposed construction will consist of approximately 6,900 linear feet of 10" PVC Forcemain, plus trench excavation, manhole rehabilitation, fittings, valves, controls, connections, testing, stone beddings, stabilization, mobilization and gravel. Total project estimated to cost \$1,189,970.

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 Joanna. 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. Project requires no acquisition and is estimated to cost approximately \$1,688,300, including \$367,280 from Laurens County Water & Sewer Commission. Bid package at SC Department of Commerce for approval.

**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 May 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 June 2026. Project monitoring also in June.

**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 were added. The project has been completed and Grand Re-Opening was held March 21, attended by elected officials and many members of the public. Project monitoring set up for first week of June.

**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 June/July 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 completed landscaping and installing medallions. Project has been completed and Grand Opening celebration was held April 2. Punch list items are being worked on as well as cleanup.

**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 and cameras installed. Working on closeout.

**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
<b>TOTAL.....</b>		<b>\$16,694,497</b>

**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 are complete. Final pay application is being prepared.

**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 - Jan. - March 2026

Number of Clients/Month	January	February	March
Assessments	97	184	178
Caregiver Support/Respite	13	32	44
Assistive Technology	16	16	16
Home/Personal Care	26	31	31
Minor Home Repair	4	2	2
Seniors Raising Children	1	2	9
Transportation	154	163	170
Legal Assistance	7	4	8

### Congregate Meals (# of meals) | Jan. - March 2026

County	January	February	March
Abbeville	331	342	410
Edgefield	231	223	290
Greenwood	665	637	743
Laurens	160	163	203
McCormick	260	292	311
Saluda	468	480	553

### Home-Delivered Meals (# of meals) | Jan. - March 2026

County	January	February	March
Abbeville	1,172	1,133	1,132
Edgefield	975	884	1,079
Greenwood	3,153	2,949	3,059
Laurens	1,300	1,240	1,105
McCormick	476	528	801
Saluda	503	406	390

**Other highlights** - AAA staff kicked off the New Year by taking part in more than 20 outreach events throughout region. 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 and also visiting the Edgefield and Abbeville senior centers. AAA staff also joined the Greenwood Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Alzheimer's Awareness Walk and Event March 28. Staff are currently organizing a Community Expo event in Saluda County May 19 at St. Paul UMC. This free event is for seniors, caregivers, and community members to learn about community resources; SC Dementia Care Specialist Jo Ann Moore will be guest speaker.

More than **22,000** MEALS delivered to seniors in Region in **January through March**

# GOVERNMENT SERVICES

- Continued work on Economic Development Administration (EDA) grants administration on one current grant in Laurens County and one for Piedmont Tech.
- 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 a City of Abbeville Economic Development Strategic Plan meeting.
- Met with Abbeville County Director and EMD to discuss a potential grant project
- Continued meetings with SC Office of Resilience staff assigned work the Saluda, Savannah, and Edisto watersheds.
- Responded to several city planning and zoning requests for information from across the region.
- Attended a meeting hosted by the Self Family Foundation to learn more about housing issues in the Greenwood area. The group heard about needs, potential resources, and on-going activities happening to improve the availability and condition of housing for all income levels.
- Met with the Clinton City Manager to discuss formatting the city strategic plan.
- Upper Savannah COG hosted Greenwood City officials and SCDOT staff to review existing plans and discuss possible outcomes for several projects related to Uptown traffic patterns and access to the Greenwood Genetic Center campus.
- 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 future meeting site for this group.
- Met with the statewide Drought Committee to evaluate drought status across the region and state.
- Met with an Edgefield County group looking to update their subdivision regulations.
- Continued work on the Town of Edgefield Comprehensive Plan update.
- 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.
- Met with Saluda County staff to review a draft of the Comprehensive Plan update.
- Met with the new Abbeville County Economic Development Director.
- Hosted all regional public administrators in the region for a lunch meeting.
- Hosted county and municipal clerks 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. Interpretive maps and a sign were unveiled during a ceremony at Wisteria Park in Troy April 18
- Continued work on environmental reviews for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and EDA projects.
- Attended a Vision Greenwood board meeting.
- 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 which was held April 16. The Land Trust is helping protect 60,140 acres of land with more than 150 easement projects across Abbeville, Aiken, Anderson, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry, Oconee and Saluda counties since its establishment in 2000.

# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## Upper Savannah Workforce Board Update

This season has been marked by increased engagement with both job seekers and employers. Our SC Works Centers have continued to serve as vital access points for individuals seeking employment, training and career advancement services.

Staff across all counties have expanded outreach efforts, ensuring that more residents are aware of available resources and opportunities.

We are also continuing to align our services with the needs of regional industries, with a particular focus on manufacturing, healthcare and logistics - key sectors driving economic growth in the Lakelands Region.

### Investing in Skills and Business Growth

Our commitment to workforce development is reflected in ongoing investments in training and upskilling initiatives. Upper Savannah received a \$50,000 Rapid Response Incumbent Worker training grant to reskill 30 plus employees at Alupress in Laurens County.

Through incumbent worker training programs and employer partnerships, we are helping businesses remain competitive while equipping workers with the skills needed for long-term success.

Additionally, we continue to pursue funding opportunities that enhance service delivery, improve infrastructure, and support innovative workforce solutions.

### Spring Job Fair Success

The 2026 Job Fair Circuit is now under way, and early events have demonstrated strong participation from both employers and job seekers.

The Greenwood SC Works Job Fair hosted by Piedmont Technical College on March 25, 2026, saw an excellent turnout, with 42 employers actively recruiting across multiple industries with 242 job seekers attending looking for new opportunities.

We had another job fair April 22 at Laurens where job seekers had another opportunity to connect directly with hiring employers.

### Performance Highlights

Preliminary data from early 2026 reflects continued growth in service utilization across the Region. Please see attached year to date stats.

Key trends include increased participation in both in-person and virtual services, strong employer engagement in hiring events, and continued demand for career coaching and training opportunities.

### Advanced Strategic Partnerships

Collaboration remains at the heart of our work. We continue to strengthen partnerships with educational institutions, economic development organizations, and community stakeholders.

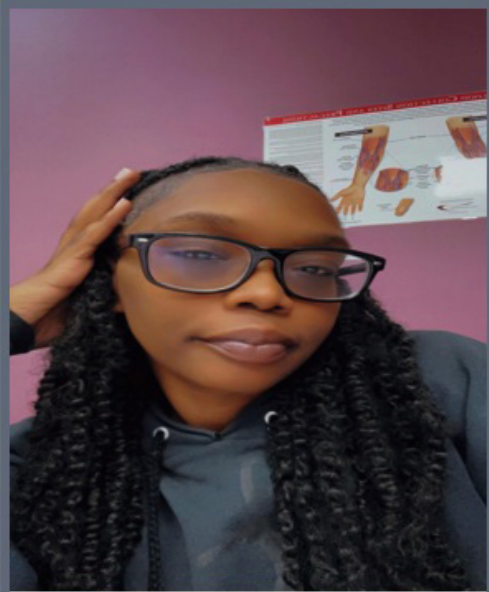
The PY '26 Request for Proposals process concluded in late March, and we appreciate the interest and engagement from organizations seeking to partner with us.

We continue to seek new community partners to serve as SC Works Connection Points across our seven-county workforce region to better support our rural areas. SC Works is virtual through "Chat with SC Works Live," visit our website at [upperscworks.com](http://upperscworks.com) and mobile with the SC Works Coach, watch our social media channels for when we are coming to your community.

### Looking Ahead

As we move into late spring and summer, we remain focused on expanding access, improving outcomes, and supporting both job seekers and employers across the Upper Savannah Region.

Upcoming Job Fair dates include: Saluda - May 21, Abbeville - June 25, Newberry - July 29, and McCormick - August 26. For more information, visit [www.uppersavannah.com](http://www.uppersavannah.com) or [www.upperscworks.com](http://www.upperscworks.com)



## Rikkeyia C.

### Greenwood County SC Works/WIOA Success Story

Rikkeyia, a 29-year-old Greenwood resident, enrolled in the WIOA program through Greenwood SC Works after losing her job at a manufacturing company. Facing an unexpected career disruption, she turned to WIOA for support and guidance as she worked to re-enter the workforce and build more stable future. Through the WIOA program, Rikkeyia received two life-changing forms of support: financial assistance to fund her Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) training and employment assistance to help her transition into a new career. With this support, she enrolled in the CMA program at Greenwood Medical Academy, where she

excelled academically and demonstrated strong commitment and determination. Rikkeyia successfully completed the program, gaining valuable hands-on experience and industry-recognized credentials. The training helped Rikkeyia develop the skills, confidence, and professional foundation needed to pursue a career in the healthcare field. With the continued encouragement and support of WIOA, she was able to transition into a more stable and sustainable career path, positioning her for long-term success. After passing her CMA exam, Rikkeyia began a new career in the medical field and is currently employed with Rophekia Cares, earning \$16 per hour. Her experience highlights the powerful impact of workforce development programs like WIOA in helping individuals overcome setbacks, gain in-demand skills, and achieve meaningful employment.

**SC WORKS**  
UPPER SAVANNAH

*Because Rikkeyia went through SC Works and approved WIOA Training Provider, Greenwood Medical Academy, she can say, "I'm the next one!" Congratulations, Rikkeyia, on being the next one employed, the next CMA and the next one to achieve your dreams!*

# SC WORKS

## UPPER SAVANNAH

### ANALYSIS OF PROGRAM YEAR SUCCESS: AN EXTRAORDINARY PERIOD OF GROWTH

Analysis of full year (PY'24) vs. Year-to-Date through February (PY'25)

In nearly every category, the current 8-month PY'25 results are already surpassing the full 12-month totals from the previous PY'24.

#### 1. UNPRECEDENTED GROWTH IN SERVICE DELIVERY

##### SC WORKS CENTER TRAFFIC



##### JOB SEEKERS & SEARCHES

Job Seekers Registered

PY'24: 3,790  
YTD PY'25: 2,281

Job Search Services  
PY'24: 6,827

YTD PY'25: 24,390

nearly  
**4X**  
INCREASE

#### 2. SURPASSING FULL-YEAR ENROLLMENT GOALS

##### NEW ENROLLMENTS (Exceeding PY'24)

Adult & Dislocated Worker

Youth Enrollments



##### TOTAL ACTIVE ENROLLMENTS

**279**

YTD PY'25

Total active enrollments (including follow-ups) reached 279 this YTD.



#### 3. ELITE PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

##### OUTCOME

##### GOAL MET?

Overall Employment Rate Q2 PY'24 ACHIEVED (91.3% / 94.4%)  
Q4 STATE GOAL (79.3% / 80.1%)

Credential Attainment Rate PY'24 ACHIEVED **99.2%** VS 71.4% GOAL **CRUSHED GOAL**

Measurable Skills Gains **124.8%** PY'24 ACHIEVED 64.2% GOAL **AMAZING GAINS**

Median Earnings Rate ACHIEVED **95.2%** **\$7,678** Qrtly / **\$16** Hourly

#### 4. VITAL SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL EMPLOYERS

##### HIRING EVENTS PARTICIPATION

	Job Seekers	Employers
PY'24 (Full Year)	3,412	339
PY'25 (YTD thru Feb)	1,030	170



##### RECENT EVENT

(March 26, 2026)



##### COLLECTIVELY CONNECTED

242+ Job Seekers, 42+ Employers

Note: Numbers not yet reflected in YTD data

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

