



UPPER SAVANNAH

Council of Governments

# ACTIVITY REPORT

## *SPECIAL COVID-19 EDITION*

### APRIL 2021

#### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

There are

**9**

active CDBG  
projects in region,  
totaling

**\$4,657,116**

#### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

USCOG  
SUBMITS  
**ONE**

CDBG  
grant  
application  
in April

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CARES Act

**RLF**

has made  
**7 loans**

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**EDA**

PROJECTS  
IN CITY OF  
ABBEVILLE,  
LAURENS  
COUNTY  
NEARLY  
COMPLETE

#### AGING

More  
than

**27,000**

MEALS SERVED  
TO SENIORS  
IN REGION  
OVER LAST  
TWO MONTHS

#### GOVERNMENT SERVICES

**TRAINING**  
planning  
commissioners  
in Town of  
McCormick,  
Laurens County

#### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

USCOG  
helping  
**Generac**  
hire production  
workers in  
Edgefield County

#### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**HIRING  
EVENT**

COG assists  
with job fair  
at Flexible  
Technologies

#### GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Assisting local  
governments,  
non-profits  
with

**COVID**  
funding  
opportunities

See

**DETAILS**  
on these and  
other activities  
in this report



# COVID-19 RESPONSE

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Development staff have been working closely with the localities to continue to determine community development needs. Staff is continuing to connect through virtual methods to help reduce exposure rates. All project hearings being held through a virtual platform have been successful.

HUD has allocated \$1,287,725 in CARES Act funds to the Upper Savannah region for pandemic relief. The funding is specific to Community Development Block Grant eligible projects that prevent, prepare and respond to the coronavirus. CD staff has been working with Economic Development staff and the Upper Savannah Region localities to help determine community development needs that meet CDBG eligibility. Needs must prepare, prevent and respond to the coronavirus. Localities have submitted their needs and staff is currently working with Guidehouse, a contractor hired by Commerce, to finalize the Intent to Apply. Once the Intent to Apply is approved by Guidehouse, the application portal will be made available to Upper Savannah.

Community Development staff are continuing social distancing and utilizing the virtual platforms to prepare application requests and applications. So far the virtual method has allowed for document screensharing which minimizes close contact, while still allowing successful communication. The subrecipient of a potential Spring 2021 CDBG grant application (Greenwood Metropolitan District) seems to find this method successful as well.

## AGING

Due to additional COVID funding, the AAA has reduced Home Delivered Meal waiting lists. As some of the HDM providers have reached their capacity to serve meals, Upper Savannah contracted with Mom's Meals. They are a nationwide company which ships frozen meals directly to clients. Their meals meet the Recommended Daily Allowances as required by state guidelines. In the last two weeks, the AAA has added 75 seniors to this service.

The Family Caregiver program has received some robotic interactive pets. These dogs and cats are very realistic looking and will respond to voice and touch by moving, purring or softly barking. The goal of this pilot program is to help Alzheimer and dementia clients by providing comfort and to help reduce feelings of loneliness, isolation and/or agitation.

Upper Savannah has been educating seniors on COVID safety measures, scams and vaccine facts and distribution plans. Upper Savannah is provide assistance to seniors with making an appointment for the COVID vaccine and helping coordinate transportation to receive the vaccine for those with driving limitations.

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Approximately 6,000 Unemployment Insurance recipients reside in the Upper Savannah Workforce area of Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry and Saluda counties. For a year, claimants could receive benefits without being required to use the SC Works database to search for work. Starting the week of April 19, recipients must now use scworks.gov weekly or risk missing weekly payments. Upper Savannah worked to increase center capacity to meet demand, computers were added in the Centers, and Center hours were extended to help satisfy the increased demand.

# COVID-19 RESPONSE

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

EDA announced the availability of CARES Act funding in early May 2020 to fund projects that “prevent, prepare for or respond to coronavirus” or respond to “economic injury as a result of coronavirus.” USCOG was invited to apply for and awarded two new grants. The first is for an additional planning grant and the other is for funds to establish a new revolving loan fund program. Both grant awards are designed to help the region respond and recover from the economic collapse caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of \$1.5 billion is available nationwide for traditional infrastructure projects, revolving loan fund programs, studies etc. A total of \$248 million is available in the Atlanta Region. USCOG has prepared and submitted four grant applications to fund water infrastructure projects in Edgefield, Laurens, McCormick and Saluda counties. These projects represent a combined total project cost of \$12,652,600, with \$10,122,080 in combined grant funds requested. Unfortunately, none of these projects were funded.

The EDA funded projects in the Upper Savannah region continue to progress without interruption from COVID-19. The Piedmont Technical College Upstate Center for Manufacturing Excellence is complete and operational. At the same time, projects in Abbeville and Laurens counties are under construction and near completion. These include the Long Cane Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade, Stagecoach Road Waterline and the Milam Road Elevated Water Tank.

Upper Savannah Revolving Loan Fund small business borrowers are experiencing challenges as one might expect due to COVID-19 closures. After speaking with all borrowers, USCOG identified five that were experiencing severe economic distress. For these, USCOG offered a short-term payment deferral. All but one has resumed making regular payments. Some businesses had not experienced any downturn in sales and have been able to make their regular payments on schedule and more importantly maintain their workforce.

## GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Continued to work with local governments, non-profits, and Guidehouse (State Contractor for COVID fund distribution) on possible CDBG-CV projects.

Continued to update the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to cover potential impacts of a pandemic on local economies.

Currently finalizing the Intent to Apply for Public Facilities for submittal to Guidehouse/ SC Dept of Commerce.

Working on Intent to Apply for Public Services for submittal to Guidehouse/ SC Dept of Commerce.

Continued to participate in Live Healthy Saluda County conference calls to discuss the possibility of an after-hours and/or walk-in clinic for primary health needs in Saluda County. Attended Saluda County Council meeting to discuss grant opportunities for a potential medical facility.

Continued to participate in Laurens County Chamber of Commerce conference calls on non-profit needs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Continued to participate in the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) fund distribution committee for Greenwood County.

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## ACTIVE PROJECTS:

APPLICANT	PROJECT NAME	GRANT AMOUNT
Town of McCormick.....	N. Main/Augusta Streetscape.....	\$750,000
City of Clinton.....	Clinton Mill Sewer Upgrade.....	\$750,000
Greenwood County.....	Baptist Sewer Upgrade.....	\$750,000
Laurens County.....	Highway 56/76 Sewer Upgrades.....	\$715,000
Town of Johnston.....	Fire Truck Purchase.....	\$454,545
City of Greenwood.....	Demolition.....	\$177,571
Greenwood County.....	College Heights Sewer Upgrade.....	\$260,000
Laurens County.....	Lydia Mill Sewer Upgrade - Phase II.....	\$750,000
Greenwood County .....	Regional Planning .....	\$50,000
<b>TOTAL .....</b>		<b>\$4,657,116</b>

## CDBG GRANT APPLICATION

### APRIL 2021 SPRING INFRASTRUCTURE ROUND

Community Development staff submitted the Mathews Mill Village Sewer Upgrade project to Commerce on April 16, 2021. Greenwood Metro will pursue funding through Greenwood County to improve infrastructure within the LMI area of Mathews Mill Village, in multiple phases. GMD submitted a grant maximum waiver request in March 2021 and was approved to request \$1 million in CDBG funds, in the recently submitted application. The proposed project would provide improved sewer service to a portion of Mathews Mill Village, an LMI community located in Greenwood. The project involves installation of approximately 480 ft of 12" gravity sewer line, 7,200 ft of 8" gravity sewer line, 26 new pre-cast concrete manholes and 150 ft of PVC/HDPE with approximately 151 reconnections that service 174 units. Improvements are proposed on Florida Avenue, Truett Avenue, Holloway Avenue, Grier Street, Kirksey Drive West, and Palmer Street. RIA funds are applied for and pending award. Project costs are estimated to be \$2,966,636. Door-to-door income surveys were successful and LMI eligibility requirements were met. Award is anticipated late June 2021.

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**Town of McCormick:** Main Street Streetscape II, N. Main and Augusta Streets. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds were requested to continue the Town's streetscape efforts by improving intersections, restriping of parking stalls and crosswalks, landscaping, ADA accessible parking and fencing along the railroad. Improvements are proposed on North Main and Augusta streets. Cameras will be installed as a public safety element. The project will address the need to provide a safe pedestrian route for LMI residents who seek goods and services within the Town of McCormick. Project was awarded November 2020.

**City of Clinton:** Clinton Mill Sewer Upgrade. Project awarded in September 2020, with \$750,000 in CDBG funds, \$500,000 from the Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) and a \$149,720 local match for total project cost of \$1,399,720. Project involves upgrading sewer lines in Clinton Mill Village area, an LMI neighborhood in City of Clinton. City is currently under Consent Order from SCDHEC due to sanitary sewer overflows in its collection system. Project will aid in reduction of inflow and infiltration to the City's collection system. Project improvement will benefit an estimated 180 units. Project is in engineering phase. Bid package being assembled and will go out to bid April 2021.

**Greenwood County:** Baptist Sewer Upgrade. Project awarded in September 2020, with \$750,000 CDBG funds and \$262,317 local match for total project cost of \$1,012,317. Project involves upgrading sewer lines in Baptist Avenue Area in Greenwood. Area includes Gilliam Avenue, Baptist Avenue, Evans Street, Percival Avenue, Singleton Street, Byrd Street, Tanyard Avenue, Bay Street and Milwee Avenue. Project will benefit an estimated 90 units. Project is in engineering phase. Bid package being assembled and will go out to bid April/May 2021.

**Laurens County:** Highway 56/76 Sewer Upgrades. Project awarded in September 2020, with \$715,000 CDBG funds, \$120,000 local match for total project cost of \$835,000. Project involves repairing two major sections of trunk line at intersections of Hwy 76/Springdale Drive and Hwy 56/Springdale Drive. Improvements to intersections would include installing new lines, pipes and manholes and reconnection of force mains. Project improvement would benefit an estimated 2,300 households and businesses, approximately half of the City of Clinton's population. Project is in engineering phase. Bid package being assembled and will go out to bid April 2021.

**Town of Johnston:** Fire Truck Purchase. Town received \$454,545 in CDBG funding in November 2019 for purchase of new fire truck to replace a 1973 model currently used by the Town of Johnston Fire Department. Truck is on order and is due to arrive April 2022.

**City of Greenwood:** Demolition Project. City received \$177,571 in CDBG funding in November 2019 to demolish and clear 10 vacant and condemned houses located on Owens St., Park Alley, Park Ave., and Washington Ave., in City of Greenwood. Project in start-up phase, going out to bid in April/May 2021.

**Greenwood County:** College Heights Sewer Upgrade. CDBG request of \$260,000 funded in June 2019, with local match of \$194,121. Partnering with Greenwood Metro for sewer upgrade off Cambridge Avenue between Bypass NE and Central Avenue in Greenwood, including Beadle and Turman avenues and Joe Louis Boulevard. Project and monitoring are complete; project being prepared for close-out submission in the coming month.



**Laurens County:** Lydia Mill Sewer Upgrade Phase II. CDBG request of \$750,000 funded in June 2019, with local match of \$107,700. Partnering with Laurens County Water & Sewer Authority, the upgrade will include Sycamore, Peachtree, Oak, Elm, Chestnut, Magnolia, Spruce, Pine and Poplar streets in City of Clinton. In addition to the residential areas, the project will include section of trunk sewer line which not only serves the entire Lydia Mill area but also other areas of the City of Clinton. Project and monitoring are complete; project being prepared for close-out submission in the coming month.

**Greenwood County:** Milwee Area Sewer Upgrade. CDBG request of \$750,000 funded in June 2018. Greenwood Metro (GMD) providing local match of \$644,572 for total project estimate of \$1,394,572. Sewer replacement project involves upgrading existing clay lines with approximately 4,200 feet of new PVC line. Project also involves installing approximately 22 new concrete manholes. CDBG funds were used to reconnect all 77 occupied houses in the rights-of-way. GMD funds were used to reconnect the 13 vacant, occupiable units and five businesses while replacing service lines on private property as needed. The target area is located in the City of Greenwood between Milwee and McLees avenues. The area includes portions of Bowie, Franklin, Gage, Meadows, Milwee, Montgomery, Squires, Taggart, and Weldon streets. Closeout package submitted to the Department of Commerce.

**Regional Planning Grant:** CDBG continuing support to provide staff assistance to local governments in project development, needs assessments and technical assistance in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Currently staff is gathering documents and finalizing close-out for the open (2019 Funds) Regional Planning Grant, and preparing submission for the new (2020 Funds) Regional Planning Grant on May 6, 2021.

#### Projects completed in 2020:

Greenwood County Sullivan II Sewer Upgrade.....	\$750,000
Town of Ridge Spring Main Street Streetscape.....	\$500,000
Town of McCormick Main Street Streetscape.....	\$500,000
Greenwood County Milwee Area Sewer Upgrade.....	\$750,000

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## ACTIVE PROJECTS:

APPLICANT	PROJECT NAME	GRANT AMOUNT
Greenwood County.....	Greenwood East Rail Park Feasibility Study.....	\$208,000
City of Abbeville.....	Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades.....	\$2,554,000
Laurens County Water & Sewer Commission.....	Water system upgrades (water tank, water lines).....	\$3,100,000
<b>TOTAL.....</b>		<b>\$5,862,000</b>

**Greenwood County** has been awarded a \$208,000 Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant to fund three studies to determine the feasibility of certain infrastructure improvements at a major industrial site known as the Greenwood East Rail Park. The project will study transportation access, the feasibility of raw water line to serve the site, and a safe yield study to model and recommend water withdrawal limits on Lake Greenwood.

**City of Abbeville** was awarded a \$2,554,000 grant to upgrade the wastewater treatment plant on Long Cane Creek. The grant was awarded under EDA's supplemental funding in response to natural disasters occurring in 2017. The damage and impacts of Hurricane Irma resulted in a presidentially declared disaster in South Carolina, which made this project eligible. Total project cost is \$3,192,500. Bid opening was held Oct. 24, 2019 and contract was awarded April 6, 2020. The contractor made significant progress in December and January and the project is nearly complete.

**Laurens County Water and Sewer Commission** was awarded a \$3,100,000 grant to upgrade a waterline along Stagecoach Road and to construct a water tank at Milam Road. Both project components will enhance the water system operations and help maximize the benefits of the new water plant. The damage and impacts of Hurricane Irma resulted in a presidentially declared disaster in South Carolina which made this project eligible. Total project cost is \$3,875,000. Bids were opened for both project components on Jan. 14, 2020, and both contracts have been awarded. Two reimbursement requests have been paid by EDA. Project is approximately 85 percent complete.



**Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program** has closed 64 loans totaling \$4,543,620 as of December 31, 2020. The RLF has helped create and retain 711 jobs and leveraged \$34,346,948 in private and other public investment.

**CARES Revolving Loan Fund (CARES RLF) Program** has closed seven loans totaling \$250,700. These loans have helped create eight jobs, retain 30 jobs and leverage \$362,750 in private investment.

## REVOLVING LOAN FUND:

MARCH 31, 2021				JUNE 30, 2020		
	NUMBER	AMOUNT	BALANCE	NUMBER	AMOUNT	BALANCE
Current	9	\$560,500	\$470,447	11	\$835,500	\$479,637
Delinquent	1	\$25,000	\$8,273	1	\$25,000	\$8,810
Default	1	\$10,000	\$9,177	1	\$10,000	\$9,177
<b>Active Loans</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>\$595,500</b>	<b>\$487,897</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>\$870,500</b>	<b>\$497,624</b>
Written off	13	\$1,138,250	\$639,693	13	\$1,138,250	\$639,893
Repaid	40	\$2,809,870	-	38	\$2,534,870	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>\$4,543,620</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>\$4,543,620</b>	<b>-</b>

## CARES REVOLVING LOAN FUND:

MARCH 31, 2021				SEPTEMBER 30, 2020		
	NUMBER	AMOUNT	BALANCE	NUMBER	AMOUNT	BALANCE
Current	7	\$250,700	\$242,147	1	\$62,500	\$61,963
Delinquent	0	0	0	0	0	0
Default	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Active Loans</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>\$250,700</b>	<b>\$242,147</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$62,500</b>	<b>\$61,963</b>
Written off	0	0	0	0	0	0
Repaid	0	0	0	Repaid	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>\$250,700</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>\$62,500</b>	



# AGING

## Upper Savannah Area Agency on Aging/Aging & Disability Resource Center Activity Report February 1, 2021 - March 31, 2021

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	CLIENTS
Assessments .....	Determine eligibility and needs for Aging services .....	327
Caregiver Supplemental Services .....	Assists with supplies, supplements, assistive technology .....	37
Assistive Technology .....	Provides Lifeline monitoring for seniors at risk .....	24
Home Care .....	Helps seniors with light housekeeping, chores, personal care .....	44
Minor Home Repair .....	Provides ramps, handrails, grab bars, safety upgrades .....	6
Seniors Raising Children Supplemental Services .....	Assists with school supplies, clothing, and miscellaneous .....	13
Transportation .....	Trips to congregate meal sites, medical, shopping .....	187
Legal Assistance .....	Provided by SC Legal Services .....	13
Caregiver Respite .....	Offers a break for daily caregivers .....	50

## Congregate and Home-Delivered Meals Report | February 1, 2021 - March 31, 2021

MEALS BY COUNTY	CLIENTS	NUMBER OF MEALS
Abbeville .....	100 .....	3,817
Edgefield .....	120 .....	3,378
Greenwood .....	277 .....	11,010
Laurens .....	109 .....	4,477
McCormick .....	46 .....	1,892
Saluda .....	71 .....	3,028
<b>TOTALS .....</b>	<b>723 .....</b>	<b>27,602</b>

More  
than

**27,000** MEALS

served in Region  
over last

**TWO  
MONTHS**

## GOVERNMENT SERVICES

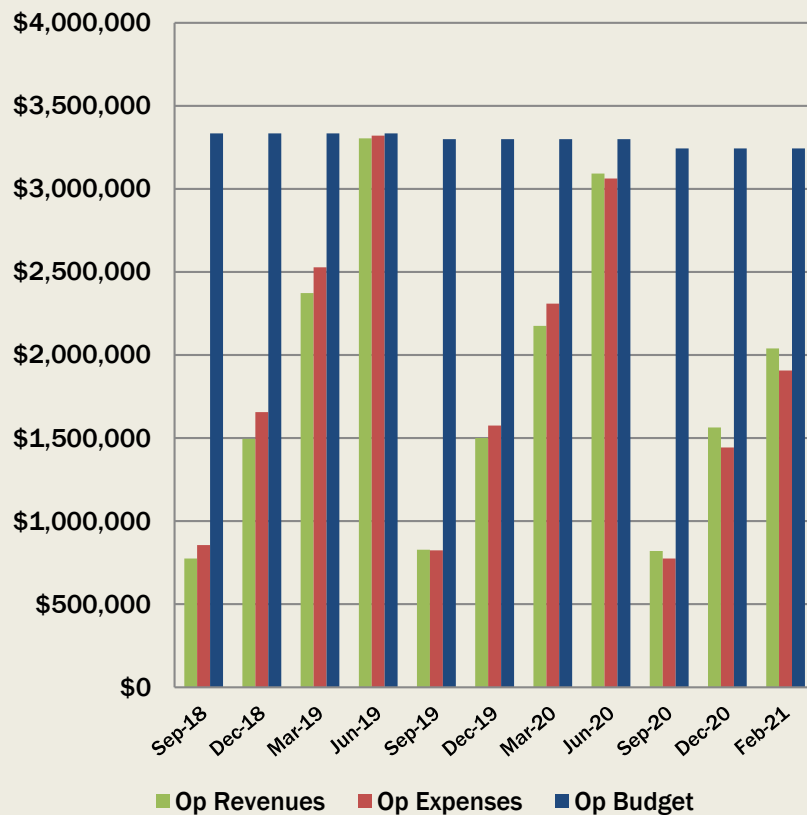
- Continued work on Economic Development Administration (EDA) grants administration on current grants. Made a site visit to the City of Abbeville Sewer Upgrade project.
- Facilitated zoning ordinance update meetings in McCormick County.
- Provided state-mandated training for planning commissioners in Laurens County. Discussed the need to update their comprehensive plan and create a Planning Department.
- Provided state-mandated training for planning commissioners in the Town of McCormick.
- Monitored work schedule for an intern who is compiling data for a Laurens County Comprehensive Plan update.
- Presented review of USCOG activities to the Leadership Greenwood group from Chamber of Commerce.
- Continued to participate in Live Healthy Saluda County conference calls to discuss need for an after-hours and/or walk-in clinic for primary health needs in Saluda County.
- Participated in a conference call for non-profits sponsored by Laurens County Chamber of Commerce.
- Continued to participate in Upstate Planners Group Zoom calls.
- Attended Saluda County Council meeting to discuss grant opportunities for a potential medical facility.
- Continued assisting the Upper Savannah Land Trust.
- Participated in online meetings to discuss planning and implementing a public transit system in Greenwood and Abbeville counties. Greenwood County is working with SCDOT Office of Public Transit to develop a service agreement with McCormick Area Transit to provide limited public transit service for medical appointments and critical needs within a five-mile radius of the City of Greenwood. A start date for the service is expected to be announced later this summer. These details are tentative and subject to change. Abbeville County non-profits are interested in starting a public transit service. They asked William Boone of Greater Abbeville United Ministries to make a presentation to County Council on that need and to propose a possible solution through a federal DOT grant application. If awarded, this grant would pay for transit services to be expanded from an existing service into Abbeville County for a period of 15 months. Discussions are underway with area transit providers that might be interested in working in Abbeville County.
- Participated in statewide plan to facilitate and improve parking locations for long-haul trucking with SCDOT. This process will continue through this year. Truckers are mandated to take a certain number of hours rest after driving for a period of time, but there is not always a safe and reliable place for them to pull over and rest. This statewide plan would begin to address that need.

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- All Upper Savannah Region SC Works Centers are open in Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry and Saluda counties. To find out hours and to make an appointment, go to [www.upperSCWorks.com](http://www.upperSCWorks.com).
- Creating directory of employers who hire recent high school graduates and will distribute to all graduating seniors in the Upper Savannah Workforce Area.
- Working with Ready SC and Edgefield County to help Generac Power Systems start onboarding production workers. Generac is a leading global power and energy technology company serving the residential, commercial and industrial markets. The company is expecting to hire at least 500 workers.
- Conducted job fair for Flexible Technologies in Abbeville County.
- Working with GLEAMNS to expand Re-entry Navigator program. Wrote letter of support for Greenwood Solicitor's office Drug Court program.
- Recruiting for ZF Transmissions in Laurens County.
- Working with Ready SC to staff Palmetto Gourmet Foods, a noodle production facility in Saluda.
- USCOG received a \$500,000 U.S. Department of Labor federal grant to train 100 emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and paramedics over the next four years in Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick and Saluda counties. Piedmont Technical College will be the educational partner while USCOG will administer the grant. COG is currently recruiting the first 12 trainees for the EMT grant and is looking for recent high school graduates to attend an EMT boot camp in June.

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

## Operating Actual vs. Budget



## Pass Through Budget

