



UPPER SAVANNAH

Council of Governments

# ACTIVITY REPORT

## *SPECIAL COVID-19 EDITION*

### JUNE 2021

#### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

REGION  
RECEIVES  
**ONE**

new CDBG  
grant  
award

#### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

There are  
**10**  
active CDBG  
projects in region,  
totaling  
**\$5,657,116**

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CARES Act  
**RLF**  
has made  
**11 loans**

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**EDA**

PROJECTS  
IN CITY OF  
ABBEVILLE,  
LAURENS  
COUNTY  
NEAR  
COMPLETION

#### AGING

More  
than  
**29,000**  
MEALS SERVED  
TO SENIORS  
IN REGION  
OVER LAST  
TWO MONTHS

#### GOVERNMENT SERVICES

**REVIEWED**

applications  
for public transit  
van replacement  
funding

#### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Workforce  
Grant**

kicks off  
with recruiting,  
training of EMTs,  
paramedics

#### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

COG assists  
with the start  
of onboarding  
production  
workers for  
**GENERAC**

#### 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 are continuing social distancing and utilizing virtual platforms to prepare for fall application round. So far the virtual method has allowed for document screensharing which minimizes close contact, while still allowing successful communication. Laurens County Water and Sewer and the Community Development team are working together to become the first in the state to participate in surveying through QR codes. This method will allow survey participants to scan a barcode with their mobile device camera. Once scanned the mobile device will display a link directly to a secured web address to submit their survey information. This method will reduce person to person contact and allow survey participation 24/7. This method is currently underway and will be used to qualify 2022 Spring Infrastructure Applications. If proven successful this could save significant time and man power on future infrastructure projects.

Community Development staff are still 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 still being held through a virtual platform are still 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 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 has submitted a Public Services application for \$695,000 and a Public Facilities application for \$95,500. Upper Savannah is currently waiting to receive word on grant awards.

## AGING

In May 2021, USCOG Aging Division staff distributed more than 2,000 flyers across the Region promoting group dining sites. Most of the Region's group dining centers are once again serving seniors in person much to the delight of the participants and staff. The Edgefield County senior center opened in September 2020. Piedmont Agency on Aging reopened the Abbeville, Greenwood, Laurens and Saluda sites in early June 2021. McCormick Senior Center is planning to reopen in July 2021. The goal is to continue promoting and expanding this program in the Region.

The home-delivered meals waiting list has been cleared of all seniors eligible to receive the meals. New seniors are assessed and added weekly to the list, but Aging staff are able to begin service for them within a two-week period. COVID funding and USCOG's contract with Mom's Meals has made this possible.

The S.C. Department on Aging received a COVID vaccines grant in May 2021. The purpose of this grant is to provide credible information about the COVID vaccine and vaccination events. Also, the grant will assist seniors in scheduling appointments and provide transportation to a vaccine site as needed.

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Served more than 6,000 Unemployment Claimants in the seven-county Region, providing income maintenance so families could pay bills. UI payments for most recipients ends in June so will be working to help residents find jobs.

Upper Savannah is one of four areas in the state offering a National Emergency Grant Disaster Recovery Program. So far 14 people have been placed in public service jobs helping their communities. Two have been placed in County Emergency Management Departments.

# 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 develop draft updates to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to cover potential impacts of a pandemic on local economies.

Submitted CDBG/COVID Public Facilities application to Guidehouse/SC Dept of Commerce.

Continued working on CDBG/COVID Public Services application 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. A draft Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) was presented to the group.

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

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## ACTIVE PROJECTS:

APPLICANT	PROJECT NAME	GRANT AMOUNT
Greenwood County.....	Mathews Mill Village Sewer Upgrade.....	\$1,000,000
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>\$5,657,116</b>

## CDBG GRANT APPLICATION AWARDED

### APRIL 2021 SPRING INFRASTRUCTURE ROUND

Community Development staff submitted the Mathews Mill Village Sewer Upgrade project to Commerce on April 16, 2021, and the \$1 million grant award was announced June 22, 2021. Greenwood Metro successfully pursued 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 project is expected to 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.

There are **10** active CDBG projects in the region, totaling **\$5,657,116**

**Town of McCormick:** Main Street Streetscape II, N. Main and Augusta Streets. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds were requested to continue 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. Project provide a safe pedestrian route for LMI residents who seek goods and services within the Town of McCormick. Project was awarded November 2020. Project is currently in the Engineering phase, will go to bid around July 2021.

**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 June 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 in July 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. Engineering phase complete. Bid package is complete. Acquisition is being completed and will go to bid July 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. Fire Truck is on order, Due for delivery in 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. Bid package is being assembled for the testing and air monitoring, going out to bid in June 2021. Demo package is being assembled and will go to bid July 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, working on closeout package.

**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, working on closeout package.

**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 project is substantially 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 90 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 11 loans totaling \$385,700. These loans have helped create eight jobs, retain 30 jobs and leverage \$362,750 in private investment.

## REVOLVING LOAN FUND:

MAY 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:

MAY 31, 2021				SEPTEMBER 30, 2020		
	NUMBER	AMOUNT	BALANCE	NUMBER	AMOUNT	BALANCE
Current	11	\$385,700	\$336,485	1	\$62,500	\$61,963
Delinquent	0	0	0	0	0	0
Default	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Active Loans</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>\$385,700</b>	<b>\$336,485</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$62,500</b>	<b>\$61,963</b>
Written off	0	0	0	0	0	0
Repaid	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>\$385,700</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>\$62,500</b>	

# AGING

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

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	CLIENTS
Assessments .....	Determine eligibility and needs for Aging services .....	306
Caregiver Supplemental Services .....	Assists with supplies, supplements, assistive technology .....	28
Assistive Technology .....	Provides Lifeline monitoring for seniors at risk .....	25
Home Care .....	Helps seniors with light housekeeping, chores, personal care .....	49
Minor Home Repair .....	Provides ramps, handrails, grab bars, safety upgrades .....	11
Seniors Raising Children Supplemental Services .....	Assists with school supplies, clothing, and miscellaneous .....	11
Transportation .....	Trips to congregate meal sites, medical, shopping .....	179
Legal Assistance .....	Provided by SC Legal Services .....	18
Caregiver Respite .....	Offers a break for daily caregivers .....	68

## Congregate and Home-Delivered Meals Report | April 1, 2021 - May 31, 2021

MEALS BY COUNTY	CLIENTS	NUMBER OF MEALS
Abbeville .....	117 .....	4,140
Edgefield .....	106 .....	3,192
Greenwood .....	355 .....	12,233
Laurens .....	152 .....	4,924
McCormick .....	48 .....	1,800
Saluda .....	84 .....	3,022
<b>TOTALS .....</b>	<b>862 .....</b>	<b>29,311</b>

More  
than

**29,000** MEALS

served in Region  
over last

**TWO  
MONTHS**

## GOVERNMENT SERVICES

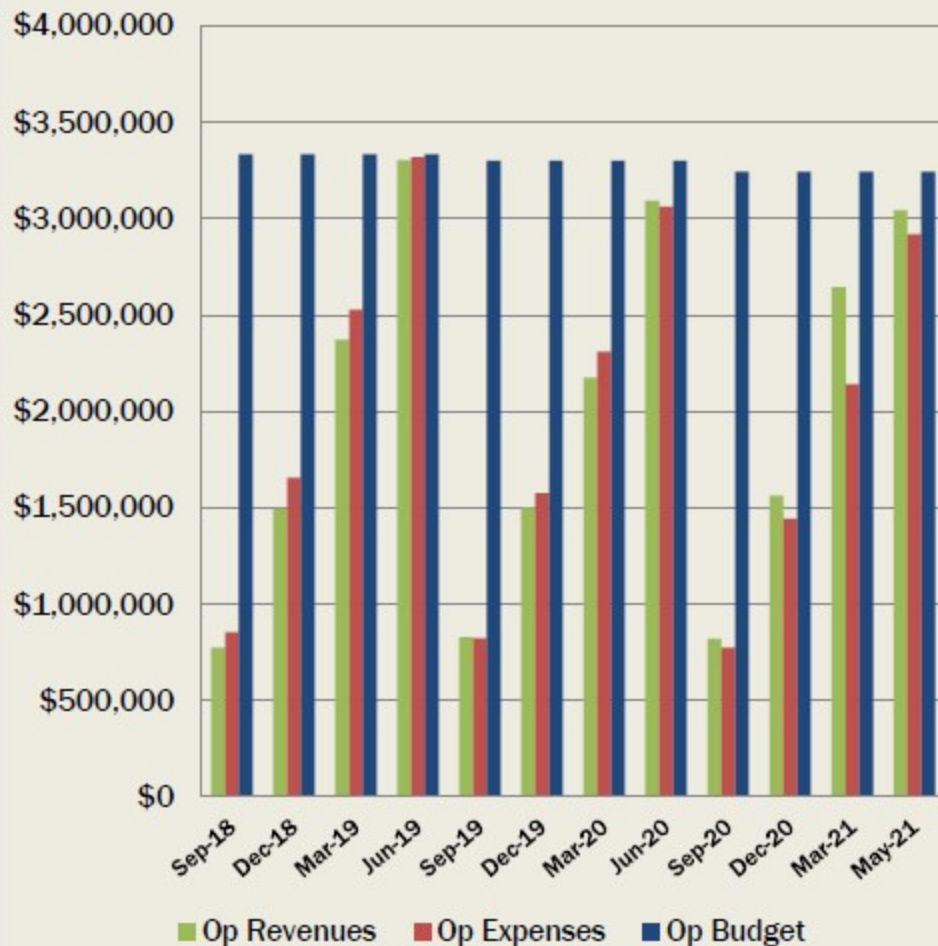
- Continued work on Economic Development Administration (EDA) grants administration on current grants. Continued work of application development for a potential application in Laurens County.
- Provided state-mandated training for planning commissioners in the Town of Saluda.
- Assisted Laurens County Museum with update to its System for Award Management (SAM) registration. This annual update is important for all local governments and non-profits who may be interested in applying for federal funds.
- Assisted the Ninety Six Mill Village Neighborhood Association with an application for animal control funds.
- Attended a meeting to discuss expanding broadband opportunities in areas where no service is available. Began work on a potential project application in McCormick County.
- Placed an SCDOT-required system performance management amendment to the regional long-range plan out for public comment.
- Reviewed regional applications for van replacement funds for designated transit providers and ranked priority projects.
- Convened conference call to discuss slow progress on Ninety Six sidewalk projects with SCDOT and its selected engineer.
- Participated in online meetings to discuss planning and implementing a public transit system in Greenwood and Abbeville counties.
- Attended a kick-off presentation of a small business support program in Greenwood. Also attended Lander University business class marketing strategy presentations and awards for the regional Small Business Development Center program.
- Attended an Opportunity Zone presentation in McCormick.
- Participated in conference call for non-profits sponsored by the Laurens County Chamber of Commerce.
- Continued assisting the Upper Savannah Land Trust.
- Worked under contract with a community in the Appalachian COG region to create an Americans with Disabilities Act plan.
- Continued to participate in Live Healthy Saluda County conference calls to discuss the need for an after-hours and/or walk-in clinic for primary health needs in Saluda County. A draft Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) was presented to the group.
- Continued to participate in the 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

- 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).
- SC Works targeted graduating high school seniors. USCOG responded by developing, printing and distributing a directory of employers who hire recent graduates to more than 2,000 graduates in the Region's 14 public high schools.
- 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 fairs for Abbeville and Laurens counties during June 2021.
- Working with GLEAMNS to expand Re-entry Navigator program. Assisted with a grant application to a local foundation.
- Working with Ready SC to staff Palmetto Gourmet Foods, a noodle production facility in Saluda.
- Started recruiting and training EMTs and paramedics for the Department of Labor Rural Health grant awarded earlier this year. Upper Savannah will guide nearly a half million dollars to train 100 new medics. Nine have been enrolled into the program with the expectation of having 20 trainees by August. The COG is working with County EMS departments to fill openings.

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

## Operating Actual vs. Budget



## Pass Through Budget

