

UPPER SAVANNAH COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
 Annual Report to the Board Members Representing Laurens County
 For the Fiscal Year Ending 2019

Financial Review - Upper Savannah COG Revenue Highlights

Local Government Funding	\$152,586
State Aid to COG	40,965
Federal & State	2,134,444
General, In-kind & Miscellaneous	93,200
Contractual & Direct Services	<u>3,097,955</u>
TOTAL	\$5,519,150

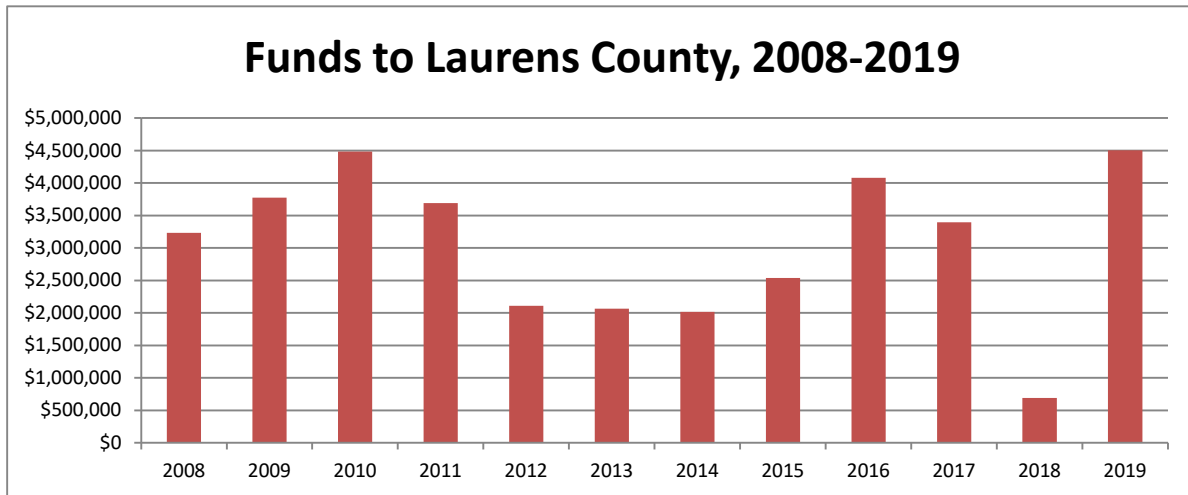
Return on Investment – Laurens County – Fiscal Year 2019

Local Government Investment	\$46,744
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Funds to Laurens County

Aging Direct Services	\$405,598
Workforce Development Direct Services	245,599
Rural Guideshare Allocation (U.S. 221 widening)	1,550
Grants by USCOG Initiation – FY 2019 (see page 2)	<u>3,850,000</u>
TOTAL	\$4,502,747

Return on Investment: 96:1



Direct Services funding consists of federal and state dollars for Workforce Development and Aging program services provided to the counties in the Upper Savannah region based on performance, need and eligibility. The COG administers these two programs under contract for direct service delivery and is responsible for the allocation and fiscal administration of these dollars. The funds assist in delivering services that provide for the health, welfare and employment of certain segments of a county’s population, thus easing the financial and administrative burden on local governments. Rural Guideshare funds are Federal Highway Administration dollars designated for highway system improvements. USCOG Board of Directors prioritizes the projects for final consideration by the SCDOT Commission.

Direct grant awarded in Fiscal Year 2019:

- **CDBG - \$750,000** – Laurens County Lydia Mill Sewer Upgrade Phase II
- **EDA - \$3,100,000** – Laurens County Water and Sewer Commission awarded grant to construct water system upgrades.

Laurens County Highlights

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. Engineers working on bid package.

City of Clinton Mill Village Water Upgrade II – CDBG request for \$626,802 funded in June 2017. Waterline upgrade in the Clinton Mill Village around Beauregard/Davis Street area. Construction completed in September 2019.

Laurens County, Joanna V Sewer Upgrade – Project awarded June 2017. Continuation of sewer upgrades in Joanna Mill Village around N. Marion, Moultrie, and N. Ellis streets. Project was completed and closed out in FY 2019.

Waterline Upgrade and Water Tank - Laurens County Water & Sewer Commission (LCWSC) 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 LCWSC's 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. The total project cost is \$3,875,000.

Industrial Training Center - Piedmont Technical College was awarded a \$1,500,000 EDA grant to fund a portion of the Upstate Center for Manufacturing Excellence. This 45,000 square foot state of the art industrial training center will benefit workers and industries in the college's service area. The total project cost is \$12,453,414. The construction of this facility is under way and the Upper Savannah COG staff is administering the project on behalf of the College.

County Finance Directors – Coordinated a meeting at Upper Savannah COG to share ideas and information about computer systems, revenue generation, audits and many other topics.

Economic Development Professionals - USCOG hosted economic development professionals' meetings. The group discussed various economic development topics of local and regional interest.

Local Government Training - Upper Savannah COG hosted a local government training session on the Freedom of Information Act. Kent Lesesne of the SC Association of Counties facilitated the training.

Laurens County SC Works Center – Helped workers from two plant closures prepare for new opportunities. Obtained a grant to help Greenwood and Laurens young offenders get jobs.

Focus on Manufacturing - The largest need in the Upper Savannah area is preparing workers for jobs in manufacturing. There are hundreds of jobs which are unfilled and several thousand job seekers in the Upper Savannah region. The Upper Savannah Workforce Development Board works with both businesses and job seekers to address short-term and long-term needs. Upper Savannah developed linkages with workforce boards in Anderson, Greenville and Spartanburg to start improving the pool of manufacturing workers in the Greater Upstate Region.

SC Works - SC Works Centers are the focal point of the workforce development system. About 1,500 job seekers were matched with jobs through the SC Works system.

WIOA Enrollment – Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) enrollment was down due to decreased demand and a reduction in funding, but 300 clients were enrolled in program year 2018 (program year 2018 ends June 30, 2019).

Outreach - Upper Savannah is best known for its innovative approaches to reaching job seekers and employers. It has two large regional job fairs. Its Facebook and Twitter feeds reach thousands each week. Upper Savannah debuted its new website at www.upperseworks.com. Piedmont Tech co-hosted the job fairs and provided billboards to advertise the events.

Laurens County Job Fair - Planned job fair for Laurens in conjunction with the Laurens Economic Development Corporation and Piedmont Technical College.

Economic Development Administration (EDA) Update – Completed project monitoring and wage review reports for the various EDA projects going on around the region. Maintained the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to keep the region eligible for EDA funding.

Planning Commissioner Certification – Hosted numerous workshops to get planning commissioner, zoning appeals board members, and staff certified. Across the region, 111 people had received the required training.

Upper Savannah Land Trust – Continued providing technical assistance to the Upper Savannah Land Trust. Two recent finalized easements put the Land Trust at more than 50,000 acres protected in USLT's eight counties (USCOG's region plus Anderson and Newberry counties).

Transportation Planning – Continued working with SCDOT on various transportation planning projects.

Transit – Received, reviewed, and ranked transit grants from regional providers and forwarded them on to SCDOT.

Environmental Reviews – Completed environmental reviews for all Community Development Block Grant projects.

Municipal Association – Hosted training teleconferences for the municipal elected officials.

Americans with Disabilities Act – Continued updating ADA plans for local governments as needed and for other governments under contract.

County and Municipal Clerks Meeting – Organized and hosted a regional meeting for county and municipal clerks to discuss topics of common interest.

HOME – Continued monitoring completed projects with the HOME Investment Partnership Program. HOME is a HUD-funded program that provides rehab or new construction funding for homes of low-income individuals and rental units. Monitoring tenant income and rent levels will continue for the next 20 years.

InfoMentum – Continued working with the data management and mapping tool accessed through a partnership with Appalachian COG. The InfoMentum program allows staff to produce quick maps for grant applications and also to use layers of demographic information to focus projects on the most needy areas. ACOG in Greenville staffs and maintains this program and USCOG is a subscribing partner.

Planning – Continued assisting various municipal and county planning commissions with development or zoning questions as needed.

Grant writing – Assisted with grant writing for local governments as requested.

Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Services - The Upper Savannah Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) provides, coordinates and contracts for services to the Upper Savannah region's senior population. In addition to the regional services through the ADRC described below, Upper Savannah contracts with the region's senior centers and other providers to meet the needs of senior adults. Contracted services include transportation, home-delivered meals, congregate dining with activities, home care, and health and wellness promotion.

State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) – The SHIP program helps seniors and individuals with disabilities research and understand Medicare coverage options with their Medicare prescription drug plans and Medicare Advantage plans. This Program also counsels and assists beneficiaries with Medicare Part A & B issues and Medigap coverage, and alerts seniors to fraudulent Medicare and Medicaid practices through the Senior Medicare Patrol Program. The Upper Savannah SHIP Program made 3,626 contacts and attended 39 outreach events from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019.

Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP) - Program provided funding to 311 caregivers as well as information, assistance, education, support, and referrals to many more throughout the region. The program provides respite, which is a break from daily care-giving that is important in helping caregivers do a better job over a longer period of time. The program also helps caregivers with supplemental services, such as incontinent supplies and assistive technology. The FCSP also continues to be available for grandparents 55 and older caring for grandchildren 18 and younger. Many grandparents take on the parental role in order to keep the grandchildren out of the overburdened foster care system. The FCSP helps those grandparents who have stepped into the role of parent due to death, incarceration or other parental problems with some funded services as well as information and support groups.

Information, Referral and Assistance (IR&A) - The IR&A program is designed to provide seniors and people with disabilities access to helpful resources. Upper Savannah staff includes four certified IR&A specialists.

Home Safety Program - The program has helped many individuals throughout the region with projects that improve unsafe areas in the home, including the building of grab bars and ramps, etc. Partnerships with area churches have maximized the funding potential. The AAA helped 75 people with Minor Home Repair throughout the region during FY 2019.

Assistive Technology (lifelines) – Program assisted approximately 38 seniors throughout the region with lifelines.

Legal Services Program - Program served 33 seniors with various legal concerns such as Power of Attorney, will preparation, and grandparent custody issues. Attorneys throughout the region have agreed to work with the ADRC at reasonable rates to better serve the senior population.

Home Care Program - Upper Savannah AAA provides a Home Care Program that helps seniors who are in need of services such as light housekeeping and some personal care. The program provides consumer choice for the seniors and their families and adds support to keeping older persons in their homes as long as possible. The program served 141 people in FY 2019.

Advocate for Senior Citizens - Continued to serve as an advocate for 2,233 seniors in the region's nursing homes and residential care facilities through the continued administration of the Regional Ombudsman Program.