



# UPPER SAVANNAH

Council of Governments

## ACTIVITY REPORT *SPECIAL COVID-19 EDITION* FEBRUARY 2021

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

There are  
**10**  
active CDBG  
projects in region,  
totaling  
**\$5,407,116**

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

USCOG  
TO SUBMIT  
**TWO**  
CDBG  
grant  
applications  
in April

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CARES Act  
**RLF**  
closes  
six loans

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**EDA**  
PROJECTS  
IN CITY OF  
ABBEVILLE,  
LAURENS  
COUNTY  
NEARLY  
COMPLETE

### AGING

More  
than  
**50,000**  
MEALS SERVED  
TO SENIORS  
IN REGION  
OVER LAST  
FOUR MONTHS

### GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Partnering  
with  
**HEALTHY  
LIVING  
SALUDA  
COUNTY**

### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

USCOG  
receives  
**\$500,000**  
federal grant  
to fund training for  
**EMTs,  
paramedics**

### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**HIRING  
EVENTS**  
USCOG  
assists with  
several job fairs

### GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Presenting  
**COVID**  
funding  
information  
to businesses,  
local  
governments

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 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 to prioritize requests. Once feasible and eligible needs have been determined, staff will hold assessment hearings with the Upper Savannah Region presenting a list of priority needs to be submitted to Guidehouse, a contractor hired by Commerce.

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 subrecipients of potential Spring 2021 CDBG grant applications (Greenwood Metropolitan District and Saluda Commissions of Public Works) seem to find this method successful as well.

## AGING

Senior centers across the state slowly re-opened their group dining centers for seniors to enjoy sharing a meal and socializing with others. The Centers operated at reduced capacity and observed all CDC recommended guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The seniors who were not comfortable returning at that time would continue to receive home-delivered meals (HDMs). Since that time, however, all centers closed again due to the surge in COVID-19 cases and group diners are eligible to receive HDMs.

Upper Savannah received additional COVID funding of \$203,606 to be used exclusively for Home Delivered Meals. This will allow Upper Savannah to continue serving and to serve additional seniors with nutritious meals who may be experiencing food insecurities due to COVID challenges.

Upper Savannah's focus will be to continue educating seniors on COVID safety measures, scams and vaccine facts and distribution plans. Upper Savannah can provide assistance with making an appointment for the COVID vaccine and help coordinate transportation to receive the vaccine.

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Upper Savannah 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. With the arrival of COVID-19, emergency medical providers have been particularly overstressed.

Job fairs were held in Laurens and Newberry counties with employers and job seekers meeting social distancing requirements.

# COVID-19 RESPONSE

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

EDA announced the availability of CARES Act funding in early May 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 Collège Upstate Center for Manufacturing Excellence is complete and operational. At the same time, projects in Abbeville and Laurens counties are under construction. 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 update the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to cover potential impacts of a pandemic on local economies.

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.

Continued to participate in Greenwood Leaders conference call on the county needs and response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

Researched CARES Act funding/distribution for minority and small businesses, non-profits, and local governments.

Communicated with county staff about the new CDBG-COVID funding opportunity.

Presented COVID funding information on a Zoom meeting with Greenwood County Department Directors.

Assembled county and regional needs list for review and submission to SC Department of Commerce.

Reached out to all Chambers of Commerce with information on Upper Savannah CARES Act Revolving Loan Fund.

# 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.....	Milwee Area Sewer Upgrade.....	\$750,000
Greenwood County.....	Regional Planning.....	\$50,000
<b>TOTAL.....</b>		<b>\$5,407,116</b>

## CDBG GRANT APPLICATIONS

APRIL 2021 SPRING INFRASTRUCTURE ROUND

CD staff is working with Saluda Commissions of Public Works on an infrastructure application through the Town of Saluda. The COG and CPW are working to finalize the target area to prepare for surveys. The Town of Saluda will be submitting a waiver to pursue \$1 million in CDBG funds. This project will be combined with USDA funding to improve low to moderate income areas within the Town of Saluda.

CD staff is working with Greenwood Metro in a multi-phase infrastructure project. GMD will pursue funding through Greenwood County to improve infrastructure within the LMI area of Mathews Mill Village. GMD will also submit a waiver to pursue \$1 million in CDBG funding. The COG and GMD are working to finalize the project area and prepare for surveying.

There are **10** active CDBG projects in the region, totaling **\$5,407,116**

**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 March/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 March/April 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 March/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. Project is in start-up phase. Project went out to bid in October 2020. Bids being reviewed and submitted for approval.

**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 March/April 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.

**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 being assembled for 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.

**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
Piedmont Technical College.....	Upstate Center for Manufacturing Excellence.....	\$1,500,000
<b>TOTAL.....</b>		<b>\$7,362,000</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 75 percent complete.

**Piedmont Technical College** was awarded a \$1.5 million 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 project is expected to cost approximately \$12 million. Construction is complete and final reimbursement request has been received.



**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 (CARES RLF) Program** has closed six loans totaling \$239,150. These loans have helped create eight jobs, retain 30 jobs and leverage \$362,750 in private investment.

### REVOLVING LOAN FUND:

DECEMBER 31, 2020				JUNE 30, 2020		
	NUMBER	AMOUNT	BALANCE	NUMBER	AMOUNT	BALANCE
Current	10	\$760,500	\$436,342	11	\$835,500	\$479,637
Delinquent	1	\$25,000	\$8,810	1	\$25,000	\$8,810
Default	1	\$10,000	\$9,177	1	\$10,000	\$9,177
<b>Active Loans</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>\$795,500</b>	<b>\$454,329</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	39	\$2,609,870	-	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:

DECEMBER 31, 2020				SEPTEMBER 30, 2020		
	NUMBER	AMOUNT	BALANCE	NUMBER	AMOUNT	BALANCE
Current	6	\$239,150	\$210,314	1	\$62,500	\$61,963
Delinquent	0	0	0	0	0	0
Default	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Active Loans</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>\$239,150</b>	<b>\$210,314</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>\$62,500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>\$62,500</b>	<b>-</b>



# AGING

## Upper Savannah Area Agency on Aging/Aging & Disability Resource Center Activity Report October 1, 2020 - January 31, 2021

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	CLIENTS
Assessments	Determine eligibility and needs for Aging services	449
<b>Caregiver Supplemental Services</b>	Assists with supplies, supplements, assistive technology	34
<b>Assistive Technology</b>	Provides Lifeline monitoring for seniors at risk	27
<b>Home Care</b>	Helps seniors with light housekeeping, chores, personal care	67
<b>Minor Home Repair</b>	Provides ramps, handrails, grab bars, safety upgrades	24
<b>Seniors Raising Children Supplemental Services</b>	Assists with school supplies, clothing, and miscellaneous	20
<b>Transportation</b>	Trips to congregate meal sites, medical, shopping	206
<b>Legal Assistance</b>	Provided by SC Legal Services	12
<b>Caregiver Respite</b>	Offers a break for daily caregivers	70

## Congregate and Home-Delivered Meals Report | October 1, 2020 - January 31, 2021

MEALS BY COUNTY	CLIENTS	NUMBER OF MEALS
Abbeville	96	7,244
Edgefield	113	5,669
Greenwood	316	20,857
Laurens	127	7,687
McCormick	59	3,181
Saluda	109	5,714
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>50,352</b>

More than

**50,000** MEALS

served in Region  
over last

**FOUR  
MONTHS**

## GOVERNMENT SERVICES

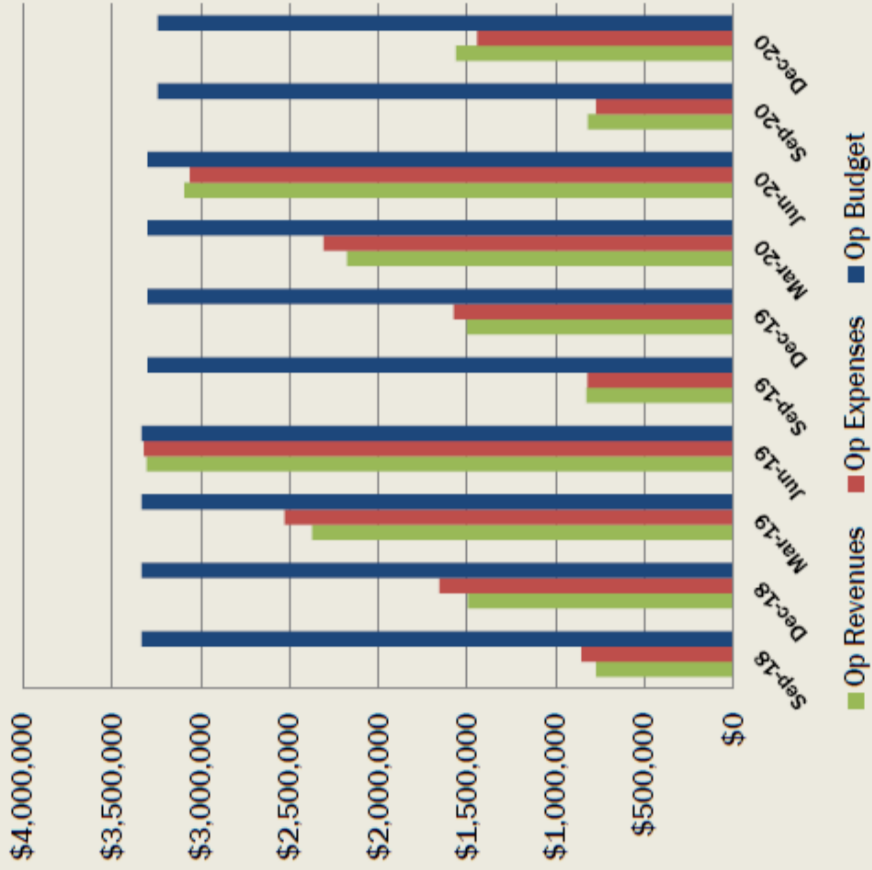
- Continued work on Economic Development Administration (EDA) grants administration on current grants.
- Assisted Abbeville County Council with a goal-setting session for 2021. The COG produced a summary of the session that is submitted to council members for their use throughout the year as they try to meet their goals.
- Facilitated zoning ordinance update meetings in McCormick County.
- Participated in online meetings to discuss planning and implementing a public transit system in Greenwood and Abbeville counties.
- Participated in a conference call for non-profits sponsored by the Laurens County Chamber of Commerce. The non-profit calls are an opportunity to hear about community needs through human service agencies and stay in touch with what is happening in Laurens County.
- Created a work schedule for an intern who is compiling data for a Laurens County Comprehensive Plan update.
- Continued assisting the Upper Savannah Land Trust. The USLT encourages and supports conservation of natural and scenic lands, farms, forests, waterways, and open spaces in Abbeville, Anderson, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry, and Saluda counties. Approximately 50,000 acres are conserved in the USLT to date.
- 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.
- Developed an Americans with Disabilities Act for the City of Landrum under contract.
- Participated in the statewide update to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Plan with SCDOT. This process will continue through this year. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Plan for the state is updated every five years and focuses on safety and improving existing trails and sidewalks to encourage more use.

## 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).
- Upper Savannah 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. The grant application was submitted jointly with Pee Dee COG, which will train nurses in their region.
- Job fairs were held in Laurens and Newberry counties with employers and job seekers meeting social distancing requirements. Upper Savannah workforce staff assisted with hiring events at ZF Transmission, Whitten Center and Flexible Technologies.
- Assisting Abbeville County with research for a Rural EMT grant.
- Completed four-year Upper Savannah Workforce Area plan which included input from nearly 200 businesses. The area will invest in training workers for manufacturing and health care jobs and will support small businesses.

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Operating Actual vs. Budget



Pass Through Budget

