



UPPER SAVANNAH

Council of Governments

ACTIVITY REPORT SPECIAL COVID-19 EDITION AUGUST 2021

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**USCOG
TO SUBMIT
THREE**

**CDBG grant
applications
in fall round**

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

There are

8

active CDBG
projects in region,
totaling

\$5,357,116

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CARES Act

RLF

**has made
12 loans**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

EDA

WASTEWATER
TREATMENT
PLANT UPGRADE
IN CITY OF
ABBEVILLE
HAS BEEN
COMPLETED

AGING

Approximately

900

SENIORS
RECEIVING
MEALS
IN REGION

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

CDBG-CV
grant awards
announced
totaling
\$718,900

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

FUJI

workforce staff
assisting
400 workers
at the plant

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**RURAL
HEALTH
GRANT**

COG recruiting
emergency medical
technician and
paramedics students

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Assisting local
governments,
non-profits
with
**AMERICAN
RESCUE
PLAN
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 2021 grant application round. The virtual method is still being used for document screen-sharing and project meetings which minimizes close contact, while still allowing successful communication. Laurens County Water and Sewer and the Community Development team are still working 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 has not been as successful as anticipated. LCWSC is still working to gather survey data.

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. Localities are still utilizing the virtual platform for project hearings.

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 COG Economic Development staff and Region localities to help determine community development needs that meet CDBG eligibility. Localities have submitted their needs and staff has submitted a Public Services application and a Public Facilities application. Upper Savannah received word of the grant awards (listed on next page of this document).

AGING

Senior centers are open in the Region serving congregate meals while providing activities and nutritional education. McCormick County Senior Center has decided not to re-open at this time. The site managers of the open sites are watching COVID case numbers closely to determine if they will be able to stay open.

The Minor Home Repair program which provides safety upgrades is beginning to pick up. In the past two months the program has provided ramps, handrails and/or grab bars to 12 seniors. Men's ministry groups that partner with Upper Savannah are keeping costs down. The COG is looking for additional volunteer groups to help with this service.

The AAA is seeing an increased need for home care services and expects this need to rise as COVID continues and the senior population increases. The AAA has budgeted additional funding to meet the growing need for this service.

COVID vaccine funding is available to provide credible information about the vaccine and information on where to get the vaccine. AAA staff has been distributing flyers in all counties of the Region targeting low income areas, Hispanics and families of homebound seniors. Flyers are provided in English and Spanish.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Extended unemployment ended in June 2021. All SC Works offices are open to help residents find work.

Upper Savannah is one of four areas in the state offering a National Emergency Grant Disaster Recovery Program. So far 15 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

Grant Award received for CDBG-CV Public Services at \$632,000. In the process of start-up to be able to access funds as soon as possible. Funded projects are:

- Upper Savannah Region - Home Delivered Meals for Seniors, \$390,000**
- Laurens School District 55 - Air Purifiers for Schools, \$192,000**
- Saluda County - Public Transportation Contract, \$50,000**

Grant Award received for CDBG-CV Public Facilities at \$86,900. In the process of start-up to be able to access funds as soon as possible. Funded projects are:

- Abbeville Civic Center, City of Abbeville - HVAC Upgrade and Installation of UVC Lights, \$65,400**
- Abbeville Opera House, City of Abbeville - Installation of UVC Lights in Existing HVAC System, \$21,500**

EDA has announced \$3 billion in American Rescue Plan programs. COG is currently researching possible projects for funding.

Continued to develop draft updates to 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 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.....	\$1,460,000
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.....	Regional Planning.....	\$50,000
TOTAL.....		\$5,357,116

CDBG GRANT APPLICATIONS TO BE SUBMITTED

SEPTEMBER 2021 FALL INFRASTRUCTURE ROUND

City of Clinton Fire Truck

\$500,000 CDBG request, \$250,000 local match, \$750,000 total project cost

Funds being requested to purchase a new fire truck to serve the LMI City. The new truck is a critical need to provide adequate fire protection to the City residents, businesses and industries that provide jobs. The City recently decommissioned a 1995 truck due to transmission failure, resulting in one fewer responding pumper.

City of Abbeville Structure Demolitions

\$321,210 CDBG request, \$32,445 local match, \$353,655 total project cost

Funds being requested for the demolition and clearance of 21 condemned structures throughout the City. These uninhabitable structures are hazardous to the community. The structures are located on Bowie, Brooks, Brown, Ferry, Greenwood, Haigler, Harrisburg, Hickory, Maple, Poplar, Raymond, Secession and Wilson streets.

Town of Saluda Streetscape

\$713,984 CDBG request, \$99,498 local match, \$813,482 total project cost

Funds being requested to provide streetscape improvements to portions of downtown. Town needs improved accessibility and beautification to promote economic growth. Improvements would encourage foot traffic, potentially stimulating business opportunities within the available storefronts. The proposed project would include the intersection of Main and Church streets.

There are

8

active CDBG projects in the region, totaling

\$5,357,116

Greenwood County: Mathews Mill Village Sewer Upgrade. Project awarded June 2021 with \$1 million in CDBG funds. Greenwood Metro successfully pursued funding through Greenwood County to improve infrastructure within the LMI area of Mathews Mill Village in multiple phases. 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. Project in start-up phase.

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 September 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 an original 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. Bids opened on 7/22/21. All bids were over budget. The COG was notified that an additional \$710,000 in CDBG funds has been awarded and the City will contribute an additional \$250,000 to continue the entire project, bringing the total project cost to \$2,359,720.

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 September/October 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 September 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 opened for the testing and air monitoring. Package being assembled for Department of Commerce to review for approval. Demo package is being assembled and will go to bid September/October 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. Closeout package submitted to the Department of Commerce.

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. 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 2021:

Greenwood County College Heights Sewer Upgrade.....	\$260,000
Laurens County Lydia Mill Sewer Upgrade - Phase II.....	\$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
TOTAL.....		\$5,862,000

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 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 June 30, 2021. The RLF has helped create or retain 715 jobs and leveraged \$34,346,948 in private and other public investment.

CARES Revolving Loan Fund (CARES RLF) Program has closed 12 loans totaling \$423,700. These loans have helped create or retain 44 jobs and leverage \$492,750 in private investment.

REVOLVING LOAN FUND:

JUNE 30, 2021				JUNE 30, 2020		
	NUMBER	AMOUNT	BALANCE	NUMBER	AMOUNT	BALANCE
Current	8	\$425,500	\$349,070	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
Active Loans	10	\$460,500	\$366,520	13	\$870,500	\$497,624
Written off	13	\$1,138,250	\$639,693	13	\$1,138,250	\$639,893
Repaid	41	\$2,944,878	-	38	\$2,534,870	-
TOTAL	64	\$4,543,620	-	64	\$4,543,620	-

CARES REVOLVING LOAN FUND:

JUNE 30, 2021				SEPTEMBER 30, 2020		
	NUMBER	AMOUNT	BALANCE	NUMBER	AMOUNT	BALANCE
Current	12	\$423,700	\$405,537	1	\$62,500	\$61,963
Delinquent	0	0	0	0	0	0
Default	0	0	0	0	0	0
Active Loans	12	\$423,700	\$405,537	0	\$62,500	\$61,963
Written off	0	0	0	0	0	0
Repaid	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	12	\$423,700	-	1	\$62,500	-

AGING

Upper Savannah Area Agency on Aging/Aging & Disability Resource Center Activity Report June 1, 2021 - July 31, 2021

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	CLIENTS
Assessments	Determine eligibility and needs for Aging services	360
Caregiver Supplemental Services	Assists with supplies, supplements, assistive technology.....	33
Assistive Technology	Provides Lifeline monitoring for seniors at risk	24
Home Care	Helps seniors with light housekeeping, chores, personal care.....	55
Minor Home Repair	Provides ramps, handrails, grab bars, safety upgrades.....	12
Seniors Raising Children Supplemental Services	Assists with school supplies, clothing, and miscellaneous.....	20
Transportation	Trips to congregate meal sites, medical, shopping.....	231
Legal Assistance	Provided by SC Legal Services	14
Caregiver Respite	Offers a break for daily caregivers.....	73

Congregate and Home-Delivered Meals Report | June 1, 2021 - July 31, 2021

MEALS BY COUNTY	CLIENTS	NUMBER OF MEALS
Abbeville.....	133	4,920
Edgefield.....	106.....	3,415
Greenwood.....	361.....	12,799
Laurens.....	152.....	5,429
McCormick.....	54	2,050
Saluda	92	2,769
TOTALS.....	898.....	31,382

Nearly

900

CLIENTS

served meals
in Region over last

TWO MONTHS

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

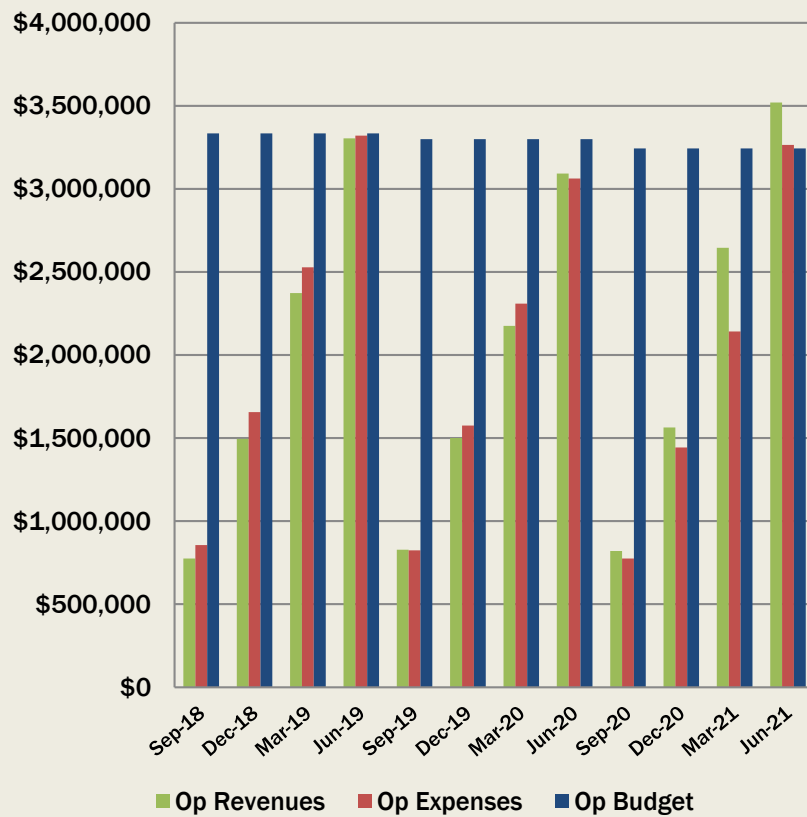
- Continued work on Economic Development Administration (EDA) grants administration on current grants. Listened to numerous webinars on new EDA funding opportunities through American Rescue Plan funding. Met with potential applicants to discuss projects. Conference called with our state EDA representative to discuss potential projects.
- Continued work on environmental reviews for CDBG projects.
- Continued work on an environmental review for Laurens County Water and Sewer EDA application.
- Attended SCDOT MPO/COG Training Academy in Columbia. Topics were upcoming requirements for funding and a general review of SCDOT planning activities.
- Participated in planning group for Interstate 85/26 Upstate Freight Study that includes Laurens County.
- Attended ribbon-cutting for new transit system in Greenwood County. The County has contracted with McCormick County Senior Center to provide public service.
- Participated in site visit and follow-up conference call to discuss progress on Ninety Six sidewalk projects with SCDOT and ITS selected engineer.
- Attended a regional meeting of the area Small Business Development Center (SBDC) board and also attended a SBDC committee meeting focused on Chambers of Commerce and Economic Developers.
- Attended The Brew, a small business discussion group meeting quarterly in the City of Greenwood.
- Attended a City of Abbeville Downtown Master Plan meeting.
- Attended McCormick County Zoning Ordinance update meetings.
- Continued assisting the Upper Savannah Land Trust, which has preserved almost 53,000 acres in an eight-county area that includes the USCOG region.
- Worked under contract with a community in the Appalachian COG region to create an Americans with Disabilities Act plan.
- Participated in study updates for the InfoMentum program. This is a data and map-making program used for several grant and study program areas.
- 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.
- 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

- Upper Savannah workforce staff wants to help job seekers. Anyone looking for a job or considering training can call 864.229.8826 or email WIOArecruitment@gleamsnhrc.org to get more assistance.
- Met with FUJIFILM to coordinate services for 400 workers. SC Works will assist with resumes onsite and help with a job fair.
- Coordinated with four other workforce areas to apply for a \$2.4 million grant to expand services to dislocated workers.
- Held two job fair/training information days at Piedmont Technical College in July connected with 180 job seekers.
- 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.
- Started recruiting and training emergency medical technicians and paramedics for a federal Rural Health grant. Upper Savannah will guide nearly a half million dollars in efforts to train 100 new medics. Ten have been enrolled and staff anticipate having 20 trainees by September. The COG is working with County EMS departments to fill openings.
- Met with Greenwood United Way and Chamber of Commerce to expand referrals to centers.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Operating Actual vs. Budget



Pass Through Budget

