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VIEWPOINT

Appalachian Council of Governments Quarterly Newsletter

Third Quarter 2015

Medical Transportation Service Comes to Cherokee County



On July 1st, Senior Centers of Cherokee County began a pilot program to offer non-emergency medical transportation for the county's dialysis patients.

Amy Turner, the director of Senior Centers of Cherokee County, submitted a winning proposal to the Appalachian Council of Governments / Appalachian Aging and Disability Resource Center to offer the service. The new service will provide van transportation from the clients' homes to their respective dialysis appointments in Gaffney and then back home again.

For this pilot program, clients have been limited to only those needing transport for dialysis treatment. Depending on the success of the pilot program, the program could be expanded in the future to include transport services to other types of medical appointments. This transportation program is targeted at persons age 60 or older who have no other means of transportation.

next generation of leaders. Conference plenary sessions will bring together government and industry leaders to explore how current initiatives and emerging opportunities can also play an important role in shaping local economic development programs.

For information on the agenda, accommodations, and registration, visit ARC's website at www.arc.gov.



An Appalachian Regional Commission Conference Hosted by the Commonwealth of Kentucky
October 14-15, 2015 | Somerset, Kentucky



Hazard Mitigation Assistance Workshop Planned for October 20th

The South Carolina Emergency Management Division will host a Hazard Mitigation Workshop on Tuesday, October 20th from 10:00 AM until 4:00 PM at the Phillips Market Center on the grounds of the SC State Farmers Market in West Columbia. The workshop is free, but registration is required by October 12th. Lunch will be provided.

This will be an informative and interactive day. State and local governments, private industry, and any other parties having an interest in mitigation or risk reduction are encouraged to attend. Speakers will address current hazard mitigation and grant topics, as well as best practices for both.

For more information, contact Howard van Dijk at 803-737-8798 or hvandijk@emd.sc.gov.



Time to Register for ARC Conference!

Registration is now open for the Appalachian Regional Commission's October 2015 conference - *Appalachian Apps: Transforming the Region's Economy* - which will showcase effective approaches to addressing key development issues facing the Region's communities today.

Concurrent sessions will focus on local models for increasing access to broadband; supporting employer-driven workforce development; and engaging the region's

SC Department of Commerce Awards Infrastructure Improvement Grants

The SC Department of Commerce recently awarded \$3,067,494 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to benefit low- and moderate-income people in the Appalachian Region. These funds are allocated to South Carolina through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to undertake a variety of community revitalization and economic development activities.

The **City of Chesnee**, in cooperation with the Liberty Chesnee Fingerville Water District, was awarded \$171,250 to upgrade the water system in the Georgia Avenue neighborhood, which is suffering from water line breaks and poor water pressure. Approximately 5,900 linear feet of 3-inch and 1,700 linear feet of 6-inch water mains will be installed. Sixty-nine homes will benefit from the project.

The **City of Belton** has received \$200,000 to replace the sewer line along Stringer Street. The project will involve abandoning 1,600 feet of 6-inch clay line behind Stringer Street houses and installing new 8-inch PVC line in the road right-of-way of Stringer Street. There will be 22 houses reconnected to sewer as a part of this project.

The **Town of Pendleton** has received \$750,000 for the construction of the Westinghouse Pump Station and the upgrading of its associated sewer lines. The project will upgrade the 8-inch gravity sewer line to a 15-inch PVC line, and the 6-inch force main will be upgraded to a 12-inch PVC force main. The project will benefit 1,059 people.

The **City of Pickens** has received \$242,285 to upgrade the water line along Ann Street. The area is suffering from line breakages and poor water quality. The project consists of upgrading approximately 2,600 feet of old 4-inch water main to a new 6-inch main. Thirty-six residences and 10 businesses will be served by the project.

Anderson County, in cooperation with the Sandy Springs Water District, was awarded \$627,488 to upgrade approximately 10,000 feet of water lines, which will alleviate problems with pressure and flow to meet DHEC standards in the LaFrance Mill Village area. The project will serve 82 homes and 211 people.

The City of Easley, in cooperation with Easley Combined Utilities, was awarded \$650,000 to undertake Phase Two of a multi-phased project to upgrade the sewer system in the city's West End area. Approximately 3,500 feet of 8-inch sewer line will be either installed or upgraded. Upgrades entail moving lines from behind houses to the street in front of the houses, followed by reconnection of 71 homes to the new line. The project will benefit approximately 177 people.

Pickens County, in cooperation with the Easley-Central Water District, will receive \$133,913 to enhance the water system in the Catechee Mill Village area by constructing approximately 1,980 feet of 6-inch water line and 510 feet of 3-inch water line. The project will benefit 30 people in 14 homes.

The **City of Westminster** has been approved for \$292,558 to upgrade 3,350 feet of sewer collector line, including 16 manholes and 35 service reconnections. This project is being undertaken to alleviate stop-ups and overflows of raw sewage. The grant will benefit 574 people.

The ACOG Grant Services Department assisted with the CDBG applications and will administer these grants to ensure that the funds are expended in compliance with state and federal guidelines. For more information on these projects, or the CDBG Program, contact a member of the Grants Services staff at the ACOG.



The Catechee Mill Village in Pickens County will receive grant funds for construction of almost 2,500 feet of water lines.



Medicare Turns 50!

Medicare is celebrating its 50th birthday this year; however, the concept of "health security for all, regardless of residence, station, or race" was originally proposed in 1945 by President Harry S Truman. Twenty years later - on July 30, 1965 - President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the Social Security Act Amendments,

popularly known as the Medicare Bill. It established Medicare, a health insurance program for the elderly, and Medicaid, a health insurance program for the poor.

Former President Truman participated in the signing ceremony with President Johnson. Harry S. Truman and Bess Truman received Medicare registration cards numbers one and two. At the time, Mr. Truman was 81 years old, and he described it as a "profound personal experience for me."

Today, Medicare and Medicaid cover nearly one out of every three Americans - well over 100 million people! It's highly likely that you, someone in your family or someone you know is covered by Medicare, Medicaid or both. Celebrating the 50th anniversary of these lifesaving programs lets us reflect on how they have transformed the delivery of health care in the United States.

More than 55 million Americans depend on Medicare to cover hospital stays, lab tests and critical supplies like wheelchairs and prescription drugs. Medicare also covers 23 types of preventive services, including flu shots and diabetes screenings. Some of these services are free, while others require only a small copayment or payment of the deductible.

Medicaid provides comprehensive coverage to more than 70 million eligible children, low-income adults and people living with disabilities. Coverage includes essential services such as annual check-ups, care for new and expectant mothers, and dental care for kids from low-income families.

Every day, the team at the Center for Medicare and Medicare Services (CMS) is working hard to keep Americans healthy by innovating, leading, and helping our health care programs grow and improve for future generations. Here at the Appalachian Area Agency on Aging, our certified State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) counselors provide unbiased Medicare counseling for consumers not only with benefit selections, but also with potential fraud issues and billing questions.

Open enrollment begins October 15th, and runs through December 7th annually. The plans change each year (in areas such as added/dropped medications; increased/decreased costs; and dropped / added plans. Be an informed purchaser so you'll have no surprises when you go to the drug store in 2016! For assistance, Call your local SHIP or SMP (Senior Medicare Patrol) at 800-434-4036 or 864-242-9733.



On July 30, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the Social Security Act Amendments, popularly known as the Medicare Bill. Former President Harry S. Truman also participated in the signing ceremony.

Progress Report for the CEDS 2013-2017: Building 21st Century Economic Development Capacity

The ACOG Planning Division recently completed the progress report for the region's five-year "Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy", or – as most people refer to it – *the CEDS*. ACOG updates the regional CEDS every five years and prepares annual progress reports for the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). *CEDS 2013-2017* summarizes not only important regional and county-level economic data, it also emphasizes key areas of economic development, including (1) Clusters, Target Industries and Innovation Capacities; (2) Workforce Development; (3) Infrastructure; (4) Available Sites and Buildings; (5) Entrepreneurship; (6) Access to Capital; (7) Local Asset-Based Development; and (8) Global Competitiveness, which was recently added.



The Inland Port continues to exceed projections and is having a transformational impact on business logistics.

The third year of *CEDS 2013-2017* was a tremendous period in the SC Appalachian Region. Each of the strategy's original *Seven Areas of Emphasis* saw exciting developments and capacity expansion. The cluster-based, target industry strategy is yielding outstanding results, with over \$552 million in capital investment and more than 3,200 new jobs announced since September 2014. Another highlight for the year is reflected in the commencement of site development for Toray Industries in Spartanburg County, which will ultimately represent a \$1 billion capital investment. In addition, the Inland Port continues to exceed projections and is having a transformational impact on business logistics.

To view *CEDS 2013-2017* online, visit www.scacog.org/OurServices/PlanningServices.aspx. For questions or

comments, please contact David Shellhorse, Economic Development Planner, at (864) 241-4649 or dshellhorse@scacog.org.



Changes in Freedom of Information and Fair Labor Standards Acts

The State Legislature recently changed the requirements for Freedom of Information (FOIA) actions. As previously required, printed notices for meetings must still be posted at least twenty-four hours prior to the meeting. Now, however, if the government entity has a website, a notice must also be posted online. In addition, the change makes it more difficult to alter the meeting agenda than in the past. A change to the agenda now requires a two-thirds vote, and if the public will not have a future opportunity to speak on the issue in question, the council must state for the record why the issue must be acted on quickly. The goal in making these changes is to get the word out to citizens about the meetings and to make government processes more transparent.

In addition, the Department of Labor has announced a proposed rule that would extend overtime protection under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) to nearly 5 million white collar workers within the first year of its implementation. The proposed rule will update the regulations defining which white collar workers are protected by the FLSA's minimum wage and overtime standards. The exception to overtime eligibility was originally meant for highly-compensated executive, administrative, and professional employees. Currently, this exception applies to workers earning as little as \$23,660 a year. For example, a parks director, administrative assistant, or some office workers may be expected to work 50 or 60 hours a week or more, making less than the poverty level for a family of four, and not receive any overtime compensation. The proposed regulation is intended to ensure that these employees are compensated fairly. The proposed rule is expected to go into effect on January 1, 2016.

Please feel free to contact either Donna Kazia or Doug Burns at 242-9733 for any additional information you may need on these two topics.

