

Growth Slows in Greenville's Apartment Market

Just as the nationwide housing industry is feeling the pinch of these lean economic times, ACOG's 2008 Greenville County Multi-Family Housing Survey revealed that the Greenville housing market is in no way immune to the consequences of an economic downturn.

For almost ten years, low mortgage interest rates and the tax benefit of home ownership encouraged would-be renters to opt for the purchase of a townhome or condominium in lieu of renting. Consequently, between 1999 and 2007 the inventory of townhome and condominium units reported in the ACOG's annual survey more than doubled. However, the 2008 survey revealed that construction of this unit type has essentially come to a screeching halt. Some projects listed as "planned" in the 2007 edition have been cancelled completely, while others that were delineated as part of large mixed-use master plans have been put on hold indefinitely. In addition, many of the units that were under construction at the time of the 2007 report are now complete, but remain unsold and empty.

The slowdown in the construction of townhomes, condominiums and other "owner-occupied" units has prompted the startup of several new conventional apartment projects, as more of the county's residents find renting to be a more feasible option over buying. At the time of the survey, three new projects were under construction – all in the Greer area. Upon completion, Tuscan Heights (205 units), The Preserve at West View (177 units), and



Tuscan Heights Apartments, located off The Parkway in Greer, is one of several new conventional rental properties in Greenville County.

Alta Crescent (204 units) will add a total of 586 new conventional apartments to the county's multi-family market.

The survey also reports on rental units having some correlation between the tenant's income and residence eligibility or the amount of rent paid. Due to limited funding, development of new "income-dependent" properties rarely occurs at the same level as in the conventional market. These developments typically consist of fewer units, and oftentimes they serve to replace substandard developments that have been torn down. At the time of the 2008 report, three income-dependent developments were under construction in the Pleasantburg Drive/Augusta Road area. Two of the developments – Nichol Town Green Commons (48 units) and Clark Street Commons (72 units) – serve to replace the Jesse Jackson Townhomes (340 units), demolished several years ago from same property. Forestview Apartments was also under construction in the same market area,

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Focus on the Board



Renee Cariveau, ACOG board member since 2004, is a busy person – a very busy person. She's on just about every local board there is, except perhaps the diving board at the community pool! She is a Spartanburg City Council member and is affiliated with the Economic Futures Group, USC Mary Black School of Nursing, St. Luke's Free Medical Clinic, S.C. Municipal Association, National League of Cities, Workforce Investment Board Youth Council, S.C. Scholarship Foundation and the Upstate Business Alliance, just to name a few of many more.

Renee would also do very well competing on Jeff Foxworthy's show, "Are You Smarter than a Fifth Grader?" She is a PhD candidate with the Strom Thurmond Institute of Government and Public Affairs. Renee has a Master of Science degree from Cornell University, another master's degree in science and mathematics from North Dakota State University, and two bachelor's degrees with concentrations in biology, chemistry and education. This is all pretty impressive for a girl who grew up on a farm.

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Fourth Annual Volunteer Appreciation

The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program's Friendly Visitor Volunteers recently held their 4th Annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. Every year, staff from ACOG and the State Ombudsman's Office gather with the program's volunteers to celebrate accomplishments and to show appreciation for those who give of their time and talents.

The Friendly Visitor Program sends volunteers to area nursing homes and assisted living facilities to be a presence in the facility on behalf of the residents. These volunteers are trained to be advocates for those who may not have a voice of their own. Volunteers visit residents on a weekly basis and are there to empower them and to be their confidants. If the residents wish them to do so, volunteers approach facility staff to address issues that residents may have with their quality of care. Most of all, the volunteers are there for the lonely residents who may have no friends or family to visit them.

This year's event took place at ACOG and was attended by Steve Pellissier, executive director, Michael Stogner, interim aging director, and Cat Angus and Kim Bailey from the Lieutenant Governor's Office of Aging. Ms. Angus spoke, recognizing the value of volunteers and praising the group for what they were accomplishing. Each volunteer was given a special gift from the Ombudsman staff, along with a Certificate of Appreciation for their hard work.

Ms. Sandra Wroblewski, the friendly visitor for Mountainview Nursing Home in Spartanburg, received the honor of Volunteer of the Year. Ms. Wroblewski received this award for her dedication to the Mountainview residents and the program.

Since the program's first visits began in October 2006, the Friendly Visitor Volunteers have given over 300 hours and visited over 3,500 residents. The program truly makes a difference in reducing the number of complaints the



The Long Term Care Ombudsman's Friendly Visitor Program recently celebrated National Volunteer Week.

Ombudsman staff receive from participating facilities. Consequently, Ombudsman staff have additional time to investigate more serious issues in facilities and to do routine friendly visits of their own.

Each Friendly Visitor volunteer is a very valuable part of the Ombudsman program's team. If you, or someone you know, are interested in the opportunity of becoming a volunteer, please contact Jessica Winters, volunteer coordinator at (864) 242-9733.



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and upon completion will provide another 42 units for the county's low-income residents.

The Appalachian Council of Governments produces this one-of-a-kind survey annually for Greenville County and biennially for Anderson and Spartanburg Counties. This unique report contains an inventory and analysis of all known conventional and "income-dependent" apartment properties with 40 or more units, and all townhouse and condominium properties with 15 or more units. For more information, or to purchase a copy of this publication, please contact the Information Services Department at 864-242-9733. This report is also available for online purchase at www.scacog.org by clicking on the "Publications" link.

Beverly Allen Named Appalachia AAA Director



Beverly Allen, longtime Aging Services team member, was recently named director of ACOG's Aging Services Division.

After working at the Appalachia AAA for over eight years as program coordinator, Beverly Allen has been named the new AAA director. According to Ms. Allen, one of her first tasks will be working with local contractors and communities to identify ways to best utilize the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds provided to serve additional meals to older adults in the region. Other priorities heading into the new fiscal year include working on the CMS Discharge Planning grant and enhancing the ADRC expansion.

Beverly has over 20 years of experience working in the Aging network, including more than 15 years at Senior Action. When she began at the ACOG in 2001, she stated that she was looking forward to developing a "regional perspective," having worked for a number of years at a local provider. Now, as the AAA director, she feels that she has an opportunity to build upon the strong foundation that the Appalachia AAA has always had, as well as an opportunity to take that 'regional perspective' to another level. "I look forward to working with community leaders, agencies and volunteers as we all work together to enhance the lives of older adults and their caregivers," she says.

Local Government Energy Grants

The South Carolina Energy Office has announced the availability of funds for local governments under the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program. The Appalachian region has been allocated \$841,338.

Any local government may apply for funds, with the exception of the following localities, which received direct formula grants under the EECBG Program: Anderson County, Greenville County, Spartanburg County, and the cities of Greenville and Spartanburg. Applications will be accepted only from general purpose units of local government.

The purpose of the EECBG Program is to assist eligible entities in creating and implementing strategies to:

- reduce fossil fuel emissions in a manner that is environmentally sustainable and, to the maximum extent practicable, maximize benefits for local and regional communities
- reduce the total energy use of the eligible entities
- improve energy efficiency in the building sector, the transportation sector, and other appropriate sectors

The grant guidelines require local governments to develop a strategy for energy efficiency and conservation and to request funding for energy measures that support the strategy. Energy measures must demonstrate the potential to reduce energy consumption, peak demand, and/or utility costs or to use renewable energy sources in place of fossil fuel. The proposed project must have a Simple Payback Period of eight (8) years or less or a simple Return on Investment of 2.5 or greater.

Project applications are due to the ACOG offices by August 28, 2009. For the EECBG guidelines, applications, a sample Energy Conservation Plan, scoring criteria, and other information, go to the SC Energy Office website at www.energy.sc.gov and click



Energy Grant guidelines require local governments to develop a strategy for energy efficiency and conservation.

on Stimulus Information. Questions can be directed to Dirk Reis, Grant Services director at the ACOG.

WorkLink Youth Summer Employment



Jobs! 1,800 persons attended the recent WorkLink-sponsored Job Fair in Anderson.

WorkLink, along with the school districts of Anderson, Oconee and Pickens Counties and OneStop staffers, recently finished the eligibility process for two summer youth programs that began in June. The in-school program targets youth (ages 14-18) and is managed by the individual school districts. This program gives in-school youth recovery credits, work-readiness skills and work experience. Palmetto

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2009 Planning Training Available



Training is available from ACOG for planners, Planning Commissions and Boards of Appeal.

Planning legislation enacted in 2006 requires that local government planning commission members, zoning appeal and architectural review board members, and staff who work with planning issues must attend a minimum of six hours of orientation. In addition, those who have completed the orientation training must attend three hours of approved continuing education courses annually. Many local communities have already taken advantage of the planning education sessions offered by the Appalachian Council of Governments. For those that haven't, there are still several opportunities to do so.

ACOG will conduct both orientation and continuing education training sessions over the next six months. Sessions will be conducted at the Council of Governments offices, as well as other locations in the region. Scheduled training is posted on the ACOG website, along with registration instructions. Different training topics are available, so persons may choose a session that best fits their needs. There is a \$25 fee per person, up to a maximum of \$450 for each local government. For more information, please contact Jennifer Vissage at 864-242-9733.

A Long Journey Home

ACOG's Aging Information and Referral (I&R) program's mission is to interview clients, gather as much information as possible, and make every attempt to match various resources with individual needs. For I&R staff, every phone call can reveal an almost insurmountable challenge.

Case in point: Late one Monday afternoon, an ACOG I&R staffer received a call from a 71-year-old mother seeking assistance for her 51-year-old daughter. The daughter had suffered a stroke while in South Korea, and in four days she was to be placed on an airplane to Atlanta. The elderly and disabled mom was already taking care of a severely disabled son in the same household. Simply retrieving the daughter from the Atlanta airport was well beyond the family's ability.

Social service agencies, churches with buses, state and federal agencies and personal friends were all contacted. Catholic Charities pledged some gas money, but other agencies could not assist with aid outside of the county. Churches without buses were afraid of liability problems and churches with buses were already committed. Travelers Aid in Atlanta was closed and Atlanta's 211 assistance number proved to be of no help.

Late Wednesday afternoon a phone call came through to ACOG from a gentleman—a total stranger—who offered his services. Mr. Goodman (not his real name) had seen an email sent out from the Senior Action RSVP program. He was given as many of the details as were known—that a partially paralyzed lady, with several severe physical problems, was coming off a 20-hour overseas flight and was to be dropped off at an Atlanta airline gate. Mr. Goodman insisted on helping. The next day, he picked up, cared for, and delivered the woman to her mother's home.

The daughter—a teacher of English at a private school in South Korea—was returning to the U.S. with ab-



From Korea to Greenville. ACOG aging staff and a kindly volunteer help reunite an ailing U.S. citizen in South Korea with her family in Greenville.

solutely no insurance benefits to assist with providing prescriptions, medical equipment or support services. ACOG's Family Care Giver Program was able to arrange for an electric hospital bed with sheets, a gel mattress and other personal medical supplies.

The family is very grateful for all the assistance given to them through a coordination of efforts in the ACOG Aging and Disabilities programs. Mr. Goodman, who provided her transportation, called to check on her condition, which thrilled the family. Of Mr. Goodman's actions, the mother commented, "Can you imagine a person volunteering to do that?"

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Renee works as a consultant with local corporations, colleges, governments, community entities and non-profit organizations in such areas as strategic planning, training, leadership development, program evaluation, policy formation, facilitation and other services. She is married to Jay Cariveau, has lived in Spartanburg for the past 20 years, and is an all-around nice person. Renee serves on ACOG's Executive Committee.

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Youth Connections is managing the out-of-school youth programs, which provide work experience and work-readiness skills for youth who are out of school (ages 17-24).

WorkLink Adds Staff to Handle Stimulus Program



Whitney Farmer and Crayton Pruitt were recently hired by Worklink to deal with new training and employment programs.

The Anderson-Oconee-Pickens WorkLink board of directors has announced the addition of two new staff members—Crayton Pruitt and Whitney Farmer—who will serve two-year assignments as Workforce Development Specialists. According to WorkLink executive director Nita Colman, these positions were added to manage an increased workload from the downturn in the economy, which has resulted in increased job search and training needs. The positions are being subsidized by Federal stimulus funds.

Mr. Pruitt most recently served three years as environmental health inspector for the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control and prior to that, he was a graduate research assistant for the Strom Thurmond Institute. He holds a master's degree in resource management from Clemson University and a bachelor's degree in parks, recreation and tourism management, also from Clemson.

Ms. Farmer most recently worked with WorkLink as a temporary employee in the role of administrative specialist, where she was one of several key employees and volunteers who helped make the recent WorkLink Job Fair a success through administrative

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A Local Business Gives Something Back



The Appalachian Development Corporation helped fund the International Kitchen Supply (IKS) warehouse in Oconee County. Now, IKS wants to give back something to the region.

The Appalachian Development Corporation helped to fund the establishment of a warehouse in Oconee County for International Kitchen Supply, and now the business wants to give something back. International Kitchen Supply (IKS), a wholesaler of imported hardwood kitchen cabinets, recently sent out more than 500 flyers announcing its charitable IKS CARES program.

IKS CARES provides products and other aid to worthy persons or organizations in need of help. The company has donated and assembled kitchen cabinets for local Habitat for Humanity houses and has donated cabinets for a local Habitat Re-store, a fire department, and a church nursery. IKS also supports local food banks with much-needed cash donations and recently helped a local homeless shelter by providing storage cabinets.

Companies or organizations seeking to participate should submit a request to IKS for a project that will benefit a person or organization in need. In turn, IKS will ask that the requesting organization support the project by assembling, delivering, and/or installing the products or assisting in some other way.

Project ideas and supporting information should be sent by email to carol@internationalkitchensupply.com, or by fax to (864) 638-4372. For ques-

tions, call Carol at (864) 638-4372. This project is truly a good idea at the right time.

Home Modifications Mean Independence



Getting a handle on the problem. If you were born after 1960, you probably don't have a clue as to what this picture is about. For the rest of us, these items may be a life-saver.

The **Family Caregiver Support Program** works to assist caregivers and care receivers in many different ways. One growing area of need is for help with simple modifications and repairs to homes. This fiscal year alone, the program has provided over \$6,000 for modifications such as installation of bathroom grab bars, construction of wheel chair ramps, widening of hall and bathroom doors, floor repairs, and much more.

An example... Recently, as a result of health problems, an Upstate gentleman became unable to get into and out of the shower by himself. Showering became more dangerous for both him and his care-giving spouse. Ultimately, he had to resort to taking sponge baths in place of bathing in a

tub. He suffered a loss of both convenience and personal dignity. Fortunately, the program was able to help with the purchase and installation of bathroom grab bars. A little help was provided, and a big problem was solved.

Working with families to create a safer environment in the home is just one way that the Family Caregiver Support Program is able to assist caregivers and care receivers. For more information on the Family Caregiver Support Program, contact an ACOG Family Caregiver Advocate at 1-800-925-4077 or 864-242-9733.

Telecommunications Study Completed



Anderson, Oconee and Pickens counties have completed a comprehensive broadband telecommunications study.

The year-long, regional (Anderson, Oconee, Pickens) telecommunications study is now complete. The study includes a broadband needs analysis, future bandwidth needs assessment, last mile technology review, and a set of recommendations at the town, county, and regional levels. Copies of the study are available online at http://www2.designnine.com/acog/welc_ome. The report components are in PDF format and may be read online or printed.

The study was conducted by broadband planning firm Design Nine Inc., with oversight from the Appala-

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VIEWPOINT

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The Town Council of the Town of Pacolet recently conducted its annual goal-setting and strategic planning session with the assistance of ACOG. Very 21st century council members are shown in the historic city hall, a 19th century mill building.

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and telemarketing work. Prior to that, she was a feature writer for *Celebrate Hilton Head* magazine and an intern for the *Anderson Independent Mail*. She holds a bachelor's degree in journalism and mass communications from Samford University and spent a semester abroad studying at the Samford University London Study Center.

"Both employees have extensive backgrounds in community service, which is extremely valuable to have in their roles with WorkLink," said Colman.

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chian Council of Governments and a steering committee of citizens, specialists and business people from the three counties. The study was funded by the Appalachian Regional Commission, a South Carolina Department of Commerce Community Development Block Grant, and some county matching funds.