

S.C. 2008 CDBG Program

The S.C. Department of Commerce has announced the availability of over \$17 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for the period April 2008 – March 2009 for a variety of community development programs, including:

Community Infrastructure - \$7,000,000 is available for projects that contribute to the creation of healthy and sustainable residential communities through water, sewer, roads or drainage activities that address one or more of the priorities listed in order of importance:

1. Documented threats to the public health of the community
2. Regional infrastructure solutions
3. Access to significantly improved public facilities that meet required quality standards

Community Enrichment - \$6,074,217 is available to fund facilities, services and other activities that strengthen existing communities and support a high quality of life within the following state priority areas:

1. Workforce development
2. Healthy communities
3. Obstacles to economic competitiveness

A variety of activities are eligible but consideration for funding will be based on state priorities listed below:

- First priority** - Workforce development (in priority order)
- * Libraries - Construct and/or equip public computer rooms or stations in



Community Development Block Grants

existing libraries to provide access to computers with broadband capability in order to enhance skills training and education

- * Workforce QuickJobs Programs - facilities or equipment for skills training
- * Workforce on the job training or other mentoring/partnership programs with business, i.e., housing construction skills, or youth build program (CDBG equipment only)

Second priority - Healthy communities (in priority order below)

- * Health clinic facilities or equipment in underserved areas
- * Firefighting facilities that offer new or expanded service for in-town locations or near business centers

Third priority - Obstacles to economic competitiveness (in priority order below)

- * Brownfield projects or demolition of obsolete buildings
- * Building re-use/conversion of existing, vacant buildings served by existing infrastructure to new eligible uses, so long as the project does not add undue operating expenses on existing taxpayers
- * Downtown streetscape infrastructure where there is significant business ac-

(CDBG continued on page 3)

Appalachian COG Loses One of Its Own



ACOG Board Member Johnnye Code-Stewart passed away in January.

Photo-Spartanburg Herald Journal

Johnnye Code-Stewart, ACOG board member since February 1994, passed away suddenly on Monday, January 28. Ms. Code-Stewart will be remembered for her unflinching dedication to Spartanburg County, the Upstate and to South Carolina. She will be missed by her friends here at the Council of Governments.



DID YOU KNOW?

The first predecessor of the Appalachian COG was known as the South Carolina Appalachian Advisory Committee, formed by Governor Robert McNair in 1965. The group's sole purpose was to advise the governor on how to invest funds channeled into the six counties in the Upstate that had been designated as part of the federal Appalachian region.

Greenville City and County Planners Learn New Skills

The ACOG hosted a unique class for students from Greenville County Planning Department and the City of Greenville Planning Division in February. The two organizations combined resources to receive training in CommunityViz®, GIS software designed to help people visualize, analyze, and communicate about important land-use decisions. Matt Noonkester, a planning consultant with Kimley-Horn and Associates Inc., of Raleigh, conducted the class, incorporating current data from Greenville County with the training demonstration.

The class is an excellent example of intra-governmental cooperation. Norman Wright, Principal Planner at the Greenville County Department of Planning, said, “The City and County are working together, using the same decision tools, to set common goals and objectives.” ACOG provided meeting space and dedicated staff time to load and configure the software on equipment loaned by the Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC). Mr. Wright added, “I want to express my gratitude to the COG for arranging a space big enough for our group and setting up the equipment. They were a tremendous help in bringing this all together!”

CommunityViz® is a component of the *Placeways* suite of GIS offerings, developed and funded through the Orton Family Foundation. “CommunityViz® adds a large suite of extra functions that combine with [ESRI’s] ArcGIS to make more specialized, powerful decision-making platform tools for setting up alternative futures (scenarios) and analyzing their effects; tools for making interactive three-dimensional (3-D) models of real places as they are now and as they could be in the future; and tools for explaining and communicating across the many groups of people who become involved in mak-



ing decisions about the future of a place.” (<http://www.placeways.com>) Wayne Leftwich, Planner for the City of Greenville Planning Division, explained that “the City and the County are preparing our comprehensive plans together, looking ahead to 2030. With CommunityViz®, we will be able to model where the City and County will grow so that we can carefully shape that growth.”

Instructor Matt Noonkester was pleased with the outcome of the three-day class. The group worked with Greenville data to construct a working model for growth scenarios and resources. Noonkester remarked that this is the first class he has taught that was able to finish their model and walk out of class ready to use it for community planning.

Blankets and Wellness for Seniors

Another first time event for the ACOG Area Agency on Aging took place in February and incorporated the efforts of **Lt. Governor Andre Bauer** and the **Duke Energy Endowment fund**. Through this effort, **over 1600 blankets** were donated by Duke Energy for distribution to seniors. The

Appalachian Area Agency on Aging was chosen as the first region to receive the blankets and take part in a “blanket blitz” distribution tour by the Lt. Governor and representatives from Duke Energy.

The Lt. Governor traveled with the ADRC mobile unit to sites in Anderson, Oconee, Pickens, Cherokee, Greenville and Spartanburg counties where he personally handed out blankets to the seniors. The ADRC mobile unit will be handing out additional blankets during the initial promotional tour in March and April.

The ACOG Area Agency on Aging was also one of five agencies whose proposal was selected for participation in the **Living Well South Carolina** initiative. This initiative provides evidence-based disease prevention programs **to help older adults take control of their own health as they live with chronic conditions** such as diabe-



ACOG's Nancy Hawkins and Jessica Arnone unpack blankets destined for deserving senior citizens.

tes, heart disease and COPD. Acceptance of the ACOG’s proposal will allow for three aging services staff to attend a four-day “train the trainer” program offered by the Lt. Governor’s Office on Aging. As a result of the training, the Living Well program will be offered in the Upstate to senior caregivers. The outcomes expected through this pilot will help senior caregivers suffering from chronic diseases increase their ability to live a better quality of life, maintain or improve their health status, and improve their capacity to continue their caregiving responsibilities. The first evidence-based program will be offered in Greenville.

ACOG Aging Staff News

The ACOG Area Agency on Aging is pleased to welcome two new staff mem-



New ACOG Aging staff members (left to right) Siri Taylor and Barbara Jardno

bers. **Barbara Jardno**, is the new Information, Referral and Assistance Specialist, who will also be the lead staff person on the ADRC mobile unit. Ms. Jardno is not new to the ACOG, as she has worked with us as a sub-contractor for Medicare Part D outreach and enrollment.

Siri Taylor, who is the new Ombudsman Program Intake Coordinator, comes to the ACOG from the Santee-Lynches COG where she was a Medicare Part D and Benefits Counselor.

Last but not least, we are proud to announce the birth of a new baby boy to one of our Ombudsman, **Jamie Guay**. "Jayse Guay" was born on February 6, and both mom and baby are doing just fine.

New ADC Loan Officer

The Appalachian Development Corporation (ADC) is pleased to announce the addition of **Carl E. Sakony, Jr.** to its staff as Loan Officer. Carl comes to the ADC with approximately 18 years of lending/underwriting experience with various banks and credit unions in both Ohio and Pennsylvania. Carl says that he is pleased to take on the



Carl Sakony joins the Appalachian Development Corporation as a Loan Officer.

challenge of assisting small businesses in the counties served by the Appalachian Development Corporation (Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Spartanburg, Oconee, and Pickens). Welcome aboard Carl!

(CDBG continued from page 1)

tivity and substantial prior investments, and CDBG funds are needed to complete the necessary infrastructure improvements. The CDBG request cannot exceed 50 percent of the total project costs.

* Planning for regional infrastructure, smart growth or sustainable development plans (subject to a cost reasonableness cap)

Village Renaissance Pilot Program - \$2,000,000 is available to assist in the development of sustainable communities through revitalization of in-town residential neighborhoods. Grants will include mixed use projects that incorporate strategies for commercial revitalization (such as those outlined in the National Main Street Program) and apply them in neighborhoods that are adjacent to downtown or business centers.

Paint the Town Pilot Program - \$1,000,000 is available to make communities more economically competitive by improving the overall physical appearance and stabilizing neighborhood property values. Visual impact will be enhanced by painting and making necessary repairs to fa-

ades and exteriors of at least ten low and moderate income occupied housing units within a single, concentrated neighborhood. Eligible activities include improvements to the exterior only of housing units, including paint and other necessary exterior repairs. Homeowners are required to assist or contribute to improvements to their property. In addition, the use of volunteers or other partners will leverage the impact of this program on the neighborhood.

CDBG funds should not exceed 75 percent of the cost of a project. There must be 25 percent leveraging, unless otherwise approved or specified in the program requirements (i.e., downtown streetscape), which can come from a variety of sources including other, non-Commerce grants, loans, waiver of fees, public or private investments, and documented volunteer or in-kind contributions.

As part of the 25 percent leveraging, the local government is required to provide at least 10 percent match of the total CDBG grant request. CDBG funds may only be used for hard construction and installation costs for low- and moderate-income hook-ups/connections to public water and sewer, and not to pay any water or sewer connection, impact or capacity fees. Any associated fees for low- and moderate-income hook up/connection to public water and sewer must be waived or paid with non-CDBG funds, and may be considered part of the local match requirement. For projects involving housing, homeowners must contribute to the project.

The deadline for requesting an application is:

- **March 17** for Community Infrastructure and Paint the Town programs
- **August 25** for Community Enrichment and Village Renaissance programs

For additional information on the CDBG program, call Dirk Reis or Dan Wagner at the ACOG, or visit <http://www.scommerce.com/teamscpdfs/Grants/CDBGDesc.pdf>.

New and Expanded Aging Services

The Appalachian Area Agency on Aging announced the expansion of



Dedicating ACOG's new ADRC mobile service vehicle: (from left to right) Mr. Curtis Loftis, Mr. Steve Pelissier, Ms. Vickie Williams, Assistant Secretary Josefina Carbonell and Rev. J.W. Sanders.

the **Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)** with a January visit from the U.S. Administration on Aging's Assistant Secretary Josefina Carbonell. The Assistant Secretary toured the pilot ADRCs in Anderson-Oconee at *SENIOR Solutions* with Lt. Governor Andre Bauer, ACOG Director Steve Pelissier, and ACOG Aging Services Director Vickie Williams. Later, the same officials met at *Senior Action* in Greenville to make the official announcement to the media and to show off the new **ADRC mobile unit**, which will be used in the six-county region beginning in March 2008.

Aging and Disability Resource Centers began as a cooperative program between the Administration on Aging and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in 2003. The State of South Carolina was one of twelve original states to be funded, and since that time has initiated ADRCs in five regions of the State; Appalachian, Santee-Lynches, Pee-Dee, Lower Savannah and Trident. The ADRC mobile unit that will be used in the Upstate is considered to be a "best practices" initiative by AOA and CMS and will provide one-stop accessibility to comprehensive information, referral and assistance, benefits counseling, Medicare/Medicaid

programs, private and public benefits/resources/Certified Insurance Counseling and a vast array of programs and services. The ADRC serves individuals 55+, adults with disabilities, caregivers and their families, and individuals and families impacted by Alzheimer's and related diseases.

towns have resolved to *plan for and achieve success*, rather than to simply react and hope that good things come their way. Good government doesn't just happen, and we acknowledge these councils. Contact ACOG's Joe Newton or Donna Kazia for information on ACOG-facilitated planning retreats.

Annual Planning Retreats



ACOG Facilitates Annual Planning Retreat—The Woodruff City Council at a Saturday strategic planning session at ACOG's offices

ACOG facilitated four municipal planning retreats in January and February and has scheduled additional retreats over the next two months. The



The City Council of Mauldin at their semiannual planning session

City Councils of **Easley, Mauldin, Woodruff and Belton** spent Fridays or Saturdays establishing and prioritizing long and short term goals and objectives for their respective communities. The elected officials of these cities and

SCDOT Enhancement Grants Almost in Season



City of Woodruff Downtown Streetscape Project

With the new year upon us, it is time to begin thinking about the **2008 Transportation Enhancement Grant Program**. Administered by the SCDOT, this program is part of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (**TEA-21**). The program funds community improvement projects that have a relationship to transportation, including facilities for pedestrians and bicycles; roadway beautification and landscaping; preservation of abandoned railway corridors; and pedestrian safety and education activities.

Now is the time to start thinking about your projects and getting your plans together. Most recently, the Cities of Blacksburg and Pendleton have used the grants for street, sidewalk, and pedestrian path improvements. An education

(SCDOT continued on page 5)

VIEWPOINT

Appalachian Council of Governments
P. O. Box 6668
Greenville, South Carolina 29606

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
GREENVILLE, SC
PERMIT NO. 1604

Address Service Requested

Development Corporation News

In the January Board meeting of the Appalachian Development Corporation, two program changes to the ADC loan program were presented and approved. Both changes deal with specific loan situations being granted interest rate reductions from the loan program's normal rate.

The Board approved a **one half of one percent interest rate reduction from the previous rate charged under the ADC loan program for loans that create one job for each \$10,000** borrowed under the program. The previous requirement was one job per each \$25,000 borrowed. This will reward companies that create a larger number of jobs and make the program more attractive to the manufacturing sector. The rewarding of a larger job creation factor is in line with the overall focus and primary directive of the loan program, which is local job creation. It is estimated that this change will allow for a rate of approximately 6.00 percent for



Beacon Blankets, Inc., in Westminster is the recipient of two ADC-managed loans.

these types of loans.

The other change involves a **one-half of one percent interest rate reduction on projects that finance environmental-related products or fixed asset improvements**. The reduced-rate funds would have to be used to finance the production of environmental products, purchase and installation of energy-saving equipment, the construction of "certified green" buildings, or renovation of existing buildings involving environmentally related improvements. The final determination of eligibility for this rate will be at the sole discretion of the Board, after staff recommendation. This effort

recognizes the value of conservation of natural resources and energy and should aid in such endeavors. This rate should also fall within the 6.00 percent range.

(SCDOT continued from page 4)

program has been established by SCDOT to provide communities with the information necessary to apply for up to \$200,000 toward eligible transportation activities. A series of workshops are scheduled in which representatives from SCDOT will distribute brochures and answer questions regarding the grant program. **The workshop for the Appalachian region will be held March 19th** at the offices of the Appalachian Council of Governments.

Look for more updates on the enhancement grants workshop on the Appalachian Council of Governments website at www.scacog.org. For more information concerning the Transportation Enhancement Program, contact Phillip Lemmon, Jr. at the Appalachian COG at 864.242.9733, Cathy Rice with the SCDOT at 803.737.1953, or visit the SCDOT website at <http://www.dot.state.sc.us/community/tep.html>.