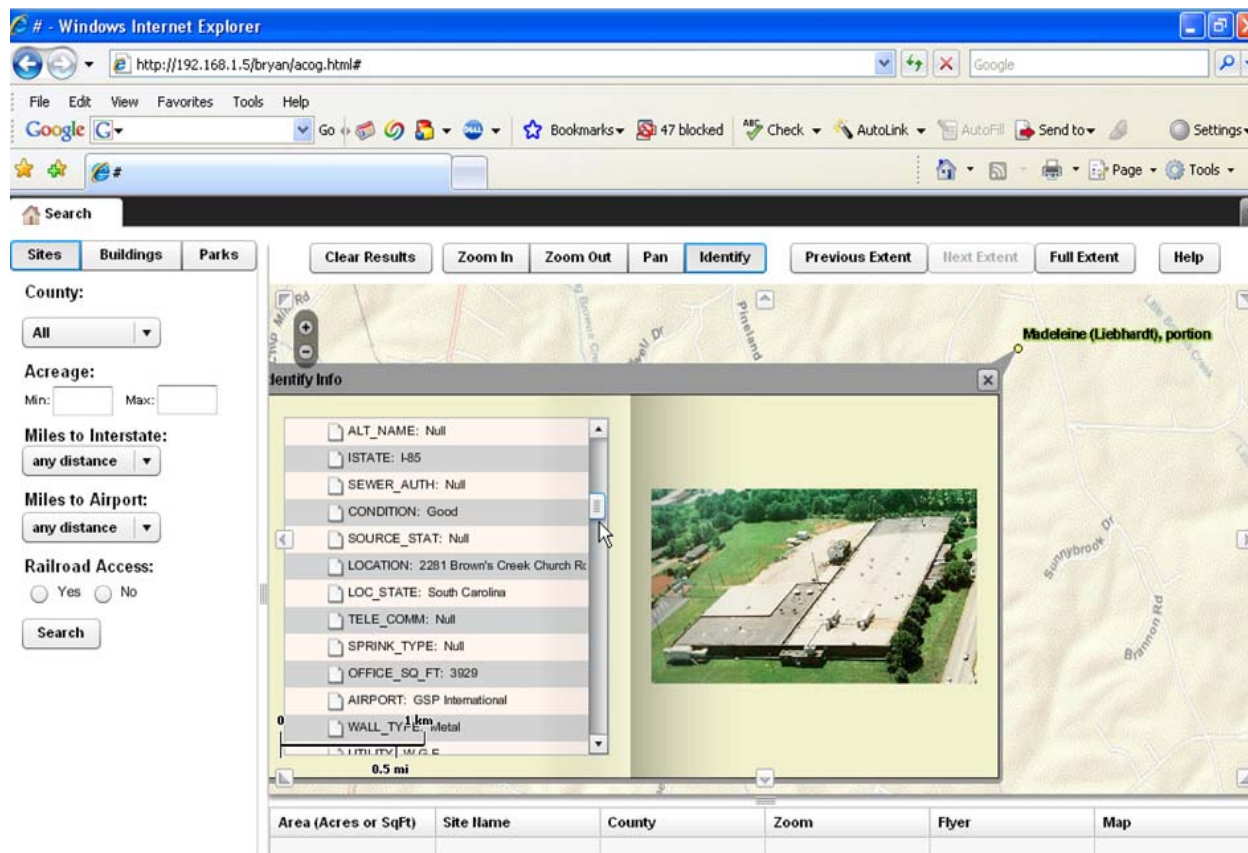




Human Resource Training. ACOG recently sponsored a class on COBRA law for municipal and county human resource personnel. ACOG provides training in a number of personnel and management areas.



Economic Development. ACOG develops economic development software and trains Upstate officials in the use of these valuable tools.



Creating jobs in the Upstate. ACOG's Information Services Department recently partnered with the Upstate Alliance and Duke Energy's AdvanceSC program to develop a state-of-the-art online property search and mapping tool.

**SC Appalachian Council of Governments,
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Appalachian Council of Governments Semiannual Report , January - June 2009

The following are just a few of the projects and services provided by the Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG) for the municipalities, counties and citizens of the Upstate of South Carolina. For more complete information, visit ACOG's website at www.scacog.org, and read ACOG's bimonthly newsletter *Viewpoint*. Contact ACOG offices at 864-242-9733.



Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). The six counties of the Upstate of South Carolina are very fortunate to be included in the jurisdiction of the federal ARC. Our six counties are eligible for inclusion in special training programs, grants and other valuable services.

GRANTS

ACOG makes a significant impact in the Upstate through funding for improved infrastructure and economic development programs

The Grants Services staff worked on the administrative activities for numerous Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) for infrastructure projects throughout the region, including grants awarded to the cities of Seneca, Pickens, Wellford and Central for sewer system improvements. Other CDBG-funded infrastructure projects include water system improvements or extensions in Cherokee County, Blacksburg, Pendleton, and Anderson County/Starr-Iva Water District. In addition, CDBG projects for which administrative services are being provided include the Tri-County Telecommunications Master Plan for Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties, Tri-County Technical College's QuickJobs Development Centers in Oconee and Pickens counties, the demolition and clearance of abandoned/dilapidated buildings in Blacksburg and Westminster, and the construction of two fire truck bays in Liberty. Administrative activities include environmental reviews, procurement of engineering and/or construction services, compliance with Davis-Bacon and related construction labor acts, drawdown of funds, public hearings, and close-out. These projects will enhance the lives of the area's residents and promote economic development activities.

The Grant Services Department worked closely with four local governments to submit applications to the State Department of Commerce for CDBG funding. These projects include the extension of water lines to the Bear Creek community in Cherokee County, the third phase of a sewer upgrade project in the Utica Mill village in Oconee County/Seneca, the upgrade of sewer lines in the Azalea community in Liberty, and energy conservation measures for several public buildings in Pickens.

Seven applications for ARC funds were submitted to the SC Department of Commerce this period. They include the Pickens County-18 Mile Creek Sewer Extension project, a water transmission system upgrade for the Anderson Regional Joint Water System, a water line extension for Pioneer Rural Water District, a water treatment plant upgrade for the City of Pickens, the Clemson/Pendleton Waster Treatment Plant upgrade project, the Goodwill Industries Three-Month Education and Training Program, and construction of a 2-mile section of the Swamp Rabbit Trail for the Greenville County Recreation District.

The Grant Services staff continues to work with Anderson County and the City of Belton to undertake activities related to the HUD-funded HOME Consortium.





2009 Salem Town Council Retreat. ACOG has facilitated eight council retreats and board orientations so far this year.

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

ACOG provides assistance to local governments so that they can better serve their citizens

The Appalachian Council of Governments provides extensive technical assistance and public administration to governments and communities in the six-county service area of Anderson, Cherokee, Oconee, Pickens, Spartanburg, and Greenville Counties. The Council's objective is to assist our local governments in their efforts to increase and improve public services, to improve opportunities for economic development, and to improve the overall health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the six-county ACOG region.

Local governments have always counted on ACOG for advice and support. In the last six-month period ACOG's Governmental Services Department received over 500 requests for information, advice and hands-on assistance. ACOG assisted the City of Woodruff with the recruitment and selection of a new city manager. ACOG finalized study to conduct a three-county (Anderson-Oconee-Pickens) wireless telecommunications study and has been working with county representatives to oversee the study. ACOG has conducted a review of the Spartanburg County Library System's proposed new facilities and has made recommendations to improve efficiency and save tax dollars. ACOG works with small jurisdictions on a daily basis providing expertise and services that they could not otherwise afford.

In the last six months, staff conducted strategic planning retreats and goal-setting sessions for the town councils of several Upstate municipalities, including Pacolet, Woodruff, Williamston, Belton, Fountain Inn, Mauldin, Easley and Salem, as well as a number of fire districts. ACOG-facilitated retreats focus on the development and prioritization of both long term and short term council goals and objectives.

ACOG hosted remote live-transmission training sessions for municipal council members, in cooperation with the S.C. Municipal Association and S.C. Educational Television. Sessions have included land use planning, public information, budgeting, housing and building codes and other technical topics. Two different Distance Learning sessions were held over the last six months instructing new and veteran council members from over a dozen different municipalities on the basics of local government.

ACOG offers a seven-week basic management/supervisory training programs for first-time supervisors. ACOG provided training to employees of the cities, counties and local special purpose districts on sexual harassment, customer service and communication techniques.

ACOG staff provided information and technical assistance to a number of jurisdictions on personnel and wage-related issues under the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

PLANNING

Upstate communities receive help and guidance to ensure healthy growth

In the first half of 2009, the ACOG has provided technical assistance on planning matters to communities throughout the region including Pendleton, Belton, Honea Path, Walhalla, Westminster, Easley, Central, Pickens, Mauldin, Travelers Rest, Chesnee, Cowpens, Duncan, Inman, Landrum, Pacolet, and Woodruff.



Telecommunications Grant. ACOG facilitated a multi-county broadband telecommunications study. The three target counties can now use the study as a basis for additional projects and federal funding.

Job Fair

The Job Fair held April 28, 2009 at the Fusion Warehouse was a resounding success, with more than 1,800 participants coming through the doors seeking employment and training opportunities. Job seekers from all ages – sixteen to retirees – visited the 58 booths that included service providers, industry, staffing agencies, hospitals, home care services, trucking firms, insurance and many others. Ten jobs were offered the day of the event, with 100-200 anticipated over the next three to six months based on exit surveys.

Youth Forum

On June 24, 2009, WorkLink and the United Way of Anderson County hosted a Youth Forum at Anderson Civic Center. The forum for educators and community service providers featured a "Train the Trainer" series, where community experts provided insights into effectively interacting with and training school-age youth. Jose Garcia, president and CEO of B2E-Mobile Financial Services, gave a lecture on "Optimizing the Relationships between Business and Education." Greg Linke, director of program development for the Youth Learning Institute at Clemson University, answered the question "Millennials: Who are these Kids?" Keynote speaker, Ruby Payne, Ph.D., presented a seminar based on her book, *Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities*. In total, the sessions offered lessons in communicating with children and adults in poverty, speaking the language of another generation, and helping students become more competitive in the job market.

Summer Youth Employment Program

Youth in Anderson, Oconee and Pickens counties went to work this summer through the Summer Youth Employment Program, sponsored by WorkLink. The program, funded through the American Recovery Reinvestment Act and grants from the South Carolina Department of Education, runs four- to six-weeks with extended work experience in some areas. Palmetto Youth Connections is managing the out-of-school youth programs, which target ages 17-24. The in-school program targets youth ages 14-18 and is managed by the individual school districts. Students worked in the school systems, performing clerical or custodial duties that ready the school for the next school year. Other participants carried out beautification projects and road maintenance, worked in local thrift stores, or learned to grow a garden. As youth complete projects, they have the opportunity to earn recovery credits and gain work-readiness skills and work experience. The rewards included paychecks that participants have added to their savings or use to purchase back-to-school items such as clothing, supplies, and computers. They also contributed to their family income.



Workforce Development Alliance Symposium

More than 85 public and private professionals gathered for the inaugural Workforce Development Alliance Breakfast held April 16 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Anderson. Panelists discussed their organizations and how they impact economic and workforce development in the region. Specific topics included collaboration among area businesses and government to improve the workforce and job seekers' training and job opportunities as well as an overview of the economic development and workforce development services available in the region. Elisabeth Kovacs from the South Carolina Department of Commerce served as the keynote speaker. The panel of six included Bobby Brothers, ReadySC; Brad Neese, Apprenticeship Carolina™; and representatives from several partners of the Alliance, including Stephen Marshall, South Carolina Employment Security Commission; Richard Gaines, Adult Education, Anderson District 3,4 and 5; John Lummus, Tri-County Technical College; and Jimmy Pennell, WorkLink. The Economic Development Offices for Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens Counties and the Anderson Chamber of Commerce also partner with the Alliance, and WorkLink looks forward to hosting events such as this throughout the year.



TECHNICAL SUPPORT:

IS staff worked closely with Oconee County IT staff to provide extensive technical support and expertise for Geographic Information System (GIS) and related projects throughout the county. Projects included comprehensive updates to the official Oconee County map, backups and maintenance for GIS data and the central geodatabase. Staff also provided GIS user support and training as needed. The ACOG/county team is currently preparing for a major upgrade to the central GIS database.

GIS TRAINING:

ACOG offers regular, and inexpensive, training in the use of Geographic Information systems. Course descriptions can be found online at <http://training.esri.com>. To schedule a class or to obtain

Business Research Tools. ACOG staff recently trained Upstate employees in the use of *InfoMentum*, a high-tech research tool designed to help economic developers bring jobs to the region.

additional information regarding a course, please contact Authorized ESRI Instructor Amy Wright Webber webber@scacog.org.

APPALACHIAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

ADC plays a vital role in Upstate small business start-up and expansion

Public inquiries regarding loans continued to be strong during the first six months of the year, but loan volume has experienced a significant decline from the levels of 2008. This is primarily a result of the tightening of credit by banks and the slow down in the economy. The ADC, however, did approve a total loan volume for the period of \$4,595,000. This figure is comprised of SBA 504 loan volume of \$208,000, of ADC's ALF loan volume of \$1,046,250, and the USDA Rural Development's Business & Industry (B&I) loan volume of \$3,340,750. The loan figure of approximately \$4.6 million represents eleven loans approved for the period.

Also during the six month period, the ADC added Mr. Ron Smith, as the Loan Servicing Manager. As the Loan Servicing Manager, Mr. Smith will primarily be handling collection efforts; as well as, other loan serving requirements as needed.



2009 Anderson Spring Job Fair. WorkLink's primary mission is to bring employers and workers together. WorkLink serves Anderson, Oconee and Pickens counties.

WORKFORCE/ EMPLOYMENT

Resources to help Upstate job seekers gain employment

One-Stop Centers

The three WorkLink One-Stop Centers served 48,199 individuals last year. From January 1, 2009 through June 30, 2009, 85,095 individuals visited the One-Stops for services such as job search, resume preparation, labor market information and workshops. In addition, 1,713 adults, 826 dislocated workers, and 251 youth received services using Workforce Investment Act Funds.

Issues addressed have ranged from updating zoning maps to developing new ordinances, to assisting with administrative issues.

ACOG staff has helped develop several plans and ordinances for communities. Staff worked on developing a new junk yard ordinance for Cherokee County as well as new road warranty standards. They also worked with towns of Honea Path and Woodruff on updates of their Comprehensive Plans and Zoning Ordinances. The Town of Pacolet also enlisted the services of the Planning Department to complete their new Zoning Ordinance which uses a new approach called "form-based code". Other local planning initiatives include providing on-going planning administration services to the Cherokee County Planning Commission and Board of Appeals. ACOG staff also provided planning education training for 73 planning officials and committee members in the first half of 2009.



Planning Education. SC law requires that members of planning commissions and boards of zoning appeal must complete technical training. ACOG provided expert instruction for 73 planning officials in the first six months of 2009.

Staff also prepared the Annual Action Plan for the Anderson HOME Consortium, a partnership between the City of Anderson, Anderson County, and City of Belton as well as prepared the Analysis of Impediments for Anderson County. This effort will bring \$564,000 this year to assist with community development efforts in those communities. Staff continues to assist the Anderson HOME Consortium with their housing rehabilitation program in the County and City of Belton. ACOG staff oversees the application and selection process as well as coordinate the housing rehabilitation projects once selected.

ACOG staff continued to work with our Counties on several transportation planning projects. Staff, in their new role as the Regional Transit Coordinator efforts, solicited and processed applications for federal Transit Funds that are part of the 5310, 5316, and 5317 transit grant programs. Additionally, ACOG staff worked with SCDOT and our member counties to identify transportation projects that would be eligible for ARRA funding. ACOG also serves on the GPATS and SPATS Technical and Policy Committees and provides staff support to the Pickens County Transportation Planning Committee.

The ACOG developed Community Needs Assessments for Oconee County, Cherokee County, and the Town of Liberty and City of Seneca. The needs assessments support applications for Community Block Grant (CDBG) funds for community improvements for water and sewer infrastructure improvements. During the first six months of 2008 ACOG staff reviewed 148 208 Water Quality permits for conformance with the Appalachian Regional Water Quality Plan. Staff also participated in a regional visioning process, Reality Check, that was held in Greenville in April and involved the 10 County upstate region.

AGING/SENIOR SERVICES

Upstate seniors rely upon ACOG for support and services

In the first half of 2009, the Area Agency on Aging/Aging and Disability and Resource Center has focused a great deal of effort on the "Digital TV: Keeping Seniors Connected" campaign. Targeting the Greenville area, in conjunction with Senior Action, ACOG:

- Provided outreach and education to over 4800 individuals
- Provided 2069 individual contacts to determine if individuals needed a converter box
- Assisted 107 individuals with getting a converter box
- Assisted 732 individuals with converter box installation and/or troubleshooting

In conjunction with the SC Healthy Connections Choices outreach efforts, often utilizing the ADRC mobile unit, over 2,267 Medicaid beneficiaries and caregivers have been reached through outreach or educational presentations.



Through the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, 1300 individuals in Greenville and Spartanburg Counties received vouchers valued at \$25 each to purchase South Carolina fruits and vegetables from local farmers. This program is a joint venture of SC DSS and SC Department of Agriculture, intended to not only help with nutrition for older adults but to also help local farmers.

The planning phase of the CMS Person Centered Discharge Planning Grant (PCDP) is underway. The current efforts for the grant have been focused on the PROCESS of discharge planning. The team has been reviewing studies and demonstrations from other hospitals and institutions from all over the world. Best practices in the industry utilizing standards from various accreditation tools and individual hospitals are being examined. The PCDP grant is also exploring the Assisted Ride program that is being developed in the Santee-Lynches region. This is strictly a volunteer-based transportation service. The Office on Aging will be

Seniors and Disabled. One of ACOG's most recent initiatives is a program to help keep seniors and disabled persons from returning to the hospital once they have been discharged.

submitting the grant application to DOT in July with the Appalachia and Santee Lynches regions as partners. The transportation project will be piloted in Spartanburg County.

Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) staff have responded to 886 calls for information and assistance; worked with 435 seniors on issues related to insurance, Medicare Part D, and Medicare fraud; financially assisted 538 caregivers of seniors; responded to 421 intakes related to complaints of abuse, neglect or financial exploitation against vulnerable adults residing in long term care facilities; made 20 presentations to facility staff and family/resident councils; and made 80 friendly visits by volunteers and staff.



Senior Volunteers. ACOG is involved in many different programs involving the health, safety and welfare of our seniors. Many of those programs rely upon talented and caring volunteers.

Through contracted ACOG Aging funds, regional aging service providers have assisted 4,455 senior adults in the region. Services provided included the provision of:

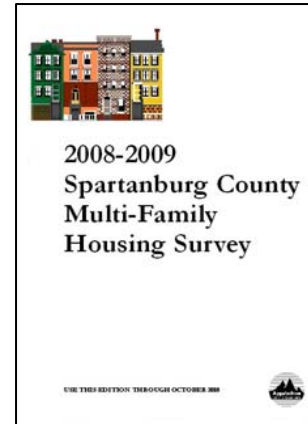
- 346,946 miles of transportation
- 60,282 group dining meals
- 61,717 home delivered meals
- 6,566 hours of health promotion/disease prevention classes
- 7,403 hours of in-home chore and housekeeping activities
- 2,141 hours of care management
- 5,140 hours of adult day care
- 796 hours of legal assistance.

Information Systems/ Economic Development:

ACOG provides economic developers with tools for bringing new jobs to the region

In partnership with the Upstate Alliance, ACOG launched Property Navigator, a cutting-edge web mapping tool to powerfully market the Upstate to site consultants and businesses considering locations in the area. The Property Navigator combines satellite imagery, available industrial property information, local demographic data and a unique ability to manipulate maps according to a visitor's particular site needs. From sketching out a building site to measuring the number of college-educated workers within thirty minutes of a site, the Property Navigator equips site consultants to understand the benefits of doing business in Upstate South Carolina without ever setting foot in the region. The project cost more than \$290,000, with two-thirds of the funding coming from a grant from Duke Energy's AdvanceSC program. The remainder of the development funding was obtained through the ACOG and the Upstate SC Alliance. ACOG played a central part in project design, technical development, web site and data hosting, and will provide ongoing support through database maintenance and tool innovations. Phase II application development of Property Navigator is currently underway.

Staff from ACOG's Information Services and Planning departments assisted extensively with research, planning, and implementation for the Upstate Reality Check regional planning exercise held in April 2009. Reality Check is a collaborative regional visioning process, developed and supported by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) and sponsored in the Upstate by Upstate Together and ULI South Carolina. Over 400 leaders from the ten upstate counties met to begin building consensus about how they want the region to look in 2030 and how they can work together to manage the opportunities and challenges of growth. ACOG staff designed and created the table-sized maps that formed the centerpiece of the planning exercise. The



maps show population density and important economic and cultural landmarks for each county in the context of the 10-county Upstate region for the purpose of long-range planning.

ACOG staff provided data and application updates for *InfoMentum* and *InfoMap*, a decision support system for the Upstate. *InfoMap* is the on-line, interactive mapping application linked to each county economic development website, showcasing the available industrial properties and offering a wealth of information about population, labor market, and economic climate. We provided technical support, training, and custom research assistance to research personnel from each county economic development office, and the Upstate Alliance. Custom projects included detailed research for industrial prospect proposals, a population density map covering a 3-state area, and compilation of data to assist the Upstate Alliance in developing a new marketing strategy for the region.

DATA SERVICES:

ACOG provides research, data and technical publications to member governments

ACOG responded to 438 requests for statistical information and map data for the region. Examples of our diverse services include:

Compilation of historical census data for Anderson County's Southside Water District.

Assisting the Greenville Technical College grants coordinator with research related to daily vehicle traffic in the vicinity of GTC's main campus.

Producing statewide thematic maps for the Children's Trust for use in the *SC Nurse Family Partnership - Leaders Collaborating to Help First Time S.C. Parents Succeed* Feasibility Study, a state-wide study for sustaining and expanding Nurse Family Partnership in South Carolina.

Compiling population migration statistics for the United Way of Pickens County.

Compilation of comprehensive socioeconomic data and maps to assist the Greenville County United Way in a needs assessment for 26 "special emphasis neighborhoods". The information compiled for each of these neighborhoods included current and projected population figures, broken down by a number of characteristics, such as race, age and educational attainment. The reports also provided statistics related to household income, housing units, teen pregnancies and unemployment.

Copies ACOG publications are available at ACOG and online at www.scacog.org.



Technical Assistance to Oconee County. ACOG staff provided extensive technical support and expertise on several Geographic Information System (GIS) projects.