



Appalachian Council of Governments January – June 2010, Six-Month Highlights

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.

GRANTS

ACOG makes a significant impact in the Upstate through better housing and improved infrastructure



Central Town Hall. Infrastructure grants benefit municipalities in the region including Central in Pickens County.

Grants Services staff provided administrative activities for numerous Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) for infrastructure projects throughout the region, including grants awarded to the cities of Seneca and Central for sewer system improvements and grants for water system improvements or extensions in Cherokee County, Blacksburg, and Pendleton.

In addition, administrative services are being provided to 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, the construction of two fire truck bays in Liberty, a streetscape project in Chesnee, and an energy efficiency project in the City of Pickens. 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.

In the last six months, four new CDBG grants were approved. The Grant Services Department worked closely with local governments to submit these project applications to the State Department of Commerce. These projects include the extension of water lines to the Norman Boulevard community in Cherokee County and the Oak Grove Community in Blacksburg, the upgrade of water and sewer lines in the Chicopee Mill village in Walhalla, and the upgrade of sewer lines in the Watkins/Head Street area in Central.

Three applications for ARC funds were submitted to the SC Department of Commerce and the Appalachian Regional Commission this period. Pickens County's Powdersville Road Turn Lane Project has been approved. Still pending are projects to extend water lines along Highway 5 in Blacksburg, and a parallel water transmission line for the Easley Combined Utility system.

Work continues with the State Energy Office and the eight local governments that received *Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant* (EECBG) funds. The Grant Services staff also continues activities related to the HUD-funded HOME Consortium in Anderson County and the City of Belton.



GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION

ACOG guides local governments to better serve their citizens.



Williamston Town Council Retreat.
ACOG facilitates a number of retreats for local municipalities.

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 works with large and small jurisdictions on a daily basis providing expertise and services that they might not otherwise afford.

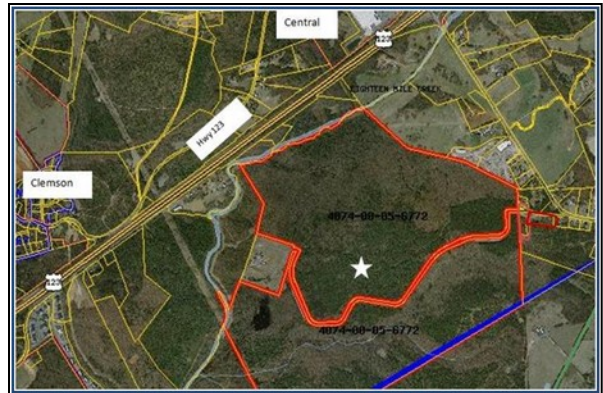
In June, ACOG conducted a bidding process for the sale of land owned jointly by Anderson, Oconee and Pickens Counties. The land was purchased in the mid 1990's for a landfill project that never came to fruition. ACOG coordinated the advertising, the bid process and much of the interaction between the counties to successfully sell the property and conclude a 17 year-old project.

Each year staff conducts strategic planning retreats and goal-setting sessions for municipal councils and special purpose districts. Retreats were recently facilitated for the City Councils of Mauldin, Easley, Williamston, and Pacolet. Additional retreats are scheduled over the next few months. 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 more than a dozen different municipalities on the basics of local government.

ACOG facilitated a seven-week basic management/supervisory training program for more than 30 first-time supervisors. ACOG also 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).



Sale of property owned by Anderson, Oconee and Pickens Counties. ACOG facilitated the sale of property jointly owned by the three counties.

PLANNING

Upstate communities receive help and guidance to ensure healthy growth.

In the first half of 2010, the ACOG's planning department provided technical assistance to communities including Belton, Honea Path, Westminster, Easley, Central, Pickens, Mauldin, Travelers Rest, Gaffney, Reidville, Inman, Lyman, Landrum, Pacolet, and Woodruff. Assistance addressed issues ranging from revising road standards to assisting with administrative issues.



Cherokee County Administration Building.
ACOG staff provides planning and zoning assistance to throughout the six county region.

ACOG staff continues to assist in the development of plans and ordinances for several communities. Staff worked on creating new road standards for the land development ordinance for Cherokee County. The Town of Honea Path Zoning Ordinance was completed, while the Honea Path Comprehensive Plan continues. Other ongoing projects include updates to the Woodruff Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance, administrative services to the Cherokee County Planning Commission and Board of Appeals and updating elements of the City of Gaffney's Comprehensive Plan. ACOG staff also provided planning education training for 164 planning officials and committee members in the first half of 2010.

Staff prepared the Annual Action Plan for the Anderson HOME Consortium, a partnership between the City of Anderson, Anderson County, and City of Belton, and prepared the Analysis of Impediments for Anderson County. This effort will bring \$623,431 in the coming year to assist with community development efforts in these areas. Staff also continues to assist the Consortium with their housing rehabilitation program in the County and City of Belton. ACOG staff oversees the application and selection process and coordinates the housing rehabilitation projects, once selected.

ACOG staff continues work with our counties on several transportation planning projects. Staff, in their role as the Regional Transit Coordinator, solicited and processed applications for federal Transit Funds that are part of the 5310, 5316, and 5317 transit grant programs. Additionally, ACOG staff worked to update the Rural TIP document outlining the transportation projects through the year 2015. ACOG also serves on the GPATS and SPATS Technical and Policy Committees and provides staff support to the Pickens County Transportation Planning Committee.

Community Needs Assessments for Oconee County, Cherokee County, and the municipalities of Blacksburg, Walhalla, and Seneca were completed by staff. These 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 2010, ACOG staff reviewed 37, "208" Water Quality permits for conformance with the Appalachian Regional Water Quality Plan. In addition, staff has facilitated work on implementation of wasteload allocations among wastewater treatment providers in both the Saluda and Reedy River basins. Each effort involves working with sewer providers, local governments, and SCDHEC to agree on the total amount of phosphorus that can be discharged into each river. Subsequently, staff works to reach an agreement between all dischargers as to how that phosphorus allocation will be shared in the future.

Planning staff is also participating with Ten at the Top in a regional visioning process. They continue to serve on committees supporting the Powdersville Highway 153 Corridor Planning project, regional air quality concerns, and regional transportation modeling efforts being led by SCDOT.

AGING/SENIOR SERVICES

Upstate seniors rely upon ACOG for support and services



The Appalachia Aging and Disability Resource Center staff has been working since early December to develop a website to serve as a tool for seniors, caregivers, families, and aging professionals. This website is the first of its kind in South Carolina.

Beginning in December 2009, the website was developed in several phases. The development committee, consisting of ADRC staff members, began by designing the initial flow of the website. The design is compliant with section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, making it accessible to people with disabilities. The site features an “apply for assistance” section that lists assistance programs, eligibility requirements, application instructions, and downloadable forms. The website, www.scupstateadrc.org, launched on June 30, 2010.

The Lt. Governor’s Office on Aging held Senior Day on May 4, 2010 at the State House in conjunction with the annual Aging Awards. Sandy Wroblewski, from Spartanburg, received the regional award for Volunteer Service. Nancy Eaker, also of Spartanburg, received the regional award for Outstanding Older South Carolinian. *All About Seniors*, a comprehensive resource information for older adults and caregivers, was recognized in the Media category.

In the first half of 2010, the Area Agency on Aging/Aging and Disability Resource Center heightened outreach efforts to target individuals who may qualify for assistance with the Medicare Drug Program and Medicare Savings Programs. Over 4554 beneficiaries and caregivers were contacted through outreach presentations, including events that incorporated the ADRC mobile unit. Additionally, 143 LIS (low income subsidy) applications for the Medicare Drug program were completed and 95 Medicare Savings Program applications submitted.

The Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, a joint venture of SC Department of Social Services and SC Department of Agriculture, helps improve nutrition for older adults. Approximately, 1300 individuals in Greenville and Spartanburg counties received \$25 vouchers to purchase fruits and vegetables from local farmers – a value of \$32,500.

ADRC staff responded to 2,977 calls for information and assistance; worked with 828 seniors on issues related to insurance, Medicare Part D, and Medicare fraud; assisted 267 caregivers; responded to 524 complaints related to abuse, neglect or financial exploitation against vulnerable adults residing in long term care facilities; made 64 presentations to facility staff and family/resident councils; and made 57 friendly visits by volunteers and staff.

During the last six months, through contracted ACOG aging funds, regional aging service providers have provided:

- 522,955 miles of transportation
- 166,341 group dining and home delivered meals
- 6,856 hours of health promotion/disease prevention classes
- 11,791 hours of in-home chore and housekeeping activities
- 4,970 hours of adult day care
- 1,460 hours of legal assistance.



Information Systems/ Economic Development:

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

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Property Navigator, the innovative online economic development tool for the Upstate, won national accolades this summer! The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) selected Property Navigator for a 2010 Innovation Award. NADO is a Washington, DC-based association that promotes programs and policies that strengthen local governments, communities and economies through regional cooperation, program delivery and comprehensive strategies. The association's Innovation Awards program recognizes regional development organizations and partnering organizations for improving the economic and community competitiveness of our nation's regions and local communities.



ACOG's **Amy Wright Webber** and **Jeremy Owens**, from GST Consulting, received the Special Achievement in GIS Award from ESRI president Jack Dangermond at the International ESRI User Conference in July, 2010.

Property Navigator was also recognized for exceptional application of GIS technology with a prestigious Special Achievement in GIS (SAG) Award from ESRI, a world leader in GIS software. This project was among only 150 chosen out of 100,000 client projects worldwide.

Property Navigator is a cutting-edge, interactive web mapping application and a dynamic regional database that provides decision support tools for economic development in Upstate South Carolina. *Property Navigator* combines satellite imagery, custom property information, local demographic data and map manipulation tools according to a visitor's unique needs.

Although ACOG staff developed the initial application for the Upstate SC Alliance, we are now integrating the state-of-the-art mapping and data technology from *Property Navigator* into the *InfoMap2* websites for each ACOG county so that they can provide a broader range of web based tools to address the need for faster access to more detailed databases and in-depth analysis. Anderson and Cherokee Counties already offer the improved InfoMap2 web tool to the

public. Greenville, Oconee, Spartanburg, and Pickens will come online in early autumn with websites customized with their own logos and maps. Staff also launched "Property Prospector", the online economic development tool for the City of Greenville. Customized for municipal purposes, it is designed to promote industrial, retail, restaurant, and office properties within the City of Greenville.

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.



DATA SERVICES:

Over the past 6 months, Information Services staff responded to 344 requests for statistical information and map data for the region. Examples of our diverse services include:

- Prepared demographic reports for the Liberty Fire Department and the Lake Cunningham Fire Department and adjoining fire districts.
- Assisted Mary Black Hospital in its community outreach efforts by compiling a list of companies, organized by size and zip code, within the hospital's service area.
- Compiled census information on selected Greenville County Schools for the Alliance for Quality Education.
- Assisted the Gaffney Board of Public Works in preparing its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report by providing current statistics on public school enrollment and a historical major employer list for Cherokee County.

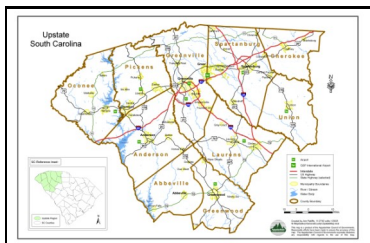


TECHNICAL SUPPORT:

ACOG IS staff worked closely with Oconee County IT staff to provide Geographic Information System (GIS) system and database support. Technical support has been provided for other related projects throughout the county that connect to the GIS system. An estimated 90% or more of local government data is geographic in nature. Extensive efforts are underway to spatially enable multiple data sets within Oconee County. Recent projects include: development of an initial public GIS viewer, with interactive access to parcel data and detailed aerial photography to provide immediate data access; collection of user input to start development of a completely new public geographic data viewer; collaboration with Oconee staff to push new addresses and streets from the GIS

to the NewWorld 911 system; and assistance with a grant application which aims to significantly expand the availability of Broadband service within Oconee County.

Information Services staff also coordinated with ACOG Aging Services staff to develop and launch www.scupstateadrc.org, an online extension of the many services offered through the Upstate Aging and Disability Resource Center. The new website will provide valuable information and tools for aging and disabled citizens, their caregivers, and services providers.



Staff provided expertise and data to support the efforts of Ten At The Top (TATT), the regional consortium working to create a common vision for future development and quality of life in the Upstate. Staff helped to develop a regional public survey in May to get input from residents on how they would like to see the region grow. More than 6000 people from all walks of life answered questions concerning growth, land use, economic vitality, natural and cultural resources, education and quality of life. TATT will use this important feedback to create an initial vision statement and vision principles. Residents will then have

an additional opportunity to help shape the vision through participation in a number of community forums to be conducted in the fall.

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 and ADC's ALF loan volume has experienced an increase from levels of the same six-month period for 2009. The ADC has approved \$1,540,350 in ALF loan for the six months ended June 2010, which is an increase of \$455,100 over the same period last year. This has been accomplished in spite of a continuing tight commercial bank credit situation. While there seems to be a general improving of banks' willingness to lend, current commercial lending is viewing credits under a much stricter criteria than before recent problems and this is expected to continue into the foreseeable future.

Also during the six month period, the ADC added Ms. Nancy Childress, as the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Treasurer. Her duties include responsibility for all financial accounting and reporting of the organization.



Ms. Nancy Childress



WORKFORCE/ EMPLOYMENT

Resources to help Upstate job seekers gain employment.

WorkLink Recognized as Local Board of the Year

WorkLink Workforce Investment Board earned the Joe A. Young Outstanding Local Workforce Investment Board Award for South Carolina. Each year, the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) honors outstanding volunteers, participants, local boards, and training providers during the South Carolina Workforce Development Partnership Symposium. The award ceremony was held Tuesday, January 26, 2010, in Myrtle Beach. The Joe A. Young Award is granted to one of 12 Local Workforce Investment Boards in the state. In addition, local board member, Kristi King-Brock, executive director of Anderson Interfaith Ministries, was named to the State Workforce Investment Board by Governor Mark Sanford.

OneStop Workforce Centers Help Job Seekers

A total of 7,882 job seekers in Anderson, Oconee and Pickens Counties entered employment as a result of the services provided by the OneStop Workforce Centers from July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2010. That total is more than double the number of individuals that entered employment in the previous program year, according to OneStop Usage Reports.

The three area OneStops received 216,547 customer visits in the past year, with 37,193 customers seeking services. Basic job search services were accessed by 212,926 customers. More than 18,983 individuals took advantage of



WorkLink is the Outstanding Local Workforce Investment Board.

activities offered at the OneStop Workforce Centers, including orientation and workshops, which were offered 2,630 times. Workshops focus on resume writing, basic computer skills, job applications and interviews, and networking, as well as specific topics such as “How to Survive a Lay-Off” and “How to Make Ends Meet.” The workshop schedule is available online at <http://www.worklinkweb.com/calendar.php>.

In addition to helping job seekers, the OneStop Workforce Centers provide employer services, including recruitment, screening, on-site interviewing, and training reimbursement programs. During the past program year, the OneStops received 3,054 employer job openings and filled 3,796 job openings. Staff completed 2,821 job development contacts and placed 147 job seekers into On-the-Job Training with area employers.

Job Seekers Connect to Local Jobs and Resources

WorkLink Workforce Investment Board hosted the Tri-County Community Job Fair on Tuesday, April 20, 2010, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Shaver Recreation Complex in Seneca. Forty-five companies exhibited at the event, including manufacturers, healthcare and homecare representatives, service industry representatives, work from home companies, and staffing agencies. Area colleges and service providers also set up booths where job seekers could explore training options and other opportunities.



Employers estimate hiring at least 89 Job Fair participants in the next year, according to exit surveys. The exhibitors accepted more than 450 resumes and interviewed 158 job seekers during the event. More than 575 job seekers participated in the 2010 Tri-County Community Job Fair. The Job Fair offered application and interview areas. OneStop On-the-Go also provided laptop computers, connected to the Internet and a printer, so job seekers could explore opportunities online or work on their resumes. Staff and volunteers helped job seekers navigate the Job Fair and complete applications.



The Services Fair was held May 22, 2010, from 9:30 a.m. to noon at Tri-County Technical College's Student Center on the Pendleton Campus. The event offered a one-stop for public services, which included help finding a job, housing, medical care, or food for their families.

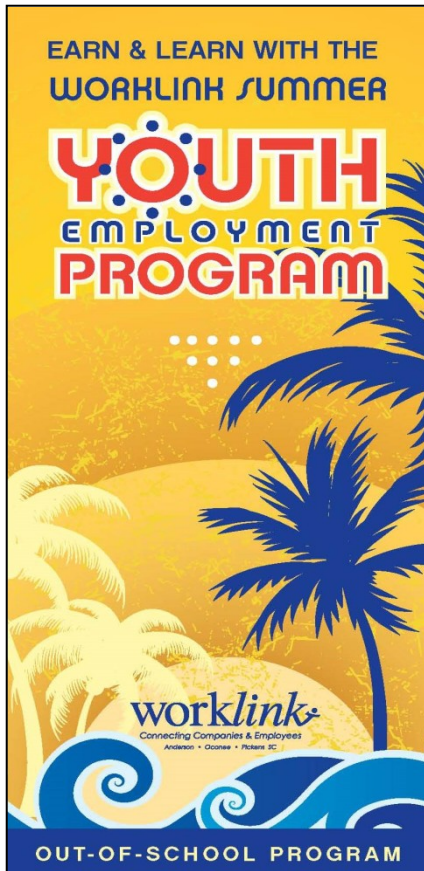
Access Points Offer Online Resources

WorkLink Workforce Investment Board has established Access Points for job search services at local libraries, adult education centers, United Way and other community centers. As part of the Sharing How Access to Resources Empowers (SHARE) Network, these Access Points offer access to a computer, through which job seekers will find online links to the several of the core services or job seeker services available at OneStop Workforce Centers in Anderson, Oconee and Pickens Counties. Online resources are also accessible from any location at <http://www.worklinkweb.com/access-point/index.php>.



Job seekers accessing the online resources can choose tools related to various stages of their job search, from filing for unemployment insurance to understanding their skills and interests. Tutorials and templates are

available for creating a resume and cover letter, and links help entrepreneurial job seekers explore working from home or starting their own business.



Summer Youth Employment Works for Students

The Summer Youth Employment Program, administered by WorkLink Workforce Investment Board, offers work-readiness/soft skills classes and work experience for in-school and out-of-school youth in Anderson, Oconee and Pickens Counties. In Anderson School District 4, 41 students participated in the 2010 program, and 17 employers signed on as work sites. Several companies hired participants after the summer program ended on July 1. Hamilton Career Center in Oconee County offered an in-school youth program to 26 students through the end of July with farm sites for the work experience component of the program. Palmetto Youth Connections manages the out-of-school youth program for up to 75 youth ages 17-24 through September 2010.

Workforce Partnerships Benefit Businesses

WorkLink joined several local partners to host a Lunch & Learn for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) on March 3, 2010, at Tri-County Technical College and an Industry Appreciation Breakfast on March 25, 2010, at Clemson University's Madren Center.

The TAA Lunch & Learn featured guest speaker Andy Nelms, strategic business manager for the Southeastern Trade Adjustment Assistance Center (SETAAC) at the Georgia Institute of Technology. The Industry Appreciation Breakfast recognized businesses that have taken advantage of training programs and spearheaded innovative training programs through Apprenticeship Carolina™ and the mechatronics curriculum at Tri-County Technical College.

Partners for these events included Anderson County Economic Development,

Oconee County Economic Development Commission, Alliance Pickens, the South Carolina Manufacture Extension Partnership (SCMEP), Tri-County Technical College, and WorkLink. Profit Partners LLC also co-hosted the TAA Lunch & Learn.

In addition, WorkLink joined other local workforce investment boards in South Carolina, the Department of Employment and Workforce, Department of Education, Department of Social Services, and Vocational Rehabilitation, in recognition of the business partnerships that have brought jobs and success to the state. It was the 25th year that the partners have collaborated on the Palmetto Workforce Partnership Awards, and the theme focused on "Greener Pastures for the Palmetto State." Workshops provided information on greening the workplace, business resources, and best practices.



Palmetto Workforce Partnership Awards

The highlight of the event was the award ceremony for small, medium, and large businesses. Local nominees from the Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens area included Bowers Emergency Services; Lakeside Sheet & Structural; The Salvation Army; Upstate Forklift Maintenance, Inc.; Confluence Watersports; Cross Country Home Services; Orian Rugs, Inc.; and Itron.



Follow WorkLink on the Web at www.worklinkweb.com or at <http://twitter.com/WorkLinkWeb> and find us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Worklink/41147335084>.

ACOG WELCOMES GSP DIRECTOR FOR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING



GSP Executive Director
David N. Edwards, Jr., AAE

The ACOG Board welcomed Greenville Spartanburg International Airport Executive Director, David Edwards, to the May 28th meeting. The General Assembly had recently considered legislation to entice new airlines to the state and staff felt he could shed some light on the subject. The invitation became more appropriate as Southwest Airlines made an important announcement. On May 11, 2010, the airline announced its intent to serve the state of South Carolina— without subsidies— through the cities of Charleston (CHS) and Greenville-Spartanburg (GSP) in 2011. Mr. Edwards called the event “a game changing announcement for the future of the Up-state”. He went on to say, “Southwest means lower fares for traveling South Carolinians, a boost for tourism and a shot in the arm for existing businesses.”

The airport hosted 1.2 million enplaning and deplaning travelers in 2009. Also in 2009, Syneva Economics, LLC presented an Economic Impact Analysis of GSP International Airport. The airport supports nearly 3700 directly and impacts 2900 jobs indirectly. GSP generates \$112,014,138 in income and produces nearly \$47 million in tax revenues. Visitors spending created \$26,719,858 in tax revenue.

employees and 86 million passengers.

By all accounts, this accomplishment is attributed to the work of airport staff, industry leaders, community leaders, and elected officials. Several of ACOG’s Board members were involved in this challenging effort.

Southwest Airlines was incorporated in Texas in 1971 with 3 Boeing 737 aircraft serving 3 cities. In 2009, the airline has 541 Boeing 737 providing 3300 flights per day in 69 cities. In 2009 the company reported a net income of \$99 million, 35,000



Who is Southwest Airlines?

- April 2010: *FORTUNE* Magazine ranked #4 among airlines and #12 among all industries as World’s Most Admired Companies.
- March 2010: Diamond Award, at the Air Cargo World awards ceremony,
- November 2009: Best Low Cost/No Frills Airline and named as a finalist for Best Airline based in North America.
- November 2009: InfoWorld 100 Award for its Automated Outbound Messaging (AOM) system.
- November 2009: Zagat’s Best Value—Domestic; Best Consumer Ontime Estimates—Domestic; and Best Luggage Policy—Domestic.
- More than 10 million people subscribe to Southwest’s weekly Click ‘N Save e-mails.
- In the first quarter of 2010, approximately 78 percent of Southwest Customers are checking in online or at a kiosk.
- First airline to establish a home page on the Internet with five Employees on the web site development team.



ACOG BULLETIN BOARD

**Management & Supervisory Training
Classes Available**

Contact Donna Kazia at 242-9733
for complete details .

**Continuing education for planning &
zoning officials & staff coming up !**

Contact Jennifer Vissage at 242- 9733
for more information.

**Plan your council retreat
today!**

Call Olivia Harris at 242-9733.

**ACOG Executive
Board Retreat**
June 11, 2010.





SC Appalachian Council of Governments,
30 Century Circle, Greenville, S.C. 29607,
(864) 242-9733 www.scacog.org