

2023-2027

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Annual Performance Report

October 2024



*Prepared by the SC Appalachian Council of Governments for the Counties of
Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens and Spartanburg*



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Cherokee County Development Board
Greenville Area Development Corporation
Oconee Economic Alliance

One Spartanburg, Inc.
SC Department of Commerce
SC Department of Employment & Workforce
Ten at the Top
Upstate SC Alliance

The Appalachian Council of Governments is very appreciative of the support our agency and communities have received from the US Economic Development Administration (EDA). In 2024, ACOG managed over \$25 million dollars in EDA grant funding for 6 projects in the region that will support economic development for years to come.



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INTRODUCTION

Planning for a **THRIVING,** **RESILIENT** Region

About the SC Appalachian Council of Governments

The SC Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG) is a voluntary organization of local governments in the northwest corner of South Carolina, serving a region which includes the counties of Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens, and Spartanburg, as well as the 42 municipalities therein. Since its formation in 1965, the ACOG has served the dual mission of tackling issues of regional significance and providing services to local governments. Economic and community development, transportation, infrastructure development, resource management, aging services, and workforce development are all issues of regional importance in which ACOG takes an active role. At the local level, the agency's services include general administration, technical assistance, training, planning, grant writing & administration, and information & mapping services.

Background and Purpose of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Partnerships with local, state, and federal agencies are essential to ACOG's success. One such partnership is with the US Economic Development Administration (EDA). As one of more than 500 EDA-designated Economic Development Districts throughout the United States, ACOG is responsible for developing and maintaining a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region. The CEDS serves as a strategic blueprint for economic development and provides a foundation for capacity-building across the region's six counties. In order to maintain eligibility for EDA grants and programs, the CEDS must be rewritten every five years and performance reports must be submitted to EDA annually in the intervening years.

In December 2022, the 2023-2027 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the SC Appalachian Region was approved by the EDA with effective dates of January 1, 2023—December 31, 2027. The 2024 Annual Performance Report will provide an update of economic conditions and evaluate performance measures related to the six economic development priorities established in the 2023-2027 CEDS. The period covered by this report is July 1, 2023—June 30, 2024.

2024 CEDS Advisory Committee

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Mayor Rockey Burgess

Rep. Neal Collins

Mayor Rick Danner

Mike Forrester

Rep. Bryan Lawson

Russell Stall



2024 REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Demographic Profile

The six counties of the SC Appalachian region are home to an estimated 1.4 million residents. This is an increase of 1.7% over 2023. Greenville County remains the most populous with 40% of the region's residents while Spartanburg County experienced the highest year-over-year growth at a rate of 2.7%. The median age of residents in the region decreased slightly to 39.7, just below that of South Carolina at 41 and above the US at 39.3. When examining the region's population by age group, it is very much in line with that of South Carolina and the US; however, the region remains much less diverse than the state and the nation despite some small gains in racial and ethnic minority groups in recent years.

	ACOG Region	South Carolina	United States
Population			
Total	1,402,877	5,391,458	338,440,954
Male	49.4%	49.1%	49.8%
Female	50.6%	50.9%	50.2%
2024-2029 Compound Annual Growth Rate	0.95%	0.86%	0.38%
Age			
Under 18 Years	21.5%	20.8%	21.0%
18 to 24 Years	9.9%	9.4%	9.6%
25 to 34 Years	12.7%	12.3%	13.5%
35 to 44 Years	12.4%	12.4%	13.3%
45 to 54 Years	12.1%	11.9%	12.1%
55 to 64 Years	12.6%	12.8%	12.3%
65 Years and Over	18.8%	20.3%	18.1%
Prime Working Age (25-54)	37.2%	36.6%	39.0%
Median Age	39.7	41	39.3
Race & Ethnicity			
White	70.1%	62.8%	60.3%
Black or African American	15.8%	24.7%	12.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.4%	0.5%	1.2%
Asian	2.2%	1.9%	6.4%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Some Other Race	4.7%	3.8%	8.8%
Two or More Races	6.7%	6.2%	10.7%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	9.0%	7.5%	19.6%

Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2024

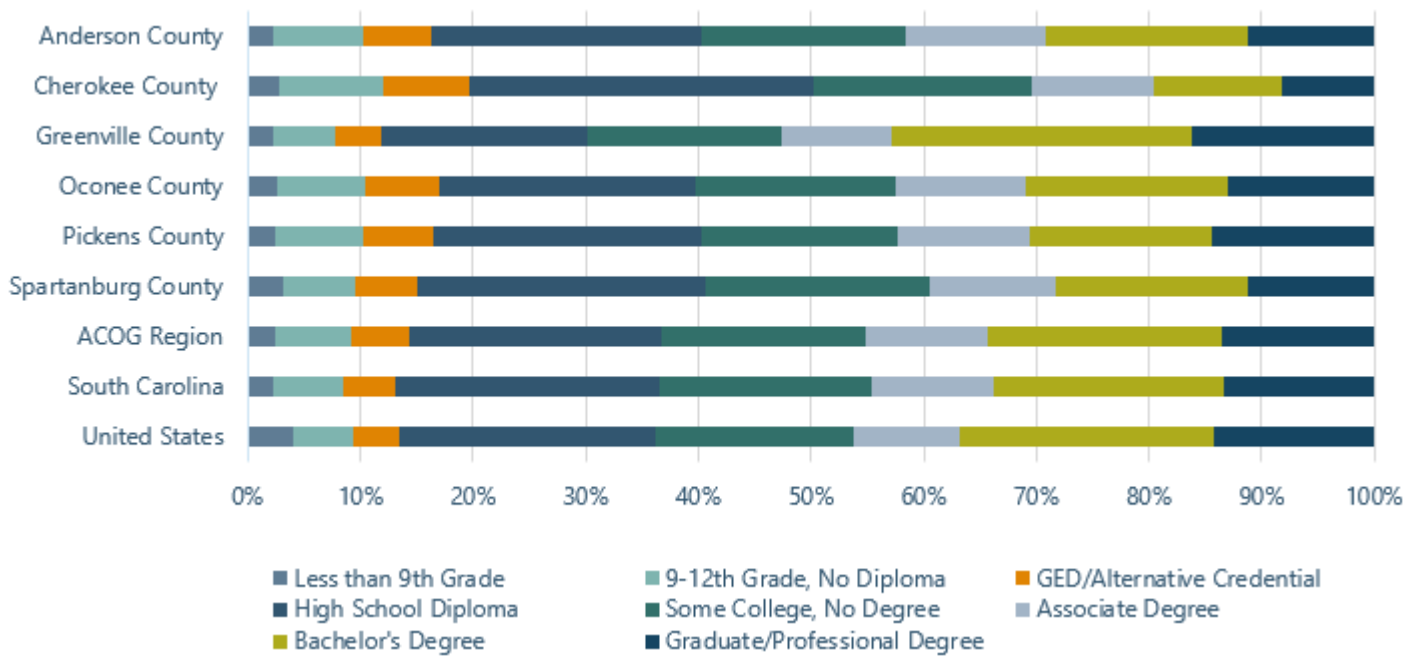


Educational Attainment

Educational attainment across the ACOG region continues to improve. Nearly 91% of residents have a high school diploma (including equivalency) or above, which is up over a point from 2023. In addition, the number of residents with a Bachelor's degree or higher has increased 1.6% to 34.3%. Greenville County outpaced the rest of the region in both categories with 92.4% of residents having a high school diploma or above and a remarkable 43% of residents holding a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Educational attainment is intricately linked to employment as expected growth rates for occupations vary by the education and training required. While all employment in the ACOG region is projected to grow 1.3% over the next ten years, occupations typically requiring a postgraduate degree are expected to grow 1.7% per year, those requiring a bachelor's degree are forecast to grow 1.7% per year, and occupations typically needing a 2-year degree or certificate are expected to grow 1.6% per year (*JobsEQ, Q1 2024*).

Educational Attainment for the Population 25+



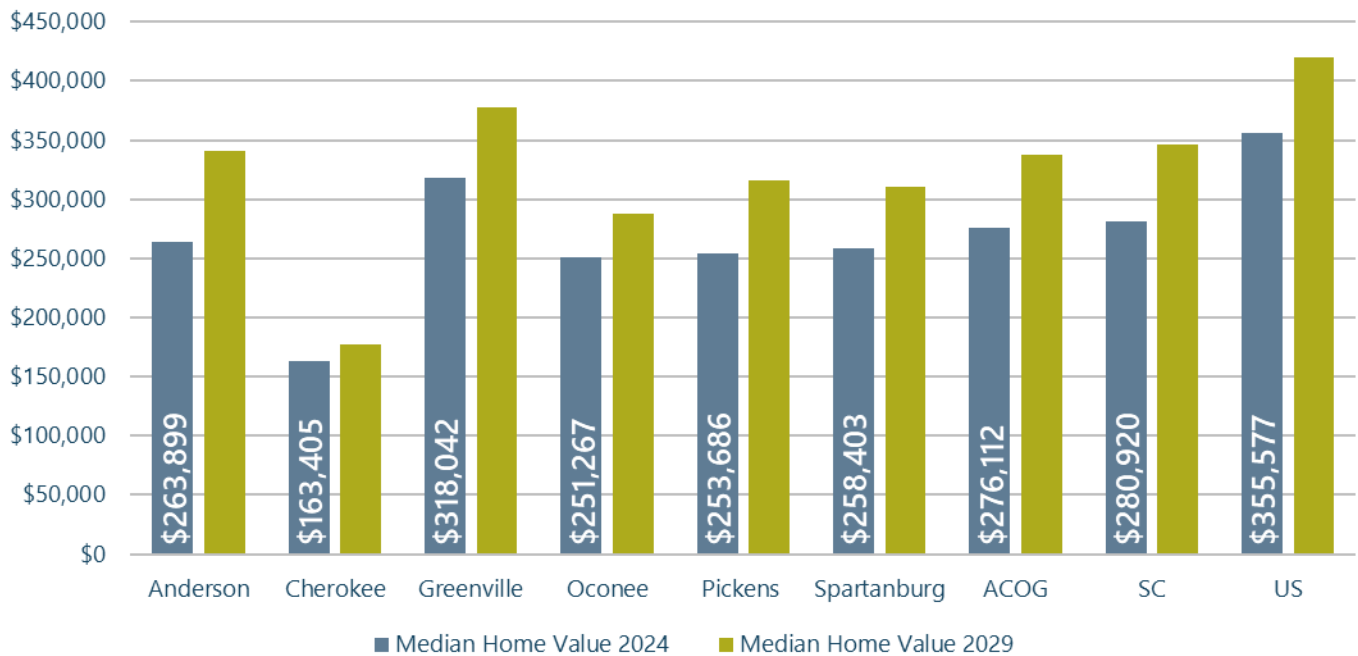
Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2024



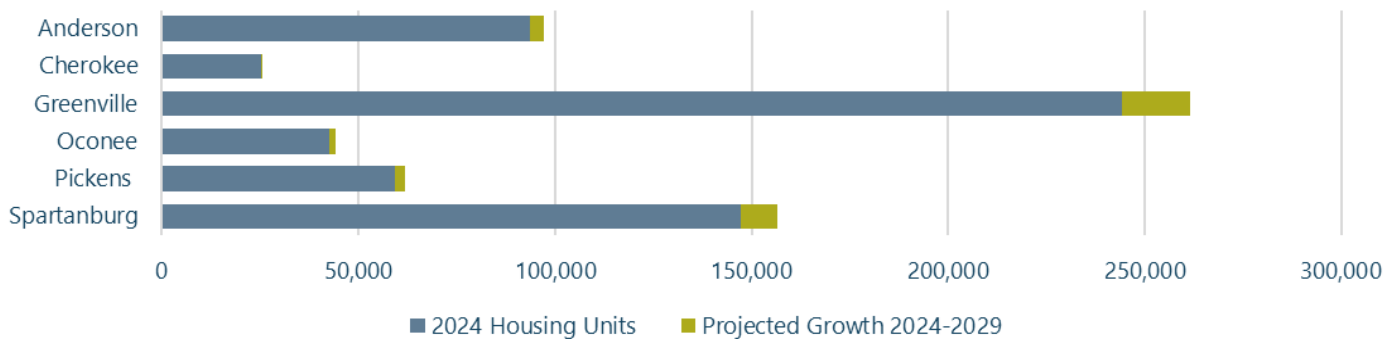
Housing

Housing costs continue to increase across the region with the median home value having climbed nearly 18% between 2023 and 2024. Greenville County has the region's most expensive housing market while Cherokee County is the most affordable with median home prices being \$318,042 and \$163,405 respectively. The number of housing units in the region is estimated to be 612,061 and is expected to increase by 5.72% over the next five years.

Median Home Values, 2024 & 2029



Projected Housing Unit Growth 2024-2029



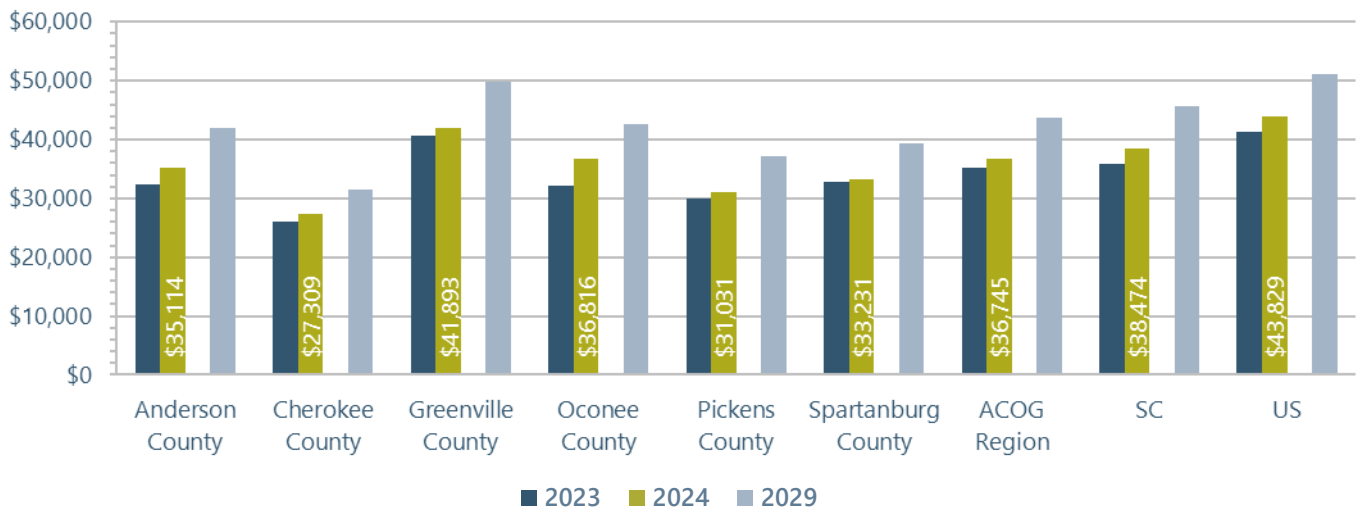
Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2024



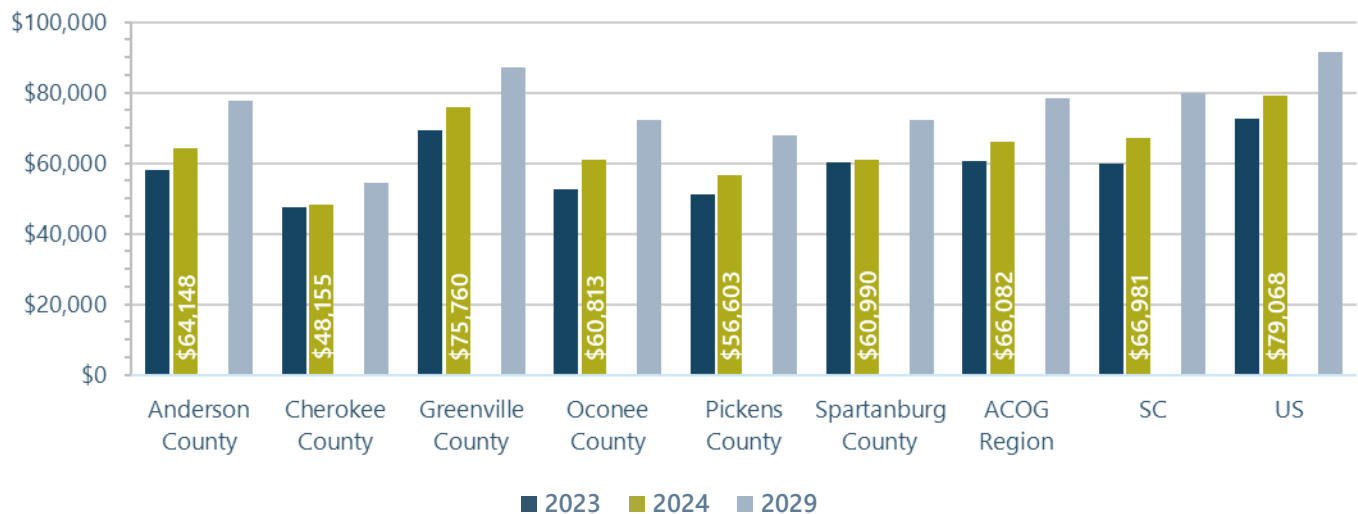
Income

Between 2023 and 2024, both per capita and median household income increased in every county in the region. The largest gains by percentage were seen in Oconee County; per capita income rose 14.4% while median household income was up 15.5%. Overall, 2024 per capita income in the ACOG region is an estimated \$36,745 while median household income rose 9% to \$78,383. Both income measures, however, remain below that of South Carolina and the United States.

Per Capita Income, 2023-2029



Median Household Income, 2023-2029



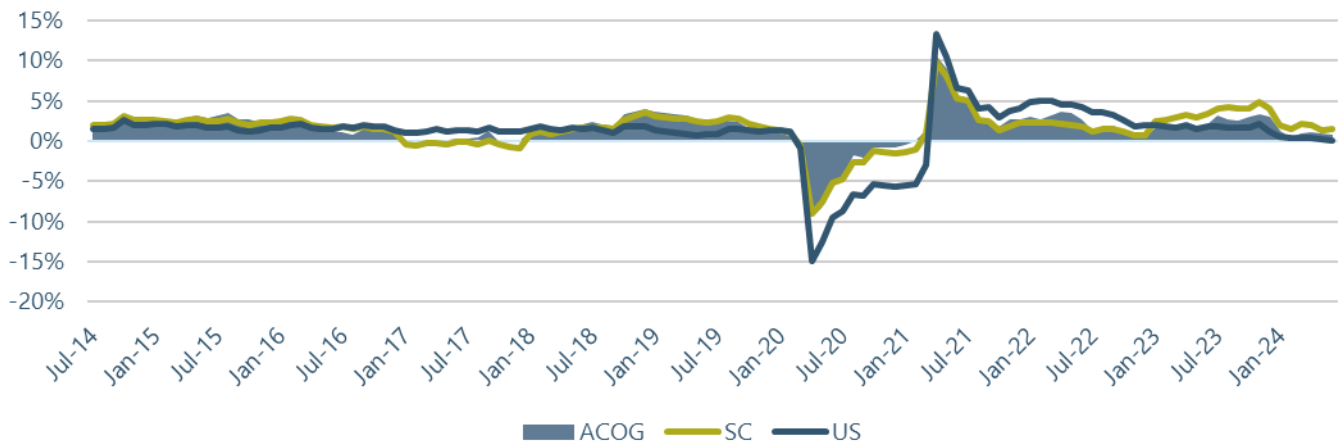
Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2024



Employment Trends

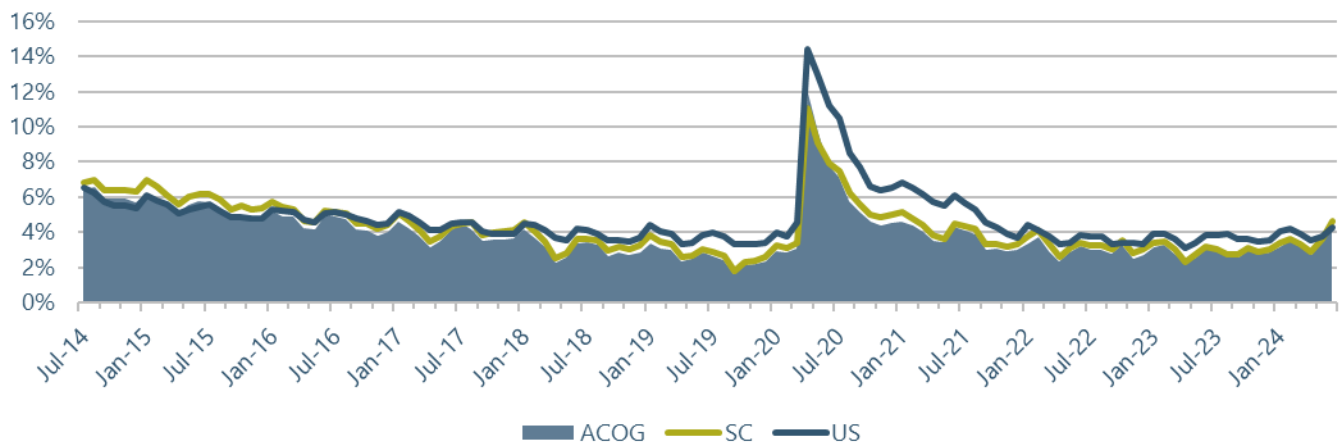
Total employment across the ACOG region was 627,858 as of June 2024. This represents a nearly 1% increase year over year.

Year Over Year Percent Change in Employment, July 2014—June 2024



As of June 2024, the ACOG region's unemployment rate was 4.5%, just below that of South Carolina (4.6%) and slightly higher than the US rate of 4.3%. These numbers all represent a year-over-year increase. Rising unemployment rates are being driven by a combination of factors with monetary policy at the federal level being a significant contributor. Dipping to 3.0% in 2023, the annual unemployment rate in the region was at a four-year low but is poised to increase in 2024.

Unemployment by Month, July 2014—June 2024



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics



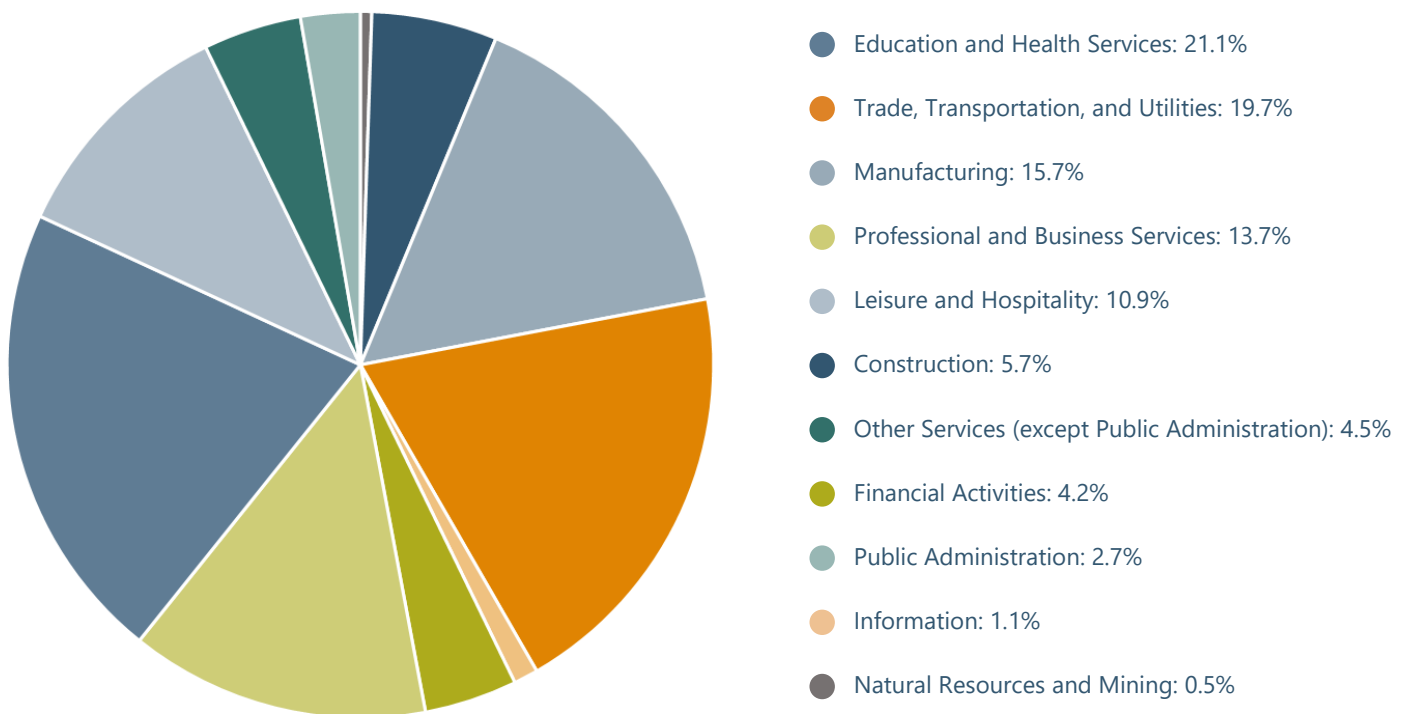
Industry Snapshot

The largest sector in the ACOG region is Manufacturing, employing 102,174 workers. The next-largest sectors in the region are Health Care and Social Assistance (86,486 workers) and Retail Trade (71,322). High location quotients (LQs) indicate sectors in which a region has high concentrations of employment compared to the national average. The sectors with the largest LQs in the region are Manufacturing (LQ = 1.97), Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (1.15), and Utilities (1.13).

Sectors in the region with the highest average wages per worker are Management of Companies and Enterprises (\$106,630), Utilities (\$90,688), and Finance and Insurance (\$83,173). Regional sectors with the best job growth over the last 5 years are Health Care and Social Assistance (+8,364 jobs), Manufacturing (+5,857), and Construction (+5,133).

Over the next year, employment across the six counties is projected to expand by 8,638 jobs. The fastest growing sector in the region is expected to be Management of Companies and Enterprises with a +2.1% year-over-year rate of growth. The strongest forecast by number of jobs over this period is expected for Health Care and Social Assistance (+1,649 jobs), Manufacturing (+1,022), and Accommodation and Food Services (+744).

Employment by Industry (NAICS Supersectors), 2024



Source: JobsEQ, Q1 2024



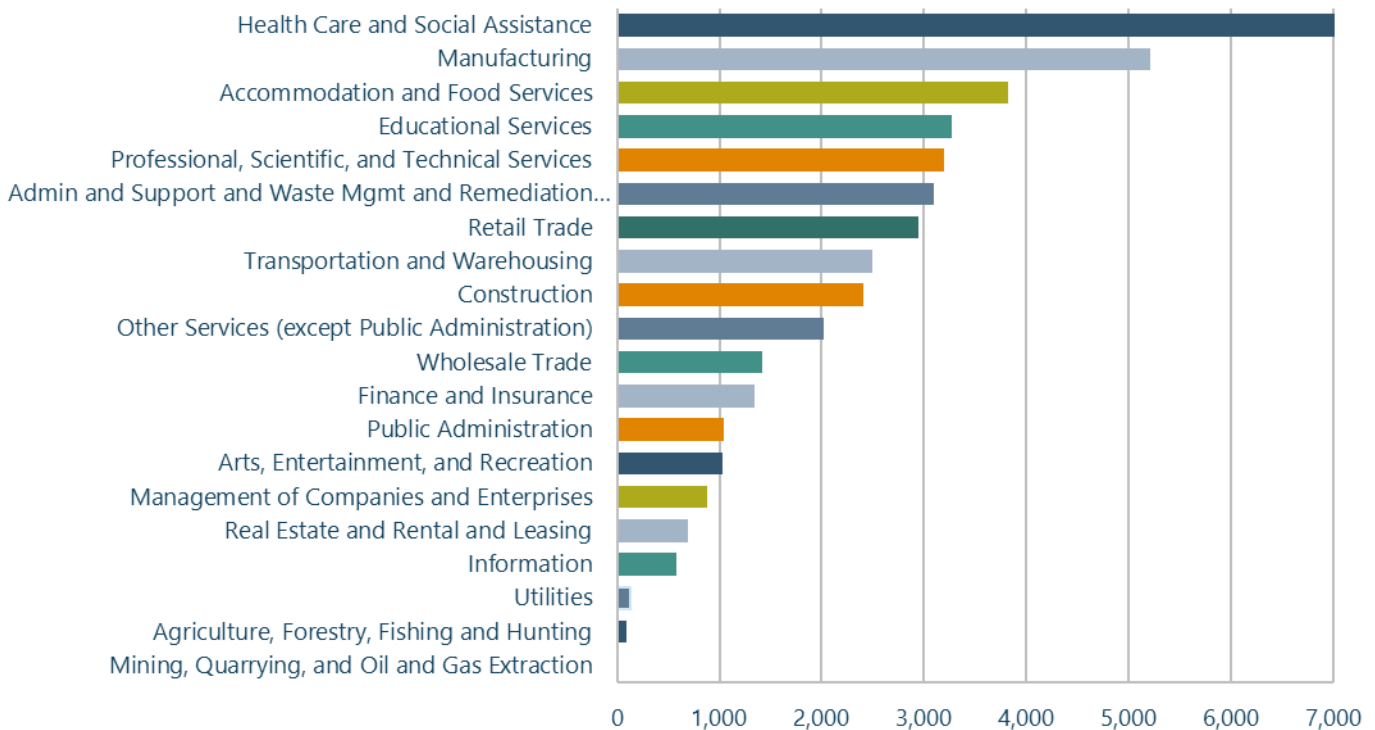
Occupation Snapshot

The largest major occupation group in the ACOG region is Office and Administrative Support Occupations, employing 80,925 workers. The next-largest occupation groups in the region are Production Occupations (69,522 workers) and Sales and Related Occupations (61,431). High location quotients (LQs) indicate occupation groups in which a region has high concentrations of employment compared to the national average. The major groups with the largest LQs in the region are Production Occupations (LQ = 1.93), Architecture and Engineering Occupations (1.24), and Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations (1.11).

Occupation groups in the ACOG region with the highest average wages per worker are Management Occupations (\$119,300), Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations (\$98,000), and Legal Occupations (\$97,400). The unemployment rate in the region varied among the major groups from 0.8% among Legal Occupations to 4.7% among Transportation and Material Moving Occupations.

Over the next year, the fastest growing occupation group in the region is expected to be Healthcare Support Occupations with a +2.4% year-over-year rate of growth. The strongest forecast by number of jobs over this period is expected for Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (+962 jobs) and Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (+717). Over the same period, the highest separation demand (occupation demand due to retirements and workers moving from one occupation to another) is expected in Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (11,185 jobs) and Office and Administrative Support Occupations (9,383).

Five-Year Job Growth Forecast by Occupation Group (2024-2029)



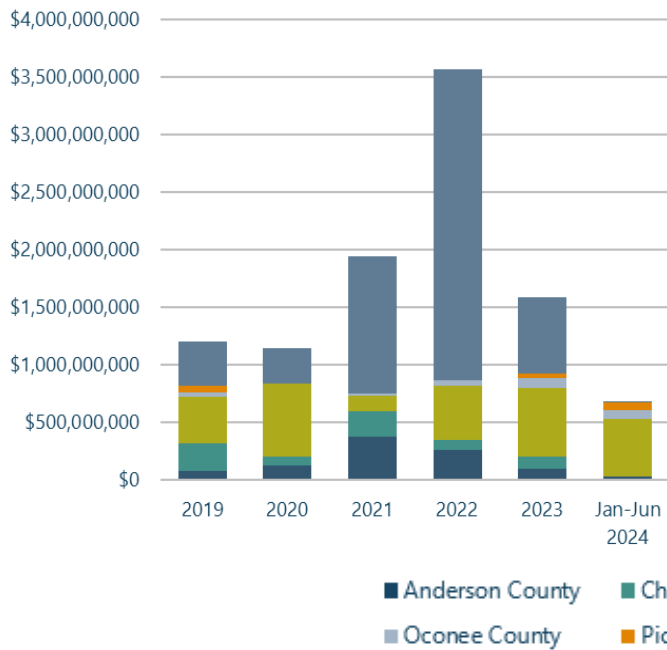
Source: JobsEQ, 2024



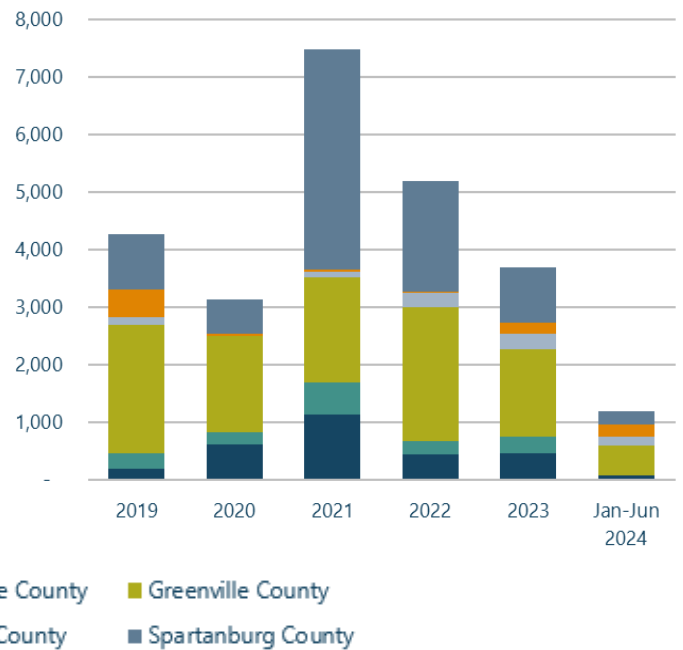
Capital Investment & Job Creation

From 2019-2023, ACOG county economic development offices announced \$9.4 billion in capital investment and the creation of almost 24,000 new jobs across the region. During the first half of 2024, another \$682 million in capital investment and 1,200 jobs were added. These announcements came from a mix of existing and new businesses from the US and abroad, and span a variety of industries including advanced materials, aerospace, automotive, biosciences, corporate and professional services, distribution, energy, and food and beverage manufacturing.

Capital Investment by County



Job Creation by County



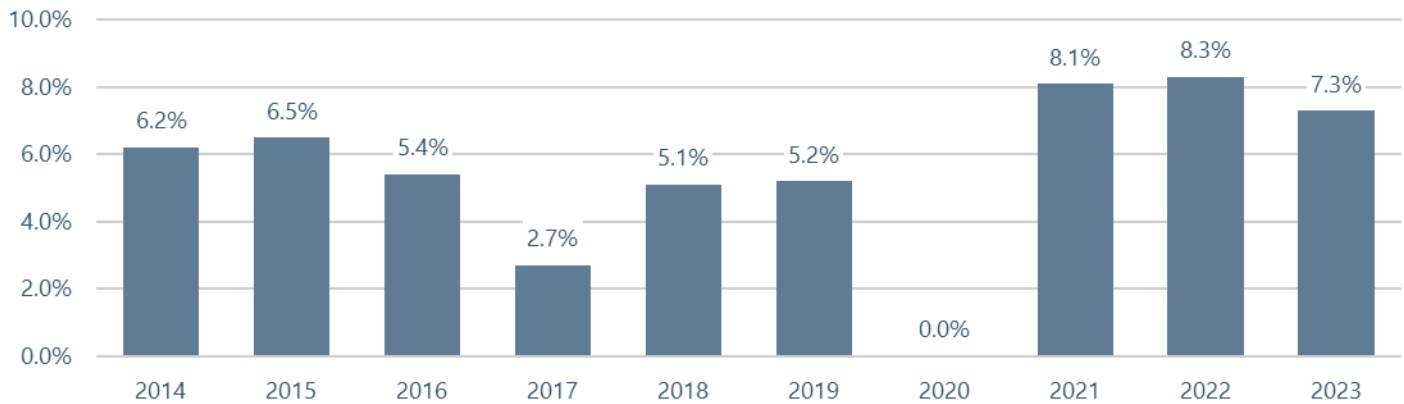
Source: County Economic Development Offices and the Upstate SC Alliance



Gross Domestic Product

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the total value of goods and services produced by a region. In 2023, nominal GDP in the ACOG region expanded 7.3%. This follows growth of 8.3% in 2022. As of 2023, total GDP in the region was \$80,037,308,000.

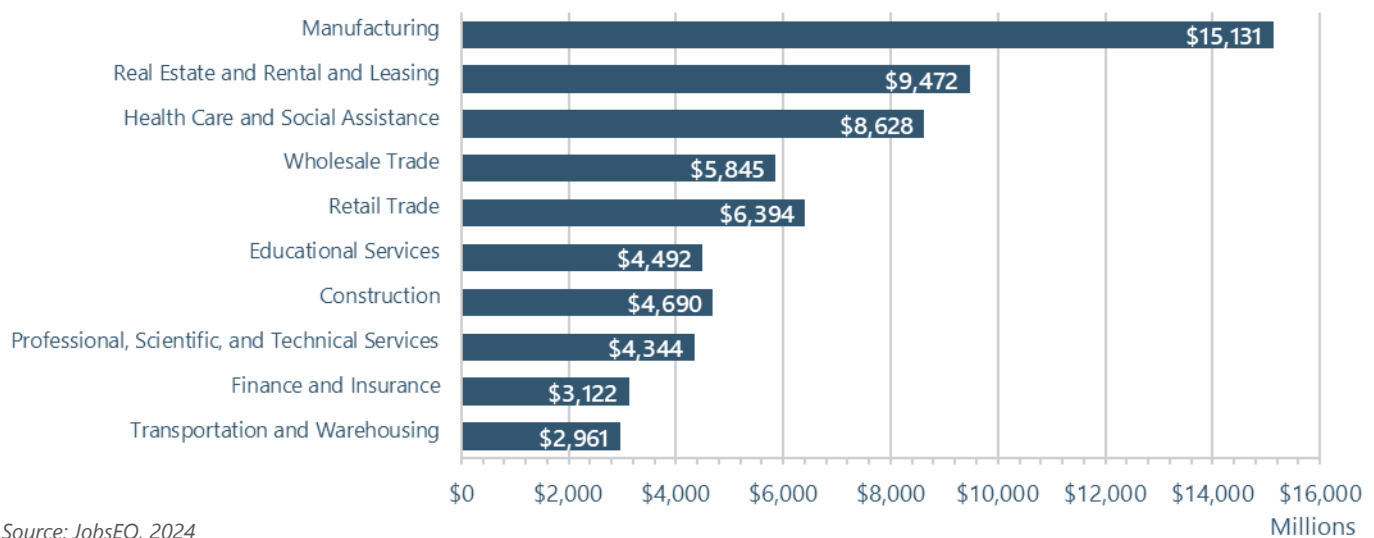
Year-Over-Year Percent Change in GDP, 2014-2023



Source: JobsEQ, 2024

Of the industry sectors in the ACOG region, Manufacturing contributed the largest portion of GDP in 2023, \$15,130,573,000. The next-largest contributions came from Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (\$9,472,233,000), Health Care and Social Assistance (\$8,627,867,000), and Retail Trade (\$6,393,984,000).

Gross Domestic Product (in \$ millions), 2023



Source: JobsEQ, 2024



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

PRIORITY ONE

Foster economic prosperity by supporting the growth of regional clusters and encouraging local asset-based economic development.

For the ACOG region as a whole to prosper, economic development strategies at both the regional and community levels are essential. This can be accomplished in part by 1) supporting the growth of the six regional clusters of advanced materials, aerospace, automotive, biosciences, corporate & professional services, and food & beverage manufacturing, and 2) the development of economic development plans to leverage the unique assets of communities in the region. To that end, the following strategies are suggested:

- Market the region to both out-of-state and international companies who would contribute to the success of the existing clusters in the region.
- Pursue strategies to build on cross linkages and convergences among clusters.
- Support research and development initiatives that target regional clusters.
- Support development of and funding for business retention and expansion programs in each county to ensure continued success of existing industry.
- Ensure available business incentives are aligned with local and regional economic development goals.
- With county and regional economic developers, routinely review and update cluster analyses.
- Encourage asset-based economic development planning throughout the region and support those efforts with grant-writing and technical assistance.
- Identify and leverage unique assets in the region.



PRIORITY ONE INDICATORS

- Number of economic development announcements
 - Amount of announced capital investment
 - Number of announced jobs
 - Layoffs and closures
 - Job growth by industry & cluster
 - Amount of foreign direct investment (FDI)
- Between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024, ACOG region economic development offices announced 37 projects totaling \$1.6 billion in capital investment and 2,874 new jobs. Of that, nearly \$752 million and 1,400 jobs were the result of foreign direct investment in the region.
 - In 2023, the SC Department of Employment and Workforce announced 11 layoff and 4 closure events in the region with 1,397 jobs impacted. Between January and June of 2024, there were 3 layoff and 5 closure events announced impacting 716 jobs.

Summary of Announced Capital Investment					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	Jan-Jun 2024
Anderson County	\$119,800,000	\$372,250,000	\$260,786,000	\$95,930,000	\$27,700,000
Cherokee County	\$82,500,000	\$219,600,000	\$87,100,000	\$103,000,000	\$600,000
Greenville County	\$631,522,580	\$142,302,278	\$470,018,000	\$596,112,050	\$503,000,000
Oconee County	\$0	\$11,500,000	\$43,000,000	\$85,900,000	\$74,000,000
Pickens County	\$5,600,000	\$4,690,000	\$4,000,000	\$38,300,000	\$63,500,000
Spartanburg County	\$304,967,625	\$1,185,539,171	\$2,702,250,000	\$662,482,132	\$13,200,000
ACOG Region	\$1,144,390,205	\$1,935,881,449	\$3,567,154,000	\$1,581,724,182	\$682,000,000

Source: Upstate Alliance and County Economic Development Offices

Summary of Announced Job Creation					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	Jan-Jun 2024
Anderson County	612	1,143	452	472	88
Cherokee County	218	545	225	288	0
Greenville County	1,672	1,836	2,326	1,503	510
Oconee County	0	82	247	267	152
Pickens County	35	40	21	201	215
Spartanburg County	589	3,825	1,915	961	234
ACOG Region	3,126	7,471	5,186	3,692	1,199

Source: Upstate Alliance and County Economic Development Offices



Announced Capital Investment & Job Creation by County and Project, July 2023 –June 2024

County	Company	Type	Capital Investment	Jobs
Anderson County	Additive Plastics Group	Existing	\$6,200,000	24
Anderson County	Carolina Structural Systems*	New	\$4,700,000	60
Anderson County	FlexIT USA	New	\$5,230,000	28
Anderson County	Mojave Energy Systems	New	\$4,000,000	200
Anderson County	Pro-Fab Manufacturing	Existing	\$2,500,000	20
Anderson County	Smurfit Kappa	New	\$68,000,000	200
Anderson County	Southern Wall Products, Inc.	New	\$23,000,000	28
Anderson County	WC Fiber	New	\$10,000,000	0
Cherokee County	Just In Time (JIT) Manufacturing	Existing	\$600,000	Not disclosed
Greenville County	Buckeye Corrugated	New	\$6,400,000	25
Greenville County	Confidential Expansions	Existing	\$54,000,000	81
Greenville County	Confidential New Projects	New	\$4,560,800	9
Greenville County	EnerSys	New	\$500,000,000	500
Greenville County	Expandable, LLC	New	\$3,000,000	10
Greenville County	International Vitamin Corp (IVC)	Existing	\$8,600,000	90
Greenville County	International Vitamin Corp (IVC)	Existing	\$1,000,000	Not disclosed
Greenville County	JTEKT North America	Existing	\$48,400,000	87
Greenville County	Nissin Foods	New	\$224,200,000	322
Greenville County	Safe-Guard Products International	New	Not disclosed	100
Greenville County	Sealed Air Corporation	Existing	\$70,000,000	Not disclosed
Greenville County	Tesla	New	Not disclosed	Not disclosed
Greenville County	Wenker, Inc.	New	\$3,120,000	27
Oconee County	Books for Less	New	\$3,900,000	20
Oconee County	Clarios	Existing	\$16,000,000	12
Oconee County	Dynamic Fluid Components, Inc.	Existing	\$4,800,000	10
Oconee County	Sandvik Coromant	Existing	\$29,400,000	Not disclosed
Oconee County	Schneider Electric	Existing	\$23,800,000	130
Pickens County	Carolina Handling	Existing	\$23,200,000	100
Pickens County	ElringKlinger Group	New	\$40,300,000	115

Table continued on next page.



Announced Capital Investment & Job Creation, July 2023 –June 2024 (continued)

County	Company	Type	Capital Investment	Jobs
Spartanburg County	Evrnu (Dec 2023)	Existing	\$51,850,000	65
Spartanburg County	Keurig Dr Pepper (KDP)	Existing	\$100,000,000	250
Spartanburg County	Lockhart Power Co	Existing	\$14,007,000	0
Spartanburg County	Matica Group	New	\$2,000,000	40
Spartanburg County	Munich Composites SC	New	\$2,000,000	32
Spartanburg County	Omron Automation (OMRON)	New	\$9,200,000	162
Spartanburg County	Tokyo Gas Engineering Solutions (TGES) America Ltd.	Existing	\$19,670,132	2
Spartanburg County	Toray Industries	Existing	\$200,000,000	125



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

PRIORITY TWO

Develop a highly-skilled workforce through education, training, and talent recruitment.

Talent shortages are among the biggest threats to successful economic development in the region. To address the current and future needs of businesses in the region, it is critical to support workforce development, retention, and recruitment. The following strategies represent a multi-pronged approach:

- Foster collaboration among workforce development entities, institutions of higher education, and private industry.
- Encourage apprenticeship and certificate programs to upskill existing workers and expand opportunities for economic mobility.
- Identify opportunities for partnerships with neighboring economic development districts/organizations and workforce development entities to enhance the skills of and resources for workers throughout the laborshed.
- Support innovative strategies to develop and retain talent to support industry clusters and other high-growth industries.
- Develop a comprehensive list of workforce development resources and tools available in the region and identify opportunities to improve navigation thereof for both employers and workers.
- Encourage industry engagement with students, parents, and educators in K-12 schools.
- Identify barriers to workforce participation and develop solutions to expand access to employment.
- Support and amplify talent attraction marketing campaigns.
- Assist employers with identifying opportunities to attract nontraditional workers.
- Strengthen partnerships between businesses and non-profit organizations engaged in workforce development.



PRIORITY TWO INDICATORS

- Labor market data
 - See pages 5-8
- Educational attainment

2024 Population 25+ by Educational Attainment			
	ACOG Region	South Carolina	United States
Less than 9th Grade	2.5%	2.3%	4.1%
9-12th Grade, No Diploma	6.6%	6.2%	5.3%
GED/Alternative Credential	5.2%	4.6%	4.1%
High School Diploma	22.3%	23.6%	22.7%
Some College, No Degree	18.2%	18.9%	17.6%
Associate Degree	10.8%	10.7%	9.5%
Bachelor's Degree	20.8%	20.5%	22.5%
Graduate/Professional Degree	13.6%	13.3%	14.3%

- Post-secondary enrollment
 - Fall 2022 enrollment in post-secondary institutions around the region was 79,229. Fall 2023 data not available as of October 2024.
- Number of apprenticeship and certificate programs
 - There are 149 companies and organizations across the ACOG region with apprenticeship programs registered with the US Department of Labor.
- Per capita and median household income
 - 2024 per capita income: \$36,745 (*Esri Business Analyst, 2024*)
 - 2024 median household income: \$66,082 (*Esri Business Analyst, 2024*)
- Poverty rates
 - The most recent poverty rate available for the ACOG region was 13.3%, a 0.4% decrease from the prior year. (*US Census Bureau, 2022 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates Program. Data released in December 2023.*)
- Implementation of solutions to barriers to workforce participation
 - Staff will begin this research in Q4 2024



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

PRIORITY THREE

Build, maintain, and enhance physical infrastructure to support economic development success.

Physical infrastructure capacity plays an important role in regional economic development success. The ability to attract and retain both companies and people is largely predicated on the presence of adequate infrastructure. The following strategies will help address both existing and future infrastructure needs:

- Ensure critical infrastructure is adequate for existing and future industrial, commercial, and residential development.
- Modernize aging infrastructure that diminishes service capacity.
- Support multi-modal transportation planning initiatives that facilitate the movement of both people and goods.
- Improve existing highways and interchanges to decrease congestion and increase safety.
- Facilitate coordination among MPOs in the region.
- Support projects at Inland Port Greer and GSP International Airport to increase the capacity for the movement of goods.
- Identify gaps in utility coverage for future large-scale industrial and office development and proactively plan for extension of service.
- Identify gaps in broadband and digital infrastructure and support initiatives to extend and improve coverage.
- Encourage construction of resilient infrastructure that has built-in redundancies and is less vulnerable to disruption.
- Identify opportunities for cross-jurisdictional coordination among service providers.



PRIORITY THREE INDICATORS

- **Amount of new public investment in water, sewer, and transportation infrastructure**
 - Staff is in the process of completing research for this indicator.
- **Amount of grant funding awarded for infrastructure projects**
 - As of June 2024, the ACOG Grants Services department was managing just over \$94 million in infrastructure project grants. \$76 million of that funding was awarded since the start of the 2023-2027 CEDS performance period.
- **Changes in level of service for major thoroughfares**
 - Staff is in the process of completing research for this indicator.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

PRIORITY FOUR

Cultivate a thriving, inclusive entrepreneurial community that encourages small-business development, innovation, and emerging industries & technologies.

Small businesses are an anchor of the regional economy. It is critical to support increased capacity building for entrepreneurship to ensure the pathway to starting a business is clear and that innovative entrepreneurs are able to operate in a supportive environment. To that end, the following strategies are recommended:

- Encourage the creation or expansion of entrepreneurial support programs to assist with market/business development, incubator development, mentoring, and supply-chain resiliency.
- Educate local elected and public officials about the importance of entrepreneur-friendly communities, highlighting the impact of small business.
- Identify and expand programs or strategies that increase access to capital for historically underserved communities.
- Engage the business community in entrepreneurial programs to create opportunities for entrepreneurs in the region to solve industry problems.
- Promote region-wide connectivity among entrepreneurial support programs and between those programs and the entrepreneurial community.
- Support business incubator, landing pad, and co-work spaces throughout the region.



PRIORITY FOUR INDICATORS

- **Number of small businesses**
 - Nonemployer establishments increased by 7,854 between 2020 and 2021 to 110,656 across the region (*US Census Bureau Table NS2100NONEMP, 2021*).
 - Employer establishments in the region with less than 50 employees increased 3.3% to 29,539 (*US Census Bureau Table CB2200CBP, 2022*)
- **Number of new patents**
 - The US Patent and Trademark Office has public records for 256 patents granted in the region in 2023 and 215 granted in the first two quarters of 2024.
- **Number of business incubator, landing pad, and co-work spaces**
 - 37
- **Number of minority-owned businesses**
 - The US Census Bureau's Annual Business Survey estimates the number of minority-owned businesses in the Greenville-Anderson-Mauldin, SC and Spartanburg, SC metro areas to be 2,747, a 2.8% increase from 2020. (*US Census Bureau Table AB2100CSA01, 2021*)



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

PRIORITY FIVE

Improve economic development capacity by increasing the quality and quantity of development-ready sites and buildings for businesses of all sizes.

While many factors play into a business' location decision, regions with a healthy inventory of available sites and buildings are better positioned to recruit new businesses and help existing businesses expand. The following strategies aim to increase the supply of sites and buildings across the region:

- Encourage public-private partnerships to facilitate product development.
- Market available sites to developers both within and outside the region.
- Provide grant-writing and technical assistance for due diligence studies, infrastructure extensions/improvements, hazard mitigation projects, etc. to increase speed to market.
- Assist local government partners with identification of potential industrial and office sites and redevelopment opportunities.
- Identify potential incubator and co-work space development opportunities.
- Research best practices for public investment in industrial development to share with interested local governments.
- Encourage the preservation of land for future industrial and commercial development.



PRIORITY FIVE INDICATORS

- **Number of sites and buildings marketed by economic development organizations**
 - At the end of June 2024, nearly 400 sites and buildings were actively marketed by EDOs. This is consistent with the previous year.
- **Number of speculative industrial buildings constructed**
 - As of Q2 2024, 5.67 million square feet of industrial space was under construction in the Greenville/Spartanburg market (*Lee & Associates Industrial Market Report*).
- **Acres of land zoned for industrial uses**
 - Staff is in the process of completing research for this indicator.
- **Number of grant applications prepared for due diligence studies, infrastructure extensions/improvements, and hazard mitigation projects**
 - Five applications totaling \$2.8 million in grant funds were submitted in FY2024. Two were awarded in FY2024 and three were awarded in FY2025.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

PRIORITY SIX

Create healthy, vibrant, resilient communities that increase the overall quality of life in the region.

The economic development success of the ACOG region would not be possible without the communities that make it a desirable place to live and work. The following strategies aim to plan for future growth, advance health and wellness, enhance quality of life, and ensure opportunities for all:

- Encourage local and regional land use planning that balances economic, social, and environmental considerations.
- Identify and share best practices for compact development from other high-growth regions with limited land availability.
- Support affordable housing programs to address the workforce housing shortage and overall housing costs.
- Promote access to quality healthcare and identify and address healthcare deserts.
- Increase access to healthy foods by supporting community gardens, farmers markets, community supported agriculture (CSAs), and similar initiatives.
- Support programs to allow seniors to age in place and remain active in their communities.
- Encourage inclusive community and economic development.
- Facilitate opportunities for collaboration among planners, emergency management professionals, and stakeholders and encourage coordination of plans.



PRIORITY SIX INDICATORS

- **Number of planning initiatives**
 - ACOG staff is working with 6 communities on ten different planning documents including comprehensive plans, zoning regulations, and land development regulations.
- **Number of residential building permits**
 - According to data from the US Census Bureau’s Building Permits Survey program, 9,969 single-family residential building permits were issued across the region in 2023. This is a 1.3% increase from 2022.
- **Affordable housing initiatives**
 - Staff is developing a database of affordable housing projects. At present, there are over 100 projects and programs across the region.
- **Food deserts – change over time**
 - According to the most recent data available from the USDA, there are 63 census tracts in the region with limited access to supermarkets, supercenters, grocery stores, or other sources of healthy and affordable food. These tracts are home to 237,675 residents.
- **Number of farmers markets and CSAs**
 - Agritourism Farms: 144
 - Certified Roadside Markets: 52
 - Certified SC Grown Members: 547
 - Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs): 5
 - Community-Based Farmers Markets: 25
 - State Farmers Markets: 1
- **Healthcare deserts – change over time**
 - In *Mapping Healthcare Deserts*, a whitepaper funded by GoodRX, healthcare deserts are defined as areas where people lack access to six key healthcare services: pharmacies, primary care providers, hospitals, hospital beds, trauma centers, and low-cost health centers. As of the latest release of data, there are five healthcare deserts in the ACOG region.

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