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LOWCOUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



**BEAUFORT
COUNTY**



**COLLETON
COUNTY**



**HAMPTON
COUNTY**



**JASPER
COUNTY**

The Lowcountry Council of Governments is a member of the South Carolina Councils of Governments, a network of 10 regional councils of governments working to positively affect quality of life and economic development in South Carolina. sccogs.org

The Lowcountry Council of Governments (LCOG) offers creative regional solutions to the four counties and twenty-one cities and towns within Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, and Jasper Counties. Guided by a thirty-member board of directors appointed by the participating local governments, LCOG partners with local governments, human service agencies and local nonprofits to leverage the best resources possible in order to serve the people who need us most.

As a result, we are a stronger region that strives to have:

- a healthy aging population
- an educated and well trained workforce
- incentives to help small businesses thrive and grow
- safe, affordable housing
- planning resources that connect our land, transportation, environmental, and economic assets

MILESTONES:



**Launched
new LCOG
Website**



**Redesigned
agency
logo**



**Created & distributed Board Member
Handbooks which include key
documents about the COG and its
governance**



D E A R L O W C O U N T R Y ,

We are pleased to provide the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Annual Report for the Lowcountry Council of Governments. This report provides details with statistics and success stories about the great work performed throughout the region by each program: Aging, Workforce, Planning & Transportation, and Community & Economic Development. Professional Development of staff and many program accomplishments are highlighted as well.

Currently, the world is in the middle of the biggest health crisis, the COVID-19 Pandemic, it has seen in 100 years. I am hopeful the pandemic will pass in due time. However, Lowcountry COG has met this crisis head on and in some ways our organization is stronger because of it. There was no time to become prepared for COVID-19. But staff quickly organized and returned its full attention to serving the citizens and local governments in the region. As Executive Director, I must acknowledge every member of our team and say thank you for your endurance and the very impressive, creative work you've done this year.

While the world's economy may have slowed down due to COVID-19, in direct correlation to that slow down, the critical work of LCOG increased. The

pandemic created unprecedented disruption to the way we normally conduct business, but we persisted. We've proven how valuable and resourceful we are to our member governments with existing programs, and the birth of a few new programs are on the horizon.

Lowcountry COG is part of a statewide association that works relentlessly to advance our state altogether. We provide creative regional solutions to many of the Lowcountry's public service dilemmas. We are proud to serve the citizens of Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, and Jasper counties, and the 21 municipalities therein. As Board Chairman, I would like to sincerely thank the Board of Directors, various committees and LCOG staff for their enduring devotion and commitment to making the Lowcountry region a great place to live and work. We look forward to an exciting 2020-2021. We will master the new normal.

Sincerely,

James "Pete" Hagood,
Board Chairman
Lowcountry Council
of Governments
Board of Directors

Sabrena P Graham,
Executive Director
Lowcountry Council of
Governments



COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Greenlawn Drive Neighborhood Upgrade

The City of Beaufort's Greenlawn Drive needed upgrades to make the neighborhood safe, especially for pedestrians. Residents from two affordable housing complexes, totaling 82 units, access this street. There was inadequate drainage, lighting infrastructure and no sidewalk up to Greenlawn Drive. Areas of the pavement had potholes and cracks. There were only two



standard SCE&G fixtures on the street. Many of the residents who live along Greenlawn Drive do not have cars; they walk to work and to shop. Many of them leave home before the sun rises and return late in the evening when it is dark. LCOG was able to work with the City of Beaufort in processing the application for the \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), which enabled the city to complete the streetscape project. The significant improvements provided the residents a safer environment to live in while greatly improving the visual aesthetics of Greenlawn Drive.



A C C O M P L I S H M E N T S

Awarded
3 SC CDBGs
(Community
Development
Block Grants)
totaling:
\$812,914

Awarded
2 RD
(Rural Development)
grant/loans totalling:
\$1,340,519

Awarded 2 RIA
(Rural Infrastructure Authority)
grants
totaling: **\$980,500**

Awarded 3 EDA
(Economic Development Administration)
grants
totaling: **\$17,688,072**

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- **Barbara Johnson** -
SC Housing Trust Fund Advisory Committee,
SC Community Development Association
Board of Directors
- **Barbara Johnson and Rhonda Davis** -
Environmental Compliance Training
- **Rhonda Davis** -
Civil Rights Compliance Training

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Lowcountry Regional Development Corporation (LRDC) Board:

- **Pete Hagood**, Hampton County
- **Brian Flewelling**, Beaufort County
- **John Carroll**, Jasper County
- **Phillip Taylor, Sr.**, Colleton County
- **Charles Savino**, Hampton County
- **Dan Wood**, Beaufort County
- **Gene Whetsell**, Colleton County
- **Tom Johnson**, Jasper County

HOME Consortium Advisory Committee

- **Gerald Dawson** - Beaufort County
- **Phillip Taylor** - Colleton County
- **Pete Hagood** - Hampton County
- **Danny Lucas** - Jasper County



P L A N N I N G & T R A N S P O R T A T I O N

B Y T H E N U M B E R S

The 208 Certifications:

- Projects:
- Residential: 25 with 2,101 housing units
 - Commercial and Industrial: 7
 - Institutional: 3

35

Transportation projects:

Miles of roads, bridges,
and highway projects: **189,595 miles**

- Dollar amount of construction: \$ 233,295,289

Accomplishments:

- Lower Savannah River Watershed Projection Plan
- Amendments/Updates to Current TIPS
- Completed Bicycle and Pedestrian Pathway Mapping for All Cities and Towns within Beaufort County
- City of Beaufort Comprehensive Plan
- The People and the Economy Report
- Lowcountry COVID-19 Weekly Reports

Professional Development:

- Christian Dammel received two certificates from the National Highway Institute:
 - Transportation Performance Management Overview for the MAP-21 and FAST Acts
 - Statewide and Metropolitan Transportation Programming





T H A N K Y O U G I N N I E

Ginnie Kozak has retired from her position as Planning Director having dedicated many years to the fulfillment of LCOG and LATS duties. We thank her for her dedication, service, and advancement of the region. She will be sorely missed.

SC170 Corridor Access Management Study

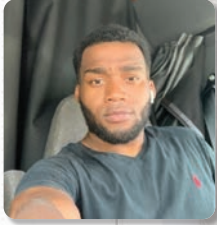
The 4-mile section of SC 170 between Okatie Center Boulevard and Sand Lowcountry Drive is an emerging growth area with several large-scale commercial and residential developments planned in the corridor. However, this growth has come with a price tag. Public comments describing the area as "an accident waiting to happen" captured the increasing congestion and safety concerns. These conditions led the LCOG Planning Department to undertake an access management study with partners AECOM, a leading engineering consultant. Local jurisdictions provided continuous input throughout the duration of the study.

The study recommended a system-wide solution, including a 4- to 6-lane "superstreet," reduced conflict intersections, improved signal coordination, and reduced delays with shorter cycles. Through a planned access management strategy, the future SC 170 corridor will be able to accommodate additional traffic volumes, provide safe access, limit signalization, and provide opportunities for landscaping and multimodal uses.





W O R K F O R C E D E V E L O P M E N T



Jaquin Beckett enrolled in the WIOA program on January 15, 2020 and graduated with his Class A CDL license on April 29, 2020 – in spite of the training facility closing down for two weeks due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Jaquin is currently employed as an over the road truck driver full-time with KLLM Trucking Co. in Jackson, MS. He began working with this company on May 28, 2020 earning \$.47 per mile. We are very proud of him for accomplishing his goals in the WIOA program and living his career dream of becoming a Commercial Truck Driver. We wish you much success!



Fire & Pine a manufacturing plant located in Okatie, SC, applied for an Incumbent Workers Training (IWT) grant that would allow them to provide upskill training to their current staff. Fire & Pine needed training and coaching in Lean principles and Value Stream Mapping to prepare the organization to handle additional throughput without adding new equipment. By reducing and eliminating unnecessary processes or steps, they would ensure customers were getting what they wanted while at the same time reducing the cost of producing that product or service. Fire & Pine received \$6,200 to train three staffers in Lean 101, to help boost their sales and marketing. The IWT grant allowed participants to better market the product, generating more sales and paving the way for employee incentives.



PakNet Technologies, located in Walterboro, SC, provides a wide range of technology solutions to businesses and organizations, large and small, enabling them to maximize production. PakNet hosted a youth client, taking part in the WIOA Workforce Work Experience (WEX) program to prepare him for employment in the technology field. The client focused on developing the essential soft skills needed to become a successful worker, such as proper dress, effective communications, punctuality, working with others, as well as the hard skills of the job. PakNet trained the client as a Structured Wiring Tech for a total of 560 successful hours, which led to a full-time job offer. A total of \$5,720 for both Youth Work Experience (WEX) and On the Job Training (OJT) funding was expended on both the client and employer. PakNet saved thousands of dollars on its training budget and has made a commitment to utilize the Workforce Training programs to create an entry level pathway for young adults interested in the field of technology.



B Y T H E N U M B E R S

Integrated Business Services Team served
347 employers
with a total of **1,336** services provided.

\$163,675 Spent on Occupational Skills training

\$25,792 Work Base Learning (Work Experience)

\$21,096 Supportive Services expended

\$6,125 Transportation

\$8,017 Other, Medical

\$6,954 Books, Supplies, Uniforms, Tools

5 Major Job Fair events (600 Jobseekers)

174 Hiring Events at SC Works Lowcountry

Contracted out our **Workforce Program Services** (1st time)



A C C O M P L I S H M E N T S

- \$13,680 in On the Job (OJT) contracts for 4 employers
- \$36,000 in Incumbent Worker Training grants for 5 Lowcountry Employers
- \$5,000 Outreach Grant awarded for Theater Advertising of SC Works
- Awarded \$4,000 South Eastern Training Association Grant
- Awarded \$100,000 COVID-19 Dislocated Worker Grant
- Hosted Lowcountry Workforce Board first job fair for employers hiring individuals with disabilities and barriers

P R O F E S S I O N A L D E V E L O P M E N T

- 7 WIOA Staff received Next Step SC Works 101 Certifications from Midlands Technical College
- 2 Staff members selected as Moderators for the SETA Conference in Myrtle Beach in March 2020
- 2 Partner members selected as Registration host for the SETA Conference in Myrtle Beach in March 2020



AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **SCDOT 5310 Funding**

The Lowcountry Area Agency on Aging (AAA) acquired SCDOT (5310) funding for the fourth year on behalf of two of four counties to help with the purchase of transportation services. By securing this SCDOT funding for transportation services, the Lowcountry AAA is able to leverage funds to help provide additional services to seniors across the region, and give contracted providers the opportunity to expand existing routes and/or create new routes. The amount awarded for FY 19/20 was \$125,000 (with match).

- **Medicare Savings Cost Tracker**

Over **\$40,400** saved for beneficiaries during the 2019 Open Enrollment Period.

- **ICARE/SHIP Programs**

Partnered with Access Health and libraries throughout the Lowcountry Region to facilitate Medicare 101 and celebrate 65th birthdays. During Older American's Month, the AAA sent activity books to seniors to encourage engagement and activity while sheltering in place during COVID-19.

- **Family Caregiver Support Program**

COVID-19 challenged us to creatively continue services by creating the "Tea Time for Caregivers" monthly virtual support group via zoom, which gave Caregivers the opportunity to continue sharing and supporting one another.

- **Ombudsman Program**

Worked in tandem with the SC Department on Aging and the SC Department of Corrections for "Operation Spread the Joy", a program that provided art created by talented inmates to seniors in nursing facilities during COVID-19.

- **Consumer Choice Home Care Program**

The Homemaker Service returned as a stand alone service, allowing care to be offered to more participants in the Lowcountry Region.

- **Evidence Based Health Promotion Services**

The AAA became the 2nd provider in the state of SC to offer the Aging Mastery Program (AMP), registering 34 participants and hosting the initial session prior to interruption due to COVID-19.





- **Veterans' Lawn Care Pilot Program**

Began providing Veterans in the Lowcountry Region with lawn maintenance thanks to the SCDOA's provision for a Pilot Program geared towards Veterans.

- **Outreach**

The AAA rolled out brochures highlighting each area of service offered as well as a composite brochure that summarizes all services. The ICARE/SHIP program was also featured on Savannah WJCL's "Ask Asa" to discuss Medicare Fraud.

- **COVID-19 Assistance**

COVID-19 introduced a new approach to Human Services and also created additional needs in the senior community. Through this pandemic, the LCOG Area Agency on Aging was able to provide 804 non-clients with bi-weekly shipments of meals over a four-month span.



A C C O M P L I S H M E N T S

- **1,998 comprehensive assessments** conducted
- **7,232 contacts served** for resource referrals
- **804 Medicare clients** provided insurance counseling
- **\$327,685** expended for an estimated **285 family caregivers**
- **\$97,985 in-home repair safety services** for **128 people** in need
- **13,109 hours of in-home care services** provided to **120 seniors**
- **\$13,255** provided in **legal fees** for **59 seniors**
- **2,652 residents** served in **75 long-term care facilities** by the Ombudsman Program
- **129,886 home delivered meals provided**
- **33,140** congregate/group dining **meals served**
- **24 Outreach Events**
- Provided **\$3,148 in lawn care assistance** to **18 Veterans** in the Lowcountry Region
- Provided **supplies for 42 ramps and 5 sets of steps**, with a portion of the ramps and steps being built in partnership with Helping Hands and Salkehatchie Summer Services.
- **Installed MySeniorCenter Technology** at all senior center/nutrition site locations

PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT**Staff Certifications:**

- **Meyoka Griffin and Charmaine Conception** - Certified Long-Term Care Ombudsman
- **Latoya Grier**, AIRS Certified as a Community Resource Specialist - Aging and Disabilities
- **Kristy Douglas** - SHIP certified
 - I-CARE/ SHIP is a program designed to allow certified counselors to provide free, in-depth, unbiased, one-on-one health insurance counseling and assistance to Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers. Senior Medicare Patrols (SMPs) empower and assist Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers to prevent, detect, and report health care fraud, errors, and abuse. This certification is required as a part of this program.
- **Staff Certified to lead the following Title III- D programs:**
 - **Rhonda Hiott** - Powerful Tools for Caregivers
 - **Latoya Grier** - Matter of Balance
 - **Karen Anderson** - Aging Mastery Program, Matter of Balance

“I will never be able to express my gratitude for the moments you talked to me on the phone that helped me get through a little more of my life, it was worth more than I could ever say.”

- Kimberly Chesney



A testimonial:

LCOG assisted Frank Moses and his wife with his mother, Corrine Lias, by providing grants over the years, enabling them to purchase items needed for her different stages of Alzheimer's, including a walker chair, incontinent supplies, medical equipment and a Broda chair.

Through the Family Caregiver Support Service program, Mr. Moses received respite care to provide him a break from his caregiving responsibilities and a caregiver through the Consumer Choice Homecare program to further assist his mother.

“Without these funds, we don't know what we would have done. Thank God for the program.”

CHAPPELL JOHNSON

Chappell Johnson's life drastically change practically overnight. To go from independence to the state of immobility was a difficult transition for him, but despite how hard it was, Mr. Johnson continued to fight to regain his strength. Eventually, he was able to become mobile with the use of an electric scooter and walker.

To aid in restoring his independence, a ramp at his home was essential. His family contacted Lowcountry Council of Governments to obtain assistance with having a ramp built. The organization, Helping Hands was contacted, and with their help, the ramp materials were purchased and the ramp was built before Mr. Johnson was release from rehab. Having an electric scooter and the use of the newly built ramp has enabled him to regain some independence, such as the ability to check the mail without assistance. For him, that is an encouragement to continue his road to recovery.



B O A R D O F D I R E C T O R S

Beaufort County:

Philip Cromer
Gerald Dawson
Brian Flewelling, *Vice Chair*
Herbert Glaze
Tamara Becker
Mary Beth Heyward
Mark Lawson
Judge Joseph McDomick
D. Paul Sommerville
Dan Wood, *Exec Cmte*

Colleton County:

Esther Black
Greg T. Pryor
Dr. Joe Flowers
Tommy Mann
Crawford Moore
Phillip Taylor, *Sr., Secretary*
Gene Whetsell, *Exec Cmte*
Mayor Tim Grimsley

Hampton County:

Pete Hagood, *Chair*
Ronald Mixson
Travis "Pete" Mixson
Buddy Phillips
Charles Savino, *Exec Cmte*
Mayor Nat Shaffer
J.L. Goodwin

Jasper County:

John Carroll, *Treasurer*
Tom Johnson, *Exec Cmte*
Danny Lucas
Chris DeBose
Dr. Gwen Johnson Smith

Sabrena Graham, *Executive Director*
Kira Fuller, *Board Clerk*



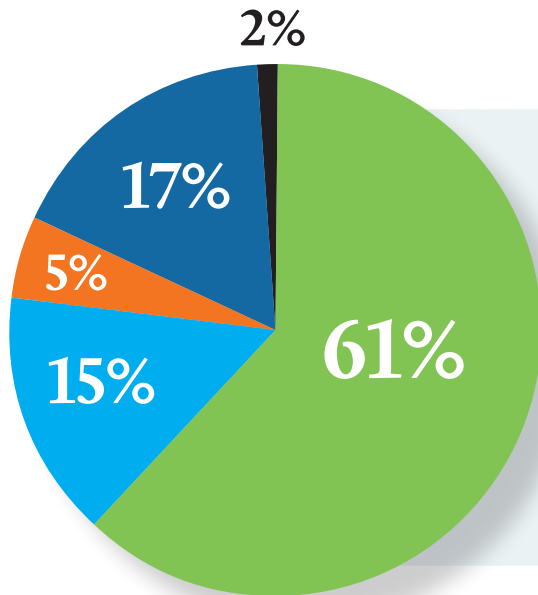
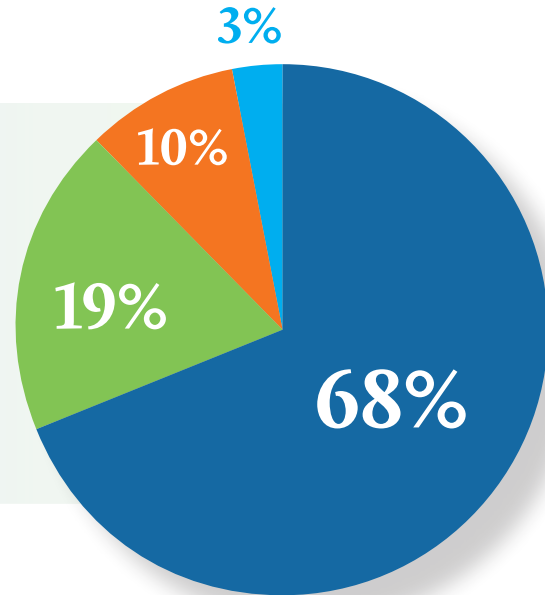


FINANCE REPORT

Year ended June 30, 2020

Revenues:

Federal	4,791,944
State	1,382,217
Local	737,652
Dues	185,244
Total.....	\$7,097,057



Expenditures

Aging	4,336,540
Community & Economic Development	1,042,713
Planning	325,431
Workforce	1,203,465
Administration	106,068
Total.....	\$7,014,217



Lowcountry

COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

PO Box 98 | 634 Campground Road | Yemassee, SC 29945
Main: 843-473-3990 | Aging: 843-473-3991 | Fax: 843-726-5165

LOWCOUNTRYCOG.ORG