



Spring 2015

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)

The Midlands Workforce Development Board is working through the biggest change to employment and training programs in over a decade. The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 is phasing out as of June 30th and will be superseded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

WIOA retains the current structure of a State Workforce Board and Local Workforce Boards, and will generally focus on streamlining and increased efficiency of programs. A part of this includes consolidating several Federal programs that overlap into other initiatives as well as addressing workforce trends and shifts realized over the course of more than 10 years.



We have continued to focus on services to job seekers and the business community. In the first two quarters of PY 14, our centers hosted an astounding number of events. 135 hiring events with 28 unique employers were hosted in our centers. Complementing these mini-job fairs were workshops open to the community. Topics ranged

from resume preparation and basic PC skills, to expungement of criminal records and health insurance basics. More than 240 workshops were available with over 1,200 customers attending.

The fall of 2014 also saw the return of Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) funds to our Business

Services tools. The IWT program offers businesses the opportunity to invest in the skills of their current employees by providing a reimbursement of 75-90 percent, depending on the size of the company, for training costs.

This year, we were able to assist 13 companies with a variety of skill building education such as lean manufacturing, high level information technology and equipment specific training.

It is truly an exciting time of evolution and growth in workforce. Never before have so many critical developments come so fast. The Midlands area is poised to capitalize on these opportunities as we move toward a new era.

CARING FOR THE CAREGIVER



The challenges of caring for elders can result in caregivers ignoring their own physical and emotional health. Caregivers often don't recognize the symptoms of stress that they are experiencing.

Support groups are available to encourage caregivers to care for themselves and help remind them that it is not selfish for caregivers to attend to their own needs.

Caregiver support groups also give opportunities for family members and friends to meet with other caregivers to discuss their specific situations and concerns. Support groups can educate and inform, as well as provide a safe, supportive community in which to walk the

caregiving journey with others who understand.

The Central Midlands Aging staff hosts a monthly series "Caring for the Caregivers: Education and Support Program."

These meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of every month to provide respite, resource information, and support to caregivers in the community.

To attend a meeting and/or receive information on the Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP), please contact our FCSP Advocate, Becky Baird, at (803) 744-5140 or bbaird@cmcog.org.

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REGIONAL TRANSIT PROJECT



access to transit.

Our project team is currently reaching out to the public through a large-scale, grassroots, outreach effort to determine the transportation needs of the community.

As part of this effort we have developed a newsletter to provide you with the latest updates on the project. To view the newsletter, please visit www.cmcog.org.

CMCOG is excited to announce a feasibility assessment project to assess the transit needs in the unserved area of Lexington and Richland Counties.

The Regional Transit Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study Project will focus on the transportation needs of residents and employees living and/or working in Richland and Lexington counties that currently do not have

We encourage your participation and input in determining and addressing the transit needs of our community.

For more information about this project, please contact Reginald Simmons at (803) 744-5133 or rsimmons@cmcog.org.

Spotlight On: Walk Bike Columbia

Imagine Columbia in 20 years as a place where people choose to walk, bike and/or take transit for some trips – not out of necessity, but because it is a convenient and enjoyable transportation choice. Development is dense and well-designed so that people have many of their everyday needs available by a short walk, bike ride or transit trip.

Programs such as walking school busses and bike safety rodeos are commonplace in schools, and walk, bike and transit-friendly streets are prevalent so that parents feel perfectly safe letting their children walk or bike to and from school (freeing up valuable time in their daily lives as well).

Transit is as reliable and convenient as driving a car and is easily accessible by anyone. As a result, it is utilized by people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities; providing better access

for families without cars to get to jobs, retail and school; creating additional viable transportation options for elderly citizens; and allowing more college students and families to live car-free.

An increasing number of

transforming and revitalizing our communities, making them more desirable places to live and visit.

This movement is a direct result of the nationwide demand for more livable communities and transportation options.

Share Plan, called Walk Bike Columbia, with funding provided in part by the Federal Transit Administration, Palmetto Health, and Abacus Planning.

The project will recommend a network of complete streets for the City of Columbia, as well as biking and walking related programs and policies.

The completion of this Plan will set the stage for the City of Columbia achieving a higher national designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community and becoming the first nationally designated Walk Friendly Community in South Carolina!

For more information about this project, please contact Reginald Simmons at (803) 744-5133 or rsimmons@cmcog.org.



communities and their leadership are seeing the potential of a future like this one; a future where better walking, bicycling and transit are critical parts of

CMCOG in partnership with the City of Columbia has recently completed a Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and Bike

Spotlight On: Air Quality

The Air Quality Index (AQI) is an index for reporting daily air quality. It tells you how clean or polluted your outdoor air is, and what associated health effects might be a concern for you. The AQI focuses on health effects you may experience within a few hours or days after breathing polluted air.

EPA calculates the AQI for five major air pollutants regulated by the Clean Air Act: ground-level ozone, particle pollution (also known as particulate matter), carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide. For each of these pollutants, EPA has established national air quality standards to protect public health.

Knowing as much as you can about air pollution can empower you to make changes and help improve the air quality in your area!

For more information on air quality activities in the Columbia area, contact Gregory Sprouse by phone at (803) 744-5158 or gsprouse@cmcog.org.

For daily air quality forecasts and real-time air quality conditions in the Columbia area, visit AIRNow.gov. This website is produced by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Park Service, news media, DHEC and other state agencies

to report conditions for ozone and particle pollution.



EnviroFlash, a program provided by EPA, can send the ozone forecast to an email address or cell-phone as soon as the ground-level ozone forecast is made.

★ Announcements ★

We are pleased to announce the promotion of Cindy Curtis to Director of the Area Agency on Aging/Aging & Disability Resource Center (AAA/ADRC). Cindy, who joined CMCOG in 2013, has served in the following roles: Client Selection Specialist (contractual), Family Caregiver Advocate, and most recently serving in the position of Interim AAA/ADRC Director.

We are also pleased to announce the promotion of Becky Baird to the position of Family Caregiver Advocate. Becky joined CMCOG in 2014 to serve as the Client Selection Specialist and most recently serving as the Interim Family Caregiver Advocate.

They bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to their new roles. We wish them the best of luck as they take on their new responsibilities.