

IN THE CENTER

Serving Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry and Richland



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In The News at CMCOG...

We would like to welcome our newest Board Member:

Mayor Bobby Horton, City of West Columbia

MIDLANDS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD JOINS CMCOG

As a result of an agreement between their respective Boards of Directors, the staff of the Midlands Workforce Development Board will join the newly formed Workforce Development Division of Central Midlands COG this summer. Bonnie Austin, director of the Workforce Investment Area (WIA) program will serve as director of the newly formed division of the COG.

The Midlands Workforce Development Board (MWDB) is the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Administrative unit for Richland, Lexington and Fairfield counties and is committed to building an integrated workforce development system in the Central Midlands region that delivers optimal quality customer-focused service while effectively pooling the resources of 14 diverse partner agencies.

Partner agencies include local area school districts, welfare-to-work, county social service providers, SC Vocational Rehabilitation, the SC Employment Security Commission, local community action coun-



The Midlands Workforce Development Board is joining CMCOG

cils and non-profit organizations.

Services provided by the Midlands Workforce Development Board include:

- Provision of OneStop system
- Job order listings, screenings and referrals
- On-site interviewing
- On the job training
- Incumbent worker training opportunities
- Pre-employment Assessments
- Employee skills development
- Hispanic outreach
- Employer workshops and small business consultation

Norman Whitaker, Executive Director of CMCOG says that joining forces with the WIA program will strengthen the COG's

economic development capacity.

Through its many innovative programs, the MWDB contributes greatly to the economic development and vitality of the Central Midlands region.

Programs such as Columbia's OneStop house 18 agencies under one roof to allow customers easy access to a wide variety of essential services from job listings to social service support and educational opportunities.

MWDB was also recently announced as a recipient of the *Regional Innovator Award* by the Southern Policy Growth Board for its work with the Hispanic community, further highlighting the assets it brings to its new partnership with CMCOG.

BUILDING PERMIT GROWTH REMAINS STRONG

2003 saw a record number of building permits issued in the Central Midlands region. A total of 8,336 permits totaling \$1.24 billion were issued in the four county region.

Permits issued for single family homes increased 10% from 2002, with the average cost

per permit increasing almost 9% from \$108,833 in 2002 to \$118,474 in 2003.

Permits for Multi-family units also saw a sharp increase. 988 multi-family permits were issued in 2003; 527 more than the previous year.

Non-residential permits also saw growth across the region. Business permits saw an increase in value of \$37.5 million to \$248.6 million in 2003. The value of all non-residential permits increased by 23.6% to over \$335.7 million in 2003. Ben Mauldin, Research Director says, "these figures show growth in the region is strong."

SPOTLIGHT ON: THE AREA AGENCY ON AGING



Please visit our website
www.centralmidlands.org
"Our Data, Your Resource!"

Under the Older Americans Acts of 1965, which was re-authorized in 2000, each Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is charged with the responsibility of preparing an Area Plan to foster the development of a comprehensive, coordinated service system to meet the needs of older persons in the planning and service area.

The development of the Plan helps to establish the AAA as the focal point on aging in each planning and service area.

The Area Plan has two principal purposes. Firstly, the Area



Seniors benefit from the services of the Area Agency on Aging

Plan serves a document describing the strategic objectives to be undertaken by the AAA on behalf of senior citizens during the years the Plan is in effect.

The Plan also sets forth the manner in which the AAA proposes to carry out certain functions which support the

implementation of the AAA's programs which are governed by the Older Americans Act.

The second purpose of the plan is to represent a formal commitment made to the State Agency on Aging as to how the AAA intends to carry out its administrative responsibilities regarding the utilization of Federal and State funds made available through the State.

The Area Plan is updated every 2 or 4 years as mandated by the State Unit on Aging. The current Plan was approved June 22nd and runs until 2006.

CDBG PLANNING GRANT ACTIVITY INCREASES

CONGRATULATIONS go to Dee Waddell who marked her 30th anniversary at CMCOG in March 2004.

Ms. Waddell is the administrative specialist for the transportation and environmental planning departments. "Central Midlands has been a really interesting place to work over the last 30 years. We've been involved with so many varied issues and projects." said Ms. Waddell.

Local planning assistance grants allow local governments to undertake planning activities that contribute to economic competitiveness, including data collection, planning studies, market analyses and development of strategies for implementing proposed plans and developing future applications.

In April, the Town of Whitmire and the City of Newberry each submitted planning grant applications for \$20,000.

The Town of Whitmire plans to perform a comprehensive needs assessment of the Town. Housing, infrastructure, community services, physical improvements and safety are to be studied with the goal of producing plan for addressing those needs and achieving positive change in the Town.

The City of Newberry intends to perform a downtown market analysis in its central business

district. The study will identify opportunities for development and will assess the existing retail mix in Downtown Newberry and identify where capital investment is being lost.

In December 2003, the Town of Winnsboro received \$20,000 in planning grant funds to comprehensively study the Town's housing stock to serve as a tool for future housing rehabilitation efforts.

WATER QUALITY PLAN ADOPTED

On March 25, 2004, the Board of Central Midlands COG approved the revision to the 208 Water Quality Plan. The approval brought to an end a twelve-month revision process undertaken by the firm of Jordan, Jones & Goulding and with the assistance of geo-technical firm Geo-Metrics, Inc.

As a result of the 208 Plan revision, several new policies governing wastewater discharge and management have been either revised or added. The 208



The Congaree River in Columbia, SC

Plan now takes into account 12 private wastewater service providers, their service areas and the process required by the SC Public Service Commission for the consolidation of these facilities.

Consolidation remains a key ele-

ment of the 208 Plan, but is now considered more as the creation of a network of regional systems. Consolidation is encouraged, but is not required based upon size or ownership of a facility. Each discharger will be held to the same treatment standards for discharges. Facilities which are unable to meet the prescribed standards will be encouraged to upgrade or consolidate to the regional system. The COG's 208 Water Quality Plan is currently awaiting approval by the U.S. EPA.

FAMILY CAREGIVER PROGRAM PROVIDES MUCH-NEEDED SUPPORT

In South Carolina, family members have always provided the majority of long-term care for older relatives. 18% of adults in South Carolina provide regular care or assistance to an elderly relative or another family member with long-term illness or disability. Many people provide this round the clock care in their own homes; many out of financial necessity. The psychological and physical demands on these unpaid caregivers are often overwhelming.

The Central Midlands Family Caregiver Support Program seeks to provide assistance to individuals caring for family members aged 60+ with health problems.

The Program works in partner-



ship with area agencies on aging and local community service providers to provide access for family caregivers to the following services:

1. Information: public education, and outreach regarding available support services.
2. Assistance: Provide assistance to individuals on how to gain access to services.
3. Counseling, Education &

Training: Provide advice, guidance and instruction to caregivers on an individual basis to solve problems faced in their role as caregivers.

4. Respite: Helping caregivers find temporary relief from caregiving responsibilities on an occasional or emergency basis.

5. Supplemental Services: Provide compensation to assist with the cost of some services (e.g. home safety supplies, nutritional supplements, incontinence supplies) used in the provision of care to family members.

For more information on the Family Caregiver Program contact Joe Ritchey. (803) 376-5390.

COATS BOUNDARY TO BE EXPANDED

As the region continues to grow and commuting patterns change, the boundaries of the COATS (urban) area are forced to evolve. The recent growth in Northeast Richland County and Lexington County means that the Elgin area of Kershaw County and two areas in western Lexington County (areas shaded green on map) will be incorporated in the next update

of the Long Range Transportation Plan which is scheduled to begin later this year. New areas to be added to the urban planning area must meet population density requirements defined by the Census Bureau.

The next Long Range Plan will utilize TransCAD transportation modeling software, which was also used to create CMCOG's

rural transportation model earlier this year.



Proposed boundary changes to COATS area

SILVER-HAIRED LEGISLATOR RECEIVES ORDER OF THE PALMETTO



Ms. Brackett receives the Order of the Palmetto at the State House together with Walton McLeod, CMCOG past chairman, John Dawkins, County Council Chairman, State Senator Ronnie Cromer & former Comptroller General, Jim Lander.

Margaret Brackett (pictured center), a Silver-Haired Legislator from Newberry County in the Central Midlands Caucus, was awarded the Order of the Palmetto on June 18th, 2004.

Governor Sanford conferred this award as recognition of Ms. Brackett's work with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and Victim's

Advocacy groups. The Order of the Palmetto is one of the State's highest civilian honors.

Ms. Brackett has served with the Silver-Haired Legislature, which advises the State legislature on issues facing the senior population, since 1999. The Central Midlands Caucus is staffed by CMCOG's Area Agency on Aging.

“There are four types of people in this world:

Those who have been caregivers;

Those who are currently caregivers;

Those who will be caregivers;

Those who will need caregivers.”

Rosalynn Carter, 1995



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Visit us on the Web!
www.centralmidlands.org

**Central Midlands COG
welcomes our newest
staff members**

Felicia Anderson is our newest Ombudsman Program Coordinator. Ms. Anderson joins us permanently having worked with us for the past year on a temporary assignment.

Jackie Thompson joins CMCOG's Aging Services Department as Information Referral Specialist. Ms. Thompson previously held this position at Senior Resources, Inc. Ms. Thompson holds a Masters Degree in Social Work from USC and is a Certified Information Referral Specialist (CIRS).

*Articles contributed by
CMCOG staff*

2004 CDBG PROGRAM ALLOWS MORE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

The SC Department of Commerce began its 2004 Program Year by announcing a number of changes to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. Core activities such as infrastructure improvements and housing projects have undergone slight changes.

Single activity, scattered-site housing projects are no longer eligible. Housing projects are now restricted to comprehensive or affordable housing activities and road projects are eligible for the first time.

The major changes for 2004 relate to a series of pilot initiatives. This year, greater emphasis has been placed not just on strengthening communities through targeted community development, but on improving the economic environment to make South Carolina a more competitive place in which to do business.

The 2004 Program Description now includes initiatives such as *Work Force Education & Technology, Commercial Revitalization* and *Small Business Development*

that can address local needs related to improving local economies.

Projects will now be funded in 4 categories:

1. **Planning:** Maximum grant: \$20,000. To comprehensively address critical community needs that are obstacles to economic competitiveness.

2. **Community Development:** Maximum grant: \$500,000 available for (i) *Infrastructure* projects (water, sewer, roads & drainage);

(ii) *Housing* (rehabilitation, affordable housing etc);

(iii) *Commercial Revitalization:* to stimulate local economy and increase private investment

through conservation/revitalization of commercial & Downtown areas;

(iv) *Workforce Education:* to increase access to workforce education and technology training. All applications are due July 23, 2004.

3. **Small Business Development**

Maximum Grant: \$250,000; to support capacity development and opportunities for innovation and productivity by entrepreneurs and small businesses. Applications due October 1, 2004.

4. **Business Development:** Maximum grant: \$1 million (varies by county) to assist businesses that create new jobs, retain existing jobs or facilitate expansion of the local economy.

Grants will be awarded to proposals showing a high degree of collaboration or use existing resources to maximize the impact on the community. Proposals must also benefit primarily low and moderate income citizens.

