

The Central View

Serving the Citizens of Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry & Richland Counties



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Spotlight on:	2
<i>Transportation Planning</i>	
<i>Silver-Haired Legislature Holds Elections</i>	2
<i>Midlands Workforce Development Board Recognizes Role of Employers</i>	3
<i>CMCOG Receives 3 CDBG Awards</i>	3
<i>Role of SC COGS Outlined in National Publication</i>	3
<i>A Word From Our Chairman</i>	4

CMCOG Programs Receive National & State Recognition



Joe Ritchey and Julie Merrill of CMCOG's Family Caregiver Support Program with the N4A Award

able to provide financial assistance to a total of 246 caregivers and their families to assist with respite care and other supplemental care-giving services.

CMCOG, the Town of Chapin and the consulting firm of Parsons Brinckerhoff were also presented with the award for "Outstanding Planning Project—Small Jurisdiction" by the South Carolina chapter of the American Planning Association (SCAPA).

Two Central Midlands Council of Governments programs were recently recognized with awards from professional associations.

The Central Midlands Family Caregiver Support Program was the recipient of a 2006 National Aging Innovations Achievement Award from the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (N4A).

The Aging Innovations Award is presented annually to successful and ground-breaking programs from across the county.

The Central Midlands Family Caregiver Program and its staff were selected in recognition of the quality of assistance and support provided in recent years to individuals living in Richland, Lexington, Newberry and Fairfield counties who care for elderly family members with health problems. The Family Caregiver Support Program's "Grandparents Raising Grandchildren" scheme was also recognized.

Over the past program year, the Central Midlands Family Caregiver Support Program has been

CMCOG Participates in Construction Careers Fair

In February, the Midlands Workforce Development Board (MWDB), in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT), the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) and the SC Department of Education, held a careers fair to promote jobs within and related to the construction industry.

The three-day event held at the South Carolina State Fairgrounds, was attended by close to 900 high school students from 32 schools around the state.

Despite the fact that one in ten workers in the United States works directly or indirectly in the construction industry, fewer and fewer skilled workers are choosing careers in construction.

Visitors to the construction careers fair



Visitors to the Construction Careers Fair look at heavy construction equipment

were able to talk with a variety of commercial contractors and SCDOT personnel about employment opportunities as well as promoting awareness of the wide variety of careers within the construction industry. Visitors were also able to participate in some "hands-on" exercises including brick-laying and view some of the heavy machinery in action. CMCOG staff were also on hand demonstrating a range of GIS and mapping software and skills that can be applied and used in the construction industry.



Wayne Shuler of CMCOG (left) and Ernie Baughman of Parson Brinckerhoff pictured with the SCAPA Award





Spotlight on: Transportation Planning

Announcements

Please join us in welcoming our newest Board members:

Zebbie Goudelock,
City of Newberry

Norman Jackson,
Richland County

The 2006 Commercial Real Estate Survey and 2006 Multi-Family Housing Survey are now available for purchase from CMCOG's offices or by visiting the Premium Documents section of our website:
www.centralmidlands.org/premiumdocs.asp

Have your say about Open Space Preservation in the Central Midlands region.

Take CMCOG's Online Open Space Survey.

Visit www.centralmidlands.org/greeninfrastructure.asp for more details.

Over the coming months a number of transportation-related plans addressing a wide range of transportation and development-related issues will begin to take shape under the direction of the transportation & planning departments of CMCOG. The most high profile of these plans is the Columbia Area Transportation Study (COATS) Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), a federally-mandated update, which, when complete, will serve as a multi-modal, fiscally constrained priority list for transportation improvements in the



Staff are working on a plan to manage traffic congestion in the Midlands.

Greater Columbia area. The goal of the plan, which is currently in the data collection and model-building stage, is to identify current and future road conditions, forecast future travel patterns (with a horizon year of 2035) and evaluate future land use and transportation alternatives within the scope of a prioritized and fiscally-constrained project list. A final draft of the Long Range Plan is expected

to be ready for adoption by the CMCOG Board by the fall of 2008.

Other major plans also currently under development by COG staff include a Regional Motor Freight Transportation Plan, a Congestion Management Study, Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan and two sub-area plans in Richland and Lexington counties.

The Regional Motor Freight Study will assess the current state of the region's freight transportation and logistical systems, determine the needs of the system's principal users and develop a strategic vision to guide future policy development in order to recommend priority improvements to the regional transportation system to ensure that the region's motor freight system remains as economically viable and efficient as possible. The Motor Freight Plan is being developed with the assistance of Wilbur Smith Associates and USC and is scheduled for completion by the end of 2007.

As the Central Midlands region continues to grow more suburban resulting in increased driving times and distances, studies such as the Congestion Management Plan, which is currently in the start-up phase, become ever more relevant. The CMCOG Congestion Management Study is intended to identify areas experiencing traffic congestion, the causes of congestion and develop a mitigation plan for managing and ultimately

reducing congestion across our region.

Another factor of which CMCOG is cognizant in its planning efforts is the relationship between transporta-



New development adds more traffic to the region's roadways

tion and land use planning. Over the course of 2007, staff will work on developing two new sub-area plans which will closely examine and integrate aspects of both land use and transportation planning in the White Knoll area of Lexington County and in Lower Richland County.

Work is also underway on a regional Human Services Transportation Coordination plan. This plan, developed in tandem with the SC Department of Transportation, aims to enhance coordination with the multiple Federal, State and local programs that fund transportation initiatives for human service providers. The plan's ultimate goal is to reduce duplication of services by the various human service agencies and operators in the region.

Silver-Haired Legislature Holds Elections

The Central Midlands Area Agency on Aging held the elections for the Central Midlands caucus of the Silver Haired Legislature on March 12, 2007.

The Silver Haired Legislature is a 72 member, non-partisan senior advocacy group that advises the South Carolina state government on issues, concerns and possible solutions for problems faced by the citizens of South Carolina, with special emphasis on issues related to older adults and retirees in the state. It is comprised of 10 regional delegations.



The recently-elected SHL Delegates from the Midlands Caucus

The model legislature was established in 1999 for "bringing together the wisdom and experience of older South Carolinians" as it develops recommendations for legislation to the Governor and General Assembly. Delegates serve two-year terms.

This year's delegates from the Central Midlands region are (from back row, L to R), Charles McNeill (L), Hannah Timmons (R), Jean Bridges (L), Bernard Gardi (R), Thomas Lloyd (L); (front row, L to R), Marjorie Johnson (R), Ellen Cooper (R), Margaret Brackett (N) and Carolyn Robinson (F)

MWDB Recognizes Role of Employers

Shortly before Christmas, the Midlands Workforce Development Board (MWDB) held a luncheon at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Columbia, in appreciation of employers from around the region.

The luncheon was attended by over 250 guests, including the Deputy Secretary of Workforce Development at the SC Department of Commerce, Peggy Torrey.

During the event, the Columbia Fire Department was recognized for its decision to implement the nationally accredited WorkKeys program to screen firefighter recruits, which has resulted in a

16.4% increase in the Fire Department's overall graduation rate.

Laserform & Machine, a job shop located in Northeast Richland County was also recognized for its use of the MWDB's Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWT), which has enabled the company to train its employees on state of the art technology, resulting in an increase in profitability as well as in the wages of its highly trained workforce.

Finally, WACH TV, the local FOX Network affiliate was also recognized for its assistance in helping the MWDB meet its public information needs, through an intensive outreach campaign, including identifying strategic

timeslots for MWDB public service announcements, on-air coverage of special events, resulting in increased public awareness of MWDB's programs.



Columbia Fire Chief, Bradley Anderson receives the Fire Department's Award from MWDB Chairman, Reggie Murphy

SAVE THE DATE

The 2007 Central Midlands Regional Leadership Award Banquet will be held

Thursday, October 11, 2007

At the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center

CMCOG Region receives 3 CDBG Awards

The Central Midlands region was the recent recipient of three Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) awards from the South Carolina Department of Commerce.

The grants, announced by Governor Sanford, were awarded to the Town of Batesburg-Leesville, the City of Newberry and Fairfield County and totaled \$1.37 million.

The Town of Batesburg-Leesville received \$460,439 to be used in combination with local funds to undertake housing rehabilitation

on Line Street to benefit 40 Low and Moderate Income (LMI) residents.

Fairfield County received \$411,150 which will be combined with local funds to perform housing rehabilitation work in the Fish Hook Road area of Jenkinsville. The project will benefit 38 LMI residents.

The City of Newberry was awarded \$500,000 to be combined with local funds to install city-wide wireless technology within the city limits of Newberry.

The applications competed against other applicants from across South Carolina and represent a portion of the \$11.6 million in CDBG funds awarded in the latest funding round.



A Residence on Line St, Batesburg

Role of SC COGs Outlined in National Publication

The March 2007 edition of the American Planning Association's Regional & Intergovernmental Planning newsletter contained a 7 page article penned by CMCOG Executive Director, Norman Whitaker, entitled "The SC COG Network: Regional Collaboration on Statewide Plans," The article

outlines the history behind and evolution of the Councils of Government in South Carolina and highlights the tremendous level of cooperation and collaboration between COGs in South Carolina.



Norman Whitaker, CMCOG Executive Director

To read the entire article, visit www.homestead.com/intergovernmental

The article goes on to describe a number of recent joint COG efforts like the Statewide Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan and the ongoing statewide GIS inventory of major water and sewer lines, as well as the monthly meeting of all SC COG directors to discuss matters of statewide significance. As our regions and state continue to grow, such collaborative efforts between regions will become increasingly important to ensure effective planning for our future needs at both the regional and state levels.

News In Brief

Tasha Milhouse (pictured below) was recently promoted to the position of Receptionist/Administrative Specialist.



Members of the Midlands Workforce Development Board recently met with community leaders in a forum to discuss workforce and economic development in the Midlands.

Issues raised at the event will be used to help shape the agenda for the Southern Growth Policy Board's 2007 Southern Workforce Summit.



**The Official Newsletter
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CMCOG Member Governments:

- Fairfield County
- Lexington County
- Newberry County
- Richland County
- Town of Batesburg-Leesville
- City of Cayce
- City of Columbia
- City of Forest Acres
- Town of Irmo
- Town of Lexington
- City of Newberry
- Town of Springdale
- City of West Columbia
- Town of Winnsboro

*Articles contributed
by CMCOG staff*

A Word From The Chairman

In this first newsletter of 2007, I wanted to take the time to inform you of some of the upcoming projects and plans that are currently in the works at Central Midlands Council of Governments.

Environmental issues remain at the forefront of our efforts to improve the quality of life within our region. CMCOG planning staff recently created an online Open Space Survey, the goal of which is to create a network of protected lands within the region. Work will also soon start on a Joint Land Use Study to identify potential threats to Fort Jackson, McEntire ANG and Shaw Air Force Base prior to the next round of military base realignments. Work is also progressing on the creation of a Wetlands Mitigation Bank. Proposed Inter-Basin Water Transfers in North Carolina have the potential to negatively affect water quality downstream in our region. CMCOG has stated its opposition to this potential environmental misstep.

From a transportation perspective, several high profile transpor-



CMCOG Chairman R. David Brown,
Fairfield County

tation planning projects aimed at improving the functionality of our regional highway system will start work. A fully-functioning, multi-modal transportation system is critical to the vitality of our region and its economy, with its very success tied closely to the efficient movement of people, goods and services.

In that regard, the imminent update to our Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) will go a long way towards determining why, how and when specific highway improvements across the metropolitan area should be made. Staff is currently in the process of developing and analyzing

base and horizon year demographic data and traffic analysis zones (TAZs) to be used within the study, as well as conducting a "Midlands Tomorrow" Travel Demand Survey; a random survey of households designed to capture and calculate how road users are using our region's highways.

Staff are also currently hard at work developing a regional Congestion Management Study, a Motor Freight Transportation Plan as well as two sub-area plans, which will study in detail the many challenges occurring as a result of rapid residential growth and commercial development in and around the White Knoll area and in Lower Richland County. Of course, with our region's tremendous growth also comes potential air quality issues. CMCOG is aware of the importance of this matter and will endeavor to plan accordingly.

All of this, together with other ongoing activities community and economic development, planning for the needs of our region's senior population; a growing caseload for the Ombudsman Program, 2007 is already showing signs of being another exciting and productive year at CMCOG.