

The Central View

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



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CMCOG Conducts Travel Survey for Long Range Transportation Plan

This past Spring, residents across the Central Midlands were invited to take part in a region-wide survey that examined how and where persons traveled throughout the Midlands region. This exercise was part of CMCOG's public participation efforts in developing the region's multi-modal long range transportation plan, called **Midlands Tomorrow: 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan**.

The 2035 Plan is a vision plan that looks 30 years into the future – to the year 2035 – to address transportation needs and makes recommendations for improving various transportation modes, such as highways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, public transportation, and freight systems, for the entire region.

The transportation survey was distributed between February and March 2008 through a variety of means and venues across the region. Persons were able to answer the questionnaire via internet (on CMCOG's and other local government websites), on paper and submitted in person by mail, fax or e-mail. In total, the survey received over 900 responses.

The survey responses collected as part of this process will be used in helping guide the development of the Midlands Tomorrow: 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan.

Some key findings of the survey include: Automobiles are very much the preferred means of transportation in the Midlands,



with 97% of respondents traveling by car on a daily basis. 41% of survey respondents also stated that the time spent traveling from one point to another was their primary travel problem. 10% stated that they experienced no problems.

The Midlands' most important transportation issues was deemed to be finding a solution to congestion problems (46%); a lack of transportation choices (25%), followed by the lack of connectivity in some parts of the region (14%) and safety issues (11%).

A number of roads were also identified as needing improvement by the public. The roads identified include Hardscrabble Road and Two Notch Road in Northeast Richland County, US 76 and Columbia Avenue in the Chapin area, US 378, US 1 and SC 6 in and around Lexington, Garners Ferry Road in Lower Richland County and Elmwood Avenue, Blossom Street, Forest Drive and Harbison Boulevard in Columbia.

The final version of the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan will include a fiscally constrained, prioritized list of projects and will address all modes of transportation within the region. The plan is scheduled to be completed in October 2008.

MWDB Assesses 10,000th Client

The Midlands Workforce Development Board (MWDB) recently served its 10,000th client since the inception of its WorkKeys assessment program in March of 2005. This feat was made possible by the hard work of the entire Midlands Workforce Development Board, its staff and the collaborative efforts of all partners within the Midlands Workforce System.

The 10,000th client, Britney O'Berry (pictured below with MWDB Chairman, Reginald Murphy), was assessed on August 5th, 2008. Miss O'Berry is a participant in our Workforce Investment Act assigned to workforce consultant Fran Mullaney of the Family Service Center of South Carolina.



Britney came to Fran looking to receive assistance in finding employment. Britney has worked in the past but has not been able to find a career. She has expressed interest in receiving training to become a licensed Certified Nursing Assistant.

Clients such as Miss O'Berry are ideally placed to benefit from the WorkKeys program. Despite having little work experience, she tested as being highly skilled, capable of learning and being successful in a wide variety of occupations as illustrated by her scores on the WorkKeys assessments. As a result of her test scores, Britney qualified to receive a Gold level WorkReadySC card and certificate.



Spotlight on: Joint Land Use Planning Study (JLUS)



Announcements

Please join us in welcoming our newest Board members:

Robert E. Malpass
City of Cayce

John Gibbons
Town of Irmo

Ellen Cooper
City of Columbia

Teresa Wilson
Florence
City of Columbia

As the population of our nation continues to grow, military bases that were formerly located in remote and rural locations are now being impacted by suburban sprawl. In military parlance, this is referred to as "encroachment", where intensive growth around an installation has the potential to limit the training missions that go on within the installation. Camp Williams in Utah has already begun to see restrictions placed on its firing ranges due to suburban growth in adjacent Salt Lake City and noise impacts on nearby residents.

In order to prevent a similar situation from occurring at Fort Jackson and McEntire ANG Station, around which several thousand residential



An M-109 Paladin, as used on Fort Jackson, on a training exercise

units have been constructed over the course of the past decade.

CMCOG recently received a \$235,000 grant from the US Defense Department to undertake a

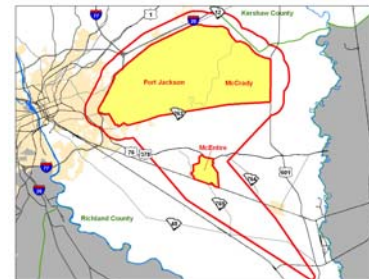
Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) which will analyze military training activities in conjunction with the land uses surrounding the two military bases.

The JLUS will have four main purposes: (1) to determine existing and future military training activities; (2) to determine existing and potential future land uses around the installations; (3) to look at where civilian and military activities overlap and conflict and (4) recommend measures to remedy or even prevent conflicts between the two. These measures include zoning changes, which would have the effect of controlling what is built adjacent to a military facility, and may also include revisions to local building codes to reduce noise impacts, which may be considerable when direct fire training exercises are being undertaken.

CMCOG recently entered into a contract with EDAW, a planning and design consultancy in Atlanta, to develop a Joint Land Use Study for the communities immediately surrounding Fort Jackson and McEntire Air National Guard Base in Lower Richland County.

A series of stakeholder meetings were held in mid-July and in late August, the first meetings of the two technical committees for both McEntire and Fort Jackson convened with staff of CMCOG and EDAW to discuss the study. CMCOG and EDAW staff will also meet with key stakeholders to determine the key issues and concerns to ensure that a thorough plan is

developed that addresses the future needs of all concerned parties.



The JLUS Study Area

Conducting a successful JLUS requires close cooperation between military installations and the cities and counties that surround them, as well as the support of a knowledgeable planning consulting firm. These three entities must work together to develop a clear picture of existing and future conditions on and around these installations, with the ultimate goal of being able to provide recommendations that the local communities can then act on and implement, in order to ensure compatibility between both on-post training activities and off-post land uses in the years to come. The Central Midlands region has enjoyed a strong military presence since 1917. A successful Joint Land Use Study that addresses the needs of both the military and civilian communities will provide for strong relationships for many years to come.

Community & Economic Development Highlights

The Town of Ridgeway was a recent recipient of a CDBG Community Infrastructure Grant of \$234,274 to extend public water service along a stretch of US Highway 21 between Longleaf Road and Smallwood Road to the south of the town. A total of 78 homes will be connected to the Town of Ridgeway's water system, benefiting 180 residents, of whom 81% are considered low and moderate income.

CMCOG is also assisting Newberry County and the City of Newberry with two economic development grants. Newberry County has received \$1



The new 463 acre Mid-Carolina Commerce Park at I-26 & Highway 773

million to provide water and sewer to the Mid-Carolina Commerce Park on Highway 773 at I-26 for UK-based Naysmith Precision Products plant, which will create 180 jobs and consist of \$25 million in capital investment.

The City of Newberry also received approval to apply for \$1 million to assist with a wastewater treatment plant expansion to serve the \$30 million expansion of the Kraft Foods/Louis Rich plant, one of Newberry County's primary employers. CMCOG will administer all three aforementioned projects.

The CMCOG
2007 Commercial Real Estate Survey,
2007 Multi-Family Housing Survey and
2007 Building Permit Survey are now available for purchase from the CMCOG office.

Contact
Andy Simmons at
803-376-5390 for
further details

Workforce Development News

SHARE

In its latest cutting edge initiative, the Midlands Workforce Development Board in partnership with the City of Columbia, Fast Forward Computer Technology Center and the US Department of Labor has implemented a new on-line resource directory to bridge this barrier. Targeted to serve individuals seeking services in Columbia and our surrounding area **Sharing How Access to Resources Empowers (SHARE)** will offer links for individuals seeking assistance, community and faith based organizations (FBCO), Workforce system partners, and a host of other service providers with access to the internet to obtain information on training, employment and many other services. Through this partnership, the City of Columbia will be the first municipality in the nation to offer **SHARE** to its community.



MIDLANDS WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

Fairfield County Transition Center

In yet another example of the kind of partnership the Midlands Workforce Development Board fosters to serve the needs of Dislocated Workers, the Fairfield County Transition Center (FCTC) has received additional resources to remain open beyond the 90 days that were originally approved. In concert with Fairfield County, the South Carolina Employment Security Commission and CMCOG, the Midlands Workforce Board opened the FCTC on February 25th, 2008 and began offering job search assistance; resume writ-

ing; job referrals; processing Unemployment Benefits; WorkKeys™ assessments; English as a Second Language workshops; and a host of other services to bridge the gap back to work.

The Transition Center has served over 500 workers laid-off from three major dislocations in Fairfield County. With the closing of two long time businesses due to foreign competition and one facility that closed due to cost cutting measures, many of these workers who had years of experience with these employers are now faced with a need to develop new skills. By offering courses in computer skills at the Transition Center, MWDB and its partners have made skill improvement more accessible, efficient and cost effective. Participants are thus more motivated to gain the kind of new skills they will need to succeed in the next phase of their work lives and services are being delivered where they are needed most.

CMCOG Staffer Graduates from Leadership Institute

Joe Ritchey, CMCOG's Family Caregiver Advocate, was selected as one of 30 individuals from across the nation to receive a scholarship to the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging's Leadership Institute in Maryland in May.



CMCOG's Joe Ritchey graduated from N4A's Leadership Institute in May

The Leadership Institute helps to enhance the capacity of the country's local aging professionals to lead their agencies to meet the challenges and opportunities that will result from our nation's rapidly aging population. The second class

of Leadership Institute graduates was recognized at n4a's 2008 Annual Conference held July 20-23, 2008 in Nashville, Tennessee.

The class was mentored by Doug Krug, co-founder of Enlightened Leadership Solutions to help prepare the participants for the heightened challenges and opportunities as they run their agencies with an eye towards meeting the changing needs of our nation's aging population.

Ombudsman Staff Assist Residents After Fire

Open Arms Community Care Home is a facility located in Little Mountain SC. On July 16, 2008 at approximately 4:30 a.m., a fire claimed the home of seven residents. No one was injured. The facility was totally destroyed.



Fire engulfed the Open Arms Care Home in Little Mountain in July

The Central Midlands Long-Term Care Ombudsman staff immediately located available beds so residents could be transferred to a safe environment. Contact was made to the Department of Health and Environ-

mental Control to coordinate the transport of the displaced residents to a facility that could accommodate the three residents needing placement who were all placed in the same facility. Two residents were placed by the Department of Mental Health and two went with family.

The CMCOG Ombudsman staff also delivered items of clothing, toiletries, travel bags and linen to the residents.

New CMCOG Staff

Please join us in welcoming our newest staff members

George Bistany joined CMCOG in May 2008 as Manager of Community & Economic Development. He will oversee the day-to-day administration of CMCOG's CDBG and EDA activities.

Frank Veney recently joined the staff of the MWDB as an Assessment Proctor

Save the Date LRTP Public Meetings

North Springs Community Center

1320 Clemson Road:
9/29/08
4-7pm

Dreher High School

3319 Millwood Avenue
9/23/08
4-7pm

Ballentine Community Center

1009 Bickley Rd
10/2/08
4pm-7pm

Lexington Town Hall

111 Maiden Lane
9/30/08
4-7pm

Dutch Square Mall

421 Bush River Road
10/4/08
11:00am -1:00pm



**The Official Newsletter of
CMCOG**

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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

As we enter the start of another new fiscal and program year at Central Midlands Council of Governments, a number of critical issues have come to regional prominence, in which the COG has the opportunity to play a pivotal role.

As our region grows, environmental concerns are increasingly becoming a factor. More vehicles on the road leads to increased air pollution; land clearance for new homes and businesses can lead to greater soil erosion and increased run-off into our groundwater supply, and our growing population places a greater demand on the ability of our region's water and sewer providers to provide a service and treat waste to a satisfactory level.

It goes without saying that a failure to adequately address these issues would negatively impact the quality of life for us in the Midlands.



CMCOG Chairman Dr. Jimmy Bales,
Richland County Legislative
Delegation

Environmental concerns are a major component in many of the projects currently being undertaken by the COG. The Midlands Tomorrow 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan will contain a number of measures with the aim of reducing vehicle emissions and promoting public transit as well as bicycle and pedestrian initiatives. The COG also

plays a lead role in building regional partnerships to take early, decisive action to avoid long term air quality impairment as well as maintaining water quality in our rivers and streams through the 208 Water Quality Management Plan and the work of the Environmental Planning Advisory Committee (EPAC). The recently announced "River Summit" will contain key input from CMCOG planners as work continues towards the development of a plan for maintaining and improving water quality for all users of the three major rivers that flow through Columbia.

In our local planning initiatives green alternatives and smart growth initiatives are always proposed to local governments as they develop comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances.

Growth is inevitable. We must ensure that we remain good stewards of our environment as we plan for the needs of the population of the Central Midlands Region.