



South Carolina Association of Regional Councils

## A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce

**COGs operate 37 SC Works offices throughout the state.**



[ COGs are the administrators and fiscal agents of federal Department of Labor WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) funds which pass through the SC Department of Employment and Workforce. COGs staff regional Workforce Development Boards which prioritize how WIOA funds will be deployed in each region. Through the 37 SC Works offices, COGs and their partners assisted 4,411 adults, 1,504 dislocated workers, and 2,450 youth with WIOA qualified job training and re-

employment over the latest program year. 186,399 South Carolinians received a Title III (Wagner-Peyser) staff assisted service in the latest program year. ]

## Caring for South Carolina Seniors

**In 2017, COGs provided 51,837 senior citizens with assistance. 768,296 meals were served, and seniors received counseling, referrals to healthcare providers, and advocacy.**



[ Seven COGs are designated as the regional Area Agency on Aging (AAA) and work with the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging to deliver services to Seniors across the state. These services provide critical meals, Medicare counseling, legal services and advocacy with long-term care providers, in-home care services, and most importantly, a network of care for some of South Carolina's most vulnerable citizens. ]

## Capital Access for Homegrown Jobs



**COGs and their affiliated Development Corporations have provided \$112 million of capital to 686 SC businesses, growing jobs and our state's economy.**

[ Capital provided by the EDA, ARC (Appalachian Regional Commission), USDA, and SBA has been leveraged by COGs for the benefit of new and growing businesses and farms. Since the early 1980s, COGs have loaned funds to expanding businesses throughout every region. Additionally, one COG manages a \$7 million brownfield cleanup loan fund on behalf of SC DHEC. ]

## 2017 IMPACT

**Why COGs?** Fifty years ago, Governor McNair recognized a need for greater regional coordination and planning in South Carolina. Councils of Governments (COGs) were formed in the late 1960s and by 1971, COGs were incorporated into the SC Constitution by voter referendum. Since that time, SC COGs have worked on behalf of the state, its citizens, local governments, and businesses to efficiently and effectively strengthen the workforce, create jobs, improve our infrastructure and keep seniors and low-income communities safe and healthy.

*"South Carolina COGs are a critical resource to local and state government. COGs help our towns and counties to be more efficient and effective. The COGs have brought literally billions of dollars back to our state for critical infrastructure and so much more."*

Dr. Roger Gaddy  
Mayor

Town of Winnsboro  
2017-2018 Chair  
SC Association  
of Regional Councils



## **Infrastructure = Economic and Community Development**

**In 2017, COGs developed and administered 142 infrastructure and community development grant projects for more than \$76 million across the state.**

[ On behalf of local governments, COGs write Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications for water, sewer, community revitalization, brownfield remediation, downtown and business district revitalization, and slum/blight removal. US Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant funds are provided to the SC Department of Commerce. Commerce then awards CDBG grants to non-entitlement cities and counties based upon competitive criteria. COGs also write and administer SC Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) grants and US Economic Development Administration (EDA) grants for water, sewer, roads, and other economic development purposes. ]

## **Roads to Greater Prosperity**

**All COGs engage in rural transportation planning, and four COGs serve as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for urban transportation planning.**

[ COG Boards and transportation policy committees recommend and prioritize transportation projects for inclusion in the regional TIP (transportation improvement program), which are then considered in the STIP (state transportation improvement program). The COGs provide feedback and input to the SC DOT (Department of Transportation) Commission regarding transportation priorities and needs across each region. Working with SC DOT, the COGs also write long-range transportation plans for each region, incorporating the state's safety goals, movement of freight, and maintenance of the national highway system. Additionally, COGs rate and rank regional transit grant proposals to provide SC DOT with feedback regarding the prioritization of transit needs. Finally, two COGs run rural transit systems, and one COG administers a major metropolitan transit system. ]



## **Expertise Means Effectiveness for Local Governments**

**In 2017, COGs assisted 65 local governments with planning services and planning staff support. COGs also were engaged to write 30 comprehensive land use plans.**



[ Many smaller local governments lack the capacity to fulfill statutory planning requirements for their jurisdictions, and COGs have filled critical gaps for these jurisdictions. COGs provided ongoing planning related staff services (planning staff, planning commission staff, geographic information systems, economic

development, procurement, etc.) for 34 cities, towns, and counties. COGs also completed other important planning projects such as capital improvement plans, strategic plans, multi-dimensional mapping, development ordinances, and zoning ordinances. Many COGs also function as the 208 regional water quality agency, and one COG provides civil engineering services to local governments. ]

## **Safe and Affordable Neighborhoods**



**Last year, COGs improved neighborhoods through the targeted demolition of 282 vacant and blighted houses and financed the creation/rehabilitation of 40 workforce/affordable housing units.**

[ Using a variety of programs, such as the HUD HOME program and the US Treasury Department's Hardest Hit Fund, some COGs finance the construction and rehabilitation of affordable and workforce housing units and provide assistance with utilities and other living expenses for low income families. COGs also have used federal and local funding sources to demolish blighted and vacant housing units, reducing neighborhood crime and improving quality of life. ]