Vetting, Reporting are Key in Police Hiring

O n a recent Sunday, eight new police hires at the SC Criminal Justice Academy failed the physical fitness test. Of that eight, some never finished the test, others took too long and a few required medical attention.

The failures — which took up coveted academy slots — might have been prevented if the departments that sent the recruits had devoted more time to preparing them for the physical demands of the course.

But putting new recruits through a pre-academy course or using a practice course at a nearby department aren't the only ways to increase the likelihood of success once the new hires are enrolled at the academy.

There are other things a police department should do before sending new hires to the academy for training. One option is to give them aptitude tests, such as one from Standard & Associates or Nelson-Denny, to see if an individual is likely to pass the academy's test.

Jackie Swindler, the director of the CJA, which is the certifying agency for law enforcement officers for the state, offered advice to municipal officials during the Municipal Association's Annual Meeting in July. He said it is helpful to observe whether any new recruits show unfamiliarity or discomfort with firearms or forceful physical contact.

Vetting, Reporting, page 2 >

New law

Act 215 went into effect in May. It requires that when an officer has been charged with misconduct, his agency must immediately submit paperwork documenting the misconduct to the Criminal Justice Academy. The officer may request a hearing within three years of the charge.

"If you have a misconduct (incident), you are separated from that agency, and you cannot work anywhere in law enforcement until it has been adjudicated," said Swindler. "Now that person has three years to ask for a hearing. If they don't ask for that hearing, they're done. If they ask for a hearing, our attorneys at the Criminal Justice Academy will hear their case and make a recommendation to our training council, which will make the final decision on whether or not that person maintains their certification."

The new law, which the Municipal Association supported, represents a clear break from how things used to be done.

"In the past, if you have a misconduct (incident), you don't work for that agency because they let you go. You cannot have a hearing until another agency hires you," said Swindler. "Then you could ask for a hearing, and that could be three years or 10 years down the road. I do not understand why an agency would hire somebody who currently has a cloud of misconduct hanging over them, because you have just accepted liability."

The change will enhance accountability and ultimately strengthen the relationship between police and residents, said Tiger Wells, governmental affairs liaison for the Municipal Association.

"I can't overstate the significance of the fact that law enforcement associations from across the state led the charge to secure these changes in the law," he said.

"Not only does the law define misconduct, but it also holds leadership responsible for reporting known allegations of misconduct. In so doing, the law enhances accountability by making it a lot harder for any bad apples to bounce from agency to agency. This, in turn, should help maintain or build relationships of trust between law enforcement officers and the public they serve."

Law enforcement recruits must pass a challenging physical agility test before they graduate from the SC Criminal Justice Academy. Photo: SC Criminal Justice Academy.

Speakers Offer Many Ways to Champion Cities

Jennifer Pinckney didn't stand before the hundreds of Annual Meeting attendees in July to recount the horror of a white supremacist's attack that killed her husband and eight other black worshippers at the Mother Emanuel AME Church three years ago.

She was on a different mission.

Pinckney, initially joined on stage by her two young daughters, urged the municipal officials to look to her husband, the Rev. Sen. Clementa Pinckney, as an example of a public servant — someone who actively listened and sought to learn about a problem before launching into a solution.

"You may have had a problem with him, but he didn't have a problem with you," said Pinckney, whose husband had served in the South Carolina House and Senate. "Most of all, Clementa loved people."

What's more, she said, here in South Carolina, we're supposed to be a state that takes care of one another.

That calls for approaching problems — from struggling schools to social divisions to poverty — with our eyes open. And time is short, she said. It's best to do the most good with what time we each have.

The problem is, we may not want to turn our gaze to the homeless man sitting with a sign asking for spare change, just as we may not want to look at blighted, abandoned buildings, Pinckney said. But we must. Visiting lower-income areas and participating in community functions — not just when there is an election but doing so all year round — helps local leaders make decisions that bring the greatest benefit to the public.

"Don't just go out there and talk to the top notch people," urged Pinckney, adding that to know what struggles an organization or a community has, you must reach out to the workers. "They're the ones who know the good, the bad and the ugly."

"Be with the people," she said. "You have the opportunity to do good and be good."

Tweet, post, tag and hashtag your city's successes

If social media is the "wild, wild west" of communication, it's time for municipal elected officials to explore the frontier.

That's because social platforms like Twitter and Facebook are where residents, legislators and the news media interact and share news.

It's time for cities and towns to meet them there.

"We must also be able to articulate why strong cities in general are a critical piece of our state-resident connection and economic success," said Cayce Mayor Elise Partin, urging attendees to tout their city's successes — from engaging residents to building communities to attracting employers.

"Cities provide so much value."

Partin urged Annual Meeting attendees to include the hashtag #StrongSCcities with all their social media posts as a way to categorize them as part of the growing collection of related posts.
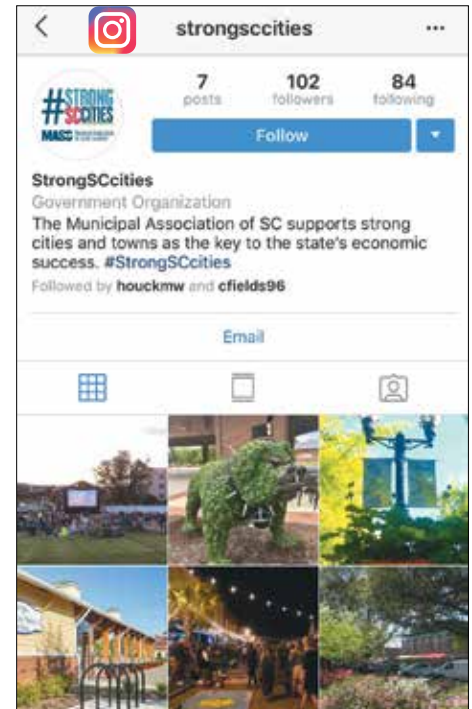
The Municipal Association encourages cities and towns to submit photos to be considered for the Association's Instagram page.

What does #StrongSCcities mean? "It's a simple message," said Partin. "Strong cities equal a strong South Carolina."

Follow the Association's new Instagram page, StrongSCcities, that showcases South Carolina's cities and towns. Submit high-resolution JPG images to be posted on the page with a brief description of the photo to Meredith Houck at mhouck@masc.sc.

Jennifer Pinckney urged attendees of the Municipal Association's Annual Meeting to engage with all members of a community, not just those at the top, in order to understand the struggles of an organization or group.

Williams-Blake Takes Helm

Delegates at the Municipal Association of South Carolina's Annual Meeting unanimously elected Octavia Williams-Blake, councilmember of the City of Florence, as the Association's president. She will serve a one-year term.

Elections took place on Friday, July 20, at the Association's Annual Meeting. When asked about her vision for South Carolina hometowns, here is what Williams-Blake had to say:

How are cities and towns influencing positive change in South Carolina?

Cities and towns are a concentration of talent, people and economic power that provide a place for the evolution of the arts, culture, and economic and technical innovation. They are centers of ideas and information. They are drivers of economic development.

Residents and businesses demand a level of services that ensure safe and protective environments, supporting retail and services that are essential for the growth and development of business and industry. Cities are characteristically the regional "drivers" that result in partnerships among the state, local agencies and private entities bringing in greater economic development opportunities.

Cities of all sizes continue to focus on development patterns centered around creating interesting and vibrant shared community spaces. These shared community spaces are helping to reshape downtowns and neighborhoods and improve community image. These spaces bring people together, create an environment for innovation, promote diversity and foster a place that binds us together.

Florence Councilmember Octavia Williams-Blake, the newly elected president of the Municipal Association, said cities make social engagement possible through the delivery of services such as police protection and recreation opportunities.

How is the delivery of city services related to a successful South Carolina?

City services are extremely important to the overall success of South Carolina. And every city identifies the services its residents need and determines the best way to deliver them. By providing many of the essential services such as police, fire, codes enforcement, planning, recreation, and economic development partnerships, cities create a place for social engagement — churches, shops, community venues and schools — and foster the arts and cultural development, along with interesting retail, restaurants and fun things to do.

What do you see as the biggest opportunities facing cities and towns?

Cities and towns — urban and rural, small and large — have the opportunity to support positive legislative initiatives that move our state forward. We have the opportunity to extend to our smaller communities many of the economic successes that our larger cities have recently experienced. Cities and towns are the perfect place to address many changing market dynamics such as online sales, local taxing restrictions and reductions in state revenues that are affecting funding for traditional and new needs.

The 2018 – 2019 Board of Directors

An 18-member board of directors, composed of both elected and appointed officials, sets policy for the Municipal Association of South Carolina. The officers (executive committee) are elected to one-year terms at the Association's Annual Meeting. The officers' terms will expire in July 2019.

President
Councilmember Octavia Williams-Blake, Florence

First Vice President
Mayor Dennis Raines, Mauldin

Second Vice President
Mayor Cornelius Huff, Inman

Third Vice President
Councilmember Kathy Pender, Rock Hill

Immediate Past President
Mayor Elise Partin, Cayce

Board members are elected at the Association's Annual Meeting for three-year terms. The board is composed of representatives from each of the 10 councils of governments areas and three at large seats.

Councilmember Amy Brown of Chesterfield
Representing: Pee Dee Regional Council of Governments area
Term expires: July 2019

Mayor J.C. Cook of Clemson
Representing: Appalachian Regional Council of Governments area
Term expires: July 2020

Mayor Terrence Culbreath of Johnston
Representing: Upper Savannah Council of Governments area
Term expires: July 2021

Mayor Jackie Heyward of Hollywood
Representing: At large
Term expires: July 2020

Councilmember Mary Jeffcoat of Myrtle Beach
Representing: Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments area
Term expires: July 2021

Mayor Billy Keyserling of Beaufort
Representing: Lowcountry Council of Governments area
Term expires: July 2019

Mayor Michael Lockliear of Moncks Corner
Representing: Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments area
Term expires: July 2019

Mayor Steve MacDougall of Lexington
Representing: Central Midlands Council of Governments area
Term expires: July 2020

Mayor Wade McLeod of Paxville
Representing: Santee Lynches Council of Governments area
Term expires: July 2019

Mayor Rick Osbon of Aiken
Representing: At large
Term expires: July 2021

Councilmember Wes Spurrier of Clover
Representing: Catawba Regional Council of Governments area
Term expires: July 2021

Mayor Jason Stapleton of Williston
Representing: Lower Savannah Council of Governments area
Term expires: July 2020

City Administrator John Yow of Orangeburg
Representing: At large
Term expires: July 2019

NEWS BRIEFS

Members of the **SC Community Development Association** elected their 2018 – 2019 board of directors. They are President Shannon Munoz, City of Hartsville; Vice President Imma Nwobodu, Greenville County Redevelopment Authority; Secretary Jessie Walker, Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments; Past President Carolet Thomas, City of Sumter. Members at large are Barbara Johnson, Lowcountry Council of Governments; DeWayne Ennis, Town of Allendale; Kimberly Herndon, Catawba Regional Council of Governments; Martha Whitaker, SC Department of Commerce; Mauretta Dorsey, Town of Andrews; Emory Langston, Lower Savannah Council of Governments; and Shawn Bell, City of Fountain Inn.

The Drug Abuse Resistance Education Association of SC recognized the **Springdale Police Department** as the 2018 D.A.R.E. Agency of the Year at the annual South Carolina Association of School Resource Officers/D.A.R.E. Association of SC awards banquet.

The National Civic League named the **Town of Mount Pleasant** an All-America City. The award recognizes "communities that leverage civic engagement, collaboration, inclusiveness and innovation to successfully address local issues." Mount Pleasant also won the designation in 2010.

The **City of Greenwood** received a "Creative Partnerships" recognition by the South Carolina Palmetto Housing Forum awards for its neighborhood revitalization project. The project involved establishing partnerships, securing funds, removing blight and restoring neighborhood pride.

Business License Standardization

Businesses locate in cities because commercial activity is concentrated in cities. Businesses and their customers depend on the services cities provide, which include police and fire protection, zoning, street lights, sidewalks and many others that can't be billed on an individual usage basis.

Through a business license tax, businesses help pay for the city services that they depend on to operate successfully.

In most cities, 25 to 50 percent of their general fund budgets come from the business license tax, and there is no alternative revenue stream to replace it.

City leaders have little flexibility in raising revenue because of Act 388's millage and reassessment caps and restrictions on the use of other revenue sources such as hospitality and accommodations taxes. This is in addition to the shrinking allocation from the Local Government Fund.

Standardizing business licensing practices

For more than 30 years, the Municipal Association has developed and shared common practices to help cities administer their business license tax in a fair and equitable manner.

In 2007, the Association made available to cities a rate class schedule, which is an appendix to the model business license ordinance that establishes a common rate structure based on the North American Industrial Classification System and Internal Revenue service statistics. The Association updates the rate schedule annually.

The Association's Business License Handbook outlines proper application and collection of the tax. City business licensing officials receive substantial training about professional best practices from the SC Business Licensing Officials Association. In 2014, the Association established a standardized business license application specifically tailored to the needs of transient businesses (those that do work in multiple jurisdictions).

Frequently asked questions about business license standardization

What is the model business license ordinance?

The model business license ordinance, developed by the Municipal Association, outlines language cities can use to ensure their business license ordinances comply with state law and other best practices of business licensing.

The model ordinance uses the North American Industry Classification System to place businesses into proper classifications according to their profitability using IRS data. The Association updates these classes when the IRS updates the data to ensure cities have the most current information in their ordinances.

How can standardizing business license practices and adopting the model ordinance among all cities make the renewal process easier for businesses?

Standardization is an important step in helping to maintain this important revenue source for cities and towns.

Businesses with locations in multiple jurisdictions have a sometimes frustrating task — tracking the varying due dates for license renewals and rate class schedules. Municipalities and counties can adopt the Municipal Association's model business license ordinance and other standard practices to reduce confusion for businesses. These standard practices illustrate to businesses around the state the goal of municipalities and counties is to be more business friendly.

What can cities do to standardize their business license renewal practices right now?

Cities that haven't adopted the model business license ordinance should transition to using it as soon as possible. This standardizes license periods and due dates, which further streamlines licensing for businesses. Cities should encourage business owners or operators who do business in multiple cities and towns to use the standardized business license application, which helps avoid the hassle of filling out a different application for every jurisdiction where the business operates.

Business License Standardization Checklist

☑ Accept the standardized business license application

☑ Adopt the most current model business license ordinance with the standard seven classes

☑ Adopt calculating the tax based on the business' prior calendar year

☑ Adopt the standard license year due dates and penalty dates:
- *May 1 – April 30: License Year*
- *April 30: Due Date*
- *May 1: Penalty Date*

Abbeville Aiken Allendale Anderson Andrews Arcadia Lakes Atlantic Beach Awendaw Aynor Bamberg Barnwell Batesburg-Leesville Beaufort Belton Bennettsville Bethune Bishopville Blacksburg Blackville Blenheim Bluffton Blythewood Bonneau Bowman Branchville Briarcliffe Acres Brunson Burnettown Calhoun Falls Camden Cameron Campobello Carlisle Cayce Central Central Pacolet Chapin Charleston Cheraw Chesnee Chester Chesterfield Clemson Clinton Clio Clover Columbia Conway Cope Cordova Cottageville Coward Cowpens Cross Hill Darlington Denmark Dillon Donalds Due West Duncan Easley Eastover Edgefield Edisto Beach Ehrhardt Elgin Elko Elloree Estill Eutawville Fairfax Florence Folly Beach Forest Acres Fort Lawn Fort Mill Fountain Inn Furman Gaffney Gaston Georgetown Gifford Gilbert Goose Creek Govan Gray Court Great Falls Greeleyville Greenville Greenwood Greer Hampton Hanahan Hardeeville Harleyville Hartsville Heath Springs Hemingway Hickory Grove Hilda Hilton Head Island Hodges Holly Hill Hollywood Honea Path Inman Irmo Isle of Palms Iva Jackson James Island Jamestown Jefferson Jenkinsville Johnsonville Johnston Jonesville Kershaw Kiawah Island Kingstree Kline Lake City Lake View Lamar Lancaster Landrum Lane Latta Laurens Lexington Liberty Lincolnville Little Mountain Livingston Lockhart Lodge Loris Lowndesville Lowrys Luray Lyman Lynchburg Manning Marion Mauldin Mayesville McBee McClellanville McColl McConnells McCormick Meggett Moncks Corner Monetta Mount Croghan Mount Pleasant Mullins Myrtle Beach Neeses New Ellenton Newberry Nichols Ninety Six Norris North North Augusta North Charleston North Myrtle Beach Norway Olanta Olar Orangeburg Pacolet Pageland Pamplico Parksville Patrick Pawleys Island Paxville Peak Pelion Pelzer Pendleton Perry Pickens Pine Ridge Pinewood Plum Branch Pomaria Port Royal Prosperity Quinby Ravenel Reevesville Reidville Richburg Ridge Spring Ridgeland Ridgeville Ridgeway Rock Hill Rockville Rowesville Ruby Salem Salley Saluda Santee Scotia Scranton Seabrook Island Sellers Seneca Sharon Silverstreet Simpsonville Six Mile Smoaks Smyrna Snelling Society Hill South Congaree Spartanburg Springdale Springfield St. George St. Matthews St. Stephen Starr Stuckey Sullivans Island Summerton Summerville Summit Sumter Surfside Beach Swansea Sycamore Tatum Tega Cay Timmonsville Travelers Rest Trenton Troy Turbeville Ulmer Union Van Wyck Vance Varnville Wagener Walhalla Walterboro Ward Ware Shoals Waterloo Wellford West Columbia West Pelzer West Union Westminster Whitmire Williams Williamston Williston Windsor Winnsboro Woodford Woodruff Yemassee York Abbeville Aiken Allendale Anderson Andrews Arcadia Lakes Atlantic Beach Awendaw Aynor Bamberg Barnwell Batesburg-Leesville Beaufort Belton Bennettsville Bethune Bishopville Blacksburg Blackville Blenheim Bluffton Blythewood Bonneau Bowman Branchville Briarcliffe Acres Brunson Burnettown Calhoun Falls Camden Cameron Campobello Carlisle Cayce Central Central Pacolet Chapin Charleston Cheraw Chesnee Chester Chesterfield Clemson Clinton Clio Clover Columbia Conway Cope Cordova Cottageville Coward Cowpens Cross Hill Darlington Denmark Dillon Donalds Due West Duncan Easley Eastover Edgefield Edisto Beach Ehrhardt Elgin Elko Elloree Estill Eutawville Fairfax Florence Folly Beach Forest Acres Fort Lawn Fort Mill Fountain Inn Furman Gaffney Gaston Georgetown Gifford Gilbert Goose Creek Govan Gray Court Great Falls Greeleyville Greenville Greenwood Greer Hampton Hanahan Hardeeville Harleyville Hartsville Heath Springs Hemingway Hickory Grove Hilda Hilton Head Island Hodges Holly Hill Hollywood Honea Path Inman Irmo Isle of Palms Iva Jackson James Island Jamestown Jefferson Jenkinsville Johnsonville Johnston Jonesville Kershaw Kiawah Island Kingstree Kline Lake City Lake View Lamar Lancaster Landrum Lane Latta Laurens Lexington Liberty Lincolnville Little Mountain Livingston Lockhart Lodge Loris Lowndesville Lowrys Luray Lyman Lynchburg

Annual Report
2018

Myrtle Beach Norway Olanta Olar Orangeburg Pacolet Pageland Pamplico Parksville Patrick Pawleys Island Paxville Peak Pelion Pelzer Pendleton Perry Pickens Pine Ridge Pinewood Plum Branch Pomaria Port Royal Prosperity Quinby Ravenel Reevesville Reidville Richburg Ridge Spring Ridgeland Ridgeville Ridgeway Rock Hill Rockville Rowesville Ruby Salem Salley Saluda Santee Scotia Scranton Seabrook Island Sellers Seneca Sharon Silverstreet Simpsonville Six Mile Smoaks Smyrna Snelling Society Hill South Congaree Spartanburg Springdale Springfield St. George St. Matthews St. Stephen Starr Stuckey Sullivans Island Summerton Summerville Summit Sumter Surfside Beach Swansea Sycamore Tatum Tega Cay Timmonsville Travelers Rest Trenton Troy Turbeville Ulmer Union Van Wyck Vance Varnville Wagener Walhalla Walterboro Ward Ware Shoals Waterloo Wellford West Columbia West Pelzer West Union Westminster Whitmire Williams Williamston Williston Windsor Winnsboro Woodford Woodruff Yemassee York Abbeville Aiken Allendale Anderson Andrews Arcadia Lakes Atlantic Beach Awendaw Aynor Bamberg Barnwell Batesburg-Leesville Beaufort Belton Bennettsville Bethune Bishopville Pacolet Chapin Charleston Cheraw Chesnee Chester Chesterfield Clemson Clinton Clio Columbia Conway Cope Cordova Cottageville Coward Cowpens Cross Hill Darlington Denmark Dillon Donalds Due West Duncan Easley Eastover Edgefield Edisto Beach Ehrhardt Elgin Elko Elloree Estill Eutawville Fairfax Florence Folly Beach Forest Acres Fort Lawn Fort Mill Fountain Inn Furman Gaffney Gaston Georgetown Gifford Gilbert Goose Creek Govan Gray Court Great Falls Greeleyville Greenville Greenwood Greer Hampton Hanahan Hardeeville Harleyville Hartsville Heath Springs Hemingway Hickory Grove Hilda Hilton Head Island Hodges Holly Hill

From the Executive Director

Every day since I came on board as the executive director of the Municipal Association in January, I have been amazed at the great work going on here on behalf of our cities and towns. As I have visited more than 60 cities and towns (see the map on the next page), I have seen first-hand some of the exciting progress being made all over the state.

As centers of commerce, South Carolina's cities and towns play such a critical role in the state's economic growth and prosperity. Here at the Municipal Association, our goal is to make sure elected officials and city staffs have the tools they need to make their cities the place where people want to live, work and play. Our role is to bring local officials together to learn, share knowledge, discuss solutions and build relationships as we strive to make a stronger South Carolina.

This year, in response to a record number of new mayors and councilmembers, the Association hosted an orientation session in May. This session was the first step for these new officials toward getting the information and resources they need to run their cities effectively and efficiently. Due to its success, this orientation will be an annual event to get newly elected officials quickly acclimated and on the path to enrolling in and graduating from our Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government, which celebrates the 30th anniversary of its first graduating class this year.

This report spotlights many of this year's programs and services that help local officials meet the needs of their communities. The front section tells the stories of many of the new and growing programs and services the Association provides to local officials. The back section is a concise directory of all the Association's programs and services with staff contact information. We are here to serve you.

I look forward to the opportunity to build on our past successes and expand our work so we can deliver the services and resources local leaders need to make our cities and towns the best they can be.
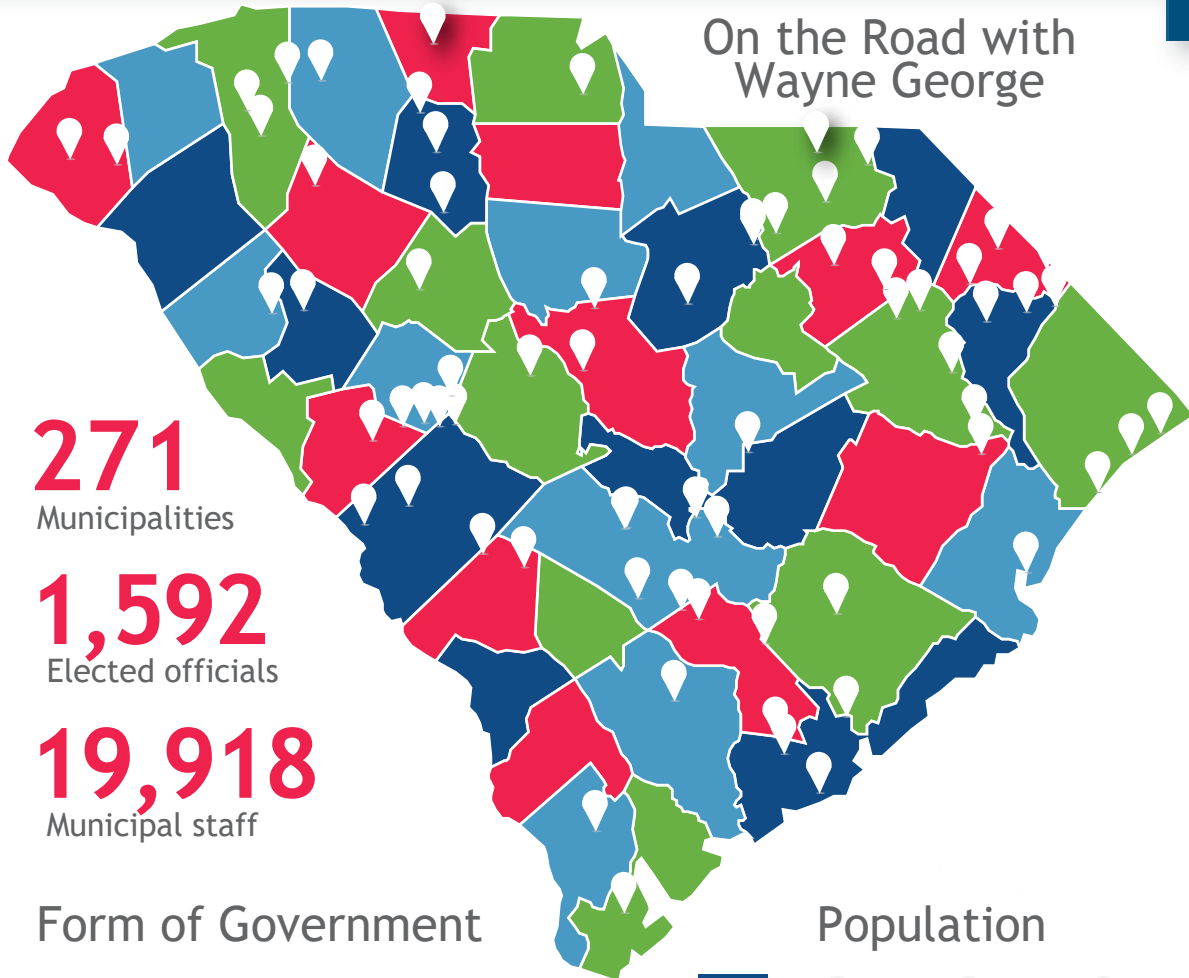
J. Wayne George
Executive Director

South Carolina By the Numbers

On the Road with Wayne George

271
Municipalities

1,592
Elected officials

19,918
Municipal staff

Form of Government

Council-Manager
33

Council
99

Mayor-Council
139

Population

19	More than 20,001 pop.
19	10,001 – 20,000 pop.
24	5,000 – 10,000 pop.
85	1,001 – 5,000 pop.
124	1 – 1,000 pop.
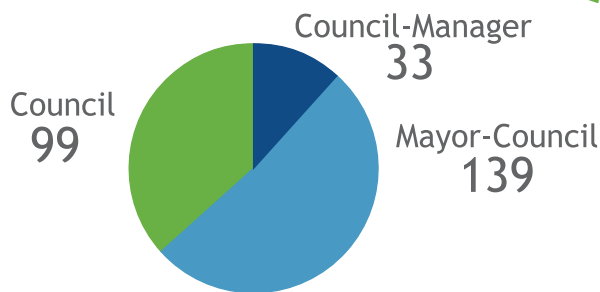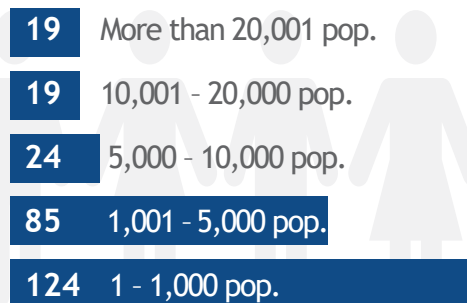
The Municipal Association, representing the state's 271 incorporated cities and towns, remains dedicated to the principles of its founding in 1930 — to pursue initiatives that cities and towns can carry out more efficiently and effectively together through the Association than they can individually. Through shared voices, shared knowledge and shared solutions, the Association pursues this mission.

Shared Voices

From the very start of the Association in the early 1930s, South Carolina municipal officials understood that only by working together could they effectively communicate the needs and views of municipal government to residents, state and federal lawmakers, the business community and the news media. The Association's online and print resources help local officials get easily accessible information about issues and topics important to cities and towns.

Local elected officials are the backbone of the Association's advocacy work at the State House. This year, 48 local officials took their own advocacy work to a new level by participating in the advocacy class offered by the Advanced Municipal Elected Officials Institute.

"As an elected official, I thought I had a pretty good idea of what it was like to be an advocate for my city in the legislature," said Jenn Hulehan, a councilmember from the City of Simpsonville.

After participating in the class, she said, "I learned there's so much more to being effective at the legislature than just picking up the phone when I need my legislator's vote on a certain issue. We learned about all the work it takes to get a bill even to the first step of a subcommittee hearing. We saw first-hand when we visited the State House how easy it is for our legislators to get inundated with requests and why our voices as local officials are so important."

Hulehan's words also ring true when talking about the resources local officials need to be effective advocates on behalf of their cities and towns. Lexington Mayor Steve MacDougall said, "I've gotten accustomed to being able to check my Twitter feed to know what's happening to bills impacting cities at the State House because I follow our Association's lobbyists. It kind of feels like I'm right there with them."

In addition to social media, other Association resources kept local officials updated throughout the legislative session on bills such as the plastic bag ban, utility relocation and funding for drainage projects.

MacDougall said, "I heard from the Association's legislative staff that I needed to make calls quickly to members of my legislative delegation asking for their support on a bill to provide funding for drainage projects. I pulled up background information from an *Uptown* article, looked at the previous week's legislative report and used talking points on the website to effectively communicate how this issue impacted my town."

By the numbers

484 // Bills tracked in the SC General Assembly impacting cities and towns

Local officials participating in the nine 2017 Regional Advocacy Meetings // **279**

4,000+ // Subscribers to the legislative report, *From the Dome to Your Home*

Registrants at **2018 Hometown Legislative Action Day** (138 cities and towns represented) // **562**

900 // Tweets about timely issues and legislative developments

Public information officers and risk management staff who learned about crisis management from the chief public information officer of the Connecticut State Police, who led the communication effort in the aftermath of the Sandy Hook Elementary School mass shooting. // **160**

176,322 // The increase in webpage views over last year (14.6 percent)

Subscribers to *The Uplift* an e-newletter launched in April highlighting positives of SC cities and towns // **716**

Shared Knowledge

The Association plays an important role in developing municipal elected officials' and employees' knowledge and skills through a wide range of training programs, publications and meetings.

The training offered by the Municipal Association can have a decades-long impact. Just ask Aiken City Councilmember Lessie B. Price *(above far right in 1989 with Mullins Mayor Wayne George, now the executive director of the Association; Sumter Councilmember Bob Galiano; and Howard Duvall, then-executive director of the Association).*

In 1989, Price was just elected to city council and immediately enrolled in the Association's new training program for elected officials, the Municipal Elected Officials Institute. She was one of the program's earliest graduates. During this year's celebration of MEOI's 30th anniversary, Price, who continues to serve on the Aiken City Council, said, "The Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government gave me a head start with the initial training. Then as I managed to get additional training over the years, it was very enriching for me as I dealt with issues in many areas."

This year, the Association launched a new orientation for newly elected officials. Forty-three newly elected mayors and city councilmembers representing 31 municipalities from Mount Pleasant to Govan attended the orientation in Columbia. It gave new elected officials a broad overview of their roles and responsibilities as well as insight into services available from the Association.

For one town's council, the inaugural orientation event was not to be missed. Mayor Roger Scott of the Town of Pelzer said he and all but one member of Pelzer Town Council attended the orientation.

"I really enjoyed the fellowship being there and talking to other people from other cities and towns," Scott said. "I enjoyed the speakers, and there were some great questions. I would give it an 'A.' It seems like when you're in a small crowd like that, you feel more comfortable asking questions."

The meeting may have marked a first for the town. "To my knowledge, no one from Pelzer has attended any Association meetings in Columbia, so we're wanting to be proactive and to learn more."

Eight city councils that can count all of their members as MEOI graduates received recognition this year from the Association as members of the MEOI Honor Roll. In the Town of Pendleton, which was one of those recognized, Mayor Frank Crenshaw said the Honor Roll designation speaks well of the town. "We all saw the importance of getting training to best serve our constituents," he said. "By graduating from the institute, we have demonstrated our commitment as an entire town council to public service."

By the numbers

2018 Achievement Award winners

- Edisto Beach
- Hampton
- Moncks Corner
- Bluffton
- Rock Hill
- Florence
- Hartsville
- Myrtle Beach
- Woodruff

10% Increase

in membership numbers for **Municipal Technology Association of SC**, **SC Association of Stormwater Managers** and **Municipal Court Administration Association**

At least one official from

204 cities and towns

attended at least one Association event.

Field services managers met with dozens of municipal councils to conduct more than

48 trainings

or facilitate goal-setting sessions.

The **Building Officials Association of SC** members played a leadership role to make doing business across the state easier by advocating at the General Assembly for legislation to clarify when building permits and engineering documents are needed for certain construction activities. BOASC also held its first fall training attended by 50 building officials from across the state.

More than **5,700** municipal and elected officials representing **204** cities and towns registered for educational programs.

310 Hours

in-person training offered to elected officials and city staff for the 12 affiliate groups, Main Street SC, MEOI, HLAD and Annual Meeting.

Shared Solutions

Cities and towns face many of the same challenges and can find solutions by pooling resources and ideas through the Association.

Grant programs supported by the Association can both help share good ideas and provide a crucial infusion of funding that can often complement other sources. The Association awarded $250,000 from the Hometown Economic Development Grant program to 10 cities and towns in 2017, the second year of the grant program, and will award $300,000 in 2018.

Like many small towns, the Town of Johnston was struggling economically. So the town sought a Hometown Economic Development Grant to landscape its downtown and redevelop its former police station, which was being used as a garden center, into a community center to serve residents and welcome visitors.

"The redevelopment of the old police station will inspire residents' hometown pride and give our small rural town something distinctive," said Johnston Mayor Terrence Culbreath. "Johnston residents are starting to see how much potential there is here."

The town's welcome center is part of a push to capitalize on its "Peach Capital of the World" nickname and use the garden center as a place for local farmers to sell their peaches.

Not only are cities benefiting from grants for their economic development projects, but many have also used grants through Risk Management Services programs. RMS provided $100,000 for the law enforcement liability reduction grants from the SC Municipal Insurance and Risk Financing Fund and $205,000 for SC Municipal Insurance Trust grants for soft body armor, public works safety equipment and fire safety equipment.

Risk Management Services also provided police training for use-of-force decision-making using the Association's two law enforcement simulators.

"I found the simulator training to be as close to realistic as one could expect," said Kelvin Washington, chief of police for the City of Darlington. "We were able to monitor officers' judgement as well as their willingness and ability to engage."

His department realized an added benefit from using the simulator: Officials outside the police department got a chance to observe it in use.

"City leadership and other key members of our community had an opportunity to see how little time officers have to make split second decision."

By the numbers

In its first two years, the Hometown Economic Development Grant program awarded **$450,000** to cities and towns, which leveraged more than $1.2 million from federal, state, local and private funding sources.

2017 HEDG winners: Spartanburg, Johnston, West Columbia, Belton, Pickens, Estill, McClellanville, Landrum and Anderson.

RMS developed a new training curriculum, **"Respect and Liability,"** to help prevent harassment claims.

The value of SCMIRF's insured property **grew by $300 million**, from $3.4 billion to $3.7 billion.

Enhancements to the **Setoff Debt Program's** software made it easier for participants to upload claims and bills, while a redesigned homepage helped them better identify tasks and deadlines.

Rising insurance costs increased the amount of taxes disbursed to cities and towns through the Insurance Tax Collection Program and the Brokers Tax Collection Program, both of which had **100 percent participation** from municipalities for three years running.

An audit of medical bill reviews led to a **50 percent reduction** in medical bill processing fees and the implementation of a technical bill review for SCMIT and SCMIRF members.

Employees of RMS member cities completed more than **11,000 online courses** on topics that included back injury prevention, workplace harassment, and defensive driving basics, designed to reduce the number of workers' compensation claims, improve officer safety and reduce liability for municipalities.

Internal Services

Technology is a key factor in the Association's vision for delivering quality services to cities and towns. Technology updates increased efficiency for the Association's staff by reducing redundancy, cutting costs and consolidating functions.

When RMS debuted a **new online claims submission portal** in November of 2016, members were only filing 49 percent of their SCMIRF claims online and 57 percent of their SCMIT claims online.

By March of 2018, **95 percent of SCMIRF claims** and **99 percent of SCMIT claims** were filed online.

The change helped SCMIT and SCMIRF process a combined **3,300 new claims** during the year.

The finance department's rollout of a new budgeting and report-writing system resulted in more accurate, timely reporting that allowed staff to manage their own budgets and provide feedback with projections throughout the year. Project managers no longer had to request the same information from multiple reports and had real-time access to accounting data and their budgets, allowing then to better manage the funds.

A new payroll service integrated payroll and human resources functions into one software package. This helps the Association staff manage leave, time and attendance, payroll, and benefits, while providing better customer service to Association employees.

A new cloud-based system for both data backup and disaster recovery for the Association's network cut costs by replacing the need for two separate solutions.

Directory of Services

More than 85 years ago, a small group of local elected officials realized they had to work together to meet the challenges of the changing times. With this mission in mind, they organized the Municipal Association of South Carolina.

The Municipal Association is still dedicated to the principle of its founding members: to join together to pursue initiatives cities and towns can carry out more efficiently and effectively by working together through the Association than by working individually.

A nonpartisan, nonprofit association representing all of the state's 271 incorporated cities and towns, the Municipal Association fulfills its mission through **shared voices, shared knowledge** and **shared solutions**.

This Directory of Services outlines all of the Association's programs and services available to South Carolina cities and towns.

Shared Voices

From the very start of the Association in the early 1930s, South Carolina municipal officials understood that only by working together could they effectively communicate the needs and views of municipal government to state and federal lawmakers.

Lobbying the State Legislature and Congress
The Association advocates for changes in state law to address city challenges and testifies against legislation that would harm cities. Partnerships play an important part in the Association's advocacy efforts. The Association also monitors federal legislation through the National League of Cities and advocates on behalf of South Carolina cities and towns when federal issues impact the state.
Staff Contact: Reba Campbell

Regional Advocacy Meetings
Each fall, the Association hosts 10 Regional Advocacy Meetings around the state to talk about the challenges facing cities and towns and how changes to state law could help meet these challenges. Based on these conversations, the legislative committee and board of directors set the Association's annual advocacy initiatives.
Staff Contact: Casey Fields

Legislative Tracking and Reports
During the South Carolina legislative session, the Association actively monitors bills impacting cities and towns. Updated daily during the session, the online tracking system helps municipal leaders follow subcommittee, committee and floor action.

Each Friday during the legislative session, municipal officials receive *From the Dome to Your Home*, which recaps the week's major legislative events and previews the upcoming week's activities. It is also posted on the Association's website and shared with more than 5,000 social media followers.

At the end of the legislative session, the Association produces its annual legislative report recapping work on the advocacy initiatives and legislative action on major bills of municipal interest.
Staff Contact: Casey Fields

Hometown Legislative Action Day
In February, Hometown Legislative Action Day draws local officials from all over the state to Columbia to get updates on current legislative issues and to visit their local legislators at the State House.
Staff Contact: Reba Campbell

Public Engagement

Legislators, business leaders, the news media and key influencers learn about successes in cities and towns through online and print resources.

Social Media Channels
The Association's Twitter (@MuniAssnSC), Facebook (MuniAssnSC.StrongSCcities) and Instagram (StrongSCcities) accounts provide up-to-the-minute information on State House activity and share good news stories about cities and towns. A regular schedule of social media posts highlighting *Uptown* stories increases traffic to the online version of the monthly newsletter and to the Association's website.
Staff Contact: Meredith Houck

Publication Partnerships
Several successful publication partnerships spotlight ways strong cities underpin the state's economic development success.

The Association partners with Columbia and Greenville *Business Monthly* magazines by providing a bimonthly column highlighting business-friendly practices in cities and towns. The partnership with *SC Biz* magazine to publish the Association's biannual *Cities Mean Business* magazine highlights how city amenities, initiatives and services improve residents' quality of life, which helps attract investment.

Through these partnerships, the value of cities to the state's economic health reaches a wide audience of business leaders and state policy makers.
Staff Contact: Reba Campbell

***City Connect* Blog**
The *City Connect* blog offers short, timely updates on a variety of issues. The blog packages information in a format that is useful not only to local officials but also to the news media, legislators and the public.
Staff Contact: Reba Campbell

Shared Knowledge

The Association plays an important role in developing municipal elected officials' and employees' knowledge and skills through a wide range of training programs, publications and meetings.

Affiliate Associations

The Municipal Association supports 12 affiliate organizations by providing training and networking for a variety of local government positions with specialized training needs.

In addition to traditional face-to-face training and networking opportunities, the affiliate associations offer online communities for members to share best practices and to pose specific questions related to their local government responsibilities.
Staff Contact: Eric Budds

Association of South Carolina Mayors
The Association of South Carolina Mayors provides opportunities for its members to more fully engage in advocating for issues that affect cities and towns, to network, to take part in educational activities, and to share ideas and best practices.
Staff Contact: Casey Fields

Building Officials Association of SC

The Building Officials Association of SC is a professional development organization of building and code enforcement officials. Members are dedicated to safeguarding life, health and property through the uniform application, interpretation, and enforcement of building codes adopted by local governments. BOASC offers education and training opportunities to its members, promotes the importance of building codes and their enforcement, monitors issues before the SC Building Codes Council and the General Assembly, and provides technical assistance to local government officials.
Staff Contact: Scott Slatton

Municipal Court Administration Association of SC

The Municipal Court Administration Association of South Carolina offers training at two workshops for court administrators, clerks of court, municipal judges and other municipal employees involved in court administration. The Supreme Court of South Carolina Commission on CLE and Specialization and the Office of Victims Services recognize these workshops for continuing education credits.
Staff Contact: Bill Taylor

Municipal Technology Association of SC

The Municipal Technology Association of SC promotes municipalities' effective use of technology. MTASC exposes its members to a broad range of technology systems, platforms and solutions. The training serves IT staff and those with GIS responsibilities, in addition to employees who work in other departments but have technology-related duties.
Staff Contact: Sara Snell

SC Association of Municipal Power Systems

All of the 21 municipal electric utilities are members of the SC Association of Municipal Power Systems. Originally, SCAMPS existed solely for its members to help one another during times of disaster. Although mutual aid is still the backbone of SCAMPS, the affiliate's scope also includes legislative initiatives and training.
Staff Contact: Eric Budds

SC Association of Stormwater Managers

The SC Association of Stormwater Managers offers its members quarterly training on stormwater management policies and best practices. The SC Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors recognizes the quarterly training sessions for continuing education credits.
Staff Contact: Sara Snell

SC Business Licensing Officials Association

The South Carolina Business Licensing Officials Association promotes best practices for administering and enforcing the local business license tax. Through rigorous training sessions, members learn skills and practices that make licensing in their cities and towns more efficient and business friendly.

The professional designation programs of Accreditation in Business Licensing and Masters in Business Licensing reflects members' dedication to continuing education.
Staff Contact: Scott Slatton

SC Community Development Association

The South Carolina Community Development Association provides educational forums for its members to address economic and community development needs. Members include municipal, county, regional and state community development professionals; employees of private companies with an interest in community development; elected officials; and volunteers.
Staff Contact: Sara Snell

SC Municipal Attorneys Association

The South Carolina Municipal Attorneys Association's annual meeting covers issues important to municipal attorneys, whether working as municipal staff or as a municipality's outside counsel. The Supreme Court of South Carolina Commission on CLE and Specialization approves this training session for continuing education credits.
Staff Contact: Tigerron Wells

SC Municipal Finance Officers, Clerks and Treasurers Association

The South Carolina Municipal Finance Officers, Clerks and Treasurers Association offers training programs covering the diverse responsibilities of its members. All of the training sessions qualify for a combination of continuing education credits for certified municipal clerks, certified public accountants and certified public treasurers. MFOCTA sponsors the Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Institute with the Municipal Association and the College of Charleston's Joseph P. Riley Jr. Center for Livable Communities.
Staff Contact: Jeff Shacker

SC Municipal Human Resources Association

The South Carolina Municipal Human Resources Association promotes sound human resources administration and encourages innovative programs. Through its training programs, MHRA provides information and the opportunity to exchange ideas among its members. The national Human Resources Certification Institute and the Society for Human Resources Management recognize this training for continuing education credits.
Staff Contact: Sara Snell

SC Utility Billing Association

The South Carolina Utility Billing Association provides training and networking opportunities for its members, including billing clerks, meter readers and department managers. SCUBA's meetings encompass a variety of topics focused on customer service, safety in the workplace, and new technologies to increase the efficiencies of utility billing and collections.
Staff Contact: Ken Ivey

Training Institutes

Educational opportunities are available to municipal officials through four training institutes.

SC Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government

The SC Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government trains elected officials to increase their understanding of local government operations. Elected officials take seven required courses to complete the institute. The required courses consist of two day-long sessions held each February in Columbia the day after Hometown Legislative Action Day and five additional classes, held yearly at the 10 councils of governments' locations or on-demand from the Association's website.
Staff Contact: Urica Floyd

SC Advanced Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government

Offered exclusively for graduates of the MEO Institute, the Advanced Institute gives elected officials the opportunity to continue their education. To complete the Advanced Institute, participants must take four of the six offered courses that explore in greater depth topics included in the MEO Institute and other topics critical for effective municipal operations.
Staff Contact: Urica Floyd

Business Licensing Training Institute

The Business Licensing Training Institute educates municipal and county officials on the basics of administering a business licensing program. To complete the institute, officials must take three classes, which are offered across three years. The SC Business Licensing Officials Association sponsors the institute.
Staff Contact: Scott Slatton

Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Institute
The Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Institute offers instruction in several areas, including forms of government, financial management, the role of the municipal clerk and business licensing. The Association sponsors MCTI in partnership with the SC Municipal Finance Officers, Clerks and Treasurers Association and the College of Charleston's Joseph P. Riley Jr. Center for Livable Communities.
Staff Contact: Jeff Shacker

Annual Meeting
Each summer, the Annual Meeting brings municipal officials together for training, networking and discussions of issues of common interest. Officials hear from state and nationally known speakers, participate in sessions, and learn about new technology and developments in local government.
Staff Contact: Ken Ivey

Technical Assistance

Field Services
The Association's two field services managers travel the state to offer hands-on technical assistance, training and consultation to help municipalities address challenges.
Staff Contacts: Jeff Shacker and Bill Taylor

Main Street South Carolina
Main Street SC helps its members revitalize their downtowns into vibrant centers of commerce and community by using the National Main Street Center's "Main Street Approach," which emphasizes organization, promotion, design and economic vitality. The boot camp program is a three-year intensive technical assistance and training program for cities and towns. After finishing the competitively selected boot camp program, participants become full Main Street SC members.

Each year, Main Street SC honors exceptional member accomplishments through its Inspiration Awards.
Staff Contact: Jenny Boulware

Information Resources
The Association's print and online resources address hundreds of topics related to municipal government.

Publications
The Association publishes a variety of manuals and handbooks on topics of municipal interest.

- *Annexation Handbook*
- *Comprehensive Planning Guide for Local Governments*
- *Election Handbook*
- *Forms and Powers of Municipal Government*
- *Handbook for Municipal Officials in South Carolina*
- *The Municipal Association of South Carolina 1930-2015: A History of Shared Voices, Shared Knowledge, Shared Solutions*
- *How to Conduct Effective Meetings*
- *Incorporation Handbook*
- *Model Employee Handbook for SC Municipalities*
- *Municipal Officials and Legislative Directory*
- *Public Official's Guide to Compliance with the Freedom of Information Act* (published by the SC Press Association)
- *Raising Hometown Voices to a New Level of Influence,* an advocacy guide
- *South Carolina Business Licensing Handbook*
- *Tips for Hometown Media Success*

Staff Contact: Eric Budds

Website
The Municipal Association's website, www.masc.sc, offers more than 2,000 pages; 1,500 documents, presentations and links to external resources; and more than 770 in-state municipal job postings. With a responsive design to fit the needs and formats of mobile and desktop devices, the site includes a powerful search engine and information center to help users navigate to specific resources of interest.
Staff Contact: Meredith Houck

Uptown
The monthly newsletter in print and electronic formats features articles on a variety of topics important to municipal officials. Each issue's special section looks in depth at a topic central to local government.

A weekly e-newsletter, *Uptown Update*, informs municipal officials about a variety of timely opportunities, including meeting registrations, training events and grants. A regular feature, "In Case You Missed It," gives *Uptown Update* readers a second look at an *Uptown* article from a past issue.
Staff Contact: Sarita Chourey

Daily News
Daily News provides links to news stories about the state's smallest rural towns to its largest cities. The articles highlight how local governments deliver services.
Staff Contact: Sarita Chourey

The Uplift
The Uplift delivers a collection of news links every Wednesday showcasing South Carolina cities and towns at their best.
Staff Contact: Sarita Chourey

Achievement Awards
The Achievement Awards recognize successful and innovative projects that improve the quality of life for residents and add value to communities. The program also encourages municipal officials to share ideas.
Staff Contact: Meredith Houck

Shared Solutions

Cities and towns face many of the same challenges and can find solutions by pooling resources and ideas through the Association.

Collection Programs
Municipalities contract with the Association to collect delinquent debts and certain business license taxes on their behalf. These programs provide centralized and efficient collections for participating municipalities and streamline the tax payment process for businesses. The Association provides an online portal for cities participating in the insurance, brokers and telecommunications tax collection programs to securely access current and past collection program documents.

Broker's Tax Collection Program
The SC Department of Insurance collects the municipal broker's premium tax, and cities and towns contract with the Municipal Association to disburse the tax.
Staff Contacts: Melissa Brown, Caitlin Cothran

Insurance Tax Collection Program
The Municipal Association collects municipal business license taxes due from insurance companies and distributes the taxes owed to municipalities.

The Association notifies all insurance companies of the payment process, uses industry data to confirm all companies paid according to municipal ordinances, and provides a portal for the reporting and payment of the tax. Cities save time and money by contracting with the Association for these services rather than all duplicating the same processes. Insurance companies save time and money by reporting to and paying one entity rather than multiple cities and towns. Many pay the tax through the Association's portal.
Staff Contacts: Caitlin Cothran, Melissa Brown, Susan Gainey

Setoff Debt Collection Program
In cooperation with the SC Department of Revenue, the Association collects delinquent debts, such as utility bills, taxes and court fines. These payments are remitted to participating entities to whom the debts were owed. The Association provides software to all participating entities to streamline their program administration and ensure compliance with state regulations.
Staff Contacts: Melissa Brown

Telecommunications Tax Collection Program
The Association collects business license taxes owed to participating municipalities from telecommunication companies.

Cities and towns contract with the Association to collect the tax as provided for in state law. The contract streamlines the payment process for telecommunications companies. It also saves cities and towns time and money by eliminating the need for each to perform the same processes.
Staff Contacts: Susan Gainey

Risk Management Services
The two self-funded insurance programs administered by the Association's Risk Management Services staff are prime examples of strength and efficiency through combined efforts of member cities. Each program operates under the direction of a board of trustees composed of representatives from its membership.

The SC Municipal Insurance and Risk Financing Fund provides all lines of property and casualty coverage, including tort liability, law enforcement liability, public officials' liability, and property and automobile coverage.

The SC Municipal Insurance Trust provides workers' compensation coverage for municipal employees.

RMS provides grants, attorney hotlines, employee training and loss control services to members. These services help members improve risk management efforts, prevent claims and reduce the cost of insurance.
Staff Contact: Heather Ricard

Training
RMS members have access to online and in-person training at no charge.

- Customized, on-site training: RMS provides training for members in their hometowns, allowing city employees to attend sessions together.
- Online training: The online training opportunities include a variety of risk management, human resources, safety and law enforcement topics, including use of force and pursuit driving.
- Statewide and regional training: RMS offers members regional training sessions on topics such as law enforcement liability, OSHA confined space training, risk management 101 and defensive driving.
- Risk Management Institute: RMI offers participants from SCMIT- and SCMIRF-member organizations specialized training in the role of risk manager and safety coordinator.
- *RiskLetter*: The quarterly e-newsletter provides information on a wide range of risk management topics.

- Law enforcement simulator: RMS offers members access to a law enforcement training simulator that allows officers to practice their decision-making skills and responses to resistance.

Loss Control/Technical Assistance
RMS helps its members build effective safety and loss control programs.

- Model policies and procedures manuals for law enforcement and fire services: SCMIT and SCMIRF members receive updated fire and law enforcement policies.
- One-on-one technical assistance visits: The loss control staff meet with member organizations to evaluate their safety and loss control programs.
- Legal hotlines: SCMIRF members can access to up to 10 hours of free legal advice on each legal hotline for labor and liability issues.
- Education tools: SCMIRF members have access to cybersecurity services through the online tool, eRisk Hub, in addition to specialized toolkits, including parks and recreation liability, public official liability, sewer backups, special events liability and workers' compensation.

Grants
The RMS grant program helps RMS members purchase products or equipment to reduce the frequency and severity of claims.

- The Law Enforcement Liability Reduction Grant Program awards grants to member law enforcement agencies to purchase stun guns or Tasers, Taser cameras, body cameras and equipment.
- SCMIT awards grants to member law enforcement, fire and public works departments to purchase work-zone safety equipment, soft body armor and other protective gear.

South Carolina Other Retirement Benefits Employer Trust
The South Carolina Other Retirement Benefits Employer Trust allows cities to set aside funds for nonpension benefits, such as retiree healthcare, as required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board. Each member shares in the Trust's administrative and investment related expenses, lowering the overall cost of compliance for each local government.
Staff Contact: Heather Ricard

Hometown Economic Development Grants
The Municipal Association's Hometown Economic Development Grants provide cities and towns with funds to implement economic development projects that will make a positive impact on the quality of life in their communities. The Hometown Economic Development Grants are awarded annually.
Staff Contact: Scott Slatton

Technology Services
The Association, in partnership with VC3, provides discounted technology services to cities and towns. VC3, an information technology company headquartered in Columbia, designs and hosts municipal websites; designs and implements computer networks; and provides disaster recovery, strategic technology planning and voice communication services.
Staff Contact: Eric Budds

Cable Franchise Assistance and Telecommunication Infrastructure Siting Program
The Association partners with Local Government Services LLC, to assist members with cable franchises, pole attachment agreements, and cellular and small cell antenna leases and ordinances. This gives local governments access to the expertise required to negotiate benefits and services with reasonable terms.
Staff Contact: Eric Budds

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2018

MASC Municipal Association of South Carolina℠

Achievement Awards
Main Street SC Inspiration Awards

2018 Achievement Awards

Started in 1986, the Achievement Awards program gives cities and towns deserved recognition for superior and innovative efforts in local government. The program also provides a forum for sharing the best public service ideas in South Carolina.

This year, 30 municipalities entered the Achievement Awards program. A video highlighting this year's winners is available on the Association's website at www.masc.sc (keyword: achievement).

Population 1 - 1,000 Category | Town of Edisto Beach
Edisto Beach Nourishment Project

If tourism is the Town of Edisto's industry, then the town's 4.4-mile beachfront is its industrial park. That means the wellbeing of the town as well as the preservation of this unique natural asset depend on protecting the coastline from the waves, tides, storm surges and other forces that cause sand to build up or to erode.

But protecting the beachfront calls for perseverance and cooperation. Luckily, Edisto Beach officials had both and were ready to step up and make the case for the project in order to win the support of various stakeholders.

In 2017, the town restored approximately 835,000 cubic yards of sand to the eroded beach and lengthened 26 groins. The technically complex, multi-million dollar project received funds from local tourism taxes and fees, including Colleton County's capital project sales tax, and grants from the S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The town established a Beachfront Management Committee to provide input to the coastal engineer throughout the design and permitting process.

Mother Nature made things more difficult. Permitting was already a complex piece of the process, in part, because it called for efforts to protect nesting turtles and other monitoring activities. When hurricanes Joaquin and Matthew hit, the permitting had to be modified.

This project would have been a lot smaller without the contributions of partners. By teaming up with the Edisto Beach State Park, the cost of mobilization and demobilization — the largest cost component of the nourishment projects — was shared. Of the $18 million project cost, the town contributed 16 percent. Four other entities shared the project costs. But before they joined in, the partners needed assurances that their contributions would be leveraged for the greatest result. Town leaders were successful in selling the benefits of the project to the other partners in order to acquire the necessary funding.

Contact Iris Hill at ihill@townofedistobeach.com or 843.869.2505.

Population 1,001 - 5,000 Category | Town of Hampton
Slum and Blight to Solar

The call from town residents who lived near a mobile home park was clear: "Something had to be done." Dilapidated structures within the park and regular criminal activity nearby were drawing outcry from residents. So in 2016, the Town of Hampton decided to purchase the property with general fund dollars, which began the town's process of abatement of 13 mobile homes and two other buildings that were on the site.

During this process, town officials discussed several options using the land. After months of deliberation and consideration of several projects, Hampton officials formed a public-private partnership with a solar energy project developer, SCE&G and Lowcountry Regional Water Systems. The town leases the property to a solar farm which sells the power to the nearby wastewater treatment plant that serves the residents of the Town of Hampton.

Town council rezoned the property and navigated the transition from a nuisance property to a field of gleaming solar panels by taking a comprehensive approach to code enforcement and community development.

But clearing a blighted area and replacing it with clean, sustainable energy technology wasn't the only benefit to the Town of Hampton and its residents. Over the next 10 years, the town will receive $270,000 through the lease of the property to the solar developers. That's enough emission-free electricity to power 147 homes for an entire year. The solar farm will also participate in the Solar Energy Non-Residential Bill Credit program with South Carolina Electric & Gas, which provides energy or bill credits.

Hampton's outlook continues to shine. Town officials plan to monitor funds that the project generates and decide whether to install additional solar panels on the property. Doing so would supply enough electricity to power to Hampton's town hall, police department and fire department. The potential savings from shifting to solar power is estimated at $18,000 per year.

Contact Robert Poston at rposton@hamptonsc.gov or 803.943.2951.

Population 5,001 - 10,000 Category | Town of Moncks Corner
Moncks Corner Community Outreach Program

Law enforcement officers in the Town of Moncks Corner were noticing a troubling theme: Residents felt disconnected from the officers who were sworn to serve them. There was tension between officers and the community due to the stressful nature of officers responding to calls for help.

So the department launched an outreach program that emphasized face-to-face engagement in a world that's increasingly technology driven. Every month, volunteer officers from throughout the department set up a grill and cook hamburgers and hot dogs for the residents of a selected community. An important but subtle feature: Residents were treated as guests.

Instead of a special unit for community policing, the department instilled the philosophy that every officer is part of the ongoing community oriented policing effort. The department aims to make the community stronger and more open by bringing together people from all walks of life to have their voices heard.

The benefits are clear. Officers have become engaged in neighborhoods, and after events, residents have even asked them when they will come back. Meanwhile, since the outreach program began in early 2016, neighborhoods have experienced a decrease in calls for service.

There's more to come. The department is planning further outreach — Neighborhood bicycle rodeos, a town carnival and other activities to welcome residents. The effort will also include other departments, such the recreation department for its many programs and the fire department for safety information and smoke detector installation in the homes, to show residents what resources are available.

The department is also working with the Federal Bureau of Prisons to put computers in a community center, so that residents can take online courses and prepare to take the GED. By building relationships before there are problems, the Moncks Corner Police Department is preparing to deal with any crisis before it occurs.

Contact Chief Rick Ollic at rick.ollic@monckscornersc.gov or 843.719.7930.

Population 10,001 - 20,000 Category | Town of Bluffton
Historic Rehabilitation Enhances Tourism and Economic Development Opportunities

The old house in the Town of Bluffton could have been demolished. But town officials recognized that it wasn't just any neglected site. The Garvin-Garvey House, built in approximately 1870, is a rare surviving example of a home built and inhabited by a freedman's family immediately after the Civil War — and the only one on the May River.

Like most historic structure rehabilitation projects, the Garvin-Garvey House project promised to be challenging. So the town hired an historic preservation consultant to assess the structure and plan the project.

In 2008, the town took steps to stabilize the collapsing structure, which was overgrown with vegetation. In 2014, the town re-stabilized the house after weather and termites led to the natural deterioration of the initial measure. During this time, a new foundation and flooring deck were installed. A reconstructed lean-to addition was built using the same framing techniques found throughout the original structure.

The project seamlessly wove together historic and new materials of the same dimension, exposure and thickness. The original interior wall boards, floor boards, roof rafters, shake shingles, trim and door were retained with all of the original finishes.

The town funded the project through grants, private donations and other public funds, and the town's accommodations tax revenue.

Open to the public since 2017, the fully rehabilitated site offers insights into American history while bringing to life the Garvin-Garvey family experiences and Gullah-Geechee culture. The Bluffton Historical Preservation Society provides guided tours. The town, which is developing an informational exhibit and interpretation design for the site, plans to have additional tours and host cultural events at the site to celebrate African American history and the Gullah-Geechee culture.

In preserving the Garvin-Garvey House, the town also created a model for future redevelopment projects on public land. The project show how to create a community unifier, an historic asset and a tourism destination from a single preservation project. At the same time, the project pulled together historical preservation organizations, state agencies, private citizens and cultural groups for support, funding and celebration.

Contact Debbie Szpanka at dszpanka@townofbluffton.com or 843.706.4534.

Communications Category | City of Rock Hill
2017 UCI BMX World Championships

The tens of thousands of visitors from around the globe traveling to Rock Hill for the 2017 UCI BMX World Championships presented city officials with two challenges: To ensure all Rock Hill residents knew about the event and to foster community pride as the first American city to host the event in 16 years.

 After the marketing services company that was initially selected couldn't be used, city staff stepped up to produce marketing materials for what would be the largest international sporting event in South Carolina history. Staff produced a detailed marketing and communications plan to guide the process, working closely with city management and parks, recreation and tourism department staff to identify clear objectives and key messages aimed mainly at local communication.

The city also debuted a mobile app for ticket purchases, an event schedule, venue map, sponsors, push notifications and information about local restaurants and shops. City staff also produced a video that earned a 2017 Telly Award in the non-broadcast sports production category. When it came to the national and international news media who set up at the event, Rock Hill held a Rock Hill BMX Media Showdown. Reporters outfitted with a bike, helmet and instruction from a local rider participated in a series of races to experience the track first-hand.

Staff created the logo, all digital ads, video and social media posts and used the local telecommunications and media services company to manage the digital placement and tracking. During the event, city workers staffed media center operations, managed social media, and updated the website and mobile app. The money the city saved by doing the communications work in-house could instead be spent on additional ad placement.

City officials have since completed a marketing communications plan for Knowledge Park, an urban, mixed-use business park, basing the plan on the BMX event. Another takeaway? The use of community presentations, partnerships and overall grassroots efforts to inform and engage Rock Hill residents.

Contact Katie Quinn at katie.quinn@cityofrockhill.com or 803.326.3791.

Economic Development Category | City of Florence
Joseph P. Riley Jr Award

Strengthening Core Neighborhoods Improves Economic Development

The residents of the City of Florence had spoken: They wanted well-designed and maintained neighborhoods close to the city's downtown. It was important to recruit and retain employers, to expand on recent successes in downtown revitalization and to provide appealing housing choices for residents, regardless of their finances. Since there was limited interest by private sector developers to invest in struggling neighborhoods, city leaders stepped up to improve the quality of housing and establish a market for private investment.

City officials hired a consultant, tapped into S.C. State housing Finance and Development Authority and other sources, and partnered with banks to offer special mortgage financing to buyers and to host credit counseling and home buying classes. The intent was to create new housing infrastructure to bring old neighborhoods back to their vibrancy of 50 years ago.

Officials identified three historically significant neighborhoods located near the city's redeveloped downtown and then funded street infrastructure and housing development programs using capital project sales tax proceeds. A combination of general fund dollars and a federal Neighborhood Program Grant allowed the city to purchase vacant lots and abandoned structures.

The city sought to reinvest near other public improvements, creating linkages to broader areas. Improvements included street infrastructure and adjacent parks or public areas. The city then built houses above the current market conditions.

To help prospective buyers, the city has also offered gap financing in the form of down payment assistance of up to 20 percent of the value of the house.

As part of the plan, the city demolished 20 abandoned houses, purchased 53 others, completed seven street or infrastructure improvements in three designated neighborhoods, and built three homes with plans to redevelop another 22 units. Additionally, the city incentivized home building on vacant lots for infill development. The city has already seen private investment in two of the three targeted neighborhoods.

Contact Drew Griffin at dgriffin@cityofflorence.com or 843.665.3113.

Public Safety Category | City of Hartsville
Hartsville Police Department Community Outreach Division

A gap in understanding had opened between the City of Hartsville's police department and some of the residents it served. City leaders viewed that gap against the backdrop of the nationwide tensions and decided to take proactive steps to foster relationships with residents and reduce the crime rate.

In the fall of 2014, the American Planning Association's Community Planning Assistance Team assessed the conditions of one of the city's most crime-ridden, low-income neighborhoods and came up with a plan to address its challenges. The team concluded that the city should "build trust between the community and law enforcement."

The police department created the Community Outreach Division to focus on these challenges through special programs for crime reduction and safety. The division achieved success, in part, because of its partnerships with outside organizations and officials' conscious decision to avoid duplicating efforts already in existence. Division members worked to connect those with needs and organizations with the appropriate resources to meet those residents' needs. A U.S. Department of Justice grant allowed the city to create a community liaison officer position to assist with the division.

The division used community presentations, school visits, a satellite office and events such as Coffee with a Cop and National Night Out to build trust with residents. Another program the city partnered with, called Employing Ministry and Police to Overcome Walls and End Racism, resulted in repairs and improvements to four houses. The division was also involved in the Hartsville Safe Communities, a community partnership that works with repeat offenders to offer them a second chance. As a result of the partnership, the City of Hartsville hired one of the ex-offenders.

The division has created an environment of trust and open dialogue within the city that led to tangible results that address community concerns.

Contact Natalie Zeigler at Natalie.Zeigler@hartsvillesc.gov or 843.339.2867.

Public Service Category | City of Myrtle Beach
Savannah's Playground Enabling Park

Savannah's Playground, named for a 19-year-old with Williams Syndrome, was the inspiration of Savannah's Playground Enabling Park.

The playground opened in 2016 and offers an array of equipment that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The park features a zip line, specially designed swings, rubber surfaces to soften falls,

an extended wheelchair ramp that stops at stations, a cooling mist feature during the summer and a mile-long wheelchair path that goes around the lake. The playground also offers the largest harmony park — a collection of durable musical instruments such as bells and chimes — in the United States.

City, state and county funds, along with donations from more than a dozen community organizations and land donated by the city, made Savannah's Playground a reality. City employees, too, helped out by clearing the land, adding landscaping and pouring concrete walkways.

The playground has boosted tourism, promoted health and wellness to residents and visitors alike, and increased property values, all while strengthening the city's image and unique sense of place. The planning and fundraising for the next phase is underway focusing on additional playground equipment and permanent restroom facilities. Families have traveled from various states, with online reviews from as far away as Canada, specifically to visit the playground. In doing so, those families have also patronized restaurants, shops and recreational activities nearby.

The concept of creating inclusive recreation space for children of all abilities, a project that fosters confidence, independence and personal growth, has mushroomed, as other South Carolina cities have turned their attention to enabling playground features.

Contact Fox Simons at fsimons@cityofmyrtlebeach.com or 854.918.1016.

Public Works Category | City of Woodruff
City of Woodruff WWTP and Collection System Upgrades

The City of Woodruff and the Upstate region are on the cusp of growth. Ordinarily, that's a good thing. But officials knew the city's wastewater treatment plant wouldn't be able to keep up with expanding residential, commercial and industrial demands. The facility was nearing the end of its lifespan, and the sewer collection system and pump stations were failing. In fact, the collection system had chronic problems, suffering constant sanitary sewer overflows due to holes in pipes.

One nearly-70-year-old pump station had repeated sanitary sewer overflows and spilled its contents directly into the path of school children walking to school. None of the pump stations had backup power, and the pumps, control panel, guide rails and valves were past their life expectancy and failed regularly.

It was time for a dramatic infrastructure expansion and modernization — upgrades that would halt the system failures, keep the public safe from spills and provide enough plant capacity for decades of growth.

Among the upgrades was technology to help clean the wastewater: New dual automatic bar screens help remove solids and trash; a moving bed bio reactor helps eliminate ammonia; and diffused air flotation technology, which removes fine solid particles, leaves the water crystal clear. To improve employee and public safety, the city transitioned to ultraviolent disinfection to replace its gas chlorination, which posed risks in the event of a spill. And for added reliability during a power failure, the upgrades included a paralleling generator system to provide redundancy if one generator fails.

City staff worked with the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, the S.C. Rural Infrastructure Authority, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and consultants to secure funding and permits necessary to improve their infrastructure.

After the city completed the improvements, word about the innovations spread among consultants and manufacturers, leading to officials in Alabama, Texas and Canada calling the City of Woodruff to learn more.

Contact Lee Bailey at lbailey@cityofwoodruff.com or 864.415.9573.

Other Entries

City of Aiken

The City of Aiken used to be reactive in its approach to utility infrastructure maintenance. But that's no longer the case, thanks to new software that allows city staff to be proactive. By using a GIS-based asset management and rehabilitation planning program for its water, sewer, and storm water utilities, the city is now able to pinpoint potential problems and make highly informed decisions when planning sewer rehabilitation projects.

Funded through the city's operational budget, the new software integrates GIS data, inspection data, work and service order data, while using spatial analysis to determine and score potential risk of failure for each asset in the utility system. City officials can then use these "consequence of failure" scores and "likelihood of failure" scores are then analyzed to create a rehabilitation plan and capital budget plan.

Data analysis for future projects will include rehabilitating an additional 58 miles of extreme and high risk sewer pipes, 67 miles of water pipes, and 25 miles of storm pipe.

Contact Sabina Craig at scraig@ cityofaikensc.gov or 803.642.7606.

City of Columbia

The City of Columbia's Water Distribution Division and Wastewater Maintenance Division shared space with the Public Works Department in a former big box chain store site. They needed room to grow. Crews working in these divisions also needed to be able to service the city's extensive water and sewer systems and to be centrally located to reach all areas quickly.

So with funding from its water and sewer capital improvement program, the City of Columbia developed a new LEED Gold Water and Wastewater Administration building on a former brownfield site and auto dealership, complete with green roof and low-impact landscaping.

The project brought a host of other benefits: Higher morale for employees, the transformation of a blighted area, a demonstration of sustainable building practices, the reinvestment in a local neighborhood and a jumpstart to the surrounding local economy.

Next up? City staff will host tours and trainings at the facility, including workshops for local builders, designers and landscapers on green design and maintenance.

Contact Chris Segars at cmsegars@ columbiasc.net or 803.545.4143.

City of Conway

The City of Conway had a historic gem of a building that sat unappreciated under decades of dust. When Horry County donated the building to the city, Conway officials knew just what to do with it. They restored the 6,800-square-foot National Register-listed property.

The restoration saved the building's historic windows, flooring, interior openings and finishes. The space became the city's visitor center that also includes community banquet and meeting space, and offices for Conway Downtown Alive, a National Main Street Affiliate working in downtown Conway.

In October of 2017, thousands of residents mingled with tourists at the building for the beginning of the annual Spirits of the Lowcountry ghost walk. Conway's general fund and a matching grant from the state of South Carolina supported the project, along with labor from city workers.

The city plans to use this building for another 100 years to give the community a place to be proud of, use for social and other events, and to greet visitors and newcomers. The building will be the beginning of countless community and tourism related events for generations.

Contact Adam Emrick at aemrick@ cityofconway.com or 843.248.1760.

City of Denmark

The need to ensure fire safety and to remedy discolored water, low water pressure and waterline leaks drove the City of Denmark to make crucial waterline improvements.

The Denmark Public Works Department conducted a review of all water lines with particular attention to the age and the number of repairs a specific area had already undergone.

By using a Community Development Block Grant and matching city funds, city leaders were able to tackle a comprehensive upgrade project, one that will take more time and additional funding but represents an aggressive effort to bring the entire system up to date. Waterline upgrades and improved fire service assisted by new fire hydrants are an integral part of the city's strategic plan.

But Denmark has more plans. The city has received additional CDBG funding, which will allow the upgrades to continue and to bring an additional five fire hydrants to the city.

Results are already apparent. The number of water leaks has gone down dramatically, and the new fire hydrants have already assisted with a house fire in Denmark. The new hydrant directly reduced damage to the house.

Contact Heyward Robinson at hrobi13901@aol.com or 803.793.3734.

City of Easley

A planning grant revealed the City of Easley's deficiencies in public walking and biking infrastructure. At the same time, the city was facing rising downtown home prices, which was in turn causing gentrification in the historic African-American neighborhoods.

So city leaders decided to do something about it. The City of Easley and the City of Pickens partnered on the creation of a 7.5-mile Doodle Trail, which opened in 2015. The 1-mile extension that leads into downtown Easley and the progressive planning of affordable housing along the Doodle Trail have transformed the City of Easley from an auto-centric, suburb into an active recreation urban core.

There's more in store. The city plans to use a network of trails and sidewalks to connect all city parks together and to connect the Doodle Trail on the north side of the city to the Brushy Creek Greenway on the south side, while working toward the long-term regional goal of connecting the Doodle Trail, Green Crescent and Swamp Rabbit Trail. In addition, a nature park focused on sustainability, conservation, and education will be situated on the western side of the city.

Contact Blake Sanders at bsanders@ cityofeasley.com or 864.293.1853.

Town of Fort Mill

The Great Recession hit downtown Fort Mill hard. Properties were vacant, commerce had slowed and businesses were struggling. The town had to act to bring back its downtown vibrancy.

That's where Fort Mill Tomorrow came in. City officials developed the town's 2008 comprehensive plan, "Fort Mill Tomorrow," and subsequent 2013 update of the plan through significant public involvement, including citizens and stakeholders throughout the community. The plan envisioned both physical improvements and legislative fixes from Town Council to boost the downtown district, enhance its sense of place and spur future private investment.

The plan called for investing public money downtown while private investment interest was low as a way to prime the downtown area for private investment as soon as the economy rebounded from the Great Recession. The town's Capital Projects Fund paid for physical investments in downtown. The town used these funds to leverage additional grant money and non-profit donations to increase the total investment.

Town officials are finalizing a new comprehensive plan, which provides a vision for next 20 years and builds on the successes of the 2008 and 2013 updated plan.

Contact Caroline Hasty at chasty@ fortmillsc.gov or 803.547.2116.

City of Greenwood

The City of Greenwood's declining Westside neighborhood was at a juncture.

In 2010, land adjoining the neighborhood and the medical district had been cleared and prepared for redevelopment. But without a comprehensive planning effort, the neighborhood's character was in danger of being lost. With the growth of the downtown and the medical district, city leaders saw an opportunity in the Westside neighborhood.

The Greenwood Partnership Alliance worked with planners to facilitate interviews, group roundtables and a public meeting that included Westside residents, property owners, city staff and elected officials at all levels, and other stakeholders. A steering committee directed the planning effort from start to finish. Partnerships and grants, including a Community Development Block Grant and private donations, helped the revitalization succeed.

The city removed some dilapidated structures. Now new homes are planned for construction, which will add to the city's tax base and provide access to affordable housing. City officials plan to continue building upon relationships forged between residents and the historic religious institutions of Westside.

Contact Charlie Barrineau at charlie. barrineau@gwdcity.com or 864.942.8410.

City of Greer

Trains are more active than ever in the City of Greer, where three rail companies — CSX Transportation, Norfolk Southern Railway and Amtrak — share railroad tracks. With a growing population of young families and increased rail traffic due to the addition of Inland Port Greer in 2013, the mix of train traffic, vehicles and pedestrians led to eight accidents involving trains from 2015 – 2017, including two pedestrian fatalities.

The public needed a greater awareness of the dangers. So the city partnered with Operation Lifesaver, a national organization that promotes rail safety to create Railfest, a family fun and educational event funded in part by the city and a grant from the S.C. Ports Authority.

"It's getting bigger every year," said Greer Police Department Sgt. Randle Ballenger. "We hope to get the word out — Don't drive around crossings."

City officials expect the event to grow exponentially in quality, partnerships and attendance, given the growing interest from volunteers. The city's expanded marketing plan's aim is to increase the attendees to include residents of cities across the Upstate.

Contact Steve Owens at sowens@ cityofgreer.org or 864.416.0121.

City of Hardeeville

Hardeeville's dramatic growth had created "neighborhood silos" that illustrated a clear divide between long-time residents and new residents, and a rising potential for gentrification that some feared would change the urban district's character and culture. So in 2015, the planning process for the Hardeeville Youth Council was born.

City leaders created the Youth Council to recognize the importance of multicultural programs aimed at connecting young residents to their local government. They had a clear challenge — to unify the changing city in the face of its rapid change and development.

The Youth Council was made up of representatives from the city's five public and private schools. Its mission was to discuss and vote on select issues taken from the Hardeeville City Council agenda and to provide input from the city's younger residents to the Hardeeville City Council before the council voted. In its first year, the Youth Council launched two initiatives, an anti-littering campaign and an anti-distracted driving campaign, which offered education and outreach to more than 2,000 students and staff.

With the Youth Council's positive impact already being felt, the city plans to expand its programs.

Contact Neil Parsons at nparsons41230@ cityofhardeeville.com or 843.784.2231.

Town of Kiawah Island

The Town of Kiawah Island's website wasn't offering enough information.

"It was like any typical municipal website, text heavy and focused on residents who were interested in town council and what services were offered," said Stephanie Braswell Edgerton, the town's communication specialist. But as a private residential island with a golf resort, Kiawah is different.

"There was no one promoting the island as a whole. Everyone was doing their own thing," she said. "We wanted to make sure that it was a community asset, supporting our tourism industry, supporting our businesses and our residents, as well as working to preserve and protect our island's unique setting and natural resources."

Over the summer and fall of 2016, town staff worked with a web design firm to develop a new website. The goal was to create an informative, easy to navigate, and exciting website for the residents and community. The town paid for the work from its general fund.

The town is now working to develop an app, in part, to help communicate with residents, visitors and businesses during hurricanes and other emergencies.

Contact Stephanie Braswell Edgerton at sbraswell@kiawahisland.org or 843.768.9166.

Town of Lexington

As the fourth-fastest growing municipality in the state, traffic in the Town of Lexington was becoming a serious concern. State traffic engineers kept traffic signals throughout town on an analog system, with programming occurring every five years. Due to Lexington's rapid growth, the timing sequence was ineffective and caused congestion.

To fix the problem, town officials switched to an adaptive computerized signalization system that constantly measures traffic volume, detects the approaching and standing vehicles using cameras, and uses an algorithm to develop the most efficient way to move traffic. With the new system, signals adjust throughout the day and evening to maximize and improve efficiency in traffic flow based on traffic spikes. Lexington County, the local council of

governments, the Columbia Area Transportation Study Share Funding and local medical center helped provide funding for the technology.

Phase II of the system to connect an additional 16 intersections is underway. Once complete, all 35 intersections in town and its borders will be part of this high-tech innovation.

Contact Jennifer Dowden at jdowden@ lexsc.com or 803.356.8238.

City of Marion

City leaders took an unfortunate accident and turned it into a boon for residents and downtown businesses. In 2011, a fire destroyed several downtown buildings, damaged others and displaced businesses. But city leaders weren't going to give up on the area. They asked residents and organizations what the city should do with three empty lots on Main Street.

The property owners sold two lots to the Historic Marion Revitalization Association. Proceeds from the sale of one donated building helped create a new downtown venue. From the gaping space left by the fire emerged the Main Street Commons, an outdoor gathering place with electricity and elevated stage for music entertainment, health fairs, farmers markets and other events.

The city plans to acquire an adjacent vacant lot to expand the space with permanent restroom facilities, an arbor and a dining venue. Two businesses have already added rear access points to their businesses. City officials predict other businesses will follow suit as business owners take pride in the enhanced aesthetics of the Main Street Commons.

Contact Alan Ammons at aammons@ marionsc.gov or 843.423. 5961.

City of Mauldin

Over the years, the City of Mauldin had grown into a suburban, commercial community driven by zoning provisions that paid little attention to walkability and favored large building setbacks and expansive parking lots.

"If you've ever heard the term suburban sprawl, it epitomized that — your sprawling commercial and sprawling residential, all disconnected," said David Dyrhaug, the city's economic development planner.

City leaders knew they had the power to reverse course and raise the development standard.

So beginning in 2017, the City of Mauldin adopted several revisions and amendments to its zoning regulations in an effort to foster and promote mixed-use spaces, pedestrian considerations and place-making principles. Among the changes were amendments that altered how height is measured and provided for a bonus of greater height in select districts in exchange for attention to urban design. The city also created a new zoning district known as the Urban Village District.

Mauldin officials aren't resting. They will continue to identify regulations that can be adjusted to align with the city's vision and strategies.

Contact David Dyrhaug at DDyrhaug@MauldinCitySC.com or 864.289.8979.

Town of Mount Pleasant

Mount Pleasant is surrounded by water — the Cooper and Wando rivers, the Intracoastal Waterway, salt marshes and wetlands. City staff noticed that crews were responding to an increasing number of spills related to traffic accidents, where materials entered storm drains, potentially polluting creeks and waterways. If the town did not have enough trained personnel to clean it up, they would have to hire special contractors and incur a larger cost.

The challenges called for a more formal response plan and a coordinated effort. So the town formed the Spill Response Team, a cost-effective, voluntary program meeting the need to adhere to the Clean Water Act guidelines and protect the natural environment.

"The program has grown to meet several needs, to deliver cost effective and cost efficient services, to train and promote safety, to foster team building across our divisions, and to help the town protect residents and environmental

resources," said Hillary Repik, the town's stormwater manager.

As safety and regulatory requirements change and demands for town services grow, the program will evolve to meet those needs.

Contact Martine Wolfe-Miller at mwolfe@tompsc.com or 843.884.8517.

City of Newberry

"Nothing will crush your soul more than to go out and see an able-bodied child playing, while their brother or sister sat on the sidelines and watched," said Newberry City Manager Matt DeWitt.

So Newberry leaders made sure that doesn't happen in their city. Children with disabilities will now be able to play alongside other children.

In 2016, the city's director of parks, recreation and tourism received a text message from a neighbor who knew someone who would like to see the city offer a wheelchair-accessible swing. The city formed a Recreation Accessibility Team, a community-based group dedicated to bringing accessible and inclusive play opportunities to people of all ability levels. City funding, community donations and a Parks and Recreation Development Fund grant helped bring four inclusive swing chairs and two wheelchair accessible swings to two city parks.

But Newberry's not finished. The city is working to add more playground equipment for all ability levels, along with a recreation complex, funded with from capital project sales tax revenues, that would house an inclusive playground and other inclusive equipment.

Contact Elyssa Haven at ehaven@cityofnewberry.com or 803.321.3607.

City of Orangeburg

The City of Orangeburg's Department of Public Utilities upgraded its existing plant, originally constructed in the 1970s, after a five-day biochemical oxygen demand test revealed an increase in pollution. The management team decided it was best to prepare the plant for the next 20 years.

The system upgrade was funded by the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, which also includes provisions for a Green Project Reserve. The project was also eligible for the Green Project Reserve because the energy savings exceeded the 20 percent reduction in energy consumption required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

"The upgrade certainly ensures our ability to return the treated wastewater back to the environment significantly cleaner than when it was first extracted for use," said Randy Etters, key accounts manager for the Orangeburg DPU.

As Orangeburg continues to grow, the wastewater treatment plant is positioned well to accommodate the added demands on its system.

Contact Randy Etters at retters@orbgdpu. com or 803.268.4103.

City of Seneca

The City of Seneca's downtown needed a boost. Its identity had faded due to a bypass that proved to be a faster, wider, more highly trafficked route through town. The appearance, convenience and infrastructure downtown were improving, but the city needed an event that would attract people. So the mayor and City Council designed Jazz on the Alley, an outdoor music festival held every Thursday night from April – October, to bring hundreds of people each week to downtown restaurants and businesses.

But Jazz on the Alley, funded by the city's hospitality accommodation tax and created with the Downtown Seneca Merchants' Association, does more than foster economic development and downtown vitality.

"We invited public service organizations and charities. 'Hey, come down. Bring your information. Put your table out there and tell us what you're doing,'" said Riley Johnson, the city's events coordinator.

City officials hope to grow Jazz on the Alley and to expand it to several streets.

Contact Riley Johnson at rhjohnson@ seneca.sc.us or 864.723.3910.

Town of Summerville

Recognizing that growth brings expanding pavement and other environmental concerns, planners at the Town of Summerville decided to get ahead of the impacts. They set about conducting an Urban Tree Canopy assessment that included a green infrastructure map to identify the town's most precious natural, cultural and historical assets. This resulted in a green infrastructure plan, which the town adopted in February of 2017.

The green infrastructure plan offers specific goals, strategies, and tasks to build upon the town's long-term plans and inform land development regulations, guide updates to long-term planning documents, and improve day-to-day planning decisions.

Summerville's efforts to balance the economic, social and environmental concerns of an ever growing community have earned kudos. Largely because of its green infrastructure plan, the town was the first to be designated an Audubon South Carolina Climate-Resilient and Bird-Friendly Municipality.

As for what's next? Town planners are overhauling the zoning and land development regulations into one unified development ordinance using the goals identified in the green infrastructure plan. Additionally, the Summerville Planning Department intends to hire an arborist/natural resource planner to help implement other goals contained in the plan.

Contact Jessi Shuler at jshuler@ summervillesc.gov or 843.851.4217.

City of Sumter

For many children in Sumter, a field trip to the Sumter Opera House is their first exposure to a live performing arts event. But with dwindling school funding for activities, most teachers must ask students to bring money from home to attend a performance with their class. This means some students are unable to participate.

City leaders believed no child should miss the opportunity to learn through the arts. The city worked with the Sumter School District to create the Y.E.S. (Youth Education Scholarship)

Program in the fall of 2016 so that underserved students could attend live performances at the Sumter Opera House. To start the program, the City of Sumter paid the costs of the artist fees for all performances the first year. Since then, grants, private donors and general ticket sales have sustained the Y.E.S. Program, which also sends nationally recognized artists into local classrooms to lead workshops before or after students attend matinée performances at the opera house.

City officials hope to continue securing funding from public and private sources and ticket sales in order to continue offering the full array of matinee shows.

Contact Shelley Kile at skile@sumtersc.gov or 803.795.2463.

City of Tega Cay

Something was missing from the City of Tega Cay Police Department's crime-reduction efforts. Officers would address traffic and crime needs in specific areas due to data or residents' complaints, but the officers would fail to communicate to the community why they were targeting the area and their methods for doing so.

The department decided to film public service announcements to get the word out about their activities. By partnering with Fort Mill High School's "The Buzz TV" media program, the PSAs cost nothing and also allowed law enforcement to build rapport with local high school students. By analyzing data, staff pinpointed when crimes peaked and then highlighted information in a PSA to reduce that specific crime. For example, in August when schools return to session, the PSA will be on traffic and crosswalk safety and when motorists must stop for a school bus.

Next up, the department will analyze data for the upcoming year and plan its 12-month PSA lineup to educate, inform, and reduce crime in the specific areas.

Contact Steven Parker at sparker@ tegacaysc.gov or 803.448.2513.

City of Walterboro

The city's website needed a revamp. It was heavy on text, hard to navigate and failed to communicate the city's "front porch of the Lowcountry" identity. Fortunately, Walterboro officials knew what was at stake — that a well-functioning website is integral to success in serving residents, attracting potential residents, recruiting industry, drawing tourists and keeping day-to-day municipal business running smoothly.

With these things in mind, the city launched a new website in 2017 with the help of the city's web team, led by the city's tourism department and assisted by representatives of different city departments. The new website reduced the number of pages from 99 to 48 pages by focusing on quality over quantity and created four categories to assist users: Government, Visitors, Business and City Services. The new site also communicates the marketing message of "the front porch of the Lowcountry," using imagery, color choices, background and typography.

Looking ahead, the city plans to keep the website fluid and responsive to local dynamics. Staff plans to consistently generate new content, while keeping in mind that the process is due to begin again in two to three years.

Contact Michelle Strickland at mstrickland@walterborosc.org or 843.538.4353.

Main Street South Carolina
Inspiration Awards

Main Street South Carolina empowers residents, business owners and local officials with the knowledge, skills, tools and organizational structure necessary to revitalize downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts into vibrant centers of commerce and community.

Main Street South Carolina is a service of the Municipal Association of SC and is accredited by the National Main Street Center. The program follows National Main Street's Four Point Approach — economic vitality, design, promotion and organization. Each year, Main Street South Carolina recognizes members' achievements and successes in downtown revitalization.

Excellence on Main Street Award

Outstanding New Construction Project
Downtown Sumter's Downtown Municipal Parking Garage

City officials understood that one of the secrets to making a city's downtown a desirable destination is making it easy to get to and enjoy. And one of the biggest complaints about most historic downtowns is that there is nowhere to park. If there's nowhere to park, residents and visitors avoid the area.

So city officials decided to build a municipal parking garage — one that was free and open to the public. The new parking garage was built in an existing open air parking lot and offers 201 spaces, which is more than double the number of spaces that available in the flat lot there before.

The idea for the garage was born alongside plans for the Hyatt Place Hotel. When the Hyatt Place Hotel decided in 2016 to locate in Downtown Sumter, part of the agreement was that the city would build a parking garage. It was funded using tax increment financing dollars and built by the same construction company that was building the hotel so as not to get in each other's way. The garage opened in December 2017, and the hotel opened in the spring of 2018.

City leaders wanted more than functional infrastructure, though. The garage was built to blend in with adjacent buildings by using similar brick and muted colors. While mainly built for function and convenience, it is also an attractive building and adheres to the city's Historic Preservation Design Review Guidelines.

Inspiration Award
Gaines Jontz Rehabilitation Award – City of Clinton's 101 Main Street

City of Clinton officials knew the value of restoring historic buildings to their former beauty. The Homes of Hope 101 Main Street project is a shining example of how to accomplish it. Project leaders leveraged federal and state historic tax credits and abandoned buildings credits to convert a mostly abandoned historic downtown building into a mixed-use space with three market-rate apartments upstairs and three commercial spaces on the ground floor. The commercial areas vary in size from 450 square feet to the 1,200-square foot-space that the First National Bank of Clinton once occupied.

The historic rehabilitation project, assisted by private investors and a low-interest acquisition loan from the Clinton Economic Development Corporation, has energized Clinton's residents, property owners and even caught the attention of future investors. Current property owners are looking to spruce up their buildings, while developers are showing more and more interest in investing in Clinton.

42

Test**yourself**monthly**quiz**

True or False: "The burden of proving that an ordinance is lawful rests with the municipality."

Answer: False

South Carolina courts have ruled that a local ordinance is a legislative enactment and presumed constitutional. If an ordinance is challenged as invalid, there is a two-step judicial review process that the courts follow to make a determination on its validity. The burden of proving that a local ordinance is invalid rests with the party that is challenging the local ordinance.

The Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government offers in-person and online courses. Elected officials who complete all of the required coursework graduate from the institute and are eligible to participate in the Advanced Institute. The next in-person courses, held September 18, *will be* Municipal Economic Development *and* Forms of Municipal Government. *The next Advanced MEO Institute sessions on October 24 will be* Advanced Budgeting and Finance *and* Advanced Leadership and Governance.

Six Graduate from MEO Institute

Six elected officials graduated from the Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government during the Municipal Association's Annual Meeting in July. These officials are now eligible to participate in the Advanced MEO Institute. The advanced program graduated its third class in February at Hometown Legislative Action Day. There were 44 Advanced Institute MEO graduates at HLAD and 30 MEO Institute graduates.

The next Advanced Institute sessions will be offered on October 24. Officials may choose to take one of the two courses offered.

In "Advanced Budgeting and Finance," experienced municipal finance professionals and consultants will use case studies to illustrate successful strategies. The course picks up where the MEO Institute's "Basic Budgeting and Municipal Finance" course left off. Learn about budget management,

July graduates of the MEO Institute included Councilmember Frank Nicholson of Johnston, Councilmember Carolyn Bruce of Darlington, Councilmember Christine Czarnik of Summerville and Councilmember Joanna B. Craig of Camden. Not pictured: Councilmembers Jim Crawford of Cheraw and Wane Postell of Calhoun Falls.

governmental accounting, annual audit, debt management and more.

The other course offered in October, "Advanced Leadership and Governance," will offer an in-depth look at the leadership role of municipal elected officials. Learn how to develop a bold vision for hometowns and sound public policy to carry out that vision.

Officials must first graduate from the Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government to participate in the Advanced Institute.

The next Advanced Institute courses will be held at the Columbia Marriott on October 24. The Association will offer two additional sessions on February 6, the day after the 2019 HLAD.

A Day in the Life of a *Sewer Operator*

"We get called mad scientists."

And for good reason — Joe Ortiz and others in the City of Woodruff sewer department are always in the laboratory. They're testing water samples to ensure the effluent that the city returns to the environment doesn't harm the waterways.

Ortiz, the city's sewer superintendent, starts his day by calibrating the lab equipment at the plant and running a variety of tests. One involves making sure the plant's effluent contains enough dissolved oxygen before it's sent back into a stream in the environment.

"If what I'm discharging into a stream eats up the oxygen, it will harm the fish," he said.

The city maintains more than 34 miles of underground sewer collection pipe and treats an average of 250,000 gallons of wastewater per day before discharging it into area streams and waterbodies.

"If we're having a big rain event or a hurricane is coming inland, I have to set the plant for high flow. I still have to maintain compliance — whether we get 1 inch, no rain or 10 inches of rain," Ortiz said.

Falling out of compliance with the discharge permit that the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control issues entities like the City of Woodruff can bring penalties and fines.

"I've got to make sure everything runs. If my equipment fails at the wrong time, I can go out of compliance," he said. "And I've not had a compliance issue in 20 years. I don't want to have one now."

Ortiz, who entered the field in 1984, said new technology and new regulations

Joe Ortiz, sewer superintendent for the City of Woodruff, said the fundamental responsibilities of his job have not changed over the decades. Photo: City of Woodruff.

have shaped the changes in his profession over the decades. The fundamentals, however, haven't changed.

In the City of Newberry, Brad Rikard, the water and sewer maintenance superintendent, said controlling the risks that can come with the job stays at the top of his mind.

"Worker safety is a big concern for me. Trench cave-ins are really concerning to me," he said, referring to the hazard of collapsing dirt walls that can bury an employee if proper safeguards are not in place. "I also worry about sanitary sewer overflows."

That said, Rikard relishes his chosen path: "I really enjoy the challenges that my

job throws at me. It also is very enjoyable when you have a great supporting cast around you."

Like Rikard, Ortiz happily takes on anything that comes his way — from the occasional line blockage and preventive maintenance to day-to-day operations and "SC 811 locates," which requires employees to locate sewer lines for different agencies so they can dig and make repairs, such as fixing water leaks.

"My job is different every day, and it's refreshing — You never get bored," said Ortiz. "Mostly, we protect the environment for future outdoorsmen and women."

He'd recommend younger job seekers consider the profession.

(left) Sewer workers for the City of Inman and others in the field must complete specialized training in order to perform confined-spaces work. Photo: City of Inman.

(top right) Casey Proctor and Gary Grice change out a water meter for a City of Newberry utilities customer. Photo: City of Newberry.
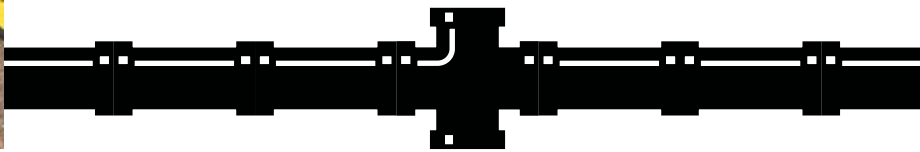
"This job has allowed me to do anything and everything I want to do in my life. I put a daughter through college," Ortiz said.

For Jeff Bailey, wastewater treatment plant director for the City of Inman, the best part of the job is protecting the environment and working with the people in his departments. His staff also operates the City of Chesnee's plant.

"I feel I'm doing my part putting clean water back in. The more I can preserve for my kids and grandkids to enjoy — that's my contribution," said Bailey.

Maintaining the pipeline

Like many in municipal government, Bailey wonders if the next generation of workers will turn to sewer operations in sufficient numbers.

"We're in need of young people for this industry — water and wastewater," Bailey said. "They look at it as a dirty job, but there's electronics and gadgets involved. We've got engineering and cameras, drawings, blueprints, planning and development. I don't think the kids realize how interesting it can be. Well, you don't want to be a ditch digger. OK, but you'll move

up, and you'll get experience and training to do these jobs that we need."

In the City of Hartsville, succession planning in sewer operations has loomed larger than turnover, according to Rebecca Mejia-Ward, the city's human resources manager. She said the city most recently lost three employees with years of experience due to retirement and employee medical issues.

The right skills

Sewer operators are in demand — so much so, in fact, that job candidates can often gather certifications after they accept employment offers.

"We are having to bring in 'clean slates' and get them certified and trained," Mejia-Ward said, adding that Hartsville does well at retaining these employees, but recruiting them is challenging.

Sewer operators have a variety of certifications and licenses, such as ones pertaining to working with asbestos cement, trenching and shoring, backflow activities, biosolids, wastewater collection, laboratory work, water distribution and biological materials.

The skills from the certifications are highly marketable. As a result, cities

and towns must often compete with local industry for employees. Private sector companies commonly operate pretreatment plants where they strip their wastewater of oils, greases, metals and other harmful contents.

The City of Newberry's water and sewer operations typically lose about one employee per year, with private sector employers often luring municipal water and sewer operators. Hires that are still working on their certifications must earn them within six months of starting work.

And yet, making sure sewer operators possess certifications doesn't pose the greatest challenge. So what does?

"It's hiring folks with experience who truly understand the technical as well as the customer service aspect of the service to citizens," said Mejia-Ward.

The "Day in the Life" series gives an insider's look at the professions that make South Carolina cities and towns great places to live, work and play. Municipal employees from around the state explain their role, discuss challenges they face and share stories from the unique world of municipal government.

Staying Professional and Avoiding Legal Complaints

It's a relatively common scenario: A town employee believes she is being sexually harassed and reports the inappropriate behavior to a friend, since her friend also serves on town council.

Sexual harassment legal expert Kevin Sturm presented the example during a session about the topic during the Municipal Association's Annual Meeting in July.

"I've had train wrecks of cases where the councilmember wants to be the employee's champion," he said. "Well, that's great, but you can't do that."

Instead, the elected official should direct the aggrieved municipal employee to the proper channels within the administration. At the same time, the elected official should tell city administration what the employee had reported to him.

"You refer it back to the administrator, and you tell the administrator, 'Bob came by' or 'Suzie came by and said this to me — just so you know,'" said Sturm.

"You can let the administrator do what they were hired to do or the mayor do what they were elected to do in a strong-mayor form of government," he said. "And if there's a problem, council can talk about it in executive session."

There are several things for elected officials to keep in mind if they receive a complaint from municipal staff. Sturm offered another piece of advice for elected officials and city staff, alike:

- No hugging. It's not appropriate in a professional setting. In the age of the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements aimed at empowering victims of sexual harassment and abuse, social and cultural values are changing. A one-time incident, touch or violation is enough to bring a lawsuit. "The tolerance level is going down, down, down," Sturm said.
- Elected officials should consider their city's form of government and the authority of the administrator or manager when considering how to deal with a harassment accusation.
- The conduct that constitutes sexual harassment can be verbal, physical, written or pictorial (images of a sexual nature).
- To qualify as sexual harassment, the conduct must be based on sex.
- The conduct must be unwelcome to the recipient.
- The conduct can take the form of a proposition. For example, a supervisor could send an email to a subordinate that says: "Can we discuss your possible promotion over dinner?"
- Employers can be responsible for sexual harassment by nonemployees. An example would be a vendor who harasses an employee during a visit to an office.
- Avoid workplace romantic relationships in which there is a power disparity. "Employees on the same level dating? That's a different matter. If you are a councilmember, no, no, no. Don't date (municipal) employees."

For Sturm's presentation and others from the Annual Meeting, visit www.masc.sc (keyword: Annual Meeting).

Ethics Tip: Compensation Outside of Salary

Public officials, public members or public employees may not solicit or receive money in addition to a salary for advice or assistance given in the course of their official capacity. The purpose of this is to prevent public servants from being paid twice for the same work. The SC Ethics Commission has advised that public employees cannot accept money from private corporations for services rendered in the ordinary scope of assigned responsibilities. For more information, refer to Section 8-13-720 of the Ethics Reform Act.

The monthly Ethics Tip is provided by the SC Ethics Commission.

Hometown Economic Development Grant Applications Due September 28

The Town of Johnston plans to live up to its nickname.

"Although, we are considered the Peach Capital of the World, we have no peach growers selling their peaches here in town," said Frances Quarles, Johnston administrator, adding that farmers sell other produce — but no peaches — every Thursday at the farmers market.

But change is coming. With the help of a $25,000 Hometown Economic Development Grant from the Municipal Association the town won in 2018, town officials are securing professional services to renovate and redesign an old police station. The idea is to repurpose the structure as a welcoming place to spur downtown commerce — ultimately a place where locals and visitors can buy baskets of peaches and town memorabilia.

Johnston's project is just one example of the uses that qualify for the competitive grant program: Professional services, such as developing master plans or providing analyses or materials for marketing; assets, such as publicly owned water or sewer projects; and programs, such as those developed with business incubators.

The Association's 2019 Hometown Economic Development Grant program will award grants of up to $25,000 each to as many as 12 cities and towns that submit winning proposals for projects that will make a positive impact on quality of life. The grant program, which began in 2016, also promotes and recognizes innovation in economic development practices.

A key step in the application process is the council's passage of a resolution in support of the grant application. Applications for the grants are accepted online. The deadline for entries this year is 5 p.m. on September 28.

The grants fund projects that can be replicated in other cities, will produce measurable results and can be maintained over time.

Cities and towns that receive a grant must provide matching funds. The amount of the match is determined by population. Those selected for grants are also required to submit reports about the progress and successes of each project and provide financial details about how the grant funds were spent.

Grant awards will be announced by October 31.
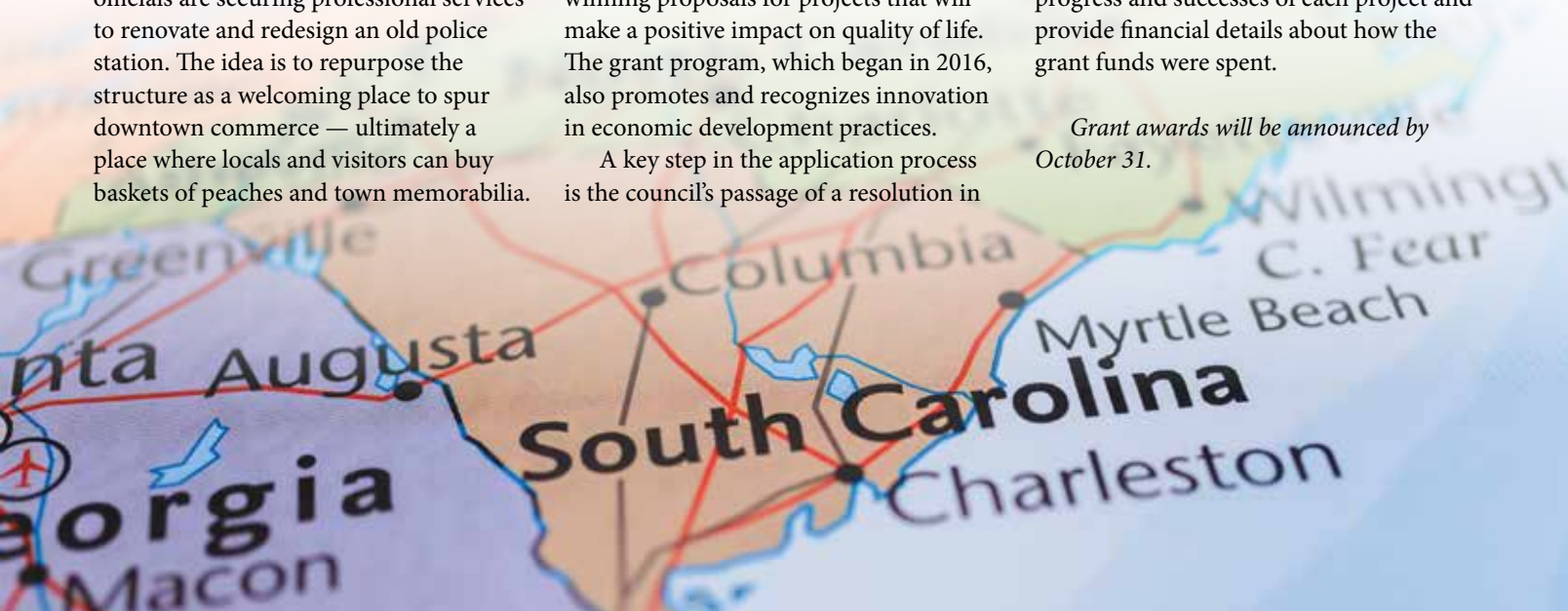
Calendar

For a complete listing of the Association's training opportunities, visit www.masc.sc to view the calendar.

SEPTEMBER

5 Regional Advocacy Meeting. Sumter. Santee Lynches Regional Council of Governments area.

6 Regional Advocacy Meeting. Conway. Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments area.

6 SC Association of Stormwater Managers Third Quarter Meeting. Columbia Conference Center. Topics include the use of drones for innovative water management, compliance tools for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System/Total Maximum Daily Load and updates from the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control.

11 Regional Advocacy Meeting. Cayce. Central Midlands Council of Governments area.

12 – 14 Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Institute Fall Session – Year 3, Session B. Hyatt Place Columbia/Downtown/The Vista. Topics include customer service, the role of clerks and treasurers in planning and zoning, negotiation and collaboration skills, budget execution, disaster planning, municipal law, and annexation.

18 Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government: Municipal Economic Development and Forms of Municipal Government. Regional councils of governments' locations.

23 – 25 Municipal Technology Association of SC Annual Meeting. The Beach House Resort, Hilton Head Island. Topics include hiring and creating a diverse workforce, alternate uses and liability of drone technology, effective document management practices, and cybersecurity.

26 SCMIT and SCMIRF Below 100 Officer Safety Training. Columbia Conference Center.

27 Main Street South Carolina Meeting. Lancaster.

OCTOBER

9 SC Community Development Association Fall Meeting. Columbia Conference Center. Topics include updates from the SC Housing Trust Fund Advisory Committee, historic properties, Main Street SC and creative ways to reuse forgotten buildings.

10 SC Utility Billing Association Fall Meeting. Columbia Conference Center. Topics include active-shooter training and engagement in customer service.

24 Advanced Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government Fall Session. Columbia Marriott. Courses offered: Advanced Budgeting and Finance and Advanced Leadership and Governance.