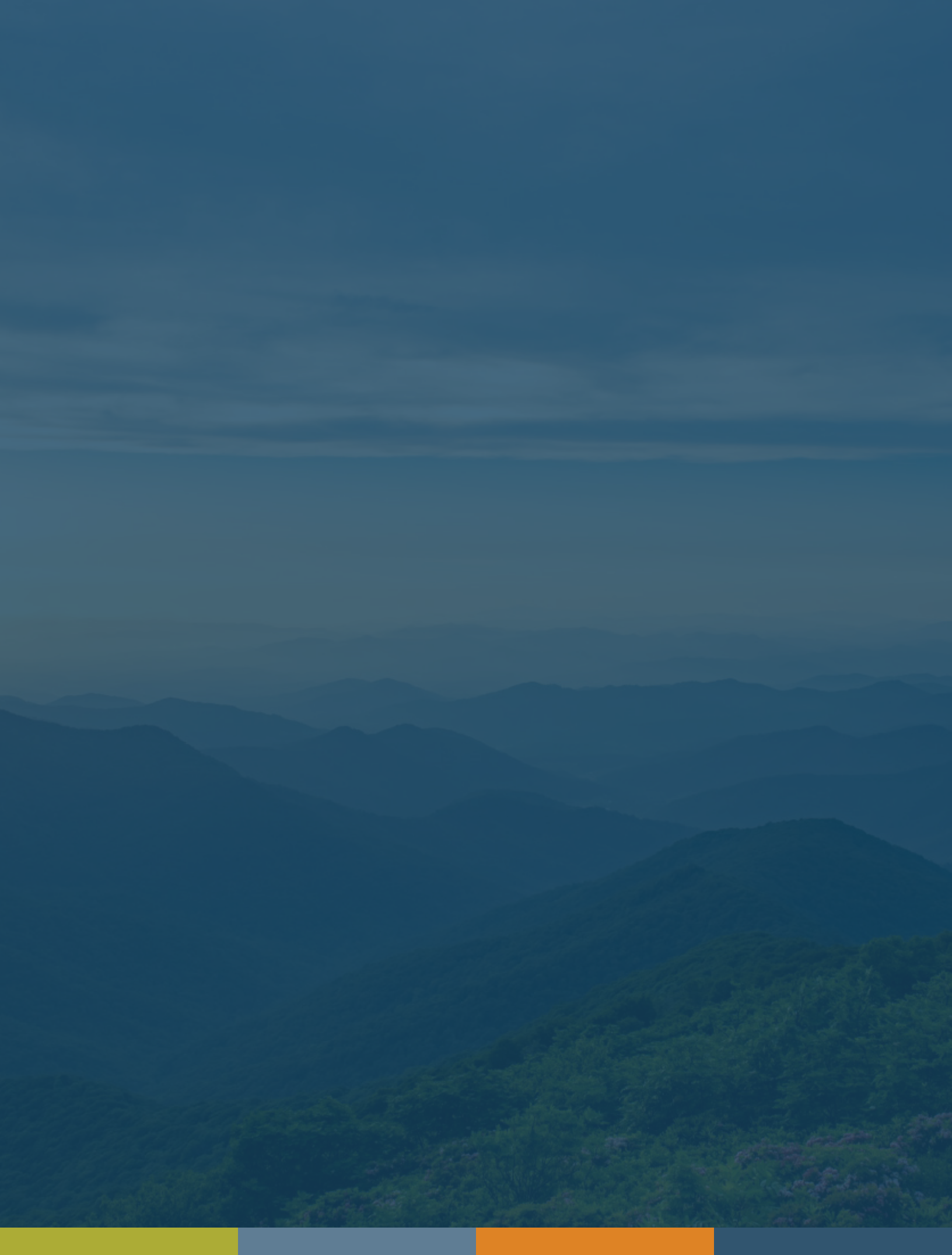


# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

*Serving South Carolina's Appalachian Region*

ANDERSON • CHEROKEE • GREENVILLE • OCONEE • PICKENS • SPARTANBURG







## LETTER FROM THE BOARD

*Mike Forrester, Board Chair  
ACOG Board of Directors*

The purpose of the Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG) is to enhance the lives of people living in the six-county South Carolina Appalachian Region. Since our establishment in 1965, we have maintained a commitment to provide quality services to residents, local governments and service providers in Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens, and Spartanburg Counties.

The heart of ACOG is our team of board members and staff; our trusted, committed, multi-disciplined, and solutions-oriented individuals who love the Appalachian Region we serve. We build and foster regional relationships, provide solutions for communities, and fill gaps in staff and administrative resources. The team serves as a regional facilitator, bringing diverse stakeholders to the table to address the most important issues facing the region.

The ACOG improves the lives of the region's citizens through services to local governments, economic and community development, planning, transportation, infrastructure development, resource management, senior advocacy, and workforce development. Our programs for the elderly, such as home-delivered meals, congregate dining, transportation, and counseling, benefit seniors across our region every day. Our focus on work skills development ensures people in our region keep up with the ever-changing skill sets required by business and industry. Our focus

on economic development through our InfoMentum Economic Development Support System, assistance with grant funding for infrastructure, workforce development programs, and transportation planning, ensures our region is equipped to compete in a global economy. In 2022, our Grants Services program had its most productive year ever in working with entities across the region to manage over \$40 million in grant funds to address existing needs, as well as to position the region for even greater prosperity in the future.

While our programs are broad and widely varied, they all come back to serving the people of the Upstate. Whether it is general administration, assistance with grants, planning, or economic development support, we want to be a key resource for getting the job done.

We are pleased to provide this Annual Report for the Appalachian Council of Governments, covering our activities and accomplishments in 2022. I hope you find it informative. Thank you for supporting our region.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Forrester". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mike Forrester  
ACOG Board Chair



# ACOG 2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



## ANDERSON COUNTY

Cindy Wilson | Secretary  
Mayor Rocky Burgess  
Dennis Claramunt  
Representative West Cox  
Sandra Gantt  
Ray Graham  
Charles E. Pinson  
Jeff Roberts  
Mayor Terence Roberts

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Lyman Dawkins III  
Ed Elliott  
Henry Jolly  
Representative Dennis Moss  
Dennis Stroupe

## GREENVILLE COUNTY

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Mayor Brandy Amidon  
Representative Mike Burns  
Reverend Grady Butler  
Reverend Ennis Fant, Sr.  
Lillian Brock Flemming  
George Fletcher  
Don Godbey  
Butch Kirven  
Willis Meadows  
Russell Stall

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Julian Davis III  
John Elliott  
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Marta Wahlen

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Roy Costner III  
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Mayor Robert Halfacre  
Mayor Fletcher Perry  
Margaret Thompson

## SPARTANBURG COUNTY

Mike Forrester | Board Chair  
Monier Abusoft  
Mayor Robert Briggs  
Brooke Coleman  
Mayor Rick Danner  
Jane Hall  
Ruth Littlejohn  
Representative Steven Long  
Manning Lynch  
Jack Mabry  
Mildred Tillerson



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## ABOUT ACOG

The Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG) was established in 1965 to advise the governor on the use of Appalachian Regional Commission funds. In 1971, the organization became one of 10 COG districts created by the South Carolina General Assembly. ACOG represents a 6 county area that includes Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens, and Spartanburg counties in the Appalachian Region of South Carolina. ACOG operates as a multifaceted service organization for local governments, providing a regional forum where elected officials, industry experts, community leaders, and community members come together to discuss issues and share ideas to solve local challenges. ACOG works in close collaboration with our community partners toward building a competitive economy and promoting healthy, livable communities.







## SERVICES

In carrying out our mission, ACOG brings together elected officials and local practitioners to develop strategies for improving quality of life, prioritizing state and federal investments into social services and public infrastructure throughout the region.

We provide comprehensive expertise and resources to support and facilitate a wide variety of programs and services for citizens and leaders. Funding for ACOG's programs and services comes from a variety of sources, including grants from federal and state agencies, as well as dues from member local governments. In 2022, approximately 75% of ACOG revenue came from federal sources, allowing us to provide many services at reduced or no cost. The total financial return to the region from ACOG programs in 2022 exceeded \$29.7 million.

### PROGRAM AREAS

The Appalachian Council of Governments provide services through five program areas and two partner organizations:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

GRANTS SERVICES

PLANNING SERVICES

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

SENIOR ADVOCACY

APPALACHIAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

WORKLINK



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

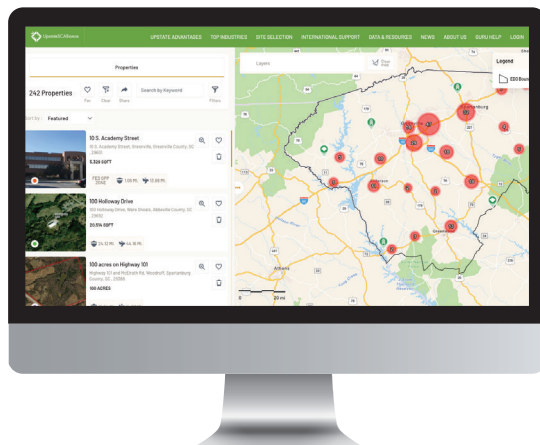
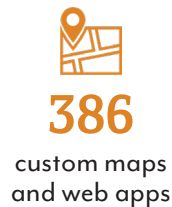
Economic Development Services supports regional community and economic development through professional planning, grant support, and InfoMentum, a national award-winning suite of services that includes customized GIS-based tools, web applications, research, and technical support. By providing assistance to communities and organizations in the six ACOG counties and beyond, the Economic Development Services team strives to facilitate growth and development, improving the quality of life of our communities throughout the region.

## 2022 CAPITAL INVESTMENT *in the region*



## INFOMENTUM

Whether promoting a site, a building, or an entire community, economic developers and strategic planners require timely, accurate, and geography-specific information in a quick and easily accessible format. The GIS-based mapping and data tools of ACOG's InfoMentum Online program give investing organizations a competitive advantage to support capital investment, job creation, and overall community enhancement.



**ANDERSON**  
**8**  
announcements

**\$315M**  
investment  
**492**  
jobs

**CHEROKEE**  
**6**  
announcements

**\$502M**  
investment  
**225**  
jobs

**GREENVILLE**  
**19**  
announcements

**\$470M**  
investment  
**2,326**  
jobs

**OCONEE**  
**2**  
announcements

**\$43M**  
investment  
**247**  
jobs

**PICKENS**  
**1**  
announcement

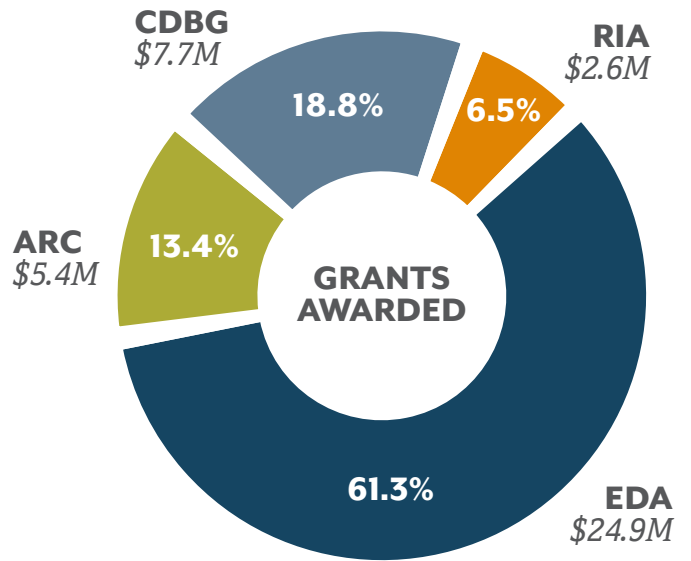
**\$4M**  
investment  
**21**  
jobs

**SPARTANBURG**  
**20**  
announcements

**\$2.7B**  
investment  
**1,915**  
jobs

# GRANTS

The Grants Services team collaborates with local governments, economic development organizations, and state and federal agencies to identify, secure, and administer grant funds for a wide range of community and economic development activities. Services include assisting communities with developing grant applications and providing administration after a grant is awarded. Projects managed range from installing public infrastructure, to developing parks and trails, to removal of dilapidated buildings and homes to create safer communities. Our staff serves as consultant, liaison, problem solver and project manager bringing expertise and the capacity to help communities secure funding for projects that contribute to building vibrant, resilient communities.



## 2022 REVIEW

**39**  
grant projects facilitated

**79,499**  
residents benefiting

**42,336**  
students and workers trained and educated

**2,000**  
jobs created and retained

**\$10.8M**

### Critical Infrastructure

Improve & develop critical water and wastewater infrastructure

**\$19.4M**

### Economic Opportunity

Maximize economic opportunities through infrastructure improvements

**\$7.7M**

### Natural & Cultural Assets

Leverage the economic potential of the region's natural and cultural heritage

**\$2.9M**

### Community Enrichment

Build a better future for communities through neighborhood revitalization

**\$40.7M**

### Total

Improve the region's economy and the quality of life of its residents

\*ARC: Appalachian Regional Commission; CDBG: Community Development Block Grant; EDA: Economic Development Administration; RIA: SC Rural Infrastructure Authority

# PLANNING SERVICES

Planning Services works with communities to enhance local and regional efforts to promote community development and improve quality of life. The role of the program is broad, ranging from transportation and regional sewer coordination to local planning and administrative services. Staff provides a wide range of technical assistance to local governments on planning administration and other growth management related issues that help communities create a path to achieve their vision and to promote prosperity in the region.



**5**  
comprehensive plan  
and zoning updates



**193**  
attendees at planning  
education & training courses



**298**  
Section 208 Water Quality  
Conformance reviews



**5**  
served as staff for  
five communities



**\$207,998**  
invested in eight homes  
rehabilitated through  
Anderson HOME Consortium



**\$212,026**  
invested to develop  
two affordable homes

## TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Over the last year, staff worked with the ACOG Transportation Committee to update the region's Rural Long Range Transportation Plan, coordinated with SCDOT on the implementation of identified projects, and supported the regional MPOs with their Long Range Plan update through updating the Appalachian Regional Travel Demand Model.



**\$220,000**  
funding awarded to the  
region for purchase of  
human service transit vehicles



**\$3.05M**  
funding to counties for  
improving local roads &  
construction of access roads





# GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Government Services provides a broad range of technical support through hands-on expertise and cost-effective consulting services. With a knowledgeable and service-oriented staff, we advise and assist our members and serve as a one-stop resource for questions and solutions. Understanding the value of services that are tailored to the individual needs of our communities helps us provide the most effective support for our member governments.

In 2022, staff worked with Anderson County to update their Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), which helps local government continue to provide essential operations during emergencies. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic created a shift in awareness to the need for a more robust COOP to address providing essential functions across a broader range of emergencies. ACOG staff worked with the county's Emergency Management Department to identify alternative facilities, key personnel, critical resources, interoperable communication systems, and vital records/databases that help develop better plans and procedures for responding to emergencies in the future.



32

attendees at our seven-week Supervisory and Management training course



9

local governments received administrative services and support



4

communities asked us to facilitate planning retreats and goal setting sessions



7

local governments received training on annexation, leadership, and sexual harassment



9

communities were assisted with staffing searches and budgeting assistance



## SENIOR ADVOCACY

The ACOG serves as the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for the Appalachian Region. Senior Advocacy's goal is to empower older adults and adults with physical disabilities to maintain a high quality of life in their homes and communities. Programs provide information and support services that focus on the physical, mental, and relational health of seniors throughout the region.

Direct assistance includes staff working with the elderly to conduct assessments and determine the level of need for clients. Identified needs are then addressed through partnerships with providers for in-home and community based services, which includes group dining and home delivered meals, transportation, home care, and health promotion programs. Primary programs available to seniors are Information and Referral Assistance, Family Caregiver Support, Home Care, Long Term Care Ombudsman, Nutrition Programs, and the State Health Insurance Program.

## NUTRITION PROGRAM

The Nutrition Program provides nutritionally balanced meals to seniors. Meals are delivered to their homes or served at congregate meal sites.

**\$5.78M**

in funding for  
senior services

**84,057**

seniors  
served

**348,953**

hot, frozen, and shelf-stable  
meals were delivered to

**3,442 seniors**



## FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Family Caregiver Support Program is focused on preventing burnout and social isolation for caregivers of older adults and seniors raising grandchildren through the provision of respite services.

**752**

families received **\$890,945** of respite relief from caregiving responsibilities

## HOME CARE PROGRAM

The Home Care Program connects older adults with caregiver services for everyday activities.

**226**

seniors received in-home help

## INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

Information and Referral Assistance specialists provide information about resources available in the region for challenges faced by seniors and their caregivers.

**20,082**

seniors and caregivers' concerns and questions were answered by our specialists

**4,085**

seniors advised for Medicare enrollment

## STATE HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

The State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) provides up-to-date information on Medicare, supplements, and health insurance to older adults and their caregivers.

**61,648**

seniors received information on making informed Medicare decisions through **69** events and informational mail-outs

## OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

The Ombudsman Program investigates and works to resolve problems or complaints affecting long-term care facility residents. Staff advocate for individuals living in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. For the safety of residents, investigation of complaints and the resolution process has moved to virtual platforms to keep the line of communication open between residents, their families, facilities, and our staff.

**415**

cases investigated concerning quality of care issues

**1,205**

facility visits

**672**

complaints from residents, family & facilities addressed

## VOLUNTEER OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

Volunteer Ombudsmen visit facilities and provide a voice for long-term care residents. They provide information about resident rights, observe conditions, and advocate for residents. On average, 60% of long-term care residents have no visitors and friendly visits play an important role for those residents.

**621**

volunteer hours spent with long-term care residents in our region's facilities





## APPALACHIAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The Appalachian Development Corporation (ADC) is a nonprofit economic development lender established to support small business development in the Appalachian Region. Business lending programs include multiple financing options. The purpose of ADC is to work in conjunction with local lending institutions to structure “gap-financing” loans that improve the applicant’s overall debt service requirements. The funding comes primarily from public dollars and the primary purpose is to leverage local investments to maximize the applicant’s resources to create jobs for our area. The ADC manages the Appalachian Loan Fund (ALF) on behalf of the ACOG. The ALF loan pool is capitalized by grants from the Appalachian Regional Commission and the State of South Carolina. The ALF is a source of low-cost, long-term, fixed-rate financing for businesses whose projects will result in the creation of permanent full-time jobs and leverage private sector investment.

**4**  
loans closed

**\$730,000**  
loaned

**\$1.04M**  
private capital leveraged

**37**  
jobs created or retained



## WORKLINK

WorkLink develops the link between employers and employees in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens Counties through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The Act is designed to help job seekers access education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market. WorkLink partners with local service providers to administer programs for adults, dislocated workers, and youth. These services increase the quality and accessibility of programs provided to job seekers and employers. WorkLink’s goal is to ensure the local workforce development system is market-driven and meets the employment and training needs of employers and job seekers.

**7,847**  
customer visits to SC Works Centers

**390**  
soft skills workshops and activities

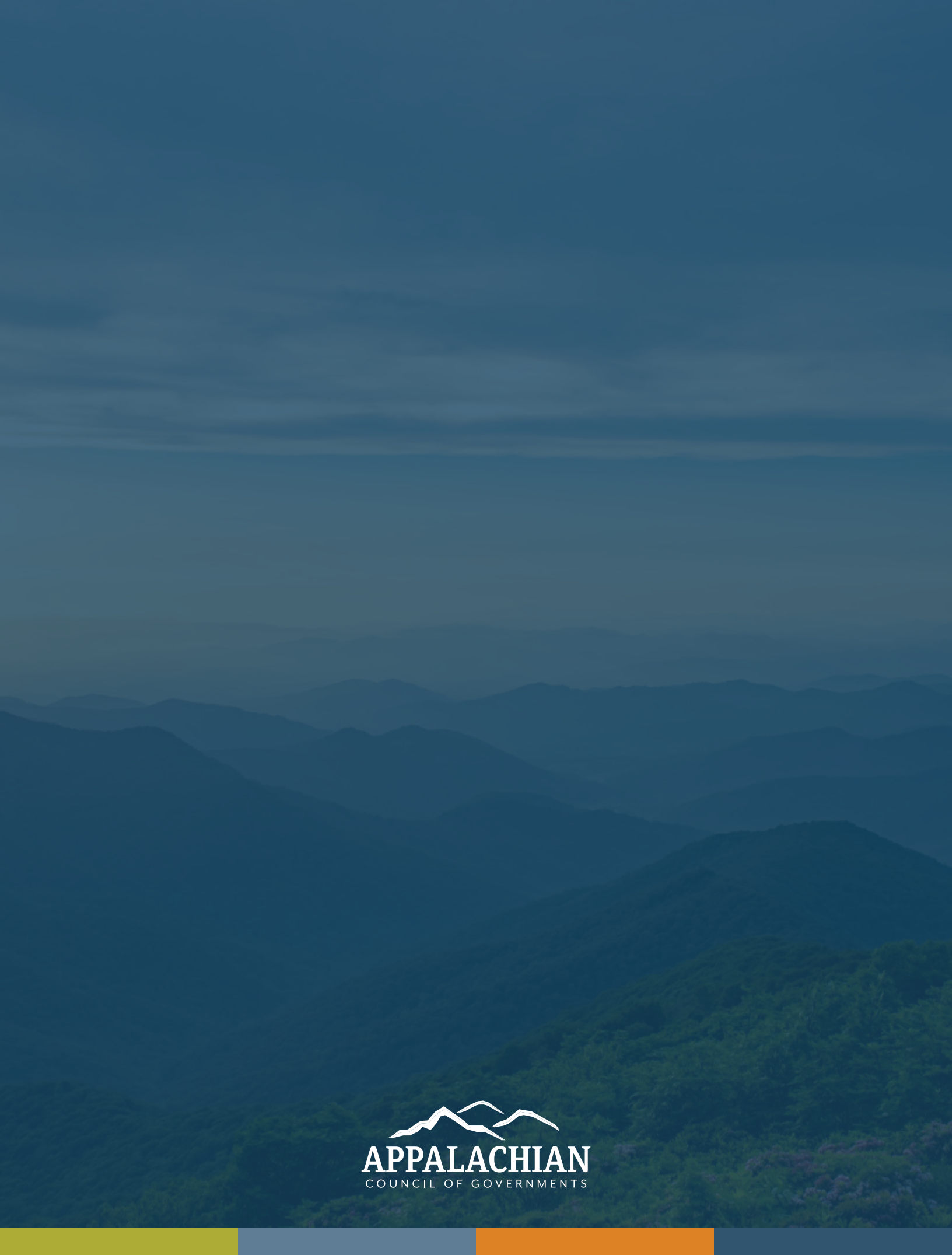
**165**  
occupational trainees

**\$387,759**  
WIOA scholarships

**\$215,730**  
in grant funding to local employers for Incumbent Worker Training







**APPALACHIAN**  
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

