

***Fairfield County
2016 Need Assessment***



***Fairfield Council County
350 Columbia Road
Winnsboro, South Carolina 29180***

Prepared By:

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Fairfield County Community Development Block Grant Program 2016 Needs Assessment

1. Introduction: Community Needs Assessment Purpose

Needs assessments are a valuable tool in determining community perceptions, strengths, and concerns for the purposes of planning and community improvement. The purpose of this Needs Assessment was to gather information from multiple sources, including publicly available data and community members themselves, in order to highlight community strengths and needs for use by local individuals and organizations to guide efforts, to address issues and plan for the future. In accordance with requirements of the Community Development Block Grant(CDBG) program in South Carolina, Fairfield County presents its 2016 Needs Assessment.

The needs assessment also helps to identify community and economic needs of the population of Fairfield County so that resources of the federal, state, and local governments can be efficiently and effectively targeted to improve the lives and to afford opportunities for advancement for all of Fairfield County's citizens, with *emphasis on the low and moderate income citizens* of Fairfield County.

Community needs assessments involve the key elements of convening stakeholders for planning (e.g., determining area of focus for the assessment, reviewing instruments, identifying the target population and avenues for dissemination), administration of a community survey and/or use of qualitative methods to gather public perceptions, analysis of data, and reporting to key partners and the community. Community needs assessments typically use the approach of gathering data from a convenience sample, which is defined as those most easily accessible to and interested in the topic or community. This method differs from basic laboratory research methods in which samples are recruited or randomly selected. For the purpose of gathering responses from a broad cross-section of the community, the partners and supporters of the Fairfield County community needs assessment solicited participation from people of all ages, ethnicities, income brackets, professions, and other qualifiers that might impact one's experience and perception of the community. Every effort was made to gather input from a wide range of community members consistent with Census data for Fairfield County.

The process used to identify community development needs for Fairfield County consists of the review of current studies, census information, economic figures, citizen input and outreach, and other related data. The draft of the Needs Assessment was prepared for review and presented at the needs assessment public hearing held on November 28, 2016 at the Fairfield County Administration Building in Winnsboro.



Studies referenced for the needs assessment include the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) regional priority lists prepared by Central Midlands Council of Governments, the *official* 2010 Census data, and the *South Carolina Employment Trends*, by the South Carolina Employment Security Commission. *An Economic analysis of the Central Midlands Region of South Carolina* was also employed as was the *Consolidated Plan for Housing and Economic Development for the Central Midlands Region* prepared by the Central Midlands Council on Government (COG) and the website of the Central SC Alliance.

2. PUBLIC OUTREACH

Fairfield County recognizes the importance of encouraging citizen participation, especially for low and moderate income residents. Applications, needs assessments, and citizen participation plans are available for citizen review and comments. Upon request, CDBG documents are made available in a format accessible to persons with disabilities.

Fairfield County encourages citizen participation throughout the process of developing a CDBG application and assessing housing and community development needs. In particular, participation by community partner that serve low-and moderate-income (LMI) residents within the project service areas, residents of assisted housing developments, and residents surrounding LMI neighborhoods are encouraged.

The County Outreach methods included public meetings/hearings, community functions, and other venues to provide opportunities for participation in CDBG application development through methods that include the following:

For the preparation of the 2016 Needs Assessment, Fairfield County's outreach efforts included:

- A presentation was made September 7, 2016 at the local County Administration building on "What is CDBG"?
- A presentation was made on September 12, 2016 at the regularly scheduled Fairfield County Council Meeting.
- An overview was conducted at the October 18, 2016 Town of Winnsboro Council Meeting where surveys were disseminated for citizens' input.
- An overview was conducted at the October 13, 2016 Town of Ridgeway Council Meeting where surveys were disseminated for citizens' input.
- Newspapers Notice (Ads) as a method to reach LMI/Non-Targeted/broad community ran September 12 through September 19, 2016 - State Newspaper - as per grantor. An additional ad placed in The VOICE - on September 29, 2016.
- Internet Outreach-Surveys available to reach targeted and broad community. Survey went live September 23, 2016 and was extended till November 21, 2016.
- Local Cable Network – TruVista.
- Flyers were mailed to the 123 churches located throughout the County
- Handbills disseminated at the annual Rock-Around-the-Clock festival, surveys disseminated at the Workforce Development office, Veteran Affairs, Fairfield County Behavioral Health office, The Fatherhood Coalition, the Council on Aging, Fairfield County Disabilities & Special Needs Board, etc.

- Surveys were also available at the Fairfield County Administration Building front desk, in addition to other County buildings, the library, and LMI proposed service areas.
- Announcements were made through local churches, non-profit organizations serving LMI residents, disabled, non-English-speaking, and other participating entities (stores and businesses) located in LMI and proposed project areas

Where an estimated 5 percent or more of public hearing participants are expected to be non-English speaking residents, the County takes reasonable measures to accommodate their needs. Meeting this provision usually means having printed material available in the non-English language(s) and/or retaining the services of an interpreter(s) for CDBG-related meetings and public hearings. The County also takes appropriate actions to accommodate the needs of persons with mobility, visual, or hearing impairments who wish to participate in the CDBG program processes.

3. POPULATION AND HOUSING PROFILE

Demographics and Housing Numbers relating to the Fairfield County uses for year 2010:
Total Population: 23,956

Black/African American	14,167	White	9,236
Hispanic/Latino	374	Two or more Races	357
American Indian/Alaska Native	52	Asian	55

Age of Population:	Number:	Percent:
Under 5 years	1436	5.99
5 to 9 years	1456	6.08
10 to 14 years	1516	6.33
15 to 19 years	1616	6.75
20 to 24 years	1373	5.73
25 to 34 years	2488	10.39
35 to 44 years	2925	12.21
45 to 54 years	3878	16.19
55 to 64 years	3703	15.46
65 to 74 years	2065	8.62
75 to 84 years	1118	4.67
85 years and over	382	1.59

Median Age 42.40 years old

Total Households: 9419 Total Housing Units: 11,681

Owner Occupied 6989 Average Household size of owner occupied unit:
8.6

Renter Occupied 2430 Average Household size of renter occupied unit

2.94

Vacant Year Round units: 2262 Female Head of Household: 52.2

Low and Moderate Income (LMI) Population based on 2015 population data supplied by HUD:

Total Population: 23,560 LMI: 17,305 LMI %: 54.29

Fairfield County is a predominantly low-income community located in rural South Carolina. HUD data indicates 58.97% of the population is low and moderate income.

The County's population has increased by 2.14% more than it was in 2000. The population growth rate is much lower than the state average rate of 15.29% and is much lower than the national average rate of 9.71%. The Fairfield County population density is 33.75 people per square mile, which is much lower than the state average density of 144.45 people per square mile and is much lower than the national average density of 81.32 people per square mile. The most prevalent race in Fairfield County is black, which represents 59.14% of the total population. The average Fairfield County education level is lower than the state average and is lower than the national average.

Housing statistics relating to the Fairfield County for year 2010:

Total housing units:	2411	
Owner occupied	1638	Average Household size of owner occupied unit: 2.47
Renter Occupied	364	Average Household size of renter occupied unit: N/A
Vacant Units:	346	Female Head of Household: 2617

According to the Census, most homes were built around 1986, in Fairfield County and is predominantly owner-occupied. Per the 2010 Census, approximately 79.3% of the City's housing stock was built prior to 1975. Over 36% of its housing stock was built prior to 1985 suggesting a significant number of houses in need of rehabilitation.

The median value of an owner-occupied housing unit in the County is \$6,900. According to 2000 census figures, the median value of a home in Fairfield County is \$92,500, with 32.33% of the homes being worth between \$50,000 and \$99,999. As a State, the median value of a home is \$92,500.

Comparing the percentage of householders that occupied their units prior to 1969 to the number of elderly and the elderly at poverty level or below, it can be assumed that the occupants of many housing units are retired and/or living in poverty and do not have the income to undertake substantial or even minor rehabilitation.

It is estimated that about 21.8% of the homes in the County are renter-occupied. Approximately 28% of the renters in the County are paying over 30% of their household income in rent which is an indicator of being over-burdened by housing costs despite the low median value of homes. These statistics indicate a need to increase wages and maintain existing housing stock.

4. COMMUNITY NEEDS



A. Housing:

Fairfield County has a significant demand for rental units and along with a high rental rate. Approximately half of all renters in our community are considered cost-burden (spending 30 percent or more of their income in housing). Many lower income residents struggle with severe housing costs driven by a tight and competitive housing market that responds to the demands of the highest earning households, driving up the cost of for-sale and rental housing. In order to maintain housing affordability and meet the needs of a diverse and growing population, the jurisdictions within the County must work to preserve and expand the supply of housing for all income levels. This will be critical to maintaining the integrity, wellbeing, and economic prosperity of the region.

Fairfield County recognizes the importance of housing to fostering a healthy and livable community. The County is committed to promoting safe, affordable housing and reducing homelessness through the County partnerships and policy efforts. In the 2016 Need Assessment survey data determined that roughly **56%** of the respondents indicated that there is a significant need to address the need for improvements to rental homes.

Fairfield County goals and strategies are to provide decent housing for the LMI community by:

- Assisting homeless persons to obtain appropriate housing
- Assisting those threatened with homelessness
- Continuing to pass ordinances/resolutions to protect vulnerable LMI community
- Continuing to educate the community on housing discrimination
- Conducting a comprehensive assessment to determine the inventory of affordable housing, permanent housing and supportive housing for persons with special needs.
- Strengthen the operations of non-profit organizations to develop affordable housing

The goal is to create a consolidated plan that would represent the high priority to assist in the creation and preservation of affordable housing opportunities for low income and special needs households in Fairfield County. This report will provide qualitative feedback collected through *regional* forums and *regional* needs through a survey, which are substantiated by quantitative data reported in the needs assessment and a market analysis that serves as the basis for prioritization.

B. Public Infrastructure:

Infrastructure for this CDBG assessment has a wide definition that includes; water, sewer facilities, flood defenses, communication, and waste water, etc. The next section will look at the significant issues that affect the entire County.

Water Infrastructure

Fairfield County is located in the Piedmont physiographic province of the State, where the primary source of water is from reservoirs, lakes and major river systems. As a result, this province depends on abundant rainfall to continually recharge these surface water bodies. Additionally, the County has access to good quality ground water from the underlying fractures of bedrock and overlying soil and saprolite. Both resources are used to meet the county's water demands. The County's two largest surface water bodies – Lake Monticello and Lake Wateree -- are the source of power generation by the SCE&G's VC Sumner nuclear Power Plant and the Duke Power Wateree Hydroelectric Station.

Water use by the VC Sumner Plant in 2006 for generating nuclear power was 271,236.322 (millions) gallons. Water use from Lake Wateree to operate the hydroelectric plant was 2,518,500.12 (millions) gallons, according to the SC Water use Report published by SCDHEC. A third reservoir located west of Winnsboro in the Jackson Mill Creek Water Shed is the water source for the Town of Winnsboro and its larger service area extending all the way to Blythwood. It is the primary source in Fairfield County for public supply, commerce and industry. The amount of water drawn from this lake was 722.306 (millions) gallons in 2006. Ground water in 2006 was the source of 71.9 million gallons of water for local consumption. While providing only about 10 percent of the water supply, the availability of ground water in most areas of the county has perpetuated and sustained a rural lifestyle in areas outside the reach of the Winnsboro service area. The value of the County's rivers, lakes and reservoirs mandates a careful planning, regulation, and development that impact these resources.

Water resources are a significant undertaking when attempting to provide water supply and sewerage infrastructure throughout the County. This includes the operation, maintenance and upgrading the system network. The County will:

- Continue with comprehensive water study plan, review of the available utility systems
- Identify aging infrastructure and repair/replacement of aging utility systems
- Proper stewardship of quality drinking water and the environment that provides such
- Improve the efficiency of services provided by the County by upgrading aging infrastructure
- Continue stewardship of fire protection system throughout the County

Telecommunication Infrastructure

Fairfield County Interoperability Communication Project is another part of the infrastructure system. Fairfield County's plan is to set a strategic direction for enhancement of regional response capability and capacity for all disciplines, including Office of Emergency management (OEM), FIRE, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and health. A critical issue facing public safety today is the inability to establish direct radio-to-radio communication with other agencies when responding to critical incidents. Businesses and the economy growth as a whole will benefit from the availability of competitive and flexible digital infrastructure.

This initiative is part of Public Safety Interoperable Communication to obtain a transportable tower to be attached to the our mass causality incident, mobile center and established two (2) repeater towers system in the Southern and Northern Corridors of Fairfield County. The transportable tower and repeater system basic capabilities are described as follows:

- Some preliminary planning and engineering has already been undertaken at no cost to the project, in order to assess the existing communications tower network and equipment.
- Identify deficiencies, and identify potential sites for erecting new towers to provide near-continuous signal coverage across the entire County and bordering counties
- All of the preliminary planning and estimating were accomplished pro bono with the help of established emergency communications equipment vendors
- All of the proposed equipment for new towers and upgrades to existing towers are compatible with existing standards for land mobile radio systems and with the future of digital transmission
- All of the communications equipment to be placed on the towers also conforms to the standards set forth in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Office of Emergency Communications (SAFECOM) Recommended Guidance for Federal Grant Programs

Fairfield County conducts regular, comprehensive regional training and exercises that are inclusive of community partners, local and interstate participation. These exercises prepare the county(s) to respond to a wide variety of emergency situations, varying in scale from local response to that requiring assistance from or providing assistance to outside jurisdictions, other states, and the federal government. Interoperability training and exercises will be most effective and relevant if they are articulated and fleshed out by the stakeholders themselves, as an organic component of planning activities. Stakeholders will be strongly encouraged to identify their own interoperability training gaps as they appear during the planning process, and propose training and exercise scenarios to Fairfield County and a working group that will help develop the scenarios to address these gaps. The bulk of the training and exercise activity is expected to occur after the enhanced communications infrastructure is in place and the use of the new system is approved by the FCC and ready for operational use. The training & exercise funds will also be used to conduct post-exercise assessments and collect after-action reports from all participating forces, which in turn will be reviewed by the stakeholders in the cross-county interoperability working group to aid in the development of interoperability MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding).

The impact of this initiative will be the tangible and intangible returns on its initial financial investment, in terms of:

- Increased emergency management awareness in all of the border communities (Kershaw & Richland);
- Significant cost savings for all emergency response agencies in northeastern corridor of SC (in terms of human life and property damage, in addition to actual dollars expended in emergency response efforts);
- Improved cross-border interoperability for combined exercises and incident response

- Fostering of sustainable long-term partnerships and working groups to address cross-country security, to include discussions of strategic emergency management issues that will require regional and national policy coordination;
- Substantial enhancement of emergency communications options and expansion of coverage areas within the border region;
- Strong potential for successful duplication of the demonstration project in other counties or states.

The County will be the primary party responsible for sustained and continual maintenance costs of this project. It is recommended that a complete separate department with staff be established to oversee the development, implementation, and the day-to-day operation. A communications company will be contracted to maintain all equipment in a timely manner. Costs will be budgeted (as this is the current method) each year and a reserve will be placed in an account for unusual repair costs. As future communications projects are realized, maintenance costs will shift to a budget line item most probably under a county interoperability coordinator.

Additional, Fairfield County has agreements with the local cell tower providers (Verizon, ATT, Sprint, etc.) that maintain and provide access to these to these towers. Fairfield County currently maintains and sustains several towers within the county and understands that should this project be funded, it will be the county's responsibility of developing, implementing and sustaining the cross-county regional radio communications UHF/VHF/700 MHz interoperability communication project within Fairfield County.

As several important Homeland Security initiatives continue to be funded through the state to achieve statewide interoperability it will be necessary for Fairfield County to continue working with the State to secure funds on interoperability to ensure the highest levels of interoperable communications. The current management team is the central part of each agency and will always have a representation on the developments, direction and advancement of interoperability communications.

The primary goal is to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the citizens throughout Fairfield County and the State of South Carolina. The project maximizes the ability of city, county and state governments to serve the public, enhance responder safety and most of all... save lives. To continue economic growth digital infrastructure must be available for businesses to migrate where this technology is readily available. The provision of funding for businesses to access the relevant infrastructure will maximize their opportunities which will ensure that Fairfield County will have a competitive edge when business leaders are considering locations for investment decisions.

C. Public Facilities:

Public facilities that serve the entire jurisdiction of the grantee, a main library for example, may qualify under the LMI benefit national objective only if the percentage of LMI persons in the entire jurisdiction is sufficiently high to meet the "area benefit" test.

Eligible types of facilities and improvements include: Handicapped accessibility improvements (including improvements to buildings used for general conduct of government), neighborhood facilities including, but not limited to: libraries, medical facilities, police sub-stations, fire stations, jails, recreational facilities, parks and playgrounds are some of the potential options.

According to the data the of 2016 Needs Assessment, 75% of the respondents, youth/teen facility has been defined as a significant need within Fairfield County. CDBG funding *may* be an option as a funding sources for a youth program/initiative that may be used for the construction of a facility. There did not appear to be a statute or regulation that defined “public facilities” or “public improvements,” HUD broadly interprets these terms to include all improvements and facilities that are publicly owned and are open to the general public during regular business hours. CDBG *may* have the flexibility, to work to allocate the funds to purchase, construct, rehabilitate, install, and reconstruct facilities owned and operated by the County.

The issues/barriers that the County faces are to provide centers that fit the needs of that specific community. Many factors must be considered before building a structure in these areas such as: Population of that community, age of the population, services needed and activities conducted at that location. This also brings into additional factors that the County must consider including staffing, maintenance of the building, utilities, equipment, supplies, etc. depending on services and hours of operation.

If Fairfield County Council is interested in advocating for CDBG funding for a youth facility, it is recommended that they consider partnering with other service providers in the community that could also benefit from the facility. They can use the project as an opportunity to create better-coordinated, more convenient services for youth in the community. Moreover, by building a broader support network for the project, this may increase the chances of successful CDBG funding.

Additionally, roughly 66% of the respondents indicated the need for park and recreation facilities and 59 % for a senior center. These suggestions have been an on-going request from the community over the years. The County Council has discussed in past years the possibly of creating “multi-purpose centers. “These types of facilities can provide large rooms that can be sub-divided into classroom/community rooms, a computer room and information center. These multi-purpose facilities could be a library, fitness center, police sub-station and recreation center that serves a holistic approach to address other multiple issues with the given community.

D. Public Safety & Community Services:

The mission of all police enforcement officers/departments is to protect the lives and properties of the citizens of Fairfield County. They enforce all city, state, and federal laws, prevent crime, and educate the public. The Administration Division is responsible for coordinating police department efforts with other departments, with other criminal justice agencies, and with the community. The Uniform Patrol Division deals with traffic, neighborhood impact, and various other aspects within the community. The Investigative Division is responsible for all investigations of a criminal nature beyond the basic patrol response. They investigate crimes, identifying and apprehending offenders, processing crime scenes, recovering

stolen property, and preparing cases for trials.

Like society in general, Fairfield County has its share of drug, alcohol problems and issues, particularly in certain pockets of the County. This is coupled with a very high incidence of nuisance, the lack of civility, the disobedience to traffic laws which results in traffic safety and enforcement concerns and those that have chosen a life of various crimes.

When looking at the current Needs Assessment roughly **74%** of the respondents expressed a concern about public safety. Yet, when looking at the additional questions and data of the survey it didn't appear that the citizens express a high concern for safety after dark, or drug activity. This issue requires additional research. The issue that may need to be addressed is a "**communication**" break down. Perception is reality.

It is the recommendation of this study that in order to better validate the citizens concerns there may need to be a forum like town hall meetings/ or a "Bright and Blue Day". This is where the community will enlighten ("Bright") the law enforcement of their concerns and come up with a community solution or take the necessary steps to address the problem(s).

Public facilities and service information pertaining to police relate to general societal issues and problems; overall police activity and radio communications are a significant concern. In summary, citizens continued to express their concerns for the lack of services across the County with roughly 77 % stating that they are concerned about the lack of Health Care Facilities services, followed by 73% for services for Abused and Neglected Children and roughly 71% for the lack of Youth Services. This continues to be statement from past Need Assessment and a connecting stream throughout this assessment.

E. Economic Development:

Brownfields are dormant properties where the presence or potential presence of contamination has impeded site redevelopment, turning the properties into economic and environmental drains on localities. Brownfield grants provide funding for municipalities to implement revitalization strategies that are necessary in order to redevelop impacted sites. Once redeveloped, Brownfield sites become community assets that can attract businesses, jobs, and ultimately expand the local tax base. Brownfield redevelopment is essential to encourage growth in distressed communities.

These grants make that possible by creating opportunities to turn dormant sites into vibrant properties that attract jobs and private investment in the end helping to revitalize once-blighted areas. The Brownfield programs helps set the stage for combined public and private investment in brownfield redevelopment. The Implementation Strategy portion of the program, which is frequently supported by Brownfield grants, is designed to establish priorities for site redevelopment and recruit developers and outside investors to the project. More specifically, Brownfield grants have supported activities that include:

- investigations of site contamination conditions;
- environmental impact assessments;

- economic and market studies to determine the best use of Brownfields and vacant sites;
- redevelopment plans for strategic sites;
- marketing to attract developer interest;
- public forums and other opportunities for community participation;
- other actions to spur investment, clean-up, and redevelopment related to Brownfield sites.

On average, a redeveloped Brownfield site has the potential to create up to 91 jobs through clean-up, construction, and new businesses. Studies have shown that approximately every dollar of public investment spent on Brownfield redevelopment leverages up to \$8 in total investment through job creation, wages, and taxes. Additionally, redeveloped Brownfields have increased property values by between five (5) and fifteen (15) percent within a quarter mile of the redeveloped site.

This will form feasible, strategic development projects and other actions to invite investment and catalyze revitalization. This strategy will foster redevelopment on strategic sites for mixed use development, professional offices, niche retail/service, hotels, housing, and public open space. Emphasis will be on redevelopment priority areas through land assemblage, environmental assessments and cleanups, expanding recreational areas and new commercial/mixed use development.

Brownfield grants provide municipalities affected by Brownfields with a unique opportunity for growth and development. The County works in close partnership with local communities to plan and realize a vision for redevelopment that will advance economic growth, enhance the landscape and improve the environment.

Under the State's Brownfields program, Fairfield County will actively work with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) services to address the cleaning up and/or possible contaminated sites to protecting public health, the environment, and returning abandoned properties to productive use.

Brownfields disproportionately impact poor communities and communities of color, stalling economic growth and causing health problems for families. Distressed neighborhoods are home to Brownfields, contaminated properties that accomplish nothing and hinder local growth. Local communities will have the financial assistance needed for redevelopment activities to attract investment and produce economic growth.

E (a) Workforce Development

Goal: Workforce Development Fairfield County's goal is to ensure a sustainable and a healthy community that requires investment in its people. People whose basic needs are met are more likely to seek higher education and living-wage jobs. In this way, community and workforce development is an essential component of economic development efforts. These programs ensure that all residents are able to find satisfaction and security in their work and those local business owners can find talented employees to grow their operations.

Goal: Rural Innovation Fairfield County's rural character, beautiful landscapes and recreational opportunities are some of its defining characteristics and clear economic development assets.

Sustainable, place-based initiatives offer opportunities for entrepreneurship, living wage jobs in industrial sectors and amenities that attract residents as well as visitors. Indeed, tourism and recreation can support innovation in rural economic development planning by creating an entrepreneurial culture, improving conditions for business growth and developing unique attractions that reflect the character of their communities.

Goal: Placemaking The distinct image and brand of a place can endear it to residents and attract visitors. Placemaking involves targeted investments to the quality and amenities of Fairfield County that will evoke character and create unique identities to make residents proud. As visitors take note of the special, placebased qualities of Fairfield County, they will increasingly choose to spend free time at shops, parks, festivals and other activities in the County.

G. Downtown Development/Revitalization:

Downtown is... the traditional geographic center of commerce and government which over time has become known for its strong sense of place within the community. The downtown is a place within the community that is identifiable to current and past residents; it is an area that has left an impression on nearly everyone that has encountered the space. The downtown is central to identifying the history of the community.

Fairfield County in conjunction with the Fairfield County Chamber of Commerce strives to develop a Downtown Revitalization Plan. The Plan intent is to: 1) further develop a cohesive and agreeable revitalization/redevelopment effort for the core of the downtown area, and 2) a strategy for taking the plan to the Revitalization Plan to Phase II directly to Implementation.

The Town of Winnsboro/Fairfield County Downtown Revitalization Plan (hereafter referred to as the Revitalization Plan) addresses the physical condition of the structures/buildings within the defined study area, examines the economic conditions via a Market Analysis, and incorporates the opinions of business and building owners. The Revitalization Plan will act as a master plan for future projects and implementation strategies in the prescribed area. The following demographic and economic overview is intended to inform recommendations for market development strategies.

In this assessment the top 3 priorities for Downtown Realization were: Business Retention at roughly 78%, Downtown Restaurants at 75% and Leadership Development at 70%.

This study recommends that the community continue pursuing options to develop a modest amount of housing within the downtown area. Upper floors can be converted into modest housing units, vacant buildings might alternately become live/work space. The development of downtown housing would offer the advantages of:

- Maximizing the use of existing infrastructure,
- Providing options for younger and older adults to remain in the area,
- Enhancing economic activity,
- Supporting a more vibrant community,
- Reducing development pressure on other types of land uses,
- Encouraging walking and cycling.



Retail Market Opportunities

Retail development ideally serves unmet community or regional needs. Comparison of consumer expenditures and retail sales within the community and retail industry sectors, there indicates opportunities for growth. Demand consistently exceeds supply. The current survey indicated that the citizens of Fairfield County would like to see the following shops/stores/business located downtown:

Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores(32)
Grocery Stores (25)
Electronic Stores(18)
Jewelry (11)
Entertainment (4)

Restaurants (31)
Building Materials (18)
Sporting Goods (15)
Appliances (6)

The appearance of a building in a traditional downtown commercial district can have a large impact on the success of a business. While many other factors play a big role in the viability of a business, appearance can enhance the visibility of a building and can help to attract customers. The improvement of the appearance of a group of downtown buildings can strengthen the entire downtown.

The work needed on the Town of Winnsboro downtown buildings varies in scope from basic deferred maintenance, such as peeling paint, to minor cosmetic improvements such as awnings, to minor repair work on windows and doors, to major renovations. The majority of the downtown buildings need major to minor work; a few need a more substantial and costly renovation.

In addition to the façade work that is needed throughout the project area, there are many buildings that remain vacant. Some buildings in downtown pose a unique challenge in their reuse for something different than that for which they were originally designed. Many of the buildings that are currently vacant fall into one of three categories:

- 1) Minimal modification (paint, façade, etc),
- 2) Significant updating: (plumbing, electrical, window replacement, façade, painting, etc.),
- 3) Those that would be too costly to restore due to the age and condition. Those in this last category may qualify as a “slight and blight” project. This will allow for them to be totally removed while bring a significant value back to the downtown in the overall appearance.

H. Neighborhood Revitalization:

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) encourages the establishment of a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) as a means to create communities of opportunity in distressed neighborhoods. The goal of this program is to reinvest in human and economic capital, and to economically empower low-income residents as part of an overall community revitalization strategy. Comprehensive community revitalization strategies seek to create partnerships among federal and local governments, the private sector, community organizations and neighborhood residents.

The first statement that should be made about Fairfield County is, Fairfield is **NOT** an Entitlement Zone. That is when the eligible grantees are as follows:

- Principal cities of Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs)
- Other metropolitan cities with populations of at least 50,000
- Qualified urban counties with populations of at least 200,000 (excluding the population of entitled cities)

Eligibility for participation as an entitlement community is based on population data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau and metropolitan area delineations published by the Office of Management and Budget. HUD determines the amount of each entitlement grantee's annual funding allocation by a statutory dual formula which uses several objective measures of community needs, including the extent of poverty, population, housing overcrowding, age of housing and population growth lag in relationship to other metropolitan areas.

Since the County is ineligible, this limits what can be done with CDBG funds. The County will continue to support the efforts that it can participate in such as: working towards water throughout the County, Side walk improvements and collaborating with other agencies that could provide neighborhood revitalization.

The goals the County will strive for are:

- Provide a suitable living environment,
- Improve safety and livability of neighborhoods,
- Increase access to quality facilities and services,
- Reduce isolation of income groups within an area through decentralization of housing opportunities and revitalization of deteriorating neighborhoods, and
- Restore and preserve properties of special value for historic, architectural, or aesthetic reasons to conserve energy resources.

PRIORTIES AND PLAN ACTIONS:

Top 3 Priority Needs:

In the coming year Fairfield identifies its priority needs as followed on the discussions among County Council Members, Citizens and other community and they are list as follow:

- 1) Economic Development has been defined as the number one(1) factor of significance to the citizens of Fairfield County when it is related to "Job Creation, Retention and Enhancement of the availability to jobs" throughout the County.
- 2) Infrastructure in its entire capacity (water, sewer facilities, flood defenses, communication, waste water, roads, etc.) has been identified as the backbone to the economic and community's growth for Fairfield County.
- 3) The overarching statement that can be summarized in the assessment is the need for multi-purpose centers/facilities. The facilities which could host a variety of services include but are not limited to: Daycare centers, senior activities, (day/weekend trips), the after/before school care for parents, karate classes, games rooms for the kids, in-door

swimming pool, water aerobics, swimming lessons, basketball & volleyball leagues, babysitting classes, CPR classes, photography classes, and even safety driving classes, and bowling leagues. Many community centers also have rooms to teach music lessons, music recitals, theatre/stage plays, women's socials, and receptions.

Actions to be potentially undertaken to meet these needs could include:

1. Public Hearings held County wide for citizen input.
2. Working with area planners to help develop a sustainable plan of action.
3. Provide ongoing communication with citizens on progress of the plan and encourage their participation in the process to attain grant funding.

Actions to be potentially undertaken for Economic Development Projects

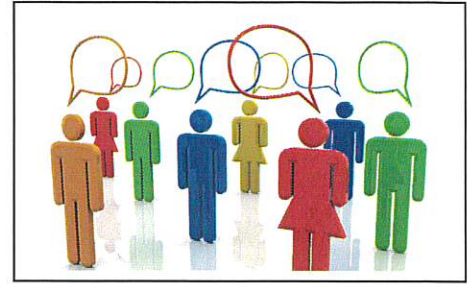
The Economic Development portion of this Plan lists and discusses projects related to assisting existing businesses realize more sales and profitability, while recruiting new businesses to fill in economic gaps in the commercial sectors. The combined analysis, especially from the Market Analysis, which may have already been completed with the public participation process, that play part in the identification to Economic Development related issues and projects which include:

- Recruit new businesses that will fill gaps in the economic needs of the community.
- Develop a Business Incubator with smaller spaces for upstart businesses.
- Educational programs for development of a Business Succession Plan.
- Locally sponsored educational programs for improving ones business.
- Enhance existing business retention programs.
- Create a Leadership Development program.

The information and economic development approaches are offered as examples of strategies that can strengthen the Fairfield County economy. It is necessary to note that the community through the Fairfield County Chamber of Commerce, and/or the Town of Winnsboro, may be working with these types of strategies together. In that case, the inclusion in this plan is merely to reaffirm and, if needed, over-emphasize the need and importance of the programs.

Community Survey Comments:

When completing the CDBG Needs Assessment, the funding organization likes to see the comments or statements that the citizens made inference to their community.



(Please note that the comments made are not that of the opinion of the writer nor the views of the elected officials. These are statements from citizens to provide feedback to the process. The statements have not been arranged in any order or given a ranking.)

Public Infrastructure Improvement Comments

1. Need for sewage system and garbage pick-up in Middle Six Area.
2. Housing - affordable housing for single parents, assistance for the working class that have hardship.
3. Community dev., recreational, low income housing, drainage water, sewer service, road and street need paving. Don't bring mining to the community. Won't develop.
4. Tear all these old houses down that look unlivable, but are being rented out to the poor.
5. Downtown: Cemetery and South Zion Streets and Zion Hill areas.
6. Need grants for seniors who cannot afford to bring up housing to code and make them more accessible and energy efficient so the utility bills will not be so high.
7. We need more new housing availability. New construction for V.C. Summers employees and other local industry.
8. Roads need to be fixed.
9. Too much rental property will only perpetuate more lower income residents. We need residents who are not on government assistance.
10. None of these are something the government should be involved in.
11. Housing does not seem to be something the County should be directly involved in most instances.
12. We have a high Veteran, elderly population and people with disabilities who need housing so they can stay near their support system.
13. Unkempt areas around houses or other privately owned properties..especially at Lake Wateree. Codes need to be enforced.
14. Middle Six Area is in need of a sewage system & trash pick-up.
15. Lack of sewer and water service plus dysfunctional coordination of water companies.
16. Jobs coming into the County and no water.
17. Sewer problems in rural areas.
18. Street lights needed on road 23, street lights needed on road 213, red light at the KFC.
19. 321 Bypass - High Grass at Stop sign.
20. Zion Hill -- around Gordon School and Cemetery look like a third world country. There are vacant dilapidated/boarded up single family homes and streets with pot holes and terrific water drainage problems. These areas have a number of substandard rental homes where code enforcement is sorely needed to fine landlords. A number of elderly, in particular, live in these homes, making the conditions that more deplorable.
21. We need to clean out areas that are not being used.
22. When streets are repaired, County fails to re-build with aprons for driveways. The ones that are done are not well constructed and result with bumps. There are some streets with misspelled names. Some streets have no names at all.
23. Downtown needs better light and curb appeal.
24. Urgent need to have sewage throughout the county and clean water available. Often water smells like Clorox.

25. The Dawkins community needs an assessment of housing needs for the poor and code enforcement on properties that need to improve for safety sake. (Rat infestations, etc)
26. By sidewalk improvement, I include parking in downtown. Downtown is not inviting at all.
27. Some of major roads need to be repaved. Some lots need to be cleaned or grass cut regularly. Cut grass overgrowth on sidewalks. Kill fire ants along side walls.
28. Sidewalks are horrible and people park on them blocking. I'd be hard pressed to say that they are up to ADA guidelines.
29. Options for WIFI without a fee of \$80.00 or more to areas outside city limits

Please describe other concerns or needs of your neighborhood

1. Tutoring services
2. Hydrant and sewer system, lighting transportation garbage pick up
3. opportunity for the youth to be positive in the community
4. Police check
5. More policing - why do I only see police is when I call 911. Policeman reside in the neighborhood but community don't know who they are.
6. Low income and adjoining roads. Mining attempts won't help middle and low-income neighborhoods develop.
7. Should look at the rental homes and landlords
8. lights need, neighborhood watch needs
9. downtown this area should be a real park of the revitalization and gentrification of restoring our history and charm.
10. Streetlights needed.
11. please fix bridge on road 23, it is great need. Need more lighting and need sidewalks in neighborhood.
12. Kids need something to do there is nothing for the kids to do in Winnsboro
13. Winnsboro needs a nursing home and physical rehab faculty
14. We have a number of slum landlords on Cemetery street. The homes are in poor condition. The streets are full of potholes and without sidewalks. It is like a 3rd world country, just ONE BLOCK from Main Street. Deplorable!!!!
15. Old abandoned cars.
16. Helping Seniors
17. There is no communication between government and cities.
18. Noise, loud vehicles & motorcycles
19. Open transparent information sharing with citizens.
20. More law enforcement, quicker response, consequences and patrolling.
21. Why is no one trying to develop land or businesses around SCE&G and Lake Monticello??? Diners, places to shop or eat??
22. Break ins are increasing.
23. Rarely a day goes by that I step out on my front porch and smell the stench of marijuana from the users all around me - law enforcement aware of them and would be able to identify it on any given day.
24. Need dirt roads paved and paved roads maintained.
25. Better school system, daycare options, state jobs that aren't given to out of county residents
26. Enforcement of speed laws; code enforcement of unattractive homes, businesses
27. Stealing, car thefts, and violence everywhere in general, family member had a 2016 vehicle stolen from Palmer St. half mile off Main Street. Fighting gang activity MUST be a priority. Fact. Youth ages 12 to 16 are involved and being trained for crime.

Fairfield County would like to thank "Everyone" for their participation!