A person is seen from behind, holding a large American flag high in the air. The background is a soft, hazy sunset or sunrise over a body of water, with some reeds or grass in the foreground. The overall tone is patriotic and solemn.

**AND THEY WHO FOR
THEIR COUNTRY DIE
SHALL FILL AN HONORED
GRAVE, FOR GLORY
LIGHTS THE SOLDIER'S
TOMB, AND BEAUTY
WEEPS THE BRAVE.**

- Joseph Rodman Drake

**GCRA Board Meeting
May 27, 2025**

June 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Administration Committee meeting, 12:30	11	12 Operations Committee meeting, 12:30	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24 Board meeting, 12:30	25	26	27	28
29	30					

July 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4 Independence Day (Office Closed)	5
6	7	8 Administration Committee meeting, 12:30	9	10 Operations Committee meeting, 12:30	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22 Board meeting, 12:30	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

**GCRA Board Meeting Agenda
Tuesday, May 27, 2025 – 12:30 p.m.
GCRA Board Room**

- 1) Call to Order Chair Barry Coleman
- 2) Invocation
- 3) *Approval of April 22, 2025 Board Minutes (Pages 5 – 7)
- 4) Administration Committee Reports (Pages 8 – 10)
 - a) Financial Highlights – KPI (Page 11)
- 5) Operations Committee (Pages 12 – 14)
- 6) Other Business
 - a) *Approval of the Program Year 2025 Annual Action Plan and the PY 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan (*PowerPoint Presentation*)
 - b) Executive Director Updates
- 7) Executive Session. When necessary, the Board convenes in Executive Session for the discussion of negotiations incidental to proposed contractual arrangements and proposed sale or purchase of property, the receipt of legal advice where the legal advice relates to a pending, threatened, or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claims, or the position of the public agency in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the Redevelopment Authority of a claim, or other matters authorized by the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.
- 8) Adjournment

Minutes
Greenville County Redevelopment Authority
Regular Session
Tuesday, April 22, 2025

Board Members Present: Barry Coleman, Chair
Denise Ernul, Vice Chair
Amy Coleman, Treasurer
Dean Doolittle
David Doser
James Hammond
Robert Julian
Jane Kizer
Walter Moragne
Joanna Reese
Diana Weir
DJ Wilson

Staff Members Present: Joe Smith, Executive Director
Pamela Proner, Finance Director
Meg Macauley, Senior Executive Assistant & Office Manager

1. **Opening and Roll Call.** The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 12:30 p.m., who then welcomed Ms. DJ Wilson as the newest member of the board.
2. **Invocation.** The invocation was offered by Mr. Moragne.
3. **Approval of the March 25, 2025 Board Minutes.** On a motion by Mr. Doser, seconded by Ms. Ernul, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the March 25, 2025 Board meeting as presented.
4. **Administration Committee.** Ms. Weir stated that there were no approval items presented at the committee meeting.
 - a. **Financial Highlights/KPI.** Ms. Proner presented the Financial Highlights for the month of February, noting that Total Assets show an increase of seven percent because she removed the \$200,000 that the County has not paid us and created an Accounts Receivable line item for it instead, with an offsetting Unearned Revenue account. In March, we received \$1 million from the County, which is reflected as a reduction of Assets and recognition of Revenue. Debt-to-income was at four percent, which will continue to decline as homes are sold. Revenue was \$430,773 and Expenditures were \$406,337, for a net of \$24,436.

The LGIP account earned \$30,470 in interest during the month at an average interest rate of 4.56 percent, for a total of \$434,442 earned year-to-date.

Mr. Doser asked if anything different should be done in the future regarding the budget. Ms. Proner responded that this was the first time that we have not received all funds allocated by the County; next time, we will not budget for the funds without greater certainty. Discussion ensued regarding expected funds, budgeting, and the effects of available funds and LIHTC program changes on potential development partners. Mr. Smith added that we are hopeful that State Housing will remove their limitation of only allowing one LIHTC application approval in Greenville County.

5. Operations Committee.

- a. Construction Cost & Sales Price Profile.** Mr. Doser stated that the Committee unanimously approved an updated construction cost of \$151,000 and a sales price of \$275,000 for a house to be built at 1306 W. Bramlett Road in the City View community. He noted that the construction cost presented is a staff estimate and that the job will be bid after approval, and that the purchase price will be subsidized substantially, such that a buyer will only have a loan of about \$200,000.

On a motion by Ms. Weir, the Board unanimously approved the construction cost and sales price as presented.

6. Other Business – Executive Director Updates. Mr. Smith provided updates as follows:

- a. Ribbon-Cutting Event.** Mr. Smith invited the board to a ribbon-cutting event to celebrate kick-off of a MetroConnects sewer line replacement project in the Union Bleachery community on Monday, May 5th at 10:30am. GCRA made a commitment to provide \$500,000 towards the project over two fiscal years.
- b. County Council/Properties Update.** Mr. Smith stated that he hopes the properties for Projects Piedmont, Ballfield, and Railroad will go before the Finance Committee in May. Phase I environmental review is still in progress for these properties, facilitated by GCRA's Brownfields grant.

Mr. Smith stated that the second affordable housing tour with partner agencies to showcase affordable housing in the Upstate will take place the next day, for Councilman McGahhey.

- c. Consolidated Plan Progress.** Mr. Smith stated that staff are reviewing the draft document; we are on schedule with our consultant to complete the process on time.
- d. Longterm Disaster Response.** Mr. Smith stated that yesterday he attended the second meeting with the Greenville County Long-term Recovery Group. Additionally, staff have met with South Carolina Office of Resiliency (SCOR) representatives to discuss working together on long-term recovery efforts in the state.
- e. GCRA "Report Card."** Mr. Smith shared a PowerPoint that provides information about two years of owner-occupied repair program production, composition of GCRA's rental portfolio by AMI categories and number of clients housed, and all projects financed by Affordable Housing Fund (AHF) dollars from 2019 to 2025. Of note: 82 percent of GCRA's rental units serve people at or below 80 percent of area median income. Also of note: GCRA

contributed \$7.9 million towards 22 AHF projects with a total cost of over \$232 million, for 958 units completed at a GCRA investment of \$8,208 investment per unit.

Questions were posed and discussion ensued regarding the housing outlook in Greenville County and GCRA's place in it. Challenges include uncertainty of federal and county budgets, slow-down in projects and cooling of the housing market, fewer permits being issued and at a slower rate, higher building costs and insurance rates, and LIHTC program restrictions. GCRA will continue our three-pronged focus on owner-occupied repair work, an affordable rental portfolio, and affordable homeownership. Mr. Smith stated that Ms. Proner is doing an excellent job of managing our finances and noted the performance of the LGIP account. We are confident in moving forward to fill two staff positions. While we await federal and county budget decisions, we are continuing in our mission, pivoting in strategies where necessary, such as altering a portion of the Gridley Place project to provide homeownership units that will not require the added expense of a homeowners' association while also providing rental units using existing designs.

Mr. Smith spoke about a critical point that arose during the tour and discussion with Councilman Farmer, that there are many people who have "followed the rules" and completed higher education and/or skilled trade training, and have gone into careers as emergency medical technicians, teachers, or police officers, and yet cannot afford to rent much less become homeowners in the current market and economy. It is imperative that GCRA and other housing providers work to address what we can, while advocating for continued funding towards affordable housing.

Mr. Smith also spoke about a recent meeting facilitated by Ten at the Top to discuss current barriers to housing affordability, and thanked the board members who attended. There was great discussion among participants regarding impediments such as soft costs and onerous processes; two subsequent meetings will be held over the summer, the next of which is on June 23rd, and board members are welcome to attend. The goal is to craft recommendations that will be shared during the Second Annual Upstate Homelessness & Housing Meeting in October, a partnership between Ten at the Top and Upstate Continuum of Care.

Mr. Smith also spoke about recent articles and opinion pieces by some housing partners and supporters of affordable housing, noting Bryan Brown of the Greenville Housing Fund, Terril Bates of The Greenville Housing Authority, and Fred Payne, former GCRA Board member and former County Councilman. Mr. Payne has approached Mr. Smith about writing/crafting editorials for the Post and Courier, focusing on the importance of public transportation and affordable housing and how the two intertwine.

7. **Adjournment.** There being no further business, on a motion by Mr. Hammond, seconded by Ms. Weir, the meeting was adjourned at 1:16 p.m.

Secretary

Memorandum

To: GCRA Board Members

From: Diana Weir, Administration Committee Chair

Re: Administration Committee Meeting, May 13, 2025

Date: May 13, 2025

1. **Opening and Roll Call.** The Administration Committee met on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 12:30 p.m. Committee members present were Diana Weir, Chair; Jane Kizer, Vice Chair; Amy Coleman; Barry Coleman; Dean Doolittle; and Joanna Reese. Staff present were Joe Smith, Executive Director; Pamela Proner, Finance Director; Francisco Arnaiz, Program Manager; José Reynoso, Senior Community Development Planner; and Meg Macauley, Senior Executive Assistant & Office Manager.

Mr. Smith shared that Francisco Arnaiz had been rehired at GCRA into the position of Program Manager; he welcomed and reintroduced Mr. Arnaiz to the Committee. Mr. Smith expressed gratitude and praise to Mr. Reynoso for doing such an excellent job of handling many responsibilities in the Program Department after Ms. Nwobodu's departure, including Consolidated and Annual Action Plan processes and communication with HUD officials.

Please review the following items of business discussed at the Administration Committee meeting. These items will not be discussed in the Board Meeting unless there is a question or comment about them.

2. **Administration Reports**

- a. **Subrecipient Report.** Mr. Reynoso presented the report, noting that Ms. Rivera has been in contact with all subrecipients to remind them to complete expenditures and reimbursement requests before the fiscal year ends in under two months. Mr. Reynoso and Ms. Rivera have been performing monitoring visits at the agencies who have already expended all of their allocated funds. Mr. Reynoso reminded the Committee of the recent news article about Unity Health on Main losing the bulk of their funding, and shared that he has learned that they should be receiving funding from other sources to allow them to continue services in the immediate future.

- b. HOME-ARP Subrecipient Performance Report.** Mr. Reynoso presented the report, stating that there are some subrecipients who are underperforming, but most are doing well. Ms. Rivera encourages them to submit reimbursement requests at least monthly. After final submissions, site visits for monitoring will be performed. Ms. Weir asked if reimbursement must go through the County or if GCRA handles it directly; Mr. Smith stated that GCRA has full control to manage the allocations and reimbursements.
- c. CDBG Timeliness Test.** Mr. Reynoso presented the report, noting that the goal by May was a ratio of 1.5; we have spent the funds necessary to be in compliance.

3. Financial Reports

- a. Financial Highlights – KPI.** Ms. Proner reviewed the financial report for the month of March, noting that we received \$1 million from the County, which is reflected in the increase of Cash and Revenue numbers. Ms. Weir asked if the County still owes GCRA any of their allocation. Ms. Proner responded that the \$200,000 has still not been received, and noted that the budget has been adjusted such that as we receive funds, they will be infused into the budget accordingly and allocated to activities. Ms. Proner stated that a Fairview home sale increased Cash and Revenue, and reduced Notes Payable for debt-to-income of one percent. Expenditures increased to 95 percent, which is a direct result of the subrecipients submitting reimbursement requests. Ms. Proner noted that we want to spend the money because this positively affects our timeliness and reporting.

The rental portfolio shows a positive balance of \$32,496. GCRA's balance in the Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) is \$9.3 million, representing 75 percent of total cash. \$34,188 in interest was earned in March, at an average interest rate of 4.54 percent, for a total of \$468,630 earned year-to-date.

- b. March Financials.** There were no questions posed for Ms. Proner regarding the financial statements.

4. Other Business – Executive Director Updates. Mr. Smith provided updates as follows:

- a. MetroConnects Ribbon-Cutting Event.** Mr. Smith spoke about the successful ribbon-cutting event on May 5th for the MetroConnects sewer line replacement project in Union Bleachery. Several public officials were in attendance, and speeches were well received. Chairman Coleman spoke with a representative from Senator Graham's office; Mr. Smith followed up by sending her GCRA's Report Card and most recent audit with a message about how GCRA leverages federal dollars to contribute to affordable housing. Staff will identify the counterpart at Senator Scott's office so that we can convey the same message to him. Mr. Smith has also been in contact with County Council members to continue to share our message about the criticality of affordable housing being funded.

- b. SCCDA Conference.** Mr. Smith spoke about the South Carolina Community Development Association conference he attended the week before. He had the opportunity to speak to Jack Suber who administers the Disaster Assistance Program at State Housing. Mr. Smith conveyed concerns and problems experienced by GCRA staff and other Upstate recipients of DAP funding who are struggling to successfully implement the program. Especially in light of proposed federal funding cuts, State Housing is trying to allocate more of the \$1.5 million the State of South Carolina receives monthly in revenue from deed recording fees back into the community. Historically, GCRA has been ineligible to apply for State Housing dollars because we are not a nonprofit organization; however, changes may be made to allow local government entities to apply. Mr. Smith also spoke with David Sykes, GCRA's Stantec representative who administers our Brownfields grant, who noted the need for GCRA to spend more of our grant allocation. Mr. Smith will contact representatives of the Cities of Fountain Inn and Simpsonville who were partners in the grant to help identify appropriate properties for Phase I assessment.
 - c. County Council/Properties Update.** Mr. Smith stated that Phase I environmental clearances are still underway for the three properties GCRA hopes to receive from Greenville County for Projects Piedmont, Ballfield, and Railroad; he expects these to go before the Finance Committee in June.
 - d. Habitat for Humanity Dedication.** Mr. Smith shared that on May 28th at 4:30pm, there will be a dedication for the second of four homes in the Creekside community of Greer to which GCRA contributed. Staff will forward an invitation.
 - e. Long Range Planning/Project Drive-In.** Mr. Smith stated that GCRA staff will meet with County Planning staff tomorrow to begin discussion regarding Project Drive-In. Leveraging the expertise of knowledgeable County staff provides an excellent partnership opportunity and cost savings to GCRA.
 - f. Consolidated Plan/Annual Action Plan Status.** Mr. Smith noted the great timing of having Mr. Arnaiz back at GCRA, as he is quite familiar with the process and deadlines necessary for the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan. Mr. Arnaiz and other staff members are reviewing the draft documents in preparation for final steps.
 - g. Federal and County Budgets.** Mr. Smith referenced the letter from the Office of Management and Budget regarding the draft of the Federal budget for the coming fiscal year which proposes to eliminate CDBG and HOME funding. As he shared before, Congress must pass a final budget into law, so the process continues. Ms. Weir expressed gratitude to Mr. Smith for his continued communication with the board and outreach to representatives.
- 5. Adjournment.** There being no further business and on a motion by Ms. Reese, seconded by Mr. Doolittle, the meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

GCRA Financial Highlights
Month at a Glance March 25

<u>Government-Wide</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>Change from Prior Month</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Change from FY24 (FYTD)</u>	<u>%</u>
Cash	12,441,434	Increase	8%	Increase	1%
Total Assets	46,886,375	Decrease	-1%	Increase	15%
Notes Payable	3,169,211	Decrease	-5%	Increase	1%
Debt-to-income			1%		2%
Net Position	38,317,891	Increase	2%	Increase	12%
Net invest. in capital assets	12,016,637	Decrease	0%	Increase	32%
Unrestricted net assets	26,301,254	Increase	3%	Increase	5%

<u>Governmental Funds</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>Change from Prior Month</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Revenue	1,756,002	Increase	308%	7,042,882
Expenditures	793,354	Increase	95%	6,768,738
Net change in fund balance	962,648	Increase	3839%	274,144

<u>Rental Portfolio</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>Change from Prior Month</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Net Income (loss)	32,496	Increase	122%	100,928 *

<u>Local Government Invest. Pool</u>	<u>Month</u>				
LGIP Balance	9,373,680	% of total cash:	75%	328,257	YTD
Interest Earned	34,188	Avg Interest rate:	4.54%	468,630	Total

Notes:

GCRA is still awaiting balance of \$200,000 from the County for the FY24 Budget.
GCRA received \$1,000,000 from County for FY25; still awaiting balance of \$2mil.

Monthly Highlights:

One Fairview home sale \$250,000; reduced notes payable by \$175,000
Increase in subrecipient spending to ensure CDBG Timeliness

Rental Portfolio:

*with intercompany transfer

Memorandum

To: GCRA Board Members

From: James Hammond, Operations Committee Vice Chair

Re: Operations Committee Meeting, May 15, 2025

Date: May 15, 2025

1. **Opening and Roll Call.** The Operations Committee met on Thursday, May 15, 2025, at 12:30 p.m. Committee members present were James Hammond, Vice Chair; Denise Ernul; Robert Julian; and Walter Moragne. David Doser and DeAndra “DJ” Wilson were absent. Staff present were Joe Smith, Executive Director; Francisco Arnaiz, Program Manager; Levi Chesney, Project Manager; and Meg Macauley, Senior Executive Assistant & Office Manager.

Please review the following items of business discussed at the Operations Committee meeting. These items will not be discussed in the Board meeting unless there is a question or comment about them.

2. **Operations Reports**

- a. **Home Sales Report.** Mr. Chesney presented the Home Sales Status Report for April, noting that bids received for 1306 W. Bramlett Road were close to staff’s estimate. Two potential buyers for Fairview are being evaluated. Mr. Moragne asked if many people are looking at the townhomes. Mr. Chesney responded that there is continued interest in Fairview, and that we must find the special type of buyers at the ideal income level with little to no debt. Mr. Moragne expressed concern regarding those who might seek to purchase the properties as investments with no intention of living there. Mr. Chesney and Mr. Smith explained that the subsidy placed on the property requires a buyer to be an owner-occupant for 20 years, or else repayment is due. Discussion ensued regarding interest rates, student loan repayments, and the general housing and economic outlook.
- b. **Rental Property Reports.** Mr. Chesney presented the Rental Report for April. He stated that two units on Marie Street are now vacant, with a new tenant already scheduled to move in next month. Discussion ensued regarding eviction activity, fair housing requirements, and re-qualifying tenants annually.

The Rental Delinquency Report for April showed a past due balance of \$14,034; this figure was reduced to \$11,667 since packet publication. Mr. Moragne asked about the eviction process. Mr. Chesney responded that delinquent tenants are first sent past-due notices during the first month, along with options of various assistance providers through which they may seek help. Many will carry into a second month of delinquency for various reasons. Ultimately, if there is no effort taken to bring an account current, eviction through court proceedings must be pursued. Discussion ensued regarding assistance providers, recourse for damage to rental units, security deposits, lease terms, and in-house management of the rental portfolio.

- c. **Operations Activity Report.** Mr. Chesney presented the Activity Report for April. Several more owner-occupied repair projects have been completed. There are a number of applicants and properties in progress; lack of contractors continues to be a problem, as well as difficulties implementing the Disaster Assistance Program because of requirements and restrictions imposed by State Housing.

Mr. Smith stated that at last week's South Carolina Community Development Association conference, he conveyed to the administrator of the program the concerns and problems experienced by GCRA staff and other Upstate recipients of DAP funding who are struggling to successfully implement the program. Part of the delay is due to ongoing negotiations regarding pricing; roofing costs are higher in the Upstate, attributable in part to effects of Hurricane Helene recovery and repair efforts. State Housing staff are continuing to research pricing; we hope they will raise allowable unit costs so that work can begin soon by qualified contractors for approved clients. One positive outcome so far is that contractors have referred homeowners to GCRA who they believe may be candidates for the program.

Mr. Smith noted that especially in light of proposed federal funding cuts, State Housing is trying to allocate more of the \$1.5 million the State of South Carolina receives monthly in revenue from deed recording fees back into the community.

Mr. Chesney stated that the contractor for the Annex renovation is still awaiting permit approval; the County's Permit Department has experienced staff turnover and increased requests, so the permit approval process is currently delayed.

- d. **Public Works Report.** Mr. Chesney stated that the bidding deadline for the infrastructure portion of the Gridley Place project is May 27th; he has already received a great response, so we expect competitive bids. He noted that our rezoning request for the single-family homeownership portion of the project has already passed first reading.

3. **Other Business – Executive Director Updates.** Mr. Smith provided updates as follows:

- a. **Staff Update.** Mr. Smith shared that Francisco Arnaiz has been rehired as our Program Manager and has already been contributing regarding development agreements and the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan process.

- b. **MetroConnects Ribbon-Cutting Event.** Mr. Smith spoke about the successful ribbon-cutting event on May 5th for the MetroConnects sewer line replacement project in Union Bleachery. At the event, Chairman Coleman spoke with a representative from Senator Graham's office, and Mr. Smith later sent her GCRA's Report Card and most recent audit with a message about how GCRA leverages federal dollars to contribute to affordable housing and to emphasize the criticality of affordable housing being funded. Staff will identify the counterpart at Senator Scott's office so that we can convey the same message to him. Mr. Smith has also been in contact with County Council members to continue to share our message.

Mr. Smith noted the necessity for partnerships among utility companies and government entities, and of layering funding for projects like this to be successful.

- c. **County Council/Properties Update.** Mr. Smith stated that Phase I environmental clearances are still underway for the three properties GCRA hopes to receive from Greenville County for Projects Piedmont, Ballfield, and Railroad; he expects these to go before the Finance Committee in June.
- d. **Habitat for Humanity Dedication.** Mr. Smith reminded the committee of the dedication on May 28th for the second of four homes in the Creekside community of Greer to which GCRA contributed; Ms. Macauley forwarded the invitation.
- e. **Board Orientation.** Mr. Smith stated that on May 29th, he will be conducting a new board member orientation for Ms. Wilson. Other board members are welcome to participate in the tour of projects and properties that afternoon.
- f. **Long Range Planning/Project Drive-In.** Mr. Smith stated that GCRA staff met yesterday with two members of the County's Planning staff to begin discussion regarding Project Drive-In. Leveraging the expertise of knowledgeable County staff provides an excellent partnership opportunity and cost savings to GCRA. Mr. Smith was pleased to see the partnership beginning and praised the education and initial ideas of the County planners.
- g. **Consolidated Plan/Annual Action Plan Status.** Mr. Smith noted that Mr. Arnaiz and other staff are reviewing the draft documents in preparation for final steps.
- h. **Federal and County Budgets.** Mr. Smith referenced the letter from the Office of Management and Budget regarding the draft of the Federal budget for the coming fiscal year which proposes to eliminate CDBG and HOME funding. As he shared before, Congress must pass a final budget into law, so the process continues.

HUD has published final allocations for Program Year 2024; the funding level is what staff expected. More discussion ensued regarding GCRA's outreach plan to advocate for leaving our County funding levels intact and how we would handle potential reductions and what our outreach effort would be regarding our federal funding.

- 4. **Adjournment.** There being no further business and on a motion by Mr. Moragne, seconded by Ms. Ernul, the meeting was adjourned at 1:13 p.m.



OFFICE OF COMMUNITY PLANNING
AND DEVELOPMENT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-7000

May 14, 2025

The Honorable Benton Blount
Chairperson of Greenville County
301 University Ridge
Suite N-1100
Greenville, SC 29601

Dear Benton Blount,

Secretary Scott Turner is committed to improving housing opportunities, reducing regulations to lower housing cost, and expanding housing supply for hardworking Americans. The nationwide shortage of rental and owner-occupied properties and the current rate of construction has not kept pace with the demand. This lack of adequate housing supply leads to higher prices for renters and homebuyers alike, forcing some into homelessness and preventing countless Americans from becoming homeowners. Across the country, partnerships between public and private sectors are providing millions of Americans an opportunity to get ahead. HUD is determined to continue its collaboration with you so programs are responsibly utilized and can spark additional leveraging and partnerships to address the nation's housing crisis.

As authorized by the Consolidated Appropriations Act (Public Law 119-4) on March 15, 2025, I am honored and excited to announce that your jurisdiction is receiving the following Fiscal Year 2025 allocations for the identified programs:

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) - \$2,849,153.00

HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) - \$1,050,123.13

Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) - \$248,799.00

Housing Opportunities for Persons W/ HIV/AIDS (HOPWA) - \$0.00

Housing Trust Fund (HTF) - \$0.00

Recovery Housing Program (RHP) - \$0.00

In addition, your jurisdiction's CDBG allocation for this year provides you with \$13,365,765.00 in available Section 108 loan guarantee borrowing authority. Section 108 permits you to borrow up to five times of your current CDBG allocation. This loan allows jurisdictions to maximize access to low-interest capital, and provide long-term financing to invest in Opportunity Zones, or further address gap financing for big projects that you envision for your community.

As you are finalizing your Annual Action Plans or Consolidated Plans that are due for submission to our office by August 16, 2025, please be reminded that it is important to align with executive orders and applicable laws. If you or any member of your staff have questions, please do not hesitate to contact your local HUD Field Office in Columbia or CPDGDAS@hud.gov.

Thank you for your interest in CPD programs and for ensuring that these dollars are responsibly achieving outcomes as intended by law. When people have a safe and stable place to call home, they can focus on contributing to the economy and be productive members of their respective communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M Fernandez", with a stylized, flowing script.

Claudette Fernandez
General Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Community Planning and Development

<https://www.wsj.com/economy/housing/spring-2025-housing-market-sales-90f41fb3>

ECONOMY | HOUSING

The Spring Home Sales Season Is Shaping Up to Be a Dud

Inventory is rising, but high home prices and mortgage rates are putting off buyers during the prime selling season

By [Nicole Friedman](#) [Follow](#)

May 10, 2025 9:00 pm ET

Key Points

What's This? ⓘ

- The housing market's spring selling season is shaping up as a disappointment, with rising inventory and tepid demand.
- Economic uncertainty and high mortgage rates at around 6.75% deter potential buyers despite falling prices in some areas.
- Sellers face challenges due to increased inventory, builder incentives for new homes and hesitant buyers.

The troubled housing market can't seem to get back on track.

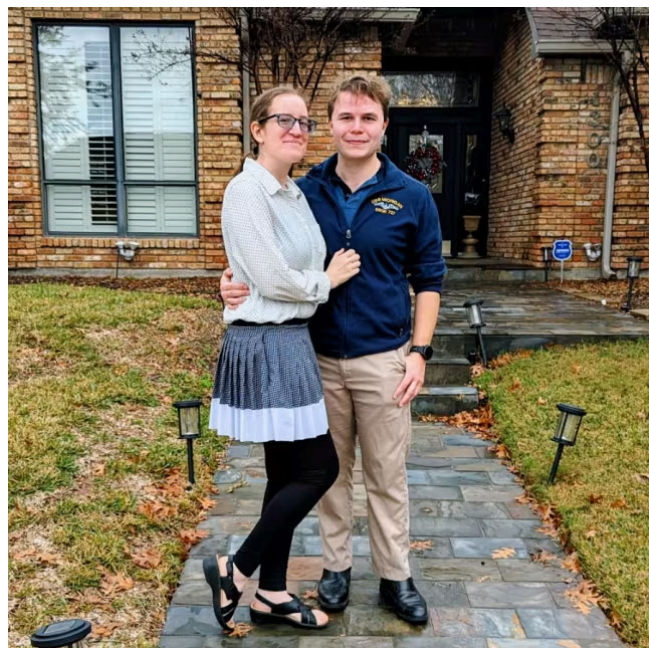
Inventory of homes for sale is steadily rising, but demand is still tepid. Home prices in parts of the country are falling. But with prices not much below record highs, many would-be buyers are still squeezed out. Mortgage rates are hovering around 6.75%, more than double the level of only a few years ago.

The crucial spring selling season is shaping up as a dud, crushing hopes that a housing market that has been anemic for more than two years can gain significant momentum this year.

"It definitely feels like a disappointment," said Selma Hepp, chief economist at Cotality, a real-estate data provider.

The recent deterioration in the economic backdrop and [consumer sentiment](#) is making matters worse, cooling buyer appetite for big purchases like a new home.

Even in markets where there is a glut of inventory and sellers are offering concessions, it isn't enough to get the market moving nationally.



Hannah and Ben Jacobs haven't gotten any offers for their house in Plano, Texas. PHOTO: FRANCES SOPER

Hannah and Ben Jacobs purchased a five-bedroom house in Plano, Texas, in March. They listed their previous home for sale in early April.

They haven't gotten any offers.

"In March I felt pretty good about buying a house, but if I had seen what happened a month later, I probably would not have pulled the trigger due to uncertainty," Ben Jacobs said.

The real-estate industry had higher expectations going into this year after existing-home sales in 2023 and 2024 dropped to the lowest levels since the mid-1990s.

Many sellers who have to move because of job relocations, growing families or other life changes can't put off listing their homes indefinitely. That is helping to wind down a long stretch when historically low supply kept sales depressed.

On the demand side, agents were counting on more [buyers accepting](#) that mortgage rates are unlikely to return to 3% and moving ahead with purchases anyway.

[Sales rose in February](#), but activity the next month suffered its [slowest sales pace](#) for any March since 2009. Then in early April, President [Trump rolled out his tariff policy](#), causing fresh economic anxiety and the stock market to sell off. That gave buyers another reason to stay away.

"It really pulled back the market," said Rick Palacios Jr., director of research at John Burns Research & Consulting.

Prices fell year-over-year in April in 19 of the 100 biggest U.S. metro areas, the highest proportion since mid-2023, according to Intercontinental Exchange, a financial technology and data company.

Home prices are still rising in the Northeast and Midwest, where inventory remains constricted. But [prices are flat or falling across the once-booming Southeast](#) and Southwest regions, especially in Texas and Florida. Homes are taking longer to sell, so inventory is piling up.

Some investors and second-home owners are also selling [due to rising costs](#). More Canadians are [unloading vacation homes](#) since the trade war with the U.S. heated up. In Florida, higher insurance prices and new requirements for condos have sparked a [glut of condo listings](#).

Home builders also built aggressively across the Southwest and Southeast in recent years and are now stuck with an excess of finished homes. They are offering incentives to buyers, [including lower mortgage rates](#). That makes it difficult for sellers of existing homes to compete.



A 16-story residential project under construction in Denver. PHOTO: OLIVIA SUN/COLORADO SUN/ZUMA PRESS

“We have new construction just clear across the city, anywhere you go,” said Jesse Landin, a real-estate agent in San Antonio.

There were more than 14,000 active listings in the San Antonio area at the end of March, near a record high in data going back to 1990, according to the Texas Real Estate Research Center.

Home prices can be slow to fall. Homeowners might opt not to sell if they can't get the price they want. Mortgage underwriting is also [more rigorous than it was](#) before the 2008-09 financial crisis, meaning that current homeowners can generally afford to pay their mortgages unless there are widespread job losses.

Prices are still rising nationally. The overall supply of homes for sale is 16% below prepandemic levels, according to Realtor.com. But that deficit is shrinking, and price growth is decelerating on a national level.



Vanessa Mateo and Tyler Bucci bought their first home this month.

“If interest rates stay in the high 6% range like they are right now, that’s a soft home-price dynamic,” said Andy Walden, Intercontinental Exchange’s head of mortgage and housing-market research.

For many buyers who can afford current home prices and mortgage rates, there is little sense of urgency, real-estate agents say.

“What a luxury that is, the ability to look at houses, sleep on it, go back the next day,” said Christine Dupont-Patz, a real-estate agent in Denver.

Tyler Bucci and Vanessa Mateo, who are planning to get married this year, bought their first home this month in Garner, N.C. The sellers paid for repairs that Bucci and Mateo requested and gave them a \$5,000 concession to help cover their closing costs.

They feel comfortable making a purchase because they plan to live in the house for at least five years, said Bucci, who is 26. “Renting in the short term definitely would save us a lot more money, but we’re kind of looking at things from a longer-term perspective,” he said.

(News Corp, which owns the Journal, also operates Realtor.com.)

BOOM & BALANCE

New census data shows the most rapidly growing towns and cities in SC

BY DAVID SLADE DSLADE@POSTANDCOURIER.COM

MAY 15, 2025



Crews continue construction on new homes in the Cypress Preserve neighborhood in Moncks Corner, Wednesday, April 30, 2025. The town in Berkeley County had one of the fastest population growth rates in the state in 2024, according to census estimates released in May, 2025.

GAVIN MCINTYRE/STAFF

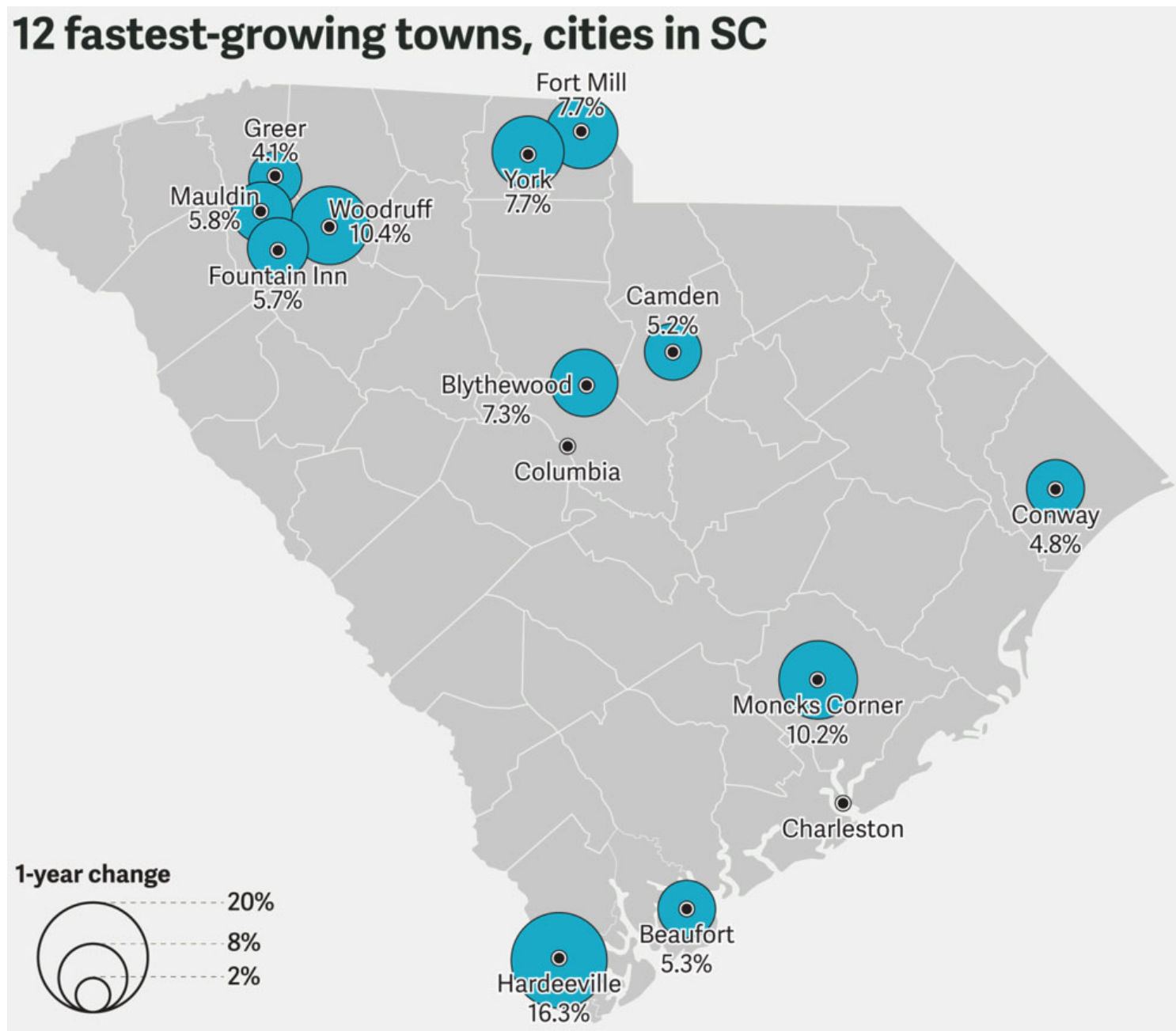
CHARLESTON — The South saw the nation's highest population growth rate for towns and cities in 2024, and in South Carolina there were 62 places that grew even faster.

Across the South, municipalities experienced an average population increase of 1.6 percent in a single year. Within those states many places saw larger, double-digit gains in residents, including Hardeeville, Woodruff and Moncks Corner in South Carolina.

Growth rates show how quickly places are changing as people relocate, isolated forests and fields become subdivisions, schools add classrooms and roads are widened to handle traffic.

In Jasper County, Hardeeville's population jumped 16.3 percent between July 2023 and July 2024, making it the fastest-growing municipality in the state, according to newly released U.S. Census Bureau growth estimates covering 2024.

In the four years since the 2020 Census was conducted, Hardeeville's population increased by 85 percent. Only two counties in the nation have seen faster population growth than Jasper County, [The Post and Courier previously reported](#).



Partly located between Beaufort County and the Savannah River, the county has been attracting large retirement-oriented subdivisions such as Margaritaville Hilton Head.

"You go back 10 or 15 years ago and Hardeeville was a small, rural community," said City Manager Josh Gruber. "Now we are a growing metropolitan area."

The city of Beaufort was also one of South Carolina's fastest-growing.

"We have a lot of multi-family development that is currently being constructed and will be constructed in the next couple of years," said Scott Marshall, the city administrator. "So it doesn't surprise me that we would have a population jump."

Growth shifts away from coast

[The new census estimates](#) reinforce [a growing trend of South Carolina's population spikes](#) shifting inland, away from once-dominant coastal areas.

A decade ago Mount Pleasant, across the Cooper River from Charleston, [was among the nation's fastest-growing 10 cities](#). In 2024, after years of intentionally trying to slow development, Mount Pleasant had a below-average population growth rate, ranking the town 171st in South Carolina.

All of the state's recent population gains have been due to people relocating here — about 90,000 yearly — and the list of fastest-growing towns and cities reflects where they have been re-planting.

Most of those places were on the outskirts of the state's largest cities, and only four of the top 12 were near the coast. Another four were in the greater Greenville area; two were in York County — part of the Charlotte metro area — and two were near Columbia.

In the tri-county Charleston metropolitan area, there was one town among the top dozen for rapid population growth statewide: Moncks Corner in Berkeley County.

Moncks Corner's population grew at a blistering pace, rising more than 10 percent to 18,359 residents. And the town expects an additional 4,500 homes will be built there by 2034, enough for about 11,000 more residents.

The city has seen several large subdivisions built recently and is on the verge of adopting development impact fees — \$4,805 for each new home — to help fund the expansion of services as the population grows.

It was the third-fastest-growing in the state, behind Woodruff.

Upstate a newcomer destination

Woodruff lies about 30 minutes south of downtown Spartanburg and 45 minutes southeast of downtown Greenville, where the skyline has been rapidly changing with new condo, apartment and office high-rises.

It has attracted new residents and a large amount of industrial investment in recent years, including a BMW electric vehicle battery plant. A new Woodruff High School — double the capacity of the existing one — is under construction.

Woodruff's population jumped by an estimated 10.4 percent, to 5,072 last year, gaining more residents in one year than it had during the prior three.



Morning drive time traffic moves southbound on highway 52 from Moncks Corner, Wednesday, May 14, 2025, a town with South Carolina's third-fastest population growth according to new census estimates.

People have been flocking to the Upstate thanks in part to its mix of amenities. Housing is more affordable there, the Blue Ridge Mountains are close by and growing investment from major businesses has been creating jobs.

That has led to a boom in housing construction that's often most noticeable in the traditionally agrarian or rural parts of the Upstate.

"I hardly see any land," said local Kendra Williams, who grew up in Greenville County. "I hardly see the greenery because cookie cutter — that's what I call them — subdivisions are going up everywhere."

The other three Upstate cites to make the top dozen for rapid growth in S.C. are Mauldin and Fountain Inn, which have become intertwined with Greenville, and Greer, which straddles Greenville and Spartanburg counties.

Charlotte growth spills over

From Spartanburg, it's a straight shot up Interstate 85 to Charlotte, a metropolitan area with nearly 2.9 million residents spread across multiple counties in both Carolinas.

Increasing numbers of those residents live in South Carolina — and particularly in York County, where Fort Mill and York were the fourth- and fifth fastest-growing municipalities in the state behind Moncks Corner.

Among South Carolina's 271 towns and cities, 94 saw no population growth or lost population and 177 saw gains — 62 of those growing more rapidly than the average across the South.

The growth has been concentrated in South Carolina's urban and suburban areas. Most counties, particularly the rural ones, have been losing population.



The Groves of Berkeley subdivision is partly built along S.C. Highway 52, Wednesday, April 30, 2025, in Moncks Corner.

GAVIN MCINTYRE/STAFF

Parts of South Carolina often appear on national top-10 lists for rapid population gains. **In 2024, only three states** — Florida, Texas and Utah — saw their populations grow more rapidly than South Carolina. The state claimed **the fastest-growing U.S. county** in 2023 (Jasper), the 3rd and 10th **fastest-growing metropolitan areas in 2024** (Myrtle Beach and Spartanburg), and **more U.S. residents relocating** here than in all but two other states.

The newcomers moving from other states are a key reason why South Carolina had **the nation's fastest-growing White population** in 2023, and why South Carolina's elderly population **has been soaring**.

The state estimates another million residents will call South Carolina home by 2042, raising the population to about 6.4 million.

Camden, Blythewood see an influx

Not far from Columbia, [the town of Blythewood](#) and the city of Camden have been seeing their numbers of residents swell. By 2024, Blythewood's population had nearly tripled since 2010, and its 2023-24 gain was the sixth-fastest in the state.

On a main road into downtown, drivers pass a 1,100-acre clearing where block-shaped structures in the distance mark the site of Scout Motors' upcoming electric vehicle plant. The Volkswagen subsidiary plans to hire 4,000 workers and begin producing 200,000 vehicles annually at the Blythewood site starting in late 2027.

Commercial and residential developments have continued to spring up in northern Columbia as officials expect a population boom tied to the project.

Blythewood Mayor Sloan Griffin III points out that the town was growing quickly before the Scout plant was announced. He said high property values, a low crime rate and high quality public schools have made it an attractive option among those in the Midlands.

"If mom or dad is able to make six figures a year, then they want to move their families from situations that are not conducive to that six-figure lifestyle," Griffin said.

To the east, Camden Mayor Vincent Sheheen also attributed that city's growth to its high quality of life.

"It's a real town, it's not just a sprawly suburb," Sheheen said.

The community, which has grown by 14 percent and added 1,092 people since 2020, enacted a moratorium on residential development last year over concerns it wasn't equipped to keep up.

In 2024, Camden saw its largest increase in residents in at least several years, adding 436 new people, for a total of 8,899.

Cities on the rise across U.S.

Nationally, the latest population estimates showed growth in cities of all sizes in all regions. The South and West saw the most rapid growth, with cities in Texas and Florida taking the top five spots for fastest population increases.

Princeton, Texas, saw the number of residents soar by 30.6 percent in one year.

The Northeast "experienced population growth after years of steady decline," the Census Bureau reported. And Los Angeles "returned to the list of top gainers for the first time since 2016, adding over 31,000 residents."

Both Jacksonville, Fla., and Fort Worth, Texas, saw their populations pass the million-resident threshold. Fewer than 2 percent of U.S. cities have 100,000 residents or more, including three in South Carolina.

Among the state's largest cities, North Charleston was a growth leader, with a 3.5 percent population gain that added 4,265 residents in a year. Columbia added an estimated 2,615 people, and Charleston gained 1,402.

South Carolina's fourth-largest town or city, Mount Pleasant, was reported to have grown by just 109 residents, to a population of 95,604. The town estimates its population is really closer to 100,000.

Contributing to this article were reporters Spencer Donovan in Greenville, Andrew Field in Columbia, and Jessica Wade in Hilton Head.

Reach **David Slade** at 843-937-5552. Follow him on Twitter @DSLadeNews.

MORE INFORMATION

Once a rural municipality, this SC city is the fastest-growing in the state. Here's why.

About Boom & Balance

Few states in the nation have seen more rapid population growth than South Carolina, and it's due to people relocating from other states. That growth has brought benefits but also challenges, such as crowded schools and roads and a loss of green space.

The ongoing and award-winning Post and Courier series "Boom & Balance" explores how rapid population growth and development are reshaping towns and cities across South Carolina.

DAVID SLADE

David Slade is a senior Post and Courier reporter and personal finance columnist. Over more than three decades he's worked for multiple newspapers and magazines, and his reporting has been honored with more than 50 state, regional and national journalism awards. David reports on the impacts of South Carolina's rapid population growth and development. Reach him at 843-937-5552 or dslade@postandcourier.com

BOOM & BALANCE

More SC cities using impact fees to fund services for newcomers, adding cost to home construction

"New residents should pay for themselves"

BY DAVID SLADE DSLADE@POSTANDCOURIER.COM

MAY 18, 2025

1 of 4



The recently-built Cypress Preserve neighborhood in Moncks Corner illustrates the rapid population growth and development the town is seeing. GAVIN MCINTYRE/STAFF

Tens of thousands of new residents [pouring into South Carolina yearly](#) are having an impact on local roads and services, so a growing number of local governments have been adopting impact fees.

The idea is that attaching substantial fees to new construction can help pay for the expanded services a growing population needs. Developers pay the fees — thousands of dollars — and typically pass the cost along to purchasers of homes and businesses.

Charleston, Edgefield and Richland counties have been exploring impact fees, as have the municipalities of North Augusta, Moncks Corner and Fountain Inn. More than two dozen local governments in South Carolina already have them.

Those fees raise the cost of creating new homes and commercial buildings, but local officials say the alternative would be raising property taxes that long-time residents and business owners also pay

"Why do you need to raise taxes?" said Moncks Corner Community Development Director Justin Westbrook. "Shouldn't development pay for itself?"



New homes line Trotters Lane in the 800-acre Foxbank Plantation development, Wednesday, April 30, 2025, in Moncks Corner.

GAVIN MCINTYRE/STAFF

South Carolina's population increases by more than 90,000 yearly, entirely due to people moving to the state. Put enough new residents in one area and local services need to expand with police and fire protection, roads, parks, sanitation, senior centers and more.

Mount Pleasant in Charleston County was the first local government to embrace impact fees under a 1990s state law governing them, then [nearly quadrupled the fees in 2017](#). The town currently collects \$6,509 when a house is built.

"I don't know where we would be without them," said town Administrator Eric DeMoura. "I don't know how we would have built the new fire stations, roads and parks we need."

"If not for impact fees, our taxes would be significantly higher," he said.

In addition to the town's fees, Mount Pleasant Waterworks collects impact fees that add another \$10,671 to the cost of building a new house. Large-scale development relies on water and sewer lines and treatment plants but expanding such a system is expensive.

In fast-growing Beaufort and Jasper counties — Jasper County had the third-fastest-growing population of any county in the nation last year — the water and sewer authority just borrowed \$600 million to address growth-related needs. The average residential customer will see their sewer and water bills rise to a combined \$171.02 monthly by 2027, [The Post and Courier reported May 1](#).

The [Home Builders Association of South Carolina](#) sees impact fees as a reasonable way to pay for development-related needs, though the association has sued several times over impact fees it believed were not handled properly.

"I'm in favor of impact fees as long as they're used correctly," said Mark Nix, the association's executive director. "If you're putting in hundreds of houses and need a fire station, that needs to go in right away."

Moncks Corner has an impact fee ordinance pending, calling for a \$4,805-per-house fee, with a public hearing [coming on May 20](#). The nearby city of Goose Creek [already has impact fees](#).

A legally-required study of Moncks Corner's proposed fees says that from 2024 to 2034 the town's population will rise by more than two-thirds and 4,550 homes will be built.

Such growth is not new to Moncks Corner, and it's ongoing.

[According to the state Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office](#), only three of the state's 271 towns and cities saw a more rapid population increase between 2022 and 2023, when the number of Monck's Corner residents grew by more than 9 percent.

"The growth is happening whether we like it or not," said Westbrook.

On May 15 the Census Bureau released new population estimates, [showing Moncks Corner](#) to be the third-fastest-growing town or city in the state, with the number of residents up more than 10 percent in one year.

"We want to maintain our services at a high level, as our existing residents expect," Westbrook said. "New residents should pay for themselves."

Westbrook put it this way: If a local government wants to have five fire trucks for every 100,000 people, then new housing for 10,000 people should pay for half a fire truck.

Big fees for some businesses

Impact fees can add thousands of dollars — [tens of thousands, in one case](#) — to the cost of a new home. Businesses can pay far more, depending on how a local government structures its fees.

For example, build a hotel [in Mount Pleasant](#) and the town will collect an impact fee of \$2,879.81 per room to fund transportation projects. And another \$1.14 per square foot for fire protection and capital projects.

Impact fees, as the name implies, are actually multiple fees linked to the cost of improvements needed to address future needs, all detailed in the required studies. There can be fees for fire protection, transportation (traffic), recreation and more.

In Mount Pleasant, the fee businesses pay for transportation impacts is much higher than the transportation fee for new homes, but only new homes are assessed a fee for recreation. It's a flat \$2,412.53 recreation fee for a single-family home, or \$1,569.92 for a multi-family dwelling such as a townhouse.

The differences are because businesses create traffic, but they don't use parks. And residential properties add demand for parks while creating little traffic. That's the calculation.

Some local governments charge impact fees based on a home's square footage. There are options, but also many detailed regulations in the state law.

Most fees must apply to both homes and businesses — even if local politicians would prefer to exempt businesses — and the money can only be used for future needs. An annual report is required, and there are rules about how quickly the money must be spent under the state's Development Impact Fee Act.

"The purpose of the act was to place restrictions upon the imposition of development impact fees and there is little doubt that the act imposes substantial limitations upon local governmental entities," [2008 opinion](#) from the S.C. Attorney General's Office.

DeMoura said small municipalities might not have the ability to manage impact fees. But large counties have faced struggles, too.

Cautionary tales of lawsuits

Both [Berkeley](#) and Dorchester counties were successfully sued for failing to spend transportation impact fees promptly enough, [resulting in refunds](#). Neither county has a transportation impact fee now. The state's 46 counties have mostly focused on sales taxes to raise money for local needs associated with population growth. [All but nine](#) have an increased sales tax to fund roads, or schools, or capital projects, or some combination of those things.

Six counties have impact fees and others are thinking about that.

Charleston County Councilman Joe Boykin arranged for a presentation to the council on impact fees earlier this year. Having learned more, he now thinks they would not be a good fit for the county's unincorporated areas.

"We would have to hire staff," said Boykin. "Is the juice worth the squeeze? — that's the question."

Also, he said most of the growth and development in the county is happening inside town and city limits, not the unincorporated areas where a county fee would apply.

Boykin said he's interested in state legislation that would create another alternative, by adding [the concept of "concurrency"](#) to the state law governing zoning. The bill has bi-partisan support in the House and Senate and could see action in 2026.

The rules would allow local governments to consider if public services could handle more development, prior to issuing permits. If not, then developments could be delayed.

Lexington County adopted [its own concurrency rules](#) in 2024, requiring most subdivisions of 10 homes or more seek confirmation that they wouldn't overwhelm police and fire departments, emergency medical services, sanitation or public schools.

A state law would formalize concurrency rules and allow any local government to adopt them.

By the time the Legislature decides on concurrency, if the legislation gets far enough for a vote, more local governments will surely have adopted impact fees. Some would like to have both: impact fees and concurrency rules.

It's all part of the broader debate about who pays the costs that come with rapid population growth and development.

Reach **David Slade** at 843-937-5552. Follow him on Twitter @DSladeNews.

RESIDENTIAL IMPACT FEE EXAMPLES

Residential impact fee examples

Among more than two dozen S.C. local governments with impact fees, they vary greatly in both price and methodology. The fees are charged to developers and are typically baked in to the price of new homes. Examples:

- Lexington (town): \$2,548
- Georgetown County: \$3,207
- Moncks Corner (proposed): \$4,805
- Mount Pleasant: \$6,509
- Summerville: \$6,523
- York County/Fort Mill schools: \$29,640*

* York County's impact fees for schools were first approved in 1996, three years before the state's Development Impact Fee Act took effect, and are not governed by that law.

In addition to local government impact fees, there are often impact fees for water and sewer systems that are levied by those utilities.

Examples in the Charleston metro area for a single-family home:

- Charleston Water System: \$9,495*
- Dorchester County Water and Sewer: \$10,010
- Mount Pleasant Waterworks: \$10,671

* The minimum fee, for a 3/4-inch service line.

Note: In cases where fees depend on square footage we used a 2,400-square-foot house, about the median size of newly-built homes in the U.S. — David Slade

How Spartanburg County uses sales tax dollars to fix its roads while Greenville looks for funding

BY MAX WHITE MWHITE@POSTANDCOURIER.COM

MAY 20, 2025



Allen Smith on May 19 at a press conference highlighting Spartanburg County's road work. The county will use money from a 1 percent local sales tax to fund 577 infrastructure projects.

MAX WHITE/STAFF

SPARTANBURG — While Allen Smith, the president and CEO of OneSpartanburg, highlighted the redesign of the intersection at Zion Hill and Sloan's Grove roads at a press conference on May 19, he emphasized the funding source for the county's many road improvement projects: a 1 percent local sales tax.

"All of this is going to happen with no debt, no property tax rate increase and more than 30 percent of the revenue will come from visitors," Smith said.

“There are other counties that were unable to do this, and unfortunately, we’ve been seeing reports as to those counties are now pulling money from schools to pave their roads and that is not something that we have to do in Spartanburg County.”

Spartanburg County voters in 2017 first approved a 1 percent local sales tax, or “penny tax,” that funded several government buildings, such as a joint city-county government complex.

Voters in 2023 chose to continue the additional sales tax, this time focusing on improving the county’s woeful roads. The county is using the estimated \$478 million raised by the tax over six years, which started in May 2024, to fund 577 bridges, roads and other infrastructure projects. In recent years, Spartanburg County’s roads have been some of the deadliest in all of South Carolina.

These hundreds of projects come as neighboring Greenville County looks for alternative funding to fix its roads after its voters in November rejected a similar penny sales tax that would have raised over \$1 billion for roads over eight years.

That funding search hasn’t been easy. It’s resulted in the county releasing a proposed plan to divert millions from county schools to pay for road work.

“(Spartanburg County voters) are not having to deal with some of the things that other counties are in terms of property tax increases and debt, things of that nature,” Smith said. “This is the best way to find infrastructure in a growing county.”

County collects more sales tax revenue than expected for roads

County Administrator Cole Alverson said the county is modestly outpacing the tax collection expectations for the second round of the 1 percent sales tax.

Despite increased costs and interest rates since the voters’ approval of that sales tax, the money is expected to cover all 577 bridges, roads and other infrastructure projects as planned.

“Collection rates so far have been strong,” Alverson said. “The first series of projects that we have completed have all been well under budget, so that gives us a little bit of cushion.”

The sales tax sunsets in May 2030. County Council Chairman Manning Lynch [said in December](#) that there is no way the county will ask voters to approve keeping the sales tax alive for a third time, beyond 2030.

While the status of the county's roads is still far from stellar, it has reported measurable improvements. The percentage of poor roads dropped from 48 percent in 2020 to 31 percent in 2024. Also, since 2020, the percentage of fair roads has jumped 11 points to 39 percent in 2024 and the percentage of good roads is up six points to 30 percent.

A year into the collection of the 1 percent sales tax for roads, the county has repaved Highway 290 from Reidville Road to North Danzler Road, North Daniel Morgan Avenue behind the county courthouse, West Main Street from Reidville Road to Saint John Street and Saint John Street from West Saint John Street to West Main Street.

More than \$250,000 of work has also been completed in restriping roadways, raising pavement markings and adding rumble strips and bidding is out now for more projects on Redville Road and East Main Street. Additionally, over \$560,000 of guardrail replacements is set to begin this year.

Smith said that not only do improved roads help safety, but they also make the area more attractive to businesses.

“Businesses want to locate in safe areas. They want to make sure that their employees can get to work safely,” Smith said. “They want to make sure that their employees can take their children to school and it be a safe route.”

MAX WHITE

REPORTER

Max White is a reporter for [The Post and Courier Spartanburg](#) primarily covering local government and business. He is a South Carolina native of Charleston and graduated from the University of South Carolina in December 2023.