



# TRAVELERS

# QUARTERLY

**Augusta Regional Transportation Study**

ARTS Newsletter

Summer **2019**



## **The Partnership Nexus: Innovation, Equity, and Under-served Markets**

**By: Warren Richard, Jr.**

The hurriedness of urban redevelopment often sideswipes what is essential in transportation planning – public involvement and benefit. It is the convergence of stakeholder collaboration, innovation and commitment in urban areas that creates a partnership nexus. The key to creating sustainable communities requires purposeful and strategic collaboration.

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Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) strive to make transportation planning a priority within the process of growth and development. The MPO serves as a catalyst for the partnership nexus with its focus on transit, multimodal transportation and the need for entire communities to be involved in pursuit of quality of life. Public, private, and nonprofit groups are open to new and innovative ways to create thriving communities anchored by multimodal transportation. The unintentional consequence of deferred transportation planning in development is the alienation of those in underserved neighborhood groups. Traditional planning methodologies on inclusive zoning takes the first step; comprehensive and metropolitan transportation planning is the next step. Inclusive growth must mature from concept to inception to fruition. The MPO with its transportation planning focus, intrinsically

has the ability to advance equitable opportunities for all members of society. Transportation planning creates access to economic engines such as schools, colleges, corporate locations, shopping centers and food suppliers. The partnership nexus requires representatives from the community and industry, aka stakeholders, to have an

active role in the engagement and advancement of an area by pursuing innovative dialogue about resources, needs and opportunities. MPO's understand the value of public engagement. Applying the partnership nexus through collaboration and transportation planning, all communities are positioned to benefit.



An Equal Distribution of Community Benefits

Vs.



An Equitable Distribution of Community Benefits

Credit: MPCA Photos, Flickr (CC BY-NC 2.0); A Publication of the American Planning Association | PAS QuickNotes No. 78 – "Inclusive Growth" - This PAS QuickNotes was prepared by David Morley, AICP, research program and OUIKKNOTES QA manager at APA.

## Complete Streets

By: Udomekong Udoko



ARTS has been working with the city, interest groups and nonprofit organizations to promote "complete streets" projects throughout the City of Augusta. Complete Streets is a transportation policy and design approach that promotes multi-modal transportation street infrastructure design. It provides right of way and accessibility for all modes including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, children, older individuals, and individuals with disabilities. The typical street design features of complete streets include: sidewalks, bike lanes, special bus lanes, comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, roundabouts, and more.

### Complete Street Features:

- Sidewalks
- Bike lanes
- Special bus lanes

- Comfortable and accessible public transportation stops
- Frequent and safe crossing opportunities, median islands
- Accessible pedestrian signals
- Curb extensions
- Narrower travel lanes
- Roundabouts



Rendering of a Complete Street

[Continued from Page 1]

Complete Streets as a policy has gained traction over the years. Many cities across the United States have begun to incorporate the guidelines and principles of complete streets into their engineering practices and roadway designs. According to a study conducted by the National Complete Streets Coalition (NCSC) there are currently over 14 cities, 5 counties, and 3 regional councils in Georgia, which have adopted complete streets policy incentives. ARTS initiatives toward improving livability and quality of life for all must embrace complete streets principles in upcoming projects.



Complete Street in Decatur, GA

## 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

By: Dr. Oliver Page

ARTS goes through the process of updating its Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) every five years. The MTP is a document that envisions and evaluates what the ARTS planning area will look like 20+ years from now in terms of population, employment, housing, transport infrastructure, transit availability, and extent of greenways and trails. This is done through a continuing, comprehensive and cooperative planning process where all members of the community are invited to participate and provide input.

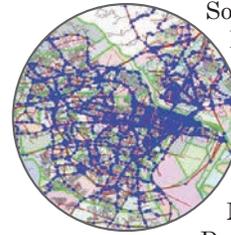
In May 2019, a consultant will be chosen to update the 2050 MTP. The previous ARTS MTP 'Transportation Vision 2040' was adopted in September 2015. The 2050 MTP Update is expected to be adopted by the ARTS Policy Committee in September 2020.

As the ARTS planning area continues to grow in population, funding will be required to improve, maintain, and operate roadways, public transit, multiuse trails and sidewalks. Proposed projects included in the MTP assist in securing federal funds. Public input is critical to identifying multimodal transportation and land use investments needed in the ARTS planning area as the primary goal is to maximize and sustain future livability and economic potential.

The motivating aspect of the 2050 MTP update process is engaging the public and obtaining input from all four counties within the ARTS planning area. Social media technology will be on hand at community meetings and events.

## Travel Demand Modeling with GIS

By: Marcus Holland



Socio-economic data collection for Travel Demand Modeling is underway!

With the assistance of its MPO partners, ARTS staff is compiling socio-economic data that will be used in the regional 2050 Travel Demand Model (TDM) mandated by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT).

Modeling is a crucial component of planning for regional infrastructure improvements. By using what is known about existing conditions to predict what conditions will be like in the future, models can help determine where, when and why specific transportation investments need to be made.

The baseline year for the 2050 TDM is 2015. Since January, ARTS staff and its partners in Aiken, Columbia and Edgefield Counties have been collecting baseline data for population, households, income, school enrollment and employment. These numbers are assigned to individual Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ), which are the basic geographic units used in traffic analysis and modeling at the regional level. Here are a few facts and figures about the ARTS TAZ's:

- The four counties in the MPO are divided into 1,106 TAZ's
- The TAZ's range in size from 0.22 acres to 24,092 acres
- The average size of a TAZ's is 1,286 acres, or a little over 2 square miles
- 73% of the TAZ's are smaller than 2 square miles
- Fewer than 5% of TAZ are larger than 10 square miles

Generally speaking, smaller TAZ's are located in cities, towns and other developed areas while larger TAZ's are found in undeveloped areas. TAZ boundaries usually line up with census block boundaries, with the average TAZ containing approximately 41 blocks. Population and household data is available at the block level in the 2010 Decennial Census, so the coincidence of boundaries makes the calculation of baseline data much easier. School enrollment includes all students at the K-12 levels as well as college students. Employment data is broken down into retail, service, manufacturing and wholesale categories.

The baseline data has been reviewed and endorsed by the ARTS Technical Coordinating Committee subcommittee and other ARTS stakeholders, the data will be submitted to GDOT for further review. Once the 2015 baseline data has been confirmed by GDOT, it will be used to make predictions for the year 2050.

# Congestion Management Dashboard

By: Dr. Oliver Page

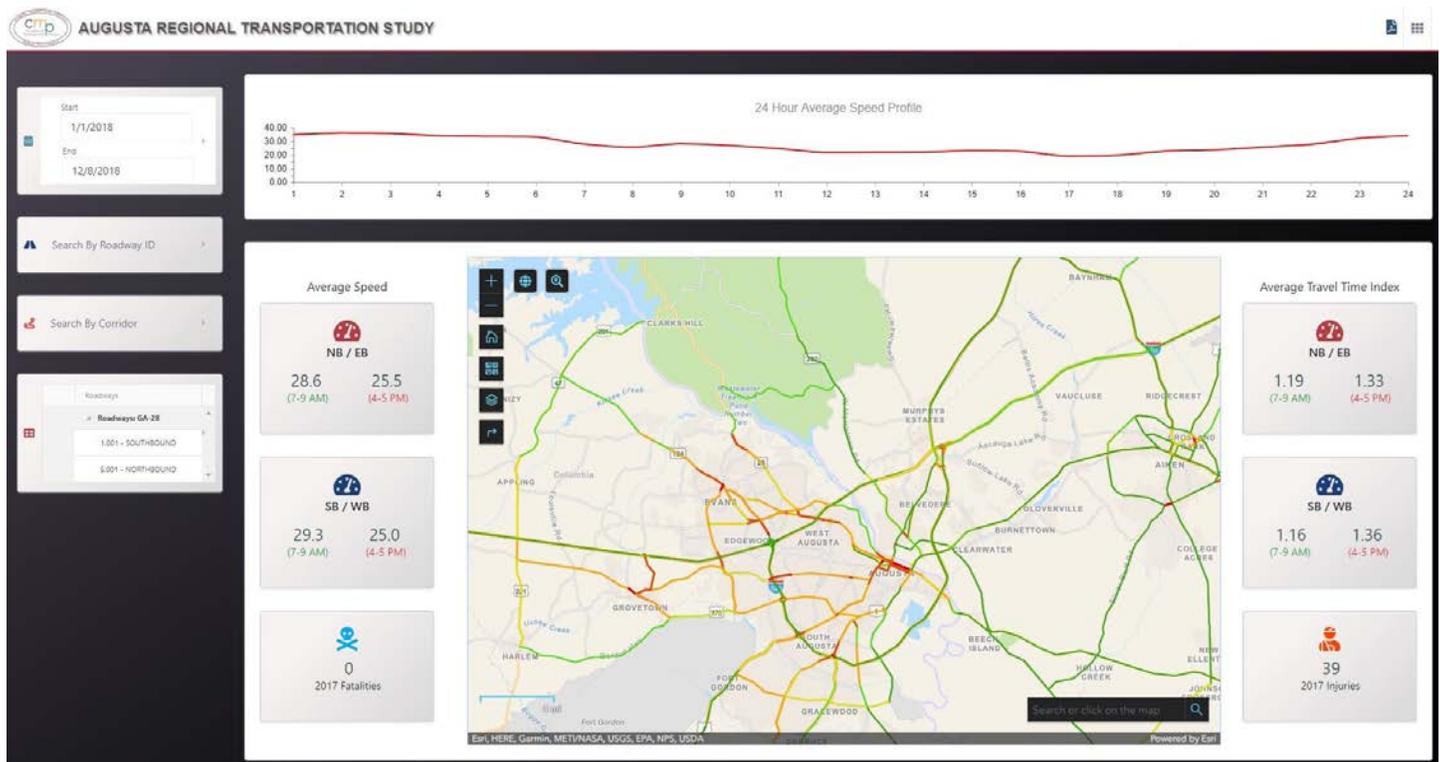
March 2019 concludes the ARTS 2018 Congestion Management Process (CMP) project. CMP simply put is an approach for the safe and effective management and operation of transportation facilities through travel demand and operational strategies. The ARTS 2018 CMP was prepared by consultants, VHB Inc., and a key deliverable was the development and implementation of an online CMP Performance Dashboard.

You may be asking ‘what is a CMP Performance Dashboard?’ It is a collection of aggregated information such as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) presented in a visually appealing and easily understandable way. The CMP performance dashboard is the front end of a series of complicated analytics involving HERE data, which captures real time speed, congestion, crashes, traffic routes and estimated time of arrival of motor vehicles traveling on major highways in the ARTS planning area.

The road segments selected on the Dashboard provide the following KPIs:

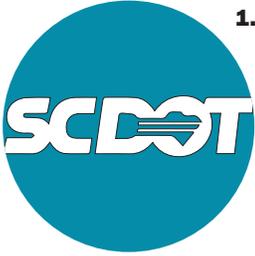
- Directional Average Speed of the selected road segment or aggregated road segments
- Travel Time Index (TTI) of the selected road segment or aggregated road segments. TTI measures the ratio of travel time in the peak period to the travel time at free-flow conditions. For example a TTI of 1.20 means a 10 minute free flow time takes 12 minutes (20 percent more) in the peak period.
- Average Speed Profile presents the previous day’s average speeds on the selected road segment or aggregated road segments
- Recorded fatalities and serious injuries information are from the latest full calendar year published data
- The highlighted road segments in different colors indicate the extent of congestion on each link

ARTS staff now have the ability to remotely harvest HERE data to continuously monitor the congestion performance of CMP corridors. In the past this would require many hours and effort to drive along each corridor several times to obtain the required information. Now, it can be done with a simple mouse click. The CMP Dashboard is a new in-house tool ARTS has to achieve regional transportation goals that enhance livability and economic prosperity for the region.



Screenshot of Online Dashboard

## SCDOT ARTS Roads Status Update



### 1. 0034292 - SC 302 (Silver Bluff Road) Corridor Improvement – Aiken County - ARTS Current

Budget - \$920,000 PE, \$1,700,000 R/W, \$73,781 UTIL, \$6,198,935.63 CONST

- Improvements include widening lanes, curb and gutter and signalization of three intersections
- Construction Phase is currently underway (work began on March 29, 2016)
- SCDOT and Eagle Construction have negotiated a new construction completion date of July 31, 2019.
- To accelerate construction, and reduce impacts to the traveling public, SCDOT is offering incentives to the contractor to potentially finish up to 120 days before July 31.

### 2. 0034300 - SC 125 (East Buena Vista Avenue/Atomic Road) Corridor Improvement –ARTS

• Current Budget - \$800,000 PE, \$2,527,000 ROW, \$38,000 UTIL, \$8,694,172.58 CONST

- Construction is now complete, with the final inspection was held Monday, October 15, 2018
- Contractor working to complete punch list items

### 3. 0041446 - SC 126 (Belvedere-Clearwater Road) Widening - ARTS

• Current Budget - \$1,300,000 PE, \$2,139,600 ROW, \$12,000,000 CONST

- Preliminary Engineering Phase has been completed, including Environmental Studies and Final Right-of-Way Plans
- Environmental Document/Public Hearing Certification was approved on April 26, 2016
- Environmental Permitting Coordination is currently underway
- Right-of-Way Phase is underway (86 tracts) -- Right-of-Way Consultant (PRIMACQ) is in the process of securing right of way for the project (83 tracts secured).
- Current Schedule

Construction Obligation – 12/2019  
Letting – 02/2020

### 4. 0040695 - SC 118 (Hitchcock Parkway) Corridor Improvement - ARTS

- Current Budget – \$3,300,000 PE (per obligation from widening carried over), \$1,496,800 ROW, \$12,200,000 CONST (Federal Resurfacing fund to pay for resurfacing of Hitchcock Parkway)
- Right-of-Way obligated in December 2018 with initial property owner contact anticipated to begin Quarter 1 of 2019.
- Current Schedule

Construction Obligation – 4/2020  
Letting – 6/2020

### 5. P037361 – SC 19 (Whiskey Road) Intersection with Eagle Road and S-447 (Old Whiskey Road) - ARTS

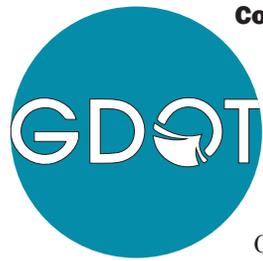
- Current Budget - \$450,000 PE, \$400,000 ROW, \$1,250,000
- Surveys have been completed; traffic study being finalized
- SCDOT is currently negotiating a contract with Parrish and Partners to provide design services, Consultant working under a Limited Notice to Proceed to begin plan development while contract negotiations are finalized.
- Current Schedule

Right of Way – Q3 2019  
Construction – Q1 2021



#5 P037361 – SC 19 (Whiskey Road) Intersection with Eagle Road and S-447 (Old Whiskey Road) – ARTS

## GDOT ARTS Roads Status Update



### Columbia County

#### **M005753 – SR 383 From North of I-20 to SR 104**

Let April 19, 2019  
Beams Construction awarded contract on May 3, 2019  
Completion date is March 31, 2020  
Cost Estimate – \$3,719,457

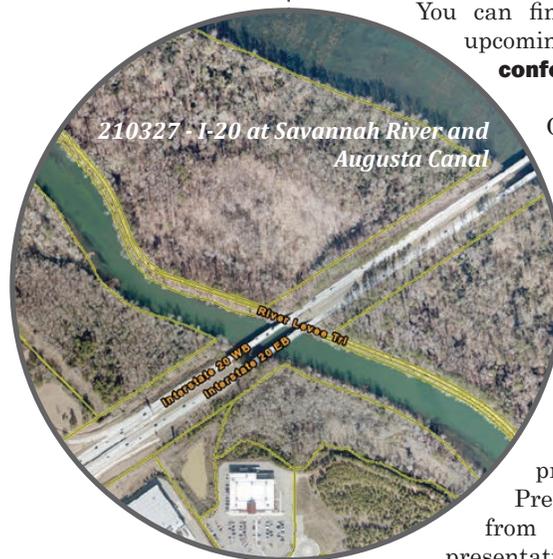
#### **0008350– SR 388 From I-20 to SR 232 - TIA**

- Widening (1.59 miles)
- Scheduled for November 2019 project start date
- ROW acquisition is underway and on schedule with 53 of the 86 parcels acquired
- Current Budget - \$1,936,726 Preliminary Engineering (PE), \$7,091,790 Right of Way (ROW), \$39,796 UTIL, \$16,437,596 CONST
- \$8,163,702 CONST (HB 170) Program year - 2020

### Richmond County

#### **210327 – I-20 at Savannah River and Augusta Canal**

- Bridge replacements over the Augusta Canal and Savannah River to include widening (0.65 miles) in Georgia and South Carolina
- Contractor completed geotechnical investigations. Survey efforts and pavement evaluations along the interstate ongoing. Final design ongoing.
- Environmental Document updated and draft permits initiated. ITS inventory complete.
- Current Budget – (2017) \$3,599,601.25 PE, \$82,512,606.02 CONST



#### **220680 – SR 4 From Milledgeville Road to Government Street - TIA**

- Widening (1.59 miles)
- Scheduled for June 2019 let
- ROW acquisition still underway with 81 of the 83 parcels acquired
- Current Budget - \$126,754.68 PE (2017), \$8,516,722 ROW, \$804,435.99 UTIL

#### **0013927 - SR 4/US 25 BU at Savannah River at South Carolina Line**

- Bridge Replacement (0.20 miles)
- Scheduled for June 2019 project start date
- Coordination ongoing between GDOT, City of Augusta and MPO
- Cost Estimate - \$22,264,641.52 CONST (2025), \$250,000 ROW (2021), \$1,000,000 PE (2019)

## Travel Training Updates

By: LJ Peterson

The 2019 Winter Planning Conference, presented by the SC Chapter of the American Planning Association was held on Friday, February 22, 2019 with a Pre-Conference Mobile Workshop on Thursday, February 21, 2019 from 4:00pm to 5:30pm. The Mobile Tour attendees were treated to a Trolley Ride through the new-urbanist developments including Hammond's Ferry Subdivision, Riverside Village and Brick Pond Park. Attendees exited the Trolley at the new Crowne Plaza Hotel and proceeded with a walking tour of SRP Park and Ironwood Apartments. The walking tour ended at the Crowne Plaza Hotel where light hors d'oeuvres were served. Day two of the 2019 Winter Planning Conference was held at the Aiken Center for the Arts, located at 122 Laurens Street, SW, Aiken, SC 29801. Breakfast and lunch was catered by Newberry Hall and believe me, they did not disappoint. Presentations were given by individuals from various parts of the state. Each presentation hit on very important topics such as Sustainability, Transportation, Law, Energy and Historic Preservation.

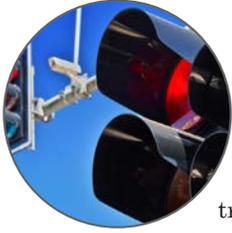
You can find more information on previous and upcoming conferences on <https://scapa.org/conferences/>

On February 4th and 5th transportation planners and engineers from all over the state gathered for the annual South Carolina Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and Council of Government (COG) conference in Beaufort, SC. The conference, with its overall goal of promoting a multi-modal transportation system across the state, focused on topics related to intermodal planning and asset management via local projects, best practices, and issues pertinent to the area. Presentations were provided by individuals from various parts of the state. These presentations, as well as brief synopses, can be viewed on the LCOG website below.

[http://www.lowcountrycog.org/planning\\_and\\_transportation/transportation/index.php](http://www.lowcountrycog.org/planning_and_transportation/transportation/index.php)

# Augusta Traffic Management Center Launch

By: Dr. Oliver Page



Augusta is excited to announce the opening of the Traffic Management Center, located in the Augusta Engineering Department Building. The new facility will allow the department to monitor traffic signals in real time. It will improve overall transportation efficiency throughout the county. The project was funded through Transportation Investment Act (TIA) funds.

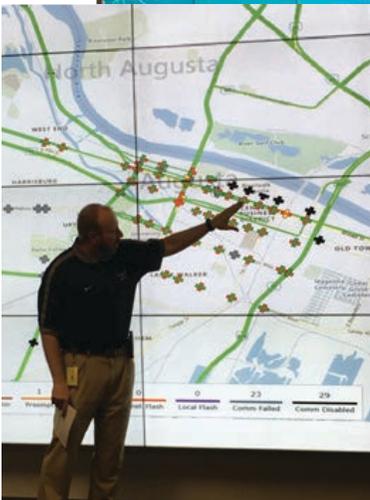
Attended by city and Georgia Department of Transportation officials, Augusta Mayor Hardie Davis, Jr. and State Transportation Board Commissioner Don Grantham cut the ceremonial ribbon. State Transportation Investment Act administrator Kenneth Franks commented on the importance of this project to the county due to the other TIA projects in the city. Presenter John Ussery, Augusta's assistant director for traffic engineering, indicated there are 85 traffic signals connected to the network with plans to have over 100 by the end of the year.

Mentioned benefits of the center:

- Keep the public safe and moving;
- Monitor and improve traffic flow;
- Improve emergency response times, and to
- Assist Public Transit bus system.

Project Specs:

- Contract Amount - \$5,136,050.00
- Design Engineer - AECOM
- Field Inspections - MAAI



*John Ussery with Augusta Engineering presenting during the opening of the Traffic Management Center*

# Welcome Aboard!



Dr. William Molnar has been the Executive Director of the Lower Savannah Council of Governments (COG) for over three years. The Lower Savannah COG is a quasi-governmental institution that provides multiple services in the mostly rural region comprised of Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun and Orangeburg counties. The COG acts as the Rural Planning Organization in South Carolina.

Dr. Molnar earned his doctorate in Policy Studies from Clemson University. In South Carolina, William worked for USDA/Rural Development as the state's Rural Development Coordinator and as a Program Manager for Clemson's Institute for Economic and Community Development. He also worked at Auburn University and Florida Gulf Coast University. While earning his Master of City Planning degree at Georgia Tech, William was a legislative aide for the MARTA Overview Committee at the Georgia General Assembly. His areas of expertise include rural development, economic development, growth issues and transportation.

Bill and his wife Allison live in Aiken, South Carolina.



Gary Bunker was elected Chairman of the Aiken County Council in a special election in October 2017 to fill the unexpired term of former Chairman Ronnie Young. He was sworn in as the fourth Chairman of the Aiken County Council on November 5, 2017. He previously served on the Aiken County Council for two terms from 2005 through

2012. During his previous time on council, he was three times elected Vice-Chairman by his peers and was Chairman of the Administrative Committee for four years.

Gary has served on several committees including the Mattie C. Hall Healthcare Commission, the Aiken County Board of Appeals, the Aiken County Transportation Committee, and the Board of the Economic Development Partnership.

Gary has lived in Aiken since 1993 and has worked continuously for several contractors at the Savannah River Site in project controls and business management. He is a Certified Cost Consultant (AACE International), a Project Management Professional (Project Management Institute), and is involved in his local professional associations. Gary and his wife, Michele, live in Aiken with their children, Charles Park and Savannah Grace.

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**ARTS MPO**  
**535 Telfair Street, Suite 300**  
**Augusta, GA 30901**



**Augusta Regional Transportation Study**

## Upcoming MPO Meetings

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Please call **(706) 821-1796** to verify the time and location.

### **Joint Technical Coordinating Committee**

Meets quarterly; August 14, 2019, 10:30 AM  
535 Telfair Street  
3rd Floor Room 391  
Augusta, GA 30901

### **Joint Citizens Advisory Committee**

August 14, 2019, 10:30 AM  
535 Telfair Street  
3rd Floor Room 391  
Augusta, GA 30901

### **SC ARTS Subcommittee**

Meets quarterly, August 1, 2019, 4:00 PM  
1930 University Pkwy  
Sandlapper Room  
Aiken, SC 29801

### **Policy Committee**

September 5, 2019, 11:00 AM  
535 Telfair Street  
Augusta GA 30901, 1st Floor Linda Beazley Room

### **Augusta Public Transit Citizen Advisory Committee**

Meets monthly on the 4th Thursday, 4:00 PM  
1535 Fenwick Street  
Augusta, GA 30904

## Contacts

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### **Lower Savannah Council of Governments**

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