

2022 SCAC Awards Program

This application is for:

Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award

Project Title

MatTrans Regional Public Transportation Provider

County/Counties

Greenwood Abbeville and McCormick

Staff Contact

Susan McIntyre

Job Title

Clerk to Council

E-mail Address

smcintyre@greenwoodsc.gov

Phone Number

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Greenwood, SC 29646


Please provide a summary of your entry (no more than 100 words) to be used in a handout for the awards competition and included in press releases/publications. You may either type the summary in the text box or upload it as an attachment below.

On behalf of Greenwood, Abbeville, and McCormick Counties, we respectfully ask that you consider McCormick Area Transit (MatTrans) Public Transportation Program for the Barret Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award for the Regional Public Transportation services that they are providing for Greenwood, Abbeville, and McCormick Counties. MatTrans is helping our counties to meet a twenty-year-old unmet need. Public Transportation is a privilege, and we appreciate the partnership with MatTrans and the care and attention that they provide for our county's residents.


Presentations may include more than one speaker; however, each speaker should be aware that the 10-minute time limit is strictly enforced. Please list the name, title, and e-mail address of each speaker:

Name	Title	Email
Becky Powell Moon	Executive Director	beckypowell@mcsc-mat.org

To upload your summary, please type "see attached" in the text box, then upload a Microsoft Word or PDF document below.



To submit these attachments online, please upload Microsoft Word or PDF documents below.



Please check boxes for attachments you will submit as part of your application

A concise Project Description to explain the purpose and significance of the entry (up to eight pages). Please follow the prescribed naming convention for your Project Description file.

Any additional materials needed to support your application (up to five pages).

Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award applications must include letters of support from the chief administrative officers for each participating political subdivision.

McCormick Area Transit (MatTrans)

Public Transportation Program

Nominee for

Barret Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award

Nominated By: Greenwood County, Abbeville County and McCormick County

May 6, 2022

Imagine living in a rural community, you have a lifechanging appointment, and your vehicle is in the shop. You call your family members or friends, but no one can get you to the appointment. You contact the local Taxi, Uber, or Lift providers that are advertised in your area, only to discover that they are located thirty miles away and will cost over \$80.00 for a one-way trip. Your only options are to walk or to miss your appointment.

Many South Carolina residents will not understand the significance of January 15, 2021, and April 26, 2021. These were not just ordinary days; these were the days that Greenwood and Abbeville County Councils signed Resolutions to partner with McCormick Area Transit (MatTrans) to meet a twenty-year un-met need of Public Transportation for the residents of Greenwood and Abbeville Counties. The regional partnerships between McCormick Area Transit (MatTrans), Greenwood County, Abbeville County, and McCormick County, have increased the number of South Carolina counties that now offer Public Transportation from 40 counties to 43 counties.

Public Transportation is a necessary service that is used to meet the needs of the county residents that are transported to medical appointments, to work or to school, as well as essential shopping, even recreational activities. Public transportation offers the ability for residents to live independently within their community, and ultimately age in place so that they may enjoy life to its greatest potential. Public transportation promotes economic development and growth for the community, industries seek out the communities that offer public transportation to their residents. Public Transportation is a privilege, and it should be respected for the value that it holds for all residents.

The McCormick County Senior Center is a Private non-Profit agency that was established in 1972 and provided senior services and multiple transportation programs for McCormick County. In 2006, the McCormick County Government signed the resolution that changed the face

of the McCormick County Senior Center and MatTrans became the Public Transportation contractor for McCormick County. In 2010, SCDOT conducted a Transit Feasibility Study for Greenwood, Abbeville, and Saluda Counties, and MatTrans was identified as the Transit Agency that could assist the neighboring counties with their public transportation needs.

For many years the mantra of Greenwood County was *Greenwood Grows Greater Together...* that growth could be seen from the topiaries that are Uptown, to the international industries that have made their home's here, or maybe that growth is best represented in the rapid growth seen in residential housing on Lake Greenwood. By any measure that is used Greenwood has continued to grow; however, there remained one issue that continued to hinder the ascension that we experienced. The ability for people and goods to be moved is a cornerstone of the any economy, health care system, and community that values quality of life and we did not have a public transit system.

For over two decades, a need for public transportation in Greenwood County had been recognized. In 2014, the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) prepared a statewide public transportation and coordination plan. Within this plan, Greenwood was identified through a study by SCDOT of intercity bus needs as a priority project. Even with this identification, and countless meetings about the need for a public transit system there was little to no discernable progress made. Beginning in August 2019 a series of meetings were held on the Greenwood Campus of Piedmont Technical College in which another effort was being made to address the issue of a need for public transportation in Greenwood County. As had been the case in previous meetings the same cast of characters were present: Government, Non-Profits, Council of Government, and some concerned citizens.

What was different in this meeting was the enormity of the project did not envelop the fact that there was incremental progress to be made.

In these first meetings it was proposed that we tackle one aspect of the need for public transportation. After a robust discussion it was decided that medical needs would be the first genre to be addressed, due to the obvious community impact that this could produce. Then the discussion turned to one of the aspects that has derailed the public transit discussion for many years---cost and specifically who would “own” the system. This system would be a massive undertaking of millions of dollars to buy buses, hire staff, insure vehicles, marketing, etc. that no Non-Profit had the workforce to accomplish and no governmental entity had the desire to undertake. However, as is often the case someone finally asked the right question---the correct question was not who would take on this program...the correct question was who was already doing this work in Greenwood County with whom we could partner. That sparked the conversation that the McCormick Area Transit (MAT) was already doing great work in bringing people to Self Regional Hospital affiliated doctor’s offices (and other medical appointments); however, to be eligible the ride had to either originate or terminate in McCormick County; which was a bureaucratic obstacle that would need to be overcome.

Greenwood County began to work with Becky Powell-Moon (Director of McCormick Area Transit) and Johnny Mmanu-ike (South Carolina Department of Transportation Director of Public Transit) to have the proper designations put in place, removing administrative and bureaucratic obstacles. In the end we were successful, and South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) awarded Greenwood County a three-year grant of \$150,000 per year to serve as a match for our partnership with MAT.

To display the commitment that Greenwood County had to this program County Council raised the County millage, something that had not been done in nearly a decade, to have recurring funding to support this new partnership.

On July 19, 2021, Greenwood County held a ribbon cutting ceremony and the start of a much-needed public transportation system began. Our services began with a two- and one-half mile radius from the city center and limited trip types to medical appointments and essential shopping. Both the pickup and drop off locations had to be within the two- and one-half-mile radius and this arrangement was good, for the beginning of the program; however, the demand for the system to be expanded became so great that the inevitable expansion came earlier than most people anticipated.

The expansion in ridership has been nothing short of amazing, outpacing even the most optimistic of predictions. In the first four months of this program, ridership increased 121%. With these kind of growth numbers, it was clear that the partnership that had been created needed expansion. In October 2021 the expansion of the MAT system occurred in several different ways. Becky Powell-Moon was able to acquire more rolling stock to better accommodate the transit requests. Greenwood County expanded the area in which the service could be provided, going from 2.5 miles to 4.0 miles from the Greenwood County Courthouse. Additionally, there was expansion of the types of rides that were eligible to now include medical purposes, essential shopping, post-secondary education, and employment.

In the first ten months of the program, we have increased ridership, on average, by 27.2% month over month for every month. Also, there has been a 978% increase when you compare the first month's ridership to April 2022. For many of us, when this program began, the goal was

not simply to check a box, claim that we had public transit, pat each other on the back and move on to the next problem. The goal was to not just provide a public option for people to be able to get to critical medical appointments, although that was vitally important. The goal was to have a reliable transportation system that everyone could use, especially those that have found a lack of transportation to be a repeated barrier to sustained employment.

For those of us who have been fortunate enough to have means of transportation our whole lives, it is difficult to understand the challenges faced by our citizens who do not have this convenience. The impact of the program ranges from life-saving trips for dialysis and cancer treatments to affordable trips for necessary employment and post-secondary education to provide future financial stability. This service was a long overdue need for the citizens of Greenwood County and has inherently contributed to a better quality of life by making necessary transportation available to those with limited resources.

Abbeville County partnered with the McCormick Area Transit (MatTrans) to meet an unmet need for the citizens of Abbeville County. There is a need for transportation for the Abbeville County citizens that either do not have a vehicle or are no longer able to drive themselves to their medical appointments or to purchase groceries.

Abbeville County is one of the 7 counties in SC that did not have a transportation system. In 2015 the local hospital, Abbeville Area Medical Center, conducted a community health needs assessment. During this study 13 organizations were asked to list city needs for the county and over half of the groups listed transportation as a critical and undeserved need. The United Christian Ministries of Abbeville County (USMAC) then distributed a needs survey, it was alarming how many citizens needed transportation to receive the preventative medical care and to

be able to gather the food and household supplies that were needed to survive. Of the 258 people responding to the survey over half needed transportation to doctor's offices and stores and 90% needed transportation to the services that are required in Greenwood and Anderson.

Abbeville County currently only has 1 grocery store for our population of approximately 24,299. Most of the population of Abbeville County is in the unincorporated areas. For a person or family that does not have transportation it would be very difficult to travel to the grocery store or to the doctor's office for preventative services. According to the US Census Bureau, Abbeville County's percentage of people living in poverty at 15.3% which is above the state average of 11.4%. Abbeville County's per capita income is \$25,598 which is well below the state average of \$35,384. Abbeville County's median age is 44.6 which is relatively higher than the neighboring counties: Greenwood- 39.8, Anderson-40.7 and Laurens 40.7 (Census.gov). With the slowly decreasing population and increasing median age residents need access to public transportation for healthcare, essential services, and grocery stores.

The MatTrans partnership is a direct answer to the issue of the aging population of Abbeville County. Abbeville County citizens have benefited from the past year of having the MatTrans to provide the necessary transportation service. There has been an increase in ridership of 300% from October 2021 to April 2022 and receive an average of 30 calls a day for transportation services in Abbeville. Currently there are approximately 45 riders for 85 round trips and the number is growing.

Abbeville Council members consider the service to be priceless, residents are being transported to doctor's appointments, dialysis, and the grocery store. Being a rural county means that those citizens must travel farther to receive goods and services.

The transportation program has been crucial to Abbeville residents that cannot drive or that do not own a vehicle. Individuals and families now have peace of mind being able to make a schedule and know that they will be able to get to their appointment, pick up groceries and other services. The Public Transportation Partnership with MatTrans has been a success and it has improved the lives of many of the Abbeville residents.

MatTrans has been providing Public Transportation Services as a Regional Transportation Provider for McCormick, Greenwood, and Abbeville Counties. This unique Regional Public Transportation service provides residents from any of the three counties to be transported to any of the three counties, as well as to Augusta, GA. MatTrans has placed 3 Drivers and vehicles in Greenwood, and 1 Driver and vehicle in Abbeville, and operates 21 vehicles that originate trips from McCormick. The vehicle leave McCormick loaded with passengers going to Greenwood or Abbeville and once the vehicle arrives, it will stay in either county to provide additional transportation services prior to the original passengers are ready to return to McCormick.

MatTrans utilizes the county lines as transfer points for passengers that are being transported from one county to another county. Having one vehicle to meet and the passengers transfer vehicles allows for the maximum number of hours that the vehicles can remain in the assigned county and provide as many trips as possible for each county. This process provides the maximum amount of transportation possible while maximizing the smaller amounts of funding that is allocated for the program.

The Regional Transportation program that MatTrans is providing has been blessed with letters of support from Secretary Christy A. Hall, SCDOT, the SCDOT Office of Public Transportation, Upper Savannah Council of Governments, McCormick, Greenwood, and Abbeville County Councils, Senator Shane Massey, Senator Billy Garrett, and Self Regional Healthcare. The letters enclosed with this nomination are just a small token of the support for MatTrans and the transportation services that they are providing to the Upper Savannah Region.

On behalf of Greenwood, Abbeville, and McCormick Counties, we respectfully ask that you consider McCormick Area Transit (MatTrans) Public Transportation Program for the J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award / Barret Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award for the Regional Transportation services that they are providing for Greenwood, Abbeville, and McCormick Counties. MatTrans is helping our counties to meet a twenty-year-old unmet need.

Public Transportation is a privilege, and we, Greenwood, Abbeville, and McCormick Counties appreciate the partnership with MatTrans and the care and attention that they provide for our County's residents.

https://www.indexjournal.com/news/matrans-slow-growth-in-abbeville-county-comes-in-stages/article_14281932-74a4-5962-8d9c-d491fedfeced.html

Matrans' slow growth in Abbeville County comes in stages

By ROBERT JORDAN rjordan@indexjournal.com

Apr 9, 2022




Growth for Abbeville's County transit service is in the future, according to Becky Powell, executive director of Matrans.


ROBERT JORDAN | INDEX-JOURNAL

McCORMICK — Growth for transportation service in Abbeville County is more akin to the tortoise than the hare. That's just fine with Becky Powell, executive director of McCormick Area Transit, or MAT trans.

McCormick Area Transit acquires funds to receive transit funding

Sep 13, 2021 


Public transit in Greenwood: fallacy or possibility?

By JONATHAN LIMEHOUSE jlimehouse@indexjournal.com Nov 13, 2019 

Transit service kicks off today in Abbeville

By ROBERT JORDAN rjordan@indexjournal.com Oct 19, 2021 

Public transit topic of Monday workshop in Greenwood

By ADAM BENSON abenson@indexjournal.com Sep 17, 2019 

McCormick County extends transit service to three Abbeville County towns

By ROBERT JORDAN rjordan@indexjournal.com Oct 15, 2021 

DRIVEN TO BE BETTER

Driven to be better: Transit system is means of investing in Abbeville County community

By ROBERT JORDAN rjordan@indexjournal.com Jun 7, 2021 

United Christian Ministries of Abbeville County seeks county support for transit plan

By ROBERT JORDAN rjordan@indexjournal.com Apr 13, 2021 

LAKELANDS VOICES: Do you think the Lakelands would benefit from a mass transit system?

Jul 10, 2017

Expanded MAT Trans shows demand for public transportation

By DAMIAN DOMINGUEZ ddominguez@indexjournal.com Nov 2, 2021

Greenwood County cuts the ribbon on MAT TRANS

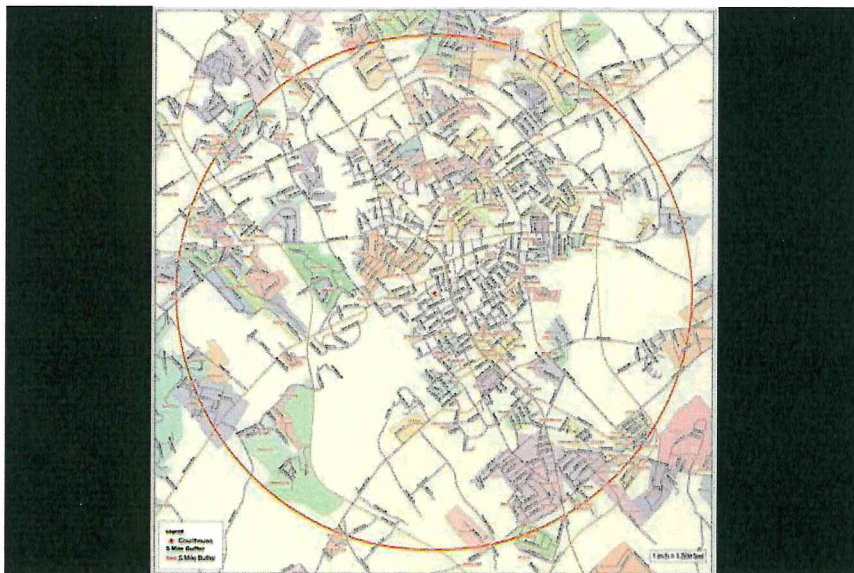
By JAMES HICKS jhicks@indexjournal.com Jul 20, 2021

MAT Trans' focus on access makes public transport key goal

By DAMIAN DOMINGUEZ ddominguez@indexjournal.com Apr 9, 2022

Greenwood County public transportation service to begin July 1

By JAMES HICKS jhicks@indexjournal.com Jun 17, 2021



MAT TRANS, Greenwood County's public transportation service provider, will pickup and drop-off riders within a 2.5 mile radius of

Lakelands Connector



Hospice to host 23rd annual Butterfly Celebration

Apr 26, 2022

Council hears public transit presentation

4/14/21

By Henry E. Green

Getting to where you need to be.

Ah! That is the question.

Abbeville County Council met Monday night, hearing a presentation from Dr. Bill Boone, executive director for United Christian Ministries of Abbeville County, and he asked Council to compose a resolution asking a McCormick group to be a transit provider for Abbeville County, to help meet the need for a public transportation system here. (See related story.)

Abbeville County is one of seven South Carolina counties without a public transportation system, said Boone, noting that such a system is needed.

The need for a public transportation system was also noted in an Abbeville Area Medical Center study from several years ago.

Meanwhile, United Chris-

tian Ministries of Abbeville County is a nonprofit, all-volunteer organization based in Abbeville, with three ministries--a food pantry system, an emergency assistance ministry, and a medical clinic.

Boone became aware of the need for a transportation system--he said he had been told that many clients were having problems, for example, getting to their appointments at the clinic.

Working with the organization Ten at the Top, UC-MAC formed a committee and produced a survey which it sent out earlier this year, a survey which confirmed the need for public transit in Abbeville County.

Many people could not work because they did not have transportation.

Solutions?

Boone noted that grant money is available for which the County would not pay

anything. He also called for Abbeville County Council to come up with and pass a resolution to support McCormick Area Transit in the McCormick organization's submission of a grant proposal which would help establish a public transportation system here in Abbeville County, and that the McCormick organization would be the transit provider for such a system.

McCormick Area Transit has been recognized for its excellence in providing public transportation in McCormick County.

The City of Greenwood, he said, asked for McCormick Area Transit's assistance in setting up a transit system, said Boone.

The transit system in Abbeville County would serve, at least initially, people with medical needs.

Council took the presentation as information.

Letters Of Support

May 3, 2022

Susan Turkopuls
Director of Research and Training
South Carolina Association of Counties
1919 Thurmond Mall
Columbia, SC 29201

RE: J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award / Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation
Award Nominations: McCormick, Greenwood, and Abbeville Counties

Dear Ms. Turkopuls:

On behalf of the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT), please accept our support for South Carolina Association of Counties (SCAC)'s J. Mitchell Graham and Barrett Lawrimore applications for McCormick, Greenwood, and Abbeville Counties for providing on demand public transportation services to tri-county residents. A key transportation strategy for SCDOT is to develop multimodal options for residents and visitors in all areas of the state, including public transportation; this collaborative, regional effort supports the agency's strategy.

As a result of this regional partnership, residents of all three counties now have access to medical and educational facilities, as well as places of employment. SCDOT recognizes that public transportation empowers individuals to be independent, seek and retain employment, access medical care, and reach new opportunities, including education, commercial activity, and recreation. The quality of life for these transit customers has greatly improved with these services, and will continue to do so as ridership increases month over month.

SCDOT financially supports this effort with our State Mass Transit Funding, and actively participated with the counties, chambers of commerce, area transit providers, and the COG to implement this needed service. SCDOT supports and applauds the innovative and collaborative efforts of these counties in providing public transportation opportunities to their residents, and looks forward to our continued partnership by providing additional, expanded, and coordinated transit options for South Carolina's residents.

Thank you for your consideration of these applications. If you have any questions, please contact Roxanne Ancheta, Office of Local Government Services at (803) 737-1232 or AnchetaRM@scdot.org.

Sincerely,

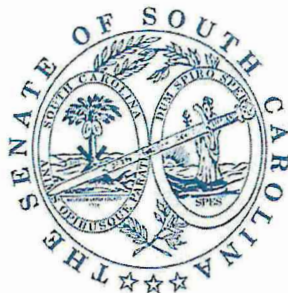


Christy A. Hall, P.E.
Secretary of Transportation

ec: SCDOT Deputy Secretaries



OFFICE:
311 GRESSETTE BUILDING
P. O. BOX 142
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA 29202
PHONE: (803) 212-6330
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E-MAIL: SHANEMASSEY@SCSENATE.GOV



COMMITTEES:
RULES, CHAIRMAN
EDUCATION
JUDICIARY
LABOR, COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT

SENATOR SHANE MASSEY
SOUTH CAROLINA STATE SENATE DISTRICT 25
AIKEN, EDGEFIELD, LEXINGTON, MCCORMICK & SALUDA COUNTIES

May 4, 2022

RE: J. Mitchell Graham/Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Award

To Whom It May Concern:

I wholeheartedly support and endorse McCormick County's application for the above-referenced award. McCormick county, together with Greenwood and Abbeville counties, has held the public transportation contract for McCormick since 2006. These counties have worked together over the years to provide transportation (between the counties and into Augusta, Georgia, for veterans) to ensure that residents have dependable access to medical, employment, education, etc., opportunities.

In my opinion, they have exceeded expectations for serving residents in our counties, and I am proud to recommend them for this award. Should you need additional information or wish to speak with me on this recommendation, please don't hesitate to contact me.

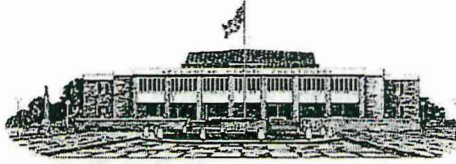
Sincerely,


Shane Massey

Greenwood County South Carolina

SENATORS
MIKE GAMBRELL
400 FILTER PLANT ROAD
HONEA PATH, SC 29654

BILLY GARRETT
CHAIRMAN
109 OAK AVENUE
GREENWOOD, SC 29646



Legislative Delegation

Greenwood County Office
600 Monument St. P-103
Greenwood, SC 29646

REPRESENTATIVES
ANNE PARKS
P.O. BOX 181
GREENWOOD, SC 29648

JOHN R. McCRAVY, III
CO-CHAIRMAN
913 JOHNS CREEK ROAD
HODGES, SC 29653

STEWART O. JONES
P.O. BOX 982
LAURENS, SC 29360

May 4, 2022

South Carolina Association of Counties
P.O. Box 8207
Columbia, SC 29202-8207

Dear Awards Committee,

It is with great pleasure that I support the nomination of the McCormick Area Transportation Program (MAT) for the Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award as it is presented by the South Carolina Association of Counties. The MAT Transportation Program has made a major impact on the quality of life and critical needs of many residents in the Greenwood and Lakelands area of the State of South Carolina. The vision, collaboration and partnership with the leaders in the local governments of Greenwood and the Lakelands area have provided a service that has proven to be successful since the implementation of the program, and continues to grow in the service area.

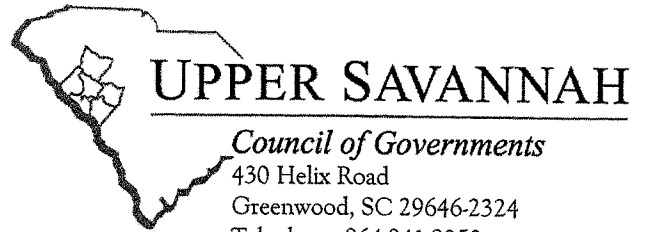
The MAT Transportation Program has been a vision for many years to support the transportation needs of the community to assist with medical care, family quality of life care, and access to health care services provided by Self Regional Hospital affiliated doctor's offices. For decades there had been a need for public transportation and coordination of a plan. The vision came to fruition in 2019 when Greenwood was identified through a study by SCDOT of intercity bus needs as a priority project. With the coordination of several agencies and the MAT Transportation Program that had already been in service in McCormick County, the public transportation system was in the planning stages to expand to the Greenwood County and Abbeville County residents. This coordination between the local County governments of McCormick, Greenwood and Abbeville Counties has been a valuable contribution to our citizens.

It is my humble recommendation that you consider the McCormick Area Transportation Program (MAT) for the Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like further information.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Billy Garrett". The signature is stylized and fluid, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Senator Billy Garrett
Greenwood County Legislative Delegation



430 Helix Road
Greenwood, SC 29646-2324
Telephone 864-941-8050
Toll-Free 1-800-922-7729
FAX 864-941-8090

May 3, 2022

South Carolina Association of Counties
J. Mitchell Graham/Barrett Lawrimore Regional Cooperation
Awards Nomination Review Panel
PO Box 8207
Columbia SC 29202-8207

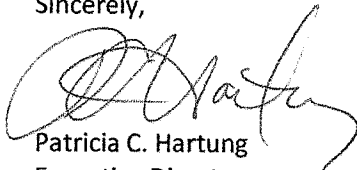
Dear Review Panel Members:

The Upper Savannah Council of Governments supports the efforts of Abbeville, Greenwood, and McCormick Counties to apply for the Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award to recognize the regional effort between these counties, the McCormick Area Transit Agency, SCDOT, and others to bring transit to unserved areas in our region.

There have been discussions about the need for public transportation in this region since 2010, when a URS Corporation study indicated the region needed some form of public transit. A number of stakeholder meetings were held in the ensuing years regarding the lack of public transit in and between these counties, ultimately leading to the present project. Two of the main reasons driving this regional cooperation were the economic growth in the area and related transportation demands, as well as the inability of Self Regional Hospital to provide transportation for its patients to medical appointments and procedures.

In March 2022, the McCormick Area Transit Agency began providing intercounty transportation, so that all residents of the three counties, as well as those of Augusta, Georgia, can access healthcare, shopping, jobs, education, etc. In McCormick, Greenwood and Abbeville counties, the county lines are being used as a transfer point for passengers to make it to medical appointments or shop for essential items in neighboring counties and Augusta. With the county lines as a transfer point, the program provides regional transportation to all residents of McCormick, Greenwood, and Abbeville counties.

Sincerely,



Patricia C. Hartung
Executive Director

Charles Jennings
Chairman, County Council

Bernard Hamby
Vice Chairman, County Council

Henry Banks
County Council

Charles Cook
County Council

Jacqueline Brown
County Council



610 South Mine Street
McCormick, South Carolina 29835
(864) 852-2231
FAX (864) 852-2783
Email: info@mccormickcountysc.org

Columbus Stephens
County Administrator

May 5, 2022

Becky Moon, Executive Director
1421 S. Main St.
McCormick, SC 29835

Dear Mrs. Moon:

On behalf of McCormick County Council and the Administrator we are very excited that you have agreed to partner with McCormick, Abbeville, and Greenwood County as participants for the Barrett Latimore Memorial Regional Cooperative Award. McCormick County Council has always been a proponent of your organization in providing transportation since the early 2000 for elderly and persons with disabilities. And now that the services have expanded to the Greenwood and Abbeville area through the transportation provided by the McCormick Area Transit, this effort continues to meet the needs and demands of Rural South Carolina Counties residents in assisting with doctor's appointments, educational opportunities, shopping etc. We will continue to provide support and partnering with McCormick Area Transit in taking a holistic approach while improving the quality of life of rural South Carolina Counties population.

Respectfully,


Chairman County Council


County Administrator

County of Greenwood

Park Plaza, Suite 102
600 Monument St., Box P-103
Greenwood, SC 29646

Phone: (864) 942-8507
Fax: (864) 942-8566
Website: <http://www.greenwoodsc.gov>



May 4, 2022

South Carolina Association of Counties
P.O. Box 8207
Columbia, SC 29202-8207

Dear Awards Committee,

Ten years ago, the New York Times came to Greenwood County and lamented the fact that Textile Mills had closed and that the community was facing a greater economic calamity than the entire Nation was experiencing. In the article it states that the poverty rate in Greenwood County more than doubled, between 2007 and 2010, to 24% and that the median household income dropped by more than 28% during the same period. These were hard times and Greenwood County residents experienced them long after the New York Times Reporter packed up and left. However, today if you drive down the Highway 72 Bypass you see National Retail establishments, there are approximately 1,300 vacant positions in Greenwood County, within the past year we have announced more capital investment than the previous four years combined and more jobs than in the previous three—with this year being an even greater statistical year. With this positive momentum, how did Greenwood County transition from the dark days that were outlined in the New York Times article to what we are experiencing today...partnerships.

For over a generation Greenwood County has batted around the idea of the need to have a public transit program. For the same amount of time there were meetings, focus groups, discussions, etc. but at no point was there anything substantive done to move us closer to the goal of public transit...until 2019. In August 2019 meetings, again we held meetings; however, for the first time a focus on partnerships was the cornerstone. These discussions eventually lead to the partnership of Greenwood County with McCormick County/McCormick Area Transit. During this process the partnerships have grown to include the South Carolina Department of Transportation and Abbeville County. During this process we have created a model that can be emulated by other smaller to medium sized counties across our State and Nation.

In the Lakelands area we are large enough to sustain International Companies and National Retail establishments; however, we are not large enough to embark on large scale programs on our own. This reality makes our area fertile ground for the types of regional partnerships like our public transit system that is shared between McCormick, Abbeville, and Greenwood Counties. Whether

the partnerships are sharing the vital water resource of Lake Greenwood between Laurens and Greenwood County or the public works infrastructure emanating in McCormick County that comes into Greenwood County; the Lakelands is an area that has regional collaborations as a part of our ethos.

Thank you for your time and consideration of the support on behalf of Greenwood County. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like further information.

Best regards,

Chuck Moates (SM)

Dr. Chuck Moates, Chairman
Greenwood County Council

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Toby L. Chappell', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Toby L. Chappell
Greenwood County Manager

Abbeville County

SOUTH CAROLINA

May 6, 2022

Mrs. Becky Powell Moon, Executive Director
McCormick Area Transit
1421 S. Main Street
McCormick, SC 29835

Dear Mrs. Moon;

On behalf of Abbeville County Council and the County Director we are thankful that you have agreed to partner with McCormick, Greenwood and Abbeville Counties to apply for the Barrett Latimore Memorial Regional Cooperative Award. Abbeville County is grateful for the transportation services that we have received from this partnership with the McCormick Area Transit.

This regional partnership has been tremendous assistance to the residents of our county that did not have transportation. Abbeville County wholeheartedly endorses the application for the Barrett Latimore Memorial Regional Cooperative Award. We look forward to this continued regional partnership.

Respectfully,



David Garner
Abbeville County Director



"Heritage With A Future"

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