



**South Carolina  
Rural Infrastructure Authority**

**Annual Report  
Fiscal Year 2017-18**

**The SC Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) was created to help close the gap in financial resources for infrastructure improvements statewide and lay the groundwork for economic opportunities.**

RIA programs and assistance are designed to meet one or more of the following objectives:

- Increase community sustainability by helping to maintain reliable and affordable infrastructure.
- Improve the quality of life by addressing public health, environmental and regulatory concerns.
- Create opportunities for economic impact by building the infrastructure capacity to support economic development.

**Learn more by visiting [ria.sc.gov](http://ria.sc.gov).**



**South Carolina  
Rural Infrastructure Authority**  
**Creating water solutions.  
Improving communities statewide.**



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*The "SC Rural Infrastructure Authority Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2018" is submitted by the SC Rural Infrastructure Authority in compliance with the SC Rural Infrastructure Act (SC Code of Laws §11-50-160). Additionally, Act 119 of 2005 mandates that agencies provide all reports to the General Assembly in an electronic format.*

*It is important to note that some totals may not add up due to rounding of numbers and cumulative totals reflect initial grant awards only.*



## Creating water solutions. Improving communities statewide.



Theodore Roosevelt once said, "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are."

For more than five years, the RIA has been working with communities to fund solutions to infrastructure challenges statewide. RIA has developed a

portfolio of financial and other resources designed to respond to these challenges and put communities in a position to succeed.

Since 2013, the RIA's Board of Directors has approved 251 grants totaling nearly \$97 million and leveraged more than \$337 million in additional water, sewer and storm drainage investment. Every county in the state has benefitted from these grants.

Additionally, the State Revolving Funds (SRF) program, which became a part of the agency's offerings in 2015, is another great resource. In the past three years, the SRF program has closed nearly \$350 million in loans for major water, wastewater and storm drainage improvements. With affordable interest rates and terms, demand for this program is at an all-time high.

Infrastructure is expensive, and local resources are often scarce. RIA is putting its resources to work by bridging financial gaps for local communities. Proving once again that when we pool our resources and work together, we can make things happen.

Robert M. Hitt III  
Secretary, SC Department of Commerce  
Chairman, SC Rural Infrastructure Authority



From day one, our board of directors has provided clear direction: "Find ways to help communities."

With that mission, RIA staff have been focused on providing a high level of customer service, meeting communities where they are and trying to solve

problems. RIA supports community projects with the greatest need and addresses infrastructure issues that have the potential to hinder quality of life and economic growth.

We partner with multiple funding sources, whenever appropriate, in order to maximize the impact of projects and to leverage limited resources. Our goal is to find solutions to critical needs – whether or not RIA resources are used to fund the project.

A customer satisfaction survey was conducted in FY18 to assess the effectiveness of the grant program and services. The quality of staff assistance and user-friendly program features received the highest marks. One survey respondent indicated, "The services offered by RIA are right on target and a tremendous asset to assisting counties with infrastructure needs."

With renewed commitment, our approach for the future is simple – focus on finding solutions and improving communities statewide.

Bonnie Ammons  
Executive Director,  
SC Rural Infrastructure Authority

## FY18: A Year in Review...

**\$22.4M**  
grants awarded



**\$143.7M**  
SRF loans closed

### GRANTS

- **51** projects
- **\$67M** leveraged

#### Customers Served

- Residential:  
**67,524**
- Businesses:  
**4,261**
- Proposed Jobs:  
**993**
- Planned Capital Investment:  
**\$266M**



#### Did You Know?

**36** of the state's **46** counties (**78%**) currently have at least one RIA grant or loan project.

### LOANS

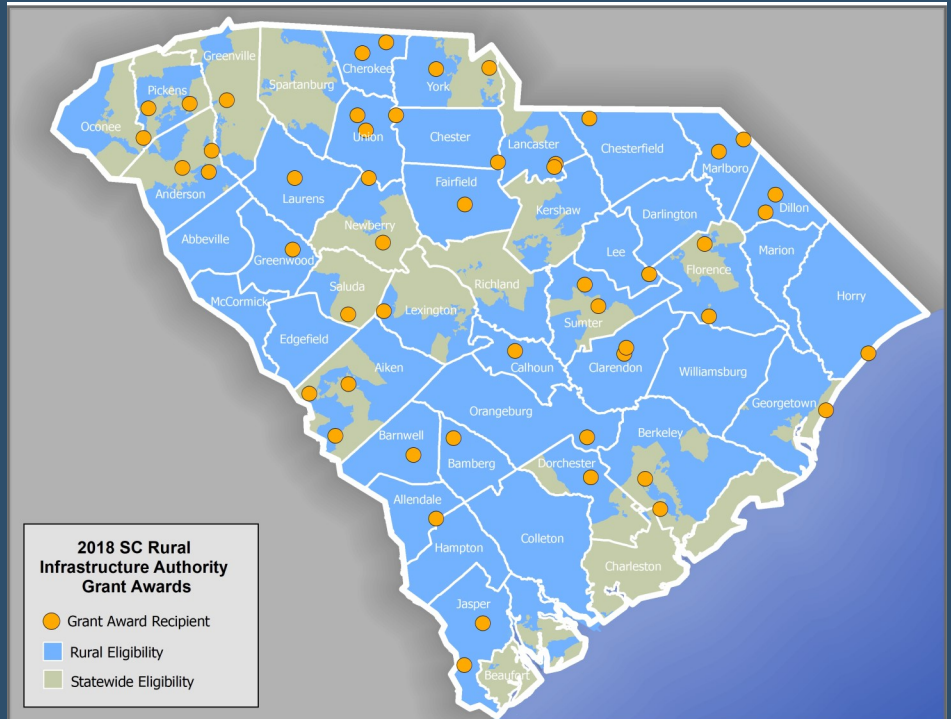
- **17** SRF Loans
- **\$115M** loan disbursements  
*(most in program history)*
- **\$50M** loan repayments
- **12%** growth in loan balances  
*(highest since 2006)*
- **\$100M+** loans in back-to-back years  
*(first time in 30 years)*



## FY18 RIA Projects

### GRANTS

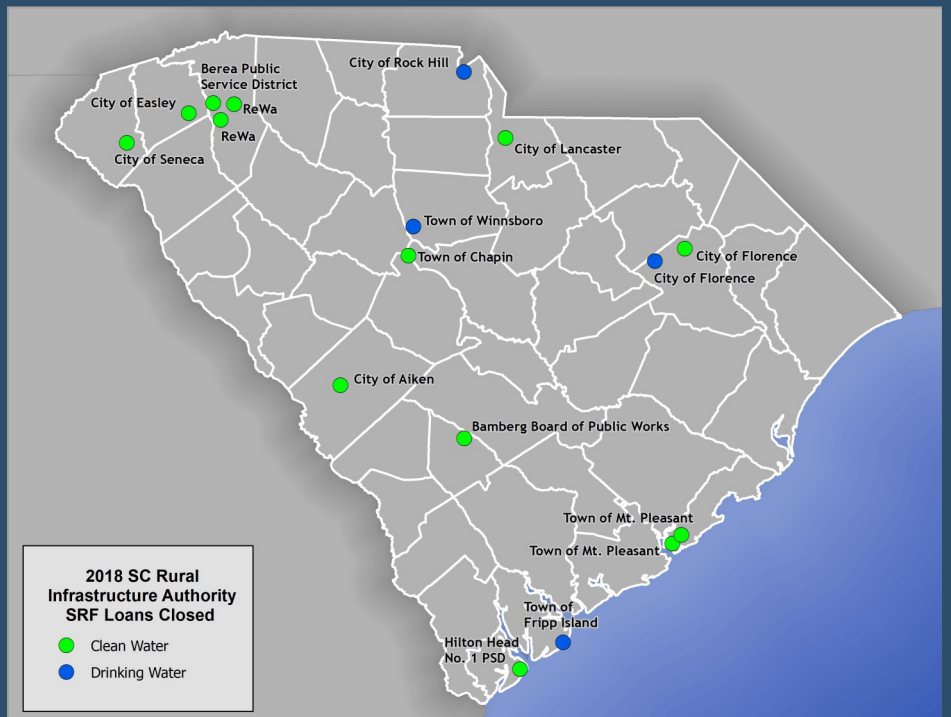
- **64%** in distressed or least developed areas
- **Nearly a fourth (24%)** supported economic development
- **52%** of grants addressed aging infrastructure



*Grant projects located in statewide eligible areas must provide a 25% construction match on approved projects.*

### SRF LOANS

- **24%** to first-time borrowers
- **Almost one half** of loans serve populations <30,000
- Average loan is **\$8M**





## Grant Program Summary

Competitive grants are offered to assist in the development of reliable water, sewer and storm drainage infrastructure statewide, as well as increase capacity for economic growth.

Financial assistance is made available through two programs - Basic and Economic Infrastructure - during two competitive funding rounds annually. Applications are reviewed on a comparative basis with consideration of the relative need, feasibility and impact of each project. Funding decisions are made by the RIA's Board of Directors. The RIA staff provides technical assistance to help communities apply for funding to address critical infrastructure needs.

RIA funds must be used for project-related construction costs. Applicants are responsible for planning, engineering, permitting, acquisition, legal and other non-construction related costs. There is an additional match requirement for projects located in Tier I and II counties, as designated by the SC Department of Revenue.

Eligible applicants are local governments, special purpose and public service districts or public works commissions. Not-for-profit water/sewer companies are not eligible as applicants but may be assisted with RIA funds if the local government being served by the project agrees to be the applicant.



**Basic Infrastructure program:** assists communities in complying with environmental quality standards, protecting public health from other environmental concerns or improving the capacity of existing water, sewer and storm drainage infrastructure. Funds may also be used to address infrastructure that has exceeded its useful life and no longer provides quality service.

**Economic Infrastructure program:** builds or enhances local water, sewer and storm drainage infrastructure to support economic development that will create and retain jobs, as well as boost opportunities for future economic impact. Reliable infrastructure benefits both new and existing businesses and puts communities in a position to attract additional investment that will contribute to long-term community sustainability.

## FY18 Grant Recipients

GRANTEE	COUNTY	PROJECT	AWARD
Aiken, City of	Aiken	Sewer System Improvements	\$500,000
Aiken County	Aiken	Water and Sewer Improvements	\$500,000
Anderson County	Anderson	Economic Water Infrastructure	\$47,314
Barnwell, City of	Barnwell	Sewer System Improvements	\$500,000
Batesburg-Leesville, Town of	Lexington	Water Tank Improvements	\$130,515
Beaufort-Jasper County WSA	Beaufort	Sewer Line Extension	\$500,000
Belton-Honea Path Water Authority	Anderson	Water System Improvements	\$270,000
Bennettsville, City of	Marlboro	Water Line Upgrades	\$487,900
Berkeley County	Berkeley	Economic Sewer Infrastructure	\$500,000
Berkeley County Water & Sanitation	Berkeley	Pump Station Upgrade	\$500,000
Blacksburg, Town of	Cherokee	Economic Sewer Improvements	\$480,500
Calhoun County	Calhoun	Economic Water & Sewer Infrastructure	\$500,000
Clarendon County	Clarendon	Water System Improvements	\$486,080
Clemson, City of	Oconee	Water System Improvements	\$500,000
Dalzell Rural Water District	Sumter	Water System Improvements	\$190,781
Denmark, City of	Bamberg	Economic Water & Sewer Infrastructure	\$500,000
Dillon County	Dillon	Economic Water & Sewer Infrastructure	\$500,000
Dorchester County	Dorchester	Sewer System Improvements	\$457,312
Easley Combined Utilities	Pickens	Sewer System Improvements	\$500,000
Fairfax, Town of	Allendale	Water Line Upgrades	\$145,310
Florence, City of	Florence	Water System Improvements	\$500,000
Fort Mill, Town of	York	Economic Water Improvements	\$500,000
Gaffney Board of Public Works	Cherokee	Sewer System Improvements	\$473,000
Georgetown County WSD	Georgetown	Sewer System Improvements	\$500,000



## FY18 Grant Recipients

GRANTEE	COUNTY	PROJECT	AWARD
Great Falls, Town of	Chester	Pump Station Upgrade	\$290,000
Greenville Water	Greenville	Economic Water Improvements	\$500,000
Holly Hill, Town of	Orangeburg	Sewer System Improvements	\$319,000
Horry County	Horry	Drainage System Upgrade	\$336,226
Jackson, Town of	Aiken	Water Line Upgrades	\$500,000
Kershaw, Town of	Lancaster	Sewer System Improvements	\$326,115
Lake City, City of	Florence	Water Tank Improvements	\$251,250
Lancaster County WSD	Lancaster	Water Line Improvements	\$500,000
Latta, Town of	Dillon	Water Line Upgrades	\$500,000
Laurens County WSC	Laurens	Water Line Upgrades	\$500,000
Lockhart, Town of	Union	Sewer System Improvements	\$365,000
Lynchburg, Town of	Lee	Water Line Upgrades	\$500,000
Manning, City of	Clarendon	Sewer System Improvements	\$496,800
McColl, Town of	Marlboro	Water System Improvements	\$500,000
Newberry County WSA	Newberry	Water Tank Improvements	\$404,000
Ninety Six CPW	Greenwood	Pump Station Upgrade	\$500,000
Pageland, Town of	Chesterfield	Sewer System Improvements	\$500,000
Ridgeland, Town of	Jasper	Sewer System Improvements	\$1,000,000
Saluda County	Saluda	Economic Water Infrastructure	\$338,663
Six Mile Rural Community WD	Pickens	Water Line Upgrades	\$350,000
Sumter, City of	Sumter	Interconnection of Sewer Systems	\$500,000
Union County	Union	Water Tank Improvements	\$130,000
Union, City of	Union	Economic Sewer Improvements	\$1,000,000
Whitmire, Town of	Newberry	Water Tank Improvements	\$164,897
Williamston, Town of	Anderson	Water Line Upgrades	\$500,000
Winnsboro, Town of	Fairfield	Sewer System Improvements	\$424,600
York County	York	Water Tank Construction	\$500,000

**51 projects awarded**

**\$22,365,263**

## Loan Program Summary

Low-interest loans are made statewide for a variety of clean water and drinking water projects through the State Revolving Funds (SRF). These are federally capitalized loan programs jointly administered by the RIA and the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC).



RIA administers all of the financial responsibilities, including: loan policies; loan applications and credit reviews; loan agreements and disbursements; as well as, loan administration activities, including repayments. RIA also provides the state match (20%) for the federal funds. DHEC acts as the federal grantee and handles the technical aspects of the SRF program, including: review of preliminary

engineering reports; project plans and specifications; issuance of construction permits; and compliance with federal requirements.

Eligible “sponsors” or applicants for SRF loans are municipalities, counties and special purpose districts. To be eligible for SRF assistance, the project sponsor must have a revenue stream sufficient to provide a reliable repayment source and the system must meet viability/sustainability requirements.

RIA works cooperatively alongside DHEC to create a pipeline of projects and to enhance customer service through training, technical assistance, communication and outreach. Efforts to increase fund utilization coupled with an improved economy, affordable interest rates and terms have resulted in an all-time high level of demand. In the past three years, \$350 million in loans have been closed.



### ADVANTAGES:

- Below-market interest rates (**2.1% in FY18**)
- Fixed-rate financing
- Extended terms up to 30 years
- Low closing costs
- Up to 100% financing of all eligible project costs

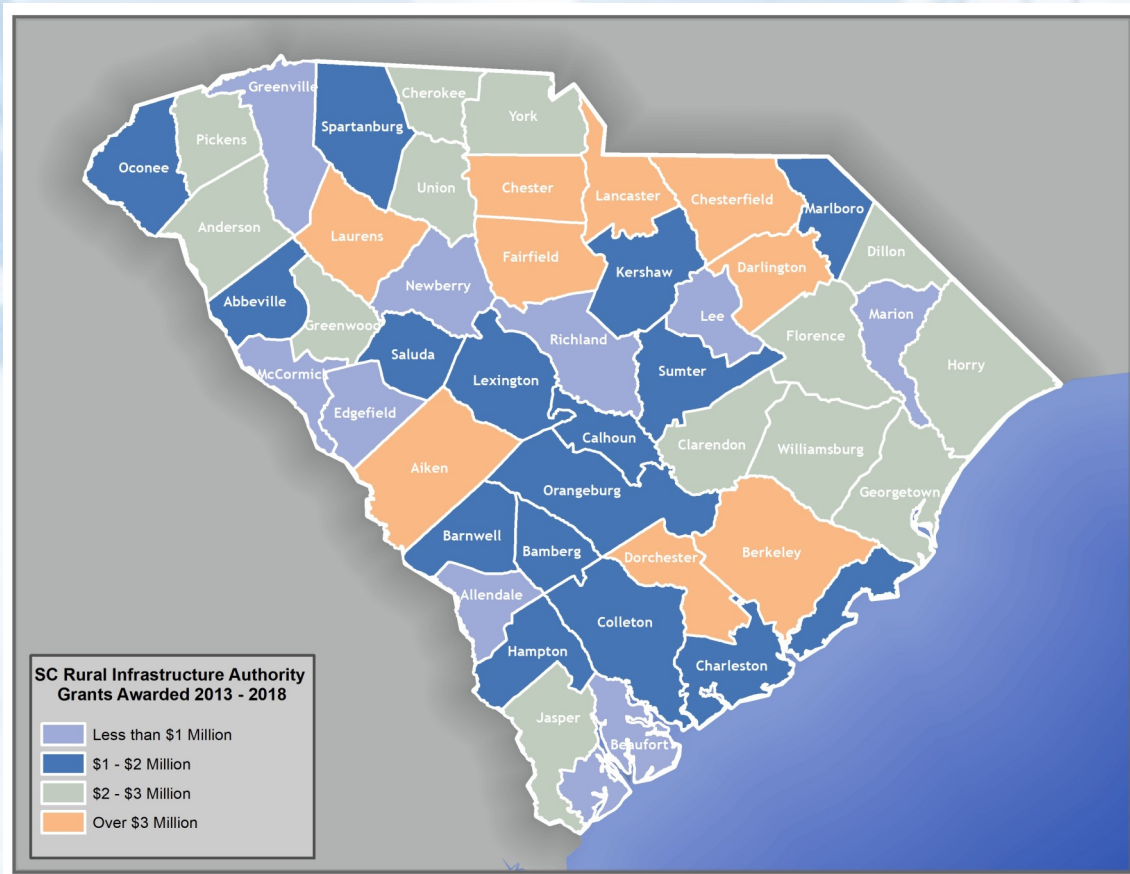
## FY18 State Revolving Fund Loan Recipients

Clean Water			
SPONSOR	COUNTY	PROJECT	LOAN AMOUNT
Aiken, City of	Aiken	Sand River Basin Sewer Rehab	\$11,535,650
Bamberg Board of Public Works	Bamberg	Pine Street Sewer Rehab	\$3,720,738
Berea Public Service District	Greenville	Sewer Collection Rehab - Phase 1	\$2,374,597
Chapin, Town of	Lexington	WWTP Upgrade and Expansion	\$13,466,544
Easley, City of	Pickens	Arial Mill Sewer Improvements	\$3,251,667
Florence, City of	Florence	Timmonsville Sewer Rehabilitation - Phase 2	\$5,730,149
Hilton Head No. 1 PSD	Beaufort	Regional Lift Station Construction & Upgrade	\$1,397,774
Lancaster, City of	Lancaster	West Arch St. & Poovey Farms	\$2,540,599
Mt. Pleasant, Town of	Charleston	Pump Station Conversion & Rehab	\$3,838,266
Mt. Pleasant, Town of	Charleston	Snee Farm Stormwater Rehabilitation	\$9,647,868
ReWa	Greenville	FY17 Gravity Sewer	\$1,803,195
ReWa	Greenville	Reedy River Basin Sewer Tunnel	\$42,392,434
Seneca, City of	Oconee	Pump Station & Gravity Sewer Rehab	\$6,031,455
<b>13 CLEAN WATER LOANS CLOSED</b>			<b>\$107,730,936</b>

Drinking Water			
SPONSOR	COUNTY	PROJECT	LOAN AMOUNT
Florence, City of	Florence	Timmonsville Water System Rehab	\$2,260,938
Fripp Island, Town of	Beaufort	Harbor River Water Line Replacement	\$3,199,654
Winnsboro, Town of	Fairfield	Broad River Intake & Raw Water Line	\$13,213,842
Rock Hill, City of	York	WTP & Lake Wylie Intake Upgrade	\$17,367,504
<b>4 DRINKING WATER LOANS CLOSED</b>			<b>\$36,041,938</b>



## Grant Programs: 2013 to 2018



Projects awarded in every county

**\$96.7M**

AWARDED

**251**

PROJECTS

**\$337M**

LEVERAGED

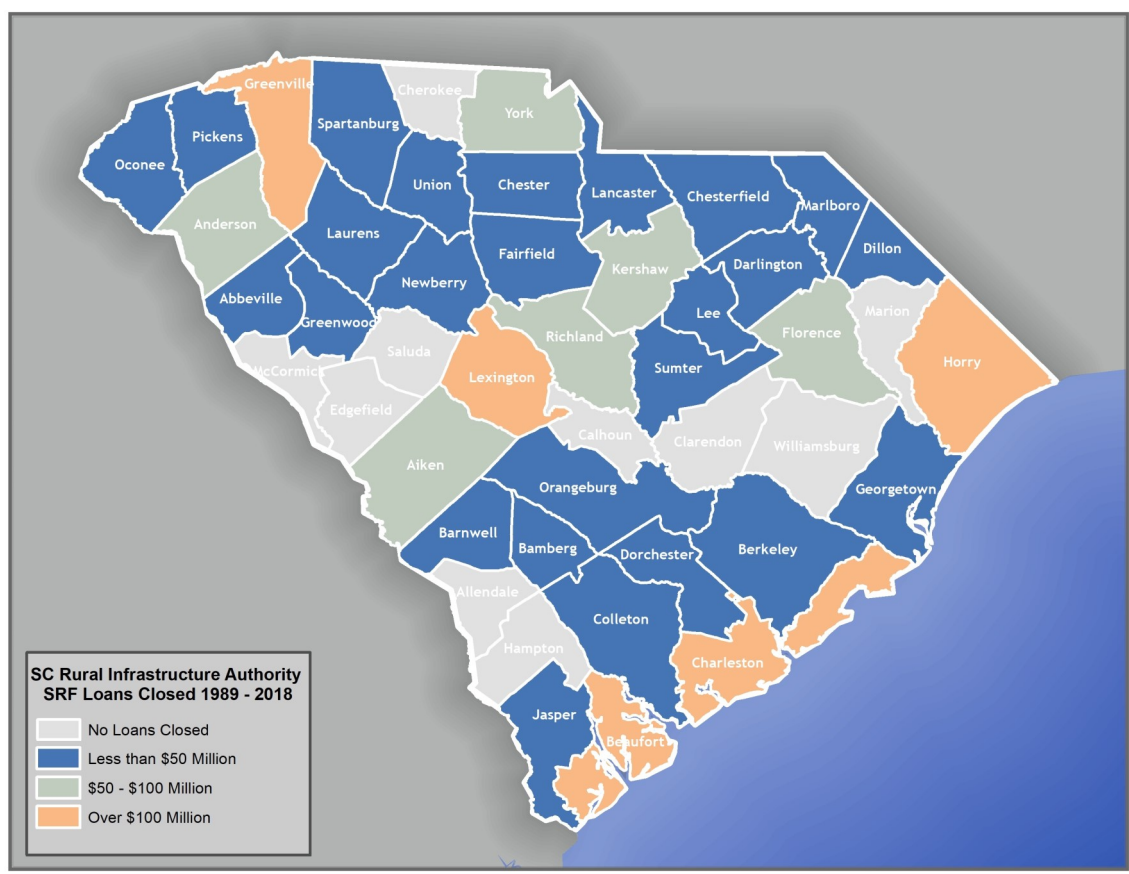
**7,748**

PROPOSED JOBS

**\$2.8B**

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

## SRF Loan Programs: 1989 to 2018



**282**  
PROJECTS

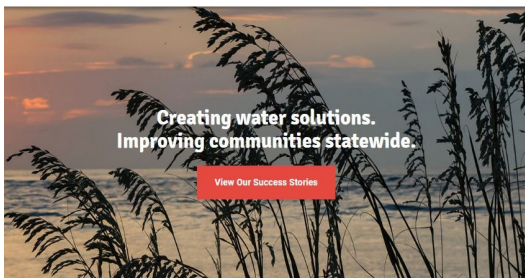
**\$1.6B**  
LOANS CLOSED

**\$1.1B**  
CURRENT LOAN PORTFOLIO

**\$5.6M**  
AVERAGE LOAN

## Outreach and Technical Assistance

The RIA is focused on serving its customers and finding ways to fund infrastructure projects statewide. Information about RIA and other funding resources is communicated to stakeholders through various outreach methods. Training is offered annually to inform local officials about accessing grant and loan resources. This year, training was provided to 291 participants at four workshops. In addition, staff travels throughout the state providing resource information, funding coordination and problem-solving assistance. About 148 meetings and project discussions were held last year.



### We're Here to Help

The RIA website was updated to provide additional resources for infrastructure funding. Among the new features:

- Interactive maps of projects awarded and water/sewer rates
- RIA-funded cases studies
- Frequently-asked questions
- Workshops, trainings and other resources

[ria.sc.gov](http://ria.sc.gov)

### Customer Survey Results

The RIA conducted a customer satisfaction survey of its grant program in FY18. Among the findings: the application process, project implementation and RIA staff received high marks. The respondents, who applied for grant funding but were not awarded a grant, generally had a good understanding of why they were not funded and were satisfied with the technical assistance provided by the RIA staff to help strengthen future applications.

Activity Evaluated	Average Response*
Application Process Easy to Follow	4.3
Project Implementation Easy to Administer	4.1
RIA Staff Responsiveness	4.7
Assistance by RIA Staff Was Valuable	4.7

\* Response Scale: 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree

The SC Infrastructure Funders Coordinating Committee is comprised of representatives from federal and state agencies, including the RIA, that provide funding for infrastructure in South Carolina. Regular meetings are held to discuss projects, address funding gaps and identify solutions to current challenges. In some cases, members of the committee have also met with prospective applicants to discuss potential projects.



Other members include: US Department of Agriculture (Rural Development); US Economic Development Administration; SC Department of Commerce: Community Development Block Grant and Appalachian Regional Commission; and SC Department of Health and Environmental Control: State Revolving Funds.



## RIA Board of Directors



From left: Representative Michael Pitts, Vice-Chairman; Senator Michael Gambrell; Mr. David E. Anderson, Anderson Brothers Bank; Secretary Robert M. Hitt, III, Chairman, SC Department of Commerce; Representative William Clyburn; Mr. Jasper Shuler, Palmetto Agribusiness Council.

*Not pictured: Mr. William Kellahan, Kellahan & Associates.*

## RIA Staff

Bonnie Ammons, Executive Director  
Pamela Gantt, Administrative Assistant

**GRANTS:** Jackie Calvi Mack, Senior Grant Manager  
Eric Melaro, Grant Manager  
Liz Rosinski, Senior Grant Manager

**LOANS:** Trish Comp, Program Director  
James Absher, Senior Financial Analyst  
Noel Hebert, Senior Financial Analyst  
Holley Sparkman, Loan Administrator



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