



South Carolina  
Rural Infrastructure Authority



# Flowing FORWARD

CREATING FOUNDATIONS  
FOR GROWTH

2024 - 2025  
ANNUAL  
REPORT



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# Flowing Forward:

## CREATING FOUNDATIONS FOR GROWTH

To borrow an often-used phrase, water is life. Streams flow through the land sustaining the surrounding flora and fauna. As water infrastructure protects water quality and public health, it also supports homes, schools and businesses. It gives life to a community.

But infrastructure needs are great and improvements are increasingly expensive, making it difficult to operate and maintain services. Communities need a helping hand to not only fill the financial gaps for critical water, wastewater, and stormwater services and improvements, but also to build capacity for future growth and encourage new economic opportunities. Infrastructure is that foundation and evidence has shown that investments in it mean jobs and economic prosperity.

A new study by the University of South Carolina Darla Moore School of Business, in conjunction with American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC-SC) Infrastructure Works Institute (IWI), offers tangible evidence of the short-term and long-term value that infrastructure can bring to our state's economy. The analysis indicated that RIA's recent investment of almost \$1.5 billion through the SC Infrastructure Investment Program (SCIIP) is having a multiplier effect on jobs, income and gross domestic product (GDP) growth all around the state, with the following estimated impacts:

**3,075**

**Jobs each year between  
FY21 and FY27**

**\$2.4 BILLION**

**Total Economic Output**

Since 2013, RIA has provided nearly \$3 billion in grant and affordable loan resources to help communities modernize their water utilities, build capacity for economic opportunities, and create sustainable solutions. By continuing this momentum through smart investments and collaborative partnerships, we are creating a foundation to put communities and our state in a position to succeed.



*Bonnie Ammons*

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
SOUTH CAROLINA RURAL  
INFRASTRUCTURE AUTHORITY

# Board OF DIRECTORS

## **Harry M. Lightsey, III**

**CHAIRMAN**

South Carolina Department of Commerce

## **The Honorable Michael Gambrell**

**VICE CHAIRMAN**

State Senator

## **David E. Anderson**

Anderson Brothers Bank

## **The Honorable William Clyburn**

State Representative

## **William Kellahan, Jr.**

Kellahan & Associates

## **Jasper W. (Jack) Shuler**

Retired, ArborOne Farm Credit & South  
Carolina Department of Agriculture

## **The Honorable Richard Yow**

State Representative

# About

## **SOUTH CAROLINA RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AUTHORITY**

### **MISSION**

To provide resources for strategic investments that will strengthen and modernize critical community infrastructure.

### **VISION**

All South Carolina communities have the infrastructure necessary to protect public health and the environment as well as lay the groundwork for economic success.



*"The Rural Infrastructure Authority is a trusted partner and a valuable resource in our efforts to boost sustainable growth opportunities across the state."*

— **HARRY M. LIGHTSEY, III**  
**RIA BOARD CHAIRMAN**



# FY 25 Highlights

99

Projects Funded

121

Grant Requests

\$195 MILLION

Grants & Loans

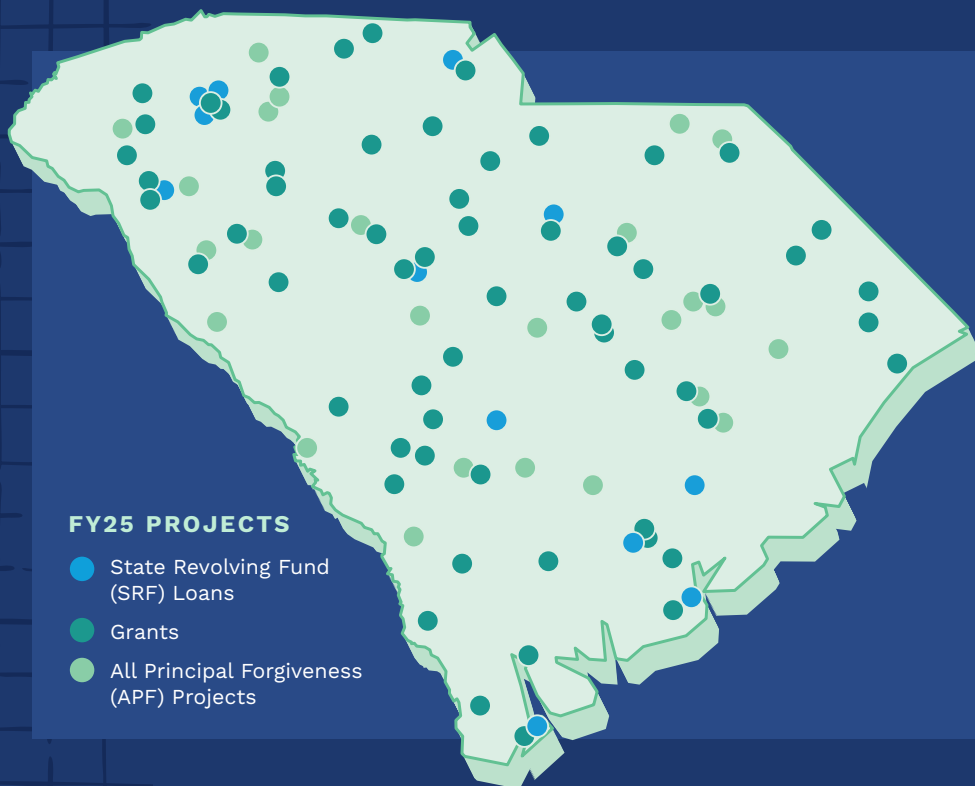
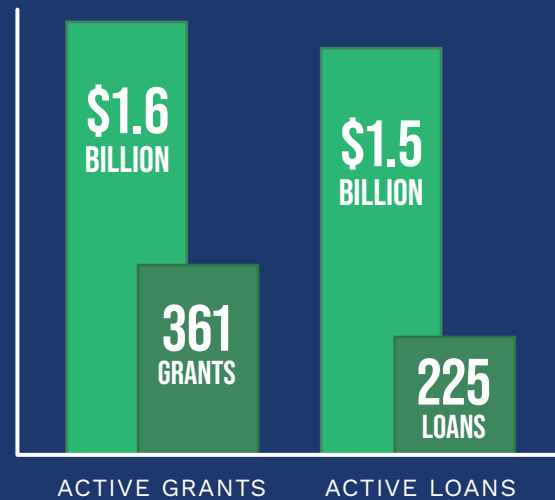
\$94 MILLION

Leveraged

39 COUNTIES

Impacted

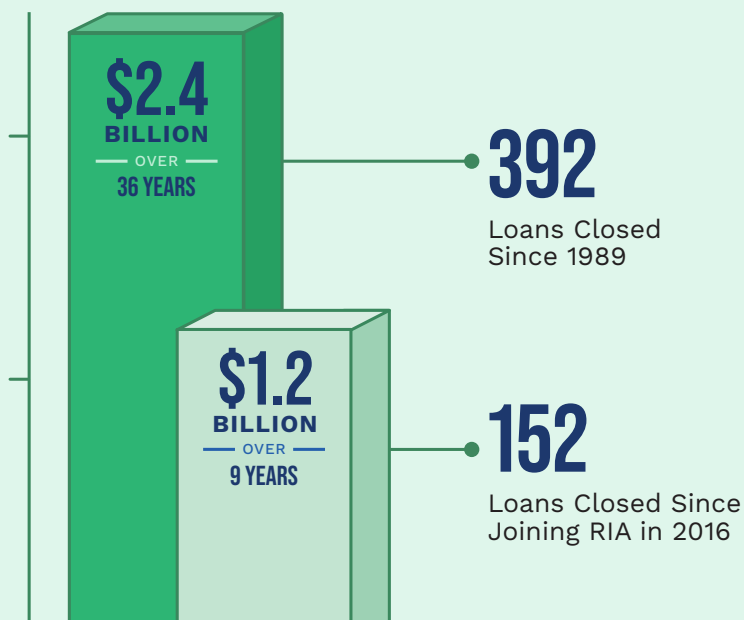
## PROJECT MANAGEMENT



## CUMULATIVE

# Funding Impacts

## STATE REVOLVING FUND LOANS



## RIA GRANTS

Since 2013

# 832

Grants

## \$1.8 Billion

Awarded

# 13,211

Proposed Jobs

## \$4.3 Billion

Proposed Capital Investment

## GRANT PERFORMANCE AGREEMENTS

Most RIA economic infrastructure projects expand capacity and prepare communities for opportunities that result in new jobs and investment. Less than one-third of economic infrastructure projects require a performance agreement with an employer, which includes a commitment to create new jobs, typically within five years.

	CLOSED	IN PROCESS
Performance Agreements	25	11*
Grant Funding	\$9.5M	\$6.5M
Jobs: Proposed	3,080	1,782
Jobs: Actual to Date	4,211	1,083
Other Public Benefit	4	-

*\*This includes one agreement that is not in compliance. RIA has received partial repayment of the grant funds disbursed, and the grant will be closed once full repayment is received.*





FY 2025

# State Grant Programs

RIA uses state funding to award competitive grants to local governments and public utilities for water, wastewater and stormwater projects. RIA's Board of Directors selects projects based on relative need, feasibility and impact. Most grantees must contribute financially to the project.

## BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Assists communities in addressing public health and environmental hazards or improving existing critical infrastructure.

## ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Helps build local infrastructure capacity to support planned job creation or prepare for economic development opportunities.

## INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

Provides resources to plan for long-term viability, which is often a challenge in small and rural communities.

62

Grants Awarded

\$61 MILLION

Awarded

56%

of funds to small and rural communities

## Customer Service

RIA partners with communities to connect them with the resources they need. Each year, RIA hosts a webinar to share grant opportunities, and program details are published online. Grantees also have easy access to instructional videos and checklists to help them meet program requirements.



139 Webinar Participants



225 Customers Assisted



1,300 Video Views

## Grant Priorities By Dollars Awarded



- 31% Health & Environmental Issues
- 31% Capacity & Economic Development
- 28% Aging Infrastructure
- 6% Planning
- 4% Regional Partnerships





## Tory Road Elevated Water Tank

*Town of Pageland*

CHESTERFIELD COUNTY  
RURAL WATER COMPANY

**Need:** Due to rapid growth, the existing water tank was too small to provide a reliable supply.

**Solution:** Construction of a second, larger elevated water tank.

**Impact:** Provides a reliable drinking water supply for 3,500 households and 200 businesses, with capacity to support future growth.

**\$1 Million**

RIA GRANT FUNDING

**\$2.2 Million**

TOTAL BUDGET



*"This project strengthens the foundation for sustainable growth, benefiting the entire community. The support from RIA has allowed us to address critical needs that would otherwise be beyond our financial reach."*

— SHANE SLIGH  
ADMINISTRATOR, TOWN OF PAGELAND



# Grant Recipients

An RIA grant manager works closely with each grantee from award to close out, helping to keep projects on schedule, within budget and in compliance with program requirements. RIA disburses funds only for work that has been completed.

Grantee	Project	Award
<b>BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE</b>		
Abbeville, City of	DW	\$1,500,000
Anderson County	WW	\$1,500,000
Anderson, City of	WW	\$1,500,000
Bamberg County	SW	\$856,000
Beaufort-Jasper Water and Sewer Authority	WW	\$1,500,000
Bishopville, City of	DW	\$1,500,000
Camden, City of	SW	\$861,898
Chapin, Town of	WW	\$1,074,414
Columbia, City of	WW	\$1,500,000
Conway, City of	SW	\$1,500,000
Coward, Town of	DW	\$1,074,930
Dorchester County	SW	\$1,252,245
Folly Beach, City of	DW	\$1,500,000
Gaffney Board of Public Works	WW	\$1,500,000
Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority	DW	\$1,500,000
Greenwood Metropolitan District	WW	\$1,500,000
Hilton Head Public Service District	WW	\$1,500,000
Joint Municipal Water and Sewer Commission/Town of Swansea	DW & WW	\$2,000,000
Laurens Commission of Public Works	WW	\$747,555
Laurens County Water & Sewer Commission	DW	\$1,500,000
Marion, City of	SW	\$253,000
Metropolitan Sewer Subdistrict	WW	\$1,500,000
Mullins, City of	SW	\$1,500,000
Myrtle Beach, City of	WW	\$1,500,000
Newberry, City of	WW	\$1,500,000
Ninety Six Commission of Public Works	DW	\$1,279,465
North Charleston Sewer District	WW	\$1,500,000
Perry, Town of	DW	\$542,665
Pickens Regional Joint Water System	DW	\$1,500,000
Richland County	WW	\$1,500,000
Ridgeway, Town of	WW	\$1,500,000
Rock Hill, City of	DW	\$1,223,366
Spartanburg, City of	SW	\$1,430,520
Sumter County/High Hills Rural Water Co.	DW	\$500,000
Sumter, City of	DW	\$815,940
Sumter, City of	WW	\$1,500,000
Union, City of	SW	\$687,885
Walterboro, City of	DW	\$1,340,143

Grantee	Project	Award
<b>ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE</b>		
Dorchester County	WW	\$1,500,000
Hardeeville, City of	WW	\$1,000,000
Lowcountry Regional Water System	WW	\$1,493,900
Manning, City of	DW	\$202,150
Marlboro County	DW & WW	\$1,500,000
Metropolitan Sewer Subdistrict	WW	\$825,000
Newberry County	DW & WW	\$678,750
Southside Rural Community Water District	DW	\$1,253,472
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING</b>		
Aiken County	WW	\$250,000
Barnwell, City of	WW	\$242,000
Blacksburg, Town of	DW	\$250,000
Blackville, Town of	WW	\$250,000
Chester, City of	SW	\$250,000
Greeleyville, Town of	WW	\$250,000
Heath Springs, Town of	DW & WW	\$187,500
Kershaw County and Lee County Regional Water Authority/Town of Lynchburg	DW & WW	\$250,000
Lane, Town of	DW	\$250,000
Mitford Rural Water District	DW	\$235,000
Patrick, Town of	SW	\$250,000
Pendleton, Town of	DW & WW	\$168,562
Scotia, Town of	DW	\$125,000
Springfield, Town of	DW	\$250,000
Williston, Town of	DW & WW	\$250,000
Winnsboro, Town of	WW	\$182,500
<b>62 projects</b>		<b>\$61,033,860</b>

## PROJECT KEY

**DW:** Drinking Water  
**WW:** Wastewater  
**SW:** Stormwater

FY 2025

# Loan Programs

The State Revolving Funds (SRF) loan programs provide low-cost loans to public utilities for water, wastewater and stormwater projects. Funding for the program comes from loan repayments and allocations of federal and state funds. Borrowers must have sufficient revenue to repay the loan as well as operate and maintain the system.



**\$109 MILLION**

Loans Closed

**2.3%**

Standard Interest Rate

**\$108 MILLION**

Disbursed

## FY25 LOANS

Recipient	Project	Amount
Anderson Regional Joint Water System	DW	\$823,000
Berkeley County	DW	\$11,000,000
Camden, City of	WW	\$5,525,000
Chapin, Town of	WW	\$4,646,241
Hilton Head Public Service District	DW	\$2,589,929
James Island Public Service District	WW	\$1,096,783
Orangeburg, City of	DW	\$13,112,100
Renewable Water Resources	WW	\$15,445,636
Renewable Water Resources	WW	\$4,750,000
Renewable Water Resources	WW	\$10,795,000
Rock Hill, City of	WW	\$28,434,516
Summerville, Town of	DW	\$10,735,417
<b>12 projects</b>		<b>\$108,953,622</b>

## PROJECT KEY

**DW:** Drinking Water

**WW:** Wastewater

## PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS

RIA jointly administers the SRF programs with the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (DES). RIA manages all financial aspects, including setting loan policies, conducting credit reviews, issuing loan agreements and handling payments. DES prioritizes and manages projects and ensures compliance with federal requirements.

## AFFORDABILITY

Part of the annual federal funding is set aside for all principal forgiveness (APF) loans, which do not have to be repaid if the recipient complies with program requirements. These funds primarily benefit smaller communities with affordability concerns. In FY25, the SRF programs committed \$25 million to 25 APF projects.



# Hemphill Water Treatment Plant Renovation

*Chester Metropolitan District*

**Need:** Key components of the water treatment facility nearing the end of their useful life.

**Solution:** Rehabilitation and upgrades of critical components.

**Impact:** A more reliable treatment facility that can be expanded to serve a growing residential and industrial customer base.

**\$9 Million**

SRF LOAN

**\$10 Million**

SCIIP GRANT

**\$22 Million**

TOTAL BUDGET

NEW RAW WATER  
PUMPING MANIFOLD



*"Renovating the structural, electrical and mechanical components of our 60-year-old water treatment plant is important to extending the life of the plant and providing a high level of resiliency and efficiency for the future. Funding from the grant and loan made it possible to leverage our funds to make the project a reality."*

— FRED CASTLES  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
CHESTER METROPOLITAN DISTRICT

OLD RAW WATER  
PUMPING MANIFOLD





# SOUTH CAROLINA INFRASTRUCTURE *Investment Program*



## 219

Projects Awarded

## 407

Contracts Completed  
or Underway

## \$359 MILLION

Project Funds Disbursed

The South Carolina General Assembly directed \$1.4 billion of the state's American Rescue Plan Act funding to transformational investments in water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure. RIA used these funds to create the South Carolina Infrastructure Investment Program (SCIIP). Awarded in FY23, these grants are supporting over 200 projects, making an impact in every county across the state. These capital improvement projects will strengthen fundamental services for residents and businesses, create more resilient communities and build capacity for long-term growth and development.

## Lower Crane Creek Equalization Storage

*City of Columbia*

**Need:** High wastewater volume causes frequent sanitary sewer overflows in northern Richland County.

**Solution:** Construction of a large storage tank and pump station to divert excess flow.

**Impact:** Expanded capacity to support rapid residential and industrial growth while protecting water quality.

**\$10 Million**

SCIIP GRANT

**\$62 Million**

TOTAL BUDGET



*"This project will provide significant public health benefits while also allowing for additional growth and development. The RIA grant was critical in allowing the City to fund the total project cost within its wastewater budget, providing a significant financial benefit to Columbia's water and sewer customers."*

— JOHN T. RIGGS, PE  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS,  
CITY OF COLUMBIA



## ACCOUNTABILITY & STEWARDSHIP

RIA staff maintain regular communication with SCIIP grantees and conduct detailed reviews at key points in the project life cycle. Timely progress and documented compliance with federal requirements are critical to ensuring that all funds are appropriately spent by the December 2026 federal deadline for expenditures.



## Drainage Improvements in Unincorporated Areas

*Horry County*

**Need:** Frequent flooding of roads and property due to undersized stormwater infrastructure.

**Solution:** Construction of larger culverts and other drainage structures in high priority locations.

**Impact:** Reduced flooding and greater storm resilience in a coastal community.

**\$6.5 Million**     **\$7.6 Million**  
SCIIP GRANT     TOTAL BUDGET

*"RIA funding allowed us to expedite this project and complete all upgrades just in time for the upcoming hurricane season."*

— BRANDON WAGNER  
STORMWATER MANAGER, HORRY COUNTY





## SMALL SYSTEM

# Viability Initiatives

Some South Carolina utilities face challenges that cannot be solved with capital improvement grants alone. In 2022, RIA completed a statewide study of these issues. With the data from that assessment and input from hundreds of stakeholders, RIA developed a four-pronged strategy. With dedicated staff to manage these initiatives, we are working with our partners to develop a comprehensive solution for those that need it most.

### 1 UTILITY VIABILITY IDENTIFICATION

RIA developed an Excel-based tool that helps identify potential viability concerns. This year, RIA made major improvements to the tool and began to provide training and implement plans to increase usage.

### 2 COORDINATION OF ASSISTANCE

RIA hosts quarterly meetings of the Viability Assistance Network, a group of technical assistance providers and other organizations. Members collaborate to identify key issues and develop ways to help struggling utilities.

### 3 LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS

RIA is developing a training manual for members of utility boards and councils. This manual and training tools will provide beginner to advanced board members with the critical information required to oversee utility financial and operational management in accordance with standard best practices.

### 4 TARGETED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

RIA funds viable solutions through grants for planning projects and capital improvements that support regional partnerships, which are often key to strengthening very small utilities.



45 Planning Grants

\$193 MILLION

Grant Funds for Regional Solutions

# Partnerships

RIA collaborates with other agencies and organizations to leverage resources and provide the best possible services to South Carolina communities. Thank you to all of our partners for your support!

## FUNDING

RIA hosts bimonthly meetings of a committee of public infrastructure funding agencies, working together to develop collaborative solutions to complex needs.



## PERMITTING

RIA coordinates with other agencies to ensure that permit applications for funded projects are reviewed in time to meet program deadlines.



## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

RIA collaborates with various partners to provide targeted support to communities through the Viability Assistance Network, as well as assistance to individual utilities as needed.







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