

JULY 2020

# Central Update

A Quarterly Publication of  
Central Mississippi Planning &  
Development District



## Workforce Response to COVID-19 Disaster

As we are all aware, COVID-19 has taken center stage for the past several months and will likely continue to do so for the foreseeable future. In addition, it will certainly impact the way we work, learn, and live going forward. Many individuals continue to work remotely, other workers have no job at all, many businesses have failed or been unable to re-open, and schools are desperately trying to plan for what learning will look like in the fall. It is certainly clear that the US was unprepared for a disaster of this magnitude.

The Central MS Planning & Development District (CMPDD) serves as the administrative entity for the Southcentral MS Works (SMW) Workforce Development Area, which encompasses seventeen counties in the southwest and south-central portion of the state. The workforce area receives federal funding from the US Department of Labor each year, which is used to provide job seekers and employers with assistance to acquire needed workforce training and help with training newly hired employees.

Since the publication of the last Central Update, several new funding sources have been made available to the workforce area to assist with re-starting our economy and getting citizens back to work. The State of Mississippi submitted an application to the US Department of Labor for a National Emergency Grant and the grant was awarded in the amount of \$3 million. The workforce area received one quarter of that amount and those funds are being used to pay wages for temporary workers who are performing

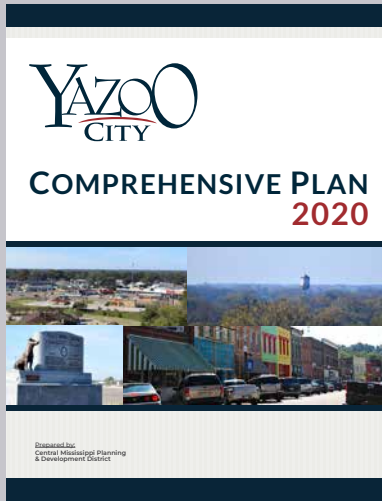
tasks related to COVID, such as cleaning, disinfecting, temperature taking, trash removal, and humanitarian efforts in public facilities, buildings and parks. Workers can work up to 320 hours each and will be paid \$12.00 per hour by a staffing agency that SMW has contracted for that purpose. These temporary workers are required to participate in an online safety training, which is provided at no cost.

In addition, the State Legislature has approved \$55 million in CARES Act funding to be devoted to workforce development. Approximately \$49 million of that amount is to be used to increase training capacity at the fifteen community colleges statewide. Many community colleges are unable to train more individuals due to restrictions of space and instructors, and these dollars will allow them the opportunity for expansion. Of the \$55 million, slightly less than \$5 million will be used for On-the-Job Training (OJT). OJT benefits not only individuals who may have lost their jobs due to COVID, but also helps employers offset the cost of training new hires. New restrictions being put into place as a result of COVID mean more training for all employees to learn how to prevent the spread of this disease and to stay safe on the job. OJT allows reimbursement to employers for a percentage of the salary they pay newly hired workers during a prescribed training period.

If you need workforce assistance, your local workforce development area is ready to help. Please contact Mary Powers at [mpowers@cmpdd.org](mailto:mpowers@cmpdd.org) or 601.981.1511.

## Yazoo City Adopts Comprehensive Plan

The Yazoo City Board of Aldermen recently adopted a new Comprehensive Plan developed by the District. The updated Plan includes not only all elements and tasks as required by state code, but also a web-based interactive GIS map viewer, 3-D modeling of conceptual redevelopment plans for the old cotton gin site, drone imagery, and promotional videos produced for Yazoo City. The new Comprehensive Plan is published both in printed form as well as an online Story Map format that is available to the public through the City's website.



## Natchez Neighborhood Housing Study

The District began work on a neighborhood housing study which focuses mainly on historically minority areas of the city. The study will look at overall demographics of the area, analysis of housing inventory, review of city policies on housing, and an analysis of resident responses to a telephone survey conducted by the District. The goal is to shed light on some of the issues the area faces and provide the city with ideas and insights on how to improve the condition of properties.

## District 5 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Draft Completed

Since the beginning of the year, CMPDD has been in contact with local Mitigation Councils from Claiborne, Hinds, Issaquena, Sharkey, and Simpson Counties to update the District 5 Hazard Mitigation Plan. These councils are comprised of Emergency Management staff, elected officials, and other community leaders with the intent to assist in the development of a plan that addresses natural hazard risks and an action plan that lessens the impact of them when they do occur.

The multi-jurisdictional plan update, which was submitted in draft form in early July, covers a wide range of hazard that could have an effect on District 5. A new hazard that is covered in this update is that of a Public Health Emergency. This has been included in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic in an effort to increase resiliency at a local level to any Public Health Emergency. The comprehensive planning process utilized to complete this project has involved six (6) basic steps:

1. Organizing the Planning Process/Building the Planning Team
  - Engage local leadership
  - Establish a Mitigation Council
  - Develop and implement an outreach strategy
  - Develop a project timeline
2. Community Assessment
  - Review existing plans and policies
  - Develop community profiles
  - Identify critical facilities
  - Identify District 5's capabilities
  - Identify participation in the National Flood Insurance Program

3. Conduct Risk/Vulnerability Assessment
  - Identify hazards
  - Develop hazard profiles
  - Identify community assets
  - Analyze risks to determine individual vulnerabilities
  - Summarize District 5's overall vulnerabilities
4. Develop Goals and Objectives
  - Develop long-term outcomes through goal statements
  - Develop specific objectives for each long-term goal
5. Develop a Mitigation Strategy
  - Document progress implementing previous actions
  - Identify an action plan specific to each community
6. Plan Review, Approval, and Adoption
  - Draft plan review
  - Plan amendments as needed
  - Final plan review
  - Plan adoption



For more information concerning the mitigation planning process underway or to find out how you can be involved in the process contact Gray Ouzts at 601.981.1511 or visit the District's mitigation website page [www.cmpdd.org/mitigation-planning/](http://www.cmpdd.org/mitigation-planning/).

# Financial Planning Underway for the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

CMPDD is more than halfway through the process of updating the Jackson Urbanized Area's long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Currently, CMPDD staff members and the consultant team are working to develop a financial strategy for meeting long-range needs. This will be done by analyzing historical funding levels and estimating anticipated future revenues out to the year 2045.

As work on the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan continues, stay engaged in the planning process by following CMPDD's Facebook page or visit <http://mstransportationplan2045.com/>. CMPDD anticipates releasing a draft of the plan for review and comments early this fall. Need more information? Contact us at [mpo@cmpdd.org](mailto:mpo@cmpdd.org).



## CDBG Administration

The Town of Bentonina recently began construction to improve the Town's sewer system. The current sewer system is old and has been causing sewage back-up and other serious issues for quite some time. Bentonina was awarded a CDBG Public Facilities grant in the amount of \$450,000 to make the much needed improvements. Construction on this project is scheduled to be complete by September 2020.

CMPDD is also providing CDBG administration services to the Town of Wesson and the City of Pearl.

Administrative services include professional services procurement, environmental clearance, compliance with all HUD and MDA regulations, and financial management and oversight (including submission of requests for cash, reporting compliance, and closeout assistance). Although the construction phase has not yet begun, CMPDD continues to provide administration services in order to move forward with each project.

## CMPDD's Medicaid Waiver Program Update

The Elderly and Disabled (E&D) Waiver is a statewide program designed to offer assistance to qualified Medicaid beneficiaries. Beneficiaries must be 21 years of age or older. They must qualify by either SSI Medicaid or 300% of SSI Medicaid. They must require assistance with activities of daily living (ADL) such as bathing, dressing, eating, ambulation and/or transferring, or instrumental activities of daily living (IADL) such as laundry, light housekeeping, errands, and/or assistance on community outings.

To remain in compliance with all state and federal guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Medicaid Waiver case managers began conducting monthly case management contacts with their clients by telephone. They continued to assess clients' needs, follow up on services, and make needed adjustments to Plans of Care and Emergency Preparedness Plans. The Division of Medicaid temporarily waived the requirement for signatures for case management and provider visits.

The Division of Medicaid also approved proposals for all case managers to distribute personal protective equipment (PPE) to E & D Waiver beneficiaries. The distributed PPE consisted of disposable masks and gloves. In response to the changing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and

in conjunction with the Division of Medicaid, additional provisions to ensure the needs and safety of clients and providers continue to be assessed and applied.

Examples include:

- Conducting monthly and quarterly recertification visits by telephone
- Allowing increases in waiver services for Home Delivery Meals and Personal Care Assistant services
- Allowing live-in family members to serve as the paid caregiver as long as they are not legally responsible for the client
- Forgoing the rule to discharge from the program if client is away from services more than 30 days
- Conducting Zoom or conference call staff and planning meetings

For more information on Elderly & Disabled Waiver services, please contact Teresa Burrell-Shoto, RN, Case Management Director, at 601.855.5914 or [tburrell@cmpdd.org](mailto:tburrell@cmpdd.org). Contact the Division of Medicaid for information on how to become a Waiver provider.



Medicaid Waiver program assistant, Chi Warren, prepares the PPE to be distributed



Case manager, Chanchez Smith, LSW delivers bagged PPE to clients.



## 2020 Census and Redistricting

The U.S. Census Bureau is currently conducting the 2020 Census count. The official counts and redistricting data will be released to the states by March 31, 2021. CMPDD is prepared to assist local governments in their redistricting efforts. Upon release of the 2020 Census, District planners and GIS staff will overlay the new Census data on existing local election districts (i.e. county supervisors, justice court districts and municipal wards) to evaluate population variance by district

and determine if jurisdictions are within the "one person-one vote" variances as allowed by DOJ. There will be no charge for this evaluation service however, in the event that redistricting is required, the District is available to enter into a contract to assist member governments with re-drawing district maps. To date, the District has contracted with thirteen member governments to begin work after the release of the Census data. If you would like more information on redistricting, contact David Wade.



# Jackson MPO Certification Review

On May 27, 2020, representatives from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) met remotely with staff from CMPDD, the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), and JTRAN transit officials to perform a Transportation Management Area (TMA) Certification Review of the Jackson Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO's) planning process. Federal regulations require FHWA and FTA to jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning process complies with Federal regulations in areas with a population over 200,000 at least once every four years. The CMPDD's last TMA Review was held in August 2016, at which time a letter was jointly issued by FHWA and FTA stating the Jackson MPO significantly met all planning requirements.

The recently completed TMA Certification Review process consisted of three main components: (1) a desk audit review of CMPDD's planning documents and procedures; (2) a video conference site visit between FHWA, FTA, CMPDD, MDOT, and transit



*CMPDD staff members Scott Burge, Lesley Callender, and Chuck Carr welcomed federal team members from FHWA and FTA remotely as they met to discuss the Jackson MPO's compliance with federal regulations for the regional transportation planning process.*

officials where CMPDD answered questions and presented additional informational on a few selected planning area topics; and (3) an opportunity for the public to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the Jackson MPO's planning process with Federal review team members. Due to health and safety concerns related to the pandemic

no in-person public meetings were held, but the MPO advertised in local newspapers, on its website, and social media ways the public could provide feedback to Federal review team members. A formal report from FHWA and FTA outlining the review findings will be completed in the coming weeks.

## CMPDD Submits Delta Regional Authority (DRA) SEDAP Applications

DRA is a federal-state partnership created by Congress, which serves a 252 county/parish area in an eight-state region. In Mississippi, 45 counties (including all 7 CMPDD counties) are eligible for funding under DRA. The purpose of DRA is to remedy severe and chronic economic distress by stimulating economic development partnerships that will have a positive impact on the region's economy. This year approximately \$1,635,177 will be available for the State of Mississippi.

In Central Mississippi, the DRA State's Economic Development Assistance Program (SEDAP) is only open to public and non-profit entities in the DRA-designated counties. To find out if your project is located within the DRA designated area or for more information about DRA, please visit their website [www.dra.gov](http://www.dra.gov).

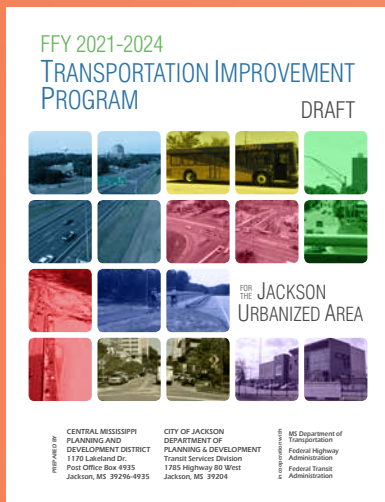
Listed below are the applications that were submitted:

<u>Community Name</u>	<u>Project Description</u>
Copiah County	Industrial Park Sewer Improvements
Bean Path	Maker Space
Town of Pelahatchie	Publicly-Owned Treatment Works (POTW) Improvements

For additional information, please contact Mitzi Stubbs at 601.981.1511.



# CMPDD is Accepting Comments Related to the Draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Fiscal Years 2021 through 2024



One of the primary planning responsibilities of the Jackson Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is to prepare and maintain a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP is a regional planning

document that provides an overview of how transportation revenues will be invested over a four (4) year period by federal, state, and local agencies responsible for building, operating, and maintaining the multimodal regional transportation system. The TIP allocates the limited federal transportation resources available among various capital and operating needs of the area, based on locally developed priorities identified in the region's long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The TIP is required to be realistic in terms of available funding. Meaning the projected amount of expenditures does not exceed the projected amount of revenues.

CMPDD is hosting a 45-day comment period to allow transportation stakeholders and other interested

citizens the opportunity to review and comment on the draft Transportation Improvement Program for fiscal years 2021 through 2024. The comment period began June 19, 2020 and ends August 5, 2020. The draft document is available for review on CMPDD's website at [www.cmpdd.org/public-notices/](http://www.cmpdd.org/public-notices/). During the review period, comments can be submitted using one of the methods listed below.

## Ways to Provide Comments:

- Email MPO Staff:  
[mpo@cmpdd.org](mailto:mpo@cmpdd.org)
- Mail written comments:  
Lesley Callender  
CMPDD  
P.O. Box 4935  
Jackson, MS 39296-4935
- Speak Directly with MPO Staff:  
601.981.1511

## CMPDD Submits Economic Development Administration (EDA) CARES ACT Application

CMPDD assisted the City of Jackson with the submittal of an EDA CARES Act Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) application. This application requested funds to make improvements needed to reopen and expand the City's Planetarium and surrounding area.

The U.S. Department of Commerce recently announced the availability of \$1.5 billion in CARES Act funds to aid communities impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under this announcement, EDA will make CARES Act Recovery Assistance grants under the authority of its Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) program, which is intended to be flexible and responsive to the economic development needs and priorities of local and regional stakeholders and help communities prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19.

Examples of projects that EDA may fund through its CARES Act Recovery Assistance include economic recovery planning and preparing technical assistance strategies to address economic dislocations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, preparing or updating resiliency plans to respond to future pandemics, implementing entrepreneurial support programs to diversify economies, and constructing public works and

facilities that will support economic recovery (including the deployment of broadband for purposes including supporting telehealth and remote learning for job skills).

Eligible applicants under the EAA program include a(n):

- District Organization
- Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes
- State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a state, including a special purpose unit of a state or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions
- Institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education
- Public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a state

For more information please contact Mitzi Stubbs at 601.981.1511.

# CMDC BULLETIN

Councilman De’Keither Stamps, President of the Central Mississippi Development Company, Inc. (CMDC), announced the approval of two (2) new loans.

The first approval was for Global MidSouth Corporation, a Checkers and Rally’s fast food restaurant franchisee. The loan was for \$571,000 of a \$1,428,500 project under the United States Small Business Administration’s 504 Loan Program. The proceeds of this loan will finance the purchase of land, equipment, and the construction of a commercial building in Pontotoc, Mississippi. This restaurant will serve as the borrowers’ third location and will create 45 new jobs in the private sector.

The second approval was for Southern Charm Furniture & Design, LLC. The loan was for \$391,600 of a \$979,000 project under the United States Small Business Administration’s 504 Loan Program. The proceeds of this loan will finance the purchase of the commercial building that the borrower is currently leasing in Gulfport, MS. This project will create one (1) new job in the private sector.

CMDC is a commercial lender certified by the U. S. Small Business Administration and works with local banks and other financial institutions in providing debt capital for small businesses. CMDC provides fixed rate low interest long term financing for small businesses and saves thousands of dollars in debt service on fixed assets. This type financing removes the problem of variable rate financing on long term assets. Many economic forecasters are certain that interest

rates will rise. These predictable interest rate increases will not negatively impact the cash flow of those small businesses that have fixed rate low interest loans through the U. S. Small Business Administration’s (SBA) 504 Loan Program. The most recent fixed interest rates under this loan program were:

### SBA 504 Loan Program Interest Rates

<u>TERM (YEARS)</u>	<u>INTEREST RATE</u>
10 (June 2020)	2.65%
20 (June 2020)	2.52%
25 (June 2020)	2.60%

Also, CMDC serves as the Loan Review Board for the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District’s (CMPDD’s) Minority Business Enterprise Loan Program (MBELP). The MBELP receives its funding from the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA). The interest rate on loans made through this program to a minority owned business is currently 2.25% per annum. The term of a loan can be up to 15 years depending on the use of the loan proceeds (commercial buildings, equipment, inventory, working capital, etc).

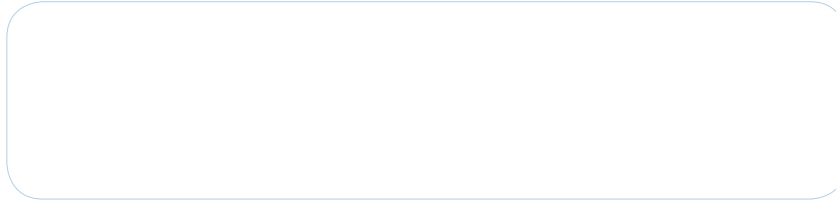
Councilman De’Keither Stamps invites bankers, commercial loan officers, business owners, real estate developers, and general contractors, to contact Dwayne Perkins at 601.981.1625, or visit our website at [cmpdd.org](http://cmpdd.org). See the tab labeled “Small Business Assistance.



Construction of Checkers Restaurant in Pontotoc, MS



Southern Charm in Gulfport, MS



***If the name and address of the recipient needs to be updated, please contact our office at 601-981-1511.***



## **Adult Protective Services Responds During the Covid-19 Pandemic**

With seniors and adults with disabilities being isolated at home during the coronavirus pandemic, many are falling victim to abuse, neglect and/or financial exploitation by family members or others with access to them (or their funds). During this time, mandated reporters of abuse such as in-home workers, medical providers, and bank personnel are not available to observe and report suspected maltreatment to Adult Protective Services (APS). Research has shown that isolation is a major risk factor for abuse and the lack of regular interaction with outside family, friends, neighbors, and service providers exacerbates the risk and limits response. Frequently considered as first line responders, the District's APS staff has played an important role in mitigating the risk of the coronavirus through placing the highest value on the needs and safety of clients and reporters.

Since the start of the pandemic, APS Programs have been overwhelmed with skyrocketing reports and cases. In response to the state and federal mandates, the District's APS staff has carefully followed safety practices established by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) when home or facility visiting is not feasible. Special provisions have been made allowing contact with alleged victims through video chats or conference calls. Unfortunately, some individuals are not able to communicate this way. When there is no alternative to a home visit, limited contact is made by conducting face-to-face interviews outside of the home at the CDC-suggested six-foot social distance.

Adult Protective Services operates under state law and has continued to provide services for victims during the coronavirus pandemic. To report

any suspicions of abuse, contact the Vulnerable Person Abuse hotline at 1.844.437.6282. For more information, contact Senior Services Director, Dr. Chelsea Crittle at 601.981.1516.

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