

Central Update

A Quarterly Publication of
Central Mississippi Planning &
Development District

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)

Through a competitive selection process, the Central MS Planning and Development District (CMPDD) has been awarded \$400,000 in federal discretionary grant funds through the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) initiative authorized by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The purpose of the SS4A grant program is to improve roadway safety by significantly reducing or eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries through safety action plan development and project implementation focused on all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, personal conveyance, micro-mobility users, and commercial vehicle operators.

The grant funds received by CMPDD will be used to develop a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan for the District's seven-county region. Development of the Safety Action Plan is the first step in identifying problems and solutions to help make roadways in Central MS safer for everyone. CMPDD hopes to find creative ways to implement low-cost, high-impact solutions.

From 2016 to 2020, in the three (3) metro counties alone (Hinds, Madison, and Rankin), there were 389 deaths and 1,230 severe injuries resulting from vehicular crashes. Alcohol was a contributing factor in 26% of crashes resulting

in fatalities and 20% of fatal crashes involved speeding. CMPDD is committed to changing this trend and working toward improved mobility options for all users.

The Action Plan will yield three (3) main deliverables: data management, policy recommendations, and a prioritized list of capital improvement projects. Once completed, the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan will allow CMPDD's members to apply for implementation (capitol construction) discretionary grant funds through the SS4A program. Effectively, this grant will open the door to future funding opportunities.

CMPDD looks forward to working with each of our member governments throughout the development of the various elements of the Action Plan and anticipates participation in data gathering, the development of alternatives and recommendations, and the prioritization of strategies to address safety concerns throughout all areas of CMPDD's region.



The Action Plan Planning Process



CMPDD's Medicaid Waiver Program Update

The Elderly & Disabled Medicaid Waiver (E&D Waiver) is a statewide program designed to provide in-home 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 (ADLs) such as bathing, dressing, eating, ambulation and/or transferring or Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs) such as laundry, light housekeeping, errands, and/or assistance on community outings. Registered Nurses (RN) and Licensed Social Workers (LSW) work



together as a team to assess the referred client, submit for approval of services to the Division of Medicaid (DOM), then manage and coordinate the approved services for all clients.

There were two (2) new Case Managers hired during this quarter. Elizabeth Stampley, RN started on January 17, 2023 and Deirdre Harvey, LSW started on March 17, 2023. We are excited to have them become part of our 24 Medicaid Waiver teams. CMPDD's Waiver division and Workforce Investment division continues to partner to employ Social Workers who have received their bachelor's degree in social work, and are seeking to work as a licensed Social Worker case manager (LSW). The salary-based 12-week program provides dedicated study time, information, preparation for taking the licensure exam, and supervised observation of case management home visits. Trainees also receive the traditional benefits of insurance coverage, leave time accrual, and other employee benefits. At the end of the 12-week training period and passing the licensure exam, the trainee will automatically transition to a permanent LSW Case Manager position.

- On January 30, 2023, the Biden Administration signaled that it plans to end the COVID-19 national emergency and public health emergency (PHE) on May 11, 2023. As part of the Division of Medicaid's Appendix K (Public Health Emergency Amendment to the Waiver), the PHE flexibilities will continue to be effective for six (6) months following the end of the PHE (ending in November 2023).

All five(5) of the Mississippi 1915(c) waiver renewals have been posted for public notice. Comments on any of the waivers can be submitted to DOM by email at DOMPolicy@medicaid.ms.gov. The links to access the drafts for review can be found on the DOM website at <https://medicaid.ms.gov/news-and-notice/public-notice/>.

*Individuals who own an agency and are seeking to become a Medicaid Waiver service provider should contact the Division of Medicaid, Long-Term Care Bureau at 601.359.6141.

For more information on Elderly & Disabled Waiver services, please contact CMPDD's Mississippi Access to Care (MAC) Center at 1.844.822.4622. Or contact Teresa Burrell-Shoto, RN, Case Management Director at 601.855.5914 or tburrell@cmpdd.org.

CMPDD Applies for 2023 CDBG Funds

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Public Facility Program provides grant funds to local entities of government for a variety of public improvement projects (e.g., water or sewer facilities, storm drainage, public

buildings, street reconstruction, etc.) that benefit low- and moderate-income families and areas. Special priority is given to water and sanitary sewer projects that eliminate existing health and safety hazards. Planning staff

are working with municipalities in Copiah, Hinds, Madison, and Rankin counties to apply for funds for much needed improvements to water and sewer systems.

Untapped Talent: Re-entering the Workforce with Confidence and Credentials

Untapped talent pools such as veterans, military spouses, individuals with disabilities, and those with a criminal record all present unique opportunities and value to organizations willing to make the effort to seek them out.

Through funding from Southcentral MS Works (SMW), the Mississippi Department of Corrections is reconnecting individuals to employment after incarceration. SMW provides WIOA funding to MDOC to provide

soft skill training, career services, skills training, and work-based learning experiences for current and formerly incarcerated individuals residing within the SMW area.

The program aims to connect this future workforce to long-term, self-sustaining employment. Participants are also provided with post-release counseling, career services, and training services which will help them better prepare for and transition to

employment upon release.

A graduation ceremony was held for 26 women who earned a Certified Nursing Assistant, Phlebotomy, or Medical Billing and Coding certificate on March 31, 2023. Upon release, the credentials will help each graduate start fresh with a career. At the graduation ceremony, Robin Parker, Director of Workforce, presented each graduate with a \$50.00 completion incentive.



Bradley Lum, MDOC Deputy Executive Director, Robin Parker, CMPDD Workforce Director, Eric Beamon MDOC Transition Coordinator, Tom Meek, Workforce Coordinator, pictured with Graduates.

Pearl River Valley Water Supply District (PRVWSD) Adopts Master Plan

At their February meeting, the Pearl River Valley Water Supply District Board of Directors adopted a new Master Plan developed by CMPDD. A Master Plan was previously adopted by the PRVWSD Board in 2013. The new Master Plan includes a Land Use Plan, Community Facilities Plan, and a Transportation Plan. This Plan was developed following significant public input through an online survey and a public meeting, discussions with overlapping jurisdictions, and discussions with the Board of Directors regarding the future of the area.

The purpose of the Master Plan is to serve as a policy guide for the physical and economic development of the PRVWSD. This plan will serve decision-makers as a means of orderly development for the PRVWSD and serves three (3) principal functions:

First, the Plan is a statement and recognition of the statutory responsibilities of the PRVWSD. These are.. “to insure an adequate, sanitary water supply at all times, to promote the balanced economic development of the state, and to aid in flood control, conservation and development of state forests, irrigation of lands needing irrigation, and

pollution abatement.” (§ 51-9-103).

Second, the Plan is an expression of what a community wants. It is a statement of goals, objectives, policies, and a vision of how citizens and residents would like the PRVWSD to develop.

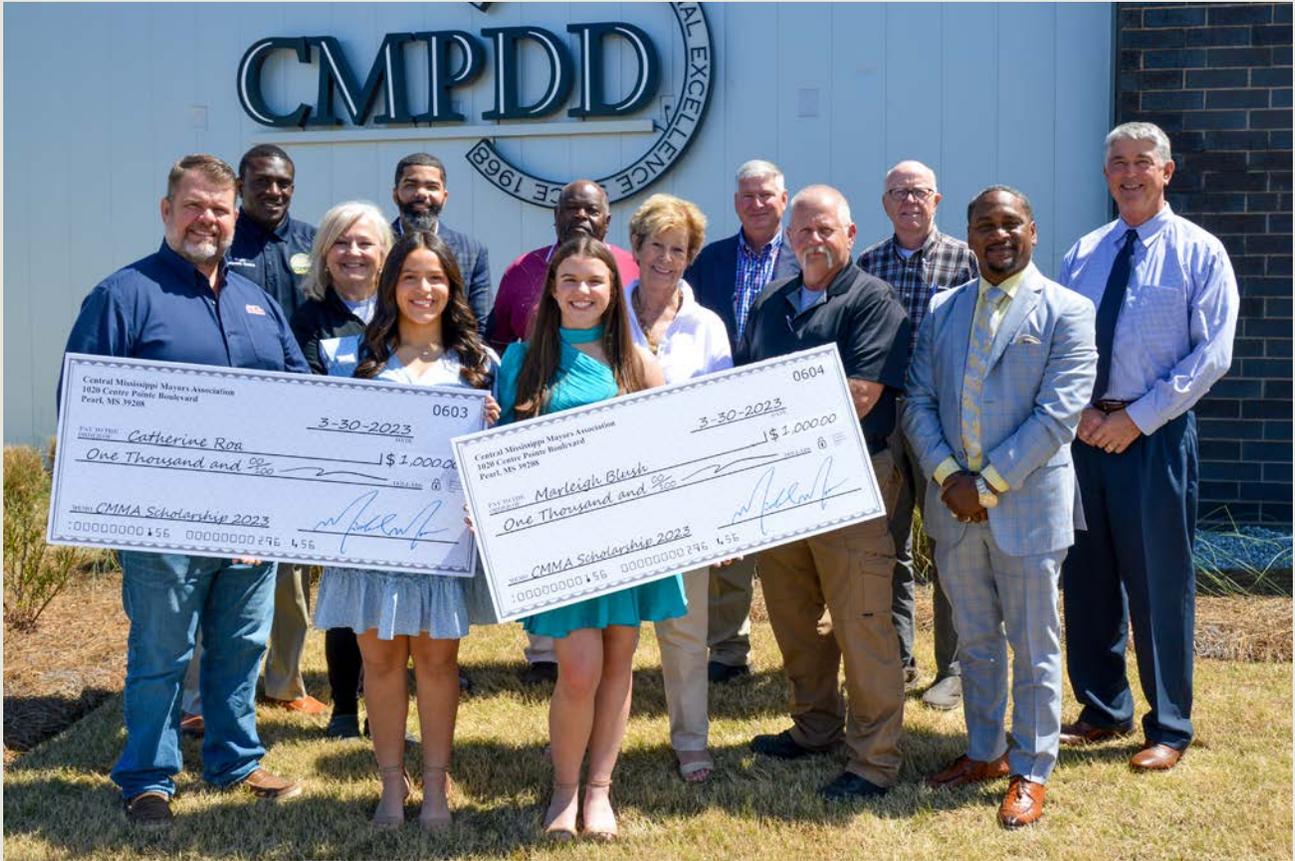
Third, the Plan serves as a policy guide to decision making by PRVWSD officials. It provides the means for guiding and influencing the many decisions that affect the PRVWSD’s future, including leasing properties and facility improvements.

The recently adopted Master Plan is available online in an interactive viewer format as well as in print.



CMMA Meeting and Scholarship Awards

CMPDD hosted the Central Mississippi Mayors Association (CMMA) quarterly meeting. CMMA is made up of Mayors of the 35 cities, towns, and villages within the District. These meetings are held quarterly at the CMPDD office for Mayors discuss current issues facing the municipalities and exchange ideas of improving each area. Thirty-two students applied for the 2023 CMMA Scholarship. Students Catherine Roa of Pearl and Marleigh Blush of Brandon were this year's recipients.



2022 CDBG Award

The Town of D'Lo was awarded a Community Development Block Grant to provide needed improvements to the Town's two (2) elevated water towers. The Mississippi Development Authority awarded the Town \$446,800 to make these improvements. These funds go toward ensuring the water quality is safe and in compliance with state regulations at no cost to the Town's citizens.



Excel Training for Aging and Case Manager staff

In January of 2023 the Planning Department and Workforce Department collaborated on developing an Excel training course for the Aging and Case Management staff at CMPDD. The training sessions covered basic to intermediate functions of Excel and were customized to aid staff with daily tasks required in the course of their work each week. The training was beneficial and well received. It also generated ideas about future training needs.

Career Coaches Explore, Prepare, and Connect Students

Their official title is career coach, but “myth buster” and “pioneer” also fit the job description for Alexandria Burrell and Monica Watson, two (2) career coaches who are helping students in the Vicksburg Warren School District bridge the gap between graduation and rewarding futures.

“There are so many paths that students can take to productive lives,” said Burrell, a career coach at Warren Central High School. “We’re removing the myth that they can only be successful with a four-year degree. We are showing them real people in the community with real jobs who have done very well on paths away from the traditional route.”

Watson, a career coach at Vicksburg High School, agreed.

“I have female students who want to go to truck driving school or become welders, which was unheard of when I was in school,” she said. “As the first career coaches, we’re pioneers, helping students find the right careers while building relationships with companies all over Mississippi.”

In partnership with local school districts and Accelerate MS, CMPDD has placed 13 career coaches throughout the district who work individually with students to help them identify career goals and map out paths to achieve them. Activities include business and industry field trips, assisting with financial aid and college applications, and connecting students with jobs and internships.

Their field trip destinations have included Grand Gulf Nuclear Station, the Vicksburg Police Department, Marian Hill Chemical Dependency Center, Hinds Community College’s workforce training programs, and Mississippi River barge operations.

“A deckhand on a boat can make a minimum of \$40,000 a year up to \$80,000,” Watson said. “If students learn a trade, they can earn a great living or even start their own business.”

“No two (2) days are the same,” said Watson. “Right now, I’m focused on helping 177 seniors get to the next level, whether it’s employment, entrepreneurship, enrollment, or enlistment. Sometimes I’m a mentor, and sometimes they just need me to listen. They know I’m here for them, and my door is always open.”



Alexandria Burrell forges a relationship with students at Vicksburg High School to help ensure they have a strong foundation to success.



Monica Watson helps Warren Central students find career paths that are right for them.

Soon, students will have access to technology that will add an exciting new dimension to career and technical education. Burrell noted that the Vicksburg Warren School District is preparing to incorporate virtual reality equipment and software into its training programs.

“I can’t wait for that,” Burrell said. “With those components in our hands, we’ll be able to take kids virtually through different career paths, and they can use virtual training to learn a specific job. It’s great to see schools investing in career programs and making sure students have a strong foundation to be successful.”

DRA Non-Distressed Census Tract Analysis

In February 2023, CMPDD performed a detailed demographic analysis for the Delta Regional Authority (DRA) related to non-distressed counties in the DRA region. The analysis involved analyzing census tract data within certain previously determined non-distressed counties to identify smaller pockets of distress. Because the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) do not track data at the census tract level, CMPDD used the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey

(ACS) data estimates for unemployment and per capita income. This census tract information was then compared to the national BLS and BEA averages to identify the pockets of distress within non-distressed counties.



Mississippi Rural Water Association's Partnership with CMPDD Yields Favorable Results

Delta Regional Authority (DRA) has awarded a nearly \$900,000 grant to the Mississippi Rural Water Association (MsRWA) through assistance of CMPDD. The grant supports the creation of a state-of-the-art water and wastewater facility to train operators throughout the state. Authorization to apply for this funding was provided through the governor's office.

"This new facility will help provide a higher quality learning experience and improve emergency readiness for water operators throughout the state," said Governor Tate Reeves. "Having dependable utilities is vital. This grant and the continued work of the Mississippi Rural Water Association will better ensure that our communities have the operators needed to maintain critical water and wastewater infrastructure."

The grant will be used to help fund the construction of a \$1.9 million centralized training facility where apprentices will learn from industry experts, vendors, and regulatory authorities. Training will ensure communities within the Mississippi Rural Water Association will have better access to certified operators and reliable utility services.

Apprentices will have the opportunity to get paid while they learn as they spend 4,000 hours over two (2) years gaining practical system experience from certified operators in the field. Training will include everything from plant operation to water quality analysis, and more. In addition to practical training, 288 hours of classroom training will also be required.

Locating the training facility centrally in Pearl near the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency would better prepare the state for future crises. The facility would replace the current status quo in which trainings take place at community halls and other locations as available throughout the state. The new facility will provide for a higher quality learning experience and an understanding of emergency readiness for operators.

Kirby Ma. eld, CEO. MsRWA, credits the planning and workforce staff at Central Mississippi Planning and Development District for its efforts in assisting with both the construction and education and training grants through Delta Regional Authority and Department of Labor. "The continued efforts of the CMPDD staff will assist MsRWA in serving rural water and wastewater treatment operators throughout Mississippi at such a critical time on our state."

Redistricting Update

The District received the 2020 Census population data in September 2021 and began an analysis to determine which jurisdictions are in need of redistricting. The process involves utilizing the District's GIS system to overlay current municipal ward lines and county supervisor and justice court districts over the new 2020 Census population data to determine where changes are needed.

CMPDD has contracted with 20 jurisdictions to develop redistricting plans. These include six (6) counties, 13 municipalities and one (1) school district. To date, eight (8) plans have been completed and adopted and several others are under consideration.

If your community needs assistance with the redrawing of election districts, contact David Wade at 601.321.2161 or dewade@cmpdd.org.

District Staff Attended Delta Regional Authority Training

District Grant Staff attended the Local Development District training for the Delta Regional Authority (DRA) in February in Memphis, TN. This year's training covered many updates to the grant programs provided by DRA as well as launching new funding programs. For questions regarding DRA Grants, please contact Amy Smith at 601.321.2164 or Lindsay Sellers at 601.321.2158.

City Clerks Luncheon

CMPDD hosted a luncheon for the City Clerks within the seven-county district. The Clerks shared best practices with each other and discussed issues that directly affect their jobs and municipalities. The Clerks celebrated the retirement of the City of Clinton's Clerk, Russell Wall, who served as Clerk for 18 years. Russell has been active with the Clerk's Luncheons since they were started and has lots of upcoming trips planned to celebrate his retirement.



CMDC BULLETIN

Representative De'Keither Stamps, President of the Central Mississippi Development Company, Inc. (CMDC), announced the approval of a new loan.



The approval was for Lock McNatt Properties, LLC which operates as Kia of McComb, an automobile dealership in McComb, MS. The loan was for \$1,883,000 of a \$5,380,000 project under the United States Small Business

Administration's 504 Loan Program. The proceeds of this loan will finance the purchase of land and the construction of a commercial building in McComb, Mississippi. This new car dealership will create ten (10) new jobs 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 of 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 (March 2023)	6.78%
20 (March 2023)	6.33%
25 (March 2023)	6.33%

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 6.75% 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.).

Representative 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 www.cmpdd.org. See the tab labeled "Small Business Loans."

Jackson MPO Approves Transportation Performance Targets

Federal legislation requires all Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), State Departments of Transportation (DOTs), and transit service providers to work collectively to establish performance targets for multiple transportation performance measure areas, as part of a performance-based transportation planning and programming approach. Performance-based planning allows MPOs, State DOTs, and transit service providers to examine current and historical data and evaluate the performance of their transportation investments against a number of federally required performance measure areas as a way to track progress toward the achievement of national goals.

The Jackson MPO, in coordination with both the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) and JTRAN is required to set performance targets for safety, pavement conditions, bridge conditions, travel time reliability, freight reliability, transit assets, and transit safety. MPO's are required to update targets for each of these performance measure areas every four (4) years, except for the safety performance measure that is required to be updated annually. At its regularly scheduled meeting on February 8th, the Jackson MPO's Planning Policy Committee voted to approve updated performance targets for each transportation performance measure area.

For more information about transportation performance targets visit the MPO's website, www.cmpdd.org/transportation/performance-management/.

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

A Taste of Central Program - Eating Well Over 60

The Area Agency on Aging recently launched the rebranding of the congregate nutrition program. Over the last decade participation at the congregate meal sites has rapidly declined. Although there was low participation, the older population was continuing to grow at a steady pace. Our program faced challenges, including program planning issues, demographic shifts, local infrastructure, program perception, marketing, meal limitations, and program participation. The Area Agency on Aging staff recognized the need to compete with today's modern society. With the baby boomers reaching eligibility status, the name "congregate nutrition program," sounding like a place where participants sat around napped and simply watched television. Our key goal was to improve the well-being of older Mississippians by modernizing local congregate nutrition programs. Changing the name was the first step to rebranding the sites. We wanted a catchy name that changed the program's perception and would attract more interest. Next, additional interactive activities were infused in the site's regular programming. The seniors eventually grew excited and complimentary about all the opportunities available. The word began to spread and now the number of registered participants has reached 342 clients.



In December 2022, to support their efforts, the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP) awarded the Area Agency on Aging a \$5000 grant to assist in the rebranding of the congregate nutrition program. These funds will certainly help to spread the message that our nutrition program is a vital safety net and designed to reduce senior isolation and hunger. According to the Aging Division Director, Chelsea B. Crittle, PhD., "this new identity symbolizes people from different backgrounds coming together to socialize and enjoy a nutritious meal". The Area Agency on Aging has purchased lunch boxes, marketing pop up banners, posters, coffee makers, and snow cone machines to ensure sites mirror atmospheres in which people like to enjoy their meals. Several sites recently set up cafes for seniors to enjoy coffee and conversation.

For more information on A Taste of Central Program, please contact the Aging Division Director, Chelsea B. Crittle, PhD, at 601.981.1516.

CMPDD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

William Banks,
President

Sally Garland,
Vice-President

Les Childress,
Secretary-Treasurer

Isla Tullos,
Immediate Past President

Michael Monk,
Chief Executive Officer

Volume 38

Number 2