



# Central Update

*A Quarterly Publication of  
Central Mississippi Planning &  
Development District*

## Governor Tate Reeves Announces \$4.4 Million Reconnect Workforce Training Grant Awarded to Central Mississippi Planning and Development District



Governor Tate Reeves has announced that the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District (CMPDD) has been awarded the first Reconnect Workforce Training Grant, a \$4.4 million investment aimed at addressing Mississippi's labor shortages. The grant, part of the Mississippi Reconnect Program, will help provide training to over 900 individuals, equipping them with the skills necessary to fill high-demand jobs in sectors such as construction, advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and information technology.

The Mississippi Reconnect initiative, led by AccelerateMS in partnership with the South Central Mississippi Works (SCMW) Local Workforce Area and the State Workforce Board, offers short-term, targeted training programs lasting up to eight (8) weeks. Participants will receive hands-on training designed to align with the needs of local industries, helping them secure employment or advance in their careers. The program

also provides wage reimbursements and stipends to support both participants and employers.

Dr. Robin Parker, Workforce Director at CMPDD, emphasized the program's transformative potential, "This \$4.4 million grant will have a tremendous effect on our local workforce. By offering targeted, short-term training, we are meeting the immediate needs of both job seekers and businesses. Our goal is to ensure that participants are prepared for high-demand roles that are essential to Mississippi's economic growth."

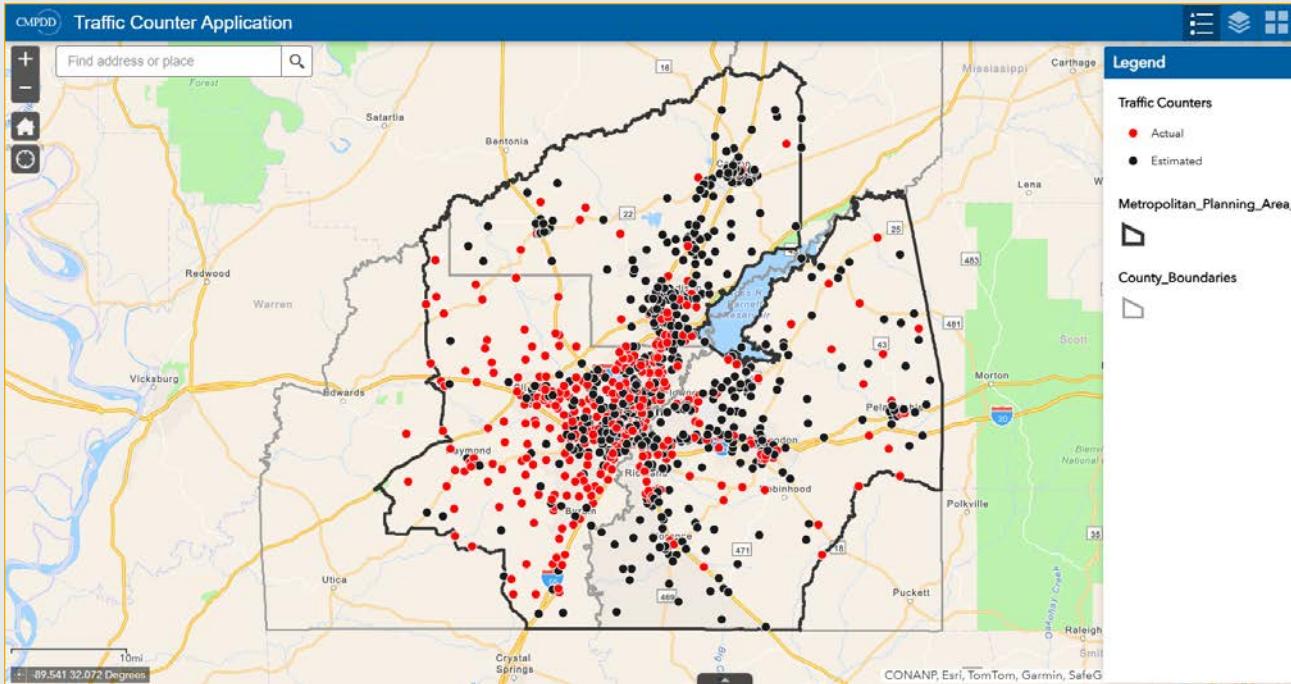
CMPDD will collaborate with BuildMS, Hinds Community College, and Holmes Community College to deliver these industry-focused training programs. The initiative focuses on addressing critical workforce shortages while creating pathways to sustainable careers. These partnerships are essential in ensuring the programs meet industry

requirements and provide participants with the skills needed to succeed.

Dr. Parker further noted the importance of collaboration in this initiative, "Working with BuildMS, Hinds Community College, and Holmes Community College, we are creating pathways for individuals to gain valuable skills while supporting the workforce needs of our region's employers. This collaboration is key to driving economic growth and long-term success for our participants."

Through this initiative, CMPDD and its partners will address critical labor shortages in priority industries, aligning with Mississippi's demand-driven workforce development strategy. The program ensures that Mississippi's workforce is equipped to thrive in sectors that are pivotal to the state's economic future.

# Traffic Count Data Collection Complete for 2024



The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) works cooperatively with the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) to collect traffic count data for all state and non-state maintained roadways that are part of the functional class system in the Jackson Urbanized Area (JUA). The collected traffic count data is used by the MPO in the development of a number of transportation planning activities including the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Congestion Management Process (CMP) and Pavement Management System.

CMPDD follows an annual schedule for collecting traffic count data in each of the three counties that comprise the MPO Planning area, which includes portions of Hinds, Madison, and Rankin Counties. Each year CMPDD staff collects traffic count data in one of the counties and repeats the process annually on a three-year cyclical basis until the data collection process has been completed for each county. Due to each county being counted every third-year estimate is developed for the interim years in which traffic count data is not collected for the other counties. Based on the rotating annual schedule, traffic count data was collected in 2024 for Rankin County and will be collected for Madison County in 2025. In addition to the regularly scheduled traffic count data that was collected, CMPDD staff received multiple special request counts during 2024 from local jurisdictions in the MPO Planning area.

At the end of each calendar year all traffic count data collected by CMPDD is forwarded to the MDOT for analysis. The data is processed, and traffic adjustment factors are applied to the raw data to develop Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts. The traffic adjustment factors used to develop AADT counts take into consideration high and low seasonal and daily traffic patterns to arrive at a more representative “annual” traffic count for each roadway segment. Once the data is processed the MDOT sends the updated AADT data to the MPO and the information is made publicly available through the MPO’s traffic count viewer on CMPDD’s website. In October CMPDD staff updated the traffic count viewer to include all traffic count data for 2023. The traffic count viewer includes not only data for 2023, but also data from 2013-2019 and 2021-2022. As can be seen on the viewer, traffic count data for 2020 is not included. Due to substantial irregularities in traffic patterns resulting from the COVID-19 shutdown in 2020 this data was excluded.

The traffic count viewer can be accessed through CMPDD’s website at [www.cmpdd.org/traffic-count-data/](http://www.cmpdd.org/traffic-count-data/). For additional information concerning traffic count data or to make a request for a traffic count study to be conducted please contact Scott Burge at 601-321-2150 or by email at [sburge@cmpdd.org](mailto:sburge@cmpdd.org).

## Caregiver Connection Support Groups

At the heart of our mission, the Area Agency on Aging has an unwavering commitment to supporting caregivers. The “Grandparents Raising Grandchildren” and “Family Caregiver Connection Support Group” programs are cornerstones of our efforts. They help answer the vital emotional and practical needs of individuals who dedicate themselves to caring for loved ones, often facing significant challenges.

Caregivers juggle responsibilities that can take a considerable toll on their emotional, mental, physical, and financial well-being. We recognize that their roles come with high demands, and that is why we approach our work with compassion and understanding. By providing essential resources and a supportive environment, we empower caregivers to prioritize self-care and seek help when needed. These actions are crucial for their well-being and the quality of care they offer to others.

Our support groups cater to both new caregivers who may be feeling overwhelmed and seasoned caregivers who have accumulated wisdom yet may feel isolated. What unites them is their shared need for connection and support. We cultivate an atmosphere where members can share emotions, engage in helpful discussions, participate in hands-on crafts, draw strength from each other’s stories, and exchange valuable information.

The feedback we receive from our members speaks volumes about our impact. Comments such as:

- “I don’t know what I would have done if it wasn’t for Central Mississippi Planning & Development District.”
- “I look forward to coming to the meeting each month because it’s so relaxing.”



- “I am encouraged by the positive attitude and compassion you all show.”
- “I am so thankful for this support group.”
- “I had no idea how much you all do here at CMPDD.”
- “You have been a blessing to me and my family.”

These heartfelt expressions motivate the Aging staff to continue striving for excellence and affirm that we are making meaningful contributions to our community.

By fostering these Care Connection Support Groups, we enable caregivers to find solace and strength in shared experiences, ultimately leading to better care for their loved ones and themselves. Our work is not just about support, it is about creating a community where caregivers can thrive and never feel alone in their journey.

At the Area Agency on Aging, we take pride in our role and are dedicated to being a beacon of hope and assistance for caregivers throughout our community. Together, we can create a supportive network that uplifts everyone involved in the caregiving process. For more information, contact the Area Agency on Aging at 601-981-1516.



# Local Jurisdictions Receive Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Funding

Both Hinds County and the City of Ridgeland each received Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant funding to implement roadway safety improvements in their respective jurisdictions during the SS4A's third funding cycle of 2024. Hinds County was awarded \$1,280,000 in federal funding for crosswalk visibility enhancements which include lighting, signing, and pavement markings. Additionally, the funding will be used to add high-visibility crosswalks, as well as medians, pedestrian refuge islands, separated bike lanes, and rumble strips. The funding will also be used to support the implementation of safety measures that will reduce speeds along select corridors throughout the county by making modifications to existing roadway design and implementation of road diets.

In addition, the City of Ridgeland was awarded \$1,948,800 in SS4A funding that will be used to implement roadway



safety improvements along West Jackson Street that will include improved pavement markings, delineators, crosswalk visibility enhancements, temporary traffic signals, and camera technology solutions. The SS4A program is funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) to implement safety improvements and strategies to prevent fatalities and serious injuries for all roadway users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, and personal conveyance/micro-mobility users. The program supports a goal of zero roadway fatalities using a Safe System Approach.

Both projects were identified in CMPDD's Safety Action Plan as part of the recommendations for local infrastructure projects. CMPDD's seven-county Safety Action Plan was approved by the Board of Directors in May 2024 and is available on our website, [www.cmpdd.org](http://www.cmpdd.org).

## 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.

CMPDD's Waiver and Workforce Investment divisions continue partnerships 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. 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.

Medicaid Waiver is proud to announce that Tsdkeyah Grant, LSW has successfully completed the trainee program sponsored by CMPDD's Workforce Division and Medicaid Waiver. She has passed the licensure exam and has joined a case management team as a licensed social worker.

CMPDD currently employs 24 Case Management (CM) teams and reserves the capacity to serve 2,840 clients living throughout all seven (7) counties.

Monthly CM contact visits may be conducted via telephone or video conference. Two (2) Initial, Recertification, Transfer, or Readmit assessments must be conducted face-to-face, three (3) Face-to-face visits must be conducted if the beneficiary is unable to communicate by telephone, if the beneficiary has unmet needs that cannot be resolved by telephone, if risks or reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation is identified, or if the beneficiary or representative cannot be reached by telephone, and four (4) With proper documentation, "Verbal Consent" may be documented in lieu of the beneficiary's or representative's original signature.

\*Individuals who own an agency and is 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](mailto:tburrell@cmpdd.org).

# First Electrical Line Worker Class Graduates with Support from CMPDD

Fourteen students have successfully completed the inaugural 16-week Electrical Line Worker noncredit workforce program, receiving certificates that position them for careers in this high-demand field. Supported by the CMPDD Workforce Division through Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Individual Training Accounts, students had their tuition, certification fees, tools, and other costs covered as part of this transformative program.

## Program Highlights and Impact

“This first group of electrical line workers has been nothing short of exceptional,” said Jason Webb, Career Technical Education Dean of Construction and Manufacturing. “You would think we hand-picked them—and, well, we did! Out of 23 applicants, we interviewed and selected 16 who exhibited the qualities we believed would make them successful in this program and profession. They’ve exceeded our expectations, and we couldn’t be prouder.”

Throughout the program, students acquired vital skills such as CPR training, pole climbing, and solving electrical problems. Additionally, all participants earned their Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) and Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) certificates, equipping them for immediate employment in the field.

Instructor Craig Davis commended the students’ dedication. “It was a pleasure working with these guys,” he said. “They have a strong work ethic, and I believe every one of them will succeed in their careers.”

## CMPDD’s Role in Workforce Development

The CMPDD Workforce Division played a crucial role in supporting these students, ensuring they had the resources needed to complete the program. Robin Parker, Workforce Director at CMPDD, emphasized the importance of investing in high-demand workforce training programs.

“Programs like this are essential to building a skilled workforce for our region,” Parker said. “The electrical line worker field offers tremendous career opportunities, and by providing WIOA Individual Training Accounts, we’ve been able to remove financial barriers and help these students take their first steps toward rewarding careers. This is what workforce development is all about—helping individuals succeed while meeting the needs of our local economy.”

## Looking Ahead

This inaugural class sets the tone for future workforce training efforts in the region, showcasing the value of collaboration between educational institutions, workforce development programs, and industry partners. With their certifications and newly honed skills, these graduates are well-prepared to make an impact in the growing electrical line worker field.

As CMPDD continues to support innovative programs like this, the partnership underscores its commitment to fostering a stronger, more capable workforce across Central Mississippi.



### Graduates Recognized for Their Achievements

The graduates include:

Front row: Thomas Taylor (Byram), Kashton Sorrell (Pisgah), Jordan Holt (Byram), William Hall (Pearl), Leland Bernal (Pearl), Jacob Walker (Pearl), and Zaccaeus McFarland (Pearl).

Back row: Instructor Craig Davis (Raymond), Hunter Barrett (Pisgah), Breland Moore (Jackson), Michael Delgado (Benton), Franco Whisenton (Yazoo City), Hunter Crutchfield (Clinton), Jalin Ratcliff (Clinton), and Chrisden Jones (Utica).

# Building Connections: Inaugural I2PA Class Graduates, Paving the Way for Mississippi's Information Infrastructure Workforce

Holmes Community College recently celebrated the first cohort of graduates from Mississippi's Amazon Web Services (AWS) Information Infrastructure Pre-Apprenticeship (I2PA) program. This trailblazing initiative, supported and coordinated by the CMPDD in partnership with Holmes, is only the third program of its kind in the nation. The four-week training, which ran from November 4 to December 6, concluded with a graduation ceremony and a networking event that connected participants with AWS experts, contractors, and vendors.

## Preparing Mississippi's Workforce for High-Demand Careers

The AWS I2PA program is designed to equip participants with the practical skills needed for careers in the rapidly growing information infrastructure sector. Over the course of 30 hours per week, participants engaged in hands-on training to build, connect, power, and operate the infrastructure driving today's global information economy. Using tools and materials found in real-world job sites, they gained expertise in AWS cloud technology, networking, and security, as well as foundational skills in fiber optics, electrical and mechanical systems, computer servers, and mission-critical software.

"This program is a testament to what's possible when education and workforce development align with industry needs," said Robin Parker, Workforce Director at CMPDD. "The information infrastructure sector is expanding rapidly, and programs like this are crucial for preparing individuals to step into high-paying, high-demand careers right here in Mississippi. We're proud to have worked alongside Holmes Community College to bring this innovative training opportunity to our region."

## A Comprehensive Learning Experience

The program didn't just focus on technical skills. Participants also developed critical workplace abilities such as problem-solving, time management, teamwork, and persistence. Throughout the program, they earned industry-recognized



certifications, including AWS I2PA and OSHA 10, and were compensated for their participation. These certifications and skills make graduates more competitive in the job market and position them for success in a variety of roles.

## A Model for Workforce Development

"This program exemplifies the kind of collaboration needed to build a more inclusive and skilled workforce," Parker added. "By combining industry expertise, academic resources, and regional workforce planning, we're creating pathways that not only meet industry needs but also empower individuals to achieve their full potential."

The AWS I2PA program reflects AWS's broader commitment to fostering a diverse tech workforce and aligns with CMPDD's mission to enhance workforce development across Central Mississippi. The success of this initiative sets the stage for future programs that will continue to strengthen the region's economy and provide Mississippians with opportunities to thrive in high-growth industries.

As CMPDD and Holmes Community College look ahead, the partnership promises to expand efforts to equip individuals with the skills needed to adapt to an ever-evolving workforce landscape. This program is a significant step forward in ensuring Mississippi remains competitive in the global economy.

## City Clerks and Central Mayors

In December, both the City Clerks and the Central MS Mayors Association (CMMA) met at CMPDD. These groups meet quarterly to share best practices and discuss issues at the municipality level. Both groups discussed upcoming grant opportunities. The next City Clerk and CMMA meetings will be held in the spring. Lastly, the mayors also recognized Mayor Butch Lee for his role as the 2024 CMMA President.



## DRA Distressed County Update

In December of 2024, CMPDD completed the work required to update the DRA Allocation Model. This is an annual project where we determine if a DRA county is distressed or not by measuring county data such as unemployment rate and per capita income against the national averages. CMPDD gathers the economic indicators for each county in the DRA territory and applies the information to the DRA funding allocation model so that its updated for the coming year. The model is used as a guide for distributing funds to individual DRA counties based on how they rank in the analysis. The variables include poverty rate, population in poverty, unemployment rate and personal income rates.

## Planning Updates

CMPDD has continued to work with the Cities of Brandon, Crystal Springs, Madison, and Richland, and the Town of Bentonia for comprehensive plan updates and/or zoning ordinance revisions. The Cities of Brandon and Richland and Town of Bentonia have been presented with initial drafts and are preparing to release drafts for public review and adoption. Plan development continues for Crystal Springs and Madison. CMPDD is also assisting Simpson County with the development of their first Zoning Ordinance based on the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan.

All comprehensive plans developed by CMPDD Planners are now released in both interactive, digital formats and booklet style print copy. The use of these formats allows local governments to easily share and distribute their planning documents in a marketable manner that is attractive to potential and current investors. Zoning documents, as a legal document, retain their traditional print formatting but are now linked to parcel data on interactive maps, which allow quick discovery of the zoning regulations applicable to a specific area or parcel.

## Update of Demographic Profiles

CMPDD recently published updated demographic profiles for counties and cities in our district including one (1) for the state as well. The profiles are in PDF format and are located on our website and easily downloaded by anyone free of charge. The profiles contain a great deal of information on our counties and cities such as demographics, income, housing, and employment.

Visit this location to see more: [cmpdd.org/rankin-demographic-data/](http://cmpdd.org/rankin-demographic-data/).

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**2025  
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**April 22-25, 2025  
Beau Rivage • Biloxi, Mississippi**

**For More Information:  
601-981-1511 or [www.mspdds.com](http://www.mspdds.com)**

# EMCED Board Meeting Explores Promising Career Paths in Information Infrastructure



On November 5th, the East Mississippi Center for Educational Development (EMCED) held its monthly board meeting at the Madison County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA). This event brought together superintendents from across central and eastern Mississippi to explore career opportunities in Amazon Web Services (AWS) and the broader Information Infrastructure sector.

Organized by the Workforce Division at the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District (CMPDD), the meeting focused on bridging the gap between education and industry. By highlighting job pathways in powering, building, connecting, and operating data centers, the event showcased strategic steps necessary to prepare the region's workforce for high-demand, high-paying careers.

## Exploring Sector-Specific Roles

The meeting featured presentations from key industry professionals:

- Joe Lackey from AWS provided an overview of 'Construction' jobs in the Information Infrastructure sector, focusing on roles critical to expanding data centers and related facilities.
- Cole Cochran of CSpire discussed the 'Connect' segment, emphasizing the importance of fiber connectivity in supporting infrastructure and ensuring seamless digital operations.
- Duane Matthews of AWS explored 'Operations,' offering insights into the ongoing management and maintenance required to keep AWS systems running efficiently.

These presentations highlighted the variety of career opportunities available within the sector and their importance to the region's economic development.

## A Vision for Workforce Growth

"This meeting was more than just a discussion—it was a commitment to future-proofing our workforce," said Robin Parker, Workforce Director at the CMPDD. "By bringing

education leaders face-to-face with industry experts, we're positioning our schools to better guide students into meaningful careers in the tech and construction industries. The opportunities within the Information Infrastructure sector are vast, and this type of collaboration is key to seizing them."

Parker emphasized the importance of aligning educational programs with current industry needs. "The jobs related to powering, building, connecting, and operating data centers are not only diverse but crucial for economic resilience. Preparing students for these roles will empower our region to compete on a larger scale," she added.

Joey Deason, Executive Director of MCEDA, echoed these sentiments. "We are seeing first-hand how rapidly career fields are evolving, creating new opportunities that didn't exist in Mississippi a few years ago. The future workforce needs to be prepared not just for today's jobs, but for the industries of tomorrow. By collaborating with superintendents and showcasing these emerging fields, we can help students build the skillsets needed and offer opportunities to more Mississippians. We look forward to continuing efforts to prepare the future workforce."

## Looking Ahead: Collaboration and Growth

The November meeting underscored the power of collaboration between educational institutions, industry leaders, and economic developers. The goal was clear: to create an informed and capable workforce ready to meet the demands of an evolving job market.

Parker concluded, "This is a significant step toward shaping a workforce that is not only ready for today's challenges but equipped for tomorrow's opportunities. The partnerships forged and the insights shared here are paving the way for sustained growth and adaptability."

As the education leaders, MCEDA, and CMPDD continue their efforts, the synergy between education and industry promises a bright future for Mississippi's workforce development.

# CMPDD Completes Pavement Management Data Collection for Rankin County

The Pavement Management System is an inventory of the pavement conditions for the functionally classified, non-state maintained, principal arterial, minor arterial and collector roadways in the Jackson Urbanized Area (JUA). Each year, on a three-year cyclical basis, CMPDD staff completes a reassessment of the roadway conditions for one (1) of the three (3) counties that makes up the JUA which includes portions of Hinds, Madison, and Rankin Counties. For 2024, the CMPDD completed the reassessment for Rankin County.

Data is collected for the Pavement Management System by inventorying the roadways through the use of windshield surveys. Windshield surveys are conducted by driving the entire length of a roadway and determining the level of deterioration

that has occurred to the roadways surface. When collecting the survey data CMPDD staff identify the various forms of cracking that have occurred to the pavement which can include alligator cracking, edge cracking and longitudinal/transverse line cracking. Other surface impediments that CMPDD staff identify during the inventory process include patching, rutting, potholes, heaves and/or swells and poor storm water drainage issues, to name a few.

Once the data collection process is complete the information is analyzed using CMPDD's Deighton Total Infrastructure Management System (dTIMS) software program. Based on the input data dTIMS assigns a numeric value, or Pavement Condition Index (PCI) rating, to each road segment which indicates from highest to lowest

which roadway segments in the JUA are in the poorest condition. The software also makes recommendations for roadway treatment based on the input data. These treatments can range from minor surface repairs to complete roadway reconstruction. CMPDD staff use this information to aid in determining which roadways in the JUA are in the greatest need for surface repair or total reconstruction.

With the data collection process completed for Rankin County in 2024, a pavement condition reassessment will be conducted in 2025 for the functionally classified roadways in Madison County. If you have questions concerning the Pavement Management System, please contact Scott Burge at 601-321-2150 or by email at [sburge@cmpdd.org](mailto:sburge@cmpdd.org).

## Grants Update

In October, the Delta Regional Authority (DRA) announced its next round of Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF) and States Economic Development Assistance Program (SEDAP) awards. DRA's investment will improve basic public infrastructure, transportation infrastructure, job training, and economic development planning to support further economic development in communities across Mississippi. CMPDD staff worked with local municipalities and organizations earlier this year on their applications. Two (2) grants were awarded within CMPDD's area:

- The City of Raymond has been awarded \$987,550 in CIF funding for sewage lagoon improvements.
- MAGCOR Industries has been awarded \$442,000 in SEDAP funding for a DRA Simulator Integrated Mobile Unit to train inmates for future work opportunities at six regional correctional facilities in Mississippi.

CIF funding is aimed at providing public infrastructure assistance for distressed and non-distressed counties and municipalities in the DRA region. These projects can apply for a maximum \$2,000,000 grant amount. In addition to CIF, DRA also offers funding for the Strategic Planning Program. Applicants for this program have the autonomy to apply for a plan that fits the unique needs and challenges of their community. Eligible plans include, but are not



limited to, economic development plans, utility rate studies, transportation plans, workforce development plans, and broadband deployment plans with a maximum grant award of \$150,000. If you have any questions regarding DRA funding, please contact Jake Bell at 601-981-1511 or [jbell@cmpdd.org](mailto:jbell@cmpdd.org).

In the fall of 2024, CMPDD assisted four (4) municipalities with site visits related to their 2024 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications. These site visits are related to projects that will improve public infrastructure in Copiah, Hinds, and Rankin Counties. Mississippi's CDBG Public Facilities Program provides municipalities and counties funding for public infrastructure needs. Eligible CDBG Public Facilities and Economic Development projects include improvements to water, wastewater and drainage systems, and streets. CMPDD staff have already begun working with many local governments on their upcoming applications. If your county or municipality is interested in applying for the FY25 funding cycle, please contact Jake Bell at 601-981-1511 or [jbell@cmpdd.org](mailto:jbell@cmpdd.org).

## Residents Help to Answer What the Region's Transportation System Should Look Like in the Next 25 Years

In October CMPDD hosted six (6) community outreach events designed to engage local residents in the development of the region's long-range transportation plan. During each event, people had the opportunity to participate in hands-on exercises and make suggestions for transportation strategies and improvements. Information gathered will help planners answer the questions "What do we want from our transportation system over the next 25 years, and how can we achieve it?"

The community engagement events were held as part of the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO's) planning efforts to develop the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the three (3) metro area counties. Federal planning regulations require MPO's to update Metropolitan Transportation Plans, also known as long-range transportation plans, every five (5) years to reflect new planning priorities and account for changes in population or economic growth that may impact travel demand. The Comprehensive Plan establishes a multimodal vision for the region's transportation system and guides both capital investments and research studies in the region for the next 25 years. CMPDD's staff is working to develop the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the Jackson Urbanized Area as part of MULTIPLAN 2050, which is a coordinated effort to develop the MS Department of Transportation's statewide long range transportation plan and regional plans for the MPO at CMPDD, the Hattiesburg-Petal-Forrest-Lamar MPO, and the Gulf Regional Planning Commission MPO.

For additional information or to see how you can get involved in the development of the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan visit our website, [www.cmpdd.org/lrtpl/](http://www.cmpdd.org/lrtpl/).



# CMDC BULLETIN

*Hotel Whiskey, Pass Christian, MS*



Commissioner De'Keither Stamps, President of the Central Mississippi Development Company, Inc. (CMDC), is pleased to announce the SBA 504 loan approval for the Hotel Whiskey Long Beach project. The \$1,883,000 loan will be utilized to construct a new 27 room boutique hotel in Long Beach, MS. The loan will also create five (5) 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

TERM (YEARS)	INTEREST RATE
10 (December 2024)	6.51%
20 (December 2024)	6.20%
25 (December 2024)	6.13%

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). 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 5.00% 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.)

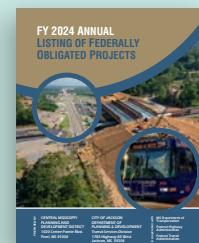
Commissioner De'Keither Stamps invites bankers, commercial loan officers, business owners, real estate developers, and general contractors to contact Dwayne Perkins at 601-981-1625, or visit our website at [www.cmpdd.org](http://www.cmpdd.org). See the tab labeled "Small Business Loans."

## CMPDD Publishes Annual Reports for the MPO

In December, CMPDD published the 2024 Annual Engagement Summary Report and the 2024 Annual Listing of Obligated Projects Report for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The Annual Listing of Obligated Projects is required by Federal guidelines and its purpose is to outline Federally funded obligations made within the MPO's region. The current report covers Federally funded obligations that transpired during the period of October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024, or Federal Fiscal Year 2024. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) defines obligation as a legal commitment by the Federal government "to pay or reimburse a State

or other entity for the Federal share of a project's eligible costs." Obligation occurs when FHWA approves the project and executes the project agreement. The obligation of funds for a project does not necessarily mean that a project is initiated or completed during the year of obligation, but that the legal commitment was made to reimburse an entity for eligible costs.

The Engagement Summary Report provides a synopsis of CMPDD's outreach activities for the MPO from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024. The annual evaluation helps CMPDD determine if changes are needed to the MPO's public



participation activities and what audiences are being reached by the outreach efforts conducted. For more information about the MPO or to view the reports visit the transportation section of CMPDD's website, [www.cmpdd.org](http://www.cmpdd.org).

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

## CMPDD Sponsors Successful “Santa for Seniors” Holiday Project

The National Association of Benefits and Insurance Professionals (NABIP) and Home Instead, Incorporated joined Central Mississippi Planning and Development District/Area Agency on Aging by successfully executing the 34th Annual “Santa for Seniors Project.” Christmas gifts were delivered to over 260 needy seniors in our seven-county area. Staff and representatives from our provider agencies participated in the annual gift-wrapping party held at Home Instead’s main office.

Seniors were asked for their wish lists, and the sponsors supplied the items. Robes, blankets, towels, electric heaters, shower chairs, and toiletries are just some of the items purchased for seniors who are home-bound and in long-term care facilities. When gifts were delivered to the seniors they were uplifted and expressed appreciation for the generosity extended to them.

Because of the sponsors continued participation in this project, CMPDD has been able to provide many needy seniors with Christmas cheer and joy during the holiday season for the past thirty-four years. We are grateful for the interest and generous support of our sponsors and look forward to working with them in the future.



### CMPDD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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President

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