

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

AUGUST ~ SEPTEMBER 2023

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### CURRENT PROJECTS & UPDATES

Several of our member governments have new and ongoing planning and construction projects occurring currently. Below is a list of the projects and the status of each.

- 1) City of Citronelle Zoning Ordinance-ongoing
- 2) Atmore Industrial Access Road project-underway
- 3) Brewton-Provalus water line project-continuing
- 4) Brewton-New water well at Brewton Hospital-underway
- 5) Dauphin Island proposed zoning ordinance draft-ongoing
- 6) City of Semmes- Comprehensive Plan project-ongoing
- 7) City of Creola- Zoning Ordinance-ongoing

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### ANNOUNCEMENTS- 2 NEW GRANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR SARPC's PLANNING DEPARTMENT!

#### 1. EPA BROWNFIELD ASSESSMENT GRANT

SARPC was recently awarded a \$500,000 grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for a Brownfields Assessment project. SARPC planners will work with PPM Consultants over the next 4 years on this project that targets areas along Highway 43 near Creola and Highway 31 near Atmore. PPM will conduct the assessments to determine if abandoned Brownfield properties in these areas are contaminated, with the end goal being identifying sites can be redeveloped and marketed to recruit new economic development opportunities to these communities.



- WHAT IS THE BROWNFIELD PROGRAM?

The purpose of SARPC's BROWNFIELD PROGRAM is to help redevelop abandoned, idle, or under-utilized properties where expansion or redevelopment is hindered by actual or perceived environmental conditions. The program provides no-cost environmental services offered by SARPC designed to facilitate the development of any commercial property, whether a private or public transaction to help spur economic growth throughout our Region. This funding opportunity is available to SARPC each year through the EPA.

- WHAT DOES THE BROWNFIELD PROGRAM PAY FOR?

Grant funds can be used to pay for environmental assessments and other upfront environmental planning costs to help move commercial properties towards redevelopment. Services such as Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs), asbestos inspections, underground storage tank removals (when eligible), and cleanup planning/cost estimating are among some of the no-cost services that can be provided for public, private, or non-profit entities on both public and privately owned properties. SARPC can provide these services for eligible sites/entities,

minimizing upfront costs that can be put towards better use in the actual development and/or redevelopment of a commercial property.

- **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE BROWNFIELD PROGRAM?**

- ✓ Will make property more attractive by identifying potential concerns regarding the environmental condition of the property.
- ✓ Will cover the costs of environmental studies, reducing capital expenditures associated with All Appropriate Inquiries (AAI) prior to purchasing and redeveloping a commercial property.

- **WHO CAN APPLY FOR THE BROWNFIELD PROGRAM?**

Any commercial property within SARPC's jurisdiction (Mobile, Baldwin, and Escambia Counties) is eligible for funding, regardless of ownership.

- **HOW TO APPLY FOR THE BROWNFIELD PROGRAM?**

Contact the Community Development Department at SARPC to find out if your property is eligible for grant funding. (251) 706-4659 or email Nicole Taylor at: [ntaylor@sarpc.org](mailto:ntaylor@sarpc.org)

- **HOW TO FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE BROWNFIELD PROGRAM?**

Visit: <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/brownfields-cleanup-grants>



## **WHAT IS THE BROWNFIELD PROGRAM?**

The purpose of the program is to help redevelop abandoned, idle, or under-utilized properties where expansion or redevelopment is hindered by actual or perceived environmental conditions. Examples include abandoned gas stations, industrial, and commercial properties. Grant funds can be used to pay for environmental assessments and cleanup planning to help move commercial properties towards redevelopment.

SARPC was recently awarded a \$500,000 Community-wide Assessment Grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency. PPM Consultants, Inc. has been retained by SARPC to facilitate the grant program and to get the word out to the commercial real estate community and to potential buyers and sellers of real estate.



## **WHAT DOES THE PROGRAM PAY FOR?**

- **Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs):** Like title searches, surveys, and appraisals, such assessments are now routine on commercial real estate transactions. Phase I ESAs include a site inspection, interviews with persons knowledgeable about the history of the property, and a review of environmental records to determine if any Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs) exist.
- **Phase II ESAs:** If the Phase I ESA identifies any RECs, additional investigation may be needed to determine if adverse environmental conditions actually exist. Phase II ESAs may include soil, surface water, and groundwater testing; asbestos surveys; lead-based paint surveys; mold surveys; tank removal; and/or threatened and endangered species studies.
- **Cleanup Planning:** If a site is found to be impacted, the grant will pay for certain engineering and consulting fees to plan for redevelopment. This can include remedial alternatives analysis and meeting with regulatory agencies.



## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Will make your property more attractive by identifying potential concerns regarding the environmental condition of your property.
- Will cover the costs of environmental studies, thus reducing capital expenditures associated with All Appropriate Inquiries (AAI) prior to purchasing and redeveloping a commercial property.
- No contractual obligations to SARPC or consulting firm providing the studies.



## WHAT SITES ARE ELIGIBLE?

Any commercial property within SARPC's jurisdiction (Mobile, Baldwin, and Escambia Counties) is eligible for funding, regardless of ownership. The program is designed to facilitate the development of any commercial property, whether a private or public transaction.

## HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

Contact one of the individuals listed below to ask if you are eligible for grant funding.

Nicole Taylor  
SARPC, Director of Community Planning  
110 Beauregard Street, Suite 305  
Mobile, AL 36633  
(251) 706-4659  
ntaylor@sarpc.org

Mr. Jere (Trey) Hess  
PPM Consultants, Inc.  
289 Commerce Park Drive, Suite D  
Ridgeland, MS 39157  
(601) 953-2564  
trey.hess@ppmco.comco.com

Mrs. Jenny Black  
PPM Consultants, Inc.  
119 W Garden Street, Suite 200  
Pensacola, FL 32502  
(251) 504-6943  
jenny.black@ppmco.com

Mr. Keith Pyron  
PPM Consultants, Inc.  
30704 SGT E.I. "Boots" Thomas Dr.  
Spanish Fort, AL 36527  
(251) 990-9000  
keith.pyron@ppmco.com

*\*Though this project has been funded, wholly or in part, by EPA, the contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the EPA.*

## 2. DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY (DRA) GRANT SUPPORT PROGRAM

SARPC was recently awarded a grant from the Delta Regional Authority (DRA) to fund a "Grants Support Specialist" position in the Community Development Department.

SARPC serves as the DRA's Local Development District (LDD), and this new funding opportunity is available to all LDD's who wish to apply. Due to the increase in federal funding from the American Rescue Plan, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Inflation Reduction Act, etc., this program has been designed as a capacity-building program for all of the DRA's LDDs by providing the needed resources to fill capacity gaps and



undertake the additional workload associated with grant administration responsibilities. The goal of the program is to bolster access to DRA resources for economically distressed communities.

These funds will enable SARPC to provide a grants specialist who will work with SARPC's member governments and partners in Escambia County (DRA funds are only eligible in Escambia County) to identify potential economic development projects in each community, and to help apply for and manage the grants. This is an ideal and optimal opportunity for SARPC and will enable our Commission to expand our grant writing and management services to our member governments.

## MEETINGS, TRAININGS & CONFERENCES

# SAVE THE DATE!!!

- [SARPC's Planning Commission & Board of Adjustment Training Workshop](#)

SARPC is happy to announce we will host a one-day Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment training event on September 13<sup>th</sup> at OWA! This event has been well attended in the past by all our member governments and we anticipate an even bigger turn out this year due to not being able to offer it during the pandemic. This is a great learning opportunity for all planning commissioners, board of adjustment members, elected officials, planning staff, and building officials! Detailed instruction will be taught that covers the planning and development process from beginning to end. You will also learn the basic concepts of community planning, including the roles and responsibilities of the Planning Commission and Boards of Adjustment. Continuing education credits will be offered through this training for AICP and CAPZO recertifications.

The training will be taught this year by Bob Barber, FAICP and Partner with the Orion Planning + Design Group, a nationwide planning organization. Bob has over 30 years of experience in planning and community development at the regional, county, and municipal levels including substantial practice with private sector development. He has served as a teacher and mentor at the university level, as an advocate for disadvantaged and minority communities in both professional and private life. He will be a great teacher for this event and we're lucky to have him. Please visit Orion's website at:

<https://www.orionplanningdesign.com/>.

Online registration is open now through August 30<sup>th</sup>.

The cost is \$35 per person, which includes a hot lunch buffet. Space is limited so please register early.

Invitations to the event will be sent to SARPC mayors, city clerks, building officials, and other planning staff. Please check your email for more information on how to register. Contact us in the Community Development Department if you have any questions.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
SOUTH ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

**PLANNING & ZONING TRAINING**

**Our Instructor**  
  
**BOB BARBER**  
ORION PLANNING + DESIGN

**Location**  
**OWA**  
OWA Parks & Resort  
**THE BOHEMIAN**  
Event Venue at  
Downtown Owa  
101 South OWA Blvd.  
Foley, AL 36535

**13 SEPTEMBER 2023**

**10AM - 3PM**  
Lunch provided

SARPC is happy to announce our 3rd biennial Planning Commission & Board of Adjustment training event for all member governments! This 1-day workshop will be taught by Bob Barber, FAICP and will provide detailed instruction that covers the planning & development process. Planning Commissioners, Boards of Adjustment, Building Officials, Elected Officials, and planning staff are encouraged to attend.

Register online:  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/planning-commission-and-zoning-boards-of-adjustments-training-workshop-tickets-486204434937?aff=oddtdtcreator>

Register by email: [mtaylor@sarpc.org](mailto:mtaylor@sarpc.org)

We hope to see you at OWA on September 13<sup>th</sup> !!

SARPC Planners will be attending several conferences and training events in the upcoming months in efforts to better serve our member governments! Please contact us in the Community Planning Department if you have any questions about the following events.

- **EDAA Summer Conference**

The Economic Development Association of Alabama (EDAA) is a membership-based organization focused on promoting economic growth in Alabama. SARPC Planner's will be attending their Summer Conference on July 30 – August 2, 2023 at the Grand Hotel in Point Clear. Much of the information learned at the EDAA conference will be applied to SAPRC's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) that we publish every five years.

- **PLAN Meeting-Plan Lower Alabama Now**-Planning staff attends the monthly PLAN meetings to network and learn planning practices from local community stakeholders and professionals throughout Baldwin and Mobile Counties. Through these workshops, SARPC Planners have learned valuable planning practices and information that we pass on to our member governments to help them improve their communities. Topics learned and shared include wetland protection and example ordinances, short-term vacation rentals, site plan and subdivision plat reviews, RV Park standards, exempt subdivisions, food truck ordinances, and much more!

- **Alabama Association of Regional Councils (AARC) Annual Conference:**

“Furthering Alabama’s Progress and Preparing for Its Future”

October 8-11, 2023 at Perdido Beach Resort



- **Alabama/Mississippi Joint Chapter Annual Planning Conference**

This year's annual Mississippi/Alabama Fall Chapter Conference will be held at The Mill Conference Center in Starkville, Mississippi on October 18-20, 2023.

- **Delta Regional Authority 2023 Delta Summit**

DRA is thrilled to announce the 2023 Delta Summit will be held October 30-November 1, 2023, at the JW Marriott in New Orleans, Louisiana! You will not want to miss this annual convening of community leaders from across our eight-state region for engaging sessions and workshops, leadership, and peer-networking opportunities as we discuss and learn about the region's opportunities for economic development, rural revitalization, and community resiliency. More information and details to come. Make sure you are subscribed to our newsletter and follow us on social @Delta Regional Authority for the most up-to-date information. Stay tuned for more information about joining us in October!

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## OPEN GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Several funding agencies have recently announced new funding opportunities.

**SARPC Planners are here to help you understand and apply for any of these grant programs.**

Let us know if we can help you apply!

### DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY (DRA)

- **Critical Infrastructure Fund (CIF)** (Escambia County only)-Grant cycle opened in March for critical infrastructure projects and business and workforce development projects. There is no deadline to apply for this fund. Visit: <https://dra.gov/> for more information.
- **DRA Strategic Planning Program** (Escambia County only)- This program offers funding for planning projects in Escambia County. This grant has a continuous, revolving cycle, so there is no deadline. Funds can be used to cover, but not limited to the following types of plans:
  - Comprehensive Economic Development Plans
  - Master Plans
  - Capital Improvement Plans
  - Workforce Development Plans
  - Preliminary Engineering Reports
  - Transportation Plans
  - Broadband Deployment Plans
  - Utility Rate Studies
  - Feasibility Studies

For more information, call or email one of our planning staff or visit the DRA at: [www.DRA.gov](http://www.DRA.gov).

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (EDA)

- **Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance (PWEAA)** Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). The FY23 PWEAA NOFO outlines application submission requirements and review procedures for applications received under EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) programs.

The Public Works program provides resources to meet the construction and/or infrastructure design needs of communities to enable them to become more economically competitive.

Supported activities under EDA's EAA program include construction and non-construction such as construction or upgrading of public infrastructure, sectoral partnerships for workforce training, design and engineering, technical assistance, economic recovery strategies, and capitalization or re-capitalization of Revolving Loan Funds (RLF).

There are no application submission deadlines and applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis.

The NOFO is posted under the "Related Documents" tab on grants.gov at:

- **Disaster Supplemental Funding**, which will support regions impacted by Hurricanes Ian and Fiona, wildfires, flooding, and other Presidential declared major natural disasters;
- **STEM Talent Challenge** that makes \$4.5 million available to eligible entities to create and implement STEM talent development strategies to complement their region's innovation economy; and

- Tech Hubs Program, which is designed to invest directly in high-potential U.S. regions to enable them to become globally competitive in industries of the future.

#### EDA Publishes Webinar Recordings for Recent Notice of Funding Opportunities

The EDA has released webinar recordings to provide more information on three recently published Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs): the Tech Hubs program, the FY23 Disaster Supplemental, and the University Center program. For more information on the grant programs and to register for the webinars, visit: [https://www.eda.gov/news/media/video/3556/?utm\\_content=&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_name=&utm\\_source=govdelivery&utm\\_term=](https://www.eda.gov/news/media/video/3556/?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=)



#### SOUTHEAST CRESCENT REGIONAL COMMISSION (SCRC) (MOBILE AND BALDWIN COUNTIES ONLY)

*The Southeast Crescent Regional Commission (SCRC) is a federal-state partnership authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill to promote and encourage economic development in areas of Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and all of Florida. SCRC invests in projects that support basic infrastructure, business development, natural resources, and workforce/labor development. SCRC's mission is to help create jobs, build communities, and improve the lives of those who reside in the 428 counties of the seven-state region.*

After 18 months of existence, the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission has released a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) outlining the inaugural State Economic and Infrastructure Development (SEID) grant program. This funding is available for Mobile and Baldwin Counties. The link to the document can be found at: [scrc.gov](http://scrc.gov) and the deadline to apply is September 15<sup>th</sup>.



#### ADECA's LAND & WATER CONSERVATION FUNDING (LWCF)

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) will announce their funding opportunity in August for the Land & Water Conservation Fund. This grant opportunity provides funding for virtually all public outdoor recreation activities. These projects are eligible for assistance through the program to include playgrounds, ball fields (including lighting with metal or concrete poles only), court sports, picnic areas, camping areas, trails, swimming facilities and splash pads, etc. In addition, outdoor recreational support facilities such as concession stands, restrooms, press boxes, park access roads, parking areas, utilities, and site preparation necessary to make a recreation activity area usable may qualify for assistance.

The LWCF program provides 50 percent matching assistance to project sponsors. The project sponsor may provide the remaining 50 percent of the project costs in the form of cash and/or in-kind/donated materials and/or services. Grant funds are distributed to project sponsors on a cost-reimbursable basis.

(ADECA) Federal Initiatives and Recreation Division will be hosting the FY 2024 LWCF Grant Application Workshop on Wednesday, August 30, at 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. in Montgomery. This will be an “in person” workshop only and space is limited. Please contact the Community Development Department if you’re interested in applying for these funds.



### Smart Growth America Announces Community Connectors Grant Program

Smart Growth America’s new Community Connectors grant program will help advance locally-driven projects to reconnect communities separated or harmed by divisive transportation infrastructure and access available federal and state funds to support these projects. Fifteen teams (e.g., public agencies partnered with nonprofits or other community organizations) from communities with populations of 50,000-500,000 will receive a capacity-building grant of up to \$130,000 in addition to tailored training. Learn more [here](#).

### USDA Rural Energy Programs

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the availability of nearly \$11 billion in grants and loan opportunities to help rural energy and utility providers bring affordable clean energy to communities. Funding will be available through two new programs under the Inflation Reduction Act: **Empowering Rural America (New ERA) program and the Powering Affordable Clean Energy (PACE) program**. USDA will accept Letters of Interest from June 30 to September 29 for the PACE program and from July 31 to August 31 for the New ERA program.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

### AICP Certification Diversity Scholarship

The American Planning Association is committed to providing opportunities for all to achieve excellence in planning by fostering equity, diversity, and inclusion in the organization and in the planning profession.



**American Planning Association**

*Creating Great Communities for All*

AICP Certification Diversity scholarships help make the planning profession more diverse. Diversity is an inclusive concept which encompasses, but is not limited to race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, sexuality, ability, educational attainment, spiritual beliefs, creed, culture, tribal affiliation, nationality, immigration status, financial status, political beliefs, and veteran status.

For more information, visit:

[https://www.planning.org/certification/scholarship/?utm\\_medium=email&\\_hs\\_mi=265153583&\\_hsenc=p2ANqtz-88QCJ0tMvVozmHNxg-JUMPBaKH8IKQEM9Na1ZqTiat3PtA6oz\\_CY-cwl87d7JNb11m01w7lkwsqXoNRM2e9azzgLmbEw&utm\\_content=265153583&utm\\_source=hs\\_email](https://www.planning.org/certification/scholarship/?utm_medium=email&_hs_mi=265153583&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-88QCJ0tMvVozmHNxg-JUMPBaKH8IKQEM9Na1ZqTiat3PtA6oz_CY-cwl87d7JNb11m01w7lkwsqXoNRM2e9azzgLmbEw&utm_content=265153583&utm_source=hs_email)

Please contact any of the staff members of SARPC's Community Development Department if you have questions about any of our projects, funding opportunities, assistance with grant applications and management, mapping needs, training events, or other planning services.

- Nicole Taylor [ntaylor@sarpc.org](mailto:ntaylor@sarpc.org) (251) 706-4659
- Sarah Wraight [swraight@sarpc.org](mailto:swraight@sarpc.org) (251) 374-6203
- Samara Walley [swalley@sarpc.org](mailto:swalley@sarpc.org) (251) 706-4677
- Cade Alred [calred@sarpc.org](mailto:calred@sarpc.org) (251) 706-4621



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