Partnerships shape all facets of the City of Greer in 2013.
GREER AT A GLANCE

Founded: 1876
Population: 25,515 (2010 Census)
Government: Council-Manager
City Administrator: Edward Driggers
Mayor: Richard W. Danner
City Council: Jay Arrowood
Wayne Griffin*
Kimberly Bookert
Lee Dumas
Wryley Bettis
Judy Albert
* - Mayor pro tempore

Area:
Total 21.76 square miles
Land 19.99 square miles
Water 1.77 square mile
Elevation 1,024 ft.

Departments:
Administration
Building and Development Standards
Fire
Municipal Court
Parks and Recreation
Police
Public Services

CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES

DISTRICT 1  Jay Arrowood
DISTRICT 2  Wayne Griffin
DISTRICT 3  Kimberly Bookert
DISTRICT 4  Lee Dumas
DISTRICT 5  Wryley Bettis
DISTRICT 6  Judy Albert
6 The Home Depot lends a helping hand
The Home Depot Foundation annually seeks out regional projects through which it and associates may assist veterans. A renovation project at Veterans Park provided just the opportunity.

7 Building bridges at Century Park
A hands-on project at the Century Park Disc Golf Course was a winner for Harley Bonds Career Center students and the city.

8 Cannon Centre earns honor
A state organization found the Cannon Centre to be the perfect example of how to repurpose an older facility.

9 City invests in local businesses
Small businesses need all the help they can get these days. Thanks to a loan and resource program funded by the City of Greer and the Michelin Development Fund, help is available.

10 Memories remain a decade later
Painful memories of an unsolved triple homicide bring multiple agencies and residents together to remember lives lost.

11 International Festival coming in 2014
Assisted by an Elevate Upstate grant, the City of Greer is ready to welcome the world to Greer City Park in 2014.

12 Family friendly and proud of it
National consumer site NerdWallet.com confirmed what many young families already know: Greer is a great place to live.

13 The true meaning of Freedom Blast
How do you say thank you to the many veterans and members of the U.S. Armed Forces? What really matters, according to one local veteran, is that you simply say it.

14 Home on the range for law enforcement
When the City of Greer and Greer CPW needed a new firing range, they went first-class... without costing taxpayers a dime.

16 Inland Port is open for business
The Inland Port at Greer made international news when ground was broken in 2013. International business is the next step.
The best partnerships are win-win

The theme of this Team Greer annual report is partnerships and, as you will read in the following pages, we have much to celebrate in the City of Greer thanks to valued partnerships.

Whether it is collaborating with the Greer Development Corporation or the South Carolina Ports Authority, much of the work takes place behind the scenes to lay the groundwork for what will come.

When the program or project becomes a reality, the ultimate goal is to make certain that it benefits the City of Greer and its residents. It should also have benefits for the partners who have worked to bring that program or project to fruition.

The very definition of partnership implies a joint interest among all parties who are willing to assume liability for losses and the right to share in profits. It is a definition that was publicly blurred in 2013 when Greenville County levied a 4.6 mill property tax increase on residents in the cities of Greer, Greenville, Mauldin, and Simpsonville.

The tax increase resulted when Greenville County Council and the Greenville County Recreation District Commission (established in 1968) collaborated in their support for the passage of Act 20 of 2013, which allows a recreation commission to transfer to a county council the district’s assets and liabilities. So Greenville County Government absorbed those assets and liabilities, personnel, and programs of the Greenville County Recreation District.

Greer City Council neither supported nor endorsed this action and it should be noted that cities were not contacted prior to learning about the consolidation plan. We simply did not have the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversation.

The City of Greer (as well as Greenville, Mauldin, and Simpsonville) originally opted out of the recreation district in favor of operating a city recreation program to serve our residents. What does the county program have to offer Greer residents who are now being told by Greenville County to support it through additional property taxes? That’s the question as city officials work closely with Greenville County and the staff at the new county recreation department – negotiations to determine how the City of Greer and its residents will be impacted both short-term and long-term by the reorganization. Under the definition of partnership, those are discussions that Greenville County should have initiated well before supporting Act 20 to help provide answers to city residents.

Greer City Council moves forward every year with fiscal conservatism and has assessed just one millage increase since 2001 as residential and commercial expansion helped grow the city budget and fund essential city services. Such strategies are the very reason, we believe, the current council was elected.

Yes, our constituents deserve answers when facing a tax increase from Greenville County that will generate approximately $2.6 million countywide to help fund the Greenville County Recreation Department.

To that end, your city council has unanimously passed a resolution preserving the right to pursue litigation unless a satisfactory plan stating the uses of funds derived from the new county tax is agreed upon by and between Greer City Council and Greenville County Council. This resolution, recommended by our city attorney, follows a similar act by Greenville City Council.

Our hope, of course, is that Greenville County moves forward to offer the residents of Greer quality recreation offerings that complement activities and facilities that are already available through the city’s Parks and Recreation Department.

That would be a win-win for all.
That would be a good partnership.

...WE HAVE MUCH TO CELEBRATE IN THE CITY OF GREER THANKS TO VALUED PARTNERSHIPS.
Having a professional staff matters

A few years ago, the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) launched a multimedia campaign called “Life, Well Run.” The campaign was designed to raise awareness of and appreciation for the value that professional government managers bring to building ethical, effective, and efficient local government in more than 73 percent of cities, towns, and counties across America with a population of 2,500 or more.

I always like to expand that awareness to include professional staff – having the correct people in the correct positions to create a great community that you are proud to call home.

As you read through this Team Greer Annual Report, note the many activities that are taking place across our various departments. Everyday responsibilities are important (imagine the inconvenience if a garbage truck ran unscheduled residential routes). It’s when staff go above and beyond – whether sharing insight during a Citizens Police Academy or applying for grants to help programs go farther – that we realize departments don’t simply run themselves.

We like to use the term “Team Greer” to describe all city employees. Any great team has skilled players supervised by knowledgeable assistant coaches overseen by a head coach. This team also has engaged elected officials that contribute to the playbook to develop policies and programs.

When the team plays well, with all members doing their jobs to the best of their abilities, the result is more often than not a win. There is an expectation among staff at all levels to meet high standards in service delivery and accountability. Together, we look for more effective and efficient ways to serve members of the community.

Team Greer also spent time in 2013 examining guidelines for ethical behavior and the role ethics play in local government to ensure that conduct and decisions merit the trust of the public, supervisors, and colleagues.

Over the past 100 years, ICMA has developed a stringent Code of Ethics for professional local government managers to which its members subscribe and which ICMA enforces. The code spells out principles of equity, transparency, integrity, stewardship of public resources, political neutrality, and respect for the rights and responsibility of elected officials and residents.

Local governments can no longer afford to operate independently. Many services that were previously managed by the state and the federal government have migrated to the local level. At the same time, federal and state aid to local governments has dwindled, even as the nation has recovered from the economic downturn.

Putting the overall welfare of the community first and making resources stretch as far as possible helps members of Team Greer develop and participate in partnerships – from applying for grants to participating in the Greater Greer Chamber of Commerce’s Leadership Greer program.

If you’ve come to rely on such services as scheduled residential trash collection, you may find it surprising that 27 percent of cities in the United States with a population of 2,500 or more are not professionally managed. As the scope and complexity of local government services has grown, so, too, has the need for greater professionalism in government management.

Team Greer is proud to work for you.
A former marketing slogan for The Home Depot stated simply, “You can do it. We can help.” The home improvement giant made good on that slogan in a big way in October, donating $8,000 to renovations at the City of Greer’s Veterans Park. On top of the financial commitment, Home Depot employees from the Greer store volunteered their time to help with the work – replacing pavers, spreading mulch, repairing and painting the gazebo, and more. They were joined by members of the city’s Parks and Recreation Department and Disabled American Veterans Greer Chapter 39.

The City of Greer project was among 10 regional projects The Home Depot undertook in 2013 to support veterans. Disabled American Veterans Greer Chapter 39 frequently uses the park for special ceremonies on occasions such as Memorial Day. The site includes memorials to men and women from Greer who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to the United States.

The local effort was part of a national campaign by The Home Depot to assist veterans. In 2013, Home Depot associates completed 868 volunteer projects across the U.S. specifically to help veterans. Projects ranged from building wheelchair ramps and renovating the homes of wounded warriors to repairing and remodeling transitional housing for homeless veterans.
Building their Bridges to Success

When it comes to education, it’s difficult to beat “real world” experience. Twenty-four students in the Building Construction program at the J. Harley Bonds Career Center honed their skills during the spring semester by constructing and installing wooden bridges for the disc golf course at Century Park.

The project proved to be a winner for all involved. Thanks to a public grant and a donation, all wood and steel I beams were acquired at no cost to the city. Teachers Scot Thompson, Richard Baer, and Roy Morris traded their students’ work for the practical experience. And disc golfers at Century Park now cross streams on sturdy bridges with handrails.

The students added a surprise on the final bridge installed – an arched span (see photo above) that Thompson said required students to bend the wood in the shop. The bridge was constructed at the Bonds Center and transported to Century Park.

The students spent more than two hours digging supports, manually placing the bridge, and making sure it was level before signing off on the job.

“The quality of the bridge work is superb. It’s obvious that the students took great pride in this project,” Parks and Recreation Department director Ann Cunningham said.

The students and teachers were recognized at a Greer City Council meeting in May “for their talented and tireless work and accepted a certificate stating that “this partnership will serve residents of the City of Greer and visitors to the community for many years to come.”

Welding students at the Bonds Career Center joined collaborative efforts in 2013.

Derrick Francis (above left) and Jacob Maxey, both graduates of Wade Hampton High School, brought to life the first public art project funded by the city – a sculpture incorporating elements of the Greer Cultural Arts logo.

The sculpture was installed outside the Cannon Centre in June. The students took on the sculpture project as a SkillsUSA community project.
Cannon Centre earns Parks Excellence Award

South Carolina Recreation and Parks Association recognizes creative repurposing project

Repurposing a nearly 80-year-old National Guard Armory isn’t easy. But when done correctly, as in the case of the City of Greer’s Cannon Centre, the end result turns heads.

A $1.1 million renovation project produced a state-of-the-art rental hall that was reserved 164 times, hosted three theatrical productions, and generated $68,000 in revenue during its first full year of use. Financing for the repurposing included funds from the city’s Hampton Road Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District and block grants totaling $50,000 from the Greenville County Redevelopment Authority.

The result was a winning effort, according to the South Carolina Recreation and Parks Association, which honored the city with its Parks Excellence Award in November at SCRPA’s joint meeting with the North Carolina Recreation and Parks Association in Raleigh. The award is presented for a project pertaining to a new, renovated or revitalized park.

“Repurposing a facility can be challenging, especially when the facility has such historical value and community ties. Several members of the community who literally grew up with the building have seen it transition from a National Guard Armory to a basketball gym and now into an event center,” Parks and Recreation Department director Ann Cunningham said.

The 10,000 square-foot Cannon Centre, dedicated July 2012, required extensive renovation. It featured a 5,700 square-foot main floor available for lease for weddings and receptions, banquets, and parties.

Also included is a full-service kitchen, two classrooms, Blu-ray quality projection, a surround-sound audio system, and full theatrical lighting. The building also houses the Greer Cultural Arts office.

Park Hop draws crowds to City of Greer facilities

Greer City Park and Kids Planet at Century Park were introduced to a new audience during the summer as the locations were among those included in LiveWell Greenville’s first Park Hop Scavenger Hunt.

LiveWell Greenville is a partnership of both public and private organizations that aims to make Greenville County a healthier place to live, work, and play. Park Hop was designed to get all members of the family outside and searching for clues at 16 parks in Greenville County. Successfully completing the hunt at all locations earned participants prizes.

Greer City Park received extra attention when Lisa Blackstone snapped a photo of her son and daughter enjoying the fountain and won the Park Hop Photo Contest.
New public-private partnership aims to promote business growth

Greer City Council unanimously approved a resolution in August providing $100,000 to the Greater Greer Chamber of Commerce for a Michelin Development Fund geared to providing loans to businesses that operate or will locate within the city.

John Tully, president of Michelin Development, said Michelin would match the funds to create an initial investment of $200,000. Tully, who made the presentation to council with Greer Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Allen Smith, also said others may contribute to the fund to promote business growth within the city limits.

"Throughout the Upstate, people are keeping the entrepreneurial spirit alive," said John Tully, president of Michelin Development. "Michelin sees the potential of these small businesses and wants them to succeed. For many right now, their biggest need is funding; socially and economically disadvantaged businesses are often the last to receive that funding."

The loan, offered at prime plus two percent, will be capped at $50,000. The money will be loaned through a Bank and Trust, while Michelin Development will be the administrator and coordinate the process. The Michelin Development steering committee consisting of locally respected associates, can help direct applicants to further sources of advice and funding.

Mayor Rick Danner praised the program as “a model of sustainability for our community,” in part because loan recipients have access to a large network of local business support on such business topics as accounting, auditing, business brokerage, business development, communications, franchising, human resources, information technology, and marketing.

S&P upgrades City of Greer’s bond rating

Any adult who has made a major purchase or applied for a low APR credit card knows the value of a good credit rating.

It’s the same for municipalities that issue bonds to fund major construction and infrastructure projects. National rating services such as Standard & Poor’s regularly evaluate obligors to determine their credit-worthiness.

Following a 2013 evaluation, Standard & Poor’s Rating Services upgraded the City of Greer’s bond rating to AA-, indicating a “very strong capacity to meet financial commitments.” The service’s highest possible rating is AAA.

The city’s prior rating was A+, which was upgraded from A- in 2010.

The rating summary notes that “Greer’s budgetary performance has remained strong in our view, with positive performance in both the general fund as well as total governmental fund balance.”

It added, “In our opinion, the city’s budgetary flexibility remains very strong, with reserves above 15% of expenditures in fiscal years 2011 and 2012.”
Ceremony remembers BRSB victims

Robbery and triple homicide in 2003 continues to haunt law enforcement professionals

Approximately 150 people filed into the Greer City Amphitheater on May 16 to remember the victims of an unsolved 2003 bank robbery and triple homicide at Blue Ridge Savings Bank in Greer. As they commemorated the 10-year anniversary of the slayings, all maintained hope for a lead that will allow justice to be served.

The Service of Remembrance and Hope offered an opportunity for a community that has never healed from the crime to gather and mark the date while holding on to hope that posters and pleas will help generate new information. Bank employee Sylvia Holtzclaw of Greer and customers James and Margaret Barnes of Boiling Springs were fatally shot at 1:30 p.m. that day. During the service, as the crowd observed a period of silence, the bell tower at Greer City Hall chimed once for each of the victims.

Speakers at the event included members of the Holtzclaw Family – David, Kevin, and Mhari – close family friend Robbie Gravley. Joining them were City of Greer Police Chief Dan Reynolds, Seventh Judicial Circuit Solicitor Barry Barnette, FBI Special Agent Matt Witt, and GPD investigator Dale Arterburn. Speakers lit candles of remembrance, sympathy, appreciation, and hope during the ceremony, which was capped by bagpiper Dean Douglas.

“Our priority is to support the families, give them some encouragement and honor the victims’ lives,” Greer Police Lt. Matt Hamby said of the service. “We also hope it serves as a good reminder to someone that now is definitely the time to come forward with any information that would help us solve this case.”

Hundreds of leads have been pursued by law enforcement in efforts to arrest those responsible. The public is urged to call the FBI office in Columbia at (803) 551-4200 with any information concerning the case.
Greer Station channels many countries during such festive events as the International Wine Festival and Oktoberfest. A $5,000 grant will help invite the entire world to Greer City Park in 2014.

The City of Greer was named in November as one of just three recipients of a $5,000 grant awarded through Ten at the Top, a nonprofit that fosters collaborations and partnerships to enhance economic vitality and quality of life in the Upstate. Hughes Investments funded the grants.

“The goal of the Elevate Upstate program is to get communities thinking about what types of initiatives or programs might help spark vibrancy within their area and then provide some seed money to get some of them started,” Hughes Investments President Phil Hughes said. “I was absolutely amazed by the number of great ideas submitted for the program.

The inaugural “City of Greer International Festival: Greer Goes Global” is planned for Saturday, March 29 at Greer City Park. The event will be held in conjunction with Upstate International, a month-long series of events in March to showcase and celebrate the world’s cultures found in the Upstate. Event organizers point out that more than 100 cultures are represented by those who live and work in the Upstate.

“Look at the industries we have here – from BWM Manufacturing to Mitsubishi Polyester Film – and you’ll begin to realize just how diverse our community is,” said Red Watson, assistant director of Parks and Recreation. “This festival is an opportunity to come together and celebrate the many cultures that make the City of Greer the place it is.”

Admission to the festival, which begins at 11 a.m., will be free to the public. Entertainment representing different cultures will include music, dancing and singing, children’s crafts, inflatables, visual arts, and sports demonstrations. Food vendors will also be available to offer a taste of international cuisine.

The City of Greer’s fifth annual juried art exhibition will also be held at Greer City Hall during the festival. The exhibition is designed to recognize the quality and diversity of work by artists in the Upstate and entries will reflect the theme “Greer Goes Global.” An awards ceremony and reception is planned from 6-8 p.m. on March 29.

“This will be different from any other festival held in the city,” Watson said. “Oktoberfest is largely for adults and other events are geared toward children. We want to hold an event that is both fun and educational for the entire family.”
NerdWallet, a consumer advocacy website, selected Greer in 2013 as one of the best towns in South Carolina for young families.

“The City of Greer has been one of the state’s fastest-growing cities over the past decade and young families have comprised a large percentage of that growth,” City Administrator Ed Driggers said. “They have discovered that the city strives to always improve the quality of life for residents through such services as parks and recreation, special events, and a rapid response to needs. I believe this survey validates the high quality of life our residents enjoy.”

NerdWallet sought to better inform young families and parents-to-be by analyzing cities and towns across the state according to five criteria:

- Public school ratings
- Median home value
- Cost of homeownership
- Median income
- Economic growth

NerdWallet ranked Greer fourth after assessing the city’s cost of living, education system, and economic growth. Greer provides great schools while housing prices and costs are among the lowest of cities and towns that comprise the top ten.

“Nestled at the foothills of the old Blue Ridge Mountains, Greer offers families that love the outdoors a multitude of activities. Surrounded by lakes, parks, and trails, it’s easy for families to maximize their time outdoors together. And the town’s Fourth of July ‘Freedom Blast’ is a firework display that’s not to be missed,” NerdWallet analyst Mike Anderson said.

The State of South Carolina also earned high marks for its healthy job market, great schools, and a beautiful environment offering a myriad of family activities, from enjoying gorgeous beaches to hiking in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

NerdWallet is a consumer-friendly financial literacy website that helps individuals make better financial decisions and set effective financial goals.

School ratings, home values, economic growth, and even cherry snow cones at one of the City of Greer’s many festivals make the city popular among young families.
DAV, Army Reserve help keep focus on military and veterans

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Greer Chapter 39 and the S.C. Army National Guard have partnered with the City of Greer since the inaugural Freedom Blast festival in 2009 to make sure members of the U.S. Armed Forces and veterans are properly recognized.

The focus of the festival was clearly evident at a press conference to announce the 2013 event. Sgt. Tim Marcus of Greer, a 13-year veteran of the Army National Guard who had recently returned from an 18-month deployment struggled to keep his emotions in check as he explained the most difficult part of his deployment – being separated from his wife and children. However, it is a job, he said, that must be done.

“So many places I visited through my time in the Army, you can’t have the freedom we enjoy here,” he said. “That’s why we do this job. That’s why I do this job.”

Preston Johnson, commander of Greer Chapter 39, summed up Freedom Blast in one sentence: “A veteran just wants somebody to say thank you.” The thanks extended to an often overlooked group when Mayor Rick Danner presented a proclamation declaring May 28, 2013 as Military Spouses and Families Day for their sacrifices and support of the United States Armed Forces.

Tiffany Marcus, standing beside her warrior husband, accepted the proclamation on behalf of all military spouses and families.

“A veteran just wants somebody to say thank you.”

– Preston Johnson

Ongoing professional development is an important part of maintaining a first-rate staff in any business.

City of Greer employees in all departments are challenged to stay current or ahead of trends and new technology so they can continue to deliver outstanding service to residents.

Internal development took a new step in 2013 with online training through the Municipal Association of South Carolina’s Risk Management Services.

All city employees attended at least four online sessions: “Bullying in the Workplace,” “Preventing Slips, Trips, and Falls,” “Dealing with Heat Stress,” and “Ethical Behavior.”

Supervisors then assigned additional courses based on employee responsibilities.

In addition to providing key training on workplace safety and efficiency, the online training eliminated the need for travel to sessions and could be scheduled around busy work periods. Sessions were included in the City of Greer’s MASC membership.

City officials said the online training will continue in 2014.
The City of Greer often uses the term **Team Greer** to describe its employees, realizing that members of different departments all contribute to the same goal: providing exception service to city residents.

The Greer Police Department’s former and current training officers, Sgt. Randle Ballenger and Sgt. Chris Forrester, respectively, expand the concept of Team Greer to businesses and individuals in the city when they talk about more than two years of renovations that have taken place at the Tactical Training Center on Highway 101.

“This really was a Team Greer project. A variety of people contributed to it and really made it possible,” Ballenger said. “It’s a huge resource for us. As urban sprawl takes over rural areas, it’s getting harder to find land for projects like this.”

The property, which is owned by Greer CPW, has been a constant in the city since the 1950s, hosting everything from turkey shoots to Boy Scout events. It underwent an overhaul in 2004 with the construction of an obstacle course and a new berm, but provided the bare minimum for members of the GPD and CPW’s wardens to train with rifles and pistols.

By 2010, the need for a dedicated local training facility and concerns about existing lead in the range’s berm provided the opportunity to investigate a full renovation of the property. A commercial estimate of $143,000 to bring the range to professional standards led officials to seek a more cost-effective renovation option.

What they discovered was a generous community willing to donate time and labor to assist local law enforcement.

Strange Brothers Grading Co. brought a bulldozer and motor grader to the site and, for the second time in a decade, the berm at the range was completely rebuilt. This time, however, the department purchased 100 tons of rubber chips to cover the berm.
“These are chips from tires that still have steel in them, so they aren’t recyclable. But they do help keep the berm from washing away and they absorb any stray shots,” Ballenger said. “We got them for one dollar per ton, so we spent $100 total.”

The need for 10 professional grade bullet bunkers prompted negotiations with The Bullet Bunker of Port Clinton, Ohio. For a substantial discount on the bunkers, GPD agreed to be the southeastern demonstration range for the company, then saved a large shipping bill when Ballenger and Sgt. Chad Richardson drove to Ohio to pick up the bunkers.

The bunkers, which use an engineering principle called in-elastic collision, improve safety and are environmentally friendly by stopping projectiles and trapping their by-products from entering the air and ground.

The facility is used monthly by the GPD Emergency Response Team and quarterly by the department’s officers.

“Expended brass is collected following training sessions and sold for recycling.

“A dedicated facility for GPD and CPW is exactly what we’ve needed,” Forrester said. “It allows us to shoot all of our weapons system (patrol rifle, pistol, and Taser).”

“**This really was a Team Greer project. A variety of people contributed and really made it possible**”

– Sgt. Randle Ballenger
Standing on damp real estate in the shadow of the J. Verne Smith Parkway on March 1, it may have been difficult for some guests to envision future roads with such names as GSP Logistics Parkway and International Commerce Way. Before the close of 2014, however, those roads opened and directed traffic to the new South Carolina Inland Port in Greer.

Ironically, it was water – 74 days of rain over a seven-month period – that forced the Inland Port’s scheduled September opening to October. But when three rubber-tired gantry cranes began hoisting cargo containers onto Norfolk Southern train cars, the port established the City of Greer as a global shipping hub.

The $50 million project developed approximately 40 acres at the 100-acre site and triggered a wave of excitement at the realization that the “game-changer,” as State Ports Authority CEO Jim Newsome referred to the Inland Port during its conceptual phase, was prepared to fire up an economic engine in the city and the entire state of South Carolina.

“The port is a key piece in the economic development puzzle and the Inland Port in Greer is a great addition to our state’s logistics network,” South Carolina’s Commerce Secretary Bobby Hitt said. “The Upstate, in particular, has a high concentration of companies that are heavy exporters. This facility will help streamline their supply chains and encourage additional growth and investment.”

The ability to streamline equals bottom dollar savings for those companies. BMW Manufacturing, already one of the Port of Charleston’s top clients, became the Inland Port’s anchor tenant when the company recently moved its export operations from Duncan to a new 413,000-square-foot building adjacent to the Inland Port. The facility is just three miles from the BMW plant.

G&P Trucking announced plans to acquire a 10-acre site near the port and Reno Deaton, executive director of Greer Development Corporation (GDC), anticipates the facility only making the area more attractive to manufacturers and other companies whose business involves importing and exporting goods on a regular basis.

Since the groundbreaking, GDC has fielded more than 200 inquiries from companies interested in locating near the Inland Port. Those inquiries have led to more than 22 prospect visits.

A new rail spur on the City of Greer’s east side reshaped part of the Victor Community and now directs Norfolk Southern trains to the Inland Port.
The Inland Port era arrives

“I think what’s happened here is we have formed a partnership with South Carolina Ports Authority, Norfolk Southern, and Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport that can yield incredible results in the future,” Deaton said. “It gives us the opportunity to give companies an opportunity to now see it in action. I think it’s a compelling story to companies wanting to use this facility and invest in our community.”

If history is an indicator, the story will generate results. The Virginia Inland Port located in Front Royal, 70 miles west of Washington, D.C., opened in 1989 and is generally recognized as the first successful inland port in the U.S., During the last two decades, 39 major companies including Rubbermaid, Family Dollar, Red Bull, Coors, and Home Depot have located near the port, investing $747 million and developing more than 8.5 million square feet of space. The activity has created more than 8,000 jobs for Front Royal.

The S.C. Ports Authority was well ahead of its time in planning the Inland Port, purchasing the bulk of the land on which the port now sits in 1982. Three decades of improvements in infrastructure, local industrial growth and a population boom over the past 20 years changed the outlook.

Another factor was the success of the Virginia Inland Port and the rise in popularity of intermodal transportation – using multiple means of shipping such as rail, ships and trucks – due to rising costs associated with the transport of goods from docks.

In the case of the new Inland Port in Greer, transporting goods by rail rather than by truck will take approximately 25,000 tractor-trailers off South Carolina highways annually. That means less fuel will be burned and state highways will experience less wear and tear.

The opening of the Inland Port combined with an industry trend of launching larger ships that will be accommodated by the expanded Panama Canal in 2015 gives the Port of Charleston a significant advantage according to Jack Ellenberg, senior vice president of economic development and projects for the State Ports Authority.

Gov. Nikki Haley (far right) and Jim Newsome, President and CEO of the S.C. Ports Authority, were frequent visitors to Greer in 2013, watching the Inland Port progress from bare ground to an operational facility.
“The Inland Port would not have happened without the ‘can do’ attitude of the City of Greer and other local entities. We have formed a valuable partnership which will bring big benefits in the future as far as the economic development of the area.”

Jim Newsome
President and CEO
S.C. Ports Authority
“The port is a key piece in the economic development puzzle.”

– Bobby Hitt
S.C. Commerce Secretary

“Ships that big are limited in ports they can call on, so they rely on the inland infrastructure,” he said. “Greer puts us in the middle of an urban footprint of 94 million people within 500 miles.”

Companies will also experience savings because the Inland Port has the ability to store empty shipping containers in 552 slots. In the past, importing goods from the Port of Charleston required two-way charges, paying to bring the full container in, and then paying again to send the empty container back. Now, trains coming into and leaving from the Inland Port will be much more efficient, carrying almost no empty containers.

Officials estimated that the Inland Port is expected to handle approximately 40,000 containers in its first year.

Greer’s location offers rail and road shipping options, but has one distinct advantage just two miles away – the freight runway at GSP. Adding air freight to the mix creates the opportunity for a company that imports through the Port of Charleston to easily ship goods anywhere in the country.

City of Greer officials have worked to make sure the Inland Port traffic does not create a burden for local residents and has worked with the S.C. Department of Transportation to create routes to the port for trucks.

With one entrance to the Inland Port – off of the J. Verne Smith Parkway (Hwy. 80) – trucks are being routed to that highway from I-85, I-26, and Hwy. 29. To minimize downtown traffic as well as wear and tear to city streets, trucks will be deterred from traveling on Poinsett St.

As the process of delivering containers to the Inland Port is being fine-tuned by Norfolk Southern, the timing and length of train traffic is also being monitored by City of Greer officials.

To keep residents informed about the Inland Port project, representatives from the S.C. Ports Authority, Norfolk Southern and SCDOT joined City of Greer and Greer CPW officials at a two-hour session at the Cannon Centre on June 28.

By the time the Inland Port opened for business, the construction tab alone included moving 1.2 million cubic yards of dirt, installing 15,000 feet of storm drain and 25,000 feet of electrical conduit, and pouring 37 acres of roller-compact ed concrete that is 13 inches thick in spots.

Money well spent? Newsome has no doubt about that.

“The Inland Port would not have happened without the ‘can do’ attitude of the City of Greer and other local entities. We have formed a valuable partnership which will bring big benefits in the future as far as the economic development of the area.” Newsome said. “I think we’ll look back on this as an extremely good investment.”
Auditors gave the City of Greer’s financial report for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2013 an overwhelmingly positive report at Greer City Council’s Dec. 10 meeting.

Johnny Britt, a partner with S. Preston Douglas & Associates, LLP, told council that the city’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Report received an unqualified opinion, the highest level of assurance of fair and accurate reporting.

“The information stated is fairly reported and can be relied upon by City Council,” Britt said. “The city has a more than three to one ratio of current assets to current liabilities, which tells us the financial status was excellent as of the end of the year.”

Key highlights for the fiscal year:

- Assets and deferred outflows of resources exceeded liabilities by $25,769,742 (net position) at the close of the fiscal year. The unrestricted net position of that amount is $7,535,159, which may be used to meet the government’s ongoing obligation to its citizens and creditors.

- As of the close of the fiscal year, governmental funds showed fund balances of $9,137,017, a positive net change of $1,790,128.

- At the end of the fiscal year, unassigned fund balance for the general fund was $5,300,579 (or 33% of general fund expenditures). The $1,579,773 increase was primarily a result of improved economic activity in construction business licenses and related permits, and reflects council’s and management’s commitment to improving the financial stability of the city.

- The city’s long-term obligations decreased by 7.65% ($1,813,896) as principal payments outpaced new borrowing.

“This statement gives us a picture at the end of the year of the financial shape the City of Greer is in to start out the new (fiscal) year. It shows us that the city is in excellent financial shape as of June 30, 2013,” Britt said.

The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the past fiscal year (and previous years) is available on the city’s website for public inspection.
The Finance Office also celebrated the receipt of its sixteenth consecutive Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting (CAFR).

The honor, given by the non-profit Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), is designed to encourage state and local governments to go beyond the minimum requirements of generally accepted accounting principles to prepare comprehensive annual financial reports that evidence the spirit of transparency and full disclosure.

Residents may also monitor city finances monthly through a web dashboard that offers a comprehensive view of year-to-date revenues and expenditures.

Monthly financial reports posted to the website include a general fund check register, a general fund budget report, a general fund ledger by individual fund, a monthly cash flow analysis, and reports on the hospitality taxes and storm water funds.

Financial reports may be accessed at www.cityofgreer.org by navigating to the finance section under City Administration or by clicking the Quick Links tab and scrolling to the financial reports link. During the initial visit, residents are encouraged to bookmark the page for easy future access.

Refinancing debt saves taxpayers nearly $735,000

When the bond was issued for the City of Greer Municipal Complex in 2008, it was based on a favorable 3.79% interest rate.

Director of Finance David Seifert identified the opportunity to refinance that facility debt in 2013 at 2.55%, saving the city $734,725 over the life of the bond.

The final payment on the bond will be in 2026.
The Building and Development Standards Department began 2013 with a revised organizational structure that was initiated late in 2012 following the retirements of department head Phil Rhoads.

City Engineer Don Holloman stepped into the role of department head, while Ruthie Helms brought a wealth of experience to the building official position and was immediately productive.

The department also strengthened its administrative support with the hiring of Suzanne Lynn and Hazel Poston’s transfer from administrative clerk into the department.

The Building and Development Standards Department exists to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the general public through the equal enforcement of all applicable codes, ordinances, and sound engineering practices within the construction industry, mobile home industry, and engineering fields as needed.

Located on the first floor of Greer City Hall, the department serves a variety of functions for the City of Greer including planning, zoning, building and codes, nuisance abatement, geographic information system, engineering, and storm water.

Holloman oversees all activities of the Engineering and Storm Water divisions. He is tasked with coordinating city construction projects; reviewing site development plans for residential and commercial projects; inspecting street construction in new subdivisions; and advising the storm water program staff in the development and application of the city’s Storm Water Management Program.

The past year brought a flurry of residential lot development not seen since 2005. Residential lot inventory in the city has been depleted in recent years and the post-recession demand for lots has increased. Consequently, developers have been working to meet this demand and a dramatic increase in housing starts is expected in 2014.

Holloman developed the Roadway Assessment Program that annually grades city streets to determine those most in need of repair and maintenance. This program has resulted in an improvement in the overall condition of streets within the city. In addition, efforts are continually underway to update property development and other records into a digital format that can be used in conjunction with the GIS program.

Storm Water Engineer Lillian Hanley and Storm Water Inspector Dan Cain work with other city departments and government agencies to protect the city’s waterways from storm water pollutants that may be generated by construction sites, industrial emissions, or other means. Staff members also respond to citizen concerns about drainage.

Because all runoff cannot be captured and treated like sewage, the best way to ensure cleaner water is to prevent runoff from ever becoming polluted. The city relies on strong storm water ordinances and a diligent staff to accomplish this goal.

A new MS4 permit was initiated by DHEC in 2013 based on the end of the five-year cycle for such permits. There are new requirements contained within this permit that must be implemented during development projects within the city’s jurisdiction.

By educating the public, managing construction sites, and inspecting industrial facilities, the city’s storm water team is working to protect the quality of the city’s water for generations to come.

### Commercial Construction Valuation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TOTAL PROJECTS</th>
<th>VALUATION</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>$10,644,087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>46</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>83</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>$25,339,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>$34,215,273</td>
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</table>
The city partners with such organizations as Upstate Forever and other local governments to provide information regarding water quality and how all can participate in keeping streams and rivers clean.

In addition to utilizing the city website and PEG channel to offer public education, Hanley and Cain were active in the community in 2013 at such events as the Friends of Lake Robinson Day of Celebration in October.

Building Inspections and Code Enforcement led the charge in focusing on cleaning up the city. Adoption of the 2012 International Codes provides the enforcement tools for inspectors to ensure that citizens have a safe, sanitary, and healthy place to live.

Nuisance Abatement Officer Chuck Cunningham partnered with neighborhood leaders and other city departments to address community concerns. Billy Campbell was hired as a part-time inspector to assist with ongoing cleanup efforts.

More than 30 condemnations resulted in the demolition of 23 structures. Staff oversaw renovations and compliance with the minimum code on nine structures that were not torn down.

An unusual rainy season created a challenge for overgrowth in the city. Numerous reports of rubbish, debris, and derelict vehicles resulted in property owners cleaning and removing items. This not only helps beautify the city, but it also improves property values.

The city experienced a record breaking year in commercial development with more than $34 million in investments of commercial properties. Although housing starts were slightly lower in 2013, the valuation of construction exceeded $18 million.

The city’s inspectors have incorporated mobile technology in the field, allowing them immediate access to viewing plans, searching codes, and working more efficiently and effectively to serve customers.

The Planning and Zoning Division is directly responsible for the staffing of the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and the Board of Architectural Review. The Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals, each comprised of seven

“Our firm works across the U.S. and in Europe and I cannot recall any municipality/team ever working harder to make things happen as you all did.”

– Richard T. Evans, Sr., President
Evans General Contractor
Contractors to the BMW Inland Port Warehouse
members appointed by Greer City Council, play an important role in the continued development of the city. The Board of Architectural Review include five members who are architects, building industry members, historians, and owners of historic buildings in Greer. They are tasked with the responsibility of reviewing building and development in Greer Station, the city’s historic downtown district.

“The Planning and Zoning Division’s mission is not just to regulate and say no. We are here to work together with our citizens and developers to guide them through a partnership of cooperation,” Planning and Zoning Coordinator Glenn Pace said. “This partnership between the citizens, the city and developers is to develop sustainable communities that enhance to entire city.”

The South Carolina Inland Port was a good example of that partnership, taking just 11 months to complete.

Notable topics in 2013 included the approval of a new development concept of pocket neighborhoods for Morrow Street. This concept promotes the infill of existing communities and are clustered groups of neighboring houses gathered around a shared open space.

Planning staff met with Ross Chapin, an award-winning architect and long-time advocate for sensibly sized houses and vibrant neighborhoods. He developed the concept of pocket neighborhoods.

“In the last 60 years, we’ve had a version of the American Dream that has had this single-family home as the ideal,” he said. “I think we have to change the definition of the good ol’ American Dream house,” Chapin said.

Another notable project was the announcement of an 88-unit assisted living complex to be constructed across the street from Greer Memorial Hospital.

John Easterling, president of Pulliam Development Company in Spartanburg said the "$15 million project will employ 40 full-time staff. One year ago we made the decision that we were going to build a senior living facility there. This is a perfect place being across from the hospital.”

The Planning and Zoning division hosted the South Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association’s spring conference in March at the Cannon Centre. More than 100 planners from South Carolina, Georgia, and North Carolina heard Mayor Rick Danner’s presentation “From China to South Carolina: Urban Challenges of the 21st Century,” and the South Carolina Ports Authority’s presentation on the Inland Port, “An Economic Driver for South Carolina.”

The Planning and Zoning division approved 733 lots for new housing.

The GIS division staffed by Justin Kirtz continued to implement and improve the city’s online mapping application. Users may now directly access Google Street View through the mapping application to get a street-level view of a selected map area.

The public launch of the application is expected in 2014.

A member of the Greenville County Geographic Information Alliance executive board for the past two years, Kirtz will serve as chairman in 2014.
After two consecutive years of having medical calls comprise 75% of its responses, the City of Greer Fire Department enacted a simple strategy to make its medical response protocols both time and cost effective.

Beginning in the fourth quarter of 2012, the department’s emergency medical personnel began responding solely to life-threatening events, allowing Greenville County EMS and Spartanburg Communications to respond exclusive responders to all non-life-threatening calls for service.

That protocol not only reduced duplicate coverage of non-life-threatening calls in 2013, but also cut GFD’s call volume by more than 700. It allowed first responders ready to go where they have been most needed.

GFD responded to 55 structure fires in 2013, including 47 residences. Three of those were classified as major fires, resulting in $185,000 in property loss, but there were no civilian deaths and just one civilian injury.

The department responded to 48 calls for fires in non-structures such as vehicles, brush and grass, and rubbish. There were no civilian injuries or loss of life in those calls.

Rescue/EMS calls dropped to 1,817 for the year, while false alarms, mutual aid, hazardous materials, and miscellaneous calls comprised the balance.

Department officials credit training as a key to limiting property damage and injuries.

Training Officer Capt. Josh Holzheimer said paid staff completed 9,982 hours of training in 2013, a 55% increase over the previous year. Volunteer staff completed 605 hours of training.

Holzheimer led by example in 2013, participating in several state and regional professional development events.

He graduated from the South Carolina State Firefighters Association’s Leadership Institute Program, a comprehensive 12-month program included such topics as:
- Paid, volunteer and combination departments
- Special purpose districts
- Labor relations
- General fire service history
- Firemen’s insurance and inspection fund
- Fire service legal and liability
- State response assets
- Statehouse tour and legislative process overview

Holzheimer was joined by Capt. Paul Brown and Fire Marshal Capt. Scott Keeley at the Alan Brunacini Fire-Rescue Leadership Institute in Columbia. The company officer and chief level retreat covers leadership topics through case studies, personal experiences, roundtable discussions, and presentations.

Lt Jody Norris and Lt. Chuck McConnell attended the National Fire Service Staff and Command Course presented by the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute at the University of Maryland.

Railroad construction leading to the Inland Port left many houses in the Victor Community vacant before they were razed. Firefighters took advantage of those vacant houses to conduct training exercises with controlled burns.
GFD hosted a S.C. Fire Academy training session at Station Two (Hood Rd.) on trench rescues, allowing six GFD personnel to attend: Capt. Barry Davis, Lt. McConnell, Raymond Tompkins, Kevin Meadows, Kevin Miller, and Joe Borrelli.

Carlos Cortes completed a Fire Instructor I class hosted by SCFA.

Cortes, Mat Tidwell, Joe Borrelli, and Taylor Graham completed Rope Rescue High Angle (Level 1) training.

Tidwell, Tompkins, Borrelli, and Cortes completed Confined Space Rescue training.

Capt. Davis, Lt. Norris, Lt. McConnell, Lt. Dwayne Brown, and Scott Tompkins all completed NFPA Fire Officer II training, bringing all GFD officers to at least that level.


GFD has participated in each of the past two Leadership Greer classes. The program, administered by the Greater Greer Chamber of Commerce, educates participants on such topics as Greer’s history, state and city government, human services, and economic development. Capt. Davis graduated in 2013 and Capt. Keeley is in the 2013-14 class.

The demolition of houses in the Victor area to clear room for a rail spur to the S.C. Inland Port gave members of the department an opportunity to train in actual structures. They assisted the S.C. Law Enforcement Division (SLED) with a fire investigation class in Victor Area and also conducted search and rescue training in the vacant houses.

Members conducted multi-company drills with the Pelham-Batesville Fire Department.

Instruction is also an important part of the staff’s job. Holzheimer taught 72 hours of medical in-service training at the department and led sessions for all City of Greer employees on hazard communications, including revised standards and changes employees can expect in the workplace.

Individuals and businesses are also encouraged to take advantage of training offered by GPD. In 2013, this included 25 classes on CPR and seven classes on fire extinguisher training.

Capt. Davis was named S.C. Adjunct Instructor of the Year at the 2013 SC Fire/Rescue Conference.

Greenville County annually honors emergency services personnel who save victims in cardiac arrest. GFD members honored in May were Capt. Bobby James, Capt. Holzheimer, Kevin Holtzclaw, Randall Hipp, Borrelli, Tompkins, and Merrill.

Each June, GFD sponsors at least one team to compete in the American Lung Association’s Fight for Air Climb, a trek up 1,310 steps in full firefighter gear at the Bon Secours Wellness Arena.

GFD fielded two teams at the 2013 event in June, earning third place among all companies in money raised for the American Lung Association. Participants were Capt. Brown, Capt. Holzheimer, Tompkins, Borrelli, Cortes, Thomas Kickler, Jonathan Bundy, and Evan Polk.

GFD’s 2013 award recipients:
• Mat Tidwell, Paid Firefighter of the Year
• Joe Woodman, Volunteer Firefighter of the Year
• Josh Holzheimer, Officer of the Year
• Chase Bradshaw, Explorer of the Year
• Joe Borrelli, Training Award
• Casey Paris, Volunteer Training Award

Members of the Greer Fire Department give back to the community by participating annually in the American Lung Association’s Fight for Air Climb. The fundraiser requires participants to climb 1,310 steps in full firefighter gear.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIRE MARSHAL’S OFFICE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013 STATISTICS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inspections</td>
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<td>Violations</td>
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<td>People Reached</td>
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<td>through Fire Education</td>
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<td>Building Plan Reviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>Certificates of Occupancy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Car Seat Inspections</td>
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Members of the Greer Fire Department
Fire Chief Chris Harvey had an ambitious goal for his department’s 100th anniversary in November of 2014 – bringing back one of its senior members to carry the department’s banner during the celebration.

In this case, it wasn’t who but what... and how much work was needed to accomplish the task.

A 1941 Chevy Southern pumper truck purchased new by the City of Greer more than 70 years ago was one of the department’s top vehicles for decades before it was removed from service. Allen Cullum, grandson of Greer businessman B.A. Bennett, purchased the truck in 1980 for recreational use at his home in Texas.

When Cullum offered the truck back to the city in 2011, Harvey’s mind clicked to the department’s centennial celebration and he took the idea of a restoration project to Greer City Council. He received council’s blessing with one stipulation: that no tax dollars be spent on the restoration.

Thanks to the generosity of more than 50 businesses and individuals who responded to the “Renew Engine Two” campaign, that goal was attained more than a year before the department’s anniversary date.

“I didn’t really know how people would respond, but it’s a part of Greer’s heritage and people wanted to be a part of it,” Harvey said. “We can’t thank those generous donors enough because they made this renovation possible.”

Harvey said Gerald Davis and Wallace Sumner, in particular, helped with the actual work that included retaining as many original parts as possible. The search brought parts from as far away as Washington State and a couple were even purchased on eBay.

Look for the shiny “new” pumper truck at local events in 2014 as the Greer Fire Department celebrates its centennial. Like the department itself, the truck is looking forward to the next 100 years.
As the judicial arm of the City of Greer, the Greer Municipal Court is responsible for the administration of justice. An efficient and courteous staff serves the public with integrity, professionalism, and respect.

“We diligently hold ourselves to a higher standard of excellence, preserving public trust, while at all times adhering to the South Carolina Code of Laws and all policies and procedures set forth by South Carolina Court Administration,” Court Administrator Kirsten Pressley said. “We are dedicated to the public while always striving to exceed expectations.”

The court staff is also held in high regard by peers in the state and is active in the Municipal Court Administration Association of South Carolina (MCAA), which focuses on fostering and developing interest in sound court administration, encouraging the most advanced technologies in the field of court administration, disseminating information and exchanging ideas among its members.

The Association offers training and access to a listserve to court administrators, clerks of court, municipal judges, and other city or town employees involved in court administration.

Pressley served as president of MCAA in 2012 and continues her service as a member of the association’s board of directors. In addition to attending two meetings annually, she helps plan upcoming training sessions for members.

She also was chosen to participate in a focus group with the association and the Municipal Association of South Carolina concentrating on concerns of the Court.

Collette Botelho, Suzette Kimmons, Anne Pitts, and Connie Hypes completed mandatory Victim Service Provider (VSP) training. Kimmons also attended both MCAA conferences in 2013, while Botelho attended the spring meeting. A member of the city’s wellness committee, Botelho also attended a Wellness Workshop in Greenville.

All clerical staff and ministerial recorders completed Security Awareness Training for Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS)

Greer Municipal Court is in session every Wednesday at the city’s Police and Court Complex to hear traffic and misdemeanor criminal cases carrying a maximum fine and sentence of $500 plus court costs or 30 days in jail, plus certain other cases as authorized by the legislature.

In addition to arraignments held twice daily (every day of the week), the facility is also the site of: General Sessions Preliminary Hearings for Greenville County charges (held monthly to determine if probable cause exists for charges); jury trials held four to six weeks per year; and pretrial conferences held four to six days per year.

The Department of Motor Vehicles uses the city facility to conduct regional administrative hearings, while Greenville County Magistrate Judge Robert F. Simms uses the courtroom or hearing room 8.5 days per month.

The courtroom is also used occasionally by the Greer Police Department for such activities as mock trial training.

During 2013, the court staff handled 6,661 filed cases and disposed of 7,541 cases. They also processed and disposed of 622 bench warrants and issued 518 bench warrants.

The court processed 711 expungements, issued 1,332 arrest warrants, and conducted 1,249 arraignments. It generated $256,330 in revenue from $724,882 total collected.

With a three percent increase over 2012, all expungements are now current. Expungements are now divided among all court employees instead of being processed by a temporary employee.

The expungement law changed again in 2013, affecting the types of cases that may be expunged through pre-trial intervention, adding more cases that qualify. The new law effectively added more work at the summary court level. It also requires that if the case is dismissed, nolle prossed, or not guilty and the defendant was not fingerprinted, the charge must be removed from any internet-based public record.

Monies Collected and Revenue

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
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<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>$226,645.98</td>
<td>$256,330.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total $ Collected</td>
<td>$633,339.66</td>
<td>$724,881.61</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
All alternative sentencing programs and payment plans are set up and monitored by court personnel. Alternative Programs include, but are not limited to: drug counseling, random drug testing, alcohol counseling, criminal domestic violence counseling, anger management counseling, MADD Victim Impact Panel, GED/Diploma, electronic monitoring, weekend jail time monitoring, Alive @ 25, defensive driving, and mental health counseling.

In cooperation with the Greer Police Department, the court has established a successful alternative sentencing program through community service.

Greer Municipal Court has established successful partnerships with local agencies, such as the Spartanburg Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (SADAC) and the local counseling group “Family...You Can’t Beat Them” to meet the needs of alternative sentencing.

The staff is tasked with the continuous maintenance of record retention schedules, bench warrant requests and bench warrants, conditional discharge files, pre-trial Intervention files, payment plans, non-resident violators compacts, alternative sentencing files, jail files, and disposed files.

Municipal Judge Henry Mims and the court's ministerial recorders maintained continuing legal education hours, including required criminal domestic violence training. Judge Mims attended the annual judge’s training at Hickory Knob State Park and the South Carolina Summary Court Judges Association training.

Ed Demko completed Magistrate/Municipal Judge Intensive Training, Barbara Ferguson attended the Upstate Judges Association training, and Lori Floyd joined Pressley at the annual MCAA training.

Ferguson, Reynolds, Floyd, and Pressley attended the Interpersonal Violence Conference.
City Council reappoints Judge Mims

The secret to an effective court is no secret at all to the City of Greer’s Municipal Judge Henry Mims. He learned it when he accepted the post.

“When I was offered the job I told them I would take it for a couple of years. That was almost 20 years ago,” Mims said with a grin. “And so, for the first time in a long time, Greer had a resident judge. We had a judge who had a vested interest in the success of the court, the success of the city, and the success of the community.”

Greer City Council realized in June that it’s difficult to argue with success and reappointed Mims to another four-year term.

That vested interest instills in Mims and the municipal court staff a sense of fairness and objectivity. Municipal court hears only misdemeanor criminal cases, traffic cases carrying a maximum fine and sentence of $500 or 30 days in jail, and certain other cases as authorized by the South Carolina Legislature, but Mims commonly refers to it as “the people’s court.”

“It isn’t just the facility. It’s the folks I’ve got down there. When you come to our court it doesn’t matter who you are. We are not ‘respecters of persons’ as my wife would say. When you come to that front window you will be treated with respect or (the employee) will not have a job,” he said. “We are a customer service organization.”

Greer Mayor Rick Danner compares visiting one of Judge Mims’ sessions to a trip to Lake Wobegon the small fictional town in which author and radio host Garrison Keillor sets life lessons for the residents.

“It’s a mixture of justice and down home humor and sometimes a little one-on-one discussion with someone about what they need to do with the direction of their life,” Danner said.

Mims prefers the word nudge.

“There are a lot of young people in this city who just needed to be nudged back. It’s simply a matter of taking the time to do that,” he said. “There are some that all I can do is lock them up, but many realize that, once they’ve been caught, we’ll never see them again (in the court). And yes it takes time to nudge them back, but you and I don’t have to pay for it through incarceration time and time in a general sessions court.”

Court Administrator Kirsten Pressley has witnessed Mims in action for the past 16 years.

“Judge Mims treats everyone fairly and with respect,” she said. “He is very supportive of his staff and leads by example.”

A Duke Law School graduate, Mims and his wife, Juliette, have a law practice across the street from the city’s Police and Court Complex.

“I practice all over the state and I see a lot of courts. Some places the mayor will call the judge and tell him who’s guilty and who isn’t guilty. And in some of those courts the judge will listen to him,” Mims said. “My deal has always been ‘You stay out of my court and I’ll stay out of politics.’ It’s worked well so far.”

That court has been a hastily assembled collection of tables and chairs at a temporary facility. It has also been, since 2008, a state-of-the-art facility in the Police and Courts building – a courtroom that Mims helped design.

When, or if, he steps down as Greer’s municipal judge, Mims would like to see one trait in his successor.

“I’ll probably stay until you run me off, but I’m hoping whoever is the next judge will be someone with an investment in the city and its people,” he said.
The City of Greer Parks and Recreation Department is committed to fulfilling its mission of providing quality recreational experiences while administering the values of community image, human development, preservation of environmental resources, health and wellness, economic development, and cultural unity.

The department relies on five divisions to accomplish this mission: athletics, recreation, events, cultural arts, and grounds and maintenance. Working together, members of every division help provide events and activities for all ages in safe and comfortable settings.

The Athletics Division offered leagues for adults and children in nine sports in 2013, drawing 2,170 total participants.

The Greer Baseball League continues to be the most popular offering with 723 young people playing in 2013. The league received a boost when four batting cages at the Country Club Sports Complex and at Century Park were renovated with accrued recreation programs funds. Teams may now participate in batting activities when the fields are too wet for practice.

Also, a new scoreboard was installed at Stevens Field after lightning damaged the existing one. The scraping, priming, painting and installation of fence capping on the outfield wall was completed in September.

The Foothills Soccer Club realized another strong growth year, adding 158 players to its 2013 rosters. Adult softball also enjoyed a strong year with 360 players.

Among highlights in 2013 was the creation of a free youth basketball program that was offered to the community at no cost thanks to sponsors and volunteers. Also, the city’s youth football program was asked to play in the “Little Panthers Game of The Week” at Wofford College and defeated the District Five Rebels. The game, sponsored by the Carolina Panthers, was televised and provided the players with lifelong memories.

Patrick Wood brought more than 24 years of teaching and coaching experience to the city tennis program and he made an immediate impact with his Rock n Roll Cardio Tennis, mixed clinics, group lessons and team workouts, junior development, and others. The tennis program tripled its gross revenue in 2013 under his direction.

The six tennis courts at the Tryon Recreation Center were resurfaced in 2013 with a fiberglass-mesh surface that provides a superb playing surface for players.

The Recreation Division staffs and oversees programs at three recreation facilities.

The Needmore Recreation Center is home to the Senior Action Group of Greer, the Needmore After School Program, the Needmore Summer Camp, National Night Out, art classes, the Piano Performers program, and various other activities for the community.

The Tryon Recreation Center has been an excellent facility for such programs as the Artifacts Club, Cutlery Club, Greer Cultural Art set builds, play rehearsals, tap classes, tennis, and a number of other instructional programs.

Victor Park and Gym is known for its athletic programs, but also provides a meeting space for the SOAR Senior program, Girl Scouts, and “Camp Greer” summer camp.

Activities are not limited to those facilities, however. The division puts on such events as the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Luncheon at City Hall and the popular Egg-Tastic Easter Event at Century Park and Kids Planet. The latter event was unfortunately was rained out in 2013, costing the division a record number of participants for one year.

Still, more than 3,300 individuals enjoyed the division’s programming in 2013 and participation has steadily risen since 2007 when just 10 programs drew 790 participants from the community. The Recreation Division offered 37 different programs in 2013.

The city’s summer camps were capped at 125 children until 2012, when enrollment was changed to weekly sessions. This change continued to yield positive feedback from parents in 2013 due to cost efficiency. The change again allowed more than 20 additional children to participate in the camps.

SOAR’s senior activities are one of the department’s most popular offerings. Department officials have been working with the coordinators of Senior Ac-
tion, a non-profit organization that has provided programs and services for seniors in Greenville County since 1967, to consolidate the programs. The move would allow the department to provide additional programming and opportunities for seniors located in the City of Greer.

The City of Greer participated in the 2013 Park Hop to foster an awareness and appreciation for the wealth of parks in Greenville County, increase youth physical activity, and establish an annual tradition for all to enjoy (See Page 8).

The Events Division, which is based at Greer City Hall, is the office to visit to book event halls at Greer City Hall, the Cannon Centre, the gazebo, outdoor amphitheater and picnic shelter.

The renovated Cannon Centre has been a popular facility for weddings, receptions, parties, and other special events. The facility hosted more than 22,000 guests at 186 events in 2013, generating more than $52,000 in rental revenue. Since it opened in July of 2012, the Cannon Center has generated more than $89,000 in revenue.

The events halls at Greer City Hall and the City Park facilities were home to 394 events with more than 90,000 guests in 2013. Those rental facilities brought in approximately $78,000 in revenue.

The park also hosted programmed events such as Freedom Blast, Christmas at Greer City Park, Moonlight Movies, the Rocky Horror Picture Show, and art shows.

The events staff partnered with various organizations to help make possible such events as Greer Family Fest, Halloween Hoopla, and the American Heart Association Heart Walk. The divisions also completed its first full year of staffing at the Greer Heritage Museum two days per week.

The Cultural Arts Division celebrated its first full year with operations in the Cannon Centre, which provided an opportunity for such new programming as Tall Tale Tuesdays, a storytelling series in an intimate setting. Greer Mayor Rick Danner kicked off the series as the first storyteller.

The Greer Children’s Theatre enjoyed another strong year, staging Grease: the School Version, A Midsummer’s Night Dream: The Musical (the first full-scale production in the Cannon Centre), Little Mermaid Jr., and the Camp ARK (Arts Reaching Kids) production The Emperor’s New Threads. The latter was written by local playwright, Nancy Rechtman and was free to the public thanks to grants from BMW and the Metropolitan Arts Council.

Camp ARK held summer camps for young people ages 5-16 on beginning theatre and advanced theatre with classes consisting of music, dance, drama, and art.

The division offered additional arts outreach with Needmore Center campers in 2013, including a free weekly art class that included clay puppet making, watercolor painting, and creative drawing. Campers and Cultural Arts Supervisor Robin Byouk painted murals for Freedom Blast and designed and painted a roller rink bench at the Tryon Recreation Center.

Cultural Arts and Events partnered to offer two art shows and ongoing exhibits in 2013. Greer: An Upstate Destination was a juried art show for artists of all ages, while the Giving Thanks Art Show for young artists enjoyed a large increase in entries. New exhibits by Upstate artists were installed every two months in the Wall Gallery at Greer City Hall.

Tunes on Trade moved to Greer City Park and adopted the new name Tunes in the Park. The Friday evening event continued to include the popular Greer Disc Golf Course at Century Park is safer with the addition of wooden bridges and steel I-beams. Members of the City of Greer Public Services Department and students from the J. Harley Bonds Center provided the bulk of the work using materials provided by grants. See Page 7 for the full story.
Idol and Greer Idol Teen events that were won in 2013 by Keiffer Mendoza and Kody Young, respectively. The Foothills Philharmonic also treated residents to five performances at the J. Harley Bonds Career Center.

The Grounds and Maintenance Division is responsible for 140 acres of parkland and is the ultimate support staff for each of the department’s divisions. Among the division’s responsibilities:

- Maintaining public parks (including buildings, fencing, electrical, plumbing, irrigation, trees, etc.), downtown flower beds, and parking lots.
- Cleaning restroom facilities daily at City Park and Kids Planet.
- Cleaning and stocking Recreation Centers.
- Providing safe playing surfaces for participants on 133 game dates for more than 1,000 games.
- Set up and breakdown for activities in City Park and The Events Halls.
- Providing support for Family Fest, Freedom Blast, Sooie’t Relief BBQ competition, Oktoberfest, and multiple stage rentals for private functions.
- Installing and removing 430 banners on seven occasions downtown and at City Park.
- Installing and removing 323 light pole Christmas decorations.

The second phase of replacing incandescent outdoor light bulbs with LED bulbs was completed prior to the holidays. All outdoor light bulbs on building rooftops in the downtown area were replaced during the spring. A fall project included upgrading all bulbs in holiday pole decorations and Christmas. The LED bulbs are more energy efficient and have a significantly longer life than incandescent bulbs.

Staffers established three color changes (consisting of more than 1,900 individual plants) to the annual beds at Greer City Park and Barnett Bridge, and planted 23 perennial trees and shrubs. The division is responsible for removing hazardous and unwanted trees and limbs in the park system. In 2013, the canopy was lifted at Kids Planet at Century Park as well as on Trade Street. During the renovation of tennis courts at Tryon Park, five problem trees were removed.

Bruce Viehman and Steve Crowell became certified playground safety inspectors in September through the National Recreation and Parks Association to reduce potential hazards and to help ensure public safety. The two are performing a facility inventory audit through which all play structures at city parks are assigned unique identification reference numbers that will be used when performing scheduled playground inspections and for documenting findings at each location.

The Parks and Recreation Department actively seeks grants to support its programs and facilities beyond the operating budget. The department was awarded more than $47,000 in grants in 2013, funds that helped fund cultural arts programming and equipment, youth football equipment, renovation at the Victor Gym, the Needmore Summer Camp, computer classes for senior citizens, and much more.

As part of its community outreach objective, the department participated in the National Night Out campaign in the Needmore Community, the annual Friends of Lake Robinson Day of Celebration, and the American Heritage Girls’ beautification project at the Tryon Recreation Center.
From Citizens Police Academies to National Night Out events, the City of Greer Police Department works hard to live up to its motto: *Policing is a Partnership.*

Behind the scenes, department members are committed to using cutting-edge technology and training opportunities to keep their part of the partnership strong. The department relies on multiple divisions to accomplish its goals.

Operational Support, under the direction of Lt. Matt Hamby, is responsible for the detention center, telecommunications center, property and evidence, record/data entry, and animal control.

The division continued to upgrade mobile data terminals (MDTs) in patrol cars, giving officers the ability to complete incident reports remotely and to quickly provide patrol officers with information.

The Telecommunications Center staff is at the heart of processing and distributing information. In 2013, the staff handled 17,469 emergency 911 calls, as well as 50,378 non-emergency calls. There were 25,517 dispatched police calls for service along with 2,870 dispatched fire calls.

Overall, dispatchers handled 9.5% more calls in 2013 than they did in 2012.

GPD’s detention center is certified by the S.C. Department of Corrections to house male inmates for up to 48 hours. During 2013, the Detention Center processed 2,301 inmates, a 1.9% increase from 2012. The center transported 320 inmates to the Greenville Detention Center and 174 to the Spartanburg Detention Center.

Animal Control Officer Scott Ruttgers responded to 1,542 calls for service during 2013, a 10.5% increase over 2012. He collected 204 live animals and transported 158 to the county animal shelter.

The Uniform Patrol Division headed by Lt. Cris Varner is responsible for answering all calls for service and working with the community to address quality of life issues.

After experiencing a shortage of personnel in 2012 due to attrition and retirements, patrol responded in 2013 with a 57% increase in citations for traffic and criminal offenses and a 19% increase in warning citations. Patrol focused heavily on traffic enforcement in high collision areas.

Patrol teams work closely with the department’s crime analyst to pinpoint any problem areas through density mapping and focusing on those areas by redistributing manpower to reduce problems.

Lt. Jim Holcombe supervises the administrative division at GPD. An important part of the division is training, which in 2013 included such topics as Amber Alert training, homicide investigation, jail management, Taser instruction and recertification, and identity theft.

A large renovation at the GPD Firearms Range was completed in 2013 (see Page 14). Improvements include a new bullet bunker system that collects 99% of all fired bullets, concrete firing lines, lighting, and bleachers supported by a concrete pad.

The Community Outreach Team works with both residents and the business community on programs that improve the safety and quality of life for all.

Among the team’s high-profile programs is Operation Medicine Cabinet, which collects expired and unneeded prescription medicines to keep them from being flushed into the water system and out of reach of young people.

Former mayor and local businessman Don Wall aided the program in 2013 when he donated a metal collection box that was installed in the department’s lobby. The box allows residents to drop off medicines at any time instead of only at scheduled events.

The team also manages safe driving programs SIDNE and Alive at 25. The SIDNE go-kart helps young people safely experience the effects of driving while impaired or distracted. Alive at 25, a one-day comprehensive course on driving safety for young people, was held seven times in 2013 at the Greer Police Department and four high schools.

GPD also hosted two sessions of its popular Citizens Police Academy and built on the success of the academy’s alumni association. The department was the beneficiary of 724 hours of volunteer work in 2013.

Angie Childers, president of the association, was honored in Orlando in May as the National Citizens Police Academy Alumnus of the Year – an
honor for which GPD nominated her. In addition to her alumni association duties, Childers was instrumental in establishing CSI camps for teens and adults that were held for the second year in 2013.

GPD participated for the second consecutive year in the COPS Hiring Recovery Program’s Community Policing Self-Assessment Tool (CP-SAT). The online survey was sent to members of the department at all ranks and positions, other City employees, and members of the community and is used as a tool for the department to measure the extent to which community policing has been implemented.

Under the direction of Lt. Eric Pressley, GPD’s Criminal Investigations Division (CID) assigned 348 cases to detectives for follow-up investigations in 2013. This marks an 11% decrease from 2012 when several property and fraud related crimes were reported and successfully resolved by detectives.

Detectives have successfully cleared 20% of all property crimes and 68% of all crimes against person. These percentages are above the national average for crime clearance rates.

CID continues to provide valuable information related to the department’s problem-oriented policing initiative. The Crime Analysis section of CID provides vital information through crime mapping and analysis, bi-weekly and monthly crime trends, Compstat, and predictive analysis. Predictive analysis entails the gathering of information of similar crimes and offering the future time periods and places of upcoming criminal incidents. All of these functions allow the police department to focus resources most effectively.

CID added a new victim advocate in 2013. Meghan Weibel offers crime victims services from the time the incident occurs throughout the court process. She is often assigned as many as 35 new cases monthly requiring victim contact.

The department worked closely with schools and businesses in the wake of national tragedies.

Responding to a rash of school shootings in the U.S., GPD personnel met with all schools in their jurisdiction to fully discuss emergency plans in the event of a school shooting.

GPD’s Emergency Response Team (ERT) participated in a mock active shooter training scenario at the Village at Pelham Medical Campus. The event was hosted by emergency planners with the Village at Pelham and included the ERT, GPD patrol team officers, Spartanburg Regional emergency and medical personnel, and campus police.

The national increase of meth labs and cleanup efforts required by law enforcement prompted the formation of a Meth Mitigation Team at the department. A trailer was purchased to hold cleanup equipment, allowing department members to safely mitigate any meth lab sites detected in the community.

Chief Dan Reynolds was sworn in as vice president of the South Carolina Police Chiefs Association at the group’s meeting in November. He will serve as the association’s president in 2015.
As they prepare for a day at school, students may sometimes feel like all of their worldly possessions are jammed into their backpacks. Marsha Lee and Karen Moose know that for adults who have fallen on hard times, having any possessions in a backpack can be a miracle.

The sisters, who make their homes in Greer, partnered with the City of Greer Police Department in 2013 to start Operation Backpack, a program through which those who find themselves struggling through difficult times may receive a backpack filled with necessities to help them stave off hunger and survive the elements. “We don’t have a large problem with homeless people in the city,” City of Greer Police Chief Dan Reynolds said. “The homeless here are largely people who have lived here but have been kicked out of their homes (by family members or landlords) and go building to building. They’re largely invisible and don’t cause us any problems. (Operation Backpack) helps because besides Greer Relief and Greer Community Ministries, we don’t have a lot of services to help those people.”

A tie to Greer Community Ministries actually inspired Lee and Moose to establish Operation Backpack in Greer. Their friend Kay Bischoffberger Lawrence, a former Greer resident and active volunteer at Greer Community Ministries, recently established a similar program with the Spartanburg Police Department. “It started when she saw people standing beside the road holding up signs about being homeless and needing help,” Lee said. “She bought items like toothbrushes and blankets and kept them in her car. When she saw these people she would pull over and give them something. Then she realized that might not be the safest thing to be doing.”

Partnering with a police department, whose officers are most likely to encounter a homeless or displaced individual, made sense to all. The department also is in close contact with the city’s fire department should an individual or family suffer a home fire and have no place to go.”

Lee and Moose have worked with members of their Sunday School class at Memorial United Methodist Church to obtain supplies for the backpacks. Best Western and Hampton Inn have contributed hygiene supplies such as shampoo and lotion.”

Each backpack is filled with approximately $25 worth of items, including a poncho, a tarp, a fleece blanket, a reusable water bottle, clothing items, high-protein snacks, and such additional hygiene supplies as a toothbrush and toothpaste, comb, and deodorant.

The sisters have shopped for the best price on backpack items in addition to asking others for gently used items. With the program now taking root in the city, Lee said she hopes individuals and businesses in the city will join in and contribute to the effort. Operation Backpack items are stored at the City of Greer Police Department and contributions may be dropped off at the department lobby at 102 S. Main St. Anyone who desires more information on the program may contact Sgt. Chad Richardson at 968-7002, Lee at 877-5656, or Moose at 848-6863.

Chief Reynolds said the program is reflection on the city’s residents. “Greer is a friendly place. We have a lot of people who come out to help others in need,” he said.

The sisters make sure backpacks contain clothing, food, and toiletries to help the homeless and displaced survive.

Marsha Lee, Karen Moose, Sgt. Chad Richardson, and Chief Dan Reynolds explain the program to the news media.
City of Greer residents may rarely see a member of the Public Services Department, but they are affected by that department’s work every day. Whether it’s strolling down a sidewalk that has been repaired or obeying a stop sign at a busy intersection, the Public Services staff has worked to make sure the City of Greer is a safe place to live, work, and play.

The department replaced 744 feet of sidewalks on Mayfield St., Randall St., Memorial Dr., and W. Poinsett St. and milled 42 misaligned sidewalk joints in 2013. Staff also installed five handicap ramps on Poinsett St.

Street signs are damaged more often than residents may recognize. Replacing those signs quickly is the key to making sure traffic moves as it is intended. Department members replaced 200 street name signs and 68 stop signs in addition to 44 damaged sign posts.

Record rainfall in 2013 kept the Public Services Department busy mowing road right-of-ways on a weekly basis. The rain also generated 20 calls about water problems, mostly ditches, drains and outfalls blocked by debris. Crews cleared debris and repaired storm boxes and grates, when necessary. They also checked pipes with cameras for broken joints, water jetted lines, and made repairs.

Storm damage also increased in 2013. Crews were called to 25 separate locations where downed trees or limbs blocked city streets.

The department maintains the grounds at Mountain View and Edgewood Cemeteries, cutting grass and cutting back overhanging limbs. Crews planted shrubs for screening at Mountain View Cemetery.

Routine street resulted in 224 tons of debris removed from city streets in 2013. It would be difficult to hold an outdoor festival in the city without the department, as staffers hang and remove banners, barricade streets, install and remove drop cords, and set up and empty trash cans. They are the first on site to set up for an event and the last to leave, making sure the streets are spotless.

One of the department’s more popular services is its 12-week curbside leaf collection that operates on a schedule allowing trucks to visit each residence three times during the collection season.

A brochure with a map and collection dates is mailed to all city residents in October in preparation for leaf collection.

Public Services also facilitates solid waste removal through ACE Environmental, the city’s contractor for curbside trash and recyclables collection, and delivers green carts, recycling bins, and yard waste carts to residences. The number of homes utilizing curbside recycling rose by 30% in 2013.

A record number of residents visited the City Recycling Center on Buncombe St. in 2013, as 8,338 individuals dropped off paper, cardboard, aluminum, plastic, and tires that would have otherwise gone to the landfill.

E-waste (electronics that are no longer permitted in county landfills) continues to be collected at the center. As of July 2013, it cost $500 per ton to dispose of e-waste.

The department hosted its eighth annual Amnesty Day at the center in April, drawing 158 residents with materials that are not collected in weekly curbside collection. The event brought in 109 containers of chemicals, 391 gallons of paint, 38 pieces of e-waste, 40 gallons of motor oil, six gallons of antifreeze, 13 tires, 33 batteries, and 81 assorted light bulbs.

For the second year, a shredder truck was on site at Amnesty Day and brought in 1,300 pounds of personal papers. Residents also brought 130 pounds of prescription medicines to be destroyed as part of the Greer Police Department’s “Take It Back” campaign.

The maintenance shop at the City Operations Center ensures a long life for a large fleet of vehicles. In 2013, the shop made 236 repairs, serviced 171 vehicles, and made 48 road calls. The department orders the fuel supply for all city vehicles and maintains the city fuel pumps.

The department played a key role in two of the city’s collaborative projects in 2013. Crews poured concrete footings and set steel I-beams to support wooden bridges at the Century Park Disc Golf Course. They also worked on the firing range renovation project, pouring, forming, and finishing 800 feet of concrete, back filling, setting bullet bunkers, spreading millings on the parking area, and resetting the storm drain box to grade.

Public Services crew members not only clean city buildings, but they also conduct general repairs and set up for events.

The administrative staff works closely with the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control to ensure compliance with all state regulations and compiles an annual report to DHEC on garbage, recycling, and the cost to the city.

Ricky Bridwell was promoted to crew leader when Harrold Rhoads retired following 10 years of service.
Economic development plays a critical role in the City of Greer. To attract new capital investments, create jobs, and revitalize the community, the City of Greer partners with the Greer Commission of Public Works, the Greater Greer Chamber of Commerce, the Partnership for Tomorrow, and private sector businesses to support the Greer Development Corporation (GDC).

The mission of this public/private partnership is to promote and to enhance economic growth and development in Greer by increasing the wealth creating opportunities in the community while preserving the high quality of life of one of South Carolina’s fastest growing communities. GDC’s strategic efforts focus on recruitment and retention of commercial and industrial businesses, targeted marketing of the community, and development of properties for future economic opportunities.

GDC provides prospective businesses and industries with data on available real estate; information on taxes, incentives, financing and business assistance programs; statistical data on Greer’s marketplace and workforce; introductions to community resources; and site selection and community tours.

Thanks largely to GDC’s marketing efforts, the City of Greer continues to enjoy a strong reputation as a great place to do business.

The City of Greer found economic development success in 2013 in every sector of its economy: Industrial, Retail, Restaurant, and Office. Perhaps no project represents the enormous success in Greer in 2013 better than the construction of a 400,000 square foot warehouse in the new GSP Logistics Park adjacent to the Inland Port. The largest building ever constructed in the City of Greer, the new warehouse alone created more than 300 new jobs in the City of Greer.

2013 also marked the acquisition of the former State Auto Building by Century 3. A global player in industrial development, Century 3 is quickly filling this premier downtown office building with new businesses and new job opportunities in Greer.

The year in downtown Greer reflected similarly positive growth. New businesses Endeavor Insurance, Greer Trading Post, and Carolina Treasures joined an expansion of Stomping Grounds and redevelopment of the historic bank building at 114-116 Trade Street to add even greater diversity to Greer’s bustling downtown.

The year also saw the completion of the South Carolina Ports Authority’s Inland Port in Greer (see Page 20).

“With a capital investment in excess of $50 million, this facility will provide a more effective and cost efficient logistics solution for many Upstate manufacturers and will leverage new recruiting opportunities for years to come,” GDC Executive Director Reno Deaton said.

Total capital investments of projects facilitated by GDC in 2013 exceeded $40 million. The projects also created 509 new jobs for the local workforce.

Continuing its trend of record Gross Retail Sales in the City of Greer, 2013 marked Greer’s best ever year. At $704,381,970 in Gross Retail Sales in the City of Greer in 2013, Greer confirmed its presence as a leader in the Upstate for commercial activity.
The Greenville County Redevelopment Authority (GCRA) provides the opportunity for residents of Greenville County to achieve the American Dream through affordable housing opportunities and community revitalization.

Established in 1974, GCRA works to improve the living conditions of the county’s residents by building new homes, rehabilitating existing homes and improving the infrastructures within communities. By developing community partnerships and administering funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), GCRA works to build a better quality of life for everyone.

First-time homeowners have the opportunity to purchase one of GCRA’s new homes, or current homeowners can repair or improve their homes through GCRA’s Rehabilitation Program.

Strong partnerships make it possible for GCRA to conduct beautification and public works projects such as improving streets, sidewalks, lighting, drainage, sewers, parks, and installing handicap ramps to maintain a safe and beautiful environment for all residents to enjoy.

The latter has been particularly effective in the City of Greer’s Needmore Community for which GCRA staff collaborated with Clemson University to create a master plan. The City of Greer and GCRA submitted an application to the Greenville County Transportation Committee, which approved funding to match the CDBG funds for infrastructure improvement and engineering design work for work on Canteen and Tremont Avenues. That work was completed as part of phase one.

GCRA has worked with The Upstate Homeless Coalition to implement a $4 million, 36-unit Housing and Urban Development senior housing complex as part of the Creekside community project.

GCRA offers a façade improvement grant program to encourage improvement and investment to retain and attract businesses, strengthen the central business district, increase utilization of downtown buildings, restore economic vitality and enhance property values. This program provides as much as $5,000 in grant funds to finance exterior improvements to a property owner or tenant’s commercial building.

A portion of the annual CDBG allocation is made available through a competitive application process to subrecipients for public service activities. In the City of Greer, subrecipient funding increased to $39,000 in 2013 for Greer Community Ministries, the Needmore Summer Camp, the Seniors Program at the Tryon Recreation Center, the Creative Advancement Center, Greer Relief and Resources, and the Helping Hands Ministry at Brushy Creek First Assembly of God.

The Greenville County Redevelopment Authority continued to build out the Creekside subdivision in Greer during 2013. An open house in November drew a steady crowd.
## WHO TO CONTACT?

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<th>Service</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jail (Detention Center)</td>
<td>(864) 848-5358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean Smith Library</td>
<td>(864) 877-8722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Openings</td>
<td>(864) 848-2174</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From reserving an event hall to purchasing a dog license, this directory will guide you to the correct City of Greer office or outside agency.

**K**
- Kids Planet: (864) 416-6606

**L**
- Library: (864) 877-8722
- Litter: (864) 801-2040

**M**
- Maps: (864) 879-4307
- Mayor: (864) 848-5387
- Municipal Court: (864) 848-5374
- Mapping: (864) 879-4307
- Missing Person: (864) 848-2188

**N**
- Neighborhood Safety: (864) 968-7002
- News & Media: (864) 416-0121
- Noise / Nuisance: (864) 801-2040

**O**
- Ordinances (City): (864) 801-2027
- Overgrown Lots: (864) 801-2040

**P**
- Parks: (864) 416-6607
- Planning: (864) 848-5396
- Police: (864) 416-6615
- Police Reports: (864) 848-2194
- Public Services: (864) 848-2182

**R**
- Recreation Programs: (864) 416-6606
- Recycling (curbside): (864) 848-2182
- Recycling Center: (864) 934-0268
- Road Maintenance: (864) 416-6611

**S**
- SAFE Kids: (864) 416-6601
- Seniors Activities: (864) 416-6606
- Sidewalks: (864) 416-6611
- Sign Standards: (864) 848-5396
- Special Events Permits: (864) 848-5387
- Sports Programs: (864) 416-0105
- Streetlights: (864) 848-5500
- Street Repair: (864) 416-6611
- Storm Water Issues: (864) 801-2026

**T**
- Taxi Code Enforcement: (864) 877-7906
- Television Channel: (864) 416-0121
- Traffic Lights: (864) 848-2188
- Trash (collection): (864) 848-2182
- Trash (litter): (864) 801-2040
- Tree Maintenance: (864) 848-2182

**V**
- Vacant House Disrepair: (864) 801-2040
- Victim Advocacy: (864) 877-7985
- Voter Registration
- Greenville County: (864) 467-7250
- Spartanburg County: (864) 596-2549

**W**
- Wanted Persons: (864) 848-2188
- Website: (864) 416-0121

**Y**
- Yard Waste: (864) 848-2182
- Youth Activities: (864) 416-6606
- Youth Sports: (864) 416-0105

**Z**
- Zoning: (864) 848-5396
Delivering effective and efficient services to provide a quality of life that makes the City of Greer a great place to live, work, and play.