



Metropolitan Sewer Subdistrict, dba MetroConnects  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### MetroConnects Awarded \$20 Million in Grant Funding by the S.C. Rural Infrastructure Authority's S.C. Infrastructure Investment Program

GREENVILLE -- Metropolitan Sewer Subdistrict, dba MetroConnects, is pleased to announce that it has been awarded \$20 million in grant funding by the S.C. Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) to assist with improvements to its wastewater collection system in Greenville County.

MetroConnects was granted funding for two \$10 million projects through the S.C. Infrastructure Investment Program (SCIIP), created by the RIA. This one-time initiative is designed to have a transformative impact on water, wastewater, and stormwater systems in small and disadvantaged communities, as well as larger, growing communities using federal funds allocated by the 2021 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). MetroConnects received a \$10 million Community Impact SCIIP Grant for sewer improvements in the Mills Mill Village, and a \$10 million Regional Solutions SCIIP Grant for sewer improvements in the Dunean Mill Village.

“These funds further support the recent regionalization of wastewater collection services by Greenville County under MetroConnects and demonstrates our ability to obtain funding for the much-needed replacement of the sewer systems in the historic mill villages, lessening the burden on rate payers,” said Carol Elliott, general manager of MetroConnects. “Replacing the wastewater collection systems that serve the historic mill village areas in western Greenville County, all of which are more than 100 years old and are past their useful life, is our highest priority.”

In 2022, MetroConnects completed the regionalization of six other sewer collection subdistricts into its system, doubling the size of Metro’s system by adding more than 700 miles of mainline gravity, 53,600 customers and eight of Greenville’s historic mill villages. As MetroConnects addresses various issues in these newly acquired systems, SCIIP funds will be used to upgrade wastewater collection in the Mills Mill and Dunean Mill Villages, which experiences significant issues with inflow and infiltration during wet weather. Elliott said the funds would provide a significant start on the projects.

“I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the remarkable efforts by the RIA’s Executive Director Bonnie Ammons, the RIA staff and the Board of Directors, as well as our local and state legislators who have worked tirelessly to provide funding for wastewater infrastructure improvements,” Elliott said. “These dollars will provide transformative change for the communities that we serve by protecting the public health, the environment and our most valuable resource, our water.”

Throughout South Carolina, the RIA awarded more than \$1.369 billion in 200 communities. The funding provides long-term capital improvements that will strengthen critical services to residents and businesses, create more resilient communities and build the capacity to support future opportunities for growth and economic development. Projects selected by RIA's board of directors are designed to address a range of needs that will protect public health and the environment and build capacity for the future. According to the RIA, priorities for project selection included regional solutions involving multiple utilities, protection of public health and water quality, resilience and storm protection, modernization of aging infrastructure, capacity development and economic opportunities. Recipients of the funds will be able to get started on their projects in the next couple of months, with a deadline to spend all funds by Dec. 31, 2026.

The RIA received more than 300 applications which total more than \$2 billion. As part of the SCIIP grant funding, MetroConnects is required to provide matching funds for 25 percent (Mills Mill) and 15 percent (Dunean Mill) of the projects. Greenville County has contributed \$3 million in ARPA funds toward this project, with MetroConnects providing the additional local funds for the renewal of these wastewater systems. MetroConnects has also received \$4 million in State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG) funding sponsored by Sen. Lindsey Graham for the Union Bleachery Mill Village wastewater collection system.

#### **About MetroConnects**

*Metropolitan Sewer Subdistrict, dba as MetroConnects, is a special purpose district founded in 1969 by the S.C. State Legislature that provides sanitary sewer collection services in Greenville County and transports wastewater to Renewable Water Resources (ReWa) for treatment and disposal. MetroConnects serves more than 99,000 customers in the unincorporated areas of Greenville County and the City of Travelers Rest.*

#### **About the South Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority**

*The South Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) is a state agency that was established in 2012 to assist communities with financing for qualified infrastructure projects for water and wastewater systems, as well as stormwater drainage facilities. RIA has awarded more than \$953 million in grants (2013-2022) and loans (2016-2022). Although RIA initially offered grants for projects in rural and distressed counties, the programs were expanded to make grant and loan assistance available statewide. Chaired by the South Carolina Secretary of Commerce, the RIA's board of directors includes six members representing distressed and/or least developed counties. Learn more about the RIA at [www.ria.sc.gov](http://www.ria.sc.gov).*