

# SCPDC

## South Central Planning & Development Commission

*Serving the parishes of Assumption, Lafourche, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Mary, and Terrebonne*

## Quarterly Newsletter



October 19, 2023 | Issue 13

### SCPDC Spearheads Louisiana Broadband Initiative *Urges Map Validation for Federal Funding*

SCPDC played a vital role in supporting broadband initiatives for the State Office of Broadband. In late August, the completion of the Lafourche Crossing GUMBO project was celebrated with Governor John Bel Edwards and other key stakeholders at the Bayou Country Children's Museum in Thibodaux, Louisiana.



Following this, Lea Ann Rucker (SCPDC) and Michelle Eroche (Director of Rural Revitalization, Region 3) organized two broadband summits in late August, held at Fletcher Technical College and River Parish Community College. Additionally, in late September, Lea Ann Rucker and Ebony Bailey (SCPDC) hosted a meeting at the Lafourche Rec Center in Lockport, featuring insights from David Lehman and his team.

As nearly \$1.36 billion in federal funds are being readied to bridge the digital divide, ConnectLA, the Office of Broadband Development and Connectivity, urges non-profits, internet service providers, and parish/municipal governments to challenge and validate the federal service availability maps. This step is crucial for directing funding accurately and efficiently.

ConnectLA plans to launch the challenge process

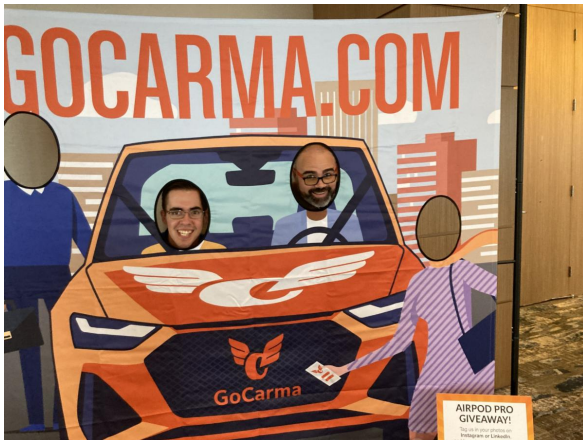


for BEAD (Infrastructure dollars) at the end of September. Non-profits, internet service providers, and parish/municipal governments are invited to participate in this important challenge process.

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## Planners Gain Valuable Insights at Conferences

Cleveland, OH | Alexandria, LA



### AMPO

Two of team members recently represented our organization at the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) conference in Cleveland, Ohio, held from September 25 to 29. This event provided a unique opportunity to dive deep into the world of transportation and planning, and our employees returned with valuable knowledge and experiences to benefit our projects and initiatives.

During the conference, our representatives actively engaged in various seminars and discussions, covering a wide range of topics related to transportation planning, urban development, and sustainable mobility. They had the chance to network with professionals from across the country, exchanging ideas



### APA

Two planners attended the American Planning Association (APA) conference in Alexandria, Louisiana, held from October 11 to 13.

Our colleagues attended the dynamic APA conference, where they explored innovative urban planning topics like park and community restoration, microtransit, environmental due diligence, and more. This experience highlights our commitment to

and best practices with their peers.

staying at the forefront of urban planning and enhancing our projects for vibrant and resilient communities.

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Our staff returned with fresh insights and a deeper understanding of the latest trends, innovations, and challenges in the field of transportation planning. They are eager to apply their newfound knowledge to our ongoing and upcoming projects, enhancing our ability to create efficient, sustainable, and inclusive transportation solutions for our community. We extend our gratitude to our employees for their dedication to professional development and their commitment to staying at the forefront of transportation and planning advancements. Their participation in events like the AMPO and APA conferences exemplifies our organization's ongoing commitment to delivering excellence in every aspect of our work.

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## South Central Welcomes New Planner

Ebony Bailey



We are thrilled to welcome Ebony as a new Planner here South Central! Her diverse background and impressive credentials make her a valuable asset to our team.

Ebony received a B.A. in English and in Criminal Justice from Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. With a 5-year foundation in small business growth, dedicated 7-year tenure in the non-profit sector, and contributions to a pioneering paramedicine organization which sought to increase healthcare affordability and access, Ebony's experience in supporting vulnerable populations, coupled with her grant writing skills uniquely positions her to advocate for

and implement inclusive, community-driven urban planning solutions that foster sustainable growth and prosperity in Louisiana.

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## Construction Continues on Acadian Road Roundabout



Construction is continuing on the Acadian Road Roundabout in Thibodaux. The Roundabout is \$10.9 million project with \$3.4 million coming through the MPO and \$6.7 million funded by DOTD's Highway Safety Improvement Program. The project aims to eliminate hazardous turn movements along LA 20 and North Canal in Thibodaux, as well as provides for greater east-west connectivity in the City. It is the

first part of the larger Acadian Road West project which is envisioned to connect Percy Brown Road to the West Thibodaux Bypass.

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# Construction Underway at Thibodaux Water Treatment Plant



Construction is underway on the Wastewater Treatment Plant in the City of Thibodaux. The plant, originally constructed in 1935 and renovated in 1992, is being upgraded to replace the filter media in two large treatment tanks. This project is essential for the continued operation of the system in a safe and sustainable manner.

The project is being paid for with \$2 million in funding from EDA and a \$500,000 match from the City.



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## Regular Loan Program Suspended to Prioritize Hurricane Recovery

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In an effort to focus on the hurricane recovery program for Ida, Laura, Delta, and May Floods of 2021, SCPDC suspended the regular loan program indefinitely. We are prepared to restart when our funds and internal capacity become more accommodating. If you would like to be placed on a list to be notified when regular business loan applications are available, please contact the Loan Department at 985.655.1051 or [businessloans@scpdc.org](mailto:businessloans@scpdc.org).

We've hired three new team members, Shelley Dupre, Tiffany Plotner, and Dan Brett, in the Loan Department to perform eligibility, award calculation, and underwriting for the massive recovery program being administered, in cooperation with long time staff Missy Menuet, Alisha Rodrigue, Brooke Bergeron, and Lisa Maloz.

As of 9/18/2023, we have sent the first batch of 13 applications for \$2.5 million to the Office of Community Development for approval at the state level. The second batch will include over 60 applications for approximately \$9 million. 82 additional applications are complete and in the Loan Department's queue, and over 350 applications are in initial stage of submission. All eligible businesses are encouraged to apply for the Restore LA hurricane recovery program through SCPDC's intake offices across the state or online at <https://cloud.bmisw.com/SCPDCRestore>.

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## Small Business Recovery Program Fund

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IMPACTED BY **HURRICANE IDA**  
OR FLOOD OF 2021



**0% INTEREST**  
&  
**40% FORGIVABLE**

**SMALL BUSINESS  
RECOVERY PROGRAM FUNDS**

**1-800-630-3791 OR SCPDC.ORG**





Funded through the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Program from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

South Central Planning and Development was allocated 63.5 (\$37.5M Laura/Delta and \$25M Ida) of 95 Million in available funding to assist small business owners in impacted areas across the state.

The program will start accepting application from May 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023.

IMPACTED BY **HURRICANES LAURA**  
OR **DELTA**



**0% INTEREST**  
&  
**40% FORGIVABLE**

**SMALL BUSINESS  
RECOVERY PROGRAM FUNDS**

**1-800-630-3791 OR SCPDC.ORG**





Funded through the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Program from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

## Restoring Small Businesses

### Advancing Economic Development for the State

The Legal & Special Projects Department is partnering with the Finance & Loan Department to implement the Restore LA. Small Business Program to provide recovery funding for small businesses that were impacted by Hurricanes Laura (2020), Delta (2020), Ida (2021) and the May Storm / Flood of 2021. Starting May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, intake crews across the state have collected nearly 650 applications (many online). The rules of eligibility were generated by the Louisiana Office of Community Development's Disaster Recovery Unit and about 23% (148) have already been deemed ineligible. Eligibility requires that a business was operating at the time of the disaster, that they have at least one employee and no more than 50 FTE and that the business had at least \$10,000 in physical damage from the disaster OR a 20% decline in annual revenue.

The intake process has been challenging as the program requires documentation to both prove the disaster's impact and prove the business' pre-storm conditions. According to SCPDC's Cullen Curole, "We need to encourage business owners to work through this application. The reward is tremendous for both eligible businesses and their surrounding communities. Small business development translates to better services being offered locally and increased employment opportunities for the community. As was proven during storms like Ida, a strengthened small business community post disaster aids the community in recovering from the impact of the disaster. This type of funding is unique and allows us to keep this money in our communities post repayment to fund other projects and business loans. The opportunity has presented itself. It's up to the people to decide if they will take advantage of it."

Dollars hitting the street have been delayed by software glitches within the State's new system, but as soon as they are able to correct these bugs, we have dozens of files (60+) ready for the state's final review and funding.

Over 40% of the applications are from within the SCPDC region. The breakdown of received applications reflects the path of Hurricane Ida. In active files, we have 108 from Terrebonne, 35 from Lafourche, 22 from St. John, 14 from St. Charles, 14 from St. James, 13 from St. Mary, and 5 from Assumption.

### Louisiana Dept of Wildlife and Fisheries Flood of 2019 Equipment Grant

Wildlife and Fisheries will soon open an application for Fishermen, Vessel Owners and Seafood Processors to upgrade equipment. Currently, LDWF is having folks register into their new database which will be used to announce the opening of the application and future funding

opportunities. SCPDC is assisting with fishermen registration and when the application is open, staff will assist in the completion of the first come first serve application. SCPDC staff are here to assist those who are challenged with LDWF's web-based database and application. We intentionally hired Restore staff so that they could also help with language assistance for Vietnamese and Hispanic applicants.

SCPDC has strategically hired people directly from each impacted parish to connect small business applicants with professionals familiar with the area. The only parish without a representative to date is Assumption Parish. The two programs have increased staffing across the state by about 35 employees. Regionally we opened offices in Galliano, Boutte, and Reserve to supplement our presence. Below is a photo of the Houma Intake Office.



In the Houma office from Terrebonne Jordan Bellanger, Kaitlynn Terrebonne, Colby Dufrene, Ed Marmande and Madison Pepper; From Lafourche Billy Pitre, Deborah Reynolds, Robert Lilley, Tammy Wendleschaffer and Mark Martinez Jarillo. At the Boutte Office we have Emily Granier from St. Charles and at the Reserve office we have Tanya Johnson from St. John the Baptist.

Three of our original intake crew have moved on to permanent positions within the agency including Ebony Bailey (Lafourche), Shelley Dupre (Terrebonne) and Dan Brett (St. James).

The LDWF Equipment Grant Program is being led by Thuy Chau (St. Mary).

### **SCPDC's Supports of the Fishing Community Expanding**

SCPDC is working tirelessly to help businesses within the region move out of recovery mode and into a place where innovation and expansion can flourish to revitalize the entire region. The new program(s) timing couldn't be better given a significant portion of the Restore applicants are from the fishing industry who have experienced impacts from up-river floods of 2019, covid, inflation rates and low prices due to an abundance of imported seafood. SCPDC just recently signed a three-year extension of the LaCreel Survey Program which is credited with improvements in the Red Snapper Industry. SCPDC is currently working with the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission to expand that work to support fisheries in Mississippi and Alabama.

# South Central's Brownfields Program



EPA  
Brownfields

SCPDC  
Brownfields

South Central Planning and Development Commission (SCPDC) Brownfields Program works to assess, clean up, and facilitate the redevelopment and/or reuse of potentially contaminated properties known as brownfields.

For more information on SCPDC's Brownfields Program, contact our Brownfields Program Manager Lesley Long at [lesley@scpsc.org](mailto:lesley@scpsc.org) or (985) 851-2900.

## Traffic Counting Program

After a hiatus due to COVID-19 and then Hurricane Ida, SCPDC's traffic counting program is now back in full swing! Traffic counts are taken throughout the region, though primarily in the MPO area, by the Planning Department to provide inputs to the regional Travel Demand Model, as well as to provide information to member governments. Many economic developers, real estate agents, and other community stakeholders often find this information to be useful for a variety of reasons.



Traffic Count  
Database

## My Government Online

Chief Technology Officer Ryan Hutchinson showcased our innovative software solutions to the annual International Code Council meeting in St. Louis. The new



MGOConnect.org & Mobile Apps  
Customer Portal offers many new and exciting features, such as:  
Push notifications when an application is accepted or returned, Enhanced project management features, Custom branding and direct application linking with a city website and more!

Many jurisdictions across the country have begun the switch to our portal at no cost and received outstanding feedback from the building community.

## MGO Connect Live National

*New Orleans, LA*

MyGovernmentOnline (MGO) is excited to announce our second annual MGO Connect Live National 2023 conference to be held December 12th, 13th, and 14th 2023. This momentous and informative conference will be held in the New Orleans, Louisiana area!

MGO Connect Live is the MyGovernmentOnline (MGO) in-person conference where you will meet with members of the MGO software staff directly to learn about new features, receive training and discuss best practices. Please RSVP for this free event today so that we can begin building our attendees list. By adding your name and e-mail address to our RSVP list, you will receive notifications regarding hotel accommodations, scheduled activities and you'll also receive an exclusive MGO "Swag Bag" when you arrive at the conference!

The national conference will be a three-day event in the New Orleans, Louisiana area where you will enjoy some of the best cuisine in the world and other great amenities. To RSVP for the MGO Connect Live National 2023 conference, send an email to [support@mygovernmentonline.org](mailto:support@mygovernmentonline.org) with the subject line "MGO Connect Live National 2023 Conference" and include the names and email addresses of each member of your party in the body of the email. We will add all members of your party to the notifications list to ensure everyone remains up to date with the latest conference details.

Mark your calendars to meet us in New Orleans on the dates of December 12th, 13th, and 14th 2023.

Anything you can do in-person at your local office you can do online. Examples include Apply for Permits, Pay Online, Request Inspections, Submit Files, Download Inspection Reports and Approved Plans, Check Status of a Permit, Download Permit Data, Search for Permits, Manage Contractor and Business Licenses.

Visit <https://www.mygovernmentonline.org/> for more information.



Our MGO team participates in many conferences, here are just a few of those:



Louisiana Floodplain Management Association - LFMA Technical & Business Conference



Annual BOAL conference in Lake Charles, LA



Building Professional Institute Conference in Houston, TX

## Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

On November 15, 2021, President Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (Public Law 117-58, also known as the "Bipartisan Infrastructure Law" or BIL) into law. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is the largest long-term investment in our infrastructure and economy in our Nation's history. It provides \$550 billion over fiscal years 2022 through 2026 in new Federal investment in infrastructure, including in roads, bridges, and mass transit, water infrastructure, resilience, and broadband.

- Click here to visit the [FHWA BIL Website](#).
- Click here to visit the [USDOT BIL Website](#).

## Federal Programs Available to the Locals



## Federal Highway Programs Available to Local Agencies (LPA)

LTAP has produced a helpful brochure that provides a list of federal highway programs that local public agencies (LPA) can apply for funding for or have access to.

Agencies that use federal and state dollars for transportation projects are required to take the LPA Training Program provided by LTAP in partnership with FHWA and DOTD.

[Download Brochure](#)



LTAP offers various training programs that offer cost-effective learning for local transportation and public works agencies on topics that range from road and bridge maintenance to roadway safety, worker safety, emergency preparedness, crash data analysis, etc. [Download Training Resources](#)

# LPA

## Local Public Agency (LPA) Training Program



[Visit LTAP for more information](#)

**Any local public agency that utilizes federal and state transportation dollars is required to attend the LPA Qualification Core Training. [Download Brochure.](#)**

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***Sign Up for LTAP's Newsletters and Training Announcements [HERE.](#)***

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Project applications for local road safety improvements are accepted year-round. However, those submitted by cutoff dates March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31 shall be given priority for project selection.

Contact Cassie Parker at [cassie@scpdc.org](mailto:cassie@scpdc.org) if you would like assistance on the application.

## Local Road Safety Program

Local Road Safety Program (LRSP) is a federal-aid funding program that provides opportunity for parishes and municipalities to implement low-cost road safety improvements.

It is intended to increase local community participation in developing and implementing Local Road Safety Plans and proven safety countermeasures that help eliminate traffic deaths on locally owned roads

[Local Road Safety Program](#)  
[Download brochure here](#)

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## South Central Regional Safety Coalition

**Program Coordinator: [Cassie Parker](#)**

*South Central Regional Safety Coalition (SCRSC) is a traffic safety coalition comprised of multidisciplinary*

[Learn More](#)



partners/agencies throughout the parishes of Assumption, Lafourche, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, and Terrebonne.

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## South Central Warrants for Blood Workshop

### *St. Charles Parish, LA*

Destination Zero Deaths Coalitions statewide are conducting Warrants for Blood Workshops for their regional law enforcement partners with the help of Statewide Impaired Driving team leads, Norma Dubois (Jefferson Parish District Attorney) and Cathy Childers (Louisiana Highway Safety Commission).



South Central held its workshop on September 28th at St. Charles Sheriff's Office's Training Center. St. Charles Sheriff's Office, Louisiana Wildlife & Fisheries, Terrebonne Sheriff's Office, Thibodaux Police Department, Lafourche Sheriff's Office, St. John the Baptist Sheriff's Office, LA Highway Safety Commission, and Nicholls State University Police Department participated.

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## Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) Vulnerable Road User Workshop - South Central

### *City of Thibodaux, LA*



Louisiana's Local Technical Assistance Program teamed up with Destination Zero Deaths' Coalitions statewide to conduct Vulnerable Road User Workshops for locals. South Central Coalition held its workshop at Nicholls State University on August 9th. We

appreciate our dedicated safety partners that were able to attend from the City of Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish Government, Terrebonne Parish Government, LSU Ag Center (Assumption, Terrebonne and Lafourche), Department of Transportation and Development, Federal Highway Administration, and Thibodaux Police Department. Vulnerable Road Users (VRU), comprising pedestrians, bicyclists, and individuals utilizing personal modes of transportation, remain a significant concern in the realm of road safety. These groups account for a considerable portion of traffic fatalities in the state of Louisiana. The state's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) identifies VRUs as an emphasis area, reflecting the urgency of addressing this issue. In an effort to curb VRU-related fatalities and severe injuries, comprehensive workshops were designed to bring together road safety stakeholders, local agencies, and concerned citizens to explore various aspects of VRU safety and discuss strategies to reduce incidents involving these vulnerable road users.

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# Nucor Steel Employee Health Fair

*St. James Parish, LA*



Nucor Steel invited our South Central Destination Zero Deaths Coalition to conduct educational outreach at their Employee Health Fair. Coalition partners, Chairman Lt. Dustin Poche (Lutcher Police Department) and Sgt. James Anderson (LA State Police) conducted fatal vision demonstrations using our new roadster pedal cart and impaired and distracted driving goggles funded through State Farm while Acadian Ambulance offered a CPR demo for employees.



## Gazebo National Night Out Event at Southdown Plantation

*Terrebonne Parish, LA*



South Central Destination Zero Deaths joined a variety of Terrebonne Parish safety partners at Gazebo's National Night Out event held at Southdown

Plantation on October 3rd. National Night Out is an annual initiative aimed at fostering community cohesion and strengthening the bond between the police and



Thank you State Farm for

residents, all in the pursuit of creating safer and more compassionate neighborhoods. This event not only improves the rapport among neighbors and law enforcement but also rekindles a genuine sense of community. Additionally, it offers an excellent opportunity to unite police officers and community members in positive and collaborative circumstances.

South Central Coalition shared seat belt and child seat information, distributed traffic safety color sheets and colors and reminded the public that children 12 and under are required by law to ride in the rear seat. Visit [Buckle Up Louisiana's](#) Facebook page for the most up to date Child Passenger Safety information!

providing funding for fun educational resources.



HTV 10 Bayou Time reported on the event.

## Louisiana Passenger Safety Task Force

### *Fitting Station Information*

In Louisiana, Child Passenger Safety Fitting Stations may be found statewide with over 600 nationally certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians available to make sure your child's safety seats are installed properly. Proper use and proper installation of child safety seats could be the difference between life and death in the event of a crash.

It's estimated that 96% of all child restraints are installed incorrectly. The LPSTF team can teach you how to select the proper child restraint, ensure that your child is placed into the restraint properly and that the restraint is correctly installed in your vehicle. Everyone who participates in a Child Safety Seat Installation Program will receive one-on-one instruction from a nationally certified Child Passenger Safety Technician (CPST) or instructor. Visit [Buckle Up Louisiana's](#) Facebook page for more information or use the QR code below to find a fitting station near you.

Is your child in the **right car seat?**

Child passenger safety law

	Age/Size	Restraint Use	
	Birth to at least 2 years old	Ride rear facing in an infant or convertible child safety seat	<p>A child who can be placed in more than one category shall use the more protective category. Child safety seats must be used according to the manufacturer's instructions.</p> <p>*5 Step Test: The seat belt fits correctly when the child sits all the way back against the vehicle seat, the child's knees bend over the edge of the vehicle seat, the belt fits snugly across the child's thighs and lower hips, and not the child's abdomen, and when the shoulder strap snugly crosses the center of the child's chest and not the child's neck. Effective 8/1/2019</p> <p><b>Free of charge</b></p>
	At least 2 years old and has outgrown the rear facing seat by height or weight	Ride in a forward-facing child safety seat with an internal harness	
	4 years old and has outgrown the forward-facing seat with internal harness by height or weight	Ride restrained in a belt positioning child booster seat using a lap shoulder seat belt	
	9 years old or has outgrown the booster seat and can pass the 5 Step Test*	Ride restrained with a lap shoulder seat belt secured correctly on the vehicle seat	
	Younger than 13 years old	Ride in the rear seat of a vehicle, when available, and properly restrained	



## National Child Seat Check Saturday - Region C

### *Terrebonne Parish, LA*



Destination Zero Deaths South Central Coalition provided support to Louisiana Passenger Safety Task Force on September 23rd for Region C's seat check event held at Grace Lutheran Church. A total of 26 child seats were inspected by Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians, 20 child seats were replaced.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) initiated this day to advocate for child safety and raise awareness regarding the correct procedures for inspecting child safety seats when traveling. These initiatives were implemented in response to the escalating frequency of car crashes in the United States, resulting in numerous injuries and fatalities among children, which could have been avoided through adherence to proper safety guidelines. It is imperative to provide children traveling on the road with the fundamental level of safety restraint.



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## National Rural Road Safety Summit

*Oklahoma City, OK*



The National Center for Rural Road Safety serves as a platform where state, local, and tribal agencies, along with their associated stakeholders, collaborate to exchange, innovate, and enhance safety tools and strategies. SCPDC's Planner, Cassie Parker, had the honor of presenting at the 4th National Rural Road Safety Summit, sharing the South Central Coalition's success in implementing Louisiana's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) at the regional and local levels.

## SCPDC Calendar of Events

### SCPDC Board Meeting - 10:30 AM

Thursday, October 19, 2023

Contact: Emma Bergeron, [emma@scpd.org](mailto:emma@scpd.org)

### SCPDC Loan Board Meeting - 8:30 AM

Third Tuesday of each month

Contact: Missy Menuet, [MissyM@scpd.org](mailto:MissyM@scpd.org)

### Region 6 Watershed Meeting - 10 AM

4th Wednesday of each month

Contact: Pat Gordon, [pat@scpd.org](mailto:pat@scpd.org)

### HTMPO Policy Committee - 12 PM

Thursday, October 26, 2023

Contact: Joshua Manning, [josh@scpd.org](mailto:josh@scpd.org)

## Print SCPDC Meeting Calendar

### HTMPO Technical Advisory Committee - 10 AM

Thursday, December 14, 2023

Contact: Joshua Manning, [josh@scpd.org](mailto:josh@scpd.org)

### Regional Transit Committee - 10 AM

Wednesday, November 15, 2023

Contact: Joshua Manning, [josh@scpd.org](mailto:josh@scpd.org)

### South Central Regional Safety Coalition - 10 AM

Thursday, November 16, 2023

Contact: Cassie Parker, [cassie@scpd.org](mailto:cassie@scpd.org)

for emphasis area meetings.

Any Parish or Municipality that wants to share regional activities they're promoting, we will give them access to our Newsletter as a medium. For more information about the Newsletter please contact Jonathan Eastwood at [jonathanE@scpd.org](mailto:jonathanE@scpd.org).

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