



For Immediate Release

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Pittsylvania County Project Manager Improving County Infrastructure, Services with CARES Act Money
Since his first day less than a month ago, Pittsylvania County Project Manager Nick Morris has been busy coordinating renovations and improvements of county services and infrastructure, all while trying to stay "within timelines and within guidelines" imposed by the Coronavirus Relief funds (CRF) he's using.

Morris was brought on in mid-August to complete an array of projects with federal funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, a federal stimulus bill passed in March that sent money through all levels of the country in response to the economic fallout caused by COVID-19. Through that bill, Pittsylvania County received \$10.5 million to cover costs that were not originally in the budget and that assist in preparation, response and mitigation of pandemic effects.

To be allowed to utilize the funds, Pittsylvania County must allocate the funds by Dec. 30 and spend them by the end of March—a tight timeframe for completing any large projects.

"This is a good stress," Morris said. "I don't worry about what I'm going to do each morning when I wake up, I just have to worry about how I'm going to do everything that day and which thing is more important at any given time."

Some of those projects Morris is overseeing include:

- Converting an outdated county building on Depot Street into a state-of-the-art disaster relief center that can also be used as an elections center
- Building an EMS station in Hurt for county ambulance staff to improve response time and access to U.S. 29
- Transforming the school division's Education and Cultural Center Auditorium into a meeting space for any county boards and commission that allows for social distancing and streaming
- Installing touchless fixtures, such as sinks and toilets, in county buildings to keep employees safe

"The CRF program is helping us vastly improve critical County infrastructure to ensure the County can provide services throughout this and future pandemics. Without Nick leading implementation, we'd be

far less capable of getting the work done during this short window of opportunity," said Pittsylvania County Administrator David Smitherman.

A native Oklahoman, Morris enlisted in the Army at age 17 and ultimately spent 32 years in the United States military, including 11 combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan as an Officer with the Marines. Morris credits that experience for preparing him for his current position.

"The military is nothing but project management," he said, noting that at different points he was responsible for leading as many as 240 marines into a combat zone.