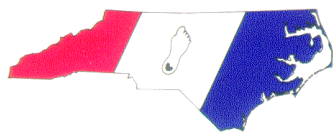# WPCOG - Newsletter
March 2019

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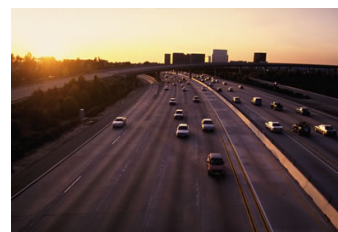Census 2020 Frequently Asked Questions. Learn more.

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Community & Economic Development
Design Foundry, Star Snax, and Trivium Corporate Center benefit from State grants

The WPCOG Community & Economic Development division secured three N.C. Department of Commerce grants in February, totaling more than $1.2 million and creating a projected 286 jobs.

The City of Hickory received a $500,000 N.C. Rural Economic Development Building Reuse grant to assist Design Foundry renovate a 344,000-square-foot building located on 22nd Street SE. Community & Economic Development Administrator Erin Schotte worked with the upholstered furniture manufacturing company to secure the grant, which also includes a $2 million investment by Design Foundry and plans to create 109 new, full-time jobs.

Meanwhile, the City of Conover received a $500,000 Building Reuse grant to assist Star Snax expand its existing 32,000-square-foot facility. Star Snax, located on Somerset Drive NW, is a manufacturer of branded, private-label tortilla chips and a domestic and international supplier for grocery and club stores. The company plans to create 40 new, full-time jobs and invest more than $1.9 million dollars. Community & Economic Project Developer Paul Teague assisted Star Snax in obtaining the grant funding.

Also, the WPCOG worked with the City of Hickory to gain a $225,000 Industrial Development Fund grant to help provide industrial road access at the Trivium Corporate Center, a 270-acre business park off Startown Road. WPCOG Assistant Executive Director Sherry Long wrote the grant that will help ITM Medical Isotopes - a German-based company that produces and supplies diagnostic and therapeutic radionuclides and radiopharmaceuticals - locate within the business park. The company plans to create 137 new, full-time jobs and invest $12 million.

Article by Paul Teague

Community & Regional Planning
Census 2020 Frequently Asked Questions

Census 2020 FAQ
It is hard to believe, but Census 2020 Day is only a year away (April 1, 2020). In preparation for the 2020 Census, North Carolina's "Make NC Count" campaign has prepared a list of frequently asked questions.

What is the Census?
Established by the US Constitution, the US Census Bureau is required to conduct a count of every person in the United States, including North Carolina. Everyone must be counted no matter their age, residence status or location. This includes deployed military at their current base address. Federal law requires that all information collected be kept confidential. The information compiled cannot be shared with law enforcement, the courts, immigration or anyone for 72 years.

How do I get counted?
Census Day is April 1, 2020. Completing the survey is quick and easy to do. You will be able to complete your Census questionnaire online or on paper. By using your phone, tablet or computer, or simply grabbing a pencil or pen, you can complete the questionnaire in only a few minutes. Responses can be submitted electronically or by mail.

Why does Census 2020 matter?

The data collected from the US Census helps determine political representation for our state and the amount of funding invested in our communities. Census data helps decide how more than $16 billion in federal funding gets used each year. By completing the 2020 Census, you will help:

- Determine the number of representatives in Congress for North Carolina
- Allocate federal funds in North Carolina
- Establish the boundaries for voting and school districts
- Provide information needed to improve schools, roads, health care, emergency response and other services in your community

How can you help make the 2020 Census successful?

It will take a team effort to make the 2020 Census in North Carolina a success and we need your help. Talk to family, friends and neighbors about why it's important to participate in the Census. Local governments, businesses, schools, tribes, community organizations, faith-based groups and individuals all have a role to play in making the Census a success for North Carolina. Groups can form local complete count committees to help:

- Spread the word on the importance of the 2020 Census in your community
- Help recruit census workers
- Promote awareness of the 2020 Census through social media, publications, word of mouth, web, mail and other media platforms.

The WPCOG Data Center is continuing its prep work for the 2020 Census. If you have any questions, please contact Taylor Dellinger at 828-485-4233 or taylor.dellinger@wpcog.org.

Article by Taylor Dellinger

IT/GIS Services
Hickory Fire Department Pre-Incident Plan ArcGIS Web Application

The Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG) Information Technology/GIS Department and the City of Hickory Fire Department have joined efforts to create a pre-incident plan ArcGIS online web application showing critical information about every commercial and multi-family property in the City of Hickory. Firefighters can now utilize the web application data to locate access points, electrical/gas/CNG/propane/water main shutoffs, fire alarm control panels, stairwells, and other critical information.

Hickory Fire Chief Matt Hutchinson says, "The fire department completed a three-year project of mapping every city multi-family and commercial property (3,628) for pre-incident planning data in GIS. The Hickory Fire Department was the first agency in the state to collect data on ESRI's ArcGIS Online platform in this manner. The ESRI platform continues to provide a very important resource for emergency response planning." The Hickory Fire Department will continue to utilize ESRI's suite of ArcGIS Online applications and tools to help analyze and locate critical pre-incident data.

The WPCOG staff used ESRI's ArcGIS Desktop and ArcGIS Online to create the pre-incident plan web application. With the help of Hickory's firefighters, the WPCOG staff developed a schema for the point feature layers and attribute data to be collected in the field. Firefighters then used iPads and the ArcGIS Collector application to collect point and attribute data about individual, commercial, or multi-family property.

For additional information, please contact Daniel Ezell, daniel.ezell@wpcog.org or Matt Hutchinson, mhutchinson@hickorync.gov.

Article by Daniel Ezell

Regional Housing Authority
Annual Waiting List Purge

In February, the RHA sent a letter to each applicant on the waiting list. Approximately 2,000 letters were sent asking applicants if they were still interested in waiting to receive housing assistance through the Section 8 program. Applicants were asked to respond by February 22, 2019. If applicants did not respond, they were taken off of the waiting list. Approximately 720 families did not respond or express their interest and were eliminated from the waiting list. This process is called a purge. The RHA has maintained an open waiting list since February 2017. By eliminating applicants who are no longer interested through this purging process, the RHA is able to manage its waiting list more efficiently.

The RHA is continuously accepting applications for our waiting list. You may apply online at wpcog.housingmanager.com. Due to certain preferences that we offer, waiting list positions can change.

We encourage any interested persons to apply. Applicants are notified of their status within 30 days of submitting an application.

The RHA would like to encourage applicants to continue to keep their addresses updated with us. We notify applicants by mail when they reach the top of the waiting list.

Please understand that our only method of communication with waiting list applicants is by mail. Therefore, it is critical that we have the most current mailing addresses.

At this time, over 1,300 applicants are waiting for Section 8 rental assistance. Since the demand for housing assistance often exceeds the limited resources available to HUD and the local housing agencies,

long waiting periods are common. If you need additional resources while you are waiting, please visit our EnVision Center page. www.wpcog.org/envision-center

Please contact Kala Guido for additional information regarding the application process at kala.guido@wpcog.org
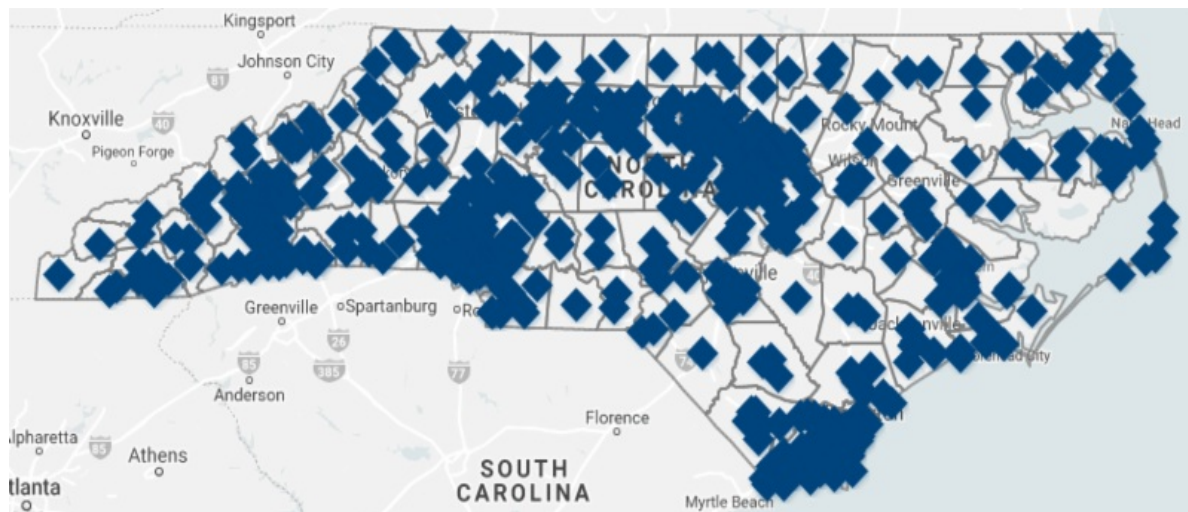
Article by Kala Guido

Transportation
NC Moves 2050 Plan

There's still time to submit your feedback for the NC Moves 2050 Plan! N. C. Department of Transportation is currently updating its long-range plan to help guide North Carolina's future transportation policies and investments. The plan provides a 30-year transportation blueprint for the state. While thirty years may seem far into the future, the time to start planning future transportation projects is now.

The NC Moves 2050 interactive map is your opportunity to provide comments or suggestions for the region of North Carolina in which you live, work, and play. To add a comment, click on a region in the map found at ncdot.gov/ncmoves. A picture of the map can be found below. To address regional and statewide challenges and opportunities, NCDOT needs your input on the following questions:

- What do you think are the biggest challenges facing our state in the future?
- What should be the focus of transportation in your region for the future? For example, should there be greater emphasis placed on safety, better connections to key destinations, better connections to jobs, more and improved transit options, more and improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, etc.?

Let your voice be heard - be a part of the future! Please submit all comments by April 30, 2019. For more information about upcoming input opportunities, please contact 919-707-0924.

Article by Averi Ritchie

Workforce Development Board
2019 Youth Summit

On, Tuesday March 19, the Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board hosted our local youth summit at LP Frans Stadium. There were 116 youth in attendance from with representation from each of the school systems in the Western Piedmont area. During the morning, the Hickory Crawdads staff conducted tours of the stadium allowing students to hear from staff about their jobs with the Hickory Crawdads and their educational background and experience. The staff were very informative and the students were attentive. Following the morning activity and staying with the ballpark theme, lunch was catered by Lucky Dogs. After lunch, the students were divided into groups and given the task of coming up with a presentation using some of the information they learned in the morning during the tour and Hickory Crawdads staff presentations. Within each of the smaller groups, a winner was selected to present in front of the Crawdads staff who served as judges. The winning group presented the idea of an International Night at the ballpark to encourage a diverse crowd of various nationalities and would have food trucks serving foods from other countries. They also would promote the night as a night to dress to impress and have games with prizes and giveaways. They suggested ending the evening with a concert and fireworks. The judges thought this was a great idea!

We want to recognize and say "Thank You!" to the businesses listed below that provided giveaway items for the students or other support for the youth summit:

Blue Ridge Healthcare, Hickory Crawdads, AMC Theaters, Steve White Motors, Hendrick Honda of Hickory, Pepsi, Wal-Mart,Chick-Fil-A,Bojangles, Google, Defy Gravity - Hickory, Sagebrush Steakhouse, McDonald's, CVCC, Sport Clips, and NEXTGen
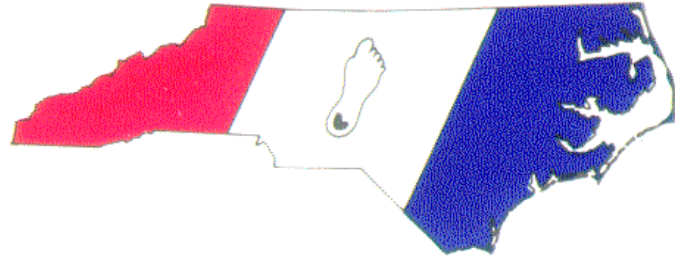
Article by Donna Gilbert

Area Agency on Aging
North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature

On March 13, 2019, the STHL met face to face with North Carolina Senators and Representatives in Raleigh to advocate for the senior citizens of North Carolina and presented the 2019 STHL Legislative Priorities that citizens across the state have voiced as important aging issues to be addressed by the NC Legislature this year.

The North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature was created by the North Carolina General Assembly with the passage of Senate Bill 479 in July of 1993. The Senior Tar Heel Legislature was created to:

- Provide information to senior citizens on the legislative process and matters being considered by the North Carolina General Assembly.

- Promote citizen involvement and advocacy concerning aging issues before the North Carolina General Assembly.
- Assess the legislative needs of older citizens by convening a forum modeled after the North Carolina General Assembly.

Each of the 100 North Carolina counties is entitled to one delegate to the Senior Tar Heel Legislature. Most counties also have an alternate delegate. Delegates and alternates must be age 60 or older. The North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services provides staff support for the Senior Tar Heel Legislature in cooperation with the 16 Area Agencies on Aging, which are responsible for conducting the selection of delegates and alternates.

The 2019 STHL Legislative Priorities are:

Increase Funding for HCCBG
The North Carolina Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) is vital in assuring the availability of cost-effective home and community-based services to the elderly, malnourished, homebound, dependent and those who are socially and economically needy. This older population continues to increase; approximately 10,000 citizens are currently waitlisted for services and 1.2 million more are expected to turn 60 years of age by 2034. This rapidly increasing older adult population will place even greater pressure on an already overburdened service delivery system. **The Senior Tar Heel Legislature requests the General Assembly increase the Home and Community Care Block Grant funding by $7 million dollars in recurring funds.**

Maintain and Increase Funding for Senior Centers
There are 171 Senior Centers in 97 counties that provide programs and services to enhance the health and wellness of older adults. These services are of significant benefit to help elders remain independent, thus delaying their potential for costlier services or housing options. Senior Center General Purpose money is vital to support critical center operations. To maintain operation, senior centers must leverage resources from a variety of sources that include federal, state, and local governments, special events, participant contributions, grants and volunteer hours. Even with leveraging, funding for senior centers has not been able to meet the needs of the state's increasing aging population who now constitute more than two-thirds of the fifty and over population. **The Senior Tar Heel Legislature requests that the General Assembly maintain the current General Purpose funding and increase this funding by a recurring $350,000 to continue to meet the vital needs of North Carolina's growing population of older adults.**

Increase funding for Project C.A.R.E.
By mandate of the North Carolina General Assembly, Project C.A.R.E. (Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty) was developed by recommendation of a statewide, multi-stakeholder Task Force to address Alzheimer disease and related dementias. Funded by the state through the NC Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Aging and Adult Services, it provides caregiver support, care management, and referrals to available services. It has become a national best practice model for providing respite services to family members who are caring at home for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. More funding is needed to assist the caregivers of the ever-growing older adult population. **The Senior Tar Heel Legislature requests that the General Assembly increase funding for Project C.A.R.E. in 2019-2020 by $500,000 and in future years increase funding by ten percent annually for expected growth.**

Strengthen and Fund North Carolina's Adult Protective Services Program (APS)
North Carolina's Adult Protective Services Program (APS) must be strengthened and funded to respond to the accelerated growth in the State's aging population. APS is a core of services provided to vulnerable and older adults who are at risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation. By 2025, 89 counties in North Carolina are projected to have more people age 60 years of age than 17 years and under. Many of these adults may be at risk of becoming victims of abuse, neglect or exploitation. The number of APS reports is expected to continue to increase as North Carolina's aging population increases. NC General Statute 108A, Article 6, Protection of the Abused, Neglected, or Exploited Disabled Adult Act, mandates county departments of social services provide APS to vulnerable and older adults who have been abused, neglected or exploited. In SFY 2016-2017 county departments of social services received 27,483 APS reports alleging the abuse, neglect or exploitation of vulnerable adults. In SFY 2016-17 counties expended approximately $23.5 million, 3% state, 79% county, 18% federal, for the provision of APS. Counties are struggling to locate funding to provide these mandated services and are relying on funding from county governments and a decreasing federal Social Services Block Grant that is used to fund many services provided by counties. The need for APS has continued to increase over the years, but the only State funding, $2 million provided

for the provision of APS, was eliminated in the SFY 2010-2012 State Budget. A comprehensive evaluation/review is needed to better reflect the challenges counties currently face in meeting the changing needs of vulnerable and older adults who have been abused, neglected or exploited and are in need protective services. **The Senior Tar Heel Legislature urges the General Assembly recognize and value its vulnerable citizens by making available $7 million in recurring funds in the State budget to meet the growing need for Adult Protective Services in North Carolina and conduct a comprehensive evaluation/review of these services to ensure this protection is adequate.**

Staff-to-Patient Ratios in Nursing Homes
The positive relationship between nurse staffing levels and the quality of nursing home care has been demonstrated widely and that increasing nurse (RN, LPN, and CNA) staffing levels facilitates enhancement of the outcomes of nursing home care. The federal Nursing Home Reform Act (NHRA), as part of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) of 1987, requires minimum staffing levels for registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical nurses (LPNs), and a minimum educational training for nurse's aides (NAs), but fails to establish a specific requirement for minimum caregiver/resident ratio or a minimum standard for the number of hours per patient day that a resident should be receiving care. In a nursing home, the CNA is the true point-person when it comes to providing adequate one-on-one care to the resident. The quality of care that facilities provide to their residents is frequently evaluated across three domains including structure (resources used to provide care; e.g., staffing), process (actions used to provide care; e.g., restraints) and outcomes (end results for patients; may be bad outcomes or good outcomes). **The Senior Tar Heel Legislature recommends that the General Assembly enact legislation, which establishes either a mandatory Standardized HPPD (hours per patient daily) or minimum staff-to-patient ratios for direct patient care, including enforcement standards and consequences to ensure quality care in nursing homes in the state of North Carolina, regardless of whether they are a for-profit or non-profit organization.**

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE NORTH CAROLINA SENIOR TAR HEEL LEGISLATURE

Mary Edwards of the Division of Aging and Adult Services is the principal staff aide and can be contacted at Mary.Edwards@dhhs.nc.gov or 919-855-3437.

STHL can be found on the web at: http://www.ncsthl.org/ and on Facebook (North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature).

For more information about the North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature, please contact your county's Delegate or Alternate:

Alexander County
Delegate: Paulette Huffman -Email: huffmanp64@gmail.com
Alternate - Vacant

Burke County
Delegate: Karen Robinson - Email: kjcr@charter.net
Alternate: Maxine Childress - Email: maxinechildress@gmail.com

Caldwell County
Delegate: Trilla Annas - Email: trillaannas@gmail.com
Alternate: Faye Higgins - Email: rhiggins00@gmail.com

Catawba County
Delegate: Gail Miller - Email: gdbrmiller@charter.net
Alternate: Richard Smith - Email: smithrpsjr@gmail.com

Residents of Alexander County age 60 or older, if you are interested in serving as the Alexander County Alternate Member of the Senior Tar Heel Legislature, please contact Anita Roberts at anita.roberts@wpcog.org or 828-485-4265 for an application. Overnight travel to Raleigh is necessary three time per year for meetings, in addition to Regional STHL meetings.

Article by Anita Roberts

WPCOG Calendar

| April | May | June |

17 - Joint Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) & Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) (2PM)

22 - Region E Aging Providers (2-4PM)

25 - Workforce Development Board Meeting (8:30AM) WPCOG Offices

25 - WPCOG Annual Meeting/50th Anniversary Celebration (6PM)

2 - Housing Partnership Network meeting (2PM) WPCOG Offices

13 - Regional Aging Advisory Committee (RAAC) (12-2PM)

23 - WPCOG Policy Board Meeting (6PM) Town of Granite Falls

26 - Joint Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) & Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) (2PM)

27 - Workforce Development Board Meeting (8:30AM) WPCOG Offices

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