

Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in Western Piedmont Council of Governments. Don't forget to add [jason.toney@wpcog.org](mailto:jason.toney@wpcog.org) to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.



# Western Piedmont Council of Governments

*Creative Regional Solutions Since 1968*

## September 2017



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### Regional Housing Authority



Join us for our  
**ANNUAL LANDLORD  
INFORMATION WORKSHOP**

November 14, 2017

3pm - 5pm

WPCOG offices

(1880 2nd Ave NW | Hickory, NC 28603)

Current and interested landlords in Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties are invited to attend our workshop to learn about the Housing Choice Voucher Program. Participating landlords may send their questions in advance, allowing us to cover those topics during our workshop. Come learn more about the HCV Program and how it can benefit you and your community.

Please RSVP and send questions to Kala Guido at [kala.guido@wpcog.org](mailto:kala.guido@wpcog.org) or 828-485-4282.



**Western Piedmont  
Council of Governments**

*Regional Housing Authority*



The WPCOG Regional Housing Authority (RHA) is committed to Equal Housing Opportunity for all applicants and participants. We comply with Federal Fair Housing Act. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make such preference, limitation or discrimination. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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Current and interested Section 8 Landlords are invited to attend our Annual Landlord Information Workshop November 14, 2017.

For questions about the Housing Choice Voucher program or to RSVP, please contact Kala Guido at 828-485-4282.

#### FAQs

##### **What is the Housing Choice Voucher Program?**

The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program is a rental assistance program funded by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and administered locally by The Regional Housing Authority

(RHA). HUD's HCV Program provides rental assistance to low income families, the elderly and persons with disabilities so that they can live in decent, safe and sanitary housing. Program participants may use their Voucher to find their own housing by searching single-family homes, manufactured homes, townhomes or apartments.

### **What are My Benefits as a Landlord?**

Landlords who participate in the program are helping low income families in Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties obtain the most basic of needs-housing. By complying with program regulations, landlords can gain these business benefits: guaranteed receipt of the RHA's portion of contract rent, lower vacancy rates and reduced tenant turnover.

### **How do I rent my home or apartment with the Housing Authority?**

The RHA has collaborated with [www.gosection8.com](http://www.gosection8.com), and [www.nchousingsearch.org](http://www.nchousingsearch.org). Both provide an enhanced program to list rental properties online for free.

### **What are My Responsibilities?**

Under the HUD HCV Program, landlords must make repairs to the property, if required. Landlords must comply with all federal, state and local fair housing laws and permit inspections of the unit as requested by the RHA. Landlords must comply with the terms of the lease, HUD's Tenancy Addendum, the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Contract, and NC Landlord laws.

### **What kind of Housing Qualifies?**

Any safe, decent and sanitary housing qualifies. Units can include single family homes, manufactured homes, townhomes and apartments. Qualifications for the program are an adequate living area with heating, water and sewer systems. The home must be free from any conditions that might endanger the health and safety of the participant. To ensure the home meets the qualifications, the RHA must conduct and the unit must pass a housing quality standard inspection.

### **What kind of inspection is done?**

Your unit will be inspected to make sure that it meets the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) of the HCV program. The inspector will examine the exterior of the building, the plumbing, heating systems, the exits, hallways, and each room in the unit to make sure the unit is reasonably clean, safe and in good condition. The unit must be ready to inspect at the time of the inspection and all utilities must be turned on and working. The inspector will need access to the unit itself, the basement and all common areas.

### **Does the Housing Authority screen Housing Choice Voucher Participants?**

The Housing Authority does not screen tenants for you. You must do this yourself, just as you would screen non-HCV tenants. The Housing Authority can tell you the number of people on the voucher, current and previous addresses, and current and previous landlords. However, the Housing Authority's main focus is checking that the applicant meets the HCV program requirements.

Article by Kala Guido

## **Workforce Development**

### **New Program Year Off to a Great Start!**

Workforce development's program year began July 1, 2017. With that being said, our NCWorks system is already off to a great start, setting up and hosting 26 recruitment events so far, and providing over 500 workforce services to employers. Just to list a few, this month we are hosting recruitment events for the Department of Public Safety, Lowes Customer Support Department, and Superior Quality Inc. (SQI). We were also happy to collaborate with Burke County workforce partners to help host this year's annual [Foothill Recruitment Event](#) on September 13, at the Collett Street Recreation Center.

To follow our impact the Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board has instituted an online performance dashboard to demonstrate our benefit and services to the workforce. It is our mission to increase economic mobility for individuals and businesses by connecting talent to jobs.

Article by Wendy Johnson



# SCAM JAM

October 6, 2017 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

Hickory Metro Convention Center

FREE EVENT  
WITH LUNCH

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



Western Piedmont  
Council of Governments

Area Agency on Aging



**Scam Jam** is a collection of educational presentations designed to familiarize consumers with the kind of scams and frauds in today's society such as consumer frauds, identity theft, and telemarketing fraud. Guest speakers include representatives from the NC Attorney General's Office, NC Secretary of State, NC Senior Medicare Patrol, and Catawba County Sheriff's Department.

Registration Required

[www.wpcog.org](http://www.wpcog.org)

or

Call: 828-485-4280

Shredding and  
Medication Drop-Off  
will be available  
on site!

SPONSORS:





# Taking Charge!

What is it?  
When do I need it?  
How do I get it?

Power of Attorney

Medicaid

Advance Directives

Register Today!

Know Your Options For  
Long Term Care



**October 20, 2017**  
**11am-1pm**

*Lunch provided at no charge*

Western Piedmont Council of Governments

Area Agency on Aging

1880 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. NW Hickory

Call 828-485-4256 to reserve your lunch.

*These questions and more answered with presentations from the experts!*

**Patrick, Harper and Dixon, Attorneys at Law**

**Catawba Social Services**

**Catawba Regional Hospice**

*Presented by Area Agency on Aging Ombudsman  
& Family Caregiver Support Programs*



**3RD ANNUAL  
ACAP CAREGIVER CONFERENCE**  
*MEANINGFUL TOOLS FOR CAREGIVERS*

NOVEMBER 3, 2017

9AM -3PM



Join us for our 3rd Annual Caregiver Conference as we add caregiving tools to your toolbox. We can help equip you with more confidence and helpful tools to support your caregiving journey.

**Date:** Friday, November 3, 2017

**Time:** 9am -3pm

**Location:** Western Piedmont Council of Governments | 1880 2nd Ave NW | Hickory, NC 28601

Admission is FREE of charge – But Space is Limited!

Breakfast and Lunch will be provided!

Register online today at [www.wpcog.org](http://www.wpcog.org) or call (828) 485-4256

(Nursing contact hours available-payment due the day of conference)

**REGISTER TODAY!**



**ACAP Hickory**  
*Adult Children of Aging Parents*



**Western Piedmont  
Council of Governments**  
*Area Agency on Aging*



**Catawba  
Regional  
Hospice**

## Community & Economic Development Notice of Urgent Repair Loan Funds

Catawba County is now taking applications for the 2017 Urgent Repair Program (URP) loan funds. The NC Housing Finance Agency sponsors the URP program with funds provided by the NC Housing Trust Fund. Catawba County has received a \$75,000 loan to assist at least fifteen (15) homeowners located throughout all of Catawba County, including all towns, cities and municipalities with the exception of the City of Hickory.

This loan will alleviate housing conditions that pose an imminent threat to the life or safety of very low-income homeowners with special needs or will provide accessibility modifications. Eligible households with special needs include households with members who are at least 62 years old; handicapped or

disabled members; military veteran; a single parent with at least one dependent child in residence; five or more persons; or the household has a child or children below the age of six whose blood lead levels are elevated. This program can also enable frail elderly homeowners and others with physical disabilities living in the home to remain in their homes by providing essential accessibility modifications. If you have applied for repair funds in the past, you must apply again for this program. Being on the waiting list does not automatically qualify you for this program. Applications will be taken ONLY by phone by calling Deanna Butcher at 828-485-4229 WPCOG, PO Box 9026, Hickory, NC 28603.

Article by Laurie Powell

## Community & Regional Planning

### McGalliard Creek Watershed Plan

In 2016 the WPCOG received a 205j grant from US EPA to complete a Watershed Plan for McGalliard Creek. The WPCOG partnered with the Town of Valdese to complete the plan. The goal of the McGalliard Creek Watershed Plan was to identify sources of impairment through data and stakeholder meetings, outline strategies to aid in watershed restoration, identify restoration activities and best management practices that best address the issues, and compile a project atlas of identifiable properties that best meet the goals of the project.



McGalliard Falls Park waterfall

McGalliard Creek is approximately six miles long and drains residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural and forested land cover into Lake Rhodhiss. The Town of Valdese and some of its residents have expressed concern over the amount of sedimentation that can be found in the Creek. Water that was once deep and used as a place for recreational fishing has seen a great deal of its banks eroded and once deep areas of the creek become shallow. These shallow, wide creeks cause the water to move more slowly, causing more sediment to sink to the bottom. The creek is currently on the 303d list of impaired streams for a poor fish community.

Now that restoration activities and best management practices that best mitigate the issues in the creek have been identified in the plan; along with estimates for load reductions, and plans for continued



monitoring of these projects; it will be important to obtain funding to carry the projects out. Watershed Plans are required from many funding sources to obtain grant funding for water quality improvements such as stream bank repair, easement acquisition, and monitoring.



McGalliard Falls Park sediment

Stakeholder input was very important during the formation of this plan. Valdese Staff, officials, and interested citizens played a key role in determining the best course of action in mitigating issues along McGalliard Creek.

Article by John Wear

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## Community & Regional Planning

### 2016 American Community Survey Data Now Available

On September 14, 2017 the US Census Bureau released data from the 2016 American Community Survey (ACS) for all areas with populations of 65,000 or more. More than 40 topics are available from the 2016 ACS including educational attainment, housing, employment, commuting, language spoken at home, nativity, ancestry and selected monthly homeowner costs. For 2016 ACS data for the Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), Burke County, Caldwell County and Catawba County click [here](#).

Article by Taylor Dellinger



## Orthophotography and GIS

When examining a map, whether on paper or a digital screen, it is often helpful to have photography of the terrain in the background. This allows the user to relate land features, -- such as roads, buildings, trees and lakes -- to his or her area of interest. The photography is so commonly used in online maps that users may take it for granted, but it is very valuable.

These background pictures used in online GIS are called "Orthophotography" or "Orthos" for short. In North Carolina, Orthos are commonly commissioned by individual counties. However, beginning in 2010, the State of North Carolina, through a partnership between the NC Department of Emergency Management (NC DEM) and the NC Center for Geographic Information and Analysis (NC CGIA), has begun to supplement County Orthos with a statewide set. The State program provides Orthos for one quadrant of the State (NE, SE, NW and SW) each year, so that any given area receives updated photos once every four years. For the WPCOG region, Orthos were provided in 2010 and 2014, and we look forward to new images in 2018.



To create Orthos, companies with specially-equipped aircraft are hired to fly over a given area in long, snaking patterns in order to take the photographs from as vertical of an angle as possible, which minimizes distortion. Orthos are usually (though not always) flown in early spring before foliage blooms in order to be able to see ground features and buildings through tree cover. This is called "leaf-off" Orthophotography. Currently, Orthos are typically taken at 6 inch resolution, meaning that each individual pixel of the photos represent a square 6 inches wide on the ground. Satellite imagery is sometimes used for areas that are not accessible to an airplane, but is generally of lower quality than

aircraft-produces images.

Once taken, the photographs are adjusted ("rectified") for topography (such as valleys, dips and hills) and for the angle that the photograph was taken from. This allows ground features better to match the true coordinates of features on the ground. One tip for using Orthophotography is, when viewing buildings, to look at where the building meets the ground, rather than its roof, because the authors try matching the position of the building's floor to the earth.

In the IT/GIS department at WPCOG, Orthophotography is included in the web-applications we build for our member governments. The State provides a streaming service of its Orthos free of charge, and WPCOG often accesses it for background imagery in our web-apps, though for special uses we may use a county's Orthos or imagery provided by Esri, Inc. If you have any questions about Orthoimagery, contact the IT/GIS Department at WPCOG at (828) 322-9191 or by email at [tom.bell@wpcog.org](mailto:tom.bell@wpcog.org).

Article by Tom Bell

## USDA Rural Development Programs Summary

USDA Rural Development has requested assistance with getting the word out on their Community Facilities program. Their budget year will come to a close on September 30<sup>th</sup> and they still have funds available and they are encouraging eligible interested communities to inquire or to apply as soon as possible.

Below you will find information about the program from Brian Queen with USDA-Rural Development. Please contact Brian or the USDA contact person for your region (see attached map) if you have any questions or need additional information:

The Community Facilities (CF) program is a loan program with a grant component. The program may be used to develop essential community facilities or purchase necessary equipment in rural areas and towns with a population of less than 20,000. Typically operating expenses, such as salaries, are not an eligible assistance purpose. The amount of grant assistance available depends upon the median household income and the population in the service area and the availability of grant funds. Grant funds are extremely limited. In most instances, projects which receive grant assistance have a high priority and are highly leveraged with other loan and grant awards.

Who may apply: Community Programs can make and guarantee loans to develop essential community facilities. Loans and guarantees are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, and special-purpose districts, as well as to non-profit corporations and tribal governments. Applicants must have the legal authority to borrow and repay loans, to pledge security for loans, and to construct, operate, and maintain the facilities. They must also be financially sound and able to organize and manage the facility effectively. Repayment of the loan must be based on tax assessments, revenues, fees, or other sources of money sufficient for operation and maintenance, reserves, and debt retirement. Feasibility studies prepared by a third party are normally required for start-up facilities.

Fund Uses: Loan funds may be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety, and public services. This can include costs to acquire land needed for a facility, pay necessary professional fees, and purchase equipment required for its operation. Refinancing existing debts may be considered an eligible direct or guaranteed loan purpose if the debt being refinanced is a secondary part of the loan, is associated with the project facility, and if the applicant creditors are unwilling to extend or modify terms in order for the new loan to be feasible.

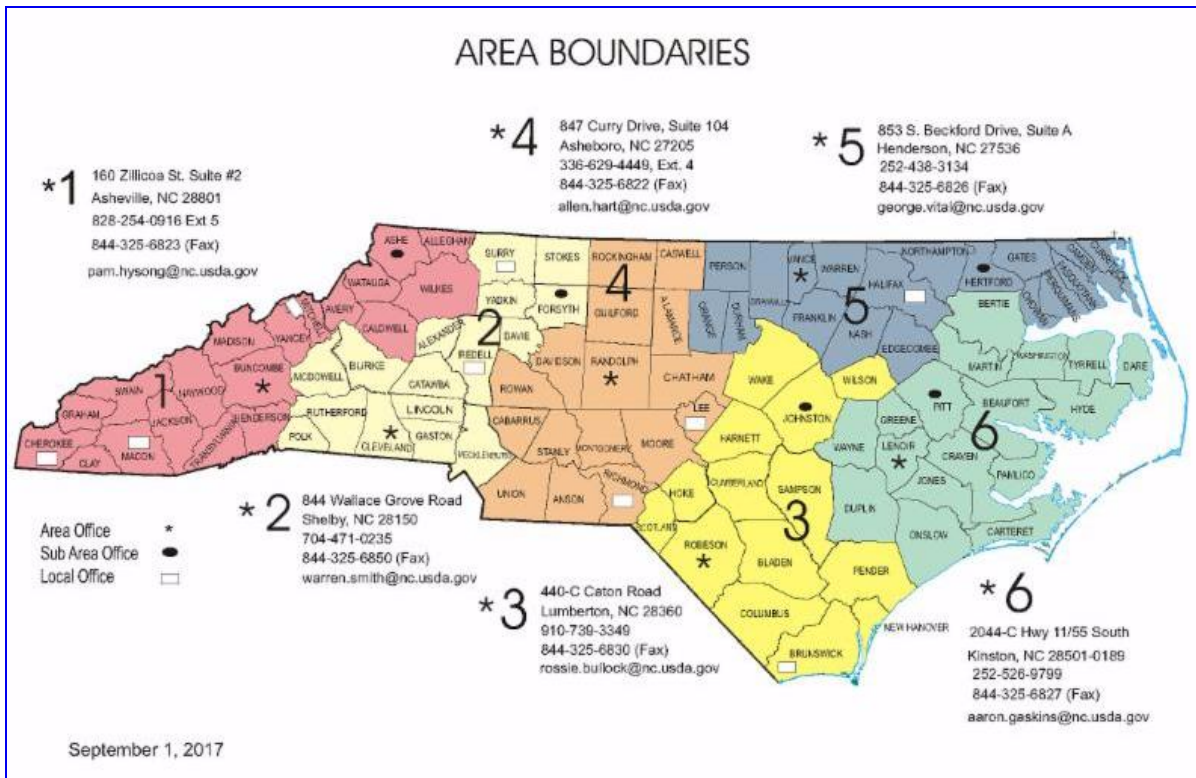
Rates and Terms: Current rate is 3.25%, but does change on a quarterly basis until fixed at loan approval. Loan repayment terms may not exceed the applicant authority (under State law or organizational structure), the useful life of the facility, or a maximum 40 years.

Security Requirements: bonds, notes pledging taxes, assessments on revenue and/or a mortgage may be taken on real and personal property

Application Processing: Applications are handled by USDA Rural Development area offices and can be submitted at any time. Area staff can provide application materials and current program information,

and assist in the preparation of an application. The CF application process is a two-stage procedure (preapplication and application). After an application is submitted, time to process the application depends upon the scope of the project, environmental review, and legal issues.

More information can be obtained by visiting the [USDA website](#) or by contacting the area office that covers the respective county listed on the attached PDF Boundaries Map.



[Area Boundaries PDF](#)

**WPCOG Calendar of Events**

September	October	November
09-12 - NADO Conference	06 - Scam Jam (10 AM)	03 - ACAP Caregiver Conference (9 AM)
19 - Western Piedmont Air Quality Committee (10 AM)	18 - Water Resources (12 PM)	13 - Regional Aging Advisory Committee (12 PM)
26 - Policy Board (6 PM)	19 - Regional Managers Meeting (12 PM)	15 - MPO TCC (2 PM) & TAC (3:30 PM)
27 - MPO TCC (2 PM) & TAC (3:30 PM)	20 - Taking Charge! Know Your Options for Long-term Care (11 AM)	28 - Policy Board (6 PM)
	23 - Regional Aging Provider Meeting (2 PM)	
	24 - Executive Committee Meeting (6 PM)	



25 - MPO TCC (2 PM)  
& TAC (3:30 PM)

26 - Workforce Board  
(8:30 AM)

26 - Mayors/Chairmen/  
Managers Meeting (6 PM)

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STAY CONNECTED

