

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 to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

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WPCOG - Newsletter

November 2019

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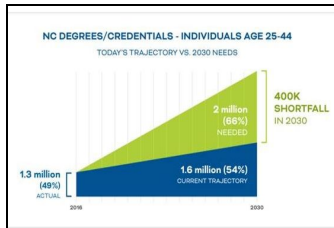
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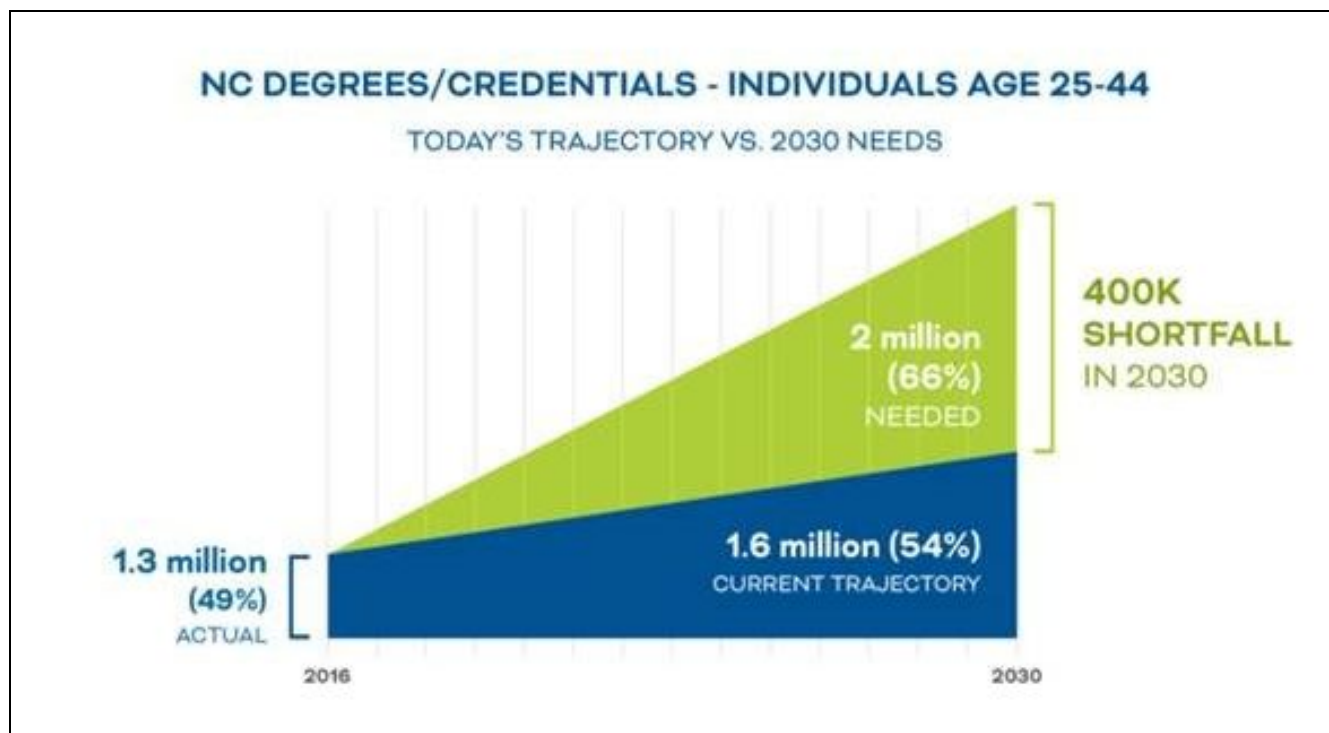
Workforce Development Board Supporting MyFutureNC

The Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board is proud to support [myFUTURENC](#) to help eliminate the skill gaps. We will continue to utilize Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds to help achieve the goal of 2,000,000 North Carolinians obtaining a high quality postsecondary degree and/or credential by 2030. On August 15, 2019 the Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board provided an official [letter of proclamation](#) supported high quality postsecondary education to myFUTURENC.

"myFutureNC's mission is to prepare North Carolina for the future by empowering individuals, strengthening communities, and ensuring our economic viability in a global economy. myFutureNC is working across sectors and in communities throughout the state to:

- *Close gaps in postsecondary attainment.*
- *Promote alignment between educational programming and business/industry needs.*
- *Ultimately improve the quality of educational opportunities for all North Carolinians.*

On Feb. 20, 2019, myFutureNC unveiled its goal and bold vision for the future of education in our state: We will work to ensure that by 2030, 2 million North Carolinians have a high-quality post-secondary degree or credential."



Courtesy of [MyFutureNC.org](#)

Area Agency on Aging National Caregiver Month 2019



November is National Family Caregivers Month, a tradition that began as National Family Caregivers week in the mid-1990's. Over the years, the National Caregivers Week has rightly gained more recognition and grown into the month of November and provides the platform to recognize and highlight the valuable services caregivers across North Carolina and the nation are providing for a family member, neighbor or friend.

Caregiving often involves providing a loved one with assistance and support in areas such as meals, bathing and dressing, medication management, transportation, housekeeping, financial assistance, and so much more. Caregiving can be a 24-hour a day/7/days a week job, and is often draining both emotionally and physically. Many caregivers are trying to balance their careers, family schedules, and meeting the needs of their loved ones every day.

During the month of November, we recognize and honor caregivers across the nation and North Carolina who are giving of themselves and providing exceptional care for parents, spouses, relatives, friends and children on any given day. Adults of all ages are among the ranks of family caregivers across the United States. We encourage caregivers to embrace the 2019 National Caregivers Month theme **#BeCareCurious**, and ask questions, seek out resources and do not hesitate to ask for help.

Caregivers can reach out to WPCOG Area Agency on Aging Family Caregiver Support Program for resources to assist their caregiving and the following services:

- Information about available services and resources to help families in their caregiver roles.
- Assistance to families gaining access to services.
- Caregiver support to help families cope with the emotional and physical stress associated with caregiving.
- Respite care to enable caregivers to be temporarily relieved from their caregiving responsibilities.
- Limited supplemental services to complement care provided by caregivers.

If you are caring for someone, know that you are providing a gift of care to a valuable person in your life. To those in our community who may know someone who is a caregiver, join the Family Caregiver Support Program and take time to recognize their commitment and dedication to a loved one and show your support during the month of November and all throughout the year.

"The state of North Carolina encourages people to acknowledge and support family, friends and neighbors who help those who are aging or have disabilities; support of family caregivers is not only the right thing to do, but an essential investment in a better future for North Carolina's older adults and individuals with disabilities." (North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper, Governor's Proclamation-National Family Caregivers Month, 2019)

For additional information, visit WPCOG Area Agency on Aging website: www.wpcog.org and click on Area Agency on Aging and Caregiver Support or call (828) 485-4256.

Article by Mary Mitchell

Community & Economic Development

WPCOG Receives Largest Grant from US HUD of Any Statewide Agency

Recently Western Piedmont Council of Governments was awarded \$40,701 by US Department of Housing and Urban Development for Housing Counseling Services. The award was the largest amount given to any non-statewide agency in North Carolina. The Housing counseling grant will help families find or keep their homes. The grant can be used to help homeowners who are facing mortgage delinquency or in default to help avoid foreclosure. WPCOG does not charge a fee to anyone who seeks assistance from the housing counselors.

Article by Paul Teague

Community & Regional Planning

ADA Compliance

What is the ADA?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) became law in 1990. Though planning efforts have been encouraged for almost 30 years, requirements are now being enforced leaving many wondering exactly what ADA entails.

The ADA is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.

This extends to local governments under Title II of the ADA. The Department of Justice's regulation implementing Title II, subtitle A, of the ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all services, programs, and activities provided to the public by State and local governments, except public transportation services.

Did you know that nearly 1 in 5 people have a disability in the United States?

According to Census Bureau Reports, about 56.7 million people - 19 percent of the population - had a disability in 2010. The report, Americans with Disabilities: 2010, presents estimates of disability status and type, with more than half reporting a severe disability regarding functional limitation.

Did you know that transition plans are a requirement for municipalities with 50+ employees?

A transition plan is a plan that identifies any non-compliant issues regarding sidewalks, greenways, intersections, cross walks, bus stops, or Town/City/County owned buildings. Transition plans generally prioritize non-compliant issues into 3 categories: critical impact, moderate impact, and low impact.

A transition plan serves to guide municipalities towards ADA Compliance with past construction and future capital improvement projects. The Department of Justice will look for these plans in the event of a grievance or review.

Did you know that WPCOG offers ADA Transition Plan services?

We are here to help! Navigating standards and best practices can be overwhelming. WPCOG is now offering ADA Transition Plan services for municipalities. We want our region to serve all citizens equally. All individuals deserve the same consideration in terms of access to public spaces and events. Services offered include:

- An inventory of the public pedestrian right-of-way (sidewalks, cross walks, greenways, bus stops), municipal owned parking lots, and all municipal-owned buildings;
- A transition plan identifying critical, moderate, and low impact issues found during inventory and best practices for moving forward;
- Plan maintenance as issues are resolved;
- An ADA Coordinator who will respond to questions, concerns, or potential grievances, provide monthly reports regarding inventory findings and general information, and maintain current information regarding state and federal laws and regulations.

Can you spot the mobility barriers?



The pictures above represent more obvious mobility barriers. Gentle slopes, well defined landings and wide smooth pathways are all convenient for the able user, but they are essential elements for people with disabilities.

Plan ahead. Protect your municipality and its citizens! Contact Averi Ritchie at 828-485-4248 or (averi.ritchie@wpcog.org) to learn more about WPCOG ADA service offerings.

Article by Averi Ritchie

Community & Regional Planning

Why We Ask? A Description of 2020 Census Questionnaire Subjects

We are only a few months away from the start of data collection for the 2020 Census. Many citizens often ask why the Census Bureau collects data on them and their household. In response to these questions, the US

Why We Ask

The 2020 Census is easy. The questions are simple.

The census asks questions that provide a snapshot of the nation. Census results affect your voice in government, how much funding your community receives, and how your community plans for the future.

When you fill out the census, you help:

- Determine how many seats your state gets in Congress.
- Guide how more than \$675 billion in federal funding is distributed to states and communities each year.
- Create jobs, provide housing, prepare for emergencies, and build schools, roads and hospitals.

POPULATION COUNT (NUMBER OF PEOPLE LIVING OR STAYING)

We ask this question to collect an accurate count of the number of people at each address on Census Day, April 1, 2020. Each decade, census results determine how many seats your state gets in Congress. State and local officials use census counts to draw boundaries for districts like congressional districts, state legislative districts, and school districts.

ANY ADDITIONAL PEOPLE LIVING OR STAYING

Our goal is to count people once, only once, and in the right place according to where they live on Census Day. Keeping this goal in mind, we ask this question to ensure that everyone living at an address is counted.

OWNER/RENTER

We ask about whether a home is owned or rented to create statistics about



homeownership and renters. Homeownership rates serve as an indicator of the nation's economy and help in administering housing programs and informing planning decisions.

PHONE NUMBER

We ask for a phone number in case we need to contact you. We will never share your number and will only contact you if needed for official Census Bureau business.

Revised July 2019

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Why We Ask

The 2020 Census is easy. The questions are simple.

NAME

We ask for names to ensure everyone in the house is counted. Listing the name of each person in the household helps respondents include all members, particularly in large households where a respondent may forget who was counted and who was not.

SEX

We ask about the sex of each person to create statistics about males and females. Census data about sex are used in planning and funding government programs, and in evaluating other government programs and policies to ensure they fairly and equitably serve the needs of males and females. These statistics are also used to enforce laws, regulations, and policies against discrimination in government programs and in society.

AGE AND DATE OF BIRTH

We ask about age and date of birth to understand the size and characteristics of different age groups and to present other data by age. Local, state, tribal, and federal agencies use age data to plan and fund government programs that provide assistance or services for specific age groups, such as children, working-age adults, women of childbearing age, or the older population. These statistics also help enforce laws, regulations, and policies against age discrimination in government programs and in society.

HISPANIC, LATINO, OR SPANISH ORIGIN

We ask about whether a person is of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin to create statistics

about this ethnic group. The data collected in this question are needed by federal agencies to monitor compliance with antidiscrimination provisions, such as under the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act.

RACE

We ask about a person's race to create statistics about race and to present other statistics by race groups. The data collected in this question are needed by federal agencies to monitor compliance with antidiscrimination provisions, such as under the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act. State governments use the data to determine congressional, state, and local voting districts.

WHETHER A PERSON LIVES OR STAYS SOMEWHERE ELSE

Our goal is to count people once, only once, and in the right place according to where they live on Census Day. Keeping this goal in mind, we ask this question to ensure individuals are not included at multiple addresses.

RELATIONSHIP

We ask about the relationship of each person in a household to one central person to create estimates about families, households, and other groups. Relationship data are used in planning and funding government programs that provide funds or services for families, people living or raising children alone, grandparents living with grandchildren, or other households that qualify for additional assistance.

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Article by Taylor Dellinger

Regional Housing Authority REACH Success Story - Tia Coleman

Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) is a program that enables HUD-assisted families to increase their earned income and reduce their dependency on welfare assistance and rental subsidies. The RHA offers a unique opportunity to participate in a program designed especially for self-sufficiency, called REACH. The REACH program, is for

active Section 8 participants.

The REACH Coordinator will work with participants and families to set goals and identify the steps needed to achieve those goals. They receive the guidance, resources and support needed to move toward economic independence.

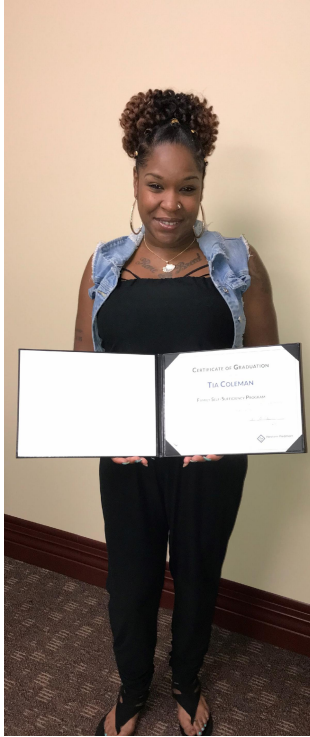
Sharing a program's mission, focus, and leadership perspective is important, but seeing a program's impact on a participant often shows that program's relevancy in a more powerful, direct way.

On October 29, the REACH Program Coordinating Committee (PCC) met at Western Piedmont Council of Governments and experienced both viewpoints. HUD requires that each of its self-sufficiency programs form a committee of community partners or join one that already exists.



Kim Duncan, coordinator for REACH, opened the meeting by describing the program and sharing what her roles are with the housing authority.

Tia Coleman, the PCC tenant representative and a recent REACH graduate, spoke about her experiences with the program and about the power of mentorship and support. She thanked all the partners for their assistance and guidance. The partners complimented Tia on her strong speaking skills and for her willingness to share her story.



Nearly 30 partners from a four-county area shared information about their programs. Agencies attending represented banking and credit counseling, social services, transportation, small business education, mental health, workforce, education, non-profits and more. Each participant received a copy of a recent REACH newsletter and program FAQ sheet as well as a sample copy of a referral form and a WPCOG impact report showing the demographics of Section 8 tenants in their counties.

HUD's 2020 grant funding request to strengthen financial literacy options was discussed, as well as collaboration in other areas that are barriers to clients. A small PCC collaboration group plans to discuss short-term, drop-in child care options.

Housing Choice Voucher Program participants are encouraged to contact Kim Duncan, REACH Coordinator, if interested in participating in the REACH program. kim.duncan@wpcog.org | 828.485.4299

Article by Kim Duncan

Transportation

NCDOT Again Honoring Community Transportation Projects with the Mobi Awards

To honor communities showcasing the state's best multimodal projects, the North Carolina Department of Transportation will host another "Mobi" Awards for the second straight year. The Mobi Awards recognize projects that showcase the important role investments in transportation play in creating vibrant communities. "Multimodal projects are vital to North Carolina's future," said NCDOT Secretary Jim Trogdon. "They connect people to places, and make the State more accessible, attractive, and competitive."

Between November 12 and December 16, communities may submit an online application. Judges will then select winners, who will be announced at an awards ceremony on April 1, 2020, in Raleigh. Contest entries must be in one of six categories. Five of these categories are the same as last year's inaugural Mobi Awards - Urban, Suburban, Rural, Tourism, and Innovation. In addition, a sixth new category of "Most Voted Project" will be awarded this year to the project that garners the most votes from the public among all entrants. Judges will select winners and honorable mentions based on how well the project leverages or spurs private investment, supports economic development, creates long-term employment, improves public health, and enhances the community. Judges will also select winners, if a project showcases another unique or significant feature.

To learn more or apply, go to <https://connect.ncdot.gov/mobi> and click the "Apply Now" button. Questions can be sent by email to theMobi@ncdot.gov. Any interested community within our four-county region may also

ask Brian Horton at WPCOG to assist with their application.

Article by Brian Horton



WPCOG Calendar

November

- 20 - MPO Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) (2pm)
- 20 - MPO Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) (2pm)
- 26 - WPCOG Policy Board Meeting (6pm) @ Maiden

December

- 12 - Workforce Development Board @ WPCOG (8:30am)
- 18 - MPO Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) (TBA)
- 18 - MPO Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) (TBA)

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