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August 2020

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Community & Economic Development Governor Cooper Announces Funding to Assist Residents, Communities

North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper has announced \$175 million to help North Carolinians with rental and utility payment support in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The announcement includes three programs designed to work together to help people avoid eviction and pay their bills.

Local Government Funds: There is \$28 million of federal funding will be administered by local governments through the North Carolina Department of Commerce. This money also comes from the federal CDBG-CV program and will be administered by incorporated municipalities under 50,000 residents and counties under 200,000 residents that apply to participate. Local governments are encouraged to prioritize the money locally to help their residents pay rent and outstanding utility bills. In addition, the funds may provide support for internet access, food distribution, COVID-19 testing and diagnosis and employment training for health care workers.

The application process for local governments to apply for the Commerce-administered funding has opened. Potential applicants should contact WPCOG Assistant Executive Director Sherry Long at 828-485-4251 or by email at sherry.long@wpcog.org.

Eviction Prevention and Utility Payments: Approximately \$94 million of the funding will be disbursed by the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency (NCORR) to support rental and utility payments and prevent evictions for those with a demonstrated need. The funding will be distributed to eligible community agencies around the state that will work directly with North Carolinians on an application and disbursement process. The fund includes \$28 million from federal Community Development Block Grant - Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funding and the remaining \$66 million from CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) money.

Crisis Response and Housing Stability: About \$53 million of the funding is designated for the Emergency Solutions Grant-Coronavirus (ESG-CV) Program through the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS). The federal ESG-CV money is intended for families experiencing homelessness or who face a more immediate risk of homelessness and will be distributed by similar community agencies handling NCORR's program. This innovative model will help streamline the process for families. Once a person applies, local community agencies will determine which program they are eligible for and then complete the application quickly.

Information about how people can apply for the NCORR program and the ESG-GV program will be shared once the programs have launched in the coming weeks.

Article by Paul Teague

Community & Regional Planning Census 2020 Data Collection Timeline Change

Data collection for the 2020 Census is ongoing. Even though COVID19 has impacted the timeline, you can still be counted at home by internet (my2020census.gov) by phone (844-330-2020 in English, 844-468-2020 in Spanish) or by paper questionnaire. Census workers began the door-to-door nonresponse follow up



operation on August 11, and completing your Census form now at home reduces the need for a Census visit and maintains social distancing.

With the onset of COVID, 2020 Census operations were paused. The US Census Bureau requested an extension of Apportionment and Redistricting data delivery and extended the 2020 Census response deadline to October 31. US Senate leadership and the Administration have indicated that they will not grant the delivery extension. The US Census Bureau has therefore reduced the response deadline to September 30, 2020.

As of August 4, in North Carolina:

- 41% of households have not been counted
- Over 4 million North Carolina residents have not been counted
- \$7.4 billion in annual funding are at risk due to Census non-response

Due to response deadline change, Census workers will have less time to count the non-responding population. Now is the time for community leaders to make sure that everyone is counted! The 2020 Census count will impact funding, services, and planning for the next 10 years.

[Article by Taylor Dellinger](#)

Community & Regional Planning 2020 Western NC Water Quality Conference



WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA WATER QUALITY CONFERENCE 2020

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN

The 2020 Western NC Water Quality will be held virtually on **September 9th, 2020!** The topics of water quality and stormwater are the primary focuses of this conference. The audience is open to local officials, planners, and members of the public.

REGISTRATION

You may register for the conference [HERE](#)

The last day for registration is **September 8th**.

A webinar invitation link will be emailed to you prior to the start of the conference.

AICP CREDITS

All webinars are eligible for AICP credits.

SPEAKERS AND TOPICS AT THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE INCLUDE:

Dr. Mike Burchell, NCSU – Wetlands for Wastewater Treatment
Tatiana Height, Partners for Environmental Justice – Enhancing Stormwater Quality and Environmental Equity through Community Engagement
NC DCR – Innovative Stormwater Solutions
NCDEQ – DEMLR – Stormwater and Water Supply Watershed Program Updates
Mitch Woodward, NCSU – Small Scale Solutions for Stormwater
More! An agenda will be available soon.

CONTACT: John E. Wear – WPCOG - 828.485.4283 - john.wear@wpcog.org



**LENOIR-RHYNE
UNIVERSITY**

Reese Institute for Conservation of
Natural Resources

To register click the image above or [here](#).



The Regional Housing Authority | EnVision Center collected feminine hygiene products through the month of February this year. As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the final count on feminine products and the distribution to the community occurred in July.

The Dignity Drive is a one month drive dedicated to restoring dignity to disadvantaged women and girls in Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties by providing them with access to free feminine hygiene products.

No one should have to choose to forgo basic, essential hygiene products for financial reasons. Lack of menstrual hygiene products is a human health issue.

During the drive the EnVision Center partnered with nonprofit organizations such as schools, shelters, and food pantries that provide services for women and girls who are:

- Victims of domestic violence
- Homeless
- Displaced
- Living in poverty for any reason

The goals of the drive, each year are to:

- Prevent infection and illness
- Preserve dignity
- Provide freedom to work and play comfortably
- Prevent embarrassment
- Enable women and girls to give appropriate value to their bodies and their health

Donations of the following items were accepted and counted:

- Pads & panty liners = over 10,000
- Tampons = approximately 5,000
- Cleansing wipes & Menstrual Cups = over 2,000
- Miscellaneous shampoos, conditioners, razors, tooth brushes, etc = approximately 600

Total feminine products collected (counting only pads and tampons) 15,369.

Thank you to everyone who marketed our drive, collected products, counted and organized products, and distributed products to organizations across the four-county region. We could not have collected over 15,000 products without the help and support of this wonderful community.

[Article by Kala Guido](#)

Transportation

New Local Projects Recommended for Funding

The Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) created the Locally Administered Projects Program (LAPP) to prioritize and program local transportation projects in the region that utilize federal transportation funding. The LAPP process involves a regular call for projects, local governments applying for projects, scoring project applications, and finally adding recommended projects to the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). As a Transportation Management Area, the GHMPO region is allocated approximately \$3.3 million in Surface Transportation Block Grant - Direct Attributable (STBG-DA) funding annually. GHMPO's Transportation Advisory Committee adopts the scoring criteria used to prioritize transportation projects and help decide which projects to fund.

This latest round, a total of five local governments applied for STBG-DA funding for seven projects. Ultimately, five of these local projects were adopted and added to the TIP. These included one project each in Conover, Hildebran, and Hudson, plus two in Hickory. The Conover project improves sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and bicycle facilities along 1st St E/W and Conover Blvd (US 70) through downtown and over to the YMCA. The Hildebran project extends sidewalks on Main Ave East from 2nd St SE to US 70. The Hudson project enhances downtown pedestrian crossings of Main St (US 321A) between Cedar Valley Rd and Legion Rd. One of the Hickory projects enhances the crossing of Highway 70 SW at 4th St Dr SW, while the other Hickory project extends 17th St NW from 9th Ave NW to Clement Blvd.

To see the full list of local projects submitted during this year's call, visit the [WPCOG/GHMPO Locally Administered Projects Program \(LAPP\) web page](#).

Article by Brian Horton

Workforce Development Board

Staff are Working in Person & Virtually to Assist Businesses & Jobseekers

As we begin the new program year (July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021) for Workforce Innovation & Opportunity, we are poised to continue helping our businesses and jobseekers achieve success. During program year 2019 and amid the COVID-19 pandemic our front-line staff through the NCWorks Career Centers and the workforce development board have:

- Took thousands of phone calls
- Provided over 200 individuals with a training scholarship
- Placed 58 young people in a paid work experience
- Delivered Upskill Incumbent Worker Grants to 13 businesses in collaboration with our community college customized training programs
- From June 2019 - February 2020 provided 177 recruitment events

We are offering virtual recruitment events, virtual workshops and supportive assistance over the phone as the NCWorks Career Centers remain closed to the public. In person, or virtually we are committed to making program year 2020 an even bigger success! Check out our newest endeavor, a regional virtual job fair for Carolina Container, spanning multiple counties. #western Piedmont Works #ncworks



REGIONAL VIRTUAL JOB FAIR

Employer Recruiting



WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2ND
2pm – 4pm

Multiple Positions Open in 5 NC Counties
Burke, Catawba, Davidson, Guilford, & Scotland

TO ATTEND THE JOB FAIR, REGISTER NOW AT
tinyurl.com/v4cs8qip

Job Details can be found at www.carolinacontainer.com/packaging-company/careers/
A resume is required to register. If you need help with a resume, contact your
local NCWorks Career Center.

Supported by 4 Workforce Development Boards:



Article by Wendy Johnson

Area Agency on Aging
Have You Heard About Project C.A.R.E.?



Project C.A.R.E. (Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty) is a state funded dementia-specific support program for family caregivers. The program uses a family consultant to provide comprehensive support to caregivers of those caring for someone at home with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. Project C.A.R.E. family consultants assist caregivers with education, resources and access to vouchers to alleviate some of the stress caregiving can create. The purpose of the program is to assist the caregiver with keeping the person with Dementia safe and comfortable in their home for as long as it is possible.

What does this really mean? Prior to COVID this meant an in person visit to the caregiver to discuss concerns, education about the disease, potential solutions, and to offer support. With precautions due to COVID all services are still available on a contactless basis over the phone, through email and mail.

A typical interaction with a caregiver involves obtaining basic demographic information and information on the challenges Dementia has presented. Staff discuss solutions that may involve physicians, counselors, senior centers, other services offered by the WPCOG Area Agency on Aging or services offered through other resources.

Just as there is no typical person with Dementia, there is no typical Project C.A.R.E. caregiver. We serve a caregiver who is 19 years old caring for her 80 year old grandmother, a caregiver who is 55 caring for her 77 year old mother with dementia, and an 83 year old gentleman who is caring for his 80 year old wife. We also have a situation of a 78 year old mother caring for her 43 year old daughter with Dementia. While every situation is different, due to the demographics of a disease that disproportionately affects women, we are seeing many aging men caring for their aging wives.

In many cases we are able to offer respite vouchers to assist caregivers in getting a break from caregiving. Often, this is a blessing the caregiver does not realize is needed. In one instance, it took some convincing for a caregiver to use respite services. She just knew no one could care for her husband with Dementia. She ended up taking a few days away from her caregiver duties and came back a new person with energy and a renewed spirit.

If you are aware of someone who needs assistance with caring for a person with Dementia, please have them call Karen Phoenix at 828-485-4267. We will be in touch and evaluate resources to assist with the issues they are confronting.

Article by Karen Phoenix

WPCOG CALENDAR

All scheduled meetings are currently being conducted electronically. For a listing of upcoming meetings and information on how to participate or attend, please visit www.wpcog.org/electronic-public-meetings.

Stay Connected



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www.wpcog.org