

WESTERN PIEDMONT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS NEWSLETTER MARCH & APRIL 2022

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Next 2020 Census Data Products to be Released in 2023

Article by Taylor Dellinger



On April 27, 2022 the U.S. Census Bureau announced revised release dates for the next set of 2020 Census data products, starting with the release of the Demographic Profile and the Demographic and Housing Characteristics File (DHC) in May 2023. Additionally, data previously planned for inclusion in the Detailed Demographic and Housing Characteristics File (Detailed DHC) will now be released as three separate products, with the first product scheduled for release in August 2023 and the schedules for the remaining products still being determined.

Demographic Profile and DHC

The Census Bureau plans to release the [Demographic Profile](#) and the [DHC](#) together in May 2023. The Census Bureau had tentatively planned to release the two products later this year but pushed the date to 2023 because of the need for additional processing time and to allow time for implementing new, stronger confidentiality protections. The revised schedule enables the Census Bureau to take the time needed to produce the high-quality statistics the public expects. More information about the schedule change is available in the [2020 Census Data Products: Next Steps for Data Releases](#) blog.

Detailed DHC

In response to data user feedback to publish detailed race and ethnicity population counts as quickly as possible, the Census Bureau also announced it will release tables planned for the [Detailed DHC](#) in three separate data products.

This will allow the Census Bureau to prioritize the release of population counts for detailed race, Hispanic origin, and American Indian and Alaska Native tribal and village population groups, and age and sex statistics for these groups ahead of the release of additional tables with other characteristics referred to as the Detailed DHC-A data product. More information about the three products and a tentative timeline for developing the first is available in the [Plans for Producing Detailed Racial, Ethnic and Tribal Data from the 2020 Census](#) blog.

Detailed DHC-A – planned release August 2023

The Detailed DHC-A — planned for release August 2023 — will include population counts and sex by age statistics for approximately 370 detailed racial and ethnic groups, such as German, Lebanese, Jamaican, Chinese, Native Hawaiian and Mexican, as well as about 1,200 detailed American Indian and Alaska Native tribal and village population groups, such as Navajo Nation.

Detailed DHC-B – release TBD

The Detailed DHC-B will include household type and tenure information for the same detailed race and ethnicity groups and American Indian and Alaska Native tribal and village population groups mentioned above for DHC-A. The Census Bureau will provide a schedule for the Detailed DHC-B as it becomes available.

Supplemental-DHC (S-DHC) – release TBD

Although originally proposed for inclusion in the Detailed DHC, the S-DHC tables were moved to a new data product based on data user feedback. These tables reflect especially complex relationships between the characteristics about households and the people living in them. The Census Bureau refers to these tables as “complex person-household join tables” or “join tables.” The Census Bureau will provide a schedule for the S-DHC as it becomes available.

54th Anniversary of Fair Housing Month

Article by Paul Teague

In April, the WPCOG Community and Economic Development staff, in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), celebrated Fair Housing Month.

This April marked the 54th anniversary for the Fair Housing Act that was signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson on April 11, 1968. The Fair Housing Act prohibits housing discrimination because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, and family status.

WPCOG staff members regularly work with counties and municipalities to update fair housing studies, promote fair housing education through advertisements and meetings, and through work with lending institutions.

For more information about the Fair Housing Act, go to the HUD website at www.hud.gov.



Town of Hildebran Awarded PARTF Funds for New Park

Article by Paul Teague

The Town of Hildebran has been awarded a \$289,700 N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) grant through the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources to develop a new park.

Assisted by WPCOG Staff, the proposed park is located within the Albert L. Parkhurst Memorial Complex that is owned by the Town. Plans for the park include construction of outdoor restrooms, a multi-purpose stage, picnic pavilion, splash pad, scattered play elements with universal design features, and a .25-mile graded and paved walking track that will link to the existing sidewalk network.

The overall budget for the park is \$579,400, with the Town contributing \$289,700 in matching funds toward the project. Located at the site of the former Hildebran High School, the park is intended as a memorial to the beloved high school and its past attendees, a gathering space for small groups and large town events, and a destination for all users with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accessible design features.



HUD's 10 Tips for Renters



The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides housing and community development assistance. On their website, hud.gov, various resources are available to direct families towards housing assistance as well as other housing related resources. HUD provides a list of top ten tips for renters that is valuable information for the community.

Tip 1- Bring your paperwork:

Showing a future landlord preparedness is the best way to win them over. Finding housing is extremely competitive so bringing the following can give prospective tenants an edge: completed rental application, provide written references from landlord, employers, and colleagues; as well as providing a current copy of your credit report.

Tip 2- Review the lease:

Carefully review all conditions before signing the lease. Understand the lease and any provisions that may be included such as restrictions on guests, pets, or alterations to the unit.

Tip 3- Get everything in writing:

Avoid misunderstanding with your landlord by getting everything in writing. Keep copies of any correspondence. This includes requesting repairs in writing.

Tip 4- Protect your privacy rights:

Knowing and understanding privacy rights will help protect tenants. (For example) knowing how much notice a landlord must provide a tenant before entering the unit.

Tip 5- Request repairs:

Tenants have the right to live in a habitable rental unit; tenants should never give up the right to have necessary repairs made. Landlords are required to offer livable premises, which includes adequate weatherproofing, heat, water, electricity, as well as clean, sanitary and structurally safe premises.

Tip 6- Talk to your landlord:

Keep communication open with your landlord. It is important to try to resolve any issues with your landlord before problems escalate to legal issues. Keep in mind that the on-site manager is the first point of contact. Next, direct unresolved concerns to the on-site manager's supervisor if necessary.

Tip 7- Purchase renter's insurance:

Renter's insurance will cover tenant's losses due to theft or damage. If a unit experiences water or fire damage, the landlord is not responsible for any contents inside. Minimum coverage for renter's insurance can cost less than \$100 annually for \$12,000 worth of coverage.

Tip 8- Protect your security deposit:

Ensure there is clarity within the lease and rental agreement on refunds of security deposits. When it is time to move in, perform a walk through with the landlord to record any existing damage.

Tip 9- Protect your safety:

Learn if the building and neighborhood are safe and establish what the landlord does to help ensure safety on the property. Determine state or local laws that require deadbolts and window locks.

Tip 10- Deal with an eviction properly:

Know when to fight an eviction notice versus when to move. If it is clear that the landlord is wrong and you have not received proper notice, then you might want to fight an eviction. However, it is important to understand that if you do not have facts on your side, the court may still enforce the eviction. An eviction can result in debts owed of hundreds or even thousands of dollars.

www.hud.gov/states/shared/working/r8/mf/topten

Landlord Participation in the Housing Choice Voucher Program

Article by Stephanie Godfrey

The role of a landlord in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program is to provide decent, safe, and sanitary housing to a tenant at a reasonable rent. The dwelling unit must pass the program's housing quality standards and must remain at those standards. The landlord enters into a lease agreement with the tenant and enters into a HAP contract with the Regional Housing Authority (RHA). Benefits of being a landlord for the HCV program include: ensures consistent payments, creates accountability, provides long term tenants, provides free advertising, reduces vacancy rates, provides annual inspections, and provides the ability to help people in the community.

Here are some things the RHA would like potential and current landlords to know:

- The landlord is responsible for screening families and determining if they would be suitable renters
- Landlords should comply with all applicable fair housing laws and not discriminate against anyone
- Communicate with housing specialists regarding potential and current tenants on the HCV program, we all work together!
- It is the landlords responsibility to collect rent due from assisted families and enforce provisions of the dwelling lease
- Make sure housing meets minimum standards. The RHA inspector conducts an inspection that must meet requirements in the following 13 Housing Quality Standards:
 - » Sanitary facilities
 - » Food preparation and refuse disposal
 - » Space and security
 - » Thermal environment
 - » Illumination and electricity
 - » Structure and materials
 - » Interior air quality
 - » Water supply
 - » Lead-based paint
 - » Access
 - » Site and neighborhood
 - » Sanitary conditions
 - » Smoke detectors

The Regional Housing Authority is eager to discuss opportunities for new landlords to participate in our program! For more information, please contact Stephanie Godfrey at 828-485-4234 or stephanie.godfrey@wpcog.org.



New Call for Local Transportation Projects



Article by: Brian Horton

As a Transportation Management Area (TMA), our four-county region is directly allocated \$3.4 million in Surface Transportation Block Grant Direct Attributable (STBG-DA) funding and \$250,000 in Transportation Alternatives Program Direct Attributable (TAP-DA) funding annually. These two federal transportation grants support the Locally Administered Projects Program (LAPP) administered by the Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO). Since the program started in 2015, there is a regular call for local projects to compete for funding approximately every one to two years. The last round in 2020 resulted in funding for five local projects, one each in Conover, Hildebran, and Hudson, plus two in Hickory. Historically, no more than three projects would be awarded from that particular funding cycle to any one jurisdiction. Like the last round, local governments may apply for funding in multiple fiscal years to support project

phases of design, real estate, and construction. New sponsors are highly encouraged to contact WPCOG staff to learn more about the process before applying. This latest round of project applications for funding are due to WPCOG by May 27, 2022.

To learn more about the application process and see the full list of local projects selected in past rounds, visit the WPCOG web page at: www.wpcog.org/local-admin-project-program.

First “Micro Transit” Service Launched in Western North Carolina

Article by: Brian Horton

On April 4, 2022, Greenway Public Transportation started a new service in Burke County that today is largely only found in the Triangle and Eastern North Carolina. “Micro Transit” is a same-day, on-demand service that utilizes vehicles already within a designated area. It works by allowing the customer to book their trip closer to their desired travel time. By comparison, van service requires calling Greenway by noon the day before, but with Micro Transit, the customer can call Greenway right before needing to travel. The customer is then booked to be picked up and dropped off on the curb of specific addresses requested by the customer. There is no need to walk to a set stop and wait until the bus arrives. Customers just call Greenway (828-465-7634) to schedule direct, same-day trips within the Micro Transit Zone at only \$2.50 per ride. A new smartphone app is expected to be launched later in the year to help customers schedule their trips.



WPCOG assisted Greenway in designing this new service as a partial replacement of the Burke Flex Routes. The prior Routes 21, 22, 23, and 24 have now been replaced with a new Morganton Loop route that operates every 30 minutes, plus the new Micro Transit service. The new service creates much more flexibility and is projected to see increased ridership. The new Micro Transit zone in Burke County covers Morganton, Drexel, Valdese, and immediately surrounding areas. To learn more and verify if an address is within the eligible zone for same-day, on-demand service, visit Greenway Public Transportation at: mygreenway.org.

Senior Tar Heel Legislature



Top Row from left to right: George Holleman (Alexander County - Alternate), Maxine Childres (Burke County - Alternate), Dr. Judith Ray (Catawba County - Alternate). **Bottom Row from left to right:** Paulette Huffman (Alexander County-Delegate), Karen Robinson (Burke County -Delegate), Linda Vitsyn (Caldwell County - Alternate), Richard Smith (Catawba County - Delegate). **Not Pictured:** Trilla Annas (Caldwell County - Delegate).

Article by: Ricky Handoo

The Senior Tar Heel Legislature (STHL) is a legislative body, created by the N.C. General Assembly, whose purpose is to:

- Educate senior adults on the N.C. legislative process and agenda.
- Promote citizen involvement and advocacy concerning aging issues before the N.C. General Assembly.
- Assess the legislative needs of older adults by convening a forum modeled after the N.C. General Assembly.

The Senior Tar Heel Legislators report and make recommendations to the North Carolina General Assembly. The STHL is made up of Delegates and Alternates representing all counties in North Carolina. Each county has one Delegate and one Alternate and they must meet the requirement of being 60 years old or older. Delegates and Alternates representing seven county service areas meet to review local and regional needs and priorities to pursue at the statewide meetings. In addition, each STHL works in their own county advocating for resources and solutions for older adults.

The delegates and alternates meet three times a year to discuss and establish their “legislative priorities” for the year. These priorities are advocated for in the North Carolina General Assembly where the delegates will travel to Raleigh to meet with representatives. These legislative priorities in the past have included increase funding for the Home Community Care Block Grant, increase funding for Adult Protective Services and increasing staffing for nursing homes.

For the 2022 year, the legislative priorities are:

- Increase HCCBG Funding
- Increase Senior Center Funding
- Increase Project C.A.R.E Funding
- Strengthen funding for APS
- Improve staffing for nursing homes.

To learn more about the NCSTHL, please feel free to visit their website at www.ncseniortarheellegislature.org or contact **Ricky Handoo** with Area Agency on Aging.

New Resource for Caregivers in North Carolina

Article by Mary Mitchell

Caregivers play an important role in caring for an older adult in need of ongoing assistance with everyday tasks, emotional support or possibly helping around the house. Their role as a caregiver can be rewarding and fulfilling, and can also be quite time consuming and stressful. Approximately 1 in 4 adults in North Carolina provide regular care or support to an older adult with a long-term illness or disability, which means there are between 1.4 and 1.7 million unpaid family caregivers across North Carolina.

It is not uncommon for caregivers to move into their role of caring for someone with little training or knowledge of care responsibilities. North Carolina caregivers can now access free, skills-based training through the North Carolina Caregiver Portal. This portal is a free online resource for individuals caring for a loved one. North Carolina Division of Health and Human Services, in partnership with Trualta, provides this educational resource to empower caregivers. Caregivers are able to quickly access valuable information and knowledge 24/7 to help them on their journey.

CONTINUED

Continued - New Resource for Caregivers in North Carolina

The NC Caregiver Portal is the only clinically validated eLearning program for family caregivers and available to all North Carolinians. It includes self-paced, skills-based modules on topics ranging from dementia and daily care tasks to valuable self-care for caregivers. The portal also connects caregivers to state and regional resources such as caregiver support programs, community-based services and support groups.

Following the end of their regular season this year, the UNC-Chapel Hill Men's Basketball players partnered with Trualta, to launch a special Instagram series, **Point to the Passer** supporting caregivers across the state. In its first week, the partnership helped NCDHHS reach 5% more caregivers through the portal.

Like so many of us in the aging/caregiving community, supporting caregivers is also very important to many of the UNC men's basketball players. The campaign is launched as part of their way to honor the life and memory of their team mother, Linda "Mama" Woods. "Mama" is the former executive assistant to Tar Heel head coaches Dean Smith and Bill Guthridge. For over 38 years, "Mama" assisted the UNC's men's basketball program, its coaches, and student-athletes. She embodied the Tar Heel's commitment to selflessness and caring for others, which is why at UNC, pointing to a player who made a pass that leads to a basket is celebrated.

UNC-Chapel Hill men's basketball players encourage NC caregivers to sign up for free resources and support the campaign. **Point to the Passer** was launched in partnership between the Friends of the Program (the group licensing group for the University of North Carolina's basketball players) and Trualta. The campaign, hosted on Instagram, is connecting caregivers to learn about the North Carolina Caregiver Portal.

"North Carolina is renowned as an innovative state in the aging network, but this partnership demonstrates their commitment to reaching caregivers in new ways," said Leda Rosenthal, Trualta's Director of Growth.

For additional information about the North Carolina Caregiver Portal, contact WPCOG Area Agency on Aging Family Caregiver Support Specialist at mary.mitchell@wpcog.org, or call 828.485.4256.



 NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Aging and
Adult Services

**North Carolina
Caregiver Portal**

Powered by Trualta

**Learn to care for your loved
one at your own pace with
this free resource**

Free caregiver information,
provided by the
State of North Carolina.

Register Now!

To access NC Caregiver Portal and sign
up for FREE resources; visit
<https://get.nc-caregivers.com/basketball/>
or contact

WPCOG Area Agency on Aging
Mary Mitchell-828.485.4256
Karen Phoenix-828.485.4267

**Free
caregiving
resource!**

Education is Key!

Who: Cho

What: Cho Yang came to the NCWorks Trade Training Program from United Technologies Corporation (UTC) where she had 21 years of experience as an electronics assembler. She had already started on her new career path before she was accepted into the Trade Training Program.

When: June 2021

Where: NCWorks Career Center, Catawba County

How: Cho had achieved her Associate of Applied Science Degree, and had earned pre-approval for the Radiology Program at Catawba Valley Community College. The Radiology program is stringent with courses that must be followed without room for error. Add to the mix the obstacles that the pandemic presented, this made for especially tough training. Cho came through training like a trooper, and graduated like the shining star that she is, with a 3.367 GPA and with a second Associates Degree, this time in Radiology.

Best Practices: By mid-June 2021 Cho had taken and passed, on the first attempt, the Radiology exam: American Registry of Radiologic Technologic Technologists. She is currently applying for positions, where no doubt, she will be an excellent addition to any medical team.

Congratulations Cho!

Visit it one your local NCWorks Career Centers for more information and visit www.western Piedmontworks.org



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Alexander

604 7th St., SW, Taylorsville, NC | (828) 632-4631

NCWorks Burke

720 East Union St., Morganton, NC | (828) 438-6161

NCWorks Caldwell

1909 Hickory Blvd, S.E., Lenoir, NC | (828) 759-4680

NCWorks Catawba

403 Conover Station, S.E., Conover, NC | (828) 466-5535



www.western Piedmontworks.org

SUCCESS STORY

NCWorks Can Work For You Too!

Teamwork and Persistence!

Who: Chad

What: Chad had been struggling to create a resume and complete applications on his phone. He decided to come to NCWorks for further assistance.

When: June 2021

Where: NCWorks Career Center, Catawba County

How: “I received resume help and general assistance with applications, as well as received some great guidance from the awesome staff at NCWorks Career Center-Catawba.”

Best Practices: Mr. Bentley stated he really enjoyed the open environment and the openness the staff had with each other to help all those in need. Mr. Bentley came back into the NCWorks Career Center on 6/16/2021 to sign his official offer letter from Commscope to be a Machine Operator. He will start on July 6th, 2021. He is extremely excited for this new journey and thanks the NCWorks Career Center-Catawba staff for all their hard work and assistance.

Client Testimonial: “From the beginning, everyone made me feel comfortable and were willing to answer questions and guide me as I applied to different companies.”

“I don’t believe I would have ever completed my application for Commscope without the help of NCWorks.”

Congratulations Chad!



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mation and visit
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