



Western Piedmont Council of Governments

Creative Regional Solutions Since 1968

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



The year 2020 was a difficult and challenging year for our region and its communities. The economy continued to experience a severe decline for our 373,459 residents due to the global pandemic. The Covid-19 Pandemic was the most significant public health crisis in a century and impacted so many of our residents' lives, and challenged our local governments to address new problems. Despite the pandemic challenges, many of our local governments continue to make substantial investments to improve our residents' lives and enhance our appeal for economic opportunities. Sound leadership at

the local and regional level has never been more evident.

Since 1968, our local governments continue to ask the Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG) to serve as a mechanism to share expertise and resources between our communities. That collaboration allows us to reach new levels of achievement that benefit our residents and businesses. This year, the WPCOG provided even greater support to our local governments.

The challenges of economic recovery and moving our communities ahead are common, and we can better address our needs with the assistance of the WPCOG. The WPCOG is the common thread that ties us together and allows us to develop and maintain relationships and better serve our constituents.

Within this Annual Report, you will find some of the work and successes in 2020 that demonstrate the value of the WPCOG. Our local governments' leadership, vision, and engagement built one of the strongest Councils of Governments in North Carolina and the nation. Organizations from across the nation look to the WPCOG to see how regionalism is best practiced. Count on the WPCOG to serve your needs. Let us count on each other to succeed on behalf of our residents and businesses.

Bob Floyd, Jr.
Board Chair, Western Piedmont Council of Governments
Mayor, Village of Cedar Rock



Anthony Starr, Doug Taylor, and Dee Blackwell

This year has been a challenging one for so many of us and our local governments. The pandemic took lives and affected the health of too many people. Our staff worked as hard as ever to meet the needs of our region. I am so very proud of how they adapted and persevered through it all.

The WPCOG focuses on serving our communities and their local governments. Our local government support makes our effectiveness possible, and our region is known for its intergovernmental cooperation. That cooperation does not happen by accident and requires cultivation and intentional efforts. Our local elected and appointed leaders understand that and continue to look for opportunities to work together for the benefit of the public.

The legacy of excellent service and work by the WPCOG is possible due to local government support, steadfast work of our employees, and a history of dependable and wise leadership at the WPCOG from our previous executive directors. This year, we lost our first full-time executive director, Doug Taylor. He served as the executive director for 36 years until his retirement in 2008. His accomplishments are too great to list everything here, but he grew this organization from less than a handful of employees to a comprehensive operation that serves our region and its residents well.

We remember Doug's fantastic contributions and extend our condolences to his family.

Anthony W. Starr, ICMA-CM, AICP
Executive Director, Western Piedmont Council of Governments



The WPCOG is governed by a Policy Board which includes delegates and alternates appointed by each of the 28 municipal and county member governments. Each city and county member government has one vote. The Policy Board also includes seven appointed members who represent the private sector.

Current membership of the WPCOG is 100% of the eligible counties, cities and towns located within the area designated including: Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties, and the municipalities of Brookford, Cajah's Mountain, Catawba, Cedar Rock, Claremont, Connelly Springs, Conover, Drexel, Gamewell, Glen Alpine, Granite Falls, Hickory, Hildebran, Hudson, Lenoir, Long View, Maiden, Morganton, Newton, Rhodhiss, Rutherford College, Sawmills, Taylorsville and Valdese.

An Executive Committee including a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Past Chair and four At-Large members is elected annually by and from the Policy Board at their November meeting. Officers are installed at the January Policy Board Meeting.

ADMINISTRATION

The Administration Department staff supports the efforts of all other WPCOG departments, including general office support, facility management, human resources, and communications. Additionally, the Administration Staff support the WPCOG Policy Board, Executive Committee, and several other regional committees. Like most organizations, 2020 supplied a number of challenges. The WPCOG Administrative team, including executive leadership, human resources, communications & IT/facilities, worked exceptionally hard in 2020 to ensure both the continued functionality of all WPCOG department operations as well as the delivery of quality service to member local governments.

EXECUTIVE SEARCHES

The WPCOG Administrative staff, led by the Executive Director and Administrative Services & Human Resources Director, regularly conduct executive searches for area local governments to fill essential and high profile positions. The staff has extensive experience facilitating personnel hiring, including Town Managers, Town Administrators, Department Directors, and more. New in 2020, WPCOG administered an assessment center for the City of Shelby city attorney. Staff are available through every step of the process, including writing and distributing job announcements, reviewing incoming resumes, focusing the potential candidate list, interviews and providing an objective and non-bias assessment of final candidates.

COMMUNICATIONS

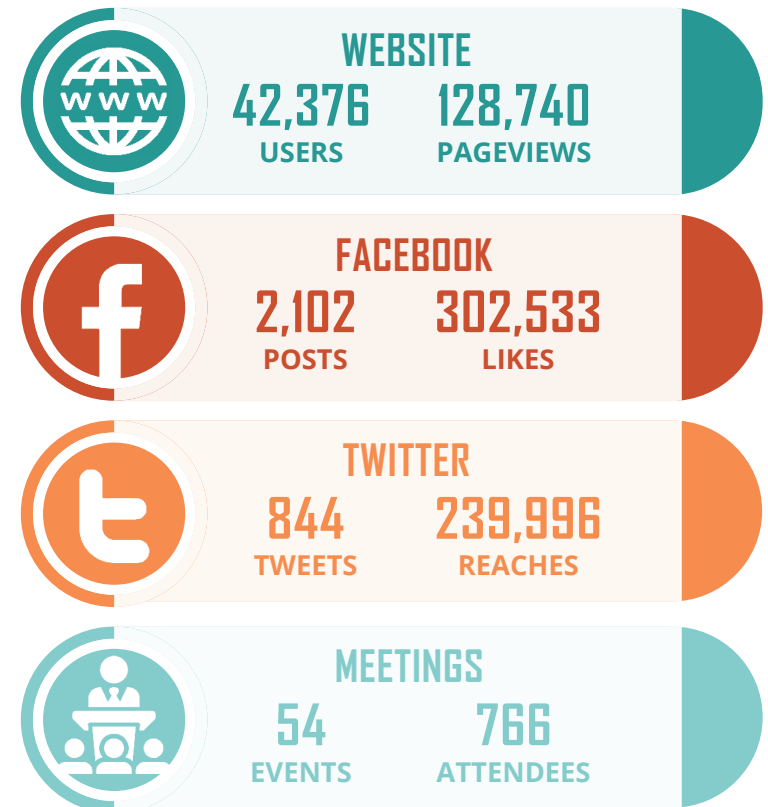
In 2020, a new challenge arose due to the pandemic; how to accommodate virtual meetings, events, and presentations. Restrictions placed on in-person meetings beginning in March 2020 by a Governor issued State of Emergency meant that the WPCOG Policy Board and staff had to shift meetings from in-person to virtual platforms. Communications in cooperation with IT/Facilities and Administration acquired and trained to use GoToMeeting and Zoom conferencing applications. Communications also offered support to our local member governments to educate personal on virtual meeting options, train in application usage, and facilitate meetings using the WPCOG's application platforms.

As a result of the pandemic, the annual meeting was canceled in 2020. Still, work continued producing the Annual Report and materials to promote and feature the COG's efforts in 2019, including a highlights video in cooperation with Ben Coffey of BC Cinematics, LLC.

Communications assisted Community and Regional Planning - ADA with the production of the Conover ADA Transition plan. The plan culminated in a 150-page document outlining steps for a transition to full ADA compliance throughout Conover's maintained sidewalks, facilities, and parks.

In 2020, Communications provided continued web assistance to the Town of Long View, Cedar Rock, NC4A, and the Catawba County Council on Aging. Contracted services included site maintenance, troubleshooting emerging issues, and mobile site changes. Staff also produced eleven Newsletters, twelve Impact Reports and helped the Data Center create four Economic Indicators Newsletters and the Workforce Development Board produce four Newsletters. Staff also assisted with several online events requiring streaming service and online registration capabilities, including the WNC Air Quality Conference, WNC Water Quality Conference, and 13 Ways to Kill Your Community Webinar (Postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions).

2020 SOCIAL MEDIA/PUBLIC OUTREACH



2020 PUBLICATIONS

WPCOG Newsletters

11

34%
Open Rate

1,604
Readers

Workforce Newsletters

4

38%
Open Rate

328
Readers

Economic Indicators Newsletters

4

These reports are distributed via Email and physical copies. Primary distribution includes Mayors, Managers, Commissioners, and WDB and WPCOG Board Members and then redistributed by them. Estimated distribution 500+.

WPCOG Impact Reports

12

IT/FACILITIES

COVID-19 Initiated Enhancements

- Phone and Network upgrade
- VPN upgrade – expanded user licenses and server capacity
- Remote Support services
- Worked with staff to enable and facilitate telecommuting

Facility Upgrades

- AV Upgrades
- Parking Lot Sealing and restriping
- Landscaping enhancements – transplanting / rearranging shrubs around the building, clearing of bank and planting of Love Grass

While 2020 brought many challenges, the Information Technology Facilities Department remained very active in providing technical support to the agency staff, primarily related to enabling and supporting telecommuting abilities. In addition to equipment procurement, assignment and installation, primary areas of service included the following:

- Enhancement of the agency IP based phone system. These enhancements allowed for better and more access to the agency phone system from mobile and remote devices. As part of the upgrades, the agency was able to add a secondary internet connection, providing SIP service for the phone system and a source of backup internet access should we have issues with the main Catawba County WAN connection.
- Upgrades to the agency VPN services. These upgrades allowed for an increased number of licensed seats for our staff and expanded VPN appliance performance. The agency VPN provides secure remote network connectivity, allowing staff to telecommute more reliably and securely.
- The agency integrated remote support service to assist staff as they transitioned to remotely working. Roughly 200 remote support requests were handled during the year. Assistance occurs over the internet and allows the IT/Facilities support person to see the client's pc and assist in changing settings and making fixes.

The WPCOG building and grounds saw several enhancements over the past year. New projectors and a new audio-visual system were installed in the Conference Center. The new AV system should be easier to control and connect to a presentation device (CPU, Tablet, SmartPhone, etc.). During 2020, Facilities oversaw several improvements to the grounds. The parking lot was sealed and restriped, and shrubs around the building were transplanted and rearranged in a more pleasing order. Also, landscapers cleared the bank's vines around the building and planted Love Grass. As the new plantings grow, there will be room for the addition of seasonal flowers.

IT SERVICES

Remote
Support
200



End User
Support
623



Management
82



Facilities
165



Total Help
Tickets
870



AREA AGENCY ON AGING

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is an organization working within a federal mandate to inform, advocate and plan for community services on behalf of older adults and caregivers. The agency is part of the National Network set in place by the Older Americans Act of 1965. There are 622 AAA's in the United States and 16 in North Carolina. The Western Piedmont AAA covers Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba counties.

SERVICES

- Resource Directory for Older Adults
- Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program
- Family Caregiver Support Program
- Technical Assistance to Agencies Serving Older Adults
- Senior Tax Help Legislature Support
- Operation Fan/Heat Relief
- Medicare Information for Patients and Providers Act Grant
- Project C.A.R.E. (Caregiver Alternative to Running on Empty)
- Evidence-Based Health Promotion Classes
- Presentations on Aging Issues

The AAA administers the Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) for the region. This grant funds an array of in-home and community based services to help seniors stay in their homes. The HCCBG allows counties the flexibility to determine which services to fund based on community need. Services are provided to older adults age 60+ and are based on need.

HCCBG SERVICES FUNDED

- Home Delivered Meals
- Congregate Meals
- In-Home Aide
- Adult Day Care
- Adult Day Health
- Medical Transportation
- General Transportation
- Housing & Home Improvement
- Senior Center Operations
- Information & Options Counseling

HOME & COMMUNITY CARE BLOCK GRANT SERVICES PROVIDED

Meals Served

143,541

Hours of In-Home Aide Services

43,803

Housing & Home Improvement Projects

119

Medical & General Transport Trips

10,158

Adult Day Care/ Health Days of Service

4,921

Approximate # of Seniors Attending Local Senior Center

24,000

Hours of Legal Assistance

1,359

Other Services Provided

1,958

Family Caregiver Support In-Home Respite Hours

30

Served Through Health Promotions Classes

500

Resource Directories Distributed

50

Community Presentations on Aging Issues

FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM



- AAA continued to offer Caregiver Directed Voucher program during 2020. This program offers caregivers the option of choosing their caregivers to provide respite from their caregiving responsibilities of family member.
- Collaborated with NCWORKS, area employers, and human resource professionals to provide caregiver information to staff and employees of local businesses/organizations.
- FCSP partnership with Carolina Caring to participate in regional virtual caregiver conference.
- Collaborated with AARP and Caldwell Senior Center to host several workshops on Meditation for Caregivers.
- Provided grandparents raising grandchildren with school supplies in Alexander and Catawba Counties and care packages to local schools.
- Collaborated with Veterans Administration to participate in virtual Caregiver Health Fair and presented a caregiver workshop.

REGIONAL LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN



277
Facility
Visits

79
New Complaint
Investigations

67
Closed
Cases

8
Presentations/
Trainings

- Provided stimulus education handouts, robotic companion pets, activity booklets, and Resident's Rights Bingo games (during Resident's Rights Awareness Month) to all Region E facility residents.
- Used CARES funding and provided iPads for each assisted living and family care home facility in Region E for activities, virtual contact with loved ones, and virtual contact with regional ombudsman. Participated in virtual meetings with residents.

CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, & Economic Security)



841
Seniors or
Caregivers Served
Through CARES

907
Processed
Intakes of Seniors
or Caregivers

\$161,307
Used Funds for
Direct CARES
Services

- AAA received a waiver from NC Division of Aging & Adult Services to provide services to older adults and caregivers with the CARES Act

funds. The funds help to purchase groceries and needed supplies and have them delivered or contactless pick-up so this vulnerable population can stay safe during the pandemic

- Worked with Systel and Square 9 to develop online intake form and work flow process for CARES Act programs.

PROJECT C.A.R.E.



56
Assessments
9 (71)
Events (Attendance)

42
Reassessments
721
Reached/Referrals

22
Home Visits
119
Vouchers Granted

- PROJECT C.A.R.E. (Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty) program serves 16 counties. The program serves caregivers of people living with Alzheimer's, dementia and related cognitive disorders; Providing information, education, care management, and respite vouchers.
- Due to COVID restrictions, assessments were completed by telephone and presentations given virtually.

OUTREACH & SUPPORT



12
Assisted with
Medicare
Part D

295
Calls for
Information &
Assistance Referrals

4
Options Counseling
to Individuals/
Families

- Served as administrative agency for SIR (Senior Information Resources).
- Working with a grant from NC Center for Health and Wellness to become Medicare accredited to allow for reimbursement for certain classes we teach to the community.

EVENTS & CONFERENCES



- In coordination with ACAP (Adult Children of Aging Parents) successfully presented virtual caregiver conference with Teepa Snow as presenter (reaching 480 caregivers).
- Coordinated Elder Abuse Awareness event in June 2020. Distributed information and encouraged everyone to wear purple on June 15th, and delivered a token of appreciation to adult protective services staff.

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GRANT DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

33
Projects

\$10.7MIL
Total Project
Funding

72
Grants
Administered

527
Full-time Jobs
Created



In 2020, staff developed applications that resulted in grant funding for 33 projects totaling \$10,701,806. The funding ranged from \$9,519 for housing counseling to \$1,500,000 for an industrial access road in Burke County.

New private sector investments for economic development projects in 2020 totaled \$85,444,253. The economic development projects will create 627 new full-time jobs in the region. Staff was able to secure five (5) N.C. Commerce Building Reuse grants, two (2) Golden LEAF grants, and continued to administer more than 50 community and economic development grant projects during 2020.

Grant highlights include Project Enzyme, a Golden LEAF grant for the City of Hickory, that features \$50 million in private investment and the creation of 151 jobs; Project Grapple, a Golden LEAF grant for the City of Conover, that has \$17 million in private investment and 144 new jobs; and Unix Packaging, a Building Reuse grant for Burke County, that has 151 new jobs.

In addition, the Town of Drexel was awarded a \$647,100 N.C. Commerce Industrial Development Fund grant and a \$300,000 Appalachian Regional Commission grant to rehabilitate existing sewer infrastructure and install new water and sewer infrastructure at a former furniture manufacturing site.

For a 10th consecutive year, the WPCOG's housing counselors worked with the N.C. Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA) to prevent home foreclosures. Staff worked with 124 homeowners to prevent or resolve mortgage delinquency. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Federal CARES Act was approved and provided protections against collection activity for homeowners with federally backed mortgages.

Also, there were three clients that were assisted in order to avoid foreclosure due to delinquent property tax bills.

Meanwhile, the WPCOG utilized \$205,813 in NHFA funding to conduct 38 housing repairs across the region as a part of the Urgent Repair Program.

HOME CONSORTIUM

50
First-time
Homebuyers

\$1MIL
First-time
Homebuyer
Assistance

\$6.4MIL
Leveraged
Lender
Financing



In 2020, the HOME Program provided 50 first-time homebuyers with more than \$1 million in assistance, through the Unifour Consortium Down Payment program, and by leveraging more than \$6.4 million lender financing.

The HOME program funded \$69,256 to a Community Housing Development Organization for the construction of two Habitat for Humanity homes in Burke County, along with a \$400,000 loan to Catawba County Habitat for Humanity for the construction of four homes.

Three clients that were assisted in order to avoid foreclosure due to delinquent property tax bills. Finally, the WPCOG utilized \$205,813 in NHFA funding to conduct 38 housing repairs across the region as a part of the Urgent Repair Program.

FORECLOSURE PREVENTION, HOUSING REPAIRS

124
Assisted with
Mortgage
Delinquency

3
Assisted with
Property Tax
Delinquency

\$205,813
NCHFA
Housing
Repair Funds

38
Housing
Repairs



Government	Grant	Funding Source	Grant Amount	Local Government Match	Private Sector Investment	Project Total	Jobs Created	Housing Units Affected
Alexander County	Industrial Park Sewer Project	ARC	\$226,165	\$226,165		\$452,330		
Burke County	Industrial Park Access Road Project	ARC	\$1,500,000			\$1,500,000		
Burke County	Unix Packaging Building Reuse	NCDOC	\$500,000	\$25,000	\$3,697,500	\$4,222,500	151	
Burke County	Project Downy Building Reuse	NCDOC	\$100,000	\$5,000	\$2,300,000	\$2,405,000	19	
Catawba County	Urgent Repair	NCHFA	\$100,000			\$100,000		12
Catawba County	Scattered Site Housing Rehabilitation	NCDOC	\$750,000			\$750,000		15
CCC&TI	Silmulated Machining Experience	ARC	\$100,000	\$100,000		\$200,000		
Conover	Project Grapple Utility Project	Golden LEAF	\$523,500	\$50,000	\$17,000,000	\$17,573,500	144	
Conover	Nufabrx PPE Manufacturing CDBG-CV	NCDOC	\$850,000		\$2,807,000	\$3,657,000	10	
Drexel	Drexel Heritage Utility Project	ARC	\$300,000			\$300,000		
Drexel	Drexel Heritage IDF Sewer Project	NCDOC	\$647,100			\$647,100		
Glen Alpine	Health Care Building Reuse	NCDOC	\$60,000	\$3,000	\$502,948	\$565,948	6	
Hickory	Atriax Building Reuse Project	NCDOC	\$75,000	\$3,750	\$1,286,805	\$1,365,555	11	
Hickory	Project Enzyme ED Project	Golden LEAF	\$240,000	\$1,416,123	\$50,000,000	\$51,656,123	151	
Lenoir	CARES Act Funding	HUD	\$86,056			\$86,056		
Lenoir	CDBG Entitlement	HUD	\$146,288			\$146,288		
Lenoir	HOME Consortium	HUD	\$1,145,874			\$1,145,874		
Lenoir	CARES Act Funding	HUD	\$88,397			\$88,397		
Morgaton	CARES Act Funding	HUD	\$87,803			\$87,803		
Morgaton	CDBG Entitlement	HUD	\$149,257			\$149,257		
Morgaton	CARES Act Funding	HUD	\$106,060			\$106,060		
Newton	Project Explorer Building Reuse	NCDOC	\$200,000	\$10,000	\$7,850,000	\$8,060,000	35	
Newton	Scattered Site Housing Rehabilitation	NCDOC	\$750,000			\$750,000		15
Rhodhiss	Scattered Site Housing Rehabilitation	NCDOC	\$750,000			\$750,000		15
Rutherford College	Park Project	PARTF	\$225,000	\$225,000		\$450,000		
VEDIC	Operating Expenses	ARC-CV	\$40,000			\$40,000		
WPCOG	Caldwell County ESFR	NCHFA	\$190,000			\$190,000		5
WPCOG	EnVision Center Ready to Work Project	ARC	\$100,000	\$100,000		\$200,000	75	
WPCOG	ABC Urgent Repair	NCHFA	\$200,000			\$200,000	25	
WPCOG	Housing Counseling	HUD	\$35,787					
WPCOG	EDA Supplemental	HUD	\$400,000			\$400,000		
WPCOG	State Home Foreclosure Prevention	NCHFA	\$20,000			\$20,000		
WPCOG	Housing Counseling	HUD	\$9,519					
			\$10,701,806	\$2,164,038	\$85,444,253	\$98,310,097	627	62

ARC – Appalachian Regional Commission
ARC-CV – Appalachian Regional Commission Covid-19

NCHFA – North Carolina Housing Finance Agency
HUD – US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Golden LEAF – Golden LEAF Foundation
PARTF – Parks and Recreation Trust Fund

COMMUNITY & REGIONAL PLANNING

PLANNING

Planning provides a variety of current and long-range planning support to member governments. Planning consists of daily permitting and inquiries, text amendments, rezoning, special use permits, plan (residential, commercial, and industrial) review, and action plans. Planning contracts include nine municipalities (Drexel, Catawba, Gamewell, Glen Alpine, Hildebran, Hudson, Sawmills, Rutherford College, and Valdese).

Long-range planning consists of visionary plans, such as comprehensive plans, small area plans (Downtown, neighborhood, commercial nodes), and corridor plans. Long-range planning contracts: (Hildebran Parks and Recreation Plan, Granite Falls Comprehensive Plan, Cahaj's Mountain Land Use Plan, and Drexel Comp Plan).

Planning staff attended 14 training events. Training opportunities included NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT), UNC School of Government, Carolina Thread Trail, NC Association of Zoning Officials (NCAZO), International City/County Management Association (ICMA), Burke County Chamber of Commerce, Catawba County Chamber of Commerce, Air/Water Quality Conferences, NCAPA, NCMS, North Carolina ArcGIS Users Group, Esri, and NC League of Municipalities (NCLM).

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Began the Granite Falls land use plan
- Began a comprehensive plan for Hiddenite and Drexel
- Completed the Alexander County Recreation Plan
- Began 160-D ordinance updates for multiple local governments
- Began the Sawmills Bike and Pedestrian Plan
- Awarded the first Hildebran Façade Improvement Grant
- Caldwell County Comprehensive Land Use Plan adopted
- Completed the first Comprehensive Land Use Plan informational video with 3-D renderings, drone footage of Caldwell County and additional information for the Caldwell County Commissioners and residents
- Approval of 66-unit apartment complex in Hudson
- Completed Hudson Bike and Pedestrian Plan completed
- Began the Drexel Comprehensive plan
- Completed the Lenoir Solid Waste Feasibility Study
- Began working on Hildebran Parks and Recreation Plan
- Completed the Catawba River Trail land feasibility analysis
- Began working on the Regional Story Book Map Project
- Began working on the Bolick Historic District Expansion

9

Municipalities
Supported Daily

2,680

Hours Provided
to Local Governments



Zoning
Permits

324

Minor
Subdivision

135

Major
Subdivision

5

Appeals

1

Conditional
Use
Permits

7

Variances

4

Annexations

2

Text
Amendments

9

Re-zonings

7

Zoning
Enforcements

70

Meetings
(Town,
Planning,
& BOA)

105

ADA TITLE II FOR STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life. Title II of the ADA prohibits state and local governments from discriminating based on disability status in services, programs, and activities. To monitor state and local government progress in regard to ADA compliance, municipalities are required to document mobility and accessibility hazards in all municipally-owned buildings, utilized spaces, and pedestrian infrastructure. This document, known as an ADA Transition Plan, is a required document that helps municipalities identify potential barriers or non-compliant issues and categorize any hazards by severity. Having an adopted Transition Plan protects municipalities against funding revocation, liabilities, and/or Department of Justice audits.

The WPCOG's ADA Compliance program is designed to help municipalities achieve compliance set by the ADA civil rights law and produce a working Transition Plan to assist in compliance efforts. The ADA coordinator is responsible for inventorying the municipalities' buildings, utilized spaces, and pedestrian infrastructure and recording the data in a custom-designed collection application. The collected data is used in creating the municipality's Transition Plan. Non-compliant issues discovered during collection are recorded and placed into one of three categories, high, medium, or low impact. The categories help the municipality determine costs associated with correcting an issue and immediacy of the issue and resolution. Furthermore, the ADA works on behalf of the municipality to address grievances, reports, audits, and the documentation process.

CONOVER ADA - INVENTORY BREAKDOWN



**Pedestrian right of way is a broad term that covers any pedestrian infrastructure. Infrastructure covered within the pedestrian application include curb ramps, crosswalks, driveway cuts, pedestrian islands, railroad crossings, pedestrian signals, transit stops, and sidewalks.*

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Completed the City of Conover's ADA Inventory and Transition Plan. The Plan is set for adoption, pending public comment, in March 2021.**
- **In the process of completing the transition plan for the Town of Granite Falls. Inventory is complete. Potential presentation to Council is set for March 2021.**
 - › Continue to work on knowledge of state laws and attend trainings
 - › Obtained certifications via the completion of ADA Title II courses
- **Determine best public input practices for transition plans - conducted several walking audits across the region**
 - › Selected and participating in Walkability Action Institute to create regional Plan and policies for mobility and accessibility
 - › Contributed accessibility elements and recommendations to comprehensive, land-use, and recreation plans

GRANITE FALLS ADA - INVENTORY BREAKDOWN



CODE ENFORCEMENT

In 2020, Brookford, Catawba, Cajah's Mountain, Cedar Rock, Drexel, Hildebran, Hudson, Maiden, Rhodhiss, and Valdese contracted with the COG for code enforcement services. WPCOG's Code Enforcement Program uses an approach that helps the citizen to become compliant through educating and consultation. An in-house GIS application allows COG staff to create a living information data base in real time and print documents needed. Despite dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Code Enforcement Program has made a significant impact for the participating municipalities, approximately 348 violations in 2020 resolved. Municipal monies are saved due to compliance from citizens and business owners after enforcement notification within those municipalities was initiated.








Code Enforcement is supporting the WPCOG Stormwater Program by providing staff support with the Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination program. An illicit discharge is any non-stormwater discharge to the stormwater system (including natural waterways), which in turn damages water quality. WPCOG's Code Enforcement program preforms waterway inspections to eliminate illegal discharges to promote a cleaner environment. A total of 16 illicit discharge and detection reports were completed in 2020. All illicit discharge issues were resolved.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Obtained State Certified MS4 Phase II Inspector licensure
- Networked with the municipal fire departments to help abate 13 minimum housing issues
- Hired and trained new code enforcement officer
- Researched better ways to locate property owners to resolve violations faster and within N.C. General Statutes and the town/city/village ordinances
- Completed new online GIS application for code enforcement, IDDE and ADA

*Code Compliance - WPCOG Monthly Impact Reports reflect rolling numbers as cases are added to over case load. Final Annual Report Numbers reflect actual case number totals and resolutions.

REGIONAL CODE COMPLIANCE CASES

	313 General Nuisance	220 Resolved General Nuisance
	18 Abandoned Mobile Homes	8 Resolved Abandoned Mobile Homes
	115 Abandoned/Junked Motor Vehicles	93 Resolved Abandoned/Junked Motor Vehicles
	16 Illicit Discharge	16 Resolved illicit Discharge
	58 Minimum Housing Standards	18 Resolved Minimum Housing Standards
	10 Non-residential Housing Standards	6 Resolved Non-residential Housing Standards
	2 Other Cases	2 Resolved Other Cases

***517 Total**

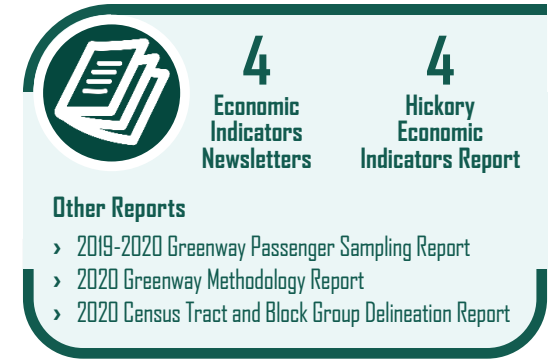
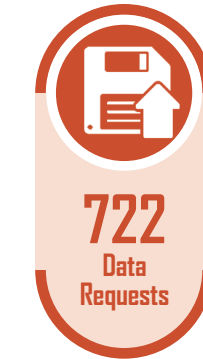
***348 Resolved**

DATA CENTER

A Lead Regional Organization (LRO) Affiliate of the North Carolina Data Center, WPCOG Data Center Staff provides assistance in locating and analyzing demographics for local governments, nonprofits and the private sector. Data Center staff also produces specialized data products, including community assessments, economic indicators newsletters, industry growth analysis, and student growth estimation models.

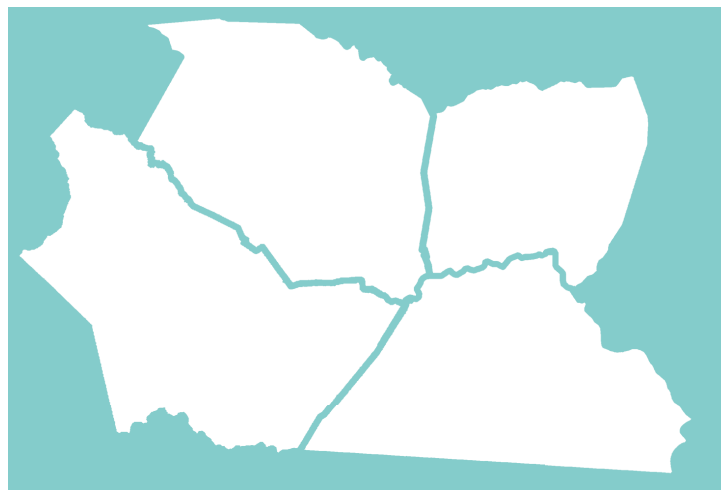
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Assisted Catawba County Public Health with demographics and employment data to determine COVID-19 vaccine distribution
- Assisted with low-moderate income assessment for Maiden Recreation Department grant application
- Calculated 2019 building permit totals for Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties
- Completed 6 vehicle occupancy rate (VOR) traffic count collections (NC 127 North and South and US 321 Business)
- Completed 8 videos of COVID-19 Impacts on employment data in the Region (current employment statistics)
- Analysis of Catawba County zip code commuting patterns for Catawba County Public Health
- Analysis of Catawba and Alexander Living Wage estimates for CVCC
- Construction Employment data for Olive Hill Resource Center
- Analysis of regional employment impacts due to COVID 19 pandemic
- Analysis of regional fair market housing data - Habitat for Humanity
- Analysis of housing needed to account for population growth in Catawba County for Hickory Housing Authority
- Analysis of passenger bus use West Hickory neighborhood stops
- Analysis of traffic analysis zone demographic and employment data in the Sherrill's Ford area
- Completed Burke County employer analysis for Morganton
- Completed calculations of adjusting WPCOG 1967-2019 grants totals to current (2019) dollars
- Catawba County low-moderate income analysis for YMCA grant
- Completed computer occupation analysis for City of Morganton
- COVID 19 employment change scenario analysis for the region
- Completed request for COVID-19 economic analysis for Hickory
- Demographic Chapter for Hildebran Recreation Plan



- Demographic profile for Caldwell Arts Council Grant
- Demographic updates for City of Hickory's 2020 Consolidated Plan
- Draft of Hickory Equity Demographics/Economic Data Report
- Final adjustments of the region's census tracts/block groups for 2020 Census
- Hickory Schools AP course analysis for Hickory
- Hispanic employment by occupation analysis for Centro Latino
- I-40 traffic analysis for BDI
- Income analysis of Alexander County Census Tracts for EDC grant
- List of employers less than 50 employees for Morganton
- Maiden and Newton internet access analysis for a grant
- New school locator maps - Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC)
- Radius analysis of Maiden for future subdivision project
- Radius economic analysis of residential/commercial site near Publix @ NC 150 in Sherrill's Ford area
- Sherrill's Ford population radius analysis for developer
- Updated 2019 foreclosure by NC County database
- Vehicle occupancy rate (VOR) analysis/submitted results to NCDOT
- West Hickory neighborhood plan demographic chapter
- 2019 average daily traffic count analysis and maps (35 maps total)
- Drexel Comprehensive Plan demographic chapter
- Determined Claremont ETJ population for Planning Board member determination
- Updated 2018 ARC vs. Catawba County vs Hickory MSA data comparison spreadsheet
- Updated County foreclosure database
- Updated Taylorsville, Catawba and Burke passenger sampling schedules based on Greenway's new operating hours
- Updated vacant housing, built before 1980 and after 2000 Census Tract maps using 2014-2018 ACS database

WPCOG REGIONAL SNAPSHOT



14.9%
Poverty
Rate

145K
Number of
Jobs

25 min.
Mean Travel
Time to Work

375K
Population
Estimate

\$51K
Median
Household
Income

\$146K
Median
Household
Value

7.9%
Unemployment
Rate

166K
of Housing
Units

Sources: NC Office of Management and Budget, NC Labor and Economic Analysis Division, 2019 American Community Survey.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

632
Maps/Spatial
Data

40,783
Addresses
Mapped

384
Hickory
Support
Hours

120
Drone
Flights

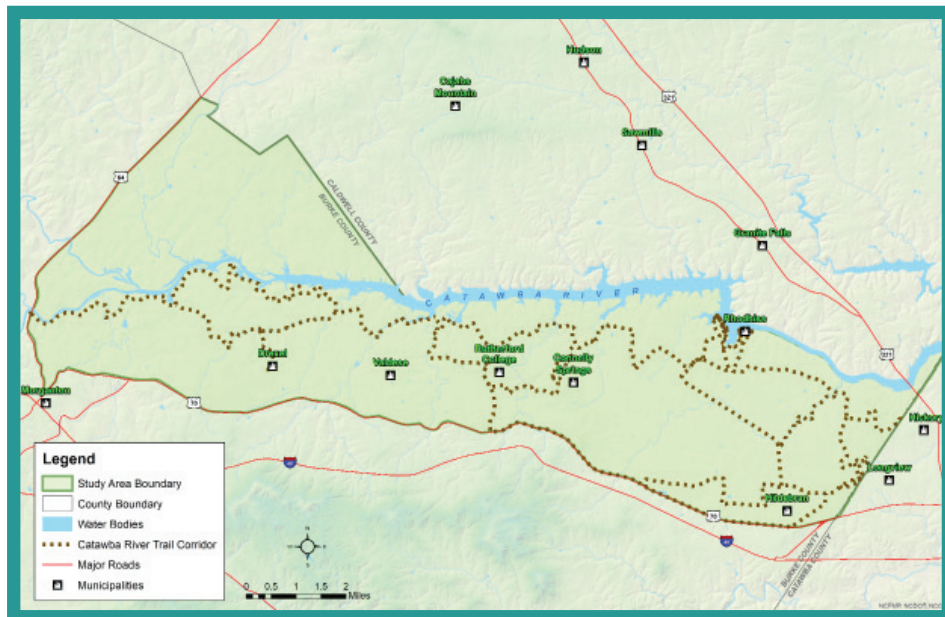


WPCOG GIS Services is a central resource of geographic information for the Western Piedmont Region. The WPCOG's GIS group maintains an extensive library of local, county, regional, and statewide datasets and provides a variety of digital mapping solutions and geospatial data services for member governments and other public and private agencies. WPCOG GIS staff also designs spatial GIS-based applications which can be accessed easily on PCs, tablets and smartphones. These applications can allow local workers to view and edit utility or other data in the field as infrastructure is updated. WPCOG can host and maintain spatial data on our servers and serve it out to PCs and mobile devices using ArcGIS Online from ESRI, Inc.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Finished Hickory Tap Card Project
- Maps for Granite Falls Comprehensive Land Use Plan
- Maps for Conover Scattered House Project Environmental Assessments
- Maps for Crescent Point Apartment Project (in Lenoir) Environmental Assessment
- 2019 Septic Program Replacement Project location maps
- Completed drone flights producing photos of 3 development sites and an updated aerial mosaic of Sweetwater Extension
- General ArcGIS Online and mapping support for Claremont, Greenway Transit, Hudson, Maiden and Valdese
- Geocoded and generated maps for Carolina Textile District (CTD) clients, CTD members, Manufacturing Solution Center (MSC) customers, and referral companies impact mapping
- Geocoded Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba Counties 2019 Nonresidential and Residential Building Permits
- Maps for Kattz Corner Multi-Family Construction Project Environmental Assessment
- Completed drone flights for Hickory construction projects
- Maps for Ridgeview Habitat for Humanity Project and Conover Scattered Site Housing Rehab Project Environmental Assessments
- Driver route maps and trash cart distribution for Lenoir Solid Waste Feasibility Study
- Assisted with trash collection route design and created cart distribution web map viewer for the Lenoir Solid Waste Automated Collection Study
- Park maps for Alexander County Parks & Recreation Plan
- C-19 PPE Manufacturer/request maps for Carolina Textile District
- Scenario maps for Oak Hill Elementary School analysis
- Site plan map for Claremont PARTF application
- Generated Conover and Granite Falls facility maps for ADA plans
- Performed Burke River Trail Analysis
- Completed and submitted a quote to Rutherford College for GPS mapping of their wastewater system
- Replaced old water meter numbers with 1,800 new meter numbers for Sawmills and fixed glitch in Sawmills app
- Worked on floorplan app, stormwater app, code enforcement app, Valdese's cemetery app and Rutherford College's wastewater app
- Completed a promo drone video for WPCOG's YouTube channel

- Scanned and geo-referenced Rutherford College's sewer map
- Completed final recommendation route maps, and worked on master address/account database for Lenoir Solid Waste Project
- Started regional local government owned property GIS layer
- Granite Falls flood hazard and Maiden low-mod income maps
- Archived Maiden and Claremont work orders
- Updated Catawba Trail Map and created 4 sectional maps
- Worked on STEM West Asset AGOL Content
- Large mark-up maps for Hildebran Recreation Plan public meeting
- ArcGIS Online Greenway Transit Catawba Re-Route 2021 Web Map
- Worked with other Planning Department staff to develop demo Regional Story Map Tour Application.
- Completed code enforcement app updates
- Updated Claremont work order app
- Integrated the use of GPS/collector for mapping trails
- Field captured potential Catawba River Trail routes for Lake Rhodhiss-Duke Power FERC License map
- Helped update Valdese water meters that are being changed-out



CATAWBA RIVER TRAIL

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

The Western Piedmont Water Resource Committee

The Western Piedmont Water Resource Committee is the key interface used by the Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG) to interact with local governments on water resources. The Water Resources Committee consists of individuals representing local governments, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and businesses from Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, and Catawba Counties.

Stormwater Planning and Administration

The Stormwater Planning and Administration program is designed to allow municipalities to comply with DEQ requirements as well as ensure the quality of their local waterways at a very reasonable cost. The WPCOG stormwater program focuses on the measures required by EPA municipal stormwater permits (NPDES MS4). Currently, the COG is contracted to administer full stormwater programs for Conover, Newton, Rutherford College, Lenoir, Granite Falls, Hudson, Gamewell, Sawmills, Cahj's Mountain, and Valdese. Also, Stormwater includes educational programs in Hickory, Maiden, and Morganton.

The Stormwater Planning and Administration Program utilizes other departments' skills to fulfill the myriad of requirements of the MS4 Permits. The Code Enforcement program enforces illicit discharge, and the GIS department oversees the collection and monitoring of stormwater utility data. The program oversight is managed under the Natural Resources Division, which also provides outreach and public participation and post-construction management. The Natural Resources Division comprises the Assistant Community and Regional Planning Director, the Stormwater Administrator, and a Stormwater Outreach intern.

Western NC Air and Water Quality Conferences

The WPCOG and the Reese Institute for the Conservation of Natural Resources have partnered to host these Annual Conferences at Lenoir-Rhyne University, since 2007. The Western Piedmont Council of Governments organizes these unique conferences, and Lenoir-Rhyne University provides lunch and facilities. This year the conferences were held online and had a great deal of participation.

This Western NC Water Quality Conference was held on Wednesday, September 9, 2020, and included presentations from NC State University, the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Partners for Environmental Justice, and the NC Department of Environmental Quality. This year's conference had 230 registrants.

The Western NC Air Quality Conference was held on Friday, December 11, 2020. It included presentations from the City of Hickory, the NC Department of Transportation, Oak Ridge Associated Universities (contractor for the US EPA), and Appalachian State University. This year's conference had 126 registrants.

NADO Awards

The Stormwater Program and the Henry Fork and Jacob Fork Watershed Conservation Plan received a 2020 Aliceann Wohlbruck Impact Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO).

Stormwater Planning and Administration

The WPCOG stormwater program focuses on the measures required by EPA municipal stormwater permits (NPDES MS4): Education and outreach on stormwater issues, illicit discharge monitoring, and enforcement, permitting and inspection of stormwater control structures for new and existing developments, and the management of good housekeeping procedures to ensure our municipalities themselves are following valuable environmental practices. The project was completed by John Wear, Assistant Director of Community and Regional Planning; Alison Adams, Director of Community and Regional Planning; and Jack Cline, Stormwater Administrator.

Henry Fork and Jacob Fork Watershed Conservation Plan

The WPCOG developed the Henry Fork and Jacob Fork Watershed Conservation Plan in a partnership with the Foothills Conservancy. The Plan, with its priorities and goals, along with the future implementation efforts, will go a long way toward achieving water quality benefits. Identifying priority parcels for conservation and recreation will reduce surface water pollution associated with erosion and stream sedimentation and provide future access for recreational corridors. This plan is beneficial for the natural environment and the City of Newton's drinking water intake on the Jacob Fork River near U.S. 321. The project was completed by John Wear, Assistant Director of Community and Regional Planning; Taylor Dellinger, Senior Data Analyst/GIS Manager; and Todd Stroupe, GIS Analyst.

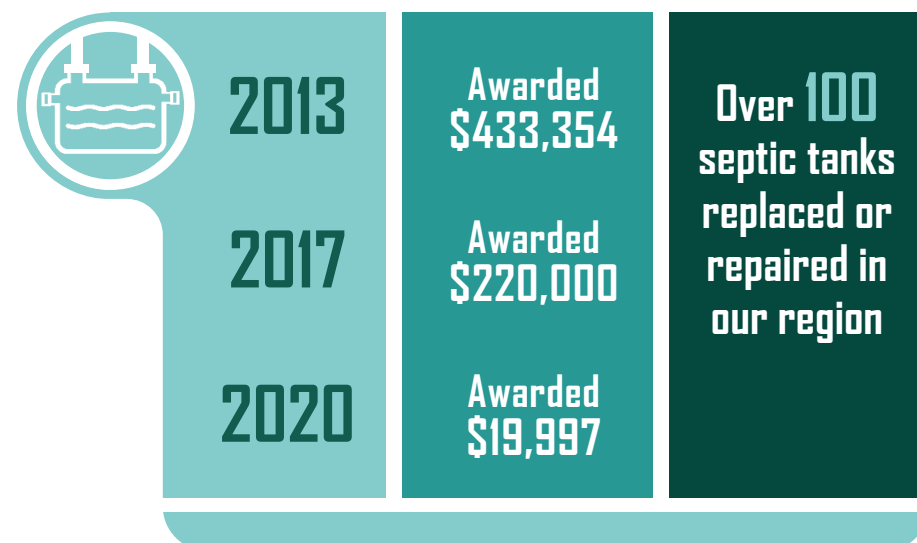
The Septic Tank Repair Project Reaches Completion

The Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG) has administered a no-interest, revolving loan program for qualifying homeowners for repairing failing septic systems. The project is located within Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba Counties, and repairs are completed within the Catawba River Basin, specifically Lake Rhodhiss and Lake Hickory. Repairs are only completed in sub-watersheds that contain a 303d listed impaired stream or are within the WSIV Water Supply Watershed.

In 2013, the Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG) was awarded a \$433,354.06 grant from the North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust Fund to address the regional need for septic repairs. In 2017, the WPCOG was awarded a \$220,000 grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) 319 Grant Program to address the regional need for septic repairs. In 2020, US EPA awarded \$19,997 in additional funding as part of this round of funding.

Since 2013, there have been just over 100 septic tanks replaced or repaired in our region. The Unifour Septic System Repair Program is beneficial for multiple reasons including helping low-income individuals with a much needed expense, the public health benefits from preventing septic run-off, and the environmental benefits for water quality.

SEPTIC TANK REPAIR PROJECT NUMBERS



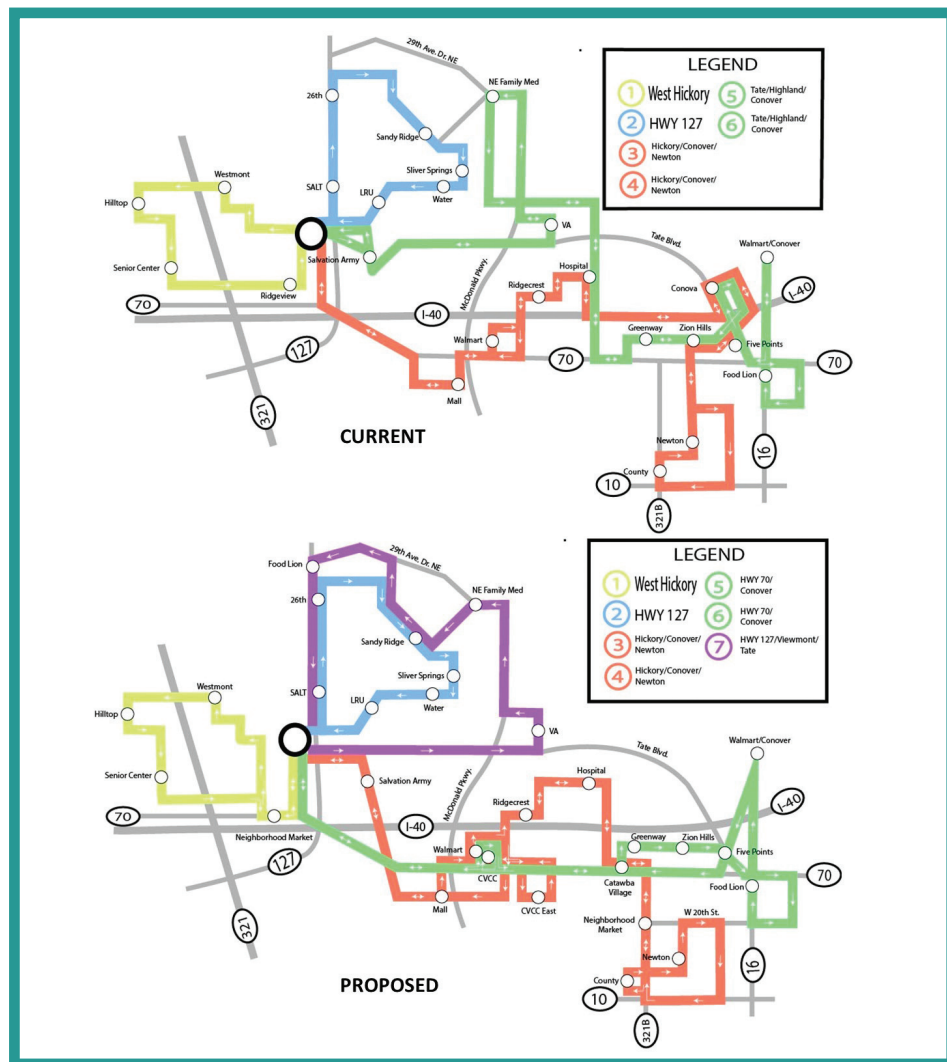
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Designated as the Lead Planning Agency for the Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the WPCOG is responsible for regional transportation planning. The MPO evaluates transportation system performance, identifies project needs, develops long-range plans, prioritizes projects, and recommends funding. The WPCOG is the primary local recipient of the transportation planning funds received from the state and federal governments. The MPO is governed by the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), comprised of elected officials from each of the 28 local governments in the region.

Highlighted Project

In September 2020, Greenway Public Transportation launched “Catawba Re-Route,” a community-led process to recommend the first potential bus system overhaul in over ten years. Over 100 surveys were collected with many comments requesting expanded service to new destinations, shorter rides, new two-way service, and more frequent service.

Western Piedmont Council of Governments staff have helped Greenway develop both cost-neutral and cost-enhanced scenarios to address community and rider requests. The graphic maps show the proposed Re-Route scenario compared with the current bus system. In 2021, staff will again assist Greenway by gathering and responding to public comments on the proposed changes.



BUS ROUTE PASSENGER SAMPLING

354
TOTAL

142
BURKE

212
CATAWBA



MEETINGS & PRESENTATIONS

12
GREENWAY
BOARD

1
TRANSIT
ADVISORY BOARD

9
TRANSPORTATION
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

9
TECHNICAL
COORDINATING
COMMITTEE

5
COUNCILS,
COMMISSIONS
& BOARDS

(ALEXANDER CO.,
CALDWELL CO.,
CLAREMONT, HILDEBRAN,
LONG VIEW)



8
LOCALLY ADMINISTERED
PROJECT PROGRAM
(LAPP) APPLICATIONS

\$12.8M
IN SURFACE
TRANSPORTATION
BLOCK GRANTS

4
ENHANCED
MOBILITY TRANSIT
PROJECT APPLICATIONS

\$478K
IN SECTION
5310



7
WALKABILITY
ACTION INSTITUTE
WORKSHOPS

4
BIKE-PED
PLAN STEERING
COMMITTEE MEETINGS

HICKORY & SAWMILLS

REGIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

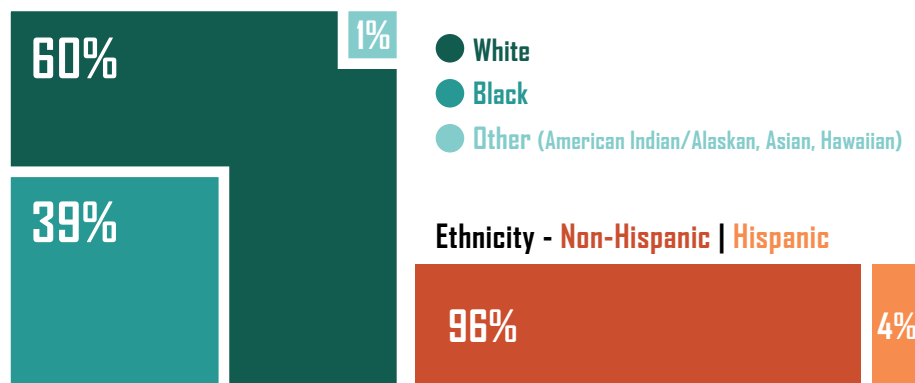
HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

The Housing Choice Voucher program is the federal government's primary program for assisting low income families in obtaining affordable housing in the private market. Housing assistance is provided on behalf of the family or individual. Participants are free to choose any housing that meets the requirements of the program. A housing subsidy is paid to the landlord directly by the housing authority on behalf of the participating family. The family then pays the difference between the actual rent charged by the landlord and the amount subsidized by the program.

ANNUAL LANDLORD SEMINAR

The 7th annual Landlord Information Seminar was held in November 2020, with approximately 55 landlords in attendance virtually via Zoom. The Regional Housing Authority (RHA) staff and guest speaker Hannah Wyatt from Legal Aid presented during the interactive meeting. Wyatt discussed COVID-19 laws and regulations, the eviction moratorium, and how both landlords and clients could receive help during the pandemic. Several Landlords received awards for their participation in the RHA Housing Choice Voucher program and for their contributions to the communities and families they rent to.

RHA CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS



FRAUD COLLECTION

Families assisted through the RHA Housing Choice Voucher program who inaccurately report income end up owing the RHA a debt. Each family is

1,209
Total Number of
families on program

Total New
Admissions 235

786
Disabled
Head of
Household

Families
with
Children 383

22
Family
Unification
Program

FSS
Participants 53

165
Mainstream
Voucher
Families

Project
Based
Families 35

offered a one time repayment agreement with the RHA. If The RHA is unable to collect the income from the family through the agreement, the family is notified and entered into the NC Debt Setoff collection system. The RHA collected \$11,603.47 in 2020. This amount reflects current repayment clients as well as amounts collected through NC Debt Setoff.



SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The RHA works to enhance the quality of life for participating families by offering opportunities through special programs. Special programs include **REACH - Family-Self Sufficiency Program (FSS)**, **HCV Homeownership** and **Family Unification Program vouchers**.

Family Unification Program vouchers help families whose children have been displaced from their household, or are at imminent risk of displacement, and facing the imminent threat of losing their children, due to inadequate housing. These vouchers also assist former foster youth who are transitioning out of the foster care program. The RHA works in cooperation with Public Child Welfare Agencies to provide housing choice vouchers to families in need. In 2020, a total of 22 families and foster youth were assisted with Family Unification Program vouchers.

The RHA HCV Homeownership Program allows housing choice voucher participants to use their rental subsidy toward mortgage payments. This year, the RHA assisted 5 participants with their mortgage each month. RHA staff continues to seek opportunities for participants to become homeowners.

REACH is a family self-sufficiency program for Housing Choice Voucher families. A case manager, who helps participants identify barriers and create a goal oriented plan to overcome those challenges, connects families to resources in the community. Finding and keeping employment, hopefully with wages that lead to self-sufficiency, is foundational to the program. In turn, as a family increases its earned income, the RHA deposits money into an escrow savings account for them. In 2020, a total of 65 families participated in REACH. Seven new families enrolled while 6 graduated, having earned \$42,253.00 in savings collectively. At the end of 2020, an escrow savings account held \$153,734.00 earned by 40 of the 52 enrolled participants.

ENVISION CENTER

The RHA EnVision Center provides communities with a centralized hub for support in the following four pillars: (1) Economic Empowerment, (2) Educational Advancement, (3) Health and Wellness, and (4) Character and Leadership.

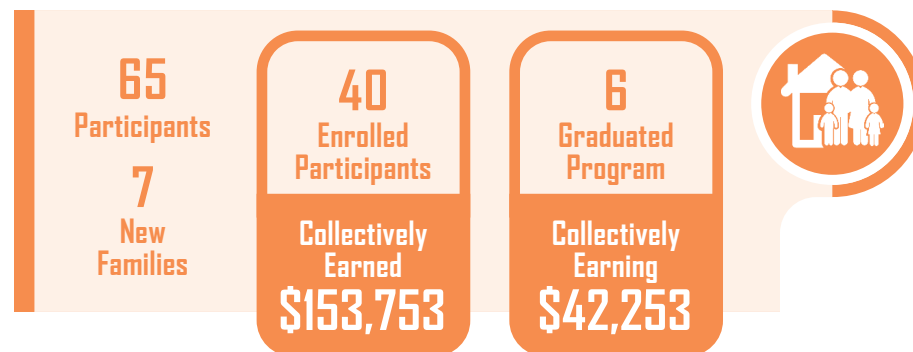
In 2020, the RHA assisted with the operation of a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site through an IRS partnership. The VITA site was open February 1 – April 15, 2020. The RHA in collaboration with Goodwill Industries of Northwest North Carolina assisted 796 families with their 2019 tax return filing. Collectively, those families received a total tax return refund of \$1,022,778.00.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Applied for and received an increase in number of allocated vouchers by approximately 24%.
- Received an additional 136 Mainstream Vouchers, which assist non-elderly persons with disabilities. The RHA was the only Housing Authority in NC to receive additional Mainstream Vouchers in the fall of 2020.
- In December, the RHA applied for and received funding for 10 HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Vouchers. The RHA partnered with Charles George VA Medical Center staff in Asheville, NC to apply for the HUD-VASH vouchers.
- In April, the RHA was notified by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) that a grant application was approved for an employment program. The RHA is working with community agencies to increase access to employment for low-income individuals in the region. Services offered through the RHA under the ARC grant include, connections to resume building, employment, on the job training opportunities, interviewing skills, and links to other resources for low-income individuals to receive transportation and child care while seeking work.
- The RHA is proud to announce a new partnership with Safe Harbor of NC and Integrated Care of Greater Hickory to provide Project Based Vouchers to low-income individuals who are accepting treatment for substance abuse disorders. These organizations are working with a hard to house population and the RHA has accepted their applications to use 20 Housing Choice Vouchers as Project Based Vouchers.

The 2020 Annual Dignity Drive successfully collected over 15,000 feminine hygiene products for disadvantaged women in Burke and Catawba Counties. Several local partners assisted in collecting and distributing products to help women in need in our community.

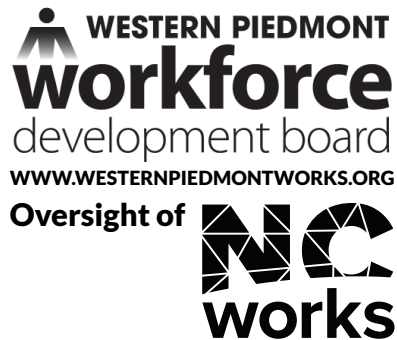
REACH (FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY) NUMBERS



ENVISION CENTER NUMBERS



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD



The purpose of the Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board is to be at the center of community and regional leadership to identify workforce challenges, to be the convener of the conversation to resolve the challenges, to be the champion for workforce development, to work in a collaborative partnership with key stakeholders, (especially economic development and education), to bring resources to bear on resolving the challenges, and to act as the accountability agent to ensure the work is completed.

Through the planning and oversight of the Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board, the region's local area NCWorks Career Centers have delivered:



Western Piedmont Workforce Development NCWorks scholarship funding was awarded across the following counties:

JAN. - DEC. 2020	
	AD/DW TRAINING
ALEXANDER COUNTY	\$4,538.57
BURKE COUNTY	\$58,536.16
CALDWELL COUNTY	\$36,299.01
CATAWBA COUNTY	\$66,377.63
TOTALS	\$165,751.37

UPSKILL



4
Total Upskill Grants Issued

\$31,160
Total Grant Funds Awarded

96
Upskill Trainees (Employees)

In 2020 the Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board continued its administration of the Incumbent Worker Grant program, branded as Upskill. The Upskill Grant offers competitive training grants to businesses in addressing employees' skill gaps, improving employee retention, helping stabilize the business, and increasing the competitiveness of the employee and business. Through this effort, businesses:

- Improve Productivity and Increase Competitiveness
- Retain Key Talent and Expertise
- Reduce Employee Turnover

Companies that participated in Upskill for 2020:

- Carolina Glove and Safety Company
- Century Furniture
- Big Twig DBA Timber Wolf Forest Products
- Performance Foodservice



Youth and Young Adult NEXTGen program (16-24 years old) delivered from January 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020

40
Internships (Work experience)

\$10.53
Average Internship Wages Earned/Hr.

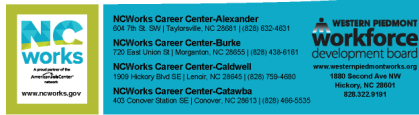
19
Completed GED\High School Diploma

36
Enrolled in Post-Secondary Education

\$177,400.42 YOUTH TRAINING/WORK EXPERIENCE

Sometimes we have to meet workforce challenges with force. In 2020 that meant we too were “forced” into uncharted territory when our offices and NCWorks Career Centers closed to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While many look back on 2020 as a dreadful year, we at the Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board and NCWorks Career Centers found that the virus created a virtual revolution, unveiling how we (NCWorks) could reach more jobseekers and businesses in ways we had not explored. We were able to continue fulfilling scholarships for 175 individuals. We charted the virtual job fair space and saw an average increase of 16 individuals in our virtual workshops.

ACE YOUR VIRTUAL INTERVIEW



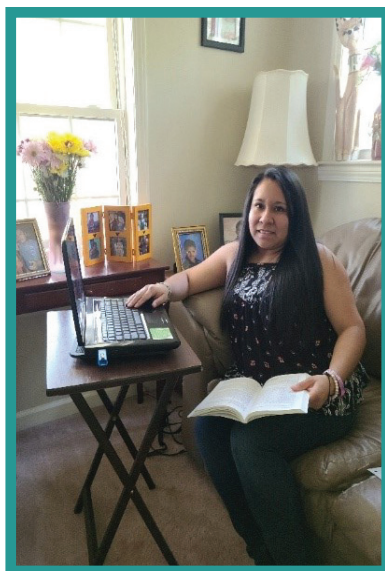
We increased our social media outreach by providing information to help others become comfortable operating with virtual services. We have added a Youtube Channel where we are housing job-prep and job-getting videos, as well as job fair recordings and business chats.

Through the steadfast work and support of our NCWork Career Advisors, our participants trusted us, and their goals, to continue their paths to success.

NCWORKS SUCCESS STORIES

Staying Focused Helps you Finish

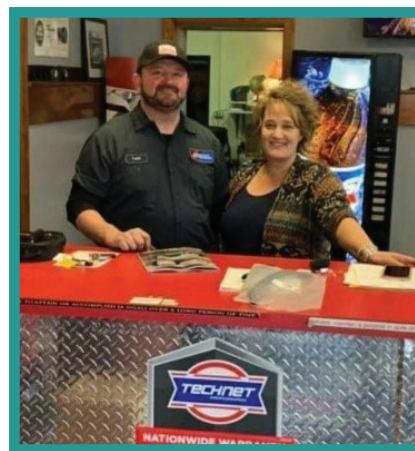
Lillian was attending Western Piedmont Community College 5 years ago. She was close to finishing but had to pause her academic career due to a high-risk pregnancy, ensuring her son was healthy and being a good mom for him. Her son is four years old now, healthy, and currently attending Pre-K at Mountain View Elementary School, which has allowed Lillian to realize her dream of going back to school and becoming the first college graduate in her family. Fortunately, WPCC Financial Aid Director, Dori Barron, told her about



NCWorks and mentioned that they could help cover some of the costs through the Finish Line Grant. She called the following day and made an appointment with NCWorks Career Advisor Cynthia Watson, who helped Lillian during this process. “Even though it’s been a crazy time with my classes being switched to an online format due to the pandemic, I am proud to have earned straight A’s in my classes this semester.

Employer and Intern Success

The Western Piedmont NCWorks NEXTGEN Youth & Young Adult Program has partnered with Christy and Todd Massagee at Master Tech to help be a part of the growth and training for up-and-coming auto technicians. Below is Christy Massagee’s perspective on working with NCWorks NEXTGEN and the opportunity of working with young minds.



“We have had the pleasure to work with the NCWorks NEXTGEN program for almost a year. It has been very rewarding to mentor young people and help them develop skills that will make them successful employees in a professional environment. The opportunity to have interns work directly in their field allows the time to bring out their strengths and weaknesses. It has also allowed us to determine which interns will struggle in this field or if more training would be needed to succeed in this field. Training may consist of specific needs such as electrical or basic automotive skills that

a community college can offer. We can comfortably say we have two interns in this program that will be a huge asset to our company. We can see them being very successful in this line of work. We look forward to working with the NCWorks NEXTGEN program in the future in any way we can.” - Christy Massagee

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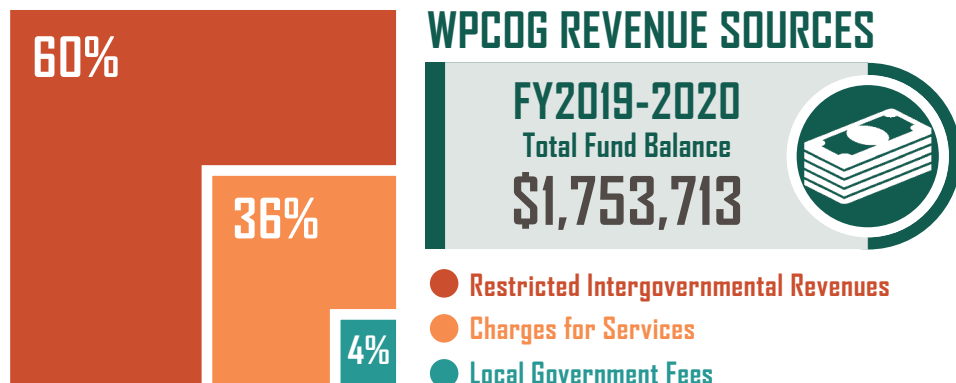
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FINANCE

The focus of the COG's governmental funds is to provide information on near-term inflows, outflows, and balances of usable resources. Such information is useful in assessing the Council's financing requirements.



The General Fund is the chief operating fund of Western Piedmont Council of Governments. At the end of fiscal year 2020, the Western Piedmont Council of Governments' fund balance available in the General Fund was \$866,135, while total fund balance reached \$1,753,713. The Council currently has an available fund balance of 14.12% of total General Fund expenditures, while total fund balance represents 28.60% of that same amount. Unassigned Fund Balance increased \$156,180, for a total of \$556,374.

At June 30, 2020, the governmental funds of Western Piedmont Council of Governments reported a combined fund balance of \$2,431,491, with a net increase in fund balance of \$62,556. Included in this change in fund balance is an increase in the General Fund of \$5,913, WIOA Fund of \$1,380, Aging Fund of \$255, Section 8 of \$118,470, and a decrease in the Building Generator Project Fund of (\$63,462).

During 2020, the finance department has assisted one local government and one non-profit with full financial services. Full financial services include accounts payable, accounts receivable, and payroll. Two additional local governments were served with specific financial services. Those services included, bank reconciliations, chart of account review, monthly journal vouchers, credit card statement reconciliations, accounts payable assistance and various financial reporting assistance.

DEPARTMENT	REVENUES	EXPENSES
AREA AGENCY AGING	\$704,110	\$753,725
COMMUNITY & REGIONAL PLANNING	\$530,210	\$462,162
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	\$903,995	\$1,077,779
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	\$259,059	\$456,601
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	\$340,281	\$234,274
GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$94,617	\$163,134
GIS SERVICES	\$100,683	\$90,910
REGIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY	\$897,928	\$885,451
TRANSPORTATION	\$1,219,579	\$1,084,346
WORKFORCE INNOVATION & OPPORTUNITY ACT	\$807,600	\$791,352
MISC./LOCAL DUES /FRINGE & INDIRECT	\$280,035	\$132,450
TOTALS	\$6,138,097	\$6,132,184
NET CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE	\$5,913	

Administration

IT/Facilities

Finance

Area Agency on Aging

Community Development

Community Planning

Regional Housing Authority

Workforce Development

**Anthony Starr**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Sherry Long**ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR**Ashley Bolick**HUMAN RESOURCES &
ADMINISTRATION DIRECTOR**Jason Toney**COMMUNICATIONS
SPECIALIST**Lori Dixon**

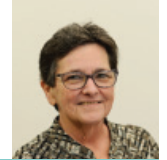
RECEPTIONIST

**Brianna McCrory**ADMINISTRATIVE
ASSISTANT**Scott Miller**

IT/FACILITIES DIRECTOR

**Andrea Roper**

FINANCE DIRECTOR

**Kelsie Mease**ASSISTANT FINANCE
DIRECTOR**Sandy Jones**

FINANCIAL MANAGER

**Kim Eckard**

PAYROLL TECHNICIAN

**Ashley Adkins**

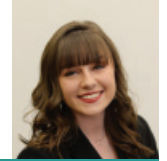
ACCOUNTING TECHNICIAN

**Sherry Deal**ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE
TECHNICIAN**Tina Miller**AREA AGENCY OF AGING
DIRECTOR**Christina Franklin**

REGIONAL OMBUDSMAN

**Mary Mitchell**FAMILY CAREGIVER
SPECIALIST**Karen Phoenix**PROJECT C.A.R.E.
CONSULTANT**Sarah Stamey**

AGING SPECIALIST

**Anita Roberts**REGIONAL OMBUDSMAN/
AGING SPECIALIST**Brianna Wert**

AREA AGENCY ON AGING INTERN

**Rick Oxford**

HOUSING PROGRAM MANAGER

**Paul Teague**COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATOR**Laurie Powell**COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATOR**Lisa Helton**COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATOR**Erin Schotte**COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATOR**Jennifer Cannon**COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATOR**Helen Whisnant**

HOUSING COUNSELOR

**Joel Hermon**

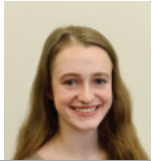
HOUSING INSPECTOR

**Alison Adams**COMMUNITY & REGIONAL
PLANNING DIRECTOR**John Wear**ASSISTANT COMMUNITY &
REGIONAL PLANNING DIRECTOR**Teresa Kinney**COMMUNITY & REGIONAL
PLANNER**Hunter Nestor**COMMUNITY & REGIONAL
PLANNER**Ashley Kale**COMMUNITY & REGIONAL
PLANNER**Dustin Milsaps**COMMUNITY & REGIONAL
PLANNER**Taylor Dellinger**SENIOR DATA ANALYST/
GIS MANAGER**Todd Stroupe**

GIS ANALYST

**Trey Schweitzer**

GIS SPECIALIST

**Brian Horton**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
MANAGER**Averi Ritchie**TRANSPORTATION PLANNER/
ADA ADMINISTRATOR**Duncan Cavanaugh**TRANSPORTATION PLANNER/
DATA TECHNICIAN**Emma Stogner**

TRANSPORTATION TECHNICIAN

**Todd Justice**

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

**Patrick DeMauro**

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

**Jack Cline**

STORMWATER ADMINISTRATOR

**Caren Shorthouse**STORMWATER OUTREACH
INTERN**Stephanie Hanvey**REGIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY
DIRECTOR**Kim Duncan**FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY
COORDINATOR**Kala Guido**

HOUSING SPECIALIST

**Joann Parlier**

HOUSING SPECIALIST

**Elizabeth Moncrief**

HOUSING SPECIALIST

**Sharday Black**

HOUSING SPECIALIST

**Kelley Hayward**

HOUSING SPECIALIST

**By Khang**

HOUSING INSPECTOR

**Wendy Johnson**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
BOARD DIRECTOR**April Lail**

WDB FINANCIAL MANAGER

**Elizabeth Hilliard**

WDB PROGRAM COORDINATOR

**Donna Gilbert**

WDB ADMINISTRATOR

**Leslie Farris**WDB STRATEGIC
INITIATIVES COORDINATOR**Matthew Xiong**

WDB BUSINESS LIAISON

Not Pictured

Ashley Williamson
HOUSING SPECIALIST
Stephanie Queen
HOUSING SPECIALIST
Jared Nava-Salgado
HOUSING SPECIALIST



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