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Western Piedmont Council of Governments

Creative Regional Solutions Since 1968

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Community & Economic Development
[Alexander County Habitat for Humanity Receives CHDO Funds](#)



Construction of Alexander Habitat for Humanity Home, Cooksey Court Taylorsville.

Alexander County Habitat for Humanity in November was the latest to receive Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) funds in the amount of \$29,505 from the Unifour Consortium HOME Program. These funds are being used for the construction of a Habitat home located on Cooksey Court in Taylorsville. This new three bedroom home is being sold to a qualifying Habitat for Humanity applicant. Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) are non-profit organizations doing housing-related activities which benefit low-income families. The Unifour Consortium HOME Program budgets 15% of its annual funding to assist local Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs).

[Article by Jennifer Cannon, Community & Economic Development Administrator](#)

Community & Regional Planning

Public Input Requested for North Carolina Volkswagen Settlement Mitigation Plan

Governor Cooper formally announced the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) as the lead agency to develop the North Carolina Volkswagen (VW) mitigation plan for the VW Settlement. As DEQ drafts the plan, the Department is meeting with interested parties to gather information and determine the best use of the funds for North Carolina. DEQ is also requesting public input regarding what the State should include for potential funding in its mitigation plan. Individuals, local governments, and other groups in the Western Piedmont region are welcome to [submit comments to DEQ](#) until December 31, 2017. The settlement includes ten categories for states to use when selecting eligible projects, which are outlined in the request for information (RFI).

The plan DEQ develops to use the settlement will specifically describe:

- Funding priorities to guide the planning, solicitation, and project selection processes;
- Categories of eligible projects to achieve the goals and how much funding should be allocated to each type;
- The potential benefit of these projects on air quality in areas that experience greater air

pollution;

- Anticipated ranges of emission benefits for eligible projects identified in the plan; and
- Explanation of processes used to obtain public input on the plan.

The funding is the result of an investigation launched in 2015 by then-Attorney General Cooper and other state attorneys general into VW for making and installing illegal software devices to help some vehicles defeat emission tests. The Environmental Protection Agency discovered that certain diesel-powered automobiles manufactured by Volkswagen and its Audi and Porsche affiliates circumvented federal air emission standards and violated the Clean Air Act by allowing some vehicles to emit 40 times the allowable levels of nitrogen oxide (NO_x). The carmakers installed defeat devices in 2.0-liter 4-cylinder and 3.0-liter 6-cylinder diesel engines produced between 2009 and 2015.

To resolve the case, Volkswagen will pay \$2.9 billion into an environmental mitigation trust fund to be shared among states and tribes. North Carolina expects to receive about \$92 million from the trust between next year and 2027. Under the court-approved settlement, the money must go to reduce NO_x emissions to offset the excess emissions caused by Volkswagen's deceptive actions. The DAQ has created a VW Settlement web page with information regarding the VW Settlement, <https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/air-quality/motor-vehicles-and-air-quality/volkswagen-settlement>. The web site also includes a link for the RFI to submit public input on the mitigation plan.

Article by Taylor Dellinger, Data Analyst

Community & Regional Planning

2012-2016 (5-Year) American Community Survey Data Now Available

On December 7, 2017, the US Census Bureau released data from the 2012-2016 (5-Year) American Community Survey (ACS) for all areas. More than 40 topics are available from the 2012-2016 ACS including educational attainment, housing, employment, commuting, language spoken at home, nativity, ancestry and selected monthly homeowner costs. The 2012-2016 ACS data can be found in American Factfinder on the US Census Bureau web site. 2012-2016 American Community Survey data summaries for the region are also available for download in the data services section of Western Piedmont Council of Governments web site. For more information about the 2012-2016 American Community Survey, contact Data Analyst Taylor Dellinger at 828.485.4233 or taylor.dellinger@wpcog.org.

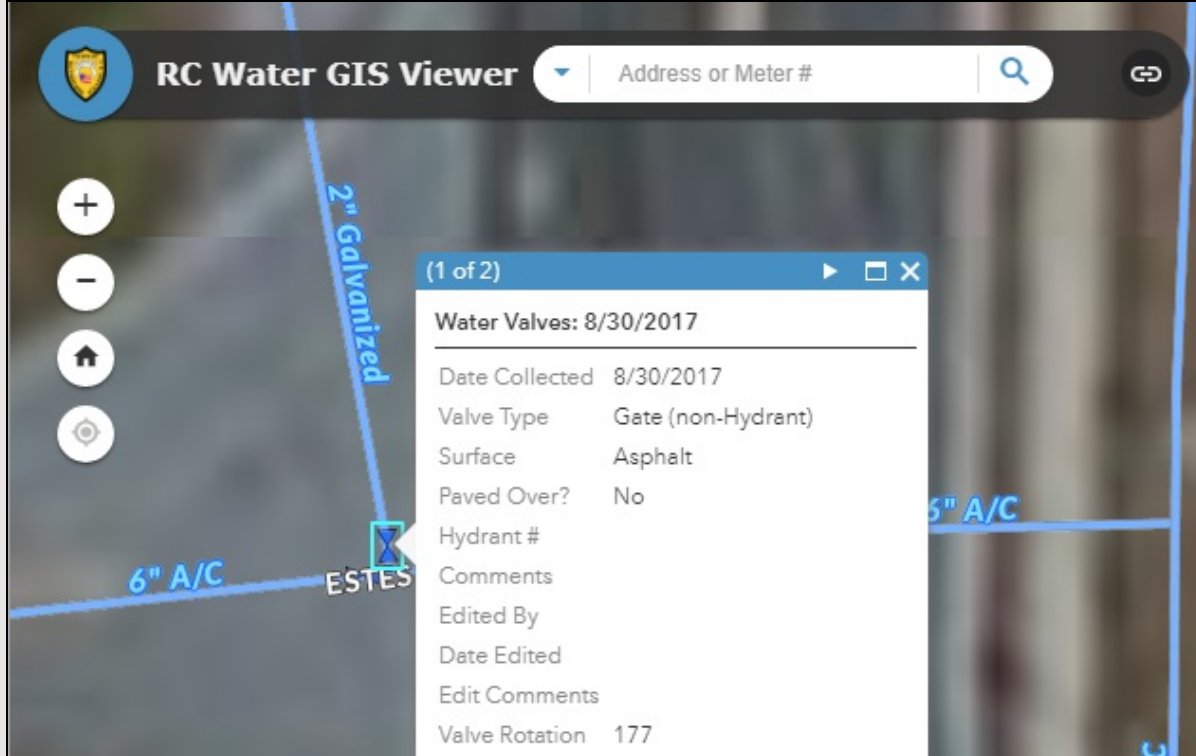
Article by Taylor Dellinger, Data Analyst

IT/GIS

New Water Utility GIS for Rutherford College, NC

During the Summer and Fall of 2017, the WPCOG IT/GIS Department teamed up with the Town of Rutherford College, NC to create a new online Geographic Information System (GIS) for the Town's drinking-water infrastructure. From July through October, IT/GIS staff visited Rutherford College daily, entering the field with satellite-positioning hardware and collecting the location and attributes of the Town's water meters, valves, hydrants and related items. All told, WPCOG staff collected 2,269 features throughout the Town's water service area.

Once the information was gathered, IT/GIS staff members used ArcGIS software and platforms to create secure, online applications that allow authorized Town personnel to access digital maps and attributes of the water system. Using their desktop computers, the staff at Town Hall can look up the location of water meters, water lines and other items. Personnel can also access the GIS viewer app in the field using internet-connected tablets and smartphones.



In addition, WPCOG staff scanned 23 plans, drawings and as-builts provided by the Town and its engineering firm (West and Associates). These were incorporated into a tool within the Town's GIS known as an "As-Built Locator," which indicates the location and year of each drawing. This tool allows users easily to select and view each drawing in the GIS as a layer along with collected water features.

Together with field-collected data, WPCOG staff used the georeferenced drawings to help provide placements and attributes for water mains. Line locations were reviewed with Public Works staff for accuracy. In the GIS, each water main line indicates which (if any) drawings display that line's location, and the tools allow users to view drawings within the online map interface.

WPCOG personnel provided training in the use of the Utility Viewer web app to the administrative staff based at Town Hall. Public Works staff also received training in how to update data in the field using a Utility Editor interface and Trimble satellite-location hardware. With equipment and training, Town Public Works staff now can view the water infrastructure, as well as maintain and update the information as the water system grows, such as adding/moving water meters, hydrants, tap lines and main lines.

Kenneth Geathers, the Town Manager for Rutherford College, appreciates the new system:

Thanks to WPCOG's IT/GIS staff, the Town now has an information-based way to manage its water infrastructure. This new system gives us the ability to update and modify the Town's water system as the community develops and evolves. The Town Administration is very pleased with the new database and the Unifour as a region is fortunate to have the technical assistance of the WPCOG.

The new GIS was presented to the Town Council during its December 5 regular meeting, and WPCOG will continue to provide training and technical support.

Article by Tom Bell, GIS Analyst



On November 14, 2017, the Regional Housing Authority staff held their fourth annual Landlord Information Workshop. Approximately 50 landlords were in attendance. Participants were given updates on inspection, termination and abatement regulations. The presentation was based on landlord responses to postcards sent out months in advance of the workshop.

After the presentation, landlords were given the opportunity to ask any program-related questions. The RHA will continue to hold annual landlord workshops based on landlord responses. Landlords should expect to receive a postcard asking for their input before next year's meeting. If you would like to share your comments and concerns but are not on our list of landlords, please email Kala Guido at kala.guido@wpcog.org.



Regional Housing Authority staff left to right: Elizabeth Moncrief, Vicky Abernethy, Kim Duncan, By Khang, Kala Guido, Stephanie Hanvey and JoAnn Parlier.

We continue to advise landlords to take advantage of www.gosection8.com to list available properties. Go Section 8 can be contacted directly. Their customer service department will post any available property and will give tips on how to make your posting more attractive. Landlords are also encouraged to visit our Regional Housing Authority website at www.wpcog.org/regional-housing-authority to check for updates. We have also added several forms for your convenience.

The RHA is willing to work with any landlord willing to comply with Section 8 regulations. If you are interested, please contact us. For information on being a Section 8 landlord or being added to the mailing for next year's meeting, please contact Kala Guido at 828-485-4282 or kala.guido@wpcog.org

Article by Kala Guido, Housing Specialist

Workforce Development
NCWorks Certified Career Pathways



On November 15, the Western Piedmont Workforce Development region received its official certification from Governor Roy Copper for its Advanced Manufacturing Career Pathway. This certification is awarded by the Department of Commerce, NCWorks Commission. In May 2015, the NCWorks Commission approved NCWorks Certified Career Pathways criteria to establish the standards for the development of career pathways across the state. This certification also ensures that enrollees have access to the best education, training, and work-based learning opportunities as they pursue careers in high-demand occupations. Although Career Pathways have been around for several years, particularly detailed within our school systems curriculum, a broader development of pathways was needed to reflect the opportunities of lifelong learning and training beyond high school and college students.

In 2016, Forbes magazine published a fantastic article on career switching. "How Many Careers Do You Get In A Lifetime?" by Steve Denning

Excerpt - "In the working world, things become even more specialized. Brand names in general are no longer enough to get you very far. Instead, it's about industry brands, the right industry contacts, the right industry profile. Of course, switching careers is always possible. It's just not easy. It takes a lot of luck and effort to overcome the switching cost between industries.

This would all be fine and swell if we could accurately predict what we wanted to do at 22. We would just waltz into the right industry right after school, and there we would stay for the next 50 years. Many of us think we're too young to marry at 22. Why would it be any different for our career?" Read the full article [here](#).

Career pathways have the endorsement of the Division of Workforce Solutions, making them eligible for targeted grant funds.

[Article by Wendy Johnson, Director of Workforce Development](#)

Area Agency on Aging
Project C.A.R.E.
(Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty)



What is the 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. The Family Consultant receives referrals to the program and schedules in-home visits to meet with the caregiver and the person with dementia. The level of assistance provided varies and is dependent upon what the caregiver needs and prefers. In the last year, Project CARE has provided support to more than 150 caregivers in the 16 county region. Many of the caregivers served have elected to utilize respite to provide a needed break from the 24 hour a day responsibility of caregiving.

Eligibility Requirements

- Caregivers of any age caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia who are not eligible to receive similar services through programs such as VA, Medicaid, etc. Services are available for those on the waiting list for other programs.
- While there are no specific income limitations, Project C.A.R.E. gives priority to low-income, rural and minority families.

Services

- **Care Management:** Offering persons with dementia and their caregivers (phone and face-to-face) counseling, care consultation, dementia-specific information, caregiver assessments, caregiver education and connections to strong social support networks;
- **Information and Referral:** Connecting families with available community resources in an attempt to meet unmet needs of family caregivers. This includes but is not limited to local support groups, supportive services, entitlement programs and other community resources.
- **Training:** Providing training and assistance to the community-at-large to increase capacity to assist persons with dementia and their families;
- **Respite Vouchers:** Eligible caregivers can receive vouchers to provide in-home respite care from a provider of their choice and/or respite in group settings such as Adult Day Care/Health. Funds are limited.

Service Area

Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Davie, Forsyth, Mitchell, Stokes, Surry, Watauga, Wilkes, Yadkin and Yancey Counties.

Project C.A.R.E. services are provided at no cost.
Learn more at www.wpcogaaa.org or Call 828-485-4267
You are not alone . . . call for help!

Article by Karen Phoenix, Project C.A.R.E. Family Consultant

of Events

05 - Western Piedmont Air
Quality Committee (10 AM)

07 - Workforce Board
(8:30 AM)

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

21 - Executive Committee
Meeting (6 PM)

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