The Upper Coastal Plain Business Development Center (BDC) will soon transition into the Wilson Innovation Hub. Greg Godard, Executive Director of the Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments, will retire June 2018 and Olga Abrams, Manager of the BDC plans to retire by year end 2018. With this in mind, negotiations began in late 2017, with regard to the transfer of ownership and operations of the BDC to the City of Wilson. The Wilson Innovation Hub will be incorporated in the City’s InnovateNC initiative.

Grant funding of $1.1 million from the Golden LEAF Foundation and a $1.6 million investment from the City of Wilson will make this redesign possible.

The Innovation Hub project timeline will be determined in the next few months as final grant agreements are completed. The City of Wilson expects to have the Innovation Hub open for business in about 18 months.

CEDS 2020:
A New Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The UCP Board of Directors, serving as the region’s Advisory Committee, oversaw the development and adoption of a fully revised five-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Their VISION, “Think Regionally, Act Locally, and Compete Globally”, provides a framework for action by leadership and communities to help assure prosperity and improved quality of life for residents and business.

A CEDS Strategy Development Group comprised of public and private sector representatives from local government, education, business, as well as economic, community and workforce development, drafted the strategy under the Advisory Committees’ leadership. CEDS 2022 was adopted in October 2017.

The Vision is underpinned by Four Strategic Goals:
1. Build on the region’s competitive advantages and leverage the marketplace
2. Establish & maintain a robust regional infrastructure
3. Create revitalized, healthy and resilient communities
4. Develop talented and innovative people

CEDS 2022 also contains an analysis of the region’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) based on regional leadership survey results and other data. The work also informs the CEDS’s service priorities for leaders, target sectors to develop, challenges to address, as well as strategies & tactics to accomplish the goals.

CEDS 2022 can be viewed at the new PDS website at www.ucpcog.org under the Planning and Development Services tab.
LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES RECEIVE WATER & SEWER GRANT/LOAN AWARDS

The Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments’ Planning and Development Services Department has a long history of obtaining infrastructure funding assistance for local municipal water/sewer related projects through CDBG & CDBG-I, NC DEQ Drinking Water and Clean Water grant/loan, DENR water/sewer, Rural Center water/sewer, Clean Water Management Trust Fund, and Golden Leaf Foundation.

The Town of Enfield was awarded a State Reserve Project Grant/Loan in the amount of $546,425 to extend municipal sewer service to a municipal subdivision in its Extraterritorial Jurisdiction located on the west-side of the town. The area is currently being served by individual, older, failing septic systems.

The Town of Saratoga has also been awarded a State Reserve Project Loan in the amount of $1,647,420 to construct a Regional Interconnection with the City of Wilson for the Town’s Wastewater Treatment as well as its Extraterritorial Jurisdictions. The project will also allow a 2015 CDBG-I funded Sewer project serving 24 low-to-moderate-income (LMI) homes and 7 non-LMI homes to proceed, as well as allow a 2016 CDBG-I funded project, serving another 24 LMI homes to proceed, thereby adding homes to the town’s sewer customer base.

The Town of Lucama was awarded a State Reserve Project Grant/Loan in the amount of $488,990 to replace filter media in its water treatment plant and to rehabilitate an existing supply well.

The Town of Seaboard was awarded a State Reserve Project Grant/Loan in the amount of $1,654,492 to replace water distribution lines in areas of the town where lines were originally constructed in 1935.

SMALL TOWN PLANNING SERVICES

With assistance from the Planning and Development Services staff, the Town of Seaboard completed and adopted the Affirmatively Forwarding Fair Housing Assessment and Plan as required triennially by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The Town of Leggett is the latest municipality to contract with Planning and Development Services. Work includes updates to the Town’s Zoning Map, assistance in the possible rezoning of a property, and to ensure consistency with current state law as well as compliance with the zoning ordinance.

Through a NC Department of Environmental Quality grant funded from the US EPA, GIS Stormwater Infrastructure mapping was begun in January for The City of Roanoke Rapids. Work continued through the fall and winter on the Town of Red Oak’s Zoning Ordinance Revisions and Town of Pinetop’s Annexation and Sub-Division Ordinance.

Hurricane Matthew Recovery

Under the auspices of funding from the US Economic Development Administration the COG is coordinating the disaster recovery response for the region while facilitating conversations in varied subject areas important to our partners and local communities.

While some member communities are already putting hazard mitigation strategies into action, others are finalizing details of mitigation buy outs and elevations. Housing recovery programs are still accepting applications. Follow this link https://bit.ly/2qcopFz or simply call 2-1-1.

Cog welcomes Andrew Delonno!

Andrew Delonno joined the COG in November 2017 as the Community Development Manager. With a master’s degree in both public administration and planning, he has worked in local government for 17 years. Andrew very much enjoys North Carolina’s natural beauty, culture and amazing people.
Thomas Drug Store Renovations

The Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments’ PDS staff assisted the City of Wilson in the management of a Community Development Block Grant for the adaptive commercial reuse of the former downtown Piggly Wiggly grocery store.

Located at 309 Nash St NE Wilson, North Carolina, the former Piggly Wiggly building was completely renovated. The CDBG Economic Development Grant was awarded by the North Carolina Department of Commerce to the City of Wilson in January 2015 in the amount of $500,000.00.

Thomas Drug Store is now operating in the former building, which provides 16,000 square feet of much needed pharmacy, medical equipment, offices, and storage space.

Planning Grant to Serve Three Towns

UCPCOG is honored to be the only NC recipient of a US Department of Agriculture – Rural Development Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training Grant. This first time offered funding awarded $150,000 so PDS staff can provide direct assistance in three communities over the course of 24 months.

The municipalities of Enfield, Garysburg, and Sharpsburg quickly stepped up and offered $10,000 each to cover their share of the required grant match, thereby ensuring $60,000 of technical and planning assistance to aid their community facilities development efforts.

Eligible activities under this grant include:

- Assisting communities in identifying and planning community facility needs
- Identifying resources to finance community facility needs from public and private sources
- Preparing reports and surveys necessary to request financial assistance
- Preparing applications for agency financial assistance
- Improving the management, including financial management, related to the operation of community facilities

FIRST RESPONDERS CLEAN TRANSPORTATION DEMONSTRATION DAY

With PDS assistance, the North Carolina Clean Technology Center from NC State University hosted its first event for First Responders at the NC Center for Automotive Research on February 28, 2018 in the Town of Garysburg. This event was free to first responders across North Carolina and Virginia and included real world case study results. Attendees enjoyed presentations from 16 clean technology providers, hands-on clean technology product review, and a ride and drive on the two-mile closed course.

Vehicles available for the ride and drive included: Ford Explorer Interceptor; Police Plug-In Focus; 2 Zero Motorcycles and more.
Halifax Community College gets $2 Million Grant

A $2 million Economic Development Administration grant will help Halifax Community College build an Advanced Manufacturing and Corporate Training Center. Halifax Community College President Dr. Michael Elam said that the grant will expand programs within its industrial systems curriculum.

The United States Department of Commerce (USDC) announced the award on December 21, 2017. The department said in a news release the project is expected to create more than 120 jobs and nearly $19 million in private investment.

The new Advanced Manufacturing and Corporate Training Center will help provide local businesses with an able workforce, stimulating future growth in the community. The training center will house curriculum and short-term training programs for industrial systems technology, welding technology, and automotive systems technology. The grant will allow the college to expand the welding area and its industrial systems program, which includes solar training, robotics, and computer training. The funds may also lead to an expansion of the school’s automotive technology area, which could lead to programs in diesel technology. The facility will also serve as a venue where area businesses and industries can upgrade the skills of their current employees as well as new hires and schedule other training needs.

The grant was part of the regional planning efforts of the Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments. The Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments strives to bring together the public and private sectors to create an economic development roadmap to strengthen the regional economy, support private capital investment, and create jobs.

Solar Farm Workshop for Public Officials

In February, PDS Director, Ron Townley facilitated an industrial solar workshop for public officials for the second consecutive year. The event was held at the Center for Energy Education (C4EE) in Halifax County and included sessions on State and local permitting, health and safety impacts, taxes, real estate values and revenues, legal considerations and more. Local officials participated from around the region and from across the state. The C4EE is an eastern United States hub for the renewable energy industry, a hands-on training ground for solar installations, a destination for students and families to learn about renewable energy resources, as well as, an education and training facility for our workforce to provide the knowledge and skills needed to pursue a career in the growing renewable energy industry.

"Energy Education is vitally important for the next generation.”
– Georg Veit, Chairman of the Board, CEO – Gecenex Solar LLC
The 2017 Mary & Bill Little Award

The Mary and Bill Little award is given each year to an individual who has gone above and beyond to serve the needs of senior adults in their county. Mary G. Little was a long-time resident of Northampton County and a strong advocate for both senior adults and school age children. She was instrumental in the establishment of the Northampton County Office on Aging and the Senior Education Corps which placed senior adults as volunteers throughout the public-school system in Northampton County. The Senior Education Corps received state and national honors. Mary Little made a difference in the lives of senior adults daily. Bill Little has been an active advocate for senior adults in Northampton County as well.

The Mary and Bill Little Award was presented by the Area Agency on Aging Regional Aging Advisory Committee (RAAC) at our annual Christmas Celebration on December 8, 2017. The award nomination reads as follows: “She loves her job and often says so, too! I’ve never really seen her “down.” She loves to laugh as well. She assumes extra tasks gracefully and has a make-a-difference attitude; one can count on her. She’s responsible, dedicated, helpful, and punctual! I remember when she wasn’t on the RAAC, but she’s been here a long time. What would we do without her? Working with her is a pleasure, for she always has input, suggestions, and overall understanding of the entire picture; she is invaluable. She’s quick to tell others, “Good Job!” No question about her caring for those RAAC serves – making a difference one person at a time – every day! She is mentor and role model. Nothing gets her down! My nomination for the 2017 Mary & Bill Little Award, Kim Emory, is a fighter and a cancer survivor. Her resume includes: being the Family Caregiver Support Program Specialist, coordinating the Barton Caregiver Conference in March of each year, being the Local Contact Agency Coordinator, and more.

Congratulations
To
Kim Emory who has gone above and beyond...

2017 SCSEP Awards

SCSEP awards were presented at the RAAC Christmas Celebration for the following:

The Host Agency of the Year Award was presented to Nadene Tucker of Wilson Partnership for Children. Wilson Partnership for Children has a history of employing our participants once they complete their community service with them. We are very grateful that they do this. This Host Agency goes the extra mile with their participants by giving them multiple opportunities to learn many skills with each placement. We were honored to award them with the Host Agency of the Year Award.

Participant of the year went to two participants: Bennie Page and Gracie Hill. Both of these participants are wonderful examples of hard working individuals who strive to learn all they can about their Host Agency and demonstrate exemplary work ethics.
What is the Local Contact Agency (LCA)?

The Local Contact Agency is responsible for working with the resident and Nursing Home Staff to discuss options for transitioning to the community by offering contact information for community based services that may facilitate transition once a resident indicates interest in learning more about transitioning home during their assessment (MDS 3.0) Section Q.

What does the Local Contact Agency (LCA) do?

- Uses a team approach to transition planning by working with the resident, the nursing home staff and those who support the resident (family or friends)
- Meets with the resident to provide facility based options counseling and to discuss the feasibility of transition
- Collaborates with the resident and nursing home staff to incorporate independent living skills into the resident’s care plan
- Shares information and assists with identifying community based resources needed for a safe and successful transition
- Provides follow-up with the resident and staff on the resident’s progress leading up to the transition process
- Facilitates the interested resident to transition from the nursing home to a community based setting

LCA Resource Info:

Region L
LCA Counselor:
Kim Emory
252-234-5960 or kim.emory@ucpcog.org

MDS 3.0 Section Q Referral Line:
1-866-271-4894

For NC statewide questions:
contact Mary Edwards, the NC Community Living Coordinator at 919-855-3437 or Mary.Edwards@dhh.nc.gov
In recognition of November as National Alzheimer’s Awareness and Family Caregiver Appreciation Month, in partnership with Alzheimer’s NC, ECU School of Nursing Geriatric Workforce Team, and Roanoke Rapids Parks and Recreation, the Upper Coastal Plain Area Agency on Aging Family Caregiver Support Program provided a one-day Caregiver Conference!

The conference was held at the Kirkwood Adams Community Center in Roanoke Rapids on Wednesday, November 15, 2017 between 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM. A total of 138 Professional and Family Caregivers attended the conference and 28 Exhibitors provided helpful resources and information for the caregivers.

Participants had the opportunity to experience the Virtual Dementia Tour - a simulation of what it is like to live with dementia.

Additionally, through the ECU School of Nursing Geriatric Workforce Team, they had the opportunity to get screened for: Fall Risk, Depression, Blood Pressure, Caregiver Strain and Cognitive Issues.

Discovering the Riches of Aging - a biblical perspective: This session provided information on God’s perspective of aging. It focused on self-worth, vitality and personal devotion. **Jim Edminson, NC Baptist Aging Ministries.**

Creative Connections Within Dementia - The focus of this session was to learn ways to identify ways of using the Senses to Find Quality of Life - this session provided useful techniques to connect and increase quality of life through using the various senses. **Melanie Bunn, MS, RN Dementia Training Specialist, Alzheimer’s NC**

The 5 Love Languages and the Alzheimer’s Journey - This presentation provided an exciting new concept that speaking the love language of an aging care recipient could be immensely beneficial to them and their care provider. **Rev. Martha McDowell, Pastor of Matton’s Grove Methodist Church and Richfield United Methodist Church in Stanly County, Former Regional Director, NC Baptist Aging Ministries.**

Candlelight Reflections Ceremony - This Ceremony is in honor of individuals affected by Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias as well as family caregivers.

Coping Strategies for Caregivers - This interactive presentation addressed ways to both identify our stressors and help find outlets for that stress. It was fun and informative. **Lisa Levine, Program Director, Alzheimer’s NC**
On February 8, 2018, Linda Barfield and other Area Agency on Aging (AAA) team members presented Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) Committee and Lead Agency training to representatives from all five counties in our region. The following topics were covered:

History & Purpose
Roles & Responsibilities
Advocacy
Alternate Funding Sources for Aging Network Providers
Priority of Services
Funding Plans, Allocations & Revisions

We value and appreciate all that our network does to serve disabled and older adults in our communities and we could not do the work we do without the dedication of those who attended the meeting. All the survey responses were positive, and overwhelmingly, participants responded that the training was helpful in their positions. Participants indicated that they can serve their communities better because they received the information provided.

The AAA extends thanks to all who participated! We look forward to continuing our positive and productive partnerships with the HCCBG Committees and Lead Agencies in our region.
OIC, Inc Armored Eagles Robotics Team

During this triumphant break into the robotics world, students from Edgecombe and Nash Counties had the opportunity to meet with other like-minded students from North Carolina. FIRST (For Inspiration & Recognition in Science & Technology) competitions simulate adult-like experiences in technological applications. This experience encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of working with others and respecting individuals and community.

Lorenzo Wilkins, Founder and CEO of Compass Youth Centers, introduced OIC to the FIRST Robotics Competition. FIRST convenes a national network of schools, organizations and industries to promote STEM programming to students of all ages and backgrounds.

When OIC, Turning Point Workforce Development, NC Works NextGen, and Compass Youth Center joined forces, little did they know that they would produce a Winning Team! Coupled with the Bridge Builder Foundation and young men from Manhood Monday Mentor Program accepted the challenge and the work began. Seven weeks later they had a working and functional Robot. The team named Armored Eagles Team 6215 was up and running. We assigned Dr. Daud Cole, a Scientist with our Organization, to take the lead and build the Team - and build he did. He brought on board Mr. Harold Lynch, an Electrical Engineer from Edgecombe Community College, and Mr. Chauncey Perry, Computer Science Engineer, from the Bridge Builder Foundation. Armored Eagles adventure and training took us to Durham, NC, where they joined forces with the Durham Academy of Math and Science robotics team 900 and a relationship was formed. The training and learning curve was steep for the Armored Eagles, as a first year team, but definitely not a bridge too far for the students. They were used to challenges, steep learning curves, difficult situations, and always having to perform under enormous stress. At the FIRST Competition, there were 32 other teams ready to compete in the FIRST Power Up Robotics Competition at the Gymnasium on East Carolina University’s Campus. This was a three day event with a full day and a half of Arcade Competition. The Armored Eagles watched the Winner’s Board as they moved up and down the rankings. At the end of the competition, they found themselves in the playoffs with a chance to move on, if selected, in an alliance with other teams. When selection was over they made the finals. When the final match was over the Armored Eagles and their Alliance were victorious (1st Place). The Team was geared up for the next competition in Forsyth County at the Winston-Salem Fair Grounds. The Armored Eagles won the Judges Award and qualified to compete in the State Championship which they also won. They had an outstanding season as a first year team and are looking forward to doing bigger and better.
Executive Director to Retire

Greg T. Godard, Executive Director of the Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments announced his retirement effective July 1, 2018, after 25 years of outstanding service to our local member governments and citizens in the region of Edgecombe, Halifax, Nash, Northampton and Wilson Counties. Godard said “God is calling me to do mission work. I have a heart and mind for working with youth”. Godard also stated he will be planning tee times rather than economic development projects and doing some fishing with his six beautiful grandchildren.

When Godard came on board, the Region L Council of Governments was simply providing state and federal-funded programs in workforce development and aging services and he knew planning and development services was a great need. In 1996 the five-county region was designated an Economic Development District (EDD) by the U.S. Department of Commerce. Since then, the regional council has received a multi-year planning and development grant that enabled the hiring of an economic development planner. As of 2017, the Planning and Development Services department has written and administered $26 million in grants for 25 projects. These funds leveraged another $996 million in private sector funds and helped create 8,258 jobs in the region.

In 1998 a small business revolving loan fund was created to serve entrepreneurial needs of the region. A total of 15 loans were made and 100 jobs created through the Small Business Resource Program. In 2007 a regional small business incubator was developed and 34 new business enterprises and 134 jobs were created.

Moving forward Godard may start a business with other retired directors to do professional facilitation, strategic planning and lobbying.

Williams Appointed to Governor Cooper’s Commission

Governor Cooper announced his appointments to the Governor’s Commission on Access to Sound, Basic Education last fall. The Commission, which Governor Cooper created through Executive Order 10, will focus on the critical importance of North Carolina meeting its duties under the state constitution as underscored by the landmark rulings in Leandro v. North Carolina and Hoke County Board of Education v. North Carolina.

“All North Carolina children have a constitutional right to a quality public education that prepares them for the jobs and opportunities of the future,” Governor Cooper said. “This commission of experts will help identify how to improve our state’s public schools so that all students in this state receive the education they need to thrive.”

The Commission includes experts from a wide range of fields that are relevant to education, student and school success. On November 15, 2017 Governor Cooper announced the appointments to serve on the Commission, which included our very own Turning Point Workforce Development Board Director, Michael Williams.

Michael Williams of Rocky Mount was appointed as the workforce board representative. Williams is the Executive Director for the Turning Point Workforce Development Board, which oversees the regional workforce development system serving Edgecombe, Halifax, Nash, Northampton, and Wilson Counties. A native of Halifax County, he has more than 25 years of experience in workforce and economic development.

CONGRATULATIONS!