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## ECC DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

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### REGIONAL UPDATES

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#### **ECC Staff will share a day of Christmas serving Seniors from the Trenton Senior Center at the Jones County Civic Center on Tuesday, Dec. 19!**

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**NC Housing Finance Agency** has proposed that a total of \$8.8 million will be made available for the 2024 Urgent Repair Program (URP24). Program funding enables recipient organizations to provide deferred, forgiven loans of up to \$12,000 for emergency home repairs and modifications to very low-income owner-occupied homes. Eligible households are those with 1+ fulltime household member with special needs (e.g., elderly, disabled, and/or Veteran fulltime household members or a 6-year-old child (or under 6) living in the home with lead hazards). Household incomes cannot exceed 50% of area median income.

Nonprofit organizations, local governments, and regional councils of government with the technical capacity to manage residential construction projects are eligible to apply. Eligible applicants must cover service areas with a population of 5,000 or greater. The maximum funding amount is \$264,000 for projects serving 2 or more counties in their entirety, and \$132,000 for projects serving 1 county. Potential applicants are encouraged to register for the URP23 Application Guideline Webinar, which will be offered on **Tues., Dec. 5, 2023 at 11:00 AM. Register for the URP24 Application Guideline Webinar by Dec. 4, 2023 3:00 PM** by clicking the following link, <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/7441734824878282843>.

Application forms and guidelines are available on this website <https://www.nchfa.com/home-ownership-partners/community-partners/community-programs/urgent-repair-program>. Under Urgent Repair Program, select 'Forms and Resources. **Completed applications must be received at the Agency by 5:00 PM, Dec. 20, 2023.** For more information, please call Mike Handley, 919-877-5627; Chuck Dopler, 919-981-



**New Historic Resilience Workshop** offered by UNC, School of Government, Downtown New Bern, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> 9:00-4:00 OR Online Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> 9:00-4:00; course fee - \$25.

The goal of the workshop is to seek and find common ground between historic preservation, hazard mitigation, private ownership, and public regulation, which generally represent worlds that are sometimes in conflict, despite common goals. Attendees will participate through structured discussions, case study problems, and open dialogue.

Targeted audience: Community Members and Property Owners; Historic Property Owners and Businesses; Preservation Advocates and Design Professionals; Preservation Planners, Historic Preservation Commissioners, Local Planning, and Preservation Officials; Preservation Nonprofits and Consultants; Historic Site Operators; and Architects, Engineers, and Other Designers; Elected Officials and Local Government Managers; Hazard Mitigation and Emergency Management Officials; Hazard Mitigation Planners, Floodplain Managers, and Land Use Planners; Religious, Higher Education, and Other Institutional Leaders; and Community Cultural Advocates. For more information and to register, visit: <https://www.sog.unc.edu/courses/historic-resilience-workshops>.

**Development Finance Toolbox** also offered by UNC, School of Government, Dec. 5-7, 10:00-2:30, Online, course fee - \$360.

Topics include: Federal tax credit financing; Public-private partnerships for redevelopment; Local government capital financing; Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and synthetic TIF; Business improvement districts; Attracting private investment to Main Street; Grant identification and management; and Fundamentals of developer real estate financing.

Targeted audience: Elected officials; City and county managers, assistant managers, clerks; and Community and economic development professionals (for the basics and understanding the options of development finance tools used by NC local governments). For more information and to register, visit: <https://www.sog.unc.edu/courses/development-finance-toolbox>.

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## UPDATES

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- ARP Office Hours:** The School of Government has released its dates for December:
- Friday, Dec. 8, 8:30-9:30 AM
  - Wednesday, Dec. 13, 12-1 PM
  - Wednesday, Dec. 20, 8:30-9:30 AM

### ZOOM LOG IN

Here is the new Zoom Log in for all Office Hour Sessions:

<https://zoom.us/j/95481909044?pwd=UIE2VHNhN2luSoJEYTJqETZTMFRWdz09>

Meeting ID: 954 8190 9044

Passcode: 779726

One tap mobile

+16469313860,,95481909044# US

+19292056099,,95481909044# US (New York)



**International Economic Development Council - Technical Assistance:** ECC is helping connect communities in our region with the **International Economic Development Council (IEDC)**, which can assist communities evaluate specific economic development / community development opportunities and provide recommendations at no cost to the community. Some current projects include:

- Helping a community evaluate options for the best use for a building acquired by the town;
- Assisting several communities with developing strategies for business promotion, or corridor beautification along a key corridor; and
- Assisting several communities with downtown redevelopment strategies.

Please contact Executive Director, David Bone, if you have questions or a potential project at [executivedirector@eccog.org](mailto:executivedirector@eccog.org).

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**Ethics Training for Elected Officials** – Wed., Feb. 21<sup>st</sup> from 6:00-9:00 PM. – ECC is once again partnering with Attorney, David Baxter of Sumrell Sugg, to provide the required ethics training for newly-elected and re-elected local government officials. NC General Statute 160A-87 allows qualified individuals to conduct the training. Each jurisdiction that participates should pass a resolution to certify that it deems Attorney Baxter to be qualified if it has not already done so (in previous years). The training and a light dinner will be held on Wed., Feb. 21<sup>st</sup> from 6:00-9:00 PM at the ECC Offices. To register for the event, visit <https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07ek33u7of5cof38f9&oseq=&c=&ch=>.

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**ECC Grant Writing Services** – ECC provides grant writing services to member communities. We are taking on grant writing projects on a case-by-case basis, depending on availability and other considerations. If you are interested in ECC helping your community with grant writing, please contact Planning Director, Larry Faison, ([planning@eccog.org](mailto:planning@eccog.org), (252) 638-3185).

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**NC Secretary of State – Your Business Starts Here!** NC Secretary of State, Elaine Marshall, stated, “For the past several years, our state has experienced record-breaking growth in the number of new businesses created. Whether you are a business owner or know someone who is, we hope you’ll share this information widely.” Visit [sosnc.gov/RISE](http://sosnc.gov/RISE). “Our entrepreneurial spirit is why North Carolina was named the top state for business. I hope you will help me reach out to both new and current business owners in your community so together, we can help them succeed. That experience is why I started Rural RISE NC – Resources for Innovators, Start-ups, and Entrepreneurs.”

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**ICMA - Civic Plus: White Paper**, "*Everyone Online: Paving the way with accessible municipal websites.*" More than 1 in 4 people in the US have some level of disability. To meet ADA requirements and to ensure key information is available online to all, municipalities must develop a website strategy. Automation, staffing restrictions, operational procedures and compliance levels should be considered.

Even simple website updates can result in missing links, data errors or poor readability, which are accessibility issues that can impact all visitors. Also consider features that are:

- Difficult for people who are sight impaired.
- Challenging for people who are hearing impaired.
- Requiring duplicate efforts.

At the very least, an accessibility solution should offer:

- Legal protection.
- Automated accessibility remediation.
- Accessibility certification.
- PDF accessibility.

Learn how to engage residents with municipal websites that are easy for everyone to use. *To request a pdf of this White Paper contact Larry Faison, ECC-Regional Planning Director, at [planning@eccog.org](mailto:planning@eccog.org)*

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**Cyber Attack Simulation Training (Free)** is being offered by the International City-County Management Association during the week of December 4 - 8, the registration link:

<https://iccma.informz.net/ICCMA/data/images/CyberattackSimulationSeries.jpeg?cb=603992>; Registration is free!

As we conclude National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, ICMA & The Professional Development Academy are excited to present a valuable opportunity for personnel involved or interested in cybersecurity measures, risk assessment, or data protection. Join ICMA for a week-long virtual Cyberattack Simulation, taking place from December 4th to December 8th. In light of the ever-evolving cyber threats, this simulation focuses on employee resilience and provides actionable insights into policies, procedures, and practices that can immediately elevate your organization's cyber risk readiness.

In this training, discover:

- ▶ **Simulation Format:** A tabletop exercise accessible virtually from anywhere, requiring only 45-60 minutes a day.
- ▶ **Focus Area:** Enhancing employee resilience and evaluating your organization's current state of readiness.
- ▶ **Benefits:** Develop and refine a playbook, identify gaps in preparedness, and fortify your defenses against potential cyberattacks.

**SPECIAL DISCOUNT ALERT!** Registering for this free Cyberattack Simulation entitles your organization to a special offer. Enroll in the ICMA Cybersecurity Leadership Academy for \$1,995, and a second person attends for FREE! Contact [moderator@pdaleadership.com](mailto:moderator@pdaleadership.com) for details and to reserve the Cybersecurity Leadership Academy BOGO for your team.

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**NCLM: 'End of Session Bulletin,'** has been published, the League has made it available by email and posted the bulletin on their Home Page: hyper link: [2023 EndofSessionBulletin \(nclm.org\)](https://www.nclm.org/2023-EndofSessionBulletin)

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**NCLM City Vision** April 23-25, Winston Salem. The League will convene on April 23-25 for CityVision 2024 in Winston-Salem at the Benton Convention Center. The League and the City of Winston-Salem are hard at work putting together a program full of engaging sessions and opportunities to connect with other municipal leaders and local government partners. Registration will open in early 2024. We can't wait to see you there! For updates and more information, visit the CityVision website.

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## AGING UPDATES

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**ECC's Area Agency on Aging calls for Volunteers to serve on the Community Advisory Committee (CAC):** The Ombudsman Program continues to seek volunteers for their CACs who will ensure quality care is given to those in long-term care facilities. To learn more about becoming a CAC volunteer, please visit our website at <https://eccog.org/human-services-area-agency-on-aging/programs-and-services/long-term-care/community-advisory-committees/>.

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**AAA -Medicare Part D Enrollment Assistance:** Last month during its annual open enrollment period, (which began on Oct. 15<sup>th</sup> and runs until Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>), AAA staff assisted Jones County and Craven County providers by assisting community members by reviewing and updating their Medicare health and drug plans for 2024. AAA staff worked with NC Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) counselors to assist older adults to review their current costs and coverage, and determined if their current plans met their needs. For further information or to set up an appointment, contact your local Senior Center.

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**ECC-AAA Monitoring Program:** AAA staff monitors provider programs in the 9-county region to ensure appropriate funding utilization and program standards are being followed for the 'FY 2023 "Older American Act." After the providers who are due for monitoring have been identified, supervision takes place – to ensure program standards are maintained, funding utilization is appropriate for programs being serviced, and clients are eligible for programs.

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## NEXT SCHEDULED MEETINGS/EVENTS

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**ECC City-County Managers & Mayors Meeting**, Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> – 10:30 AM, ECC Offices.

**ECC Offices closed for the holidays** – Dec. 25-28.



***Happy New Year!***

**ECC Offices closed for New Year's Day**, Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>.

**ECC Budget and Audit Committee Meeting** - prior to the General Membership Meeting, Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>, ECC Offices.

**ECC General Membership Meeting**, ECC Offices, Jan. 11, Dinner – 6:00 PM, Meeting – 6:30 PM.

**ECRPO Technical Coordinating Committee and Technical Advisory Committee Meetings**, La Grange Community Center, Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 AM.

**DERPO Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) Meeting**, ECC Conference Room/ Virtual, Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 10:00 AM.

**DERPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting**, Jan. 30<sup>th</sup>, ECC Conference Room/ Virtual, 10:00 AM.



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**Eastern Carolina Council | PO Box 1717, New Bern, NC 28560**

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