



## ECC'S MARCH 2025 NEWSLETTER



## NEWS AND EVENTS



**By March 8th, apply to host a Lead for NC (LFNC) Fellow through UNC-SOG!** Hosts of LFNC Fellows receive recent college graduates for 1 year to augment the State's local governments who will focus on enhancing vital community projects. LFNC Fellows receive prior training and on-going support from the UNC-SOG. To apply, visit <https://lfnc.sog.unc.edu/apply/>.

**ECC Hosts State Mandatory Ethics Education.** The State Government Ethics Act requires that public servants, legislators, legislative employees and ethics liaisons attend an ethics and lobbying education presentation within six months of assuming their positions and every two years thereafter. ECC's partner, Attorney David Baxter of Sumrell Sugg, and Trey Ferguson presented the Ethics Training for our Member jurisdictions. Thirty-nine newly elected and re-elected Elected Officials attended the training at ECC's offices on Feb. 5th.



We remain grateful to Sumrell Sugg for continuing to offer this required, regional training for ECC's local government officials.

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**ECC hosted Day 1 of its Grant Writing Workshop held on Feb. 18th.** Many initial grant proposals were prepared by 18 enthusiastic participants representing 5 towns, 4 cities, and 5 Eastern Carolina Counties. The second day of the Workshop, scheduled for Feb. 19th was cancelled due to the forecasted ice storm; it was rescheduled for Thurs., Feb. 27th. Participants continued developing and presenting grant proposals that will enrich their communities.

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**ECC hosted its Regional Legislative Breakfast on February 24th at the La Grange Community Center in La Grange.** Approximately 115 attended the Breakfast to hear from representatives of their Local Legislative Delegations, which included Sen. Michael Lazzara, Sen. Bob Brinson, Rep. Jimmy Dixon, and Rep. Chris Humphrey.



Senator Michael Lazzara,  
Randy Mitchell, and David Bone



Sen. Bob Brinson



Rep. Chris Humphrey



Rep. Jimmy Dixon



Invocation by La Grange  
Mayor, Bobby Wooten



View of Legislative Breakfast Attendees



La Grange - Thank you!



ECC Staff

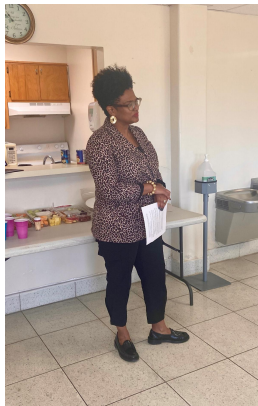
Legislators provided information concerning current issues that will be discussed during the 2025-2026 Legislative Session. ECC is grateful to the entire Legislative Delegation for their support of our region and to its 9 County Members of whom ECC promotes! The special event was sponsored by Duke Energy, Mark III, Jones-Onslow EMC, WithersRavenel, and the Town of La Grange.



The **Resilient Communities Planning Guide** is now available **online!** The guide, comprised of 2 volumes, the *Playbook* and *Idea Book*, may be used in unison, or separately. It was developed by the NC Office of Resiliency and Recovery (NCORR) to assist local governments in developing a plan with process steps or to be integrated into an existing resiliency/recovery plan. To download the Resilient Communities Planning Guide, visit <https://www.rebuild.nc.gov/nc-resilient-planning-guide>.

**Craven County Digital Inclusion Listening Session held at New Bern Towers.**

In partnership with the New Bern Housing Authority, ECC's 5th Digital Inclusion Listening Session was held on Feb. 26th in Craven County, having 18 participants contribute to this effort to develop a Digital Inclusion Plan for the region. A digital inclusion plan is a tool and resource for a community to assess who has the access and resources to utilize, broadband, the internet, computers, and all the resources that come along with that.



Adama Washington, from NCSU



Sympathy Huggins & Latasha Simmons, of the NBHA

Thank you to our partners from NCSU for facilitating the conversation and for the New Bern Housing Authority for being gracious hosts!

Our Digital Inclusion Plan Listening Session for Wayne County will be held on March 10, 6:00 p.m. at the Wayne County Public Library (1001 E. Ash St.).

**FREE FEMA Disaster Recovery Public Assistance Financial Administration Training - April 10 - Pembroke, NC.** The North Carolina Association of Regional Councils of Governments (NCARCOG) is made up of the Eastern Carolina Council and the other 15 councils of government (COGS) in NC. NCARCOG is continuing its commitment to support local governments by providing an updated version of FEMA Disaster Recovery Public Assistance Financial Administration Training in a one-day format based on changes in FEMA's Public Assistance Grant Program requirements. In eastern NC, this training will take place on Thursday, April 10, 2025 from 9:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. at the Lumber River Council of Governments in Pembroke, NC.

**To register, send an email to [NCARCOGtraining@hscllc.net](mailto:NCARCOGtraining@hscllc.net) by Friday, April 4, 2025.**



## DISASTER RECOVERY PUBLIC ASSISTANCE FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION TRAINING

### BACKGROUND

The North Carolina Association of Regional Councils of Governments (NCARCOG) supports local governments in effectively managing and building capacity for local and regional disaster recovery, mitigation, and resilience efforts.

In 2023, NCARCOG partnered with High Street Consulting, LLC (HSC) to develop **Disaster Recovery Public Assistance Financial Administration Training to address gaps in the financial administration of disaster recovery efforts.** The curriculum was developed with input from an NCARCOG Subject Matter Expert (SME) Committee and from Public Assistance grant experts.

### IN-PERSON TRAINING

NCARCOG is continuing its commitment to support local governments by providing an updated version of the training in a one-day format based on changes in FEMA's Public Assistance Grant Program requirements.

**Who should attend?** This training is designed to help local communities prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters. It is intended for **local financial administrators, first responders, town administrators and support staff, and elected officials.**

Date and Time	Location
Thursday, April 10, 2025 9:00 am - 4:30 pm	Lumber River Council of Governments 30 CJ Walker Road Pembroke, NC 28372
Check-in and refreshments begin at 8:30 am Lunch and snack breaks will be provided	Free onsite parking is available <a href="#">Google Maps</a>

**Is there a cost?** This training is offered **free of charge** to local NC communities.

**What are the hotel accommodations for attendees?** Lodging is not included with the training. There are a number of hotels available in Lumberton, between 8-10 miles from the COG (15-20-minute drive). [Nearby hotels](#)

**How can I register?** Send an email to [NCARCOGtraining@hscllc.net](mailto:NCARCOGtraining@hscllc.net) with the name of the individual attending the course, any dietary requirements, and any accommodation needs.

**When should I register?** Registrations must be received by **Friday, April 4, 2025.**

**For more information, please email [NCARCOGtraining@hscllc.net](mailto:NCARCOGtraining@hscllc.net)**



**Public input sought for the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) by April 4th.** NCDOT is soliciting public input on the draft STIP for years 2026-2035. A public comment period is now open and runs through April 4th. People can review the document and submit feedback online, additionally local NCDOT offices across the state will hold weeklong drop-in periods in the coming months for the public to ask questions and submit comments in person. More information on the times and locations of those meetings will be posted at [www.ncdot.gov](http://www.ncdot.gov) once schedules are finalized.

The Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) law established the Strategic Mobility Formula, which allocates available revenues based on data-driven scoring and local input. It is used to develop the STIP, which identifies the projects that will receive funding during a 10-year period. The process encourages thinking from a statewide and regional perspective while also providing flexibility to address local needs. The final STIP for 2026-2035 is anticipated to be approved by NCDOT Board of Transportation during the summer of 2025. An informational video is available as a brief overview of the public input purpose, visit <https://shorturl.at/vsGcN> and to provide public comment, visit <https://shorturl.at/xwoRq>.

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## ECC AREA ON AGING (AAA) NEWS

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### Training

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**On Jan. 29th, ECCAAA Staff provided a day-long Dementia Live Simulation and training for 42 Pine Knoll Shores Aquarium's staff members.** ECCAAA staff engaged participants in meeting the needs of older adults, caregivers, and individuals with Dementia who participate at their location. Staff received customer services training and an in-depth understanding of what people with Dementia may go through daily by their participation in the Dementia Live Simulation. Participants also learned how to support caregivers and older adults advocated for in the community.

**ECC delivers Crisis Intervention Training Dementia Live Simulation and Dementia on Feb. 4th.** January Brown facilitated and delivered content to 14 Duplin County Law Enforcement Officers. Participants engaged in the Dementia Live large group simulation to learn empathy of those diagnosed with Dementia. Participants also received training on caregiver crisis interventions, older adult crisis interventions, behaviors, normal aging vs. not normal aging, elder abuse, and the Long-term Care Ombudsman Program.

**The AAA quarterly, regional, service provider meeting was held on Feb. 10th.** ECCAAA staff shared

program updates, information about upcoming events, grants, and best practices for compliance monitoring. Service providers and staff also held conversations on funding allocations and ARPA grants.

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## Events

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**ECCAAA facilitated a Zoom-based Ombudsman Association Meeting shared by the Division of Aging.** It included topics such as Community Advisory Committee (CAC) volunteers, Ombudsman roles, and an upcoming survey regarding the Ombudsman program. Friends of Residents gave a presentation on their advocacy efforts and their 2025 Legislative Priorities.

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North Carolina  
Senior Games

**The 2025 NC Senior Games have begun – register now.** Each spring participants (aged 50 and older) compete in sports and arts categories in 54 Local Games. For information regarding your local Senior Games, registration, events, and volunteering, visit: <https://www.ncseniorgames.org/> or contact your local Senior Center.

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**March 2025 is National Senior Nutrition Month.** National Senior Nutrition Programs have supported nutrition services for older adults across the country, which have been funded by the Older Americans Act. Local

programs serve as hubs where people 60+ find healthy meals and vital services that strengthen social connections and promote well-being. Every March, we celebrate our program's anniversary and its many accomplishments at the national and local levels. We promote how nutrition services help people stay independent as they age and highlight critical Senior nutrition issues. The 2025 theme, ***A Place at the Table***, recognizes the importance of local nutrition programs and the meals being served in communities across the country. Regional Senior Centers will be hosting several events, presentations, and providing information about Senior nutrition throughout the month. For further information, contact your local Senior Center.

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**ECCAAA staff visited the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly(PACE) Center's facilities located in New Bern.** The PACE program, which provides comprehensive medical and social services to their clients, is expected to open later this summer to serve at least 80 people. The New Bern facility will have a coverage area, including all of Craven, Jones, and Pamlico Counties, and portions of Beaufort, Carteret, Lenoir, and Onslow Counties.

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## UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

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Wayne County Digital Inclusion Plan Listening Session, March 10, 6:00 PM, Wayne County Public Library (1001 E. Ash St.).

Eastern NC (includes 4 COG regions) Regional Managers Meeting (Focus on budgeting; registration required), March 13, 10:00-2:00, ECU's Main Campus Student Center (501 E 10th St., Greenville).

NC Main Street Conference, March 11-13, Mooresville.

Recovery Alliance Initiative, "Healthy Recovery Communities" Symposium, March 13-14, Riverfront

Convention Center.

ECC General Membership Board Meeting, March 13, 6:00 PM Dinner, 6:30 Meeting, ECC Offices.

Legislative Day, April 2 – NC Association of Regional Councils of Government (NCARCOG), Raleigh.

DERPO TCC Meeting, March 18, 10:00-11:30 AM, ECC Board Room.

ECRPO TCC and TAC Meetings, March 20, 9:30-10:30 AM, La Grange Community Center.

DERPO TAC Meeting, March 25, 10:00-11:30 AM, ECC BOARD Room.

NC Rural Center's Rural Summit, March 25-26, Raleigh.

NCARCOG FEMA Disaster Recovery Public Assistance Financial Administration Training - April 10 -  
Pembroke, NC.

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## CONNECT WITH US!



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*Eastern Carolina Council Mission - to improve the region's quality of life by providing human, planning, and economic development services to local governments and area residents by leveraging resources and collaborating regionally.*

Eastern Carolina Council | PO Box 1717 | New bern, NC 28560 US

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