



IN THE PARK

Sponsorship Proposal



About Gig in the Park

Gig in the Park is one of Wilson's most anticipated annual events — a free concert series that draws thousands of residents and visitors to Downtown Wilson for regional live music, food trucks, frosty beverages, and community fun. Presented through a partnership between the Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park & Museum (VSWPM) and the Wilson Downtown Development Corporation (WDDC), the series reflects a shared commitment to arts, culture, and community-driven programming.

The Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park & Museum is a nonprofit organization and a catalyst for economic development, a year-round tourist destination, and a vibrant community gathering place. Home to Vollis Simpson's iconic whirligigs — the official folk art of the State of North Carolina — the park preserves and shares Vollis' story while providing free, accessible programming for Wilson County and beyond. Proceeds support the conservation and maintenance of the whirligigs and the continuation of meaningful community experiences.

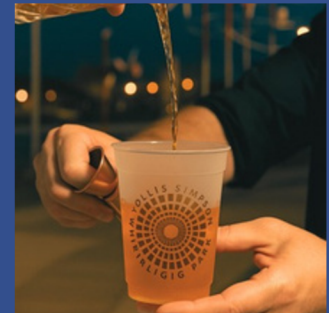
Together, VSWPM and WDDC work to activate Downtown Wilson, strengthen local businesses, enhance tourism, and elevate quality of life through signature events like Gig in the Park — creating spaces where art, music, and community connect.



Local Bands



Food Trucks



Social District Beverages



Community Living Room



Folk Art Culture



Economic Multiplier

Whirligig Conservation


A Note From The Director Of Development

Part of what makes the Whirligigs so enchanting is their one-of-a-kind engineering. Vollis Simpson built them using parts from scrap yards and forgotten machinery, turning the discarded into the extraordinary. To honor the integrity of his genius, we often find ourselves sourcing rare, decades-old parts. Just this spring, the Barbecue Whirligig needed a replacement piece originally pulled from a 1970s Corvette. We tracked it down - and now Barbecue spins freely once again. When such parts can't be found, they must be custom-machined, which can be costly but necessary to preserve Vollis's vision.

The Whirligigs are more than whimsical art — they're intricate machines weathering North Carolina's harshest elements. Blazing summers, freezing winters, and humid storms take their toll, making regular maintenance essential. Each repair often requires a crane rental (\$5,000+), and annual upkeep can exceed \$100,000.

Our nonprofit owns and cares for these iconic sculptures, we handle every bolt, brushstroke, and blade. Your sponsorship directly sustains this effort, preserving Vollis Simpson's genius and the heartbeat of downtown Wilson. As downtown Wilson continues to grow and evolve, your support helps ensure the Whirligigs remain not just a cultural landmark, but a living tribute to innovation, resilience, and imagination.

Together, we're not just preserving sculptures - we're carrying forward the spirit that brought this community back to life. Your support keeps them spinning.



Anne Sauerborn, Director of Development



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www.WilsonWhirligigPark.org



ECONOMIC IMPACT SNAPSHOT

BASED ON THE 2024 ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT BY ECONOMIC LEADERSHIP, LLC

194,310

TOTAL VISITORS IN 2024. NEARLY 48% FROM OUTSIDE THE COUNTY

42

FULL-TIME COMMUNITY JOBS GENERATED BY THE PARK

\$5,300,000

TOTAL SALES IMPACT GENERATED FOR WILSON COUNTY BUSINESSES

\$53,300,000

INCREASE IN REAL ESTATE VALUES SINCE PARK'S CREATION

\$874,000

ANNUAL LOCAL PROPERTY TAX REVENUE FROM THE PARK AREA

\$2,100,000

ANNUAL COMMUNITY BENEFIT FROM FREE EVENTS & PROGRAMS

\$506,000

VOLUNTEER HOURS VALUE & DONOR COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS

#2

VOTED BEST SCULPTURE PARK IN THE U.S. BY USA TODAY

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA TO SEE OUR IMPACT!



HISTORIC DOWNTOWN WILSON ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

462

Downtown
Residential Units

809

Current Downtown
Residents

\$19.9M

Annual Economic
Impact of Downtown
Residents on
Local Economy

552

Cities/Towns
in North
Carolina

72

Designated NC
Main Street
Communities

51

Nationally Accredited
Main Street
Communities in NC

\$41,973,490

Total Public Investment

\$47,434,850

Total Private Investment

\$89,408,341

Total Investment
in Downtown

13

Net New
Businesses
Opened

5

Net New
Construction
Project
Completed

40

Downtown
Events

15,121

Volunteer
Hours

\$33.01

Average Value of
One Hour of Labor

\$499,128

Volunteer
Hours

10

Building Façade
Projects
Completed

7

Building Rehab
Projects
Completed

37

Public
Improvement
Projects Completed

2,578,727

Square Feet
Property
in Downtown

77

Net Full Time
Jobs Gained

49

Net Part Time
Jobs Gained

101

Net Full Time
Equivalent Jobs





WHY CHOOSE SPONSORSHIP?

Gig in the Park exists because of community support. As nonprofit organizations, the Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park & Museum and the Wilson Downtown Development Corporation rely on the generosity of sponsors and donors to bring free, high-quality programming like this concert series to Wilson.

At the Whirligig Park, sponsorship support helps conserve and maintain Vollis Simpson's iconic whirligigs — towering works of art that require specialized care and protective infrastructure to withstand the elements. At the same time, the Wilson Downtown Development Corporation works to activate Downtown Wilson through economic development, placemaking, and community-focused programming that supports local businesses and strengthens the city's core.

Together, this partnership ensures the Whirligig Park remains not only a nationally recognized cultural landmark, but also the anchor of a vibrant, revitalized downtown. Gig in the Park brings that mission to life — drawing thousands of residents and visitors, driving tourism, supporting local businesses, fostering cultural pride, and providing a free, welcoming gathering space for families, artists, students, and visitors from across the region.

By choosing to sponsor Gig in the Park, you're not just supporting a concert series — you're helping bring this event to Wilson while investing in downtown vitality, community connection, and the creative identity of Eastern North Carolina.

**Proceeds of this event also
allow us to continue...**

**SUPPORTING LOCAL
PARTNERSHIPS**



**WILSON FARMERS &
ARTISAN MARKET**



**ART & SCIENCE
EDUCATION**



*"The Whirligig Park is the heartbeat of Wilson. Supporting this place means investing in community, creativity, and culture."
- Local Business Owner, Past Sponsor*

Sponsorship Levels

Presenting Sponsor - \$12,000

- Tier 1 logo placement on digital ads and marketing materials
- On-stage recognition and promotion during each concert
- Premium tent space for your organization to distribute promotional items at all concerts
- Web link and Tier 1 logo placement featured on Downtown Wilson (DW) and Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park & Museum (VSWPM) event pages
- 50 beverage tickets

Series Experience Sponsor - \$6,000

- Tier 2 logo placement on digital ads and marketing materials
- On-stage recognition and promotion during each concert
- Individual tent space for your organization to distribute promotional items at all concerts
- Web link and Tier 2 logo placement featured on DW/VSWPM event pages
- 30 beverage tickets

Concert Sponsor - \$3,500

- Choose 1 of 5 concerts to be “yours” (first come, first served)
- Tier 3 logo placement on all digital ads and marketing materials with available space for logos
- On-stage recognition during your selected concert
- Individual tent space for your organization to distribute promotional items at all concerts
- Web link with Tier 3 logo placement on DW/VSWPM event pages
- 20 beverage tickets

Community Sponsor - \$1,500

- Tier 4 logo placement on all digital ads and marketing materials with available space
- Individual tent space to promote your business during all concerts
- Web link in Tier 4 featured on DW/VSWPM event pages
- 10 beverage tickets

Friend of Downtown Sponsor - \$500 (MSD Business Owners - \$250)

- Tier 5 company organization name listed on digital and print advertising
- Company name on marketing materials with available space
- Table space in ticket tent for promotional items
- Web link in Tier 5 featured on DW/VSWPM event pages
- 5 beverage tickets



2026 CONCERT DATES + BANDS

~~April 23 | The Embers ft. Craig Woolard~~
(taken by Greenlight Community Broadband)

May 7 | ACE Party Band

~~May 28 | Los Acoustic Guys~~
(taken by Casa de Azul)

June 11 | Caroline Keller Band

June 25 | Band of Oz

HOW TO SPONSOR

To become a Sponsor, please reach out to our Sponsor Lead, **Brie Anderson** at [**banderson@wilsonnc.org**](mailto:banderson@wilsonnc.org) - for questions, please contact by phone (252) 299-4776

Checks can be made by mailing check to:

VSWPM, P.O. Box 6161, Wilson, NC, 27894

Thank You!

"Gig in the Park is more than just a concert series — it's where our community comes alive. By sponsoring this season, you are doing more than supporting a stage; you are preserving the Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park and fueling the continued growth of Downtown Wilson.

Your partnership creates a space where neighbors become friends, all surrounded by the whimsical energy of North Carolina's most iconic folk art. Whether you are a new partner or a long-time sponsor, your investment ensures that thousands of people can continue to find joy, rhythm, and connection here.

We look forward to seeing you in the crowd, enjoying the music, and celebrating with the community we all call home."

— *The Whirligig Park & Wilson
Downtown Development Team*



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