



**CENTRALINA**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL

*Fiscal Year 2020*  
**ANNUAL  
REPORT**



Since 1968, Centralina has been dedicated to serving the needs of our nine-county region. We address area-wide issues and opportunities by offering planning, coordination, advocacy and technical assistance services. Our neutral platform and regional framework allow local leaders to work together to create holistic solutions that will advance our region.

### OUR MISSION

Centralina Regional Council leads regional collaboration and sparks local action to expand opportunity and improve quality of life. We do this through creative problem solving, innovative service delivery and support to our local governments.

### OUR TEAM

For over half a century, our unique structure has allowed our departments to focus on specific services while also cross-collaborating on larger initiatives.



**Centralina Regional Planning** looks strategically at our region's interconnected systems of land use, transportation and economy and helps local governments create places of lasting value.



**Centralina Area Agency on Aging** identifies needs and delivers critical programs and services to support older and disabled adults.

**Centralina Government Affairs and Member Engagement** delivers value to member governments and regional stakeholders through relationship building, advocacy and strategic support.



**Centralina Community Economic Development** offers technical assistance and expertise to improve housing, public infrastructure and downtown revitalization. The affiliated **Centralina Economic Development District** addresses regional economic opportunities and challenges.



**Centralina Workforce Development Board** solves the needs of employers and career seekers across our region to create a thriving workforce and ensure we remain globally competitive.

**Centralina Administration and Finance** oversees the coordination, implementation and monitoring of administrative and financial activities within Centralina.

### RECOGNITION

We are a team of nationally recognized thought leaders with 45 subject experts that average a decade or more of service to the region. This past year, 10 of our team members received local, state and national recognition for their outstanding contributions and our departments were recognized for the following:

#### National Association of Area Agencies on Aging National Spotlight:

Centralina Area Agency on Aging (AAA) was recognized for quickly shifting its Chronic Disease Self-Management Living Healthy Program to a virtual platform during COVID-19. They were the first AAA in the state to conduct the program virtually.

#### National Association of Development Organizations Research Foundation (NADO RF) National Best Practice:

Centralina's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy website and interactive data portal ([www.centralinaedd.org](http://www.centralinaedd.org)) - managed by the Centralina Economic Development District - was recognized as a trend-setting innovation in strategic economic services at the NADO RF workshop, part of its annual training conference.

#### BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina Foundation Selection:

Due to our recognized track record in transportation and health policy, Centralina Regional Planning was chosen to assist the foundation in developing their transformational health policy through 2040.

#### 2019 Governor's NCWorks Awards of Distinction Innovative Partnership Award:

Awarded to Centralina Workforce Development Board for partnering with Kannapolis City Schools to motivate and elevate overlooked students, as well as partnering with Wayne Brothers, Inc. to develop a skilled talent pipeline for the local employer.



# WEAVING THE REGION TOGETHER

Our region is stronger when we work together, especially during times of change and growth. That's why we champion collaboration across the three levels that make up our region. By weaving together a diversity of voices, we can create opportunities that benefit everyone.



## REGIONAL

We identify regional opportunities, facilitate area-wide planning and lead collaborative problem solving with regional, state and federal partners.



## COMMUNITY

We support elected officials and local governments by providing essential technical support, training and networking to help them best serve their communities.

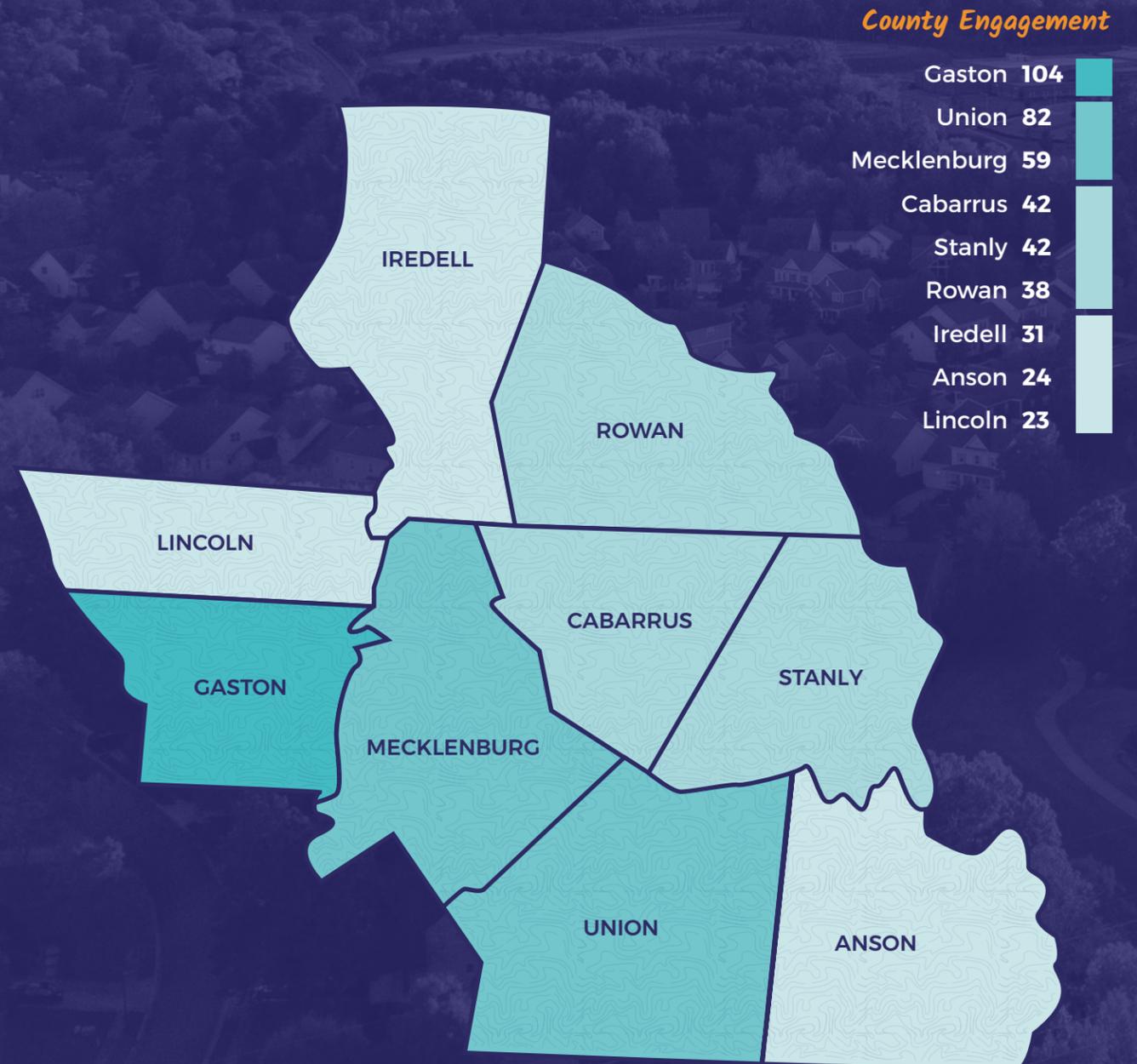


## INDIVIDUAL

We deliver direct health, aging and workforce services to individuals to create new opportunities and improve outcomes for people.

## REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT INTENSITY (2020 FISCAL YEAR)

Over the fiscal year, we successfully provided services and engaged stakeholders at the regional, community and individual levels, including presenting at over 300 events and meetings. The map below shows the high levels of engagement in Centralina activities by our network of local government stakeholders and partners. Activities include participation in Centralina Board of Delegates meetings, project engagement, committees, professional development and training events.



# LEADING THE REGION

Amidst the rapid change happening throughout our nine counties, regional planning and collaboration are essential if we want our region to grow and thrive. When our region works together and leverages combined resources, we create better outcomes for individuals and our communities, inevitably attracting top talent and investment opportunities to our region.

## REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Centralina manages over 25 boards, advisory committees and working groups – eight of which were established in the past fiscal year – that convene stakeholders to think and act regionally. As a leader in cross-jurisdictional collaboration, we excel at bringing people together to collaborate on a range of issues.

## Spotlight: CENTRALINA COUNTS!

In preparation for Census 2020, Centralina regularly convened Complete Count Committee members throughout the nine counties to discuss best practices in community outreach and engagement to ensure a complete count. As a result, several counties were able to create or enhance their stakeholder engagement plans.



## PLANNING FOR A STRONGER REGION

This year, Centralina continued to advance holistic regional plans and provide a framework for policy and planning in line with regional goals. A hallmark of our approach is robust stakeholder engagement, which is exemplified by these department project achievements:

- Completed the 2020-24 Centralina Area Plan on Aging, a blueprint for how Centralina Area Agency on Aging will respond to five statewide goals with programming and services specific to our region's needs.
- Launched CONNECT Beyond, a 12-county, bi-state mobility initiative led by Centralina Regional Planning to create a regional transit vision that will improve and inform mobility projects and priorities for decades to come ([www.CONNECT-Beyond.com](http://www.CONNECT-Beyond.com)).



## SUPPORTING REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Centralina Workforce Development Board and the Centralina Economic Development District play a leading role in providing support, securing resources and attracting talent for major economic development projects in the region. Successes from the past year include:

**307** People Hired  
in Concord

Supported the hiring of 307 individuals at the Carvana Inspection Center in Concord, North Carolina.

**\$2M** Public Works  
Grant

Administered an EDA public works grant for the \$2 million construction of the Advanced Technology Center at Rowan Cabarrus Community College.

**3K** New Data Portal  
Users in first year

Launched an online data portal with accessible regional and county information that had over 3,000 new users in the first year.

# CHAMPIONING OUR COMMUNITIES

This past year, Centralina expanded our engagement, professional development training and technical services. Our technical services enable communities to receive expert support for reduced fees compared to private sector companies. Our professional development offerings provide high-quality, locally available training that connects local government staff with emerging public policy topics and best practices.



Dots Represent Technical Assistance Contracts

## PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 **Anson County:** Collaborated with stakeholders to update the county-wide land use plan.
- 2 **Albemarle:** Led council retreats and strategic planning sessions to guide city priority setting and budget development.
- 3 **Union County:** Administered over \$800,000 in federal community development block grant funds that supported six water, sewer and sidewalk projects across the county.
- 4 **Marvin:** Provided planning board training, village council retreat facilitation and human resources consulting services.
- 5 **Mecklenburg County:** Led the public planning process to update the County's Five-Year Consolidated Plan and Year 1 Action Plan to guide how federal community development block grant funding is spent to advance specific goals.
- 6 **Cabarrus County:** The NCWorks Career Center and County Human Services Department partnered on the Cabarrus County H.U.B.B. initiative, a new approach to transitioning families from poverty to prosperity.
- 7 **Salisbury:** Led training and marketing efforts for the North Carolina Department of Transportation related to increasing access to the North Carolina passenger rail.
- 8 **Lincolnton:** Provided commercial and residential code enforcement services.
- 9 **Troutman:** Provided planning services and assisted the town with hiring its new manager.
- 10 **Gaston County:** Awarded a Centralina Love Where You Live Placemaking Grant to enhance streetscapes with public art.
- 11 **Dallas:** Led public engagement activities to support the town's long-term planning goals and priority growth area mapping.
- 12 **Kannapolis:** Conducted bike and walkability audits as part of the North Carolina passenger rail project.

## Spotlight:

**2%** increase in technical assistance contracts throughout our region

Managed 53 local government service and technical assistance contracts in planning, public administration and community economic development.

**12** professional development training sessions completed

Led 12 professional development training sessions for 325 local government staff.

# CARING FOR OUR CONSTITUENTS

In addition to leading area-wide planning and collaboration, Centralina provides ongoing workforce and aging services to individuals and businesses. These efforts are led by Centralina Area Agency on Aging and Centralina Workforce Development Board. Here are a few examples of our impact from the last year:

## AGING SERVICES

### Spotlight:

Centralina Area Agency on Aging launched Pride in Care NC, a three-year initiative to develop and implement a LGBT sensitivity and awareness training curriculum for frontline workers in nursing facilities.



**65** PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS SERVED

Served 20% more participants in the Senior Community Services Employment Program. The program offers older adults income and professional training to prepare them for unsubsidized employment.

**47%** MORE SUPPORT FOR LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES

Supported long-term care facilities by offering 35% more technical assistance and 12% more staff training opportunities through the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program, which promotes and protects the rights of 16,500 residents in facilities across the region.

**140** VOLUNTEERS

Increased the number of fall prevention workshop volunteer leaders and coaches by 40%. Workshop participants experienced increased activity levels and decreased emergency room visits and hospital stays, leading to a savings of over \$900 in unplanned medical costs per Medicare beneficiary or \$2.5 million region-wide.

## WORKFORCE SERVICES

**10,795**

### NCWORKS REGISTRANTS

Registered 91% more job seekers in NCWorks, increasing the number of available potential employees that local employers can access for job opportunities.

**31,216**

### TOTAL JOB SEEKERS SERVED

Offered 31% more job seekers workforce services, including virtual workshops, remote career coaching and Centralina Virtual Career Marketplace, an online career fair.

**46,098**

### TOTAL JOB REFERRALS IN THE REGION WE SERVE

Completed 46,098 job referrals that matched job seekers with employer needs, increasing the number of hired NCWorks referrals. Each customer received personalized assistance with Center staff to ensure they met the skill requirements, which increased their chances of getting hired.

Engaged 18% more employers through NCWorks and provided employers with 31,513 distinct services including talent recruitment and screening, employee upskilling, labor market and wage information, talent pipeline development and on-site outplacement services for companies impacted by downsizing.

**615** EMPLOYERS



### Spotlight:

Centralina Workforce Development Board was awarded 97 Finish Line Grants that provide one-time financial assistance to help community college students complete their training when facing unforeseen challenges.

# CARING AND RESPONDING DURING COVID-19

The global COVID-19 pandemic triggered significant health and economic repercussions across our region, leaving no aspect of society untouched. Like local governments and businesses across the region, Centralina confronted the stay-at-home order and the evolving “new normal” that followed. In March, Centralina shifted quickly to maintain continuity of service, transitioning to virtual networking, advocacy and information exchange across our departments, boards and committees. Here are few ways that we adapted and expanded our services to individuals during the pandemic:

**90** ROBO PETS GIVEN TO SENIORS

Launched a program that provided 90 socially isolated older adults with robotic pets for companionship and comfort during the pandemic.

**128** GALLONS OF SANITIZER DELIVERED

Purchased and delivered 50 gallons and 2,500 individual bottles of hand sanitizer to help nutrition programs and senior centers provide safe and sanitized meal delivery and pick-up.

**\$4.6M** FEDERAL COVID-19 FUNDING MANAGED FOR OLDER AND DISABLED ADULT PROGRAMS AND SUPPLIES

Received \$4.6 million in federal COVID-19 funding for older and disabled adults, a 45% increase in passthrough funds from the previous year. Funding provided older and disabled adults with food, transportation and personal care and helped aging providers cover expenses during the pandemic.

Transitioned all evidence-based health and wellness programs to a virtual platform to continue teaching individuals coping skills, healthy habits and how to manage long-term chronic conditions, resulting in reduced hospitalizations and increased compliance.

**06** VIRTUAL EVENTS

Held six Centralina Virtual Career Marketplace events that were attended by 466 career seekers and 127 employers with 401 open positions.



COVID-19 also required Centralina to pivot our approach to supporting local governments and supporting the region in relief and recovery efforts. Here are a few examples of how we responded to meet our area’s rapidly shifting needs:

**200+** COVID-19 RESOURCES

Developed a COVID-19 resource library for regional managers and administrators to house important documents, templates and guides produced by Centralina and other key sources. The site was visited over 2,000 times during the fiscal year.

Created a virtual meeting guide for planning boards and boards of adjustment and presented it to a statewide audience during the UNC School of Government webinar series entitled Planning in a Pandemic.

**26** MICRO BUSINESS LOANS WERE APPROVED

Assisted Mecklenburg County in the creation and administration of a \$1 million micro business stabilization loan fund to support low and moderate-income businesses. Centralina Community Economic Development reviewed 161 loan applications and approved 26 loans by the close of the fiscal year.

**\$8M** UNION COUNTY RELIEF FUNDS ADMINISTERED

Designed Union County’s COVID-19 relief fund compliance management system and assisted the county in administering the program.



## Spotlight:

Implemented a small-town purchase program to acquire no-cost personal protective equipment and sanitization supplies for nine of the region’s smaller towns, saving those communities over \$3,000.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

Centralina's revenue is composed of several complimentary funding streams. The largest share comes from the federal government in the form of funding that passes through to local providers and entities for specific services. Grants and competitively awarded contracts are another source, in addition to technical assistance projects and membership dues. Centralina actively seeks to diversify its funding streams and remain efficient stewards of public resources. Successes from the fiscal year include:

**\$1M** IN FUNDING FROM 10 DIFFERENT PARTNERS  
ACROSS OUR REGION TO SUPPORT THE CONNECT  
BEYOND MOBILITY INITIATIVE

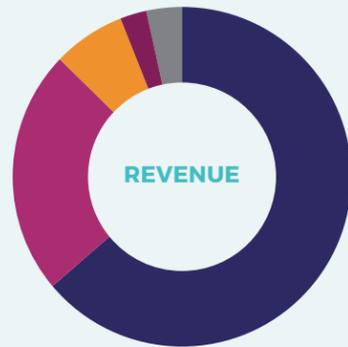
**07** COMPETITIVE  
GRANTS  
RECEIVED

Including \$200,000 from the U.S.  
Economic Development Administration.

**95%** RISE IN TECHNICAL  
ASSISTANCE  
REVENUE

Managed 53 technical assistance (TA) and project  
contracts, resulting in a 95% TA revenue increase.

JULY 1, 2019 TO JUNE 30, 2020



Intergovernmental	\$14,703,574	65.77%
Technical Assistance	\$1,307,006	5.85%
Other Revenue	\$819,469	3.67%
Membership Dues	\$870,095	3.89%
Workforce Passthrough	\$4,656,195	20.83%
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$22,356,339</b>	<b>1.0001%</b>



General Government	\$206,186	0.93%
Transportation	\$944,439	4.27%
Environmental Protection	\$157,633	0.71%
Economic and Physical Dev	\$1,387,943	6.28%
Human Services	\$13,768,718	62.29%
Workforce Passthrough	\$5,637,886	25.51%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$22,102,805</b>	<b>0.9999%</b>

**TOTAL NET PROFIT** \$253,534

# OUR MEMBERS | AS OF JULY 2020

## COUNTIES

Anson County  
Cabarrus County  
Gaston County  
Iredell County  
Lincoln County  
Mecklenburg County  
Stanly County  
Union County

Town of Dallas  
Town of Davidson  
Town of East Spencer  
Town of Faith  
City of Gastonia  
Town of Granite Quarry  
Town of Harrisburg  
Town of Huntersville  
Town of Indian Trail  
City of Kannapolis

Village of Misenheimer  
City of Monroe  
Town of Mooresville  
Town of Morven  
City of Mount Holly  
Town of Norwood  
Town of Oakboro  
Town of Pineville  
Town of Ranlo  
Town of Richfield

## MUNICIPALITIES

City of Albemarle  
Town of Ansonville  
Town of Badin  
City of Belmont  
Bessemer City  
City of Charlotte  
City of Cherryville  
Town of Cleveland  
City of Concord  
Town of Cornelius  
Town of Cramerton

City of Kings Mountain  
Town of Landis  
City of Lincolnton  
City of Locust  
City of Lowell  
Town of Marshville  
Village of Marvin  
Town of Matthews  
Town of McAdenville  
Town of Midland  
Town of Mineral Springs  
Town of Mint Hill

City of Salisbury  
Town of Spencer  
Town of Stallings  
Town of Stanley  
City of Statesville  
Town of Troutman  
Town of Wadesboro  
Town of Waxhaw  
Town of Wingate



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# OUR COMMUNITIES. OUR REGION. OUR FUTURE.

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[www.centralina.org](http://www.centralina.org)

