



CONNECT Beyond

A Regional Mobility Initiative

Focus: Rowan County

CONNECT Beyond Overview

CONNECT Beyond is a bold regional mobility plan that will transform how residents and visitors travel throughout our 12-county region. The CONNECT Beyond Mobility Moves are the building blocks for creating a network that will enhance economic competitiveness, improve access, and create transit ready places.

Why is this important?

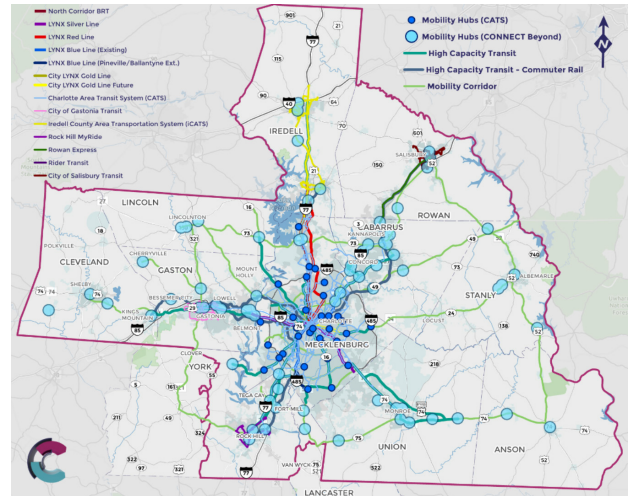
We've been clear throughout the planning process about the tremendous benefits of having a regional vision for mobility, but we'd like to highlight how this benefits your county as we move into the adoption and endorsement process.

Why this Project is Important to Rowan County

- **Access to Jobs and Education:** Transportation choices are important to the quality of life for individuals that reside in one county but work or seek education in another.
- **Employers:** A highly functioning transportation network will appeal to employers by increasing the accessible labor force and giving employers a larger area of recruitment to meet business needs.
- **Rural Access:** An interconnected transportation network gives people greater access to shopping, restaurants, school, sporting events and other activities across all parts of Rowan County and in surrounding areas.
- **Freight Mobility:** Key industries in Rowan County depend on reduced traffic congestion for swift movement of raw materials and final products. Expanding mobility options will mean fewer people on the roads and more capacity for freight mobility.
- **Downtowns:** Mobility investments help transform downtowns and better meet the needs of businesses and residents.
- **Equity:** Very real economic and social inequalities exist in the region. Focusing on expanding transportation choices, improving accessibility, and increasing affordable housing can help to enhance equity in meaningful and impactful ways.

Why this Project is Important to Individuals in Rowan County

- Helping provide more access and opportunity for everyone.
- Making it easier for riders to figure out how, when, and where to use transportation options to get to jobs, education, medical appointments, and other important resources.
- Creating places that are easier to walk, bike and take public transit where you want to go.



How can CONNECT Beyond help address these issues?

5 Mobility Moves	What this means for Rowan County
<p>Create Mobility-Friendly Places: Strategies to support vibrant, pedestrian-friendly communities that have convenient access to public transit services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect existing sidewalk, bike, and trail connections to downtowns and major employment centers • Focus growth at mobility hubs and along mobility corridors (I-85 and Hwy 52)
<p>Expand Mobility Choices: Strategies to support how, when and where residents and visitors travel, now and in the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue growing local mobility efforts and expand existing agreements to support mobility choices • Seamless schedule for cross-county travel • Encourage mobility hub investment in 4 mobility hubs identified in CONNECT Beyond Plan • Participate in commuter programs for residents who travel for education/jobs, especially for Rowan Cabarrus Community College, Catawba College and major employment centers
<p>Strengthen Rural to Urban Connections: Strategies to improve transportation choices for those who choose to live and work in suburban/rural communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give residents more access to medical facilities in surrounding counties and ability to use services for non-medical trips (grocery) • Support efforts to develop coordinated regional scheduling for cross-county trips
<p>Build a Better Bus Network: Strategies to make it easier for riders to plan, pay for and complete their trips.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect RTS with expanded fixed route systems to better serve needs of residents • Explore increasing frequency of express services between Rowan and Charlotte communities
<p>Invest in Strategic Mobility Corridors: Strategies to identify candidate corridors where high-capacity transit lines could be located and where focused transit investments should occur</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with CATS on extension of Blue Line from UNC Charlotte to Salisbury • Continuing analyses of transit options for HCT corridors (including economic impact of modes) • Support and coordinate with commuter rail communities

Maintaining our Momentum

- **Regional Coordination:** To create a region of mobility-friendly communities interconnected by a total mobility network, we must work together. We must build on existing positive collaborations while developing confidence and trust in shared responsibilities. Regional partners will work together to move recommendations forward as capital projects, strategic initiatives or operational improvements.
- **Transportation Funding:** In order for this regional mobility plan to be implemented, developing clear cost estimates and finding funding sources will be essential. Together we have more power to secure resources for the region. The Plan helps ensure no one is left behind and that all jurisdictions can proceed forward on their own timeline.

What can Rowan County do now to advance the CONNECT Beyond Recommendations?

- Support CRMPO's adoption of CONNECT Beyond recommendations in relevant documents by coordinating with technical coordinating committee and policy board representatives.
- Ensure County coordination with CRMPO on funding needs for upcoming mobility projects.
- Advise CONNECT Beyond staff on how implementation can be best designed to meet local needs.