



# FY2023 – 2024 WORKPLAN

*July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024*



# INTRODUCTION

The four goals outlined below describe Centralina's aspiration for achieving our vision through our service to the region, communities and individuals. Under each goal, the corresponding strategies outline the paths we will take to make progress over the next three-year period. The priority actions outlined under each strategy are what Centralina aims to accomplish in the FY23-24 fiscal year. These actions complement our core services that form the foundation of our work.

**Goal 1:** Lead regional engagement to prepare, plan and act on issues that respond to today's needs and tomorrow's opportunities.

**Goal 2:** Build local government capacity, efficiency and innovation in service to Centralina communities and the region.

**Goal 3:** Grow our portfolio of person-centered services that enhance an individual's ability to thrive in their careers and in their communities.

**Goal 4:** Strive for organizational excellence by investing in our employees, promoting our work and building efficient systems.

## **Goal 1: Lead regional engagement to prepare, plan and act on issues that respond to today's needs and tomorrow's opportunities.**

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**Strategy 1: Lead implementation of regional infrastructure and mobility initiatives outlined in plans such as CONNECT Beyond, the Regional Freight Mobility Plan and CONNECT our Future.**

### *FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Continue implementation of high-priority CONNECT Beyond implementation items including the Seamless CONNECTIONS initiative and increasing cross-system coordination among human services transit providers.
2. Create a Transportation Demand Management Program organizational and financial needs assessment.
3. Develop initial datasets for regional land use analysis for travel demand modeling program, COORDINATE Our Future.
4. Lead regional stakeholder engagement for CONNECT Beyond implementation projects including committees to advise COORDINATE Our Future modeling and the Transportation Demand Management Program.
5. Develop recommendations for a regional funding and governance structure through the CONNECT Beyond Advancing the Plan Committee.
6. Create regional educational materials about transportation options for older adults and people with disabilities and provide training related to aging awareness and elder abuse to transportation providers.
7. Lead regional engagement to determine opportunities for consortium applications for Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Inflation Reduction Act and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.

**Strategy 2: Strengthen regional partnerships and foster collaboration on resilience, recovery and environmental stewardship initiatives.**

### *FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Lead regional resilience and recovery planning to develop individual county roadmaps for Recovery Support Function (RSF) and Community Lifeline data needed to prepare for future disasters and economic shocks.
2. Strengthen partnerships with regional water advocacy groups, state and regional agencies (e.g. Regional Stormwater Partnership of the Carolinas, Catawba-Wateree and Yadkin-Pee Dee water management groups, NC

Department of Environmental Quality) to connect water infrastructure, growth and economic development coordination.

3. Provide support to the Lake Wylie Marine Commission and the South Fork River Health Committee.
4. *(If funded)* Develop required deliverables and coordinate with region-wide stakeholders to identify local and regional priorities under the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant program.

### **Strategy 3: Align Centralina’s economic development and workforce development initiatives to effectively lead regional economic development strategy implementation.**

#### *FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Develop and implement the IEI BAND-NC Digital Inclusion Plan for seven counties and establish a Centralina Regional Digital Navigator housed on the Centralina website.
2. Support the implementation of the Prosperity for All Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) by establishing a talent working group to facilitate collaboration across the region’s workforce boards, community colleges and economic development organizations.
3. Host one to two regional best practices roundtables to exchange information and identify good models for K-12, community college, economic development and business partnerships around career and technical education and career pathways.
4. Evaluate the existing, certified career pathways and determine if further development / expansion is needed and/or if new career pathways should be developed and formally submitted for certification.
5. Map regional workforce development resources in order to make recommendations that enhance cross promotion and service navigation for individuals and businesses (such as online map or guide which routes individuals directly to the needed resource).
6. Meet regularly with local businesses, economic developers and education leaders identify industry specific retain / retrain approaches and make recommendations for enhancement as appropriate.
7. Lead cross-workforce board collaboration and engagement between business service leaders to foster more region-wide collaboration with industry partners.

**Strategy 4: Expand research, data analysis and convening activities to better position the region to address emerging challenges.**

*FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Update, maintain and promote the regional data portal on the Centralina website to showcase available data resources.
2. Utilize new tools, such as the CEDS Prosperity Profiles, Transit Equity Map and Resilience and Equity Map, to identify and analyze regional trends.
3. Produce an annual state of the region report summarizing key trends and a progress report on major regional planning implementation activities.

**Strategy 5: Advance regional priorities at the state and federal levels through a robust advocacy agenda and strategic partnerships.**

*FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Update and implement federal and state advocacy agendas for new legislative periods.
2. Expand Raleigh Relations and Federal Congressional Delegation outreach to proactively report on Centralina engagement with local governments at the District level.
3. Collaborate with federal and state relations consultants to provide Centralina members with legislative and policy analysis on key issues in the advocacy agendas.
4. Collaborate with NC Association of Regional Councils of Government (NCARCOG) on the state-wide advocacy agenda for the 2024 short session.

**Core Services**

- Regional planning and implementation on growth, mobility, economic development, alternative fuels and resilience
- Regional groups management: Solid Waste and Recycling Managers Roundtable, Mobility Management Committee, NC 73 Council on Planning, etc.
- Centralina Clean Fuels Coalition, including Energy and Environmental Justice Leadership
- Federal grant administration for economic development (EDA) and workforce development programming and career services (WIOA)
- Regional Federal Advocacy Agenda and Raleigh Relations Initiative

## Goal 2: Build local government capacity, efficiency and innovation in service to Centralina communities and the region.

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**Strategy 1: Expand technical assistance offerings to leverage Centralina expertise and efficiently deliver services to local governments.**

### *FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Promote availability of advisory services to local governments in housing planning, model zoning code language and minimum code enforcement.
2. Engage smaller local governments and provide advisory services or technical support on issues of greatest need including communications, community engagement and administrative services.
3. Promote availability of code enforcement services via IBTS partnership.

**Strategy 2: Support the local implementation of land use, mobility and healthy communities solutions identified in regional plans.**

### *FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Launch North Mecklenburg Housing Preservation Initiative.
2. Coordinate partners associated with at least one CONNECT Beyond mobility pilot project that supports advancement of near-term recommendations.
3. Conduct at least four walkability audits around fixed-route transit stops to support safe, accessible mobility.
4. Provide on-demand support and expertise to local governments regarding electric vehicle, energy efficiency, environmental justice, land use and transportation trends.
5. Identify local governments interested in planning for electric vehicle infrastructure and support their preparation for funding opportunities in alignment with regional and state plans.
6. In response to the May 2023 Executive Order 280, develop resources for local member governments on age- and dementia-friendly community planning and certification.
7. *(If funded)* Provide support to at least one local government initiative focused on proving health through community design or achieving age- and dementia-friendly certification.
8. *(If funded)* Engage up to four local governments in their role in advancing implementation actions in CONNECT Beyond, including planning for mobility hubs, increasing local access to transit and supporting employee commuter programs.

### **Strategy 3: Lead impactful networks and convenings that build knowledge, share resources and foster regional relationships.**

#### *FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Expand outreach to leaders in smaller local governments to exchange best practices and scalable solutions.
2. Plan and implement six to eight *Centralina Learns* events to equip local governments with information and resources on emerging policy and practice topics.
3. Develop and implement training events in all nine counties that address strategies to reduce social isolation and loneliness in the older adult population.
4. Host six events for local governments, Centralina Area Agency on Aging (AAA) volunteers and communities to inform and educate audiences about pressing aging and older adult issues.
5. Lead four trainings for elected and appointed officials regarding transportation-land use decision making to support mobility friendly communities.

### **Strategy 4: Expand programming that builds fiscal health and efficiency in local governments through grants and shared services.**

#### *FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Provide technical assistance to local governments that supports recovery planning, grant development and ARPA monitoring and reporting.
2. Provide grant advisory and preparation support to local governments pursuing infrastructure, community development, housing, brownfield site assessments and downtown revitalization funding.
3. Assess viability of a regionwide nutrition contract for all nine-county aging nutrition service providers by establishing a committee, surveying providers, collecting and reviewing data and providing a final report.
4. Oversee the statewide coordination of the NCARCOG Disaster Recovery Financial Administration Training program and deployment of training activities in the Centralina region.
5. *(If funded)* Launch new local government financial services assistance focusing on smaller local governments and those on the Local Government Commission watch list.

**Strategy 5: Support local government and public administration service through talent recruitment, professional development and strategic partnerships.**

*FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Expand programming and resources available to local governments for their employee attraction and retention efforts, including the use of Centralina NCWorks Career Center services.
2. Expand awareness of Centralina Workforce Development Board services and its NCWorks Career Centers in order to pursue collaborations with local governments to support their hiring and training needs.
3. Develop a condensed Centralina NCWorks Career Centers services demo package for local governments.

**Core Services**

- Member engagement, retention and cultivation activities
- Administration and content development for online member portal and resource center
- Technical assistance services in planning, community development and public administration
- Centralina Learns professional development and education events
- Region of Excellence Awards program
- Grant information, writing and administration of state and federal grants Community Development Block Grants (entitlement and neighborhood revitalization)

**Goal 3: Grow our portfolio of person-centered services that enhance an individual’s ability to thrive in their careers and in their communities.**

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**Strategy 1: Expand our capacity to address the social determinants of health for a broader range of older and disabled adults.**

*FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Develop one new partnership with a Medicaid Managed Care entity, Medicare agency or other private organization to address social isolation and caregiving issues.
2. Expand regional capacity to deliver Home Improvement and Chore Enhanced services and Family Caregiver Support services through ARPA funding.



**Strategy 2: Adapt aging and workforce programs and services to reach historically underserved populations and meet new needs brought on by the pandemic.**

*FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Expand reach of PEARLS (Program to Encourage Active Rewarding Lives) by increasing number of clients by 75% and developing two new partnerships.
2. Utilize Community Health Worker model to increase outreach to underserved older adults.
3. Develop three new Youth Opportunity Sites and / or NextGen services, especially in communities with higher levels of disengaged youth.
3. Expand promotion of work-based learning opportunities and other services by working with NCWorks Career Center leaders to identify and connect with individuals in their communities.
4. Increase the number of counties with age 50+ job clubs to expand services, workshops, training offerings for older adult workers.
5. Revisit and revamp the Alternative Talent Pool initiative.

**Core Services**

- Older Americans Act and related grants implementation and funding to counties for adult nutrition, transportation, in-home aide services, senior centers and more
- Family caregiver support and evidence-based health programs (chronic disease, depression, falls prevention, etc.)
- Long-term care facility Ombudsman services and elder abuse awareness education
- Influenza and shingles vaccine education and outreach
- Senior health insurance counseling
- Workforce, Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funded training and career services
- NCWorks Career Centers in Anson, Cabarrus, Iredell, Lincoln, Rowan, Stanly and Union counties
- Centralina Nextgen services and NextGen Youth Opportunity Sites

## Goal 4: Strive for organizational excellence by investing in our employees, promoting our work and building efficient systems.

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**Strategy 1: Develop and implement systems for multi-year financial planning and revenue development to support Centralina growth.**

### *FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Update three-year revenue forecast model to plan for resources needed to meet the organization's goals for growth and compensation approach.
2. Explore feasibility of bringing on external expertise to support the organization in understanding strengths, opportunities and risks related to current revenue sources and business development opportunities.
3. Apply for federal and state discretionary grants that directly advance CONNECT Beyond and CEDs implementation.
4. Review, evaluate and pursue discretionary grants that are aligned with Centralina goals, including opportunities from the Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Environmental Protection Agency and Housing and Urban Development.

**Strategy 2: Transition to an organizational structure that builds efficiency, collaboration and career pathways for staff.**

### *FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Enhance succession planning activities to identify critical positions and opportunities for staff development of core leadership competencies.
2. Invest in new operational positions in HR / Operations and Finance to meet the needs of a growing organization and compliance requirements for federal and state grants.
3. Complete career pathway maps for job families and / or departments.

**Strategy 3: Invest in a OneCentralina culture of engagement, professional development and market competitive compensation structure.**

### *FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Lead monthly *OneCentralina Connect* engagement activities focused on strengthening employee relationships, well-being and recognition.
2. Complete at least two *OneCentralina Serves* volunteer projects in the region.
3. Expand professional development programming for supervisors and emerging leaders with a focus on practical application of knowledge and integration into our performance management system.

4. Create customized learning paths in LinkedIn Learning to support employee skill development.
5. Identify and implement organization-wide trainings on topics identified by staff including IT and cybersecurity, Title VI / federal non-discrimination compliance and DEI.

**Strategy 4: Increase regional awareness of Centralina by enhancing our strategic communications planning and promoting our brand.**

*FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Develop department level communication plans that include strategies for priority projects, social media and department service offerings.
2. Assess and update brand collateral, website text and social media strategy.
3. Complete updates to the Centralina Workforce Development Board, Centralina Area Agency on Aging and CONNECT Beyond websites to increase accessibility and alignment with brand standards.
4. Identify opportunities to promote Centralina experts for commentary and analysis with regional media and professional publications.
5. Create internal materials to increase awareness of Centralina's projects and service offerings so that employees can become stronger ambassadors of the organization.

**Strategy 5: Enhance Centralina operations by refining polices and managing risks.**

*FY23-24 Priority Actions*

1. Transition from paper-based forms to online form platform (Cognito) to improve efficiency and decision making related to HR, contracts and finance.
2. Explore software solutions to better manage Centralina contacts (i.e., Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system) and external communications.
3. Review NC National Guard Cybersecurity Assessment and develop implementation plan to address high-priority issues.
4. Evaluate vendors and services for IT, telecommunications and legal to determine opportunities for efficiency and improved service.
5. Develop standards and structure for online file storage to ensure accessibility, security and compliance with applicable regulations.



# OUR COMMUNITIES. OUR REGION. OUR FUTURE.

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