

Advancing the Plan Committee

March 2023



Many Advancing the Plan Committee members participated in a survey about communication needs for CONNECT Beyond. A key part of the survey **identified misconceptions about the project** – Committee members reviewed the top misconceptions at the March 24th meeting. See below for responses to each of these misconceptions:

FAQ: How to Address Project Misconceptions

CONNECT Beyond's plan only applies to urban centers and not rural communities

The plan applies to the 12-county greater Charlotte region, made up of rural communities, small towns, suburban areas and a major metropolitan city. With almost 75% of the region's land identified as rural, strengthening rural to urban connections is a critical part of the plan. One of the plan's five mobility moves is dedicated to **improving mobility and transportation choices for those living in rural communities** to make better, more reliable connections to jobs, medical appointments and daily activities.

CONNECT Beyond's plan only applies to transit

CONNECT Beyond is focused on regional mobility and encompasses a variety of transportation modes beyond transit. Many plan recommendations are related to **improving access and safety for bikes, trails and pedestrians**. These mobility strategies provide important last and first mile connections to the plan's strategic mobility corridors. Improving mobility options for the region also helps to improve the efficiency of the region's road infrastructure.

CONNECT Beyond's plan is only a plan – it is not action orientated

Implementation has always been the goal. There are over 120 plan recommendations that act as a blueprint for increasing mobility across the region. Of these, **40% fall into the immediate-term timeframe** (under 3 years). Since the plan's adoption in late 2021, focus quickly shifted from plan development to implementation. Project activities such as conducting quarterly mobility managers **meetings with community transportation providers**, developing a **regional transportation demand management program** and seeking **short-term opportunities for transit coordination** are already underway.



Talking Points from the March Meeting:

Highlights from the Committee's March 24th meeting include:



Reviewed Current CONNECT Beyond Implementation Activities:

Please see the **CONNECT Beyond Implementation one-pager** (attached to the meeting follow-up email) for a summary of project activities. *This document can easily be included in newsletters, emails, and as a meeting leave behind.*



Reflected on Central Virginia Transportation Authority (CVTA) Case Study:

Committee members participated in an engagement activity discussing the **positive and challenging attributes of the CVTA case study**. Input from this activity will be used to generate a list of governance model attributes for consideration at upcoming meetings.



Identified Key Project Messaging:

The Committee's homework survey also identified key project messaging for specific audiences. The project team will work in the coming weeks to provide tools to support communications with these audiences. See below for a summary of **key messages for state lawmakers** and **local elected officials**:

Key Benefits of Regional Collaboration

Funding: Working together makes us more competitive for funding

Increases Economic Competitiveness:

A complete transportation network supports our region's industries (advanced manufacturing, logistics) and increases labor access

Planning for Growth: Making the region future ready and planning for growth in a way that maintains quality of life

Connects People to Jobs: Over 50% of workers in the Charlotte region live in one county and work in another

For Next Meeting:

- Report Back and Share:** Members should provide an update on the Committee to their jurisdiction and/or relevant mobility organizations.
- Homework and Volunteer Opportunity:** Centralina will be reaching out to Committee members with a homework survey focused on ranking attributes of governance models. Members will also receive information about an upcoming volunteer opportunity to educate and engage with state lawmakers about the CONNECT Beyond project.
- Next Meeting:** Friday, May 19, 2023 | 8:30am-10:30am

What is CONNECT Beyond? CONNECT Beyond is a bold regional transit vision and plan that provides real mobility solutions and opportunities for residents and visitors across the two states and 12 counties that make up the greater Charlotte region. The plan was adopted by its lead sponsors, Centralina Regional Council and Metropolitan Transportation Commission and all North Carolina transportation planning organizations in the region. Project efforts now are focused on implementing the plan's 120+ recommendations.