



**CENTRALINA**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL



*Fiscal Year 2023*

JULY 1, 2022 - JUNE 30, 2023

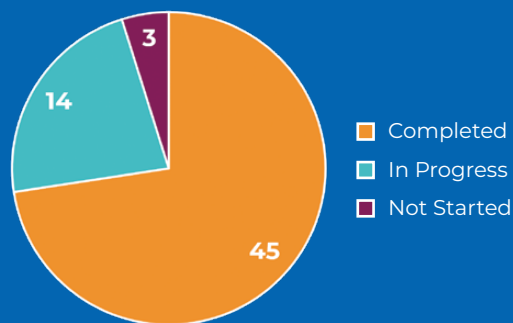
**ANNUAL  
REPORT**



## A letter from our EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the Centralina Board of Delegates and staff, I'm pleased to share this report on our achievements for the year ending June 30, 2023. As we begin our 55th year of service to the region, we are committed to the principles of collaboration, connection, service and innovation across the spectrum of our work. FY22-23 marked the first year of activities and investments towards the implementation of Centralina's three-year strategic plan. Our workplan included over 62 action items and our team initiated or completed 95% of them by the close of the fiscal year.

### Workplan Implementation Status



### Our priorities included:

- ◆ Implementing recently completed visionary regional plans through expanded stakeholder engagement and local project development.
 

**Success:** Launched the Advancing the Plan Committee to guide CONNECT Beyond implementation – see page 2.
- ◆ Leveraging new federal funding opportunities to bring resources to the region.
 

**Success:** Applied for over \$5 million in federal grants.
- ◆ Deepening our work to build regional resilience and support local recovery.
 

**Success:** Launched phase two of the Regional Resilience Collaborative to develop long-term disaster recovery plan and resilience roadmap for the region.
- ◆ Launching a state advocacy agenda and continuing to build relationships with our state and federal representatives.
 

**Success:** Submitted a \$1 million state budget request to support CONNECT Beyond implementation.
- ◆ Expanding our professional development learning programming series, Centralina Learns, and our networks of regional peer leaders.
 

**Success:** Over 175 local government professionals attended our Centralina Learns events and we hosted over 200 peer network and project development meetings.
- ◆ Evolving our portfolio of programs for older adults and caregivers to better serve our most rapidly growing demographic in the region.
 

**Success:** Launched several new programs including an evidence-based health program focused on depression and isolation among older adults (PEARLS) that was recently featured on PBS North Carolina – see page 6.

We invite you to learn more about our work in the remainder of this report and review our specific accomplishments across Centralina's three levels of impact: regional coordination, support to local governments and innovative service delivery to individuals.

With gratitude,

Geraldine I. Gardner  
Executive Director, Centralina Regional Council

# LEADING THE REGION

Regional planning and collaboration are essential for a thriving region. When our communities work together and leverage combined resources, we create better outcomes for our member governments and the people that call this region home. The following are award-winning initiatives from the past fiscal year.

## CONNECT BEYOND: ADVANCING THE PLAN



**CONNECT Beyond**  
A Regional Mobility Initiative

In 2021, Centralina and the Metropolitan Transit Commission voted to endorse the CONNECT Beyond regional mobility plan that contains over 120 recommendations to improve connectivity across the region. This past fiscal year, Centralina and our partners worked on key implementation activities, including: (1) The formation of the Advancing the Plan Committee, comprised of elected officials and city/county managers, that works to advise on short-term opportunities for collaboration, determine options for a regional governance approach, endorse a communications framework and collaborate with state lawmakers to advocate for funding. (2) The development of a regional transportation demand management plan to provide education on transportation choices, improve efficiency of the existing infrastructure and enhance employer's access to workers with increased travel options. (3) The creation of Seamless CONNECTIONS by advancing transit coordination opportunities for fixed route and demand response transit.

**Learn more:** [www.centralina.org/advancing-the-plan](http://www.centralina.org/advancing-the-plan)

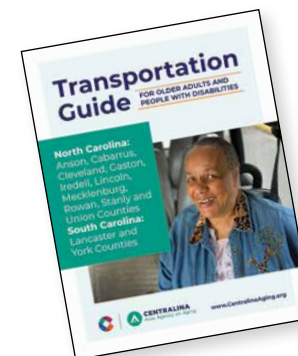
## PROSPERITY FOR ALL CEDS STRATEGY 2023-2028

The Centralina Economic Development District (EDD) worked with stakeholders to assess the region's current economic conditions and develop a strategy to build on existing assets while addressing short-term shocks and structural challenges to the economy. These findings were the building blocks of the 2023 – 2028 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), a five-year locally based, regionally driven economic development strategy to generate good jobs, diversify the economy and spur economic growth. Centralina EDD also underwent a brand refresh and launched an updated website with powerful regional dashboards to help communities make data-driven decisions. Some of this data, ranging from demographics, labor market information and entrepreneurs, will be used to track metrics for the CEDS.



**Learn more:** [www.centralinaedd.org](http://www.centralinaedd.org)

## TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES FOR OLDER ADULTS



Centralina Area Agency on Aging developed a set of resources to help older adults get where they need to go. The Transportation Guide for Older Adults and People with Disabilities, available in English and Spanish, features resources and key considerations when making transportation decisions as an older adult or as a caregiver. There is also a companion transportation toolkit that was created for service providers and a video mini-series.

**Access the tools:** [www.centralinaaging.org/transportation](http://www.centralinaaging.org/transportation)



# BUILDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAPACITY

Our technical services enable communities in our region to receive expert support for reduced fees compared to private sector companies. Over the past fiscal year, our staff provided a variety of support services to Centralina communities. We enjoyed working for the first time on land use planning, grant support and strategic planning projects in Ansonville, Harrisburg, New London, Norwood and Richfield. Learn more about our service offerings and the following topics at [www.Centralina.org/Annual-Report](http://www.Centralina.org/Annual-Report).

## Strategic Planning & Facilitation

Meeting design and facilitation, strategic planning, benchmarking studies

**Online Stories:** *City of Albemarle: Strategic Planning for the Future*

## Planning Assistance

Land use planning, planning board and board of adjustment training, GIS and data modeling

**Online Stories:** *Land Use Planning in Wingate*

## Mobility

CONNECT Beyond implementation, clean energy and electric vehicles planning and walkability audits

**Success Stories:** *CONNECT Beyond: One Year Anniversary, PoleVolt: Collaborating for Clean, Equitable Transportation, Supporting the Deployment of Clean Transportation in NC, Transit Guide & Other Resources to Address Transportation Issues*

## HR Assistance

Hiring assessment centers, pay and classification studies

**Online Stories:** *Centralina Assists City of Gastonia in Hiring New Police Chief*

## Housing

Planning, engagement and code review for affordable and missing middle housing

**Online Stories:** *Celebrating Union County and Their Fair Housing Initiatives, Statesville Thrives: Leading a Prosperous Community Conversation on Housing, Centralina Learns: Affordable Housing & The Missing Middle, Housing Preservation & Innovation: An Interactive Discussion*

## Grant Support

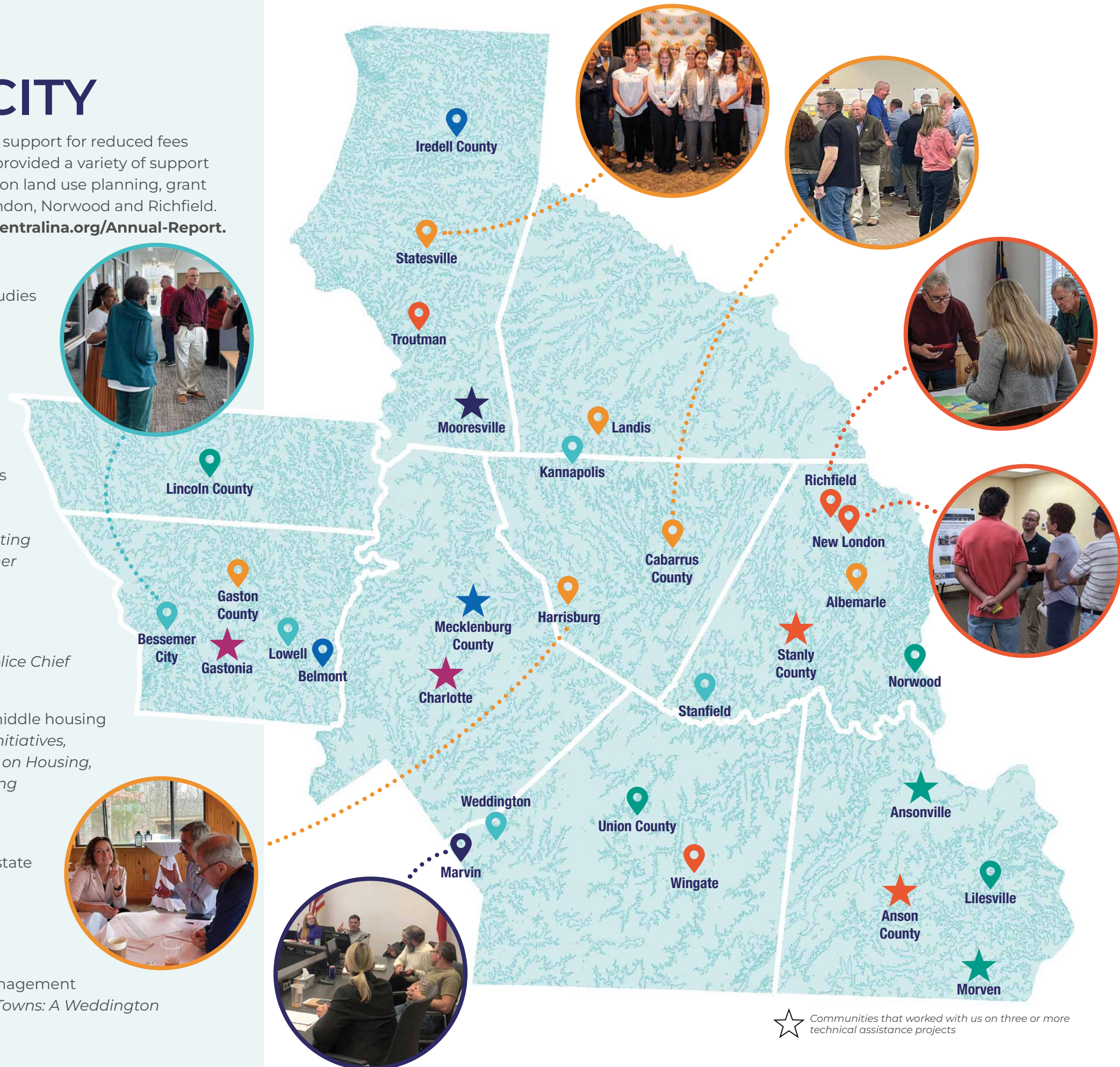
Development, application preparation and administration of various state and federal grants

**Online Stories:** *Centralina Wins NARC Award for its ARPA Fund Implementation Support Program*

## Code Enforcement & Construction Management

On-call code enforcement services and inspections, construction management

**Online Stories:** *Supporting the Code Enforcement Needs of Small Towns: A Weddington Success Story*





# IMPROVING PROSPERITY & QUALITY OF LIFE

Centralina delivers direct health, aging and workforce services to individuals and businesses in our region to create new opportunities and improve quality of life. The following are examples of some of our work over the past fiscal year.

## WORKFORCE SERVICES



- ◆ **1,424** employers served with **20,200** services
- ◆ **15,236** career seekers served through NCWorks Career Centers including **264** workshop participants
- ◆ **14,524** job referrals
- ◆ **16,370** career seekers served
- ◆ **43** sponsored adult and youth job seeker work experiences
- ◆ **35** on-the-job training partnerships with local employers

## AGING SERVICES



- ◆ **53** lay leaders trained
- ◆ **43** workshops with **471** participants
- ◆ **11** webinars hosted with **1,248** participants and **519** post-event views
- ◆ **11,250** COVID tests distributed to aging service providers, caregivers and older adults
- ◆ **1307** GetSetUp users took **3,277** classes
- ◆ **10,692** Second Harvest Boxes delivered



- ◆ **Regional Ombudsman**
  - **842** technical assistance and information requests completed
  - **323** long-term care complaints addressed and **237** cases completed
  - **826** facility visits and consultations

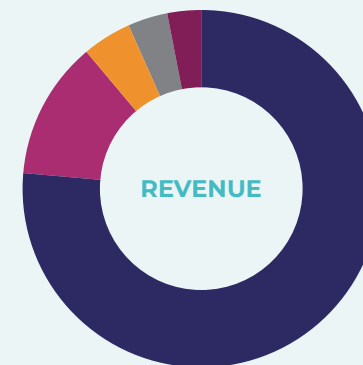
## Centralina AAA Offers New Programs

This year, Centralina Area Agency on Aging (AAA) introduced several new programs to help older adults and people with disabilities stay safe and improve quality of life. The **Housing & Home Improvement and Chore Enhanced Programs** assist older adults with keeping up with essential repairs and maintenance inside and outside of their homes. The **Healthy Homes Fall Prevention Pilot Program**, part of the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative, focuses on falls prevention education and home modification for older adults at high risk for falling. Finally, Centralina AAA partnered with University of North Carolina Asheville to pilot **PEARLS (Program to Encourage Active Rewarding Lives)** aimed at reducing depression in older adults and people with disabilities. **View the PEARLS PBS segment:** [www.centralina.org/blog/pbs](http://www.centralina.org/blog/pbs).

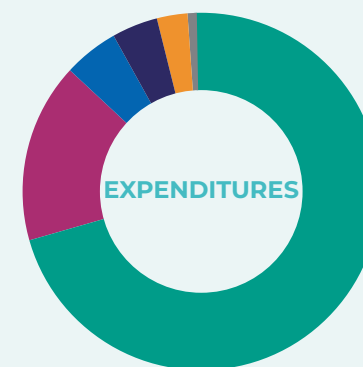
## Centralina WDB Opens NextGen Opportunity Site in Troutman

On January 16, 2023, Centralina Workforce Development Board (WDB) celebrated the opening of its latest Opportunity Site housed at the J. Hoyt Haynes Memorial Library in Troutman. This Iredell County center is part of the Centralina NCWorks network that focuses on NextGen services that assist youth and young adults with career guidance and skills to find employment. Statistics show that youth are being held back due to lack of transportation, access to technology and limited support in rural areas. Building Opportunity Sites in underserved parts of our counties allows these critical services to reach more people.

# FINANCIAL REPORT



Intergovernmental	\$18,910,260	76.45%
Technical Assistance	\$1,088,808	4.40%
Other Revenue	\$699,746	2.83%
Membership Dues	\$929,201	3.76%
Workforce Passthrough	\$3,107,072	12.56%
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$24,735,087</b>	<b>100%</b>



General Government	\$990,460	4.02%
Transportation	\$684,453	2.77%
Environmental Protection	\$258,655	1.05%
Economic and Physical Dev	\$1,241,703	5.03%
Human Services	\$17,467,100	70.79%
Workforce Development	\$4,033,179	16.34%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$24,675,550</b>	<b>100%</b>

**REVENUES OVER EXPENSES \$59,537**



# OUR COMMUNITIES OUR REGION OUR FUTURE

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