









Centralina Council of Governments

FY21 WORKPLAN

July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

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INTRODUCTION

Centralina Council of Governments 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. Centralina's six departments and associated boards are dedicated to this mission of public service with a regional spirt.

Each community in the nine-county Centralina region is unique, but we share a common set of challenges. We believe that our region thrives when we work together, unified by a common mission for expanding opportunity and improving quality of life. The strong fabric of cooperation, woven by over 50 years of regionalism, must be sustained through robust implementation of localized solutions.

Our Regional Goals

As one of the fastest-growing metro areas in the country, Centralina has a diverse set of guiding plans[1] for the region; with limited resources and capacity, it is critical to prioritize within the ongoing implementation of these plans. We must also respond to the evolving needs of the region, local communities and the individuals that we serve. Last year we worked with the Board of Delegates, Regional Managers and partners across the region to set seven cross-cutting goals to guide our work over three years (2019-2022):

1. Growth: Manage cross-jurisdictional collaboration for coordinated regional growth
2. Mobility: Expand regional mobility choices and connections
3. Health: Improve the health and resilience of individuals, communities and our region
4. Economic development: Facilitate business and infrastructure investments in our local communities and regional economy
5. Talent: Provide talent Tactics and solutions for a qualified and competitive workforce
6. Innovation: Support and champion our local governments
7. Operations: Enhance Centralina operations, infrastructure and partnerships

Centralina departments have designed workplans for FY21 that advance these goals through specific strategies and implementation tactics. Funding to support our work comes from federal, state and local sources; the Centralina Executive Board will review and approve FY21 workplan in June 2020 and corresponding budget amendments throughout the fiscal year.

[1] CONNECT our Future Regional Growth Strategy (2015); Prosperity for Greater Charlotte Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2017-2022); Centralina Area Agency on Aging Area Plan (2020-2024); and the Centralina Workforce Development Board Annual Plan

Centralina Council of Governments

GOAL 1: Manage cross-jurisdictional collaboration for coordinated regional growth

We work across borders to support regional growth and economic development.

Strategy 1	Lead collaboration and implementation of regional growth and economic development strategies.
Tactics	1. Provide a five-year update on CONNECT Our Future implementation. 2. Maintain website, implementation support and interactive data-portal for the Prosperity for Greater Charlotte Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. 3. Provide Centralina Economic Development District bi-annual State of the Region report for promoting US. Economic Development Administration (EDA) investments, EDA grants and strategic economic advising services.
Lead Depts.	Regional Planning & Centralina Economic Development District

Strategy 2	Provide tools and services to support planning for cross-jurisdictional growth and its impacts.
Tactics	1. Expand use of the Metrolina Regional CommunityViz Model through expansion of geography, increased use of data, more frequent model runs, incorporation into scenario planning and/or other activities. 2. Research and document how other regions communicate and/or coordinate related to developments of regional impact. 3. Consolidate multiple economic impact model methodologies into a preferred system and implement to illustrate return on investment and potential jurisdiction revenue gains.
Lead Depts.	Regional Planning & Community Economic Development

Strategy 3	Increase understanding of land use and transportation connections and impacts.
Tactics	1. Provide training on best practices for higher density growth and coordination through CCOG University series.

	2. Develop and update transit activity center community types to align with outcomes of the regional transit-oriented development project.
Lead Dept.	Regional Planning

GOAL 2: Expand regional mobility choices and connections

We partner with all levels of government to keep our region moving.

Strategy 1	Increase transportation mobility in the region, contributing to a more comprehensive system where modes and systems are integrated.
Tactics	1. Define a regional transit vision and goals to guide all activities related to the CONNECT Beyond regional mobility initiative. 2. Through extensive analysis and engagement, define preferred high capacity transit corridors for the region (high capacity transit includes commuter rail, light rail and bus rapid transit). 3. Manage a regional, 14-county, bi-state intelligent transportation and traffic incident management project to increase capacity of existing and planned transportation networks through the use of technology.[2] 4. Engage elected, technical, business and non-profit stakeholders across the region regarding near-term and longer-term public transit investment and improvement. 5. Identify key regional connection points or mobility hubs critical to the interoperability of transportation modes. 6. Provide first-mile / last-mile support to communities in our region through the NC by Train Initiative. 7. Provide support for Regional Freight Plan implementation activities (BUILD grant, Freight Advisory Committee, coordination with metropolitan planning organizations on freight topics, etc.).
Lead Dept.	Regional Planning

[2] Strategy dependent upon US Department of Transportation BUILD planning grant; grant submitted May 2020; notice of award September 2020.

Strategy 2	Increase transportation planning coordination across the region.
Tactics	1. Facilitate joint meetings of transportation planning boards and committees, such as metropolitan planning organizations. 2. Serve on transportation related committees to provide context and connections among transportation related efforts across many organizations.
Lead Dept.	Regional Planning

Strategy 3	Support the region in enhancing transportation technology, resilience and sustainability.
Tactics	1. Develop staff expertise in transportation demand management (TDM) through training and peer region networking. 2. Begin to develop a framework for a regional TDM program in conjunction with the region's transportation planning organizations (metropolitan planning organizations and transit organizations). 3. Facilitate the Connected and Autonomous Vehicle (CAV) Task Force for local and regional preparedness as a direct implementation of the Centralina CAV Regional Roadmap, including initiation of updates to the Roadmap as guided by the Task Force. 4. Provide information and training related to the deployment of alternative-fueled transit and local government fleet vehicles. 5. Implement Department of Energy Clean Cities Coalition activities for this region in support of local government transportation-related sustainability goals.
Lead Dept.	Regional Planning

Strategy 4	Provide education about transportation options to older adults and people with disabilities.
Tactics	1. Conduct three community educational events to promote mobility options, including transportation fairs, public speaking events, presentations at nutrition sites, etc. annually (includes virtual format).

	2. Conduct one presentation to Region F Aging Advisory Committee each year to provide updates and information on older adult transportation issues. 3. Develop and distribute a Regional Transit Guide for older adults and people with disabilities. 4. Provide support to and manage the Centralina Regional Mobility Management Group, which meets four times a year. 5. Ensure interdepartmental coordination between Regional Planning and Centralina Area Agency on Aging on mobility management efforts, including the CONNECT Beyond Regional Mobility Initiative, walk and bike audits around transit stops and implementation activities from the Mobility Barriers Survey.
Lead Dept.	Regional Planning & Centralina Area Agency on Aging

GOAL 3: Improve the health and resilience of individuals, communities and our region

We advance health and resilience through a holistic approach.

Strategy 1	Expand access to and increase individual participation in evidence-based health promotion programs and disease prevention programs.[3]
Tactics	1. Conduct six evidence-based health programs (EBHP) annually at locations easily accessible to low-income senior populations. 2. During the four-year plan period, build new programs capacity to include Chronic Pain Self-Management, Building Better Caregivers and Living Healthy in the Workplace. 3. Develop and implement a marketing plan. 4. Add 30 new lay leaders for all EBHP each year. 5. Add 10 new partners annually. 6. Conduct at least one health and wellness educational opportunity either through a webinar or in-person workshop.

[3] Aligns with CAA Area Plan Goal: "Quality of Life: Create opportunities for older adults and their families to lead active and healthy lives."

	7. Utilize GIS regional and county maps to select workshop locations that target high risk and underserved areas and areas that reflect specific chronic conditions.
Lead Dept.	Centralina Area Agency on Aging

Strategy 2	Provide innovative services to enhance the individual resilience of our region's career seekers.
Tactics	1. Increase use of Centralina Career Headlight within the region by 30% to enable individuals to build upon their strengths and interests to achieve self-sufficiency and individual resilience. 2. Provide at least 20 new Finish Line Grants to area community college students that meet the stated criteria for assistance. The grants will help students complete their education and obtain their degree or certificate, increasing their opportunities for employment and thereby achieving self-sufficiency and individual resilience.
Lead Dept.	Centralina Workforce Development Board

Strategy 3	Support local efforts to create healthy, life-long communities.
Tactics	1. Coordinate with Centralina Area Agency on Aging to map community health indicators and at-risk populations. Update GIS maps annually with the latest health data for the region. 2. Incorporate health considerations into technical assistance projects where appropriate, related to park quality and access, walkability/bikeability, health in all policies, food access, etc. 3. Support the development of "Planning for Healthy Communities" educational sessions as part of the Centralina Area Agency on Aging annual conference.
Lead Dept.	Regional Planning

Strategy 4	Guide regional resilience planning and recovery efforts.
Tactics	1. Implement U.S. Economic Development Administration Disaster Recovery Coordinator grant to frame the regional approach to resilience and recovery coordination.

	2. Assist communities in planning for long-term resilience to hazards (natural and/or economic) through interdepartmental coordination. 3. Coordinate with statewide resilience programming lead by the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency and the North Carolina Association of Regional Councils of Government. 4. Develop the Carolina Alternative Fuel Infrastructure for Storm Resilience plan to enhance alternative fuel vehicles fleet and fueling facility disaster preparedness, recovery planning and resiliency.
Lead Dept.	Community Economic Development & Regional Planning

Strategy 5	Assist the region with planning for and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the best health outcomes for older and disabled adults.[4]
Tactics	1. Allocate and monitor all Families First Coronavirus Response Act and Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds throughout region for spending and programmatic compliance. 2. Hire at least one staff person for all COVID-19 related activities including monitoring, planning, development of resources, education/outreach and technical assistance. 3. Assist aging service/program throughout the year with reopening and planning efforts by providing technical assistance, resources, and guidance from the NC Division of Health and Human Services and the Administration for Community Living. 4. Update current Centralina Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Emergency Response Plan to include goals in response to pandemic and other similar issues. 5. Provide approved COVID-19 resources on Centralina AAA website. 6. Conduct at least three webinars/education sessions on COVID-19 and related issues to aging network and the community. 7. Provide updates to Centralina Executive Board and Board of Delegates upon request.

[4] Aligns with CAA Area Plan Goals: Covid-19 Response and Quality of Life

Lead Dept.	Centralina Area Agency on Aging

GOAL 4: Facilitate business and infrastructure investments in our local communities and regional economy

We connect the dots between the public and private sector to unlock funding and stimulate the economy.

Strategy 1	Assist with federal and state funding for public Infrastructure, disaster recovery, COVID-19 recovery and community development.
Tactics	1. Facilitate local government access to federally funded disaster recovery grants and COVID-19 CARES Act economic impact funding. 2. Serve as the regional liaison with the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and support applications for EDA public infrastructure grants to support economic development. 3. Market Centralina's expertise in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) administration and support local governments applications to North Carolina's state CDBG program.
Lead Dept.	Community Economic Development

Strategy 2	Promote downtown development and revitalization planning services.
Tactics	1. Assist communities with understanding downtown development potential via advising or developing necessary financial plans, identifying economic trends and securing project grants or funding. 2. Support downtown redevelopment planning through community engagement, mapping and land use analysis, upon request.
Lead Depts.	Community Economic Development & Regional Planning

Strategy 3	Improve Centralina Workforce Development Board Member-NCWorks Career Center relationships and coordinate with the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance (CRBA) on economic development and talent efforts in the region.

Tactics	1. Expand use of Centralina Virtual Career Marketplace by holding at least 10 events (regional and county/industry specific). Get CRBA to help co-promote these regional events. 2. Increase the number of posted jobs by the 24 Centralina Workforce Development Board Member companies and the use of NCWorks Career Center services by 60% and correspondingly the number of people hired directly through the utilization of Centralina Workforce Services.
Lead Dept.	Centralina Workforce Development Board

Strategy 4	Coordinate services provided to businesses in the region by workforce organizations.
Tactics	1. Provide customized talent services value package for new and expanding businesses. Seek to have 75% of projects involving local economic development commissions approved. 2. Increase the number of approved UpSkill Centralina training grants for incumbent workers by 25%. 3. Implement NC Apprenticeship grant for youth in the region for at least 25 new apprenticeships.
Lead Dept.	Centralina Workforce Development Board

GOAL 5: Provide talent tactics and solutions for a qualified and competitive workforce

We champion career seekers and businesses at the heart our regional economy.

Strategy 1	Provide high quality, customer-focused talent services to career seekers and employers through the eight local NCWorks Career Centers.
Tactics	1. Upgrade and modernize NCWorks Career Center facilities including access to remote/virtual services. 2. Ensure that at least 95% of NCWorks Career Centers customers are satisfied with the services they received.
Lead Dept.	Centralina Workforce Development Board

Strategy 2	Improve or establish our continuum of services or flow of services for both customers and employers with established accounts in NCWorks.
Tactics	1. Provide monthly education/training sessions for NCWorks Career Center staff on improving flow of services for all customers. 2. Add this strategy as action item at monthly NCWorks Career Center meetings.
Lead Dept.	Centralina Workforce Development Board

Strategy 3	Provide services to out-of-school youth and young adults (NextGen) to increase their potential to enter or reenter the workforce.
Tactics	1. Increase work experience opportunities by 40% for all NextGen customers. 2. Seek to have 85% entered employment rate for NextGen customers who exit services.
Lead Dept.	Centralina Workforce Development Board

Strategy 4	Strengthen relationships and expectations of local Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) host agencies, which include non-profit and government agencies.[5]
Tactics	1. Hold at least two meetings each year with host agencies. 2. Review and update host agency agreements for changes annually. 3. Partner with host agencies to help them provide training and ongoing assistance with unsubsidized employment placement and make a commitment to hire at least one participant. 4. Assure that host agency preferences and the needs of the participant are a "good fit" by reviewing assessment and placement options prior to placement and at least once during placement. 5. Pursue funding opportunities and host agency contributions to assist with SCSEP match.
Lead Dept.	Centralina Area Agency on Aging

[5]*Strategy aligns with CAAA Area Plan Goal: "Quality of Life: Create opportunities for older adults and their families to lead active and healthy lives."*

GOAL 6: Support and champion our local governments

We stand ready to serve our members as a local resource and trusted partner.

Strategy 1	Engage members proactively to provide excellent customer service, information and support.
Tactics	1. Setup member liaisons to build relationships with members and coordinate response across other Centralina departments. 2. Conduct quarterly outreach calls to members to check in and identify needs. 3. Publish annual membership materials and impact profiles. 4. Respond to ad hoc local government questions, requests and informational presentations in front of elected bodies or staff.
Lead Dept.	Government Affairs & Member Engagement (GAME)

Strategy 2	Offer education and professional development opportunities to local government staff and elected officials.	
Tactics	1. Enhance capability and infrastructure to support virtual events.	GAME
	2. Build out Centralina member webpage with education and professional development content.	
	3. Design and implement the 2020-2021 CCOG University general government professional development series.	
	4. Design and implement 2020-2021 CCOG University planning training series.	Regional Planning
	5. Provide planning and administrative support to the Charlotte Douglas International Airport community initiatives, including the CLT Aviation Academy.	

	6. Offer community economic development workshop series.	Community Economic Development

Strategy 3	Convene member government staff and elected officials in peer learning and networking activities.
Tactics	1. Develop a small towns initiative for how to serve small towns in the region, focusing on communities of 10,000 or fewer people. 2. Lead Regional Managers roundtable series to convene managers and administrators on topics that meet the needs of our member government leadership. 3. Explore the feasibility of establishing new peer networks and affinity groups (e.g. Centralina women's leadership forum, inclusion leaders network, human resources and communications/public information officer networks)
Lead Dept.	Government Affairs & Member Engagement

Strategy 4	Implement expanded grant outreach and support strategy.
Tactics	1. Provide unified menu of grant services offered across departments, including strategizing sessions and grants administration. 2. Create expanded list of grant writing resources for members. 3. Continue proactive communication of grant opportunities at the federal level and expand outreach on state funding opportunities.
Lead Dept.	Government Affairs & Member Engagement

Strategy 5	Lead intergovernmental coordination and advocacy.
Tactics	1. Cultivate relationships with elected officials and staff at the state and federal levels through specific Centralina-led activities. 2. Implement annual Federal Action Plan approved by Executive Board. 3. Develop and implement state-level action plan to guide engagement.

	4. Offer engagement opportunities between members and state agency staff/statewide partner organizations, such as North Carolina League of Municipalities and North Carolina Association of County Commissioners. 5. Actively participate in the North Carolina Association of Regional Councils of Government and support statewide efforts to increase the profile of COGs as a state implementation partner.
Lead Dept.	Government Affairs & Member Engagement

Strategy 6	Foster dialogue and support local governments on topics of regional significance, including COVID-19 recovery.	
Tactics	1. Support local government managers and department staff in COVID-19 recovery including peer learning, federal grants management and research.	Regional Planning, GAME, Community Economic Development
	2. Coordinate with adjacent Councils of Government to find a solution to the Piedmont radar gap issue.	GAME
	3. Assist local governments with Census 2020 related activities including data availability and impacts, trainings, etc.	Regional Planning

Strategy 7	Provide creative and innovative services that help local governments meet their administration, community planning and economic development needs.	
Tactics	1. Target and market local government administration and recruitment services to members.	GAME
	2. Provide planning assistance to local governments to address a variety of issues related to growth, land use, transportation, housing, public engagement and governance.	Regional Planning
	3. Provide administrative support to the Lake Wylie Marine Commission.	

	4. Administer Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement programs in partner counties and support local governments in CDBG application process.	Community Economic Development
	5. Provide code enforcement services and administration of essential single-family rehabilitation program.	
	6. Expand use of Centralina Virtual Career Marketplace.	Centralina Workforce Development Board
	7. Promote virtual enrollment and chat features as part of NCWorks.gov.	

Strategy 8	Support communities in the implementation of Chapter 160D of the North Carolina General Statutes (NCGS) planning law modifications to ensure community compliance.
Tactics	1. Provide 160D related information and training for local government staff. 2. Provide direct code writing technical assistance to incorporate NCGS 160D provisions. 3. Assist communities in developing initial comprehensive land use plans and/or updating existing plans to comply with the new laws.
Lead Dept.	Regional Planning

GOAL 7: Enhance Centralina operations, infrastructure and partnerships

We seek opportunities to improve how we work together and with our partners in support of our mission.

Strategy 1	Enhance employee engagement in support of our core values.
Tactics	1. Implement a Centralina day of service or volunteer hours.

	2. Conduct periodic staff surveys / "suggestion box" concept per our Culture & Development (CD) Team. 3. Host monthly staff engagement activities and informal opportunities to build team connections (e.g. all-staff meetings, team building, virtual water cooler). 4. Develop coordinated, cross-department professional development training and health/wellness programming. 5. Enhance our internal and external work towards diversity, inclusion and equity.

Strategy 2	Streamline operational services, policies and procedures.
Tactics	1. Complete update of policy and procedures manual, especially IT, procurement, contracting and communications sections. 2. Develop new teleworking policy for the organization. 3. Generate efficiencies in operations, creating less paperwork (e.g. Bernie portal, online support work requests).

Strategy 3	Improve internal IT coordination and external vendor services.
Tactics	1. Implement IT security, governance and standards recommendations from IT strategic planning process. 2. Engage external IT vendor and explore options to improve service. 3. Establish organization-wide standards for purchasing hardware, software and licenses. 4. Implement an asset tracking system. 5. Explore a suitable customer relationship management system that supports communications and partnership goals. 6. Offer staff training on software, hardware and A/V systems.

Strategy 4	Enhance finance and revenue diversification infrastructure.
Tactics	1. Implement quarterly department revenue forecast and system to track contract/technical assistance requests from local governments.

	2. Pursue business development opportunities, grants and other external funding sources by department (e.g. EDA grant for transit-oriented development, intelligent transportation systems plan). 3. Coordinate with Centralina Foundation to pursue funding for Goal #3 health and resilience activities. 4. Pursue partnerships with outside organizations to support workplan strategies and tactics. 5. Utilize AccuFund core evaluation to fully utilize the various features currently not used or needing improvement. 6. Streamline AccuFund data to reduce detail overload on reports and ensure better utilization of subledgers. 7. Offer AccuFund report writing training and implementation to improve functionality and value of report output.

Strategy 5	Implement and enforce a consistent contracting process.
Tactics	1. Clarify contract review and signature process and provide training to staff on procedures. 2. Implement e-signature process. 3. Implement contract status tracking system. 4. Work with attorney to clarify by-laws on approval thresholds for certain types of contracts.

Strategy 6	Complete name change to Centralina Regional Council and promote with stakeholders.
Tactics	1. Work with attorney to complete a "Doing Business As" name change as an interim step. 2. Update legal documents, accounts and other business documents to implement full name change following Board of Delegates approval.

Strategy 7	Enhance Centralina's external communications activities and the internal infrastructure to support it.

Tactics	1. Complete rebrand and website project culminating in the August 12 launch event. 2. Coordinate with departments to design and update sales sheets, brochures and other collateral to meet new brand standards. 3. Pursue activities and develop publications that focus on impact and storytelling (e.g. revised annual report, success stories, social media). 4. Develop policies and offer staff training for website updates, usage brand standards, social media and other areas to guide organization-wide adoption.

Strategy 8	Coordinate with Broadcom building management on safety improvements and operations.
Tactics	1. Conduct monthly meetings with building management to coordinate on ongoing issues and special projects, including Americans with Disabilities Act compliance improvements. 2. Coordinate on COVID-19 building response and recovery, including planning for future shutdowns. 3. Create opportunities for greater collaboration between building tenants (e.g. safety training, audit, etc.).

Strategy 9	Determine organization's space/building needs in light of upcoming lease terms, COVID-19 and teleworking experience.
Tactics	1. Review best practices and latest industry thinking in office space design and teleworking policies post-COVID-19. 2. Engage realtor to explore alternative locations that meet financial and operational needs. 3. Utilize Culture & Development Team to engage staff.

Strategy 10	Strengthen agency compliance and awareness for the privacy and security issues surrounding the Medicare/Medicaid reimbursable programs conducted by Centralina Area Agency on Aging (AAA) and associated confidentiality in all services provided by Centralina.

Tactics	1. Ensure through the Brighflow PII portal that 100% of aging and assigned finance/admin staff associated with the Medicare/Medicaid reimbursement programs delivered by Centralina AAA have scores greater than 700 on security tests and ongoing satisfactory scores for additional micro-testing, phishing and other related scam training. 2. Conduct annual assessment of the HIPPA preparedness across the organization. 3. Update, as necessary, the HIPPA addendum to Policies and Procedures for Centralina/Centralina AAA. 4. Update, as necessary, the Area Plan strategic plans associated with HIPAA compliance. 5. Maintain encrypted email/fax capacity for incoming and outgoing correspondence for staff associated with Medicare, Medicaid and Medicare Advantage reimbursement programs.

Reporting Our Progress

On a quarterly basis, staff will share updates with the Board of Delegates on our progress related to the strategies and tactics associated with each goal. The workplan will also inform how the organization prepares the required Annual Report. Each department works with various performance indicators and metrics based on the requirements of various funding sources. As a whole, Centralina seeks to define its impact on the individuals, communities and region we serve.

