Centralina Regional Council

2024 – 2025 Workplan

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

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.

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Continue implementation of high-priority CONNECT Beyond implementation items including the Advancing the Plan Committee, Seamless CONNECTIONS initiative and increasing cross-system coordination among human services transit providers.
2. Launch a regional Transportation Demand Management program that is sustainable, affordable, accessible, known and convenient for all.
3. Complete the COORDINATE Our Future regional land use analysis for travel demand modeling and facilitate CommunityViz trainings.
4. Disseminate the Transportation Guide for Older Adults and People with Disabilities throughout region to older adults and Centralina communities.
5. Provide at least four transportation related training events to those serving older and disabled adults such as transit providers or aging service providers, older adults, caregivers and people with disabilities.
6. Determine opportunities for training, innovative financing and/or consortium applications for Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Inflation Reduction Act and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.
7. Launch the initial activities of the Centralina Integrated Mobility Center.
8. Increase communication of regional mobility and CONNECT Beyond implementation activities through website updates and an annual report.

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

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Launch a regional brownfields program to support community redevelopment, adaptive reuse of buildings, environmental assessment and future clean up.

2. Develop grant-required Comprehensive Climate Action Plan that aligns to local and regional priorities and outlines feasible implementation strategies.

3. Engage and support water groups (e.g. Lake Wylie Marine Commission, the South Fork River Health Committee, High Rock Lake, Catawba-Wateree Water Management Group) to strengthen regional collaboration on infrastructure, management and sustainability.
4. *(If funded)* Launch the next phase of the Regional Resilience Collaborative to track county performance of the Regional Resilience Roadmap, support the completion of locally requested plans and offer FEMA Public Assistance Administration training.

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

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Support the implementation of the *Prosperity for All Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)* through the management of thematic working groups and tracking implementation activities via quarterly progress reports.
2. Contribute to the EDA-funded Carolinas Innovation Center for Optics and Metrology (CICOM) Tech Hub Grant by engaging regional stakeholders to create a talent development strategy.
3. Evaluate existing certified career pathways to determine if expansion is needed or if new career pathways should be developed and formally submitted for certification.
4. Meet quarterly with local businesses, economic developers and education leaders in each county to identify and recommend industry-specific talent retain / retrain approaches.
5. Participate in quarterly meetings between the region's three workforce board business service leaders to increase region-wide collaboration with industry partners.
6. Partner with seven participating counties to develop the Institute of Emerging Issues (IEI) at NC State BAND-NC funded Regional Digital Inclusion blueprint plan and curate regional implementation strategies to increase local affordability and access.
7. Develop a Regional Digital Inclusion interactive webpage to serve as a repository for County Digital Inclusion plans, information and resources.

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

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Utilize the regional data portal to proactively identify trends and produce a monthly snapshot, infographic or article for the *Central Lines* newsletter.
2. Promote and update the customized data and mapping tools available on the Centralina Data Portal including CEDS Data Dashboard and Prosperity Profiles, Transit Equity Map and Resilience and Equity Hazard Assessment Tool (REHAT).
3. Utilize data and original analysis to inform regional convenings and activities such as the economic forecast briefing, state of the region report and Board meetings.

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

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Develop the federal advocacy agenda for the 119th Congress and relationships with new Congressional representatives and their staff.
2. Develop the state advocacy agenda for the 2025 long session and continue Raleigh Relations efforts to build relationships with representatives and their staff.
3. Collaborate with federal and state relations consultants to provide Centralina members with legislative and policy analysis via monthly "Capitol Corner"' articles in the *Central Lines* newsletter.
4. Collaborate with NC Association of Regional Councils of Government (NCARCOG) on the 2025 state-wide advocacy agenda and COG funding requests.

Core Services

- Regional planning and implementation on growth, mobility, economic development, alternative fuels, community resilience and digital inclusion.
- Centralina Clean Fuels Coalition, including the Department of Energy supported Clean Cities Energy and Environmental Justice Initiative, that supports partnership building with groups who advocate for environmental justice in underserved communities.
- Federal grant information and administration for economic development (EDA), Southeast Cresent Regional Commission (SCRC), Congressional Community Projects Funding (CPF) and workforce development programming and career services (WIOA).
- Regional Federal Advocacy and Raleigh Relations Initiatives.

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

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

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Promote availability of advisory services to local governments in planning for housing diversity, attainability and equitability, model zoning code language and minimum code enforcement.
2. Promote technical assistance services to smaller local governments including strategic planning, communications and engagement, operational and HR policy review and administrative services.
3. Provide technical assistance to local governments to support hazard mitigation, recovery and resilience planning.
4. Support local Energy Efficiency Block Grant implementation through regional education, low-moderate income qualification technical assistance and non-profit support.
5. Increase awareness among local government stakeholders of aging issues and provide at least one aging sensitivity training to a government organization.

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

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Implement the North Mecklenburg Housing Preservation Initiative in coordination with local governments and non-profit partners.
2. Conduct pilot projects with four to eight employment, healthcare and education centers in the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization area to develop and implement Transportation Demand Management tools and strategies.
3. Conduct at least four walkability audits around fixed-route transit stops to support safe, accessible mobility.
4. Provide on-demand support, expertise and training to local governments seeking to implement actions that support regional plans related to electric vehicles and infrastructure, energy efficiency and alternative fuels, mobility and transportation trends.
5. *(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.

6. *(If funded)* Assist local governments in implementing energy efficient programs or projects under the Climate Pollution Reduction program, with funding provided to the state of North Carolina.

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

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Expand outreach to leaders in smaller local governments to exchange best practices and scalable solutions through activities and the Small Towns Thrive initiative.
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. Host annual 2025 Aging Conference for aging and healthcare service providers, professionals and volunteers.
4. Develop and pilot Digital Navigator program to provide digital skills building to older adults and professional working with older adults across the region.

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

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Support local governments in the annual reporting and final close out of federal ARPA funding.
2. Coordinate across departments to develop a multi-tiered approach to providing grant information, advisory and preparation services to local governments with varying needs and local capacities.
3. *(If funded)* Provide local government financial support services that meet the needs of Centralina members.

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

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Coordinate across GAME and Centralina Workforce Development Board to develop programming and resources for local governments that supports and/or fill gaps in employee attraction and retention efforts.
2. Expand awareness of Centralina Workforce Development Board services and its NCWorks Career Centers 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

- Regional groups management: Regional Managers, Mobility Management Committee, NC 73 Council on Planning, etc.
- 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.

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

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Launch new home improvement and safety "Choosing Home" initiative focusing on at-risk and vulnerable older adults in all nine counties.

2. Administer Veterans-directed home and community-based services program in partnership with Salisbury Veterans Administration Medical Center.
3. Procure a registered dietician consultant and provide one Medicare approved Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support workshop.
4. *(If funded)* Develop regionwide Digital Champion program for older adults that supports their digital literacy of mobility, public safety and social isolation services, information and supports.

Strategy 2: Pursue creative funding, program and service adaptations that respond to changes in available federal funding and the needs of historically underserved populations.

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Refine business development strategy for aging program sustainability.
2. Lead engagement of Centralina Workforce Development Board, Workforce Consortium, Equus service provider and other stakeholders to determine best strategy for utilization of federal funds and deployment of workforce services and locations in the region.
3. Develop funding strategy to supplement declining federal funds and bolster workforce services and programming with discretionary grants and private sector collaborations.
4. Expand community health worker outreach efforts to underserved, non-English speaking older adults in the region with a focus on chronic disease prevention and management.
5. Connect community health workers with local NCWorks Career Centers to better inform individuals of assessment, training and employment services available.
6. Develop and promote services to justice involved individuals, veterans, opportunity youth and non-traditional populations through local NCWorks Career Centers and our community partners.
7. *(If funded)* 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.

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.

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

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Update three-year revenue forecast model to plan for resources needed to meet the organization's goals for growth, compensation and fund balance.
2. Develop multi-year strategy for discretionary grants that addresses the remaining state and federal funding opportunities (ARPA, BIL, IRA, CHIPS).
3. Develop organization-wide policies and procedures for grant strategy, development and administration.

Strategy 2: Develop strong systems that support talent development, compensation and operational efficiency.

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Complete leadership-level succession planning activities to identify critical positions and opportunities for staff development of core leadership competencies.
2. Review and update job descriptions for all positions in preparation for a future pay and classification study.
3. Transition HR forms to secured Cognito system to improve efficiency and decision making.
4. Enhance information dissemination and staff training on key personnel and operational policies and procedures.

Strategy 3: Enhance our OneCentralina culture of innovation, collaboration, connection and service.

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Lead monthly *OneCentralina Connect* engagement activities focused on strengthening employee belonging, appreciation and recognition.
2. Support *OneCentralina Serves* by organizing Centralina-led volunteer projects in the region and logging service hours for individual volunteer activities.
3. Expand professional development programming to offer ongoing support for supervisors in the practical application of knowledge and engage a new cohort of emerging leaders in the program.
4. Enhance wellness programming by offering Centralina-led activities, promoting available services/information and encouraging department specific work agreements that support flexibility.

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

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Enhance communication of regional initiatives at various stages of planning and implementation through website enhancements, media outreach, success stories and reports.
2. Implement a dynamic system for managing department communication needs that includes the identification of specific strategies for priority projects or initiatives.
3. Assess and update Centralina website to account for new initiatives and user needs.
4. Launch the new Centralina Area Agency on Aging website and a redesign process for the CONNECT Beyond website.
5. Increase internal awareness of Centralina's projects and service offerings so that employees can become stronger ambassadors of the organization.

Strategy 5: Manage Centralina assets and information technology systems through proactive planning and risk management.

FY24 - 25 Priority Actions

1. Assess and improve as needed current IT policies/procedures, asset management system and staff training approaches.

2. Strengthen the security culture by enhancing staff training, developing a cyber incident response plan and collaborating with the managed service provider to make the necessary technical adjustments to operations.
3. Evaluate organizational needs for telecommunications services, financial management software, a customer relationship management (CRM) system and event management software to inform future procurement processes.
4. Support the transition to a fully cloud-based file storage system, including a clear structure and staff education to ensure accessibility, security and compliance with applicable regulations.
5. Develop Artificial Intelligence usage policy and test AI tools to determine the best fit for the organization's needs.



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