



CONNECT Beyond

A Regional Mobility Initiative

Plan Implementation Update

CONNECT Beyond partners have seamlessly moved from plan development to implementation. This year, we're focusing on laying the foundation for long-term change, while also working to improve choices today. Here are a few of the project priorities that we are working on:

Implementation Activity	Project's Next Steps	When?
Regional Funding & Partnership Working Group	Relaunch the regional committee to evaluate funding and partnership options and work with local, <u>state</u> and federal partners to assess CONNECT Beyond recommendations.	Kickoff later this spring
Mobility for Rural and Small Communities	Seek funds to support mobility connections in rural and small communities. This could include a pilot program to develop a rural mobility hub – a place where different travel options come together – to be a demonstration for future projects.	Now through next year
Mobility Support for Major Employers and Employment Centers	Secure state and local funding for regional program to engage employers and workers to understand needs and develop program structure that will improve employee transportation to major employment hubs, like industrial parks.	Now through next year
Emerging Technology Activities	Refresh the Connected & Autonomous Vehicle (CAV) Plan for the region and update the CAV Task Force work plan for 2022-2023. Centralina Clean Fuels Coalition continues to coordinate with state and federal agencies on developing EV corridors.	Now through next year
Transit Agency Coordination	Support coordination among the 17 transit agencies to implement key plan recommendations , including human services transit planning, technology and software integration (e.g., scheduling, route planning). Initiate and conduct a Regional Fare Study	Now through next year
Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Coordination	Continue to work closely with the four federally designated TPOs on incorporating plan recommendations into long-range transportation plans, identifying opportunities to support projects related to CONNECT Beyond recommendations and leveraging forthcoming Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding.	Now through next year

Mobility Move Spotlight:

Expand Mobility Choices

Each quarterly CONNECT Beyond newsletter will highlight a specific mobility move, the five categories of recommendations that will transform the way people travel around our region. In this issue we will focus on **Expanding Mobility Choices**.



Our region is projected to experience exponential population growth over the next 20 years, and as a result, there will be a need for increased mobility. This mobility move focuses on how our regional partners can work together to expand transportation demand management (TDM) strategies, enhance the experience of using our region's total mobility network services, embrace emerging mobility trends and implement a network of mobility hubs to support our region's total mobility network.

See the Plan's
Recommendations for
Expanding Mobility Choices

Watch a Short Video to
Learn More About
Expanding Mobility Choices

Featured Article:
All About Mobility Hubs



Mobility Hubs are places of connectivity where people can conveniently access multiple travel options. A mobility hub is a focal connection point and can signify a downtown, major activity center, transit station or stop location where multiple different mobility options meet up and allow a user to transfer from one mode to another. Mobility hubs offer a range of integrated mobility services and supporting amenities/technologies to facilitate efficient connections and make trip planning easier. Continue reading to learn about the different mobility hub types, mobility hub amenities, recommended locations and examples from around the country.

[Read the Full Article](#)

Learn More at the June 9th Centralina Learns Event: Creating Mobility Friendly Places

Each community in our region experiences different land use and development patterns, community characteristics and transportation systems. Therefore, mobility-supportive development strategies must be applied at multiple contexts at different scales. This Centralina Learns session will focus on corridors, centers and sites and highlight good practices for providing a high-quality mobility network that is convenient, safe and accessible so that community members are encouraged to walk, bike or ride public transit rather than relying solely on private automobiles.

[Register Here](#)

Grant Opportunities

On March 7, 2022, FTA announced approximately \$1.1 billion available for fiscal year 2022 grants to help modernize bus fleets and bus facilities across the country, including to help transit agencies purchase or lease **low- or no-emission vehicles** that use advanced technologies to help improve air quality and combat climate change. Grant due day is May 31, 2022.

- View the [notice of funding opportunity and webinar dates/information](#)
 - Learn more about [Zero-Emission Fleet Transition Plans](#)
 - [FY22 NOFO Webinar Presentation](#)
 - [Recording of All Applicants Webinar for FY22 Low-No & Bus Program Combined NOFO](#)
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The Latest News Around the Region

Centralina Cleans Fuels: Tuesday, May 17 Clean Transportation Virtual Feedback Meeting

Don't miss your opportunity to engage with the NC Clean Transportation Plan update, including small group access to Jennifer Weiss with NCDOT, the lead for this updated plan. This is a critical opportunity to let the state lead know what the Centralina region needs for the future of your fleets, infrastructure, technology, assistance and support. By attending this meeting, you will receive the opportunity to provide updated plans for your fleet or organization's clean transportation efforts, make your input on what needs and recommendations the state should focus on and finally, provide guidance to next steps and the plan's working groups to focus on key topics for our region. [Learn More](#)

CONNECT Beyond Receives National Award

CONNECT Beyond received a **National Recognition Award** in the American Council of Engineering Companies' (ACEC) 2022 Engineering Excellence Awards competition, the "Academy Awards of the engineering industry." The national recognition award is a prestigious distinction, honoring projects that have achieved top awards for excellence at the state level. Congratulations to the CONNECT Beyond project team! More about ACEC and awards: <https://www.acec.org>

Support for CONNECT Beyond

The **Rocky River Rural Planning Organization** endorsed the CONNECT Beyond plan and recommendations in March. Additionally, the **Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization** recognized the completion of the CONNECT Beyond plan at its March meeting. Thank you for your support and we look forward to working together.

New Hybrid Electric Buses for the City of Concord

The City of Concord will receive funding through a Federal Transit Administration grant to buy hybrid electric diesel buses to replace older buses that have exceeded their useful life. This project will improve air quality and service reliability while reducing maintenance costs. City of Concord was one of 70 projects funded across the country – congratulations! More information [HERE](#).

Centralina Unveils PoleVolt Station with Governor Cooper and Project Partners

CONNECT Beyond recommendations include increasing our region's electric infrastructure, including innovation solutions like the PoleVolt electric charger. [Continue Reading](#)

New Transportation Quarterly Newsletter in Belmont

Belmont's Planning and Zoning Department started a quarterly transportation newsletter, "Belmont on the Move," to keep everyone informed on transportation-

related issues. The newsletter will include updates on transportation projects, notices on when to give public input on a potential project and much more. View the newsletter [HERE](#).

Sharing CONNECT Beyond

CONNECT Beyond's project team has been busy attending conferences to share lessons learned and project next steps. Recent presentations include: [North Carolina Public Transportation Association](#) Annual Conference, [North Carolina Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations](#) Annual Conference, [NC Clean Tech Summit 2022](#) and the [West Boulevard Neighborhood Association](#).

In Closing

It is exciting to see all that is happening around the region to support increased mobility and connectivity. Please let us know if you have transit related news to share! Email us at connect-beyond@centralina.org.

Thank you,

Jason Wager, AICP CEP
CONNECT Beyond Project Manager

