



# CONNECT Beyond

A Regional Mobility Initiative

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## 2023 CONNECT Beyond Annual Report

We are pleased to announce the release of the inaugural CONNECT Beyond Annual Report. This comprehensive report captures the main milestones and highlights accomplished over the last year for CONNECT Beyond Implementation. Thank you to our partners and stakeholders for maintaining the momentum and making 2023 a great year for our region's first-of-its-kind mobility plan. Here's to more exciting work in 2024!



[View the Report](#)

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## Upcoming Events

### Centralina Events

Centralina Regional Council has some exciting sessions coming up focused on Transportation Demand Management and how we connect Clean Transportation with Affordable Housing. Click the links below to register to attend!

**May 16th from 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. (Virtual session)**

[Centralina Learns: Transportation Demand Management for Workforce & Economic Development](#)

**June 4th from 1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. (Virtual session)**

[Centralina Learns: Connecting Clean Transportation & Affordable](#)

## Regional Events

Join the North Carolina Public Transportation Association for a fun-filled week of networking, professional development and competitive fun! Click the link to learn more and register!

**April 5th - 10th**

[NC Public Transportation Association – Annual Conference, Expo, Roadeo & Golf Tournament](#)

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## Project Updates

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### Advancing the Plan Work Continues in 2024



The Advancing the Plan Committee, an official sub-committee of Centralina Regional Council's Board of Delegates, reconvened in February to continue its work on regional collaboration and providing guidance on CONNECT Beyond implementation activities. The Committee's goals for 2024 include to:

- Refine the preferred regional coordination model to strengthen broader support and incorporate local input
- Champion short-term wins for regional collaboration and support for CONNECT Beyond implementation
- Advocate and collaborate with local, state, federal and business community partners to advance next steps for regional coordination

[Learn More About the Committee](#)

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# Plan in Action: Local Successes

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## Connecting the Matthews Community

The Town of Matthews, in collaboration with Centralina's Community Economic Development team (CED), recently completed a sidewalk extension project near the Town's popular downtown district. The sidewalk extension provided critical connectivity for residents and helped to ensure public safety. Providing safe areas for pedestrians is a key ingredient to creating more [mobility-friendly places](#) under CONNECT Beyond's plan.

[Read the Full Success Story](#)

## Anson County Receives Funding for Electric Charging Station

Anson County recently installed a new electric vehicle charging station after qualifying for funding provided through the Volkswagen Group settlement program. The charging station will help to increase the clean transportation infrastructure investment in the state, which is especially important in underserved counties such as Anson County. The [Centralina Clean Fuels Coalition](#) assisted Anson County with their grant application and emphasized the infrastructure's role in bolstering economic investment in the county.

[Read More About The Project's Success](#)

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## Resources & Grants

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### Safe Streets 4 All (SS4A) Grant

The SS4A program supports the development of a comprehensive safety action plan that identifies the most significant roadway safety concerns in a community and the implementation of projects and strategies to address those issues. The program provides funding for two types of grants: Planning and Demonstration Grants and Implementation Grants. Both have their own unique deadlines.

**Deadline #1 for Planning and Demonstration Grants is April 4, 2024.** [Click here for more information on the program and how to apply.](#)

### Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program

This competitive Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) grant program focuses on building networks of connected bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, including providing better trail networks

between communities. As part of the program, FHWA will award competitive grants to help communities plan, design or construct safe and connected active transportation networks, such as sidewalks, bikeways and trails. These essential networks help connect residents to popular destinations, such as schools, workplaces, residences, businesses, recreation areas and medical facilities within a community or metropolitan region.

### **Final Application Deadline: June 17, 2024**

Visit this [webpage](#) to learn more about the program and see how your community may be able to apply for funding.

### **NCDOT On-Demand Microtransit Report**

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) recently compiled a report on the state of microtransit adoption and operations across the state. The report was completed in October 2023 and was released online in December. [Click here to view the full report.](#)

## **In Closing: Sharing CONNECT Beyond**

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](mailto:connect-beyond@centralina.org).

Thank you,

Jason Wager, AICP CEP  
CONNECT Beyond Project Manager



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