



# CONNECT Beyond

A Regional Mobility Initiative

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One common theme in the CONNECT Beyond plan is creating more efficient and safer ways for people to move around our region. Key recommendations around emerging technologies and [expanding mobility choices](#) exemplify this theme and are the focus of this quarterly newsletter. From creating transit coordination efficiencies with new technologies to making pedestrians safer with Vision Zero plans, our region is moving CONNECT Beyond's plan forward. Make sure to check out the Resources/Grants section below and see how your community can join in this work.

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## Plan Recommendation Spotlight: Transportation Demand Management

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October 2023 marks the two-year anniversary of the adoption of the [CONNECT Beyond Regional Mobility Plan](#), and during this time focus, has been on the implementation of the plan's key near-term [recommendations](#). One of the most important and impactful recommendations is the development of a regional transportation demand management (TDM) plan and program. Centralina is leading the effort on this recommendation.

Please see our latest [article](#) for an update on the regional plan development process.

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## Hearing from our Stakeholders – Take our TDM Survey!

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Over the past few months, the TDM project team has been holding stakeholder engagement meetings to gather inputs for the regional TDM plan. For those of you who have participated in these meetings, thank you for your time. For those we have not reached yet, we would like to get your input with the survey below.

This is an opportunity to share your insights on transportation barriers, possible TDM solutions and TDM strategies for different community types. **We will be holding this survey open from now until December 15th – please take the time to share your thoughts.**

[Take The Survey](#)

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## Upcoming Events

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### **Centralina Mobility Management Group**

Tuesday, December 12th, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (On Zoom).

For more information or to join to the meeting, please contact Katie Kutcher at [kkutcher@centralina.org](mailto:kkutcher@centralina.org)

## Climate Action 2023: Regional Stakeholder Summit

Friday, December 8th, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

10735 David Taylor Drive, Suite 250, Charlotte NC 28262

Click [here](#) to learn more and register to attend virtually or in-person.

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## Project Updates

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### Seamless CONNECTIONs



Several CONNECT Beyond recommendations related to emerging technologies call for regional coordination on the deployment of these technologies to improve connectivity and service. One group working on this topic is the **Connected Autonomous Vehicles (CAV) Task Force**, which meets quarterly to discuss the current and future impacts of CAV technologies to our region. Recently, Centralina convened the CAV Task Force on November 6th in conjunction with a demonstration of the [CASSI shuttle program at UNC Charlotte](#). In addition to taking a ride on the CASSI shuttle, CAV Task Force members heard presentations on the future capabilities of these automated vehicle technologies and how to prepare for them.

For more information about the CASSI program, visit [NCDOT's project page](#).

For more information on other CAV projects in the state, check out [Cary's Bond Park Community Center project](#) and [NC A&T State University's Aggie Auto program](#).

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## Resources/Grants

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### Upcoming: Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program

For those interested in funding active transportation projects, keep an eye on the [Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program](#), a competitive grant program created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The focus of the funding will be on connecting destinations and communities with active

transportation and integrating active transportation into transit services. The NOFO is expected Fall 2023.

## **NCDOT Interim Design Safety Pilot Program**

The NCDOT Interim Safety Pilot Project deploys low-cost, interim design safety countermeasures on state owned and maintained roadways. This program emphasizes safety countermeasures that can be deployed rapidly to protect pedestrians and bicyclists. Check out the [final report](#).

## **National League of Cities Resource**

Check out this [new resource](#) to help applicants put together competitive applications for federal US Department of Transportation grants.

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# **Plan in Action: Local Successes**

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## **2023 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Recipients**

Congratulations to the **City of Gastonia** and the **City of Monroe** for being 2023 SS4A grant recipients. Both jurisdictions received grant funds to develop safety action plans – a key element to helping communities plan and design safer streets and a part of USDOT's [National Roadway Safety Strategy](#). Visit [the USDOT website](#) for more information about the SS4A Grant Program. The next round of grant applications is expected to open in February 2024.

## **Climate Pollution Reduction Grant: Call for Interest**

Centralina Regional Council received a \$1 million planning grant through the U.S EPA's **Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program**, a two-stage grant program that includes funding for noncompetitive planning grants and competitive implementation grants. Our staff will serve as the lead entity for the 13-county, bi-state area and will prepare a series of plans designed to support local needs and priorities toward improving air quality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. **Many of the CONNECT Beyond recommendations could be supported through this program.** We encourage all of our communities and transportation planning organizations to submit their projects to be included in this plan. Click [HERE](#) to complete the survey.

This program was also touched on in a recent Centralina Learns session. Learn more about the session's main takeaways through this [recent article](#).

## **Regional Infrastructure Accelerator Grant Announcement**

In October, Centralina learned it was a recipient of a Regional Infrastructure Accelerator grant from the US Department of Transportation (US DOT). Centralina received \$1.75M in funding for CONNECT Beyond implementation, including establishing an *Integrated Mobility Center* and building out project service lines for finance innovation, pipeline project facilitation and transit orientated development. [Read the full USDOT press release](#).

# In Closing: Sharing CONNECT Beyond

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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 any news or updates to share! Email us at [connect-beyond@centralina.org](mailto:connect-beyond@centralina.org).

Thank you,

Jason Wager  
Project Manager, CONNECT Beyond



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