CONNECT CENTRALINA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



CONNECT Centralina Transportation Demand Management Plan

AUGUST 2024

CENTRALINA REGIONAL COUNCIL

Integrated Mobility Division
N.C. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONNECT CENTRALINA

Centralina Regional Council (Centralina) is a lead sponsor and implementor of the CONNECT Beyond Regional Mobility plan (2021) for the greater Charlotte area. This effort created a shared regional vision with specific recommendations for attaining a reliable, efficient, and well-connected transportation system that benefits everyone. Developing a regional Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program was a key recommendation of the CONNECT Beyond Plan. Through the CONNECT Beyond plan development process, Centralina was identified to serve as a lead agency for hosting a future regional TDM program, called **CONNECT Centralina**.

WHAT IS TDM?

Transportation Demand Management is a broad term that includes any type of program or infrastructure that helps people shift their travel behavior away from single-occupancy vehicles (SOVs) and toward healthier, more sustainable travel choices, like walking, biking, carpooling, riding transit, making shorter trips, remote/flex-work, and travel during off-peak hours. TDM also helps communities meet goals related to creating walkable and bikeable places, supporting business and job growth, addressing public health challenges, reinforcing sustainability measures, and providing access for all.



Key CONNECT Beyond Recommendation

“DEVELOP A REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TDM) PLAN

TIMEFRAME: IMMEDIATE.

CONNECT Beyond recommends our regional partners work together to develop a regional Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan.”[1]

WHY NOW?

Centralina’s region has been one of the fastest growing metro regions in the country over the past decade and is continuing to experience rapid growth. The region is at a crossroads. Elected officials, policymakers, local planners, and residents are involved in frequent conversations about navigating the region’s transportation challenges. Decisions made now will shape the region’s mobility future for decades.

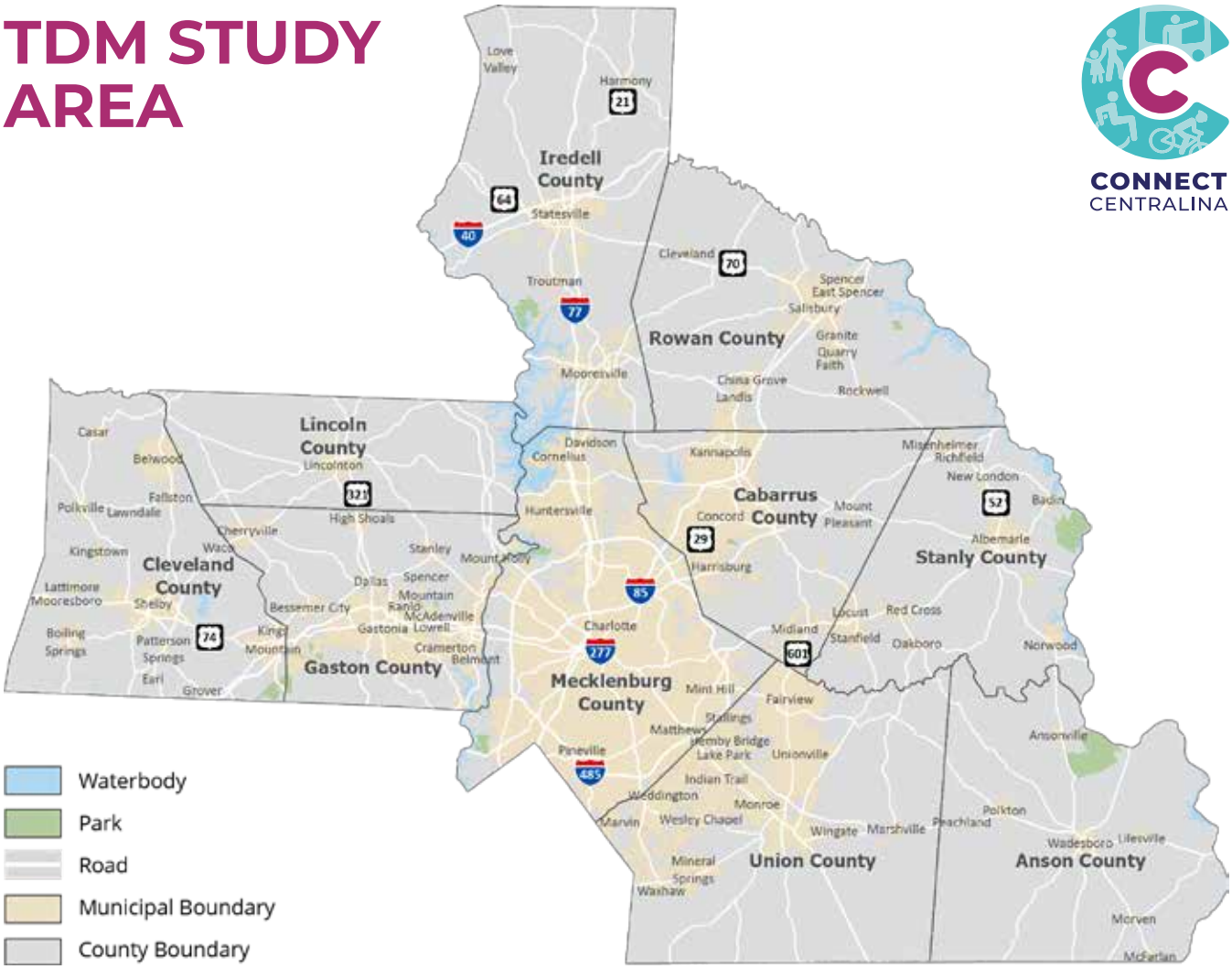
The transportation challenges facing the Charlotte region include:

- Providing transportation choices that keep pace with growth;
- Serving an increasing diversity of transportation needs and preferences;
- Prioritizing safety, health, and livability, particularly for the region’s most vulnerable residents and roadway users;
- Understanding how to maximize existing transportation assets and reduce the strain on road networks;
- Navigating a post-Covid reset of travel behavior and mobility expectations;
- Implementing policies and regulations that manage the transportation impacts of new development; and
- Addressing the public health and climate impacts of air pollution from the transportation sector.

Through a coordinated, region-wide effort, the CONNECT Centralina TDM program can help shift regional travel behaviors to support a more resilient, efficient, and sustainable mobility system. This approach complements ongoing regional efforts to advance large-scale investments in roads, transit, and other infrastructure.

[1] ***CONNECT Beyond Regional Mobility Plan.*** *(pg. 59). Centralina Regional Council & Metropolitan Transit Commission. October 2021.*

TDM STUDY AREA



CONNECT CENTRALINA

With the largest population in North Carolina and the most significant congestion issues, the Charlotte metropolitan region could benefit the most from TDM strategies...

(North Carolina Dept. of Transportation (NCDOT) Statewide TDM Strategic Plan Update | 2018)

OUR PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process for the CONNECT Centralina TDM plan was built upon the extensive engagement conducted for the CONNECT Beyond Regional Mobility Plan. The regional engagement behind CONNECT Beyond resulted in a clear recommendation for the development of the CONNECT Centralina TDM program.

Like CONNECT Beyond, this TDM plan and program development was a stakeholder-driven process. The planning process was informed by four primary audiences:

1. **The Project Management Team (PMT),**
2. **The Program Development Steering Committee,**
3. **Stakeholder Groups, and**
4. **Focus Groups.**



TDM Program Development Recap

3 TDM Focus Groups

4 NCDOT Coordination Meetings

6 Stakeholder Meetings

5 Interviews/Case Studies of Peer Programs

8 Steering Committee Meetings

12 Interagency Project Management Team Meetings

CONNECT Centralina TDM Program Vision Statement:

The greater Charlotte region is a place where sustainable and affordable travel options are accessible, known, and convenient for all.

TDM STRATEGIES

After confirming the program vision and goals, Centralina's TDM project team developed a menu of TDM strategies for consideration. TDM strategies represent actions that the TDM program will pursue to influence regional travel behaviors and support the goals of this plan.

Informed by the peer agency benchmarking, the focus groups/ stakeholder meetings, and the TDM Steering Committee, the TDM project team grouped the large menu of TDM strategies into 4 primary categories (listed below) and identified high priority strategies for early implementation (listed at right).



Education & Marketing



Regional Partnerships & Coordination



Incentives & Facilitation



Technical Assistance

9 HIGH PRIORITY TDM STRATEGIES



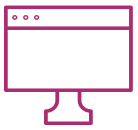
Launch a Regional Marketing Campaign



Pursue Dedicated Funding & Grants



Form a Regional TDM Advisory Committee



Develop a Travel Options/TDM Program Website



Promote Carpool Matching



Promote Vanpool



Support Expansion of the Emergency Ride Home Program



Support the Development of Transportation Management Associations (TMA's)



Provide Workplace Travel Resources & Planning

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

Based on feedback from project partners, the program management recommendations, the identified high priority TDM strategies, and benchmarking against peer programs, the project team developed an action plan for implementation of a TDM program in Centralina's region. Action items are listed by program year to provide staff clear steps for launching and implementing a TDM program.

PROGRAM LAUNCH AND TRANSITION YEAR
(FISCAL YEAR 2025)

Focus: Leverage existing staff resources to launch the program and secure additional funding.

- **Find a sustainable program funding "cocktail"**
- **Present the TDM plan to key partners**
- **Use pilot projects to deploy and demonstrate high priority TDM Strategies**
- **Launch the TDM Advisory Committee**

YEAR ONE
(FISCAL YEAR 2026)

Focus: Build awareness of the TDM program and establish key partners.

YEAR TWO
(FISCAL YEAR 2027)

Focus: Build internal capacity and amplify your message.

YEAR THREE
(FISCAL YEAR 2028)

Focus: Target worksites and broaden external partnerships.

YEARS FOUR+
(FISCAL YEAR 2029+)

Focus: Expand the program to reach more people and places.

HIRE A FULL-TIME TDM PROGRAM MANAGER

This should be done as soon as funding allows (not defined by a fiscal year). Dedicated staff capacity is necessary for the TDM program to have the desired reach and impact. This starts with hiring a full-time TDM program manager.



CENTRALINA REGIONAL COUNCIL

CRTPO charlotte regional transportation planning organization

GASTON-CLEVELAND-LINCOLN MPO Metropolitan Planning Organization

CITY OF CHARLOTTE CHARLOTTE DEPARTMENT of TRANSPORTATION

CATS CHARLOTTE AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM

Integrated Mobility Division N.C. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

KITTELSON & ASSOCIATES

Foursquare ITP

RS&H

www.connect-beyond.com

AUGUST 2024