



Centralina Council of Governments

2013-14 ANNUAL REPORT

The Centralina Council of Governments (CCOG) is a regional council of cities, towns and counties working together to help local governments in this region to grow jobs and the economy, improve quality of life and control the cost of government. Centralina provides services that enable local governments to address the local and regional challenges that affect them; get up-to-date regional, state and federal information and best practices; save money; access grant funds, and better position themselves for long-term economic health. We are one of 16 state-designated councils of government with this responsibility in North Carolina.

This Fiscal Year 2013-2014 Annual Report provides a financial report, preceded by program highlights of the ways CCOG is responding to the needs of our member governments, their citizens and the region.

By the Numbers

25 public events were held this year to spread the word about available benefits under the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA)

145 seniors learned new skills for future work through Senior Community Services Employment Program

1,200 individuals participated in 100 evidence-based program workshops that are designed to strengthen independent living, health management and self-advocacy skills for older and disabled adults

1,686 hours of direct services were provided to the region's residents and families through the Ombudsman program

16,000 residents residing in regional long term care facilities and over 5,000 clients and consumers have been served by the Ombudsman program

AGING SERVICES

As the Area Agency on Aging (AAA), Centralina plans and provides comprehensive services to address the needs of the region's older population. Centralina AAA has been on the cutting edge in the development of senior-friendly planning initiatives that improve quality of life and help control the cost of government. This year's program highlights include:

■ **Volunteer Transportation Services (VTS)** – The Volunteer Transportation Services program was developed to provide transportation to older adults, people with disabilities and veterans in the Centralina Region through a network of certified volunteers. The program reflects a grassroots effort to fill transportation gaps for those who do not qualify for existing services and relies on the help of volunteers from faith-based community groups, civic clubs and organizations, private companies, and government agencies to ensure the success of the program. The program began recruiting and training volunteer drivers in April of 2014 and by the end of June had trained 12 volunteer drivers in Lincoln County.

■ **Evidence-based Health Programs (EBHP)** – AAA's evidence-based programs focus on strengthening independent living, self-management skills and guidance and training to individuals learning to take charge of their own health. This year Centralina worked with a network of over 45 partners and 175 volunteers to make Centralina's EBHP the most successful of its kind in North Carolina. Training was provided in more than 100 workshops. About 1,200 individuals across our region participated in workshops that addressed chronic disease self-management and falls prevention, helping them to learn how to improve their quality of life, increase activity, and remain productive in the community.

■ **Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP)** – This program is a community service and work-based job training program for workers, aged 55 and older. The program provides training for low-income, unemployed seniors. SCSEP participants gain work experience in a variety of community service activities at non-profit and public facilities, allowing them to enhance skills and provide needed services. Participants work an average of 20 hours a week, and are paid minimum wage. This training serves as a bridge to unsubsidized employment opportunities. Enrollment priority is given to veterans and qualified spouses. This year, 145 seniors participated in the program and learned new skills for future work.

■ **Regional Long Term Care Ombudsman** – The Ombudsman program advocates for residents and helps resolve issues related to the long term care facilities in the Centralina region. These regional advocates help control the cost of government by offering local intervention and problem-solving skills that avoid the more costly regulatory intervention by a team of state regulators. Serving over 16,000 residents residing in regional long term care facilities and over 5,000 clients and consumers from the community, the Ombudsman successfully closed 315 cases, with a total of over 1,686 hours of direct services to our residents and families.

■ Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) –

Through the MIPPA grant the Centralina AAA receives funding to help Medicare beneficiaries apply for Medicare Part D Extra Help/Low-Income Subsidy (LIS) and the Medicare Savings Programs (MSPs). In its third year of grant funding, Centralina continues to spread the word about available benefits and this year worked with partners throughout the region to host 25 public events that reached 1,100 consumers.

PLANNING

CCOG staff supports communities by coordinating, introducing and implementing new initiatives relating to all aspects of planning such as: land use, pedestrian, small area and corridor plans; building healthy, lifelong communities; public engagement; board training and retreats; park, streetscape, and landscaping design; and transportation. CCOG also convenes and leads energy and environmental programs in conjunction with federal, state, and local agencies and other partners, and coordinates the Centralina Clean Fuels Coalition (CCFC) program. Significant activities in Fiscal Year 2013-14 include:

■ Regional Scenario Planning and the Preferred Growth Concept –

Planning efforts have focused on the extensive public engagement required to develop the region's top priorities related to growth. Building on those priorities, a regional scenario planning model was built and calibrated to model alternative growth scenarios and evaluate different growth options for the region. This process allowed communities to contemplate options and see how different growth patterns impact high priority issues, such as creating transportation choice, supporting local communities, providing access to parks and recreation, housing choice, and return on public investment. More than 8,400 participants were involved in developing the Preferred Growth Concept which is one of three building blocks in the CONNECT Regional Growth Framework, along with the region's growth priorities, and a toolkit to help local governments address local challenges.

■ **Healthy Communities** – Centralina hosted the Planning for Healthy Communities conference, bringing together more than 100 planners, park and recreation officials, and public health officials from throughout the region to build local capacity for creating active, life-long communities. Direct assistance was provided to local governments to incorporate health into their plans and policies, included road diet visualizations, neighborhood bike planning, and downtown streetscape recommendations.

■ **Regional Collaboration** – The Regional Conference of Mayors, city and county managers, and regional planners meet regularly to receive updates on legislative activities that impact their community and to discuss shared challenges and experiences in an open forum. Building networks is important to helping our communities address issues and learn from others. Through these collaborative efforts, mayors and managers have become more active in building relationships with legislators through direct communication and through visits to Raleigh.

■ **Water Resources Planning** – At the Board's direction, staff has ramped up discussions focused on our region's capability to provide reliable and adequate water in the future. The focus of this work is to establish a cross-basin collaborative network, to build awareness and capacity around water issues, and to develop long term strategies to address the region's needs. The effort has included extensive engagement with regional stakeholders and a continued dialog with water "thought leaders".

By the Numbers

4 alternative growth scenarios were compared and evaluated for trade-offs based on the 10 regional growth priorities

60 metric tons of pollutants are removed from the air annually through CFAT projects

100 regional planners, park and recreation officials and public health officials attended the Healthy Communities Conference to help build healthy, life-long communities

8,400 participants were involved in developing the Regional Growth Framework and Preferred Growth Concept which is one of three building blocks in the CONNECT Regional Growth Framework



By the Numbers

4.9 million dollars from HUD and \$3 million in local in-kind public and private matching resources were awarded in November 2011 to help CONNECT Our Future build greater communities for future generations

14 counties in North and South Carolina collaborate through CONNECT Our Future to build greater communities for future generations

93 organizations have signed the agreement to join the CONNECT Consortium

■ **Clean Fuel Advanced Technology (CFAT) Program** - The CFAT program is focused on reducing transportation-related emissions in the 24 North Carolina counties that do not meet national air quality standards, many of which are located in this region. The Centralina Clean Fuels Coalition is the primary partner supporting the greater Charlotte Region for this NC Clean Energy Technology Center led initiative. The work was focused on air quality education and support of air quality improvements through funding for clean fuels and advanced technology vehicle projects. Those projects help remove nearly 60 metric tons of pollutants annually from the air in counties not meeting air quality standards.

CONNECT OUR FUTURE

Through CONNECT Our Future, Centralina COG, along with its South Carolina partner Catawba Regional Council of Governments, is facilitating the efforts of governments and organizations in the 14-county, two-state region surrounding Charlotte to achieve the fundamental obligation of government – to build greater communities for future generations. This initiative is funded by a \$4.9 million HUD Sustainable Communities Grant awarded in November 2011, and \$3 million in local in-kind public and private matching resources. Significant activities in this year include:

- **Engaging Communities** – 54 local governments and 39 others (private sector, quasi-governmental and non-profits) joined the CONNECT Consortium. Twelve consortium meetings were held in late 2013 – mid 2014 to review CONNECT activities and provide guidance.
- **Engaging Residents** – More than 8,400 diverse residents of CONNECT's 14 counties participated in various CONNECT Public Engagement forums during the year, including but not limited to Open Houses, Community Growth Workshops, County Consortium meetings, and an Online Engagement Forum (MetroQuest Tool).
- **Technical Reports** – Several technical reports were produced as part of the CONNECT Our Future process to focus on specialized areas such as housing, food systems, public health, energy, air quality, economic development and land use & transportation. These technical report findings will be aligned with the final Regional Growth Framework.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Through public and private sector partnerships, the Centralina Workforce Development Board (WDB) provides leadership in a variety of workforce development areas and has been effective in meeting the needs of the current and emerging workforce. This year's program highlights include:

■ **Career Assessment Tool** – Centralina WDB launched the Career Headlight project, an innovative new career tool matching students and job seekers with in-demand local careers, education and skills training. The project is a key component of the region's response to the massive shift in the regional economy's composition and serves the 17-county, bi-state Greater Charlotte region. The tool is unique because it uses occupational demand and educational programs data specific to the Greater Charlotte region and that data is updated quarterly. This is unlike national or state-level data that is compiled annually or less frequently. Also, the Career Headlight project is in an innovative, state-of-the-art, user-friendly, touch-enabled and publicly-accessible Internet interface at www.centralinacareerheadlight.com.

■ **Youth Career-Connect Grant** – Centralina WDB was part of a collaborative planning team that designed the successful grant application for the implementation of the Career-Connect: STEM Academy Program for Anson High School. Anson High School was one of only 24 grant recipients in the nation to receive the grant from the US Department of Labor, which brings over \$2 million to Anson High School over the next four years and will serve over 300 students. The program is designed to expand options for students to acquire STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) literacy and other critical skills, knowledge and credentials that will prepare them for high-demand, high-wage, and high-skill careers. More information can be found on Facebook at *Anson High Youth Career-Connect: STEM Academy*.

■ **Centralina Youth Services Summit** – The 7th annual Centralina WDB Youth Services Summit hosted by the Centralina Youth Council was held in October 2013 at Byron's in Concord. More than 100 people gathered for the event themed "Sink or Swim: Surviving Life's Treacherous Waters." Each message shared throughout the day focused on dealing with challenges, surviving trying times and understanding resources that are available to help young people navigate through life. More information can be found at www.way2work.org.

■ **Allied Health Summit** – Centralina WDB collaborated with regional partners to host *The Competitive Workforce Alliance Allied Health Summit: Taking the Pulse on Healthcare; A New Prescription for the Workforce*. The Summit provided data on how changes in health care laws will impact North Carolina and how the ability to collect large amounts of computer data is changing the healthcare workforce. Eighty healthcare professionals participated in the Summit, which was recognized by attendees as a valuable resource for the development of a well-trained and prepared allied health workforce. More information can be found at www.agreatworkforce.com/alliedhealth.

■ **CAFÉ Program** – The Centralina WDB co-sponsored the CAFÉ (Career Academy for Educators) program for Stanly County educators and administrators. CAFÉ is designed to help business and industry connect with schools and education by giving participants the opportunity to visit with local employers to identify the education and social skills necessary for employees to be successful in their careers. This year's CAFÉ program featured a specific session for teachers in the school system and a separate session geared toward school principals, counselors and staff of Stanly Community College. More information can be found at www.centralinaworks.com.

By the Numbers

2 million dollars will help Anson High School over the next four years expand programs in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, through a grant prepared by WDB

17 counties in the greater Charlotte region are included in the Career Headlight project tool that matches students and job seekers with in-demand local careers

80 professionals in the healthcare field attended the Allied Health Summit to learn practical information to help build a strong healthcare workforce

100 youth attended the Youth Services Summit designed to help youth acquire job skills and learn about college preparation

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Essential to collaborative region-wide economic growth was the Centralina Economic Development Commission (CEDC), established by Centralina in 2005 as a 501(c)3 public-private partnership that promotes job growth and the retention, expansion, and development of business and industry. Significant accomplishments for the Commission include:

By the Numbers

2 million dollars in U.S. Commerce EDA funding for two community colleges to expand advanced manufacturing training centers

26 grants were awarded, one received by Centralina and the CEDC, by the US EDA to help communities create economic development strategies that leverage their comparative advantages

900 business, education and community leaders engaged in discussions about the region's role in the global marketplace through the Charlotte Global Competitiveness Summits

■ **Centralina Regional Economic Development District's CEDS**

Plan – The “Prosperity for Greater Charlotte” CEDS five-year update plan for 2012–2017, was recognized for supporting regional strategic initiatives and facilitated \$2 million in U.S. Commerce EDA funding for two community colleges to expand advanced manufacturing training centers. CEDC implemented plan priorities that promoted alignment of regional infrastructure, talent and assets for economic growth. Recognized with a 2013 NADO Innovation Award, the plan also included key strategies for boosting the job growth rate by linking the region’s workforce skills and strengths, education, and training assets to the needs of high-growth and emerging industries.

■ **Global Competitiveness Summit series support to Global Vision**

Leaders taskforce – Prosperity for Greater Charlotte supported Charlotte Global Competitiveness Summits in August 2012, February 2013, and March 2014 that brought together more than 900 business, education and community leaders to engage the Greater Charlotte Region’s role in the global marketplace.

Services provided by the Community and Economic (CED) Department help promote local and regional economic growth and quality of life. Significant activities in Fiscal Year 2013–14 include:

■ **HUD Five-Year Consolidated Plan Implementation** – The department provided grant administration services for the activities and projects within the five-year consolidated plan for Mecklenburg County encompassing approximately \$600,000 annually in HUD Community Development Block Grant funding. It focuses on low and moderate income population housing and community development needs.

■ **Code Enforcement and Drug-Alcohol Testing Program (DATP)**

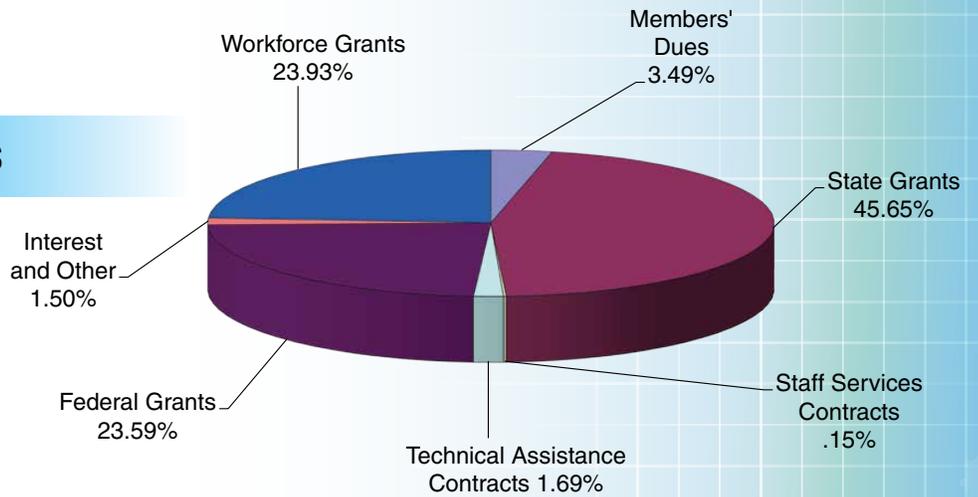
– Multiple jurisdictions engaged CED to provide code enforcement and minimum housing standards operations as well as DATP testing for city and county workforce regulatory requirements.

■ **Grants** – Centralina and CEDC received an Investing in Manufacturing Community Partnership (IMCP) Phase I grant, one of just 26 awarded by US Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) around the country. The U.S. EDA grant program’s purpose is to help communities create economic development strategies that leverage their comparative advantages. The Centralina IMCP project, *Centralina Advanced Manufacturing Ecosystem Strategy Development*, will support and extend the Greater Charlotte Region’s primary core competitive competency in Advanced Manufacturing, identified in 2012–2017 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy as a key regional strength.

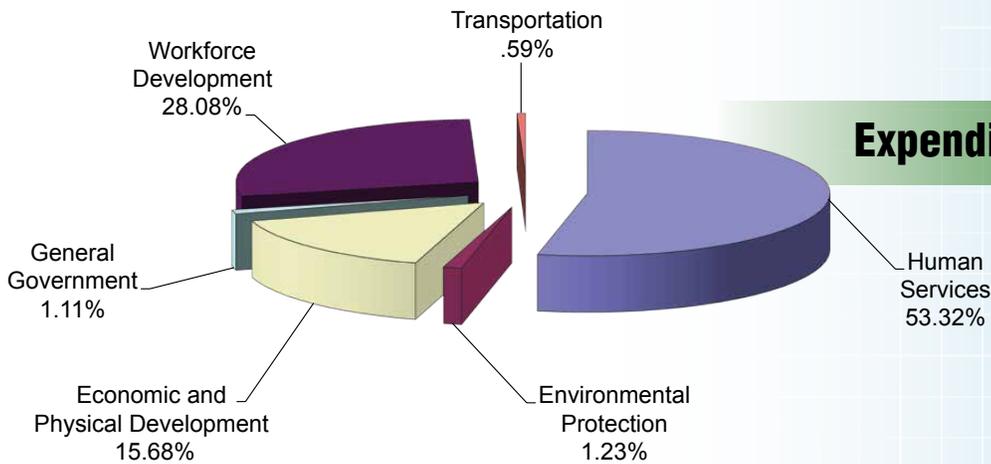
Financial Report for Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2014

Centralina Council of Governments' revenues from all sources exceeded \$21.7 million during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014, with increases in federal grants revenue. The accompanying charts show the primary revenues by source and expenditures by program.

Sources of Revenues



Expenditures by Program





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