

## Background

As one of the fastest growing regions in the country, there is recognition that long-term transit planning efforts should be accelerated if we are to remain a leading, competitive region nationally and globally. The three-year HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Initiative, known locally as CONNECT Our Future, engaged over 8,400 stakeholders across 14 counties in the greater Charlotte region on a variety of growth related topics. Transportation choice emerged as a top priority in the first ever bi-state regional growth framework. The extensive discussion revealed that regional transit held interest in urban, suburban, and rural communities, for a variety of reasons including transportation, access, economic development, and place making. In general, stakeholders and local leaders are increasingly concluding that regional transit planning:

- Is not just about moving people, but also supports economic accessibility, mobility, housing choice, innovation, workforce development, and broadband opportunities;
- Results in economic activity, growth, and private sector investment;
- Demonstrates to federal agencies that a regional, multi-functional approach is worthy of their attention, participation, and funding;
- Clarifies and identifies our competitive advantage;
- Is necessary to achieve a multi-county, coordinated transit system on an expedited timetable.

## Scope

The Regional Transit Public Engagement Series is a continuation of the CONNECT Our Future dialogue and is an opportunity to have a focused conversation about regional transit, well before any planning takes place. This is an opportunity for communities to express their aspirations, concerns, values, and interests around long-term transit. The foundation for successful transit planning is public understanding and an early determination of community values and interests surrounding transit. A comprehensive approach to public participation is a key determinant of the ultimate success of these investments, and increases the likelihood that investments achieve the maximum possible benefit for the widest variety of constituents.

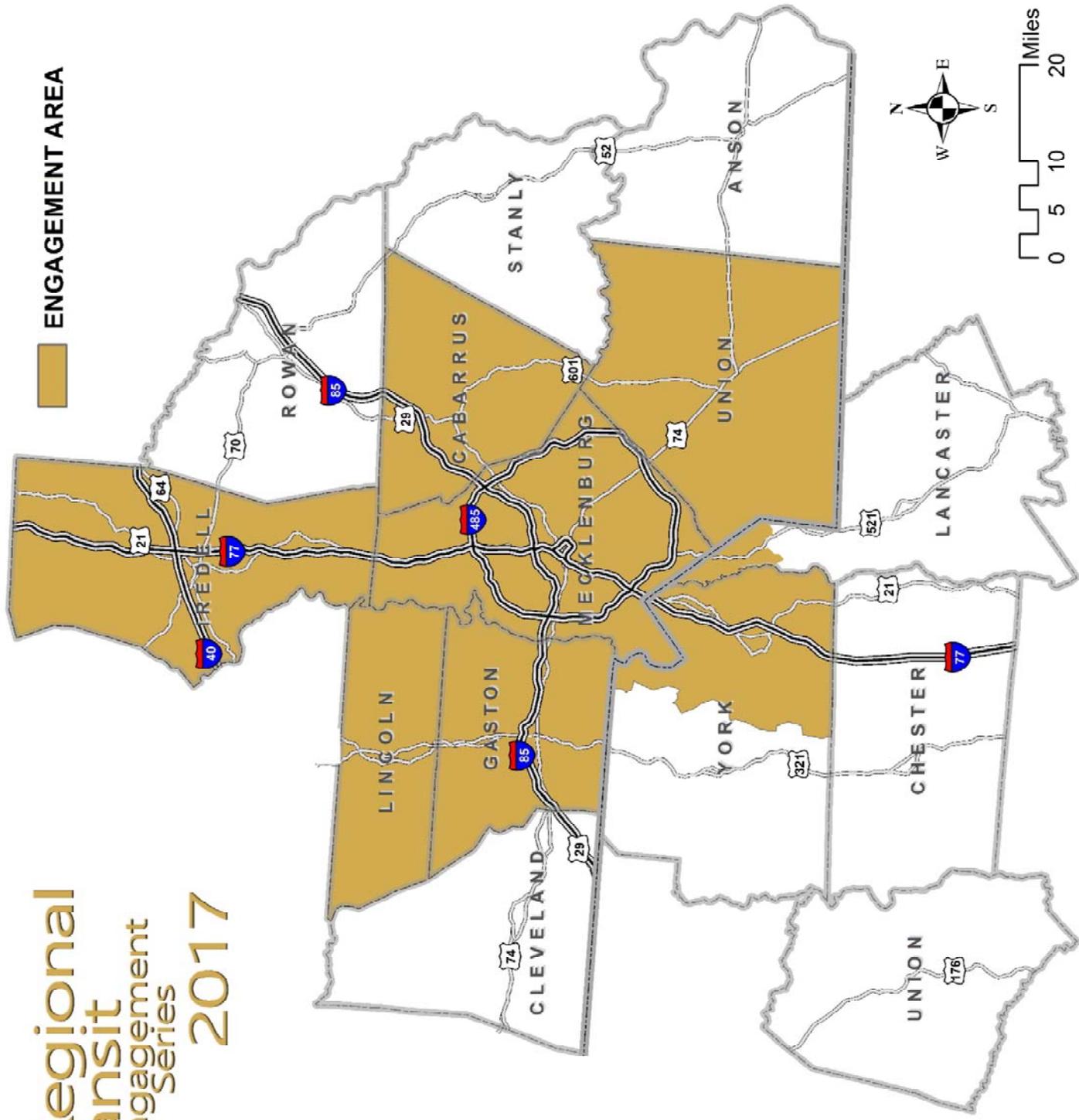
Centralina COG and the Metropolitan Transit Commission are collaborating to engage regional partners in a transit discussion that will provide important information to guide future transit planning efforts. Engagement will include a public opinion survey, county-level meetings with elected officials and local government staff, economic development organizations, institutions, transportation and transit organizations, Federal and State elected officials and staff. This work will be instrumental to the update of the CATS 2030 Transit System Corridor Plan, future transit planning in communities outside of Mecklenburg, and the identification of future transit corridors, regional transit hubs, transit modes, and station locations.

## Study Area

As a starting place, the study area for the engagement will include community stakeholders from Cabarrus, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, and Union counties in North Carolina and the urbanized areas of Lancaster and York counties in South Carolina. This study area represents MTC counties, plus Lincoln and Lancaster counties. This project area may be adjusted through mutual agreement between CATS and CCOG based on project timeline and resources. Urbanized areas are defined as those areas that are part of the Rock Hill-Fort Mill Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization at the time the contract is initiated. **See attached map.**

# Regional Transit Engagement Series 2017

 ENGAGEMENT AREA



**Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC)**

Map created March 2017 by  
Centralina Council of Governments



# Regional Transit Engagement Series 2017

Centralina COG  MTC Partnership

## Partner Updates

