Centralina Economic Development District (EDD) released its five-year update for the U.S. EDA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) on December 1, 2022. Centralina EDD engaged a variety of stakeholders across the region and conducted a robust data analysis of current economic conditions so that the plan would reflect local realities and shared regional aspirations. The CEDS Steering Committee synthesized the data and feedback to develop a compelling "**Prosperity for All**" vision for the region's future:

> *The greater Charlotte region collaborates to inclusively support businesses, innovators and individuals in reaching a prosperous and globally connected future.*

Three themes (people, place, economy) emerged from this vision that informed the CEDS framework and goals:

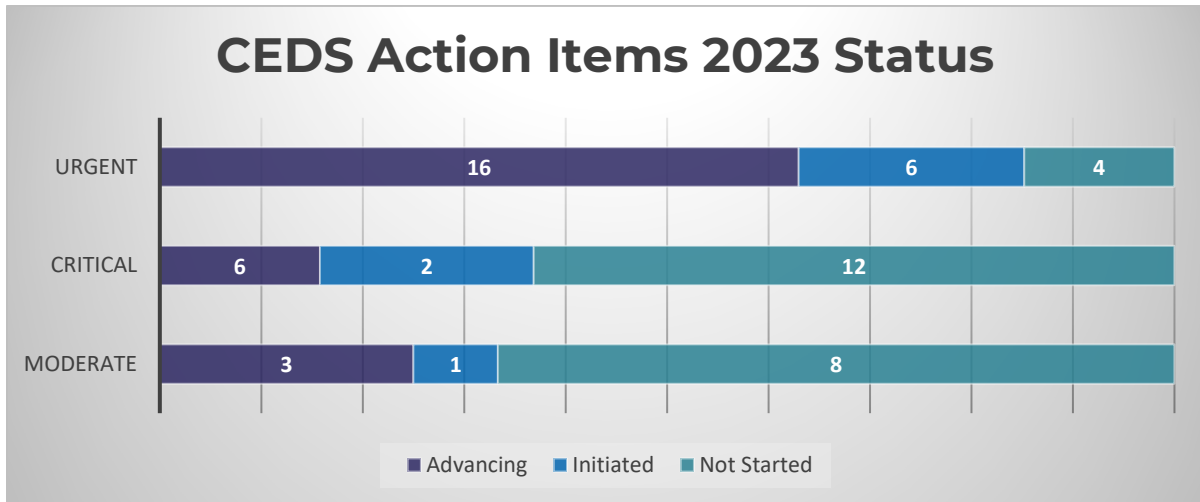| GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3
Expand Economic Opportunity (People)	**Build Community Supportive Infrastructure (Place)**	**Strengthen Regional Resilience and Global Competitiveness (Economy)**

Throughout the year, the Centralina EDD team has been working to advance the CEDS in 2023, which includes a total of 15 Recommendations and 58 Action Items. Among these, 26 action items are designated as requiring **Urgent** attention and shall be initiated by June 2024.

As of November 2023, the Centralina EDD and regional partners have already moved on 16 of these 26 urgent items with an overall total of 34 action items in motion. The remaining 24 action items that have not been started are categorized as either **Critical** or **Moderate** priorities and have an anticipated initiation timeline set for June 2025 (marked critical) or June 2027 (marked moderate). Encouragingly, 12 of these critical and moderate items have already been set into motion.

CEDS Action Items 2023 Status

	Advancing	Initiated	Not Started
URGENT	16	6	4
CRITICAL	6	2	12
MODERATE	3	1	8

■ Advancing ■ Initiated ■ Not Started

Advancing Action Items
Activities that are moving toward achievement.

GOAL 1

- Working with Centalina Workforce Development Board to share information in data portal and create a survey to understand assets. **Action Item-1.1**

- EDD Board member, CharlotteWorks, has mapped workforce resources to identify opportunities for job seekers and cooperating to share best practices with partners in the region. **Action Item-1.4**

- Centralina Workforce Development Board assists the City of Monroe, NC with the Good Jobs Great Cities Grant by bringing business leaders together with workforce and economic development professionals. **Action Item-1.5**

- The Centralina EDD Board includes all three area Workforce Board Directors and who have been working together at meetings. **Action Item-2.1**

- Four targeted virtual job fairs for local government, education, manufacturing, flexible schedule/remote employment. **Action Item-2.2**

- Centralina Area Agency on Aging developed a transit guide for older adults needing transportation for work. **Action Item-2.3**

- Centralina provided technical assistance to Lincoln County Economic Development Association for a shared CTE facility. **Action Item-2.4**

- Jointly presented information with the Centralina Workforce Board on the trends in workforce and education as it relates to the region at the MyFutureNC event. **Action Item-2.6**

CEDD@Centralina.org | 704-372-2416 | 10735 David Taylor Drive, Suite 250, Charlotte, NC 28262 | www.CentralinaEDD.org

Increasing the prosperity and job creation of Greater Charlotte

- Centralina EDD is planning for program outreach to bolster the resources available for economic developers to access concerning childcare issues and readiness to begin collaborating to solve the problem. **Action Item-3.1**

- Centralina convened regional planners to discuss land use planning models for safe siting of community and early care facilities to meet employer's needs. **Action Item-3.2**

GOAL 2

- Established Advancing the Plan committee to convene regional leaders to help with the implementation of the Connect Beyond Regional Mobility Plan. **Action Item-1.2**

- CONNECT Beyond began implementing Seamless CONNECTions, a mobility plan to increase transit choices. **Action Item-1.3**

- CONNECT Beyond staff conduct quarterly meetings with all Community Transportation Providers. **Action Item-2.1**

- Centralina Regional Council applied for a USDOT Regional Infrastructure Accelerator Grant to support CONNECT Beyond implementation and build capacity to support infrastructure project development. **Action Item-2.2**

- Connect Beyond shared Transportation Demand Management Plan with Regional and Metropolitan Planning Organizations. **Action Item-2.5**

- Through the Centralina Clean Fuels Coalition an application for funding to support alternative fuel vehicles and infrastructure was submitted. **Action Item-3.2**

- Organized Statesville Thrives! Housing Symposium to educate and connect residents around affordable housing needs. **Action Item-4.1**

- Published Prosperity Profile Technical Report through presentations to local organizations and promoted through CEDD website data portal. **Action Item-4.4**

- Centralina has been working with NC State Institute for Emerging Issues to assess what tools and resources counties need for future connections. **Action Item-5.2**

GOAL 3

- Planned and participated in IEDC Site Visit to five counties in our region, Cabarrus, Iredell, Lincoln, Mecklenburg and Rowan. **Action Item-1.1**

- Explored supply chain council with Charlotte Regional Business Alliance including NC Manufacturing Extension Partnership. **Action Item-2.1**

CEDD@Centralina.org | 704-372-2416 | 10735 David Taylor Drive, Suite 250, Charlotte, NC 28262 | www.CentralinaEDD.org

Increasing the prosperity and job creation of Greater Charlotte

- Provided three letters of support to local community college partners to expand capacity in workforce development programming. **Action Item-2.2**

- Centralina Business Services is working with local industries to coordinate partnerships with higher education to improve training models and increase upskilling of the workforce. **Action Item-2.4**

- Participated in 32 meetings during the application process with two industry consortiums pursuing the EDA Tech Hub grant. **Action Item-4.1**

- Initiated collaboration efforts with NC Innovation and opportunities with a newly hired UNC Charlotte position for NC Innovation. **Action Item-4.2**

Initiated Action Items

Planned activities that are in the beginning stages of advancement.

GOAL 1

- Exploring opportunities with NC Commerce for a webinar series to support NCWorks career counselors. **Action Item-1.2**

- Charlotte Regional Business Alliance has collected data for asset mapping for entrepreneurs and small businesses. **Action Item-4.1**

GOAL 2

- Connect Beyond staff are identifying champions for the Transportation Demand Planning Advisory Committee. **Action Item-1.1**

- Centralina is working with the regional Transportation Planning Organizations and the City of Charlotte on the planning and implementation of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). **Action 1.4**

- Centralina received funding for the U.S. EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant and is considering ways to incentivize green infrastructure solutions. **Action Item-3.4**

- Conducted a Centralina Learns on Transportation Demand Management (TDM) which included a discussion on rural communities and the need for the expansion of broadband infrastructure. **Action Item-5.1**

- Considering funding opportunities to coincide with the Centralina Digital Inclusion planning process. **Action Item-5.3**

GOAL 3

- Centralina EDD created a Cluster Convergence working group to analyze the current cluster strategy report provided by IEDC. **Action Item-1.2**

- Continuing the IEDC analysis Centralina is considering the cluster competitiveness of each county and messaging. **Action Item-3.1**

CEDD@Centralina.org | 704-372-2416 | 10735 David Taylor Drive, Suite 250, Charlotte, NC 28262 | www.CentralinaEDD.org

Increasing the prosperity and job creation of Greater Charlotte

Implementation Activities

Regional Engagement

- ***Prosperity for All*** Greater Charlotte Region CEDS 2023-2028 was submitted to the U.S. EDA on November 23, 2022, and received approval.

- Worked with land use analysis consultant to audit land use conditions and job-related activities presented and released to regional economic developers.

- Presentation of Prosperity Profiles at UNC Charlotte Schul Forum to discuss displacement risk, challenges and progress around economic mobility in the region.

- Hosted a *Centralina Learns* webinar featuring NC EDA Representative with 28 attendees.

- 2023 NADO Impact Award recipient for Prosperity for All CEDS 2023-2028

Grant Support

- Provided a CEDS Consistency Letter for Gaston College to assist with the Fiber Innovation Center and equipment needs that will help to improve the textile and apparel niche industry cluster, strengthen the talent pipeline and promote entrepreneurial opportunities. ***Received***

- Submitted funding request under U.S. Congressman Jeff Jackson's Community Projects Program to help implement key recommendations from the CEDS and support building economic resilience in the advanced manufacturing cluster to address talent gaps, R&D and regional collaboration. ***Not Approved***

- Provided Letter of Support for Union County Good Jobs Great Cities Academy grant application to support CEDS workforce initiatives. ***Received***

- Requested a Technical Assistance grant from IEDC to assist with identifying cross-linkages and convergences within the established industry clusters in the region. ***Received***

- Centralina applied for funding to the EPA for a Regional Climate Pollution Reduction grant ***Received***

- Submitted letter of support for South Piedmont Community College to the Department of Labor for Transportation Logistics Consortium and Golden Leaf Fund for additive manufacturing equipment. ***Completed***

- Submitted a grant request to NC State Institute for Emerging Issue to assist the Centralina region in its digital equity and inclusion planning ***Received***

CEDD@Centralina.org | 704-372-2416 | 10735 David Taylor Drive, Suite 250, Charlotte, NC 28262 | www.CentralinaEDD.org

Increasing the prosperity and job creation of Greater Charlotte

- Submitted application for Southeastern Crescent Regional Commission Local Development District Capacity Building program grant. ***Received***

- Provided CEDS Consistency Letter to Rowan-Cabarrus Community College for EDA request of Driver Training Range. *Pending*

Individual Service Delivery

- Provided Technical Assistance to Lincoln County Economic Development Association to create a shared facility among educational institutions and higher education.

- Shared information about EDA grants with local economic developers and stakeholders attending the January 2023 Board meeting.

- Completed 15 individual meetings with CEDD board members in 1:1 setting to discuss board focus and initiatives.

- Provided 9 engagement meetings for NC EDA representative;

The Boost Pad	City of Charlotte
City of Concord	Gaston College
Latin American Chamber	RevTech Labs Accelerator
Rowan-Cabarrus Community College	Town of Waxhaw
South Piedmont Community College	

Strategy Framework

- Promoted CEDS development and implementation process through blog posts and Centralina newsletter publication.

- Created a recruitment flyer to send to prospective volunteers to outline the roles and responsibilities of a board member.

- Appointed six new board members to the Centralina EDD Board including workforce board directors, entrepreneurs and regional economic development partners.

- Conducted a work session with board members to capture current activities that align with CEDS.

- Formed two working groups serving Workforce Talent Solutions and Cluster Convergence to prioritize challenges lifted from the work session and support effective and efficient implementation of the CEDS action items.

- Published Prosperity Profile Technical Report to understand economic prosperity and resilience in the region.

CEDD@Centralina.org | 704-372-2416 | 10735 David Taylor Drive, Suite 250, Charlotte, NC 28262 | www.CentralinaEDD.org

Increasing the prosperity and job creation of Greater Charlotte

2024 Anticipated Activities

Projects that will likely occur with the movement of current action items.

- Host Regional Best Practice Roundtable discussion on CEDS-related research topic
- Update the Regional Resilience Equity and GIS mapping tool data tool data layers and user interface.
- Implement Digital Inclusion Plan program to the Centralina counties and municipalities to ensure all individuals have access to broadband, technology and digital skills.
- Pursue CICOM Tech Hub Strategy Development Grant with consortium members.
- Host Centralina Learns online forum to provide an overview on the present situation of the EDA Tech Hubs grant.

In conclusion, the Centralina EDD is committed to fostering economic growth and regional prosperity through the implementation of its CEDS. This approach to improving the economic mobility, inclusivity and resilience of our nine-county region through the lens of collaboration, innovation and ***"Prosperity for All."***

CEDD@Centralina.org | 704-372-2416 | 10735 David Taylor Drive, Suite 250, Charlotte, NC 28262 | www.CentralinaEDD.org

Increasing the prosperity and job creation of Greater Charlotte