2026-2029

Strategic Plan

CENTRAL PINES
REGIONAL COUNCIL

STRATEGIC PLAN

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Mission Statement

Central Pines Regional Council is a member-driven organization serving as a leading resource to connect communities and enhance their strategic priority outcomes through regional policy, collaboration, and technical assistance at the local, regional, and state level.

Vision Statement

Central Pines Regional Council is the premier regional organization that addresses the needs of members by leading work focused on comprehensive, innovative, timely, and reliable solutions for the region.

CENTRAL PINES REGIONAL COUNCIL

Strategic Focus Areas

FOCUS AREA 1

Thriving People and Communities

Supporting the well-being, health, and quality of life for all residents across the region through direct assistance, age-friendly communities, community outreach, and service coordination.

FOCUS AREA 2

Connected Places

Creating accessible, well-planned, and linked communities through coordinated land use, transportation networks, housing opportunities, regional water/sewer opportunities and regional planning.

FOCUS AREA 3

Prosperous and Sustainable Region

Building economic and environmental resilience through strategic asset building, resource protection, and community resilience initiatives.

FOCUS AREA 4

Regional Excellence and Innovation

Serving as the premier convener and catalyst for local government members through technical assistance and expertise, collaboration, innovative solutions, and efficient shared services.

FOCUS AREA 5

Organizational Excellence

Ensuring operational effectiveness, financial stewardship, compliance, and organizational capacity to deliver on our mission through strong administrative functions and strategic internal investments.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 1

Thriving People and Communities

Supporting the well-being, health, and quality of life for all residents across the region through direct assistance, age-friendly communities, community outreach, and service coordination.

SERVICE AREAS Area Agency on Aging | Human Services

GOAL 1

Serve as the regional innovation hub for advancing effective, person-centered human services.

a) Establish a regional collaboration network for human service delivery.

- **i)** Develop one policy/best practice document each year, highlighting/reviewing regional best practices, including how it could be implemented in the region.
- **ii)** Convene partners to develop and identify models to follow, but not duplicate work.

b) Convene county managers, county CPRC Delegates, CPRC Leadership, and AAA Leadership twice a year for education, coordination, and updates on implementation of State Aging Plan.

c) Develop a strategy to coordinate Continuum of Cares (COC) across the region.

GOAL 2

Leverage the Central Pines Regional Data Center to utilize human services data to support proactive planning, service alignment, and effective investment decisions.

a) Develop a gap analysis to evaluate the data needs of partners and a strategy for implementation.

b) Serve as a trusted analyst and resource for human services data.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 2

Connected Places

Creating accessible, well-planned, and linked communities through coordinated land use, transportation networks, housing opportunities, regional water/sewer opportunities and regional planning.

SERVICE AREAS Land Use | Transportation | Housing | Water and Sewer Infrastructure

GOAL 1

Develop a coordinated regional long-range plan.

a) Launch the Connected Region Shared Decision Tool Library.

b) Develop the first edition of the Central Pines Connected Region Scenario Plan/Strategy building off Central Pines existing land use model.

c) Expand Regional Day as a major regional event, including the incorporation of Connected Region efforts. Continue holding Quarterly Connected Region Series events.

d) Develop and implement a strategy for a single regional digital twin or systems for regionally linked local digital twins.

e) Develop a policy paper showing the impacts, including the pros/cons, of a single Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) compared to the current two MSAs. Include recommendations on federal policy changes needed to facilitate MSA unification.

GOAL 2

Improve regional coordination on transportation issues and leverage our technical expertise to add value and consistency to the region.

a) Support strategies to ensure sustainable transportation funding for Central Pines MPO and RPO coordination work.

b) Relationship building, coordination, and developing strategies to work with all transportation partners, establishing us as a trusted leader in the transportation space.

c) Development and implementation of long range TDM Plan.

GOAL 3

Lead regional coordination to increase and preserve a housing supply that strategically aligns with community well-being, transportation networks, jobs, and infrastructure capacity.

a) Develop a regional housing suite of tools through the Central Pines Data Center.

b) Explore the feasibility of creating a regional housing funding source and pursue implementation as directed.

c) Recommend regional actions to streamline partnerships and funding to preserve housing.

d) Leverage the Central Pines 501C3 to develop a regional business group to promote housing solutions (similar to RTA in transportation).

e) Develop a Regional Housing Strategy.

- **i)** Assess housing partnerships and funding.

GOAL 4

Facilitate land use and infrastructure planning.

a) Fully develop and implement a regional planning directors' group.

b) Facilitate stakeholders to strengthen investment in regional infrastructure and increase the implementation of regional water and sewer partnerships.

c) Leverage existing programs to initiate and expand regional land use and infrastructure collaboration.

d) Serve as a thought leader for emerging land use issues.

- **i)** Explore cross training in land use and utility planning.

e) Develop a proposal for the CPRC Board of Delegates' consideration to provide water/sewer rate studies for local government members.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 3

Prosperous and Sustainable Region

Building economic and environmental resilience through strategic asset building, resource protection, and community resilience initiatives.

SERVICE AREAS

- Community Development
- Environmental Protection
- Emergency Management and Resilience

GOAL 1

Strengthen proactive regional resiliency and enhanced coordination to natural and human-caused occurrences.

a) Begin regular convening of county emergency management directors and develop opportunities for regional collaboration.

- **i)** Develop plan for CPRC staffing to support regional emergency management needs.
- **ii)** Develop internal capacity to support local governments with documentation and paperwork needed following a disaster (Currently FEMA PA).
- **iii)** Develop training for local governments in coordinated regional responses, financial assistance, administration, and local government elected official media relations.
- **iv)** Educate North Carolina Division of Emergency Management on regional council capabilities and advantages related to regional emergency management hazard mitigation planning.

b) Analyze local stormwater programs for alignment and gaps. Develop strategies, data and recommendations for regional alignment.

c) Develop a strategy to coordinate local hazard mitigation plans, state blueprint work and CPRC/TNC NOAA flood project.

d) Investigate the potential role of CPRC in heat islands.

GOAL 2

Regional coordinator and thought leader around water utility and watershed planning/interconnection.

a) Educate and provide thought leadership around PFAS/ emerging contaminants and how to fund mitigation efforts.

b) Facilitate proactive, sustained regional approaches to water and sewer challenges.

c) Offer stormwater training and education on green stormwater infrastructure.

d) Watershed-based stormwater regulations, pitching ideas to communities.

GOAL 3

Support an increase in local and regional investment and capacity to expand assets that advance community development and economic opportunity.

a) Increase local investment through the Central Pines Grant Writing Program and expand Central Pines grant administration services.

b) Develop the 2027 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) update and ensure alignment with existing strategies.

c) Convene stakeholders to build public-private partnerships.

d) Increase Central Pines Regional Council's planning services/portfolio (current and long-range).

e) Develop research items on barriers to economic opportunity (e.g. Centralina's childcare study).

f) Develop value added suite of services targeted to rural local government members.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 4

Regional Excellence and Innovation

Serving as the premier convener and catalyst for local government members through technical assistance and expertise, collaboration, innovative solutions, and efficient shared services.

SERVICE AREAS

- Technical Assistance
- Member Support
- Innovation
- Innovation
- Collaboration
- Shared Services
- Regional Policy
- Regional Data Center

GOAL 1

Establish Central Pines as the region's leading, trusted resource on the issues that most impact local goals, policy, and services.

a) Establish the Central Pines Regional Data Center as the region's one-stop source for actionable data, plans, and analysis from internal and external thought leaders that identify emerging trends and support clear, informed decision-making.

- **i)** Fully fund and staff Central Pines Regional Data Center.
- **ii)** Market the Regional Data Center, including data opportunities to local government members and partners.
- **iii)** Develop a quarterly, sponsored newsletter utilizing data center material.
- **iv)** Establish a standard set of regional measures that CPRC will use consistently across dashboards and plans.

b) Understand and respond to member government needs on issue areas.

- **i)** Develop and maintain inventory of member needs.
- **ii)** Develop Central Pines subject matter experts to discuss emerging trends, inform decision-making and increase training.
- **iii)** Increase opportunities for local government members to display expertise through regional training opportunities.

c) Lead coordination on regional funding and policy needs that require partnership with federal and state agencies.

d) Fully implement Connected Region Podcast series.

GOAL 2

Deliver a consistent, member-centered experience that strengthens capacity and collaboration.

a) Improve our technical assistance strategy and offerings, resulting in a core package of services we offer (menu), defining offerings (internal staff for tech assistance).

b) Continue to build and improve Central Pines Regional Council communications infrastructure.

- **i)** Develop education for elected officials, managers, and procurement staff of local government managers on how Central Pines can be used highlight Charter and State Statute allowances.
- **ii)** Develop an organizational portfolio for publication.
- **iii)** Redevelop the Central Pines website.
- **iv)** Diversify who we speak to externally.

c) Develop an AI strategy for Central Pines work with local government members.

GOAL 3

Advance collaboration among public institutions, community-based partners, and government agencies, to improve effectiveness, efficiency, and reduce duplication.

a) Launch a Regional Policy Program that convenes the region's leading institutions and decision-makers to align priorities and effectively communicate regional goals to state and federal policymakers.

b) Equip decision makers with tools to make impactful regional decisions at the local level.

- **i)** Gap analysis between Federal, State and Local plans.

c) Continue development of partnerships with FutureNC, Greater Triangle United Way Future of Work initiative and others, with a focus on local Government workforce pipeline work.

d) Engage partners to identify people/groups CPRC is not currently engaged with but should be.

e) Develop a partnership with chambers of commerce to integrate a regional council portion of intercity visits or develop a regional intercity visit concept.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 5

Organizational Excellence

Ensuring operational effectiveness, financial stewardship, compliance, and organizational capacity to deliver on our mission through strong administrative functions and strategic internal investments.

SERVICE AREAS Administration | Non-Departmental

GOAL 1

Uphold exceptional financial stewardship through transparent financial management, strong compliance practices, and proactive risk management that reinforce member trust and position CPRC as a dependable regional partner.

a) Strengthen grant and subaward compliance through refined practices and internal training.

b) Develop a strategy for funding sustainability and diversification for Central Pines financing.

- **i)** Work with the Managers group, Executive Committee, and Board to increase awareness of Central Pines' funding challenges.
- **ii)** Utilize Central Pines 510 (c)(3).

c) Develop standard technical assistance contracts for organization-wide use.

d) Accomplish clean, unqualified annual audits.

GOAL 2

Strengthen organizational capacity to provide proactive, member-centered, cross-functional, technical expertise.

a) Invest in staff development, leadership capacity, and institutional knowledge to ensure CPRC remains the premier source of forward-looking policy guidance, analytics, and technical assistance for a rapidly growing region while demonstrating CPRC's Core Values.

GOAL 2

i) Develop organizational leadership pipeline strategy, mentorship opportunities, and encourage cross collaboration and succession planning.

ii) Develop an internal AI policy.

iii) Prepare staff to represent the organization and improve their meeting facilitation and presentation skills.

b) Advance CPRC's technological and administrative foundations to improve data capabilities, streamline processes, and enhance communication and collaboration across the organization and with member governments.

c) Engage the regional managers group to provide strategic direction to CPRC.

d) Redevelop the Subcommittee structure to reflect the new Central Pines Regional Council's Strategic Plan structure.

GOAL 3

Elevate Operational Excellence and Accountability.

a) Improve and preserve Central Pines culture.

i) Demonstrate employee's connection to improving region.

ii) Develop employee learning labs.

b) Develop a new Governance model to incorporate joint Board and subcommittee meetings to ensure maximum value and work for board member's time.

CPRC

Learn more at centralpinesnc.gov