

## “Clean Cities”

### Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

#### For Excellence in Clean Transportation and Alternative Fuel Activities

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS), through the leadership of Bryan Steiner, Construction Engineer and long-time stakeholder in the Centralina Clean Fuels Coalition, has made an effort in recent years to explore alternative fuels and clean transportation technologies. Bryan researched and supported the purchase of 2 propane buses, 5 propane F550's, 5 propane bi-fuel E-350 vans, (via Roush CleanTech and Fontaine Modification) and 4 neighborhood electric vehicles (Club Car) by the Building Services and bus fleets at CMS. These 16 alternative fuel vehicles displaced 12,750 gasoline gallon equivalents (GGEs) and reduced Greenhouse Gas emissions by 15.4 tons in 2016. In addition, CMS also has idle reduction and route optimization programs in place that have further displaced an estimated 180,454 gallons of petroleum in 2016 alone!

These alternatively fueled vehicles replaced older more polluting equipment, saving money on lower cost fuel, improving air quality, and reducing dependence on traditional petroleum. The reduced PM and NOx emissions compared to the vehicles these replaced are of special interest given their constant operation around school children, one of the most vulnerable segments of the population from a health perspective.

CMS's efforts to solve for fuel infrastructure location, permitting, and logistics, the purchasing and specifying of vehicle packages that could use alternative fuels while accomplishing the work required, and structuring a fueling contract with Amerigas, all helped to make the operational and financial case.

Combined, these activities support the Clean Cities mission and illustrate a dedication and passion for making a difference for our children's health and a more sustainable region now and in the future.



Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Propane Fueling demonstration led by Bryan Steiner of CMS during a CCFC Core Stakeholder meeting, January 2017.

## More Information on Centralina COG

Centralina Council of Governments (CCOG) is the state-designated lead regional organization for our nine county region and is one of 16 regional councils in the state. CCOG represents more than 60 county and municipal governments and encompasses a population of over 2.2 million people.

### CCOG's role in the region

CCOG serves as a bridge between federal, state and local governments. This is an increasingly critical role as we manage the growth in our region. CCOG:

- Provides a platform for formulating, implementing, and coordinating regional public policies;
- Provides a forum for networking and problem solving for local jurisdictions; and
- Serves as a conduit of state and federal grants in areas of aging, workforce development, economic development, environment and planning.

The organization concentrates its efforts on forming greater collaborative partnerships to address and find solutions to regional issues. Recognizing the importance of regionalism and setting regional priorities, CCOG provides a number of award-winning services and has embarked upon a number of program initiatives to further this concept.

### Centralina Council of Governments

Serving Anson, Cabarrus, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Rowan, Stanly and Union Counties and the municipalities throughout the region.



Centralina Council of Governments

## REGION OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS

MAY 10, 2017

### 2017 EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNERS

#### Controlling the Cost of Government

Town of Wadesboro

Renovated Wadesboro Police Station

#### Growing the Economy

Town of Mooresville

Workforce and Education Alignment Initiative

#### Improving Quality of Life

City of Bessemer City

Centennial Park Revitalization Project

#### Improving Quality of Life

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department

Woodstone After School and Mentoring Program

#### Clean Cities

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### BACKGROUND

Centralina COG celebrates the work of member governments through the Excellence Awards. These awards honor the outstanding achievements that work collectively to achieve regional goals.

Elected officials, managers and other staff from our member governments were encouraged to nominate innovative projects implemented by their jurisdictions that contribute to significant and positive advancements in the community.

A panel of impartial judges reviewed each submittal and selected award winning projects based on the following award criteria:

- Innovation and creativity
  - Commitment to goals
  - Contributions to regionalism
  - Program successes and sustainable benefits
  - Engagement of community members
  - Interaction with public/private partners
- Our judges this year included: Dr.

Thomas Barth, Director of the Master of Public Administration program at UNCC and Betty Huskins, Executive Director of the NC Association of Regional Councils of Government. A separate team reviewed and selected the winner of the Clean Cities Award. A special thank you to all of our Excellence Award judges!

### EXCELLENCE AWARD CATEGORIES

#### “Controlling the Cost of Government”

The recipient of this award has been creative in implementing a new or innovative program or initiative that is effective and delivers the most value with public funds. Such program exemplifies efficiency through: utilizing economies of scale; partnering with other local governments to maximize the impact of public funds; and/or encouraging best practices to maintain or expand services.

#### “Growing the Economy”

The recipient of this award has implemented innovative solutions to community development/investment challenges and engages in best practice strategies that: utilize public/private sector partnerships to maximize investment opportunities; prepares existing sites and infrastructure to meet the needs of target industries; and/or implements economic development including job creation/retention initiatives, etc.

#### “Improving Quality of Life”

The recipient of this award best leverages resources to improve the quality of life for citizens. The award recipient has implemented innovative program offerings such as those that: enhance social equity; encourage community participation through public and private sector leadership; develop solutions that build on the community's strengths and improve upon its weaknesses; or use cooperative volunteerism to maintain or expand services.

#### “Clean Cities”

The recipient of this award best recognizes the environmental and economic benefits of reducing consumption of fossil fuels. This recipient has lowered the use of traditional transportation fuels by: purchasing alternative fuel and/or fuel efficient vehicles, using alternative fuels in their fleet, implementing idle reduction policies and/or has partnered with fuel providers to expand alternative fuel availability.



**“Controlling the Cost of Government”**  
**Town of Wadesboro**  
**Renovated Wadesboro Police Station**



The Wadesboro Police Department's renovation project is an example of controlling the cost of government and doing more with less.

The Wadesboro Police and Fire Departments operated out of space built in the 1920s and 1930s. In FY 2013-14, the Town hired a professional to conduct an existing space assessment and develop program requirements for police and fire facilities.

This assessment determined that the police and fire departments were operating out of approximately 42% of the recommended space for their functions and noted the following: *“Clearly, in regards to each department, the adequate type of space hampers day-to-day efficiency. As well, mechanical and electrical system issues are evident as are several structural concerns; ... in fact, issues with regards to the quality and type of space are as significant as the need for more space.”*

Ultimately, the Council determined that finding new homes for the police and fire departments was a top priority. However, with an estimated \$2.2 million price tag the project was going to be cost-prohibitive due to the Town's declining population and location in a State-designated economically distressed area.

In being creative, the Town purchased a building in its Uptown area for \$225,000 and spent approximately \$130,000 in renovations. The Town was able to accomplish this by relying on donations, Town staff work such as police officers painting, utility staff doing plumbing work, seized “drug” funds and Town reserves.

The Wadesboro Police Department moved into its new location at the end of 2016 without any debt. The project is a great example of doing more with less. The long-lasting impact of the project will create pride and ownership for the leaders and residents for years to come.

**“Improving Quality of Life”**  
**City of Bessemer City**  
**Centennial Park Revitalization Project**

The Centennial Park expansion project included the reclamation of underutilized city property in combination with adjoining privately held lots for the creation of a unified multi-purpose public gathering space. On either side of the original 25 X 120 existing park stood abandoned commercial structures that were no longer viable for reasonable redevelopment. Since its construction in 1993, the original Centennial Park had served as an attractive green space on the main thoroughfare but had fallen into disrepair.

In recent years as activity in the Downtown has increased through the expansion of special events including the Downtown Festival, Christmas in the City and the summer Cruise In and Concert series, a more structured open air venue was required. By combining the adjacent lots the park areas has been expanded to 75 X 120. The new space features a large covered stage/performance platform designed for bands and recreational activities, seating, lighting and electrical access for events and is enhanced by a variety of local artwork.

The park is located along a block currently containing four available vacant buildings in downtown and is meant to encourage daily use; therefore, making it more attractive to invest in those older buildings for new business. Central Drug, the longest continuously operating business in Bessemer City, shares a wall with the park area and now offers extended hours. The project also allowed the City to stabilize the opposing boundary wall, improving the marketability of that property.



The park provides a permanent and versatile setting for existing downtown activities.

**“Growing the Economy”**  
**Town of Mooresville**  
**Workforce and Education Alignment Initiative**



Photos from the NCMi Launch

The Iredell County Workforce and Education Alignment Council (WF&ED Council) was formed in Fall 2015. The WF&ED Council is comprised of representatives from business and industry, local economic development commissions, Mitchell Community College, Iredell-Statesville School System, the Mooresville Graded School District and the Centralina COG.

The WF&ED Council utilized county specific data found in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy's final report (“Prosperity for Greater Charlotte”) as the framework to identify job growth, economic and educational opportunities specific to the Town of Mooresville and Iredell County. In late 2016, the WF&ED Council formed three obtainable objectives to strengthen the local workforce and education efforts: become an NCWorks ACT WorkReady Community, launch the NC Manufacturing Institute at Mitchell Community College and market the manufacturing needs of the community.

Iredell County achieved WorkReady Community status in December 2016, the Manufacturing Institute is live through Mitchell Community College and the Town is currently working to achieve the third goal by partnering with the Edge Factor Group to educate students and their parents on career possibilities in advanced manufacturing.

This project is a great example of a community conducting a strategic analysis, identifying skills gaps, and collaborating with multiple agencies to achieve success.

**“Improving Quality of Life”**  
**Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department**  
**Woodstone After School and Mentoring Program**

Woodstone apartments is a fifty-unit, multifamily, government assisted complex comprised mostly of single parent, low income families. Often these communities are a haven to drugs, crime and minimal education. Woodstone's manager and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) teamed up to change this.

By working together to evict drug dealers, gang members and other criminals, the residents began to feel safer. Next CMPD and the Woodstone apartment manager, Rindy Kirkman, developed programs to get the residents involved, informed and on track.

It began with the Woodstone After School Tutoring and Mentoring Program. The children of the community began meeting weekly with officers to get help with school work and to have someone to talk to. This opened the door for parents to become involved. Seeing a difference in the grades and attitudes of their children, they began coming to the office to meet with management and police.

Woodstone now offers a Lending Library through the generous donation of citizens. Residents also have use of computers donated by Target and CMPD for school work and job search. This goes along with weekly résumé and job search help given in the office. Woodstone and CMPD teamed up with the Urban League, ResCare and the Center for Community Transitions to offer job training and placement help. Discovery Place also became a partner and sent 16 of the children of the community to summer camp as well as came to the complex to offer hands on classes and events. Residents are happier and you not only see that their quality of life has improved but can also feel it.



The Charlotte Mayor's Mentoring Alliance recognized mentor, Rindy Kirkman, and mentees from the Woodstone After School Mentoring Program.