

RealityCheck2050 and **CONNECT Our Future**

Let's grow by choice not by chance



CONNECT Our Future is a three year, three phase program. Phase One was about input from the community. Phase Two is helping to design the regional growth options. Phase Three will be about the selection of growth options. *CONNECT Our Future* brings together public, private and nonprofit organizations across our 14-county region to build jobs and the economy, improve quality of life and control the cost of government. This program uses extensive grass roots community engagement to build on what communities identify as existing conditions and future plans, and create potential strategies for the future.

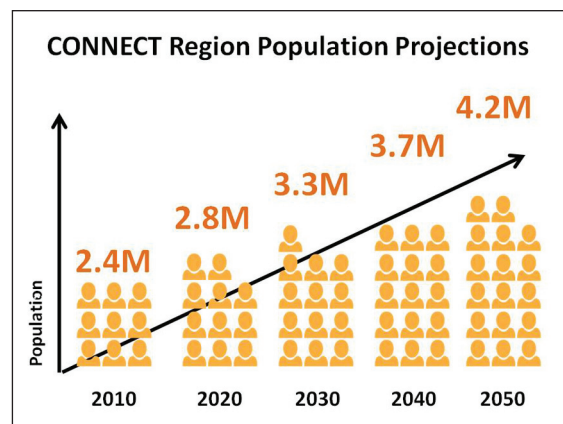
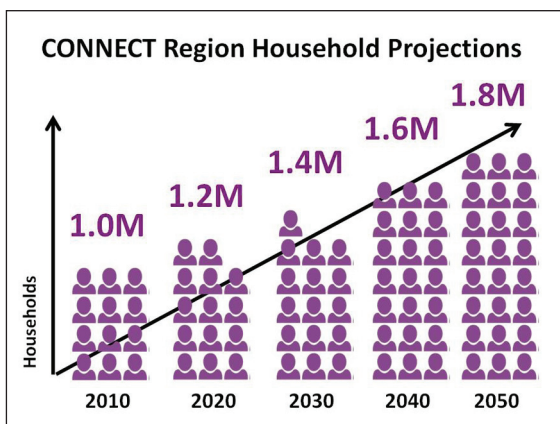
By 2050 our region is expected to grow by 1.8 million people and 850,000 jobs. We need to be prepared when it comes to housing, transportation, education and more. *CONNECT Our Future* discusses and explores how to accommodate the ongoing growth in our region while sustaining our economy and quality of life. It also helps the region address current challenges as we plan for this growth.

The primary driver for *CONNECT Our Future* is the region's projected growth:

- Where will those people live?
- How will they get from home to work?
- Where will people need to go for everyday needs such as food and childcare?
- Where will children play?
- What will be the impact of growth on the challenges we're already experiencing?



The 14-county *CONNECT Our Future* Region

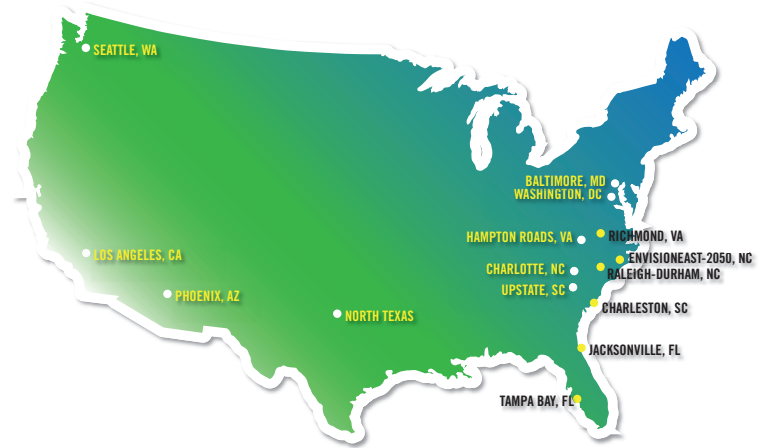


Household and population growth projections for the 14-county *CONNECT Our Future* Region (2010-2050)

What is RealityCheck2050?

Reality Check is an event developed by ULI, the Urban Land Institute, as a regional visioning exercise to build consensus on development issues. It is increasingly being used to effectively engage local stakeholders in creating a framework for long-term regional planning and infrastructure investment, economic development decisions, and local land use decisions.

“Exactly what is meant by ‘Reality Check’?” In general, it refers to a defining moment, a tipping point, when a region’s residents become aware that they have choices to make about growth, air quality, traffic, housing affordability, and other important issues. Neither a traditional conference nor a theoretical exercise, Reality Check is a planning tool rooted in analysis of real-world economic, demographic, and geographic data and trends. It allows participants to throw out their preconceived notions of how land is zoned today and forget what type of growth they believe is coming tomorrow. The exercise is their chance to act as master planners for how they would like the region to look in the future.



United States map of Reality Check exercise regions.

The name RealityCheck2050 was created to focus our attention on our goals in 2050. The event, held June 4, 2013 in Charlotte, is a ULI (Urban Land Institute) program that helps participants visualize the growth that will occur in the region. It garnered 400 participants, all working together, to figure out how we fit the projected 1.8 million people and 850,000+ plus jobs to be added to this region, while still preserving the values identified by Phase 1 participants. Teams of 10 players gathered around six-foot regional maps (the game board) and decided on key principles their table felt were important to guide growth. There were a total of 41 tables, 2 of which were reserved for youth. The participants placed hundreds of LEGO bricks on the maps: yellow LEGOs represented jobs, red LEGOs represented households, while yarn outlined new roads, regional transit, and green space. In a few hours, participants created principles to guide growth, better understood the 2050 scenarios and perhaps, more importantly, gained a new understanding of the region’s growth issues. After gameplay participants discussed the findings from the exercise, participated in real time polling, and learned how they can be involved in the next steps (Phase Three of the *CONNECT Our Future* program).



Phase Two in action: RealityCheck2050 on June 4, 2013 at the Charlotte Convention Center

Table Outcomes “Themes”

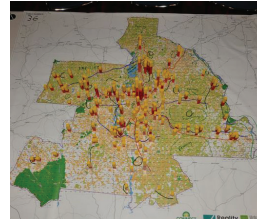
A selection of theme examples

Dispersed Pattern

Selected Example: Table 16



Selected Example: Table 36



POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

Transit Supportiveness	Low
Travel Time	High
Trip Length	High
Cost to Serve	Medium to High
Environmental/Agricultural Impacts	Medium to High

CHARACTERISTICS

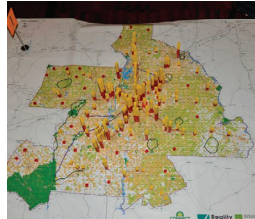
Development Footprint (2D)	Large
Typical Densities	Very Low or Low

Characteristics

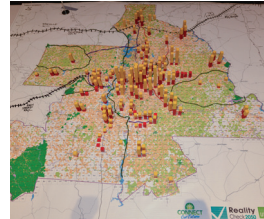
Resembles existing growth patterns. Low density, growth anywhere and more separation between jobs and housing.

Corridor

Selected Example: Table 1



Selected Example: Table 26



POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

Transit Supportiveness	Medium to High
Travel Time	Medium to High
Trip Length	Medium to High
Cost to Serve	Medium
Environmental/Agricultural Impacts	Medium

CHARACTERISTICS

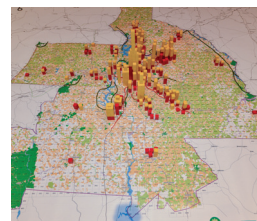
Development Footprint (2D)	Medium to Large
Typical Densities	Medium to Tall

Characteristics

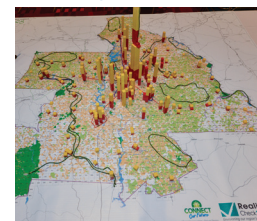
Growth concentration along new and existing transportation corridors. More compact than Dispersed Pattern but not as mixed and dense as the Compact Urban pattern. Diversity in this pattern is measured in terms of corridor length and the number of defined corridors.

Compact Urban

Selected Example: Table 6



Selected Example: Table 28



POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

Transit Supportiveness	High
Travel Time	Low to Medium
Trip Length	Low
Cost to Serve	Low to Medium
Environmental/Agricultural Impacts	Low

CHARACTERISTICS

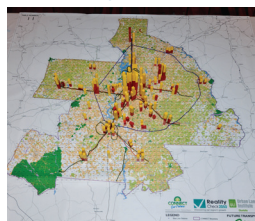
Development Footprint (2D)	Small to Medium
Typical Densities	Medium to Higher

Characteristics

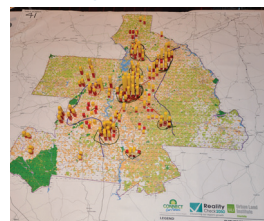
Most new growth is in existing urban centers. Compact development mixed-use development are prevalent. There is heavy emphasis on infill and redevelopment.

Multiple Centers

Selected Example: Table 11



Selected Example: Table 41



POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

Transit Supportiveness	Medium to High
Travel Time	Medium
Trip Length	Medium to High
Cost to Serve	Medium
Environmental/Agricultural Impacts	Medium

CHARACTERISTICS

Development Footprint (2D)	Low to Medium
Typical Densities	Medium to Tall

Characteristics

New growth is focused in existing cities and towns. Variation of jobs and household mix. Growth is clustered in well-defined areas with some areas of infill.

CONNECT's Phases: What Happens Next?

Phase One: Public Engagement

Phase One began in the Fall of 2012 by engaging the community about their personal needs and values. Phase One brought together more than 2,200 people from our 14-county, bi-state region through a series of open houses, small group conversations and online opportunities -- more than 100 different venues in total!

Phase Two: Regional Growth Options

Phase Two started with RealityCheck2050. The “representative” table outcomes or “themes” for growth that were developed at the event (see page 3) will be shared regionally at 48 Community Growth Workshops to be held in each of the 14-counties. At these community workshops, another 1,600+ residents will have the opportunity to weigh-in on how they think the “themes” might work in their county. The dates and times for these workshops are posted on the ConnectOurFuture.org website. Sign up and register to be part of a Community Growth Workshop near you!

Phase Three: Alternative Growth Scenarios

During Phase Three, starting in early 2014, information from Phase One, the “themes” from RealityCheck2050, and the results of the Community Growth Workshops, will be used to build four to five models, or “Alternative Growth Scenarios,” for the region’s future. Then the public will have a chance to provide feedback for each of the scenarios and the outcomes they produce, ultimately identifying a “preferred growth scenario” for the region. This will help translate the region’s shared vision for the future into an implementable framework for growth.



A RealityCheck2050 “theme,” a potential Alternative Growth Scenario building block

Working Together for our Future

