



# News Flash

*Breaking News and Information that Affects Your Region*

## CCOG Hires Geraldine Ide Gardner as its New Executive Director

Centralina Council of Governments (CCOG) has selected Geraldine Ide Gardner as its next Executive Director, beginning in January 2019. The CCOG Executive Board unanimously approved Gardner's hiring at its meeting on Thursday, November 1. Her selection was the culmination of a five-month, nationwide search.

"Geraldine brings the perfect mix of energy, experience and commitment to regional collaboration to the role of CCOG Executive Director," said CCOG Board Chairman and Town of Granite Quarry Mayor Bill Feather. "We were fortunate to have found someone that has demonstrated outstanding ability in bringing people together around common issues and who has the experience to strengthen Centralina's local, national and global profile."

Gardner, a native of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, has extensive experience convening diverse leaders for outcome-oriented discussions on critical topics facing cities and regions, with a strong focus on impact and action. Gardner spent the last six years at the German Marshall Fund of the United States, building an international program for leading urban and regional practitioners and thought leaders from government, philanthropy and the private sector. Prior to this post, she served as Associate Director of the Office of Planning for the Government of the District of Columbia.

"Centralina Council of Governments is a critical institution for shaping a vibrant, sustainable and prosperous region," said Gardner. "I'm honored to have been chosen to lead the organization and will bring my expertise in convening and coalition building to help deliver our mission. I'm looking forward to working with the very talented Centralina staff and collaborating with the board on the next phase of the organization's development."

### **About Centralina Council of Governments**

Centralina Council of Governments is the regional council of more than 60 local government members (cities, towns and counties) in the nine-county Greater Charlotte region of North Carolina, including Anson, Cabarrus, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Rowan, Stanly and Union counties. CCOG's mission is to unify the region's collective resources to help grow the economy and jobs, improve quality of life and control the cost of government. Centralina Council of Governments focuses its efforts on finding innovative solutions to both existing and future challenges and coordinating long-term systems and strategies across multiple jurisdictions, working collaboratively with local governments, businesses and non-profits.

The largest of sixteen state-designated regional councils of government, CCOG coordinates federal and state funding for community and economic development, workforce development and aging programs within the region. It serves as an umbrella organization for the Area Agency on Aging, Centralina Workforce Development Board, Centralina Economic Development Commission, Centralina Clean Fuels Coalition, Centralina Foundation and Centralina Health Solutions.

Centralina Council of Governments gained national recognition with its three-year CONNECT Our Future collaborative process that developed the region's first-ever growth framework and strategies for the physical and social infrastructure required to grow the economy and jobs, control cost of government and improve quality of life for future generations. Centralina currently facilitates the implementation of those strategies through a regional freight mobility plan, a regional transit plan and the U.S. Commerce Economic Development Administration sponsored 2017-2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the region, "Prosperity for Greater Charlotte". Centralina also assists communities with a wide variety of technical services initiated with the CONNECT regional growth strategy.



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