



## Centralina's Top Three 2014 Commitments to Members

Centralina Council of Governments (CCOG) has set its top three commitments for how it will assist its local government members to prosper and grow in 2014. We have set goals and priorities for the months ahead and are taking crucial initial steps to achieve them.

### 1. We will help you plan for growth.

Our region is growing rapidly. We are partnering with you and the other local governments in the region to collaboratively plan for the region's physical and social infrastructure necessary to accommodate that growth.

- **Growing Jobs & the Economy** – We're taking steps to identify what's needed to expand our region's advanced manufacturing sector. We've received a \$200,000 federal "Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership" grant which will enable Centralina's CEDC and partnering organizations to develop a multi-faceted, implementation-ready strategy to advance our region's advanced manufacturing sector.
- **Workforce Development** – In order to provide a regionwide platform that will allow easy and equal access across the region to identify what jobs exist and where to get the training, we've developed the Centralina Career Headlight tool. The web-based tool to align the region's jobs, workforce and education in the region will soon be available to career seekers in the region.
- **Transportation Systems** – The effective and efficient movement of freight is critical to business growth in the region. Centralina has partnered with a diverse group of stakeholders in the region to seek funding for the development of a regional freight plan that looks at how we will move goods and products to business.
- **Food Systems** – Supporting our locally-grown food industry is important to the economy and to the health of residents of our communities. CCOG is working with regional partners to develop a strategy to support the growth and distribution of locally-grown foods in our region, and access to them by residents regionwide.

*"The vitality of each of our communities throughout the region depends upon our ability to grow the economy and jobs. Centralina's "Prosperity for Greater Charlotte" blueprint for economic growth and in particular the recent Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership grant will singly advance our efforts to achieve the job growth of our communities."*

**Bill Thunberg, Centralina Economic Development Commission Chairman, Former Mayor of Mooresville**

*"The Charlotte Douglas Airport's investment in the intermodal facility will position the region to compete more effectively for jobs and business growth. Centralina's regional freight planning initiative is a critical element to capitalizing on this investment, linking all the communities throughout our region to this facility."*

**Joe Carpenter, Gaston County Commissioner**

### 2. We will help you design and shape your community for growth.

Centralina is working side-by-side with communities through technical support services and grant-funded programs to ensure communities can grow and prosper and retain their unique identities.

- **Community Housing Strategy** – Having the right mix of housing to meet the demand of employers as well as the aging population is crucial to community growth and quality of life. Centralina will help communities develop local strategies to meet the housing needs identified by their residents, businesses, housing professionals and elected officials. CCOG's technical support services will help communities respond to local and regional housing trends identified through the CONNECT Our Future Comprehensive Housing Needs Study.
- **Healthy Communities Program** – Many communities struggle to respond to concerns about traffic congestion and speeds. As a follow-up to a successful 2013 "Planning for Healthy Communities" conference,

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Centralina is helping communities visualize, define, and plan for road diets, neighborhood bike routes, parks and greenway trails. These services will continue to grow as communities respond to resident demands for bike and pedestrian facilities for recreation, transportation, and sense of place. A 2014 Healthy Communities conference is also planned.

- **Downtown Redevelopment** – The need to maintain a thriving downtown is a challenge for many communities and a priority cited by residents across the region engaged in the CONNECT Our Future process. Centralina will provide technical support services to assist communities wishing to redevelop, improve and revitalize their downtowns.

*“Centralina staff recently facilitated a strategic planning session with our elected officials. One of our primary findings was that developing a comprehensive housing strategy is critical to the future of the Town of Spencer. Centralina’s resources and strategic approach to housing should help us address a number of concerns for our community.”*

**Jody Everhart, Town of Spencer Mayor**

*“The Healthy Communities initiatives sponsored by Centralina are helping us develop strategies that will incorporate health considerations into land and transportation planning, increasing opportunities for physical activity and healthy living. That means increased quality of life for our residents.”*

**M. Darrell Hinnant, City of Kannapolis Mayor**

*“Our downtown is the heart of our city. Centralina’s collaborative framework in developing a strategy for our downtown will help us achieve benefits and results that are critical to the continuing vitality of this important community asset.”*

**Costi Kutteh, City of Statesville Mayor**

### 3. We will help you control the cost of government.

As state and federal funding to local governments shrinks, everyone is being asked to do more with less. Centralina is your partner in controlling the cost of government.

- **Mobility Management System** – Local community transit services are unable to meet all the needs of a growing senior population and of disabled residents. A Centralina mobility management program has begun this year that

will coordinate human service transit options and initiate volunteer transportation services in the nine-county area. The program is made possible through the award of a \$450,000 grant to the Centralina Council of Governments (CCOG).

- **Water** – Communities need a reliable, quality water supply to grow and prosper. CCOG is working with local governments to take a comprehensive regional look at shared issues of water capacity, quality and quantity and the need for a regional strategy to address them.
- **Opportunities for Shared Services** – The cost of delivering services is becoming an increasing challenge to communities, and many are seeking ways to contain or reduce that cost. Centralina will be working with interested local governments to identify viable opportunities for shared services.
- **Energy Management** – Energy costs are a significant item in local government budgets. Centralina is working with public and private partners to identify best practices to reduce local government energy costs and bring funding and technical knowledge to our local governments.

*“Water is one of our most important assets for economic development. Protecting water quality and managing water availability is important to the future viability and success of each of our communities. Centralina is developing a region-wide assessment of water quality and quantity issues facing our region. This will inform strategies that will better enable our communities to assess water needs in the future and support community growth.”*

**Lindsey Dunevent, Stanly County Commissioner**

Centralina Council of Governments’ first annual “**Creative Solutions for Thriving Communities**” conference will be held December 11, 2014. The conference will be designed around the challenges you have told us you face, and it will provide information on best practices, resources and strategies to meet those challenges. More information will be available in the coming months.

**If you are interested in learning more about the services, programs and work mentioned in this article, contact Centralina Council of Governments at (704) 372-2416.**

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