

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 29, 2022
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CNU Board Names New Co-Leaders, Rick Cole Returns to City Government

Washington, DC -- After providing steady leadership through a period of transition and staff growth, Rick Cole has announced that he will be leaving CNU in December to accept a position as the Deputy Chief Controller for the city of Los Angeles. The Board of Directors unanimously voted to name Mallory Baches as the incoming President and Margaret Gattis as the Executive Director in a new shared leadership model that will steward the organization into the future.

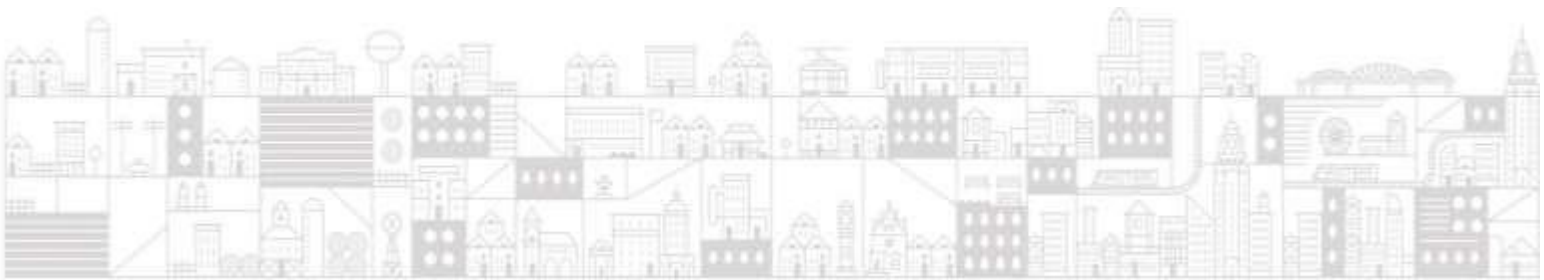
Mallory is an urban designer based in Savannah, Georgia, with more than 20 years of experience working at the intersection of urbanism and community development. She previously worked for CNU as Director of Strategic Development, and has a long history with the organization and the New Urbanism movement. Mallory's urban design practice has included award-winning greenfield and infill masterplans, architectural and adaptive reuse concept designs, design codes and urban land use policy guidelines, and strategic planning direction for climate change impact. She began her career with DPZ, the firm of two of CNU's co-founders after earning her undergraduate degree in Architecture from the University of Notre Dame. Mallory also holds a Master's Degree in Sustainable Urban Development from the University of Oxford. Her professional work and longtime involvement with CNU makes her an excellent fit for this leadership position.

"I am honored to have been asked to lead the Congress for the New Urbanism, an organization that has been central to my career," Baches said. "This opportunity to focus on reinforcing the mission outlined in the Charter, as we meet the moment of the urgent crises that communities are facing, is a privilege and I am grateful to the Board of Directors for their trust and support. I am determined to further elevate the spirit of collaboration that has been the lifeblood of this movement since its founding. I look forward to exemplifying that spirit through a powerful new model of CNU leadership, shared with my colleague and friend Margaret Gattis. We are excited to engage with the broad network of CNU members and partners, who are so uniquely positioned to respond to the serious harms that sprawl continues to impose on our neighborhoods, cities, and planet."

The board is pleased that Margaret Gattis, the current Deputy Director, will step into the role of Executive Director, in light of her internal leadership for the organization during the past two years of transition and growth. Prior to joining CNU in 2018 as Program Director, Margaret spent over a decade working in marketing, research, and policy across various divisions of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

CNU has had either a President or an Executive Director, but never a shared leadership allowing both positions to serve the organization at the same time. The transition to a collaborative leadership model is an exciting opportunity for CNU to reap the benefits of having internal and external leadership in lock step along with diversified experience at the executive level.

This exciting new structure will not only provide a stronger foundation for CNU staff and programs, but will allow the organization to make measurable progress on the strategic plan in 2023.



“The appointment of Mallory Baches as President and Margaret Gattis as Executive Director of the CNU gives us hope that we can finally get to mount a robust and diverse urbanist response to the challenges of climate change.” said Stefanos Polyzoides, Francis and Kathleen Rooney Dean of the School of Architecture at Notre Dame, Partner MOULE & POLYZOIDES, Architects and Urbanists, and co-founder of CNU.

Over the past year and a half, Rick Cole has reconnected CNU with key partners in the urbanism field and increased the support and engagement of the Chapter network. He has renewed the focus on key directives of the Strategic Plan: honing CNU’s focus on diversifying neighborhoods, designing for climate change, and legalizing walkable places. Among his many accomplishments, he is leaving CNU in strong financial shape, with a more versatile and diverse staff. Throughout his career, Rick has recognized the impact of design locally and has championed the principles of New Urbanism in local government. He will be bringing that passion to his new position as Chief Deputy Controller for the City of Los Angeles.

“As I return to local public service, I’m excited for the future of CNU,” Cole said. “I look forward to seeing everyone in Charlotte next year. I am deeply grateful for an incredibly enriching 18 months working with the architects, planners, builders, engineers, officials and activists who every day are on the ground fighting sprawl and creating the livable and sustainable places everyone deserves.”

There will be more chances to get to know CNU’s new leaders through upcoming webinars as well as at CNU 31. Charlotte May 31 - June 3, 2023.

About CNU

The Congress for the New Urbanism’s (CNU) mission is to champion walkable urbanism. We provide resources, education, and technical assistance to create socially just, economically robust, environmentally resilient, and people centered places. We leverage New Urbanism's unique integration of design and social principles to advance three key goals: to diversify neighborhoods, to design for climate change, and to legalize walkable places. Visit cnu.org for more.