

For Immediate Release

For an interview with Carrie Runser-Turner, GroWNC Project Manager, please contact Erica Allison, Allison Development Group at 828.329.5089 or erica@allisondevelopmentgroup.com



Final Round of GroWNC Community Meetings Begins November 8

Public invited to identify future scenarios for the region; create a patchwork quilt for the future.

Asheville, NC (October 2012) – The GroWNC Consortium announces a second, and final, series of Community Meetings scheduled for November and December in Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania counties. Meeting organizers state that the goal of the meetings is to gather community input and provide an update on the progress of GroWNC. Community Meetings are scheduled to take place on November 8th in Buncombe County, November 13th in Transylvania County, November 15th in Hendersonville, November 29th in Haywood County, and December 6th in Madison County. The meetings will be from 1-3 pm and 4-6 pm on the designated day for each county.

“To accommodate a variety of schedules, we’re holding the Community Meetings in two sessions, with a drop-in format, in each county,” said Carrie Runser-Turner, GroWNC Program Manager. “Attendees are invited to stop by anytime during the two sessions and can stay as long as they like.” The community is invited to explore, evaluate and recommend scenarios that can shape the future of the region. “Using scenarios helps folks imagine how today’s decisions impact their future, on a grander scale,” said Runser-Turner. Meeting organizers plan to use a patchwork quilt to illustrate how the preferences of a community can work together to create a unique ‘map’ or snapshot for the future.

Using storytelling, images, maps and imagery, attendees will be able to review and compare four different scenarios, ultimately ‘scoring’ each based on preferences for themselves and their community. Performance measures derived from goals and objectives developed by the community will help participants discern the scores assigned to each scenario. As participants leave the meeting, they’ll give their scores to the meeting organizers or “quilters” who in turn will use them to “weave” together a quilt that represents the preferences for each county.

GroWNC Process

GroWNC Workgroups have been collaborating since January to develop goals, recommendations, and initial findings focused on these core study areas: housing, transportation, land use, economic development, natural resources, cultural resources, energy,

and public health. A summary of public input gathered throughout the process, including the results of a series of over 85 small group discussions with over 800 participants from communities across the project area will be displayed in a visual gallery.

Members of the public who are unable to attend the Community Meetings can still participate in the GroWNC process. The GroWNC website, www.gro-wnc.org, features a variety of ways for the public to be involved. As the Community Meetings begin in November, an interactive, web-based version of the meeting will be made available which can be used by community groups, neighborhood associations, and others to provide their input if they cannot attend the Community Meetings. No knowledge of the project is required and the web-based meeting will mirror the experience at the Community Meeting, including the tools needed to easily participate.

About GroWNC

The GroWNC initiative focuses on growth and economic development in the five counties of Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania. Led by a Consortium of local governments, organizations and community members, GroWNC is using existing regional and local plans and building on that information with extensive public involvement and research, to produce future scenarios to guide decision-making, as well as action-oriented strategies for use by local governments and others in the region. The Community Meetings are a major component of the GroWNC public involvement effort.

GroWNC is funded by a grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and is administered by Land-of-Sky Regional Council (LOSRC), with the assistance of an interdisciplinary team led by LandDesign. UNC-Asheville's National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center (NEMAC) is working with Land-of-Sky and LandDesign to facilitate community outreach and assistance with modeling and mapping of results. The GroWNC Consortium is led by an 18-member Steering Committee, made up of representatives from across the region. The Steering Committee includes a representative of each Workgroup, three At-Large members, representatives from the region's local governments, and three Ex-Officio members from three state agency partners - the NC Department of Commerce, the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and the NC Department of Transportation. The final outcomes and community vision are expected to be delivered to local governments at the end of 2012.

Community Meeting Schedule & Locations

Buncombe County: November 8, 2012 – 1-3 pm and 4-6 pm at the US Cellular Center (Civic Center)

Transylvania County: November 13, 2012 – 1-3 pm and 4-6 pm at the Transylvania County Public Library

Hendersonville: November 15, 2012 – 1-3 pm and 4-6 pm at the Blue Ridge Conference Hall, Blue Ridge Community College (Flat Rock Campus)

Haywood County: November 29, 2012 – 1-3 pm and 4-6 pm at the USDA Center

Madison County: December 6, 2012 – 1-3 pm and 4-6 pm at the Madison County Extension Office

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Land-of-Sky Regional Council

Land-of-Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) is a multi-county planning and development organization. It is one of 16 such organizations in the state and serves Region B, which includes the counties of Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania. LOSRC is composed of elected officials– mayors, county commission chairpersons and alternates–from member governments, one private representative of economic development interests in each county and two at-large members. Members meet monthly to plan programs and set policies and goals to benefit the entire region. LOSRC administers state and federal funds for community and economic development, serves as the Area Agency on Aging and is an affiliate of the NC State Data Center. For more information on GroWNC, visit www.gro-wnc.org or call Land-of-Sky at [828-251-6622](tel:828-251-6622).