

For Immediate Release
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GroWNC Begins Scenario Planning

Community meeting results have been incorporated into next phase of planning, as Workgroups evaluate potential scenarios in upcoming workshop.

Asheville, NC (July 2012) – The GroWNC Consortium and Steering Committee are ready to begin the next phase of a regional comprehensive planning process: **Scenario Planning**. Using data gathered by consultants in the fields of **housing, energy, transportation, land use, health and wellness, natural and cultural resources**; input collected from a series of community meetings across five counties; and the synthesis of existing plans; workgroup members will be asked to react to and offer input for **scenarios** presented at a meeting **July 30, 2012, at the NC Arboretum beginning at 9:30 AM**. Specifically, those present at this meeting will be asked to:

- recognize complementary and competing goals, and
- compare two future scenarios to see if one achieves goals better than the other, or suggest a third scenario.

Workgroups in the areas of **Economic Development, Housing, Transportation, Health & Wellness, Energy, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Cultural Resources** have been meeting since January to develop draft goals and objectives and to review data in their topic areas. Workgroup meetings are always open to the public and welcome input from folks interested in this process.

Scenario Planning is a method for learning about the future. It allows communities to understand the potential consequences of present-day choices and to make wise decisions in the face of uncertainty. The outcomes of the Scenario Planning process will be taken to the public for additional input and strategy development in **October of 2012**. At that time, the GroWNC Consortium and Steering Committee will hold an additional set of Community Meetings where residents of the region can provide their input on a preferred regional future and strategies and projects needed to achieve that vision. Additional information about the Scenario Planning Workshop is available here: www.gro-wnc.org/events.html.

Background on the Process:

Throughout the month of May, the GroWNC Consortium, Steering Committee and Workgroups held a series of five Community Meetings throughout the region. The primary purpose of the meetings was to hear from residents on topics related to future development and growth in the five counties of Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania. Over 200 people attended the open-house style meetings, offering their input through a series of topic-specific activities and questions designed to gather ideas, input and reactions.

A preliminary report of the input received, as well as links to all of the maps and materials presented at the meetings, is available in the Community Meetings section of the GroWNC website at www.gro-wnc.org/communitymeeting.html.

Options for Participation:

If residents were unable to attend the Community Meetings in May, other options exist to participate in the GroWNC project. The website features an interactive meeting called a **Community Road Trip** which can be conducted by small groups of 8-12 people. Previous experience with or knowledge of the project is not required, and all of the materials needed to participate are available electronically. Individuals can also fill out a **survey**, submit their story, and find more information at www.gro-wnc.org or by calling 828-251-6622.

About GroWNC

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 assistance by 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.

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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 17 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.