



Workgroup Launch Meeting Agenda

DATE Thursday, January 19, 2011

TIME 10:00am- Noon

LOCATION Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College
Enka Campus, Haynes Conference Center
1459 Sand Hill Road
Candler, NC 28715

AGENDA

10:00am: Welcome and Introductions

10:15am: GroWNC Project Update

10:30am: Role and Function of the Workgroups

10:45am: Workgroup Formation

11:00am: Workgroup Break Out Sessions

11:45am: Reconvene and Next Steps

12:00pm: Meeting Close



GroWNC Workgroups Overview

PURPOSE OF THE WORKGROUPS

The GroWNC process will be guided by Consortium members who will self-select into one of eight workgroups focused on the following topic areas: economic development, energy, health, housing, natural and cultural resources, transportation, land use and communications/outreach. A Federal and State partners workgroup will also form (note that the Federal and State Partners workgroup will nominate ex-officio members to the Steering Committee). The Workgroups will form partnerships, identify opportunities and challenges, develop strategies, and look for ways to implement projects identified in the GroWNC process.

Specific tasks assigned to individual workgroups are based upon the tasks set forth in the original grant application and subsequent workplan documentation. It is anticipated that individual Workgroups will evolve their charge as the project progresses.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE WORKGROUPS

Workgroup members should be willing to:

- commit their time to participate actively in GroWNC, including a commitment to attend a minimum of 3 workgroup sessions (other meetings may be necessary and will be scheduled at the discretion of the individual workgroups)
- provide leadership, share work responsibilities and listen to their fellow workgroup and consortium members; and
- nominate individuals to serve on the Steering Committee (in order to ensure equitable representation, the Land-of-Sky Board will select Steering Committee members from those nominated from the workgroups); and
- develop recommendations for consideration by the Steering Committee; and
- assist with public outreach and involvement by sharing project information with members of the public and their constituents; and
- communicate with and represent the interests of their constituencies.

Workgroups will focus on the specific topic areas below and will form smaller cross-sector subgroups as needed to complete various tasks and ensure that deeper analysis cuts across various topic areas.



WORKGROUP DESCRIPTIONS*:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The economic development workgroup will bring together people from a variety of backgrounds and interests with the goal of developing strategies for job creation. Strategies will be developed with strong consideration of and to support the Region's Livability Principles. Strategies may be developed to support, but will not be limited to, the following objectives (as outlined in the original grant application and workplan documentation):

- Improved economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs by workers as well as expanded business access to markets.
- Effective job training programs that are matched to employment needs.
- Establishment of partnerships and development of strategies for job creation.
- Improved graduation rates and employability of local high school graduates.
- Development of a partnership between affordable housing developers and transportation system coordinators and major employment providers.

ENERGY

The energy workgroup will evaluate the energy baseline and future energy needs for the five county region, taking into account the outputs from the other workgroups. From there, the group will develop policy and action recommendations for energy planning to meet the region's future needs including working to expand and utilize more local, and renewable energy sources. Strategies may be developed to support, but will not be limited to, the following objectives (as outlined in the original grant application and workplan documentation):

- Energy and financial savings.
- Energy-efficient housing and transportation choices, including increasing alternative fuel vehicles and stations.

HOUSING

The housing workgroup will bring together people from a variety of backgrounds from both the public and private sectors with the goal of developing strategies to promote equitable and affordable housing options throughout the five counties. Strategies may be developed to support, but will not be limited to, the following objectives (as outlined in the original grant application and workplan documentation):

- Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.
- Develop housing initiatives interconnected with multi-modal transportation and major employers.
- Suggest infill sites for sustainable, affordable and accessible housing development along transit corridors which connect to employment centers.



- Develop a partnership between affordable housing developers and transportation system coordinators and major employment providers.

LAND USE

The land use workgroup will bring together people from a variety of backgrounds and interests with the goal of developing strategies that support existing communities and neighborhoods. Strategies may be developed to support, but will not be limited to, the following objectives (as outlined in the original grant application and workplan documentation):

- Study potential development patterns and their impacts across the landscape.
- Assist with identification of gaps and opportunities in existing land use plans.
- Assist in assimilating recommendations from existing land-use planning documents.
- Identify infill sites for sustainable, affordable, and accessible housing development along transit corridors which connect to employment centers.

NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

The natural and cultural resources workgroup will bring together people from a variety of backgrounds and interests with the goal of preserving and enhancing our natural and cultural resources. Strategies may be developed to support, but will not be limited to, the following objectives (as outlined in the original grant application and workplan documentation):

- Development and dissemination of tools to help communities make more pro-active and strategic land conservation, land development and investment decisions.
- Study potential development and various development patterns across the landscape and compare these to our valuable natural resources and “green infrastructure” network to study the impacts.
- Expanding the economic development strategies for rural and urban working lands in the region.
- Identifying and recommending areas for recreation and for preservation.

TRANSPORTATION

The transportation workgroup will bring together people from a variety of backgrounds and interests with the goal of providing more transportation options. Strategies may be developed to support, but will not be limited to, the following objectives (as outlined in the original grant application and workplan documentation):

- Provide more transportation choices, including developing and expanding the region's clean, efficient and affordable transportation options.
- Enhance multi-modal transportation options near major employment centers.
- Develop safe, reliable and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation’s dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote public health.



- Expand multi-modal transportation and employment options to rural communities.
- Increase alternative fuel vehicles and stations.
- Decrease per capita VMT and transportation-related emissions.
- Develop a partnership between affordable housing developers and transportation system coordinators and major employment providers.

HEALTH

The health workgroup will work to explore the common health challenges the region is facing now and in the future. This group will utilize available data, examine public health indicators and, guided by the methodology employed for Community Health Assessments (CHAs) and Health Impact Assessments (HIAs), evaluate the region to determine what policies, plans, programs and/or projects are needed to improve the health of the population and workforce for a better future. Strategies may be developed to support, but will not be limited to, the following objectives (as outlined in the original grant application and workplan documentation):

- Development of tools (such as HIAs, and CHAs) to analyze potential health benefits/impacts of various activities
- Develop partnerships so that health impacts are taken into consideration in transportation, housing, and employment decision-making

OTHER WORKGROUPS

FEDERAL AND STATE PARTNERS

The Federal and State Partners workgroup will work to align federal and state planning and investment resources that mirror the local and regional strategies for achieving sustainable communities, strategies may be developed to support, but will not be limited to, the following objectives (as outlined in the original grant application and workplan documentation):

- Identify state and federal priorities and funding sources for regional sustainability projects.
- Incorporate state and federal sustainability policies and resources into regional plan.
- Incorporate regional priorities and strategies in state policies and strategies.



COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

The Communications and Outreach workgroup will work to implement the outreach strategy throughout the project. Their activities will include, but will not be limited to, the following objectives (as outlined in the original grant application and workplan documentation):

- Seek active participation from members of targeted communities.
- Identify communication barriers and issues.
- Assist with the development and deployment of a Communications Toolbox which will include multi-lingual and multi-media resources.
- Assist with outreach before, during, and following the two Reality Check events.
- Ensure widespread public involvement in Reality Checks.

** The aforementioned objectives were generated as part of the initial HUD Sustainable Communities application process. As the GroWNC process unfolds, the workgroups should assume full liberty in revising goal statements.*

GroWNC Workgroups Assignments

Please consider the following questions/comments in preparation for the January 19 meeting. These questions will help guide the conversation during the workgroup break out discussions.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- What do you see as the greatest economic development opportunities for the GroWNC region?
- What are the major contributing factors to the GroWNC region's economic competitiveness?
- A number of factors contribute to the identification of employment sites including suitability of zoning, compatibility of surrounding uses, availability of building types, transportation infrastructure, availability of workforce, access to public transit, proximity to customers and suppliers, etc. What other site suitability factors are important in the GroWNC region?
- Economic development is often measured as number of jobs created. What other measures are important for the GroWNC region?
- List any documents or data sources that are relevant to this project.

ENERGY

- How important an issue is energy to the region's future sustainable development, economic prosperity, and quality growth?
- What are your goals for future sources of energy? For example, what sources are most desirable and what percentage of total energy should come from renewable sources (e.g. State-mandated levels or greater)?
- How big of an issue is the cost of energy to area businesses and residents? Does it affect regional competitiveness? If it is an issue, is it becoming more serious? Why?
- What do you see as the greatest opportunities to reduce energy consumption?
- Reducing energy consumption is often measured as reductions in per capita energy consumption. Is this the right measure for the GroWNC region? What might be better targets?



- List any documents or data sources that are relevant to this project.

HOUSING

- What are the region's main challenges to measurably increasing the supply of housing affordable to a diversity of incomes?
- A number of factors contribute to housing location choice including affordability, proximity employment, proximity to amenities, energy efficiency, general accessibility, privacy. What other factors are important in the GroWNC region?
- Define the existing condition (policy, regulation, local practice, public perception, private interests, etc) that, if modified, could have a positive impact on development of mixed income housing.
- What are the most important traits of sustainable housing development in the region? Affordability, energy efficiency, location near resources such as transit, others?
- What types of housing choices are needed in the region?
- How has the economy impacted the housing markets and residents attitudes on housing? How can the region improve development processes during this lull in activity to make more sustainable development possible?
- List any documents or data sources that are relevant to this project.

LAND USE

- Are there major concerns/issues with the existing development pattern(s) in your community? If so, what are they?
- What components of your locally adopted land use plans are relevant for the five-county GroWNC region?
- Define existing conditions (policy, regulation, local practice, public perception, etc.) that, if modified, could have a positive impact on land use and development.
- Given the local and regional land use work already completed, where are the gaps in information?
- List any documents or data sources that are relevant to this project.



NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

- How do the region's natural and cultural resources currently support economic development and quality of life?
- What are your goals for future conservation of natural and cultural resources?
- Given the regional inventory of natural and cultural resources already completed, where are the gaps?
- List any documents or data sources that are relevant to this project.

TRANSPORTATION

- What are the biggest obstacles preventing you personally (or someone you know, or people/households in general) from substituting transit or walking/biking for driving? From owning fewer automobiles? (If you have already made such a change, what did it take? What was the most difficult adjustment? The most unexpected benefit?)
- What were the top 3 factors (in order of importance) in choosing your current residence? What would they be for your next residence (or if you had to change residences)?
- How many times has your household changed residences in the past 10 years? How many times have employment locations (commute destinations) changed?
- At what price would the cost of fuel be so high as to trigger significant changes in your household travel decisions/behavior? What changes would you make?
- Are there any policies/programs/practices/laws at the local/regional(/state) level that you think directly impede your (or your neighbors') ability to walk, bike or take transit?
- List any documents or data sources that are relevant to this project.

HEALTH

- What challenges (HEALTH OUTCOMES) are we facing in the region? Note the supporting evidence/data.
 - Today?
 - In the future?
- What are the contributing FACTORS (health determinants)? Note the supporting evidence/data.
 - Direct?
 - Indirect?



- Define the existing condition (policy, regulation, local practice/behavior, public perception, absence of program, etc) that, if modified, could have a positive impact on health.
- List any documents or data sources that are relevant to this project.

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

- Which populations/communities in our region are marginalized or often under-represented in public processes? Can you identify leaders within these populations/communities with whom we should work to improve our outreach and communication efforts?
- What communication challenges, barriers, and issues will we face in this project (or are normally encountered in public processes in our region)?
- What are some essential tools that should be included in the Communications Toolbox we develop and deploy for this project?
- List any documents or data sources that are relevant to this project.