CULTIVATENC™

COMMUNITIES UNEARTHING LOCAL TALENT
INSPIRING VIBRANT AND TRANSFORMATIVE ECONOMIES

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Introduction

CultivateNC is the new community development project of North Carolina Cooperative Extension in conjunction with NC State University. An important component of this project is the CultivateNC curriculum. The curriculum engages communities of people in redeveloping, reenergizing, and reinventing the areas where they live, work, and play. It has been developed to encourage NC Extension Agents to explore a creativity-based community and economic development initiative that draws upon the skills and talents of the local community.

Curriculum summary

Economic development in the 21st century is different from any other time in history. In today's globalized marketplace innovation has become the key that allows one business to rise above the others. Corporate industries are hiring people that can solve problems or increase profits, using resourcefulness and creativity.

Even the small, independent family farmer needs to explore fresh, new ideas for all areas of the operation if they want to stay competitive.

The CultivateNC Curriculum provides a step-by-step process for Extension Agents to use in organizing and conducting a community-driven initiative for revitalizing and re-building local capacity; one that is guided by the principles of creative thinking and leads to sustainable development.

NC Cooperative Extension's unique role in "'Empowering People . . . Providing Solutions" positions it to be a powerful catalyst for this work. Extension has the local relationships and tie to the Land-grant university system to build partnerships that leverage resources to meet the needs of the state and local community. This work will result in a better quality of life and will create and strengthen jobs, businesses, and industries.

Context

Background: *Creativity Inc.: Rural Sustainability through Innovation,* the precursor to the CultivateNC Curriculum*,* was initiated as a pilot program in Anson and Stanly Counties NC. The core partners included the Institute for Emerging Issues (IEI) at NC State University; Regional Technology Strategies (RTS), a nonprofit economic development organization in Carrboro NC, and NC State Cooperative Extension. The overarching goal was to develop an approach for introducing creativity-based economic development that draws upon the skills and talents of the local community.

Creativity: The idea of the creative economy likely brings to mind images of artists, musicians, and photographers. In fact, the creative economy is a multifaceted field that includes not only traditional artists but also occupations and enterprises that can be found in manufacturing, construction, design, science, agriculture, and technology. *Creativity is the process of generating ideas that can be used to solve problems, increase profits, or invent new products or services. (Institute for Emerging Issues, 2010.)*

Creativity has always played a role in economic development, but until recently creativity was not considered an economic driver. The important thing to remember is that creativity is not confined to only people with artistic talents; everyone has creative ability. Creativity and innovation can help promote growth in every sector of the community. What you will find in this curriculum are the tools to help your community discover and develop its creative edge*.*

What You Will Find

The CultivateNC curriculum has been developed to encourage NC Extension Agents to explore a creativity-based community and economic development initiative that draws upon the skills and talents of the local community.

Whether a community is planning to build a community garden on a vacant lot, convert a polluter to a more environmentally friendly system, or create economic opportunities in their downtown area, *this curriculum provides a process for the community to participate in the creation of the solutions.* (Adapted from Abi-Nader, 2005.)

The curriculum is separated into three phases and incorporates a youth-adult partnership. Phase one builds a strong leadership core (the Steering Committee and the Research Team) and collects and prepares a community profile for Phase two.

Phase two centers around a large Community Workshop that will bring in new voices and begin to build a community action plan. Phase three takes the results and the enthusiasm from the Workshop to build an ongoing community development initiative.

Each phase takes 3 to 4 months and offers a flexible timetable so that Agents or Community Specialists feel comfortable incorporating this initiative into their busy schedules. The role of the Extension Agent or Community Specialist is to organize the process. The majority of work will be shared with the Steering Committee and The Research Team.

For Extension Agents that are New to Community Development: The curriculum provides a step by step agenda, research tools, instructions, and a series of activities for each phase. The process is interactive; each activity builds a foundation for the next step.

For Community Development Specialists: The curriculum incorporates techniques and strategies that will seem familiar. You may find yourself thinking, "I already do this in my work."

This was intentional. We wanted to weave into this curriculum the guiding principles used by successful development specialists, which are often learned only through experience.

Adaptable Curriculum: The curriculum recognizes that each community will have their unique challenges and there is no one cookie-cutter solution or process for building community capacity. We have attempted to create a curriculum that is adaptable to different issues and will provide the inspiration to think *outside-the-box*.

CultivateNC Guiding Principles *(Keep these in mind as you read through this curriculum summary.)*

- In order for a community or economic development program to be sustainable it must grow from *within* the community.

- *Diverse* and *inclusive* participation and leadership will enrich program planning and implementation.

- People are more committed to ideas and plans they help create.

- Creativity-based community development programs build on the strengths, assets, and resources that exist in the community.

- Sustainable growth requires development opportunities in every demographic sector and neighborhood.

- Creativity is the process of generating ideas that can be used to *solve problems, increase profits, or invent new products or services.*

Sources: American Community Gardening Association, Institute for Emerging Issues, Southern Rural Development Center

PHASE ONE: RESEARCH AND PLANNING

Getting Started

The first step is to determine who will organize the program. It may be you or it may be someone you select. In either case it should be a person with organizing/leadership experience and who is interested in community development. Another option would be to have two program leaders. Using two leaders would help divide the work and responsibilities of this curriculum.

The next step is to gather a core group of local people who are committed to working on this program. The core group will include a Steering Committee, comprised of representatives from diverse groups within the community, and a youth-based Research Team.

The majority of the work in *Phase One* of this curriculum will be completed by the Research Team so you will want to get a team on board as soon as possible. We suggest finding a 4-H Youth Group, high school service learning program, or students at the community college or local university. Teenagers are not often invited to participate in the process of community development and yet they have the most to gain or lose in their community's future.

For communities that are concerned about youth migration away from home, a youth-adult partnership can develop or deepen ties to the community. But most importantly, these are the voices that can inspire new and innovative thinking. Youth engagement is one of hallmarks of the CultivateNC Curriculum. We suggest seven team members as ideal, but the research can be completed with 4-5 volunteers. *(For additional information on youth-adult partnerships see pages 23-24 of the Curriculum.)*

The Steering Committee should include residents from different age groups, gender, economic status, and skills as well as ethnicity. The

demographics of the community should reflect the demographics of the Steering Committee. Voices from every sector should participate in the process, including the youth. *(See suggestions for locating Steering Committee members pages 19-22 of the Curriculum.)*

Research Team Goals

In the first phase of the curriculum, the Research Team will be working as a subset of the Steering Committee, collecting data for the Asset Mapping Inventory and conducting the Community Interviews.

Asset Mapping refers to the process of creating an inventory of Community assets and resources. (People often think of financial assets, but for this project the Research Team will also be collecting cultural, human, political, social, natural/environment and built/infrastructure assets.) These assets represent what the community has to work with when planning future projects.

When the Research Team completes the Community Asset Inventory they will move on to the Community Interviews. The process for collecting Community Interviews is called Appreciative Inquiry. It is different from the usual survey instrument; the questions are more probing and ask for stories, not just short answers. From the interview stories you will learn about community values and get a sense of how the community would like to grow.

Asset Mapping and Appreciative Inquiry build the foundation for your community initiative. The research will be presented at the Community Workshop. Learning about community assets and community values will help guide the Workshop participants as they begin to explore future possibilities for their community.

This research process will take 3-4 months depending on the number of team members and the time available. In addition to the Work

Sessions, the Research Team will join the Steering Committee for meetings two and four. You will want to get the Research Team working as soon as possible. (*A complete set of instructions, for the Research Team Work Sessions are provided in the Guidelines for the Research Team pages 148-204.)*

Kick-off Meeting

Once you have a group of interested residents. The next step is to plan a Kick-off meeting. The Research Team, all Steering Committee members, and any potential new recruits to the Steering Committee, should receive an invitation.

Meeting Objectives:

1. Bring a group of potential Steering Committee members together for an overview of the CultivateNC Curriculum, the work and the rewards.
2. Provide an opportunity for them to think about the commitment needed and state their willingness to participate,
3. Generate excitement over the possibilities and listen to concerns they may have to resolve to participate fully.

The meeting agenda includes two activities; 1) Introduction/icebreaker and, 2) What does Creativity have to do with Economic Development.

The second activity is lengthy but powerful. For this activity the group is divided into three working groups. Each group is given one of three stories to read with questions at the end. The stories provide true examples of creativity in economic and community development.

The working groups are then asked to reconvene and share their stories. This activity leads to a broader discussion of creativity as an economic driver.

Once the participants have a better understanding of Creativity and its place in Community Development, the facilitator will provide a brief overview of the curriculum with time for Q&A. The Kick-off closes with one final exercise of the group nominating themselves, each other, and anyone not already invited to the process to become a part of this initiative. *(For additional information see pages 25-37 of the Curriculum.)*

Steering Committee Meeting One

This is the first official meeting of the Steering Committee members.

Meeting Objectives

- Provide an overview of the curriculum and tentative timeline
- Describe the Research Tools that will be used to build a foundation for this work (Asset Mapping, Community Interviews)
- Identify three roles, one to work on the community profile, one to be the note taker, and one to be the social networking catalyst
- Create a historical timeline of the community (the History Wall

The agenda includes one activity, creating a History Wall. An historical timeline helps us understand what happened in the past and how we grew into the community we are today. Sometimes looking back helps us remember important values and can provide some guidance for the future.

The History Wall will be replicated in some creative fashion and displayed at the Community Workshop. (*See pages 39-51 of the Curriculum.)*

Steering Committee Meeting Two

The Research Team meets the Steering Committee to establish a youth-adult partnership. The meeting time and location need to be convenient for both groups to attend.

Meeting Objectives:

- To get to know each other
- To let the youth begin to experience an Appreciative Interview (which they will later be conducting as part of the research)
- To help establish a productive youth-adult partnership
- To outline where we will be going from here

The first exercise (Paired Interviews) introduces an approach known as the Appreciative Interview (AI). The questions in an AI are different because they are more probing….they ask for stories not just short answers. But, most importantly, the Appreciative Interview is different because it seeks to identify the positive elements . . . the good instead of the bad; the strengths not the problems.

For this project, participants will be asked to tell a story about a time when they realized their community was special or unique. (These are the same questions the Research Team will use when they interview community leaders.)

The next activity is going to set the stage for this work as a youth-adult partnership. Often when youth and adults work together there is difficulty in balancing the relationship, power, and workload. This exercise is going to help set the stage to avoid common pitfalls and have a successful partnership.

If you have chosen older members for the Research Team, you may skip this exercise.

Youth-Adult Partnerships (YAPS) are a partnership between one or more youth and one or more adults where both parties are joined together for a common goal. YAPS are beneficial to both groups because through YAPS, both groups have a chance to learn about the other and through the YAPS partnership, project and programmatic goals are reached in a more efficient manner. YAPS open up new doors to not only working with a different peer group, but also open up avenues to reaching expanded audiences because of the partnership between the youth and the adults. YAPS are an effective way to blend generations for multi generation and cross programmatic instruction.

The facilitator will show a short PowerPoint presentation on YAPS. This is followed with a role-play activity and discussion. (*See curriculum page 53-68.*)

Steering Committee Three:
Planning the Community Workshop

The goal of this meeting is to begin working on the Community Workshop logistics and agenda.

Meeting Objectives: Planning and Logistics

- Discuss a date and location for the Community Workshop.
- Suggestions of resources for snacks and lunch/dinner (ideally, lunch will be provided by a local caterer, using local food; the menu should be fun and cater to local tastes.
- Suggestions for a guest speaker (optional).
- Define any challenges or barriers to the Community Workshop; the Steering Committee team may be able to provide answers or assistance.

- Create a list of needed materials and supplies for the Community Workshop. Identify Steering Committee members who may have access to resources or potential donors to contact.
- Identify facilitators for the Workshop program activities
- Ask for updates on action steps from the previous meeting

(See pages 69-77 of the Curriculum.)

Steering Committee Meeting Four:
Using the Research Data for Planning Economic Development

Over the past few months, the Research Team has been collecting data for the Community Asset Inventory and conducting Community Interviews. Today, the Research Team is meeting with the Steering Committee to reflect on and discuss the information that was gathered from the Community Interviews.

Meeting Objectives:

- Reflect and discuss Community Interviews
- Select five or six themes (dreams or goals) that were identified from the interviews
- Create a Community Vision Board

The meeting agenda includes four group activities. The first activity will ask the Steering Committee to join their partners on the Research Team. Together they will reflect and discuss the community interview summaries.

The second activity asks the group to answer the following questions:

1. What were the most compelling or life-giving stories?
2. Overall, what was your sense of what was most important to the people interviewed?

The third activity asks the group to identify five or six dreams or wishes that were common in the interview responses. (The interviewees were asked to describe 3 wishes or dreams they had for the community.)

In the final activity, the group will design a Community Vision Board that will list a compilation of community wishes in one column and community values in the second column. The Vision board will be displayed at the Community Workshop and used for a Workshop planning activity. *(See pages 70-77 of the Curriculum.)*

PHASE TWO: ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY IN A CREATIVITY WORKSHOP

Research Team Goals

Once the Research Team has finished collecting and summarizing the Community Asset Inventory and the Community Interviews, its members can choose to end their participation with this program or they can join the Steering Committee for Phase two.

Ideally, the ResearchTeam will continue to work with the Steering Committee. Doing so will expand their knowledge and skills in communication, promotions and logistical planning. In addition, the Team will get to see how their research data correlates to the process of community development.

In phase two the Research Team works alongside of the Steering Committee to plan and strategize methods for promoting the Community Workshop and engaging the community. This process takes three months. *Details for this work can be found in Steering Committee meetings five, six and seven, pages 89-104 of the Curriculum.*

Steering Committee Meeting Five: Engaging the Community

Getting a good turnout to the Community Workshop will be a challenge. Many families are overwhelmed by work schedules and family responsibilities. Others may feel that their input is not valued. The curriculum includes suggestions on how to address these barriers as you plan your campaign to promote the Community Workshop.

Meeting Objectives:

- **Plan:** Plan and strategize methods for promoting the Community Workshop and engaging the community.

- **Press Release:** Identify a group to write and distribute a press release by email and fax to all local media.

- **Invitation:** Identify a group to design the invitation and the flyers.

- **General announcement:** Identify a group to write and distribute an announcement to community newsletters, both online and in print.

- **Social Media:** Identify a group to distribute announcements and updates on the internet (blogs, facebook, email list serves etc.).

- **Translator:** Identify a person that can rewrite the announcement in the appropriate language for newsletters or flyers.

- **Radio:** If your community has a local radio talk show, identify a group to contact them to see if you or your spokesperson can do a spot on the show.

Ideally, the Steering Committee members and the Research Team members will work together on these tasks in small work groups. To help keep the teams on track the curriculum includes a timeline for distributing promotional materials. *(For details, see pages 89-96.)*

- Reach out to community leaders, and ask them to help spread the word about event.
- Pay special attention to the leaders of minority groups. Please keep in mind that minority groups are any group that is under-represented (including youth and the elderly).
- Reach out to Special Interest groups: Identify local businesses that are owned by or cater to a specific population in the community.

The Steering Committee and the Research Team members will work together to create and distribute the promotional materials. *(See pages 97-100 of the Curriculum for additional ideas.)*

Steering Committee Meeting Six:
Outreach and Media

Meeting Objectives:

- Review and approve promotional material drafts
- Identify who will create the promotional materials
- Identify who will distribute promotional materials

The agenda includes one Brain-Storming activity: creating an invitation list for the Community Workshop. (The group will already have a list from the Community Asset Inventory. The goal of this activity is to go beyond the usual civic-minded volunteers and to reach into the far corners of the community.

A personal invitation takes more time, but it makes an impression and lets the recipients' know their attendance is valued. Ask each member of the group to identify one or more personal invites they will make. Some suggestions are listed below.

Committee Meeting Seven:
Finalize Workshop Preparations

The focus of this meeting is to finalize all the details for the Community Workshop. Every step, from the sign-in table to the breakdown crew needs to planned and well thought-out.

Meeting Objectives:
- Finalize the program agenda
- Confirm Workshop program facilitators
- Create a list of materials and supplies
- Confirm guest speaker
- Check out meeting facilities to make sure that everything is on track
- Confirm meals and refreshments
- Confirm staff responsibilities for room set up, refreshments, break down and trash removal
- Send out a Workshop reminder to email lists
- Schedule telephone reminders

- Schedule a radio announcement
- Schedule a media announcement
- Schedule a practice run for program facilitators

Community Workshop

Create an opportunity for the community to come together and work on rebuilding and revitalizing local capacity; one that is guided by creative thinking and leads to sustainable growth and development.

A secondary objective is to bring together representatives from the various community sectors, so they can become better acquainted and begin the process of exploring what they might be able to accomplish as a group.

Meeting Objectives
By attending this workshop, participants will be able to:

- identify community assets
- identify community values
- understand why linking community assets can build community capacity
- understand how creativity can be an economic driver
- design community development project ideas that use local assets, values and resources
- design strategies for implementing those project ideas

The Workshop agenda offers two options:

1. A one-day six hour workshop, which includes a one hour lunch.
2. A two-day weekend Workshop running for 3 hours on Saturday morning and three hours on Sunday afternoon. The two-day option includes a celebration dinner Sunday afternoon.

The agenda includes seven activities. If you are planning a one-day workshop, three of the activities will be completed before lunch and the remainder after lunch. If you planning a weekend or two-day workshop three of the program activities will be completed on the first day, and the remaining activities on day two. If you have a large workshop attendance, break the group into small work groups of 6-8 people each.

The first activity, Paired Interviews is an icebreaker which gives participants a chance to talk about something they care about right away. The questions are similar to those from the Community Interviews.

What does Creativity have to do with Economic Development is the second activity. It uses stories to help the participants expand their thinking about creativity as an economic driver. This activity was used at the Kick-off.

The third activity, Understanding the Research Data uses visual aids to help the participants understand the research data. Three large displays are set up in the room before the Workshop begins. One display is the History Wall, the second is a display of the Community Asset inventory, and the third display is the Community Vision Board. *(See examples on page 118-120 of the Curriculum.)* A copy of the Community Profile should be provided on each table.

Members of the Steering committee or Research Team will provide a brief summary of the research, how it was collected and what it represents. The participants will be given time to look at the displays and to add *their personal wishes* to the Vision Board.

At this point the Workshop either breaks for lunch or returns the next day to complete the remaining activities.

Begin the Second Half of the Workshop

The fourth activity, *Asset Bounce and Shuffle* is a fun game to get the participants to think about creative ways to link and leverage the assets and resources that were presented in the previous activity. This exercise will help the participants begin to think outside-of-the-box and to connect the dots in different ways. The objective is to think up 6 to 8 project ideas that reflect the wishes and the values identified on the Community Vision Board.

(These project ideas should not be large-scale development plans that require lots of funding and many years to complete. We are looking to identify small projects that will improve the quality of life and can be completed using local assets and resources.)

Designing the Future: The last three activities are designed to help the participants turn their dreams into a reality. The goal is for the participants to leave the workshop with a well-developed plan of action.

The fifth activity will help the group prioritize the ideas developed in the previous activity. The curriculum provides a *Project Complexity* chart *(see page 129 of the Curriculum)* to list project ideas and to determine how difficult they are versus how important they are. This chart will highlight the top four ideas. (The remaining ideas should be saved for another time.)

Project Champions: By this point, leaders in each group should start to appear. We refer to them as Project Champions. They are usually enthusiastic about the project idea, vocal and respected by the group. They often become the project leaders or coordinators. We will be referring to them later in the summary.

The sixth activity asks the participants to determine if their goal or project idea is a SMART Goal. SMART is a sort of logic model, it shows the logical flow of events that will make the goal a reality.

Create a Timeline: The next step is to create an outline beginning with the end. Working backwards is a very effective planning tool, but it can be a little challenging if you have never used this concept.

Begin by writing on sticky notes, the steps and milestones that you can think of to achieve your goal; one idea per note. For each step or milestone, consider what smaller steps lead up to that milestone. Then record those steps on sticky notes. Continue the process until you have exhausted all ideas. Arrange the sticky notes in a logical order and record the steps or milestones on a chart *(see page 133).*

Who is doing what? The final step will be to plan how and when those steps will be achieved and by whom. Set specific responsibilities that the group leader will follow up on later. You may want to create a project calendar to help everyone keep on track. When you have completed the worksheet, be sure to schedule a meeting day when the team will meet to discuss their progress and next steps. *(See the worksheet on page 134.)*

Looking back at the Anson/Stanly Pilot Project

The following list of recommendations came from the Anson/Stanly community meeting. This is not meant to be a guide but just to give you an idea of the kind of suggestions or ideas that can come from the community.

- *Encourage visual and performing arts venues in our two counties to coordinate and combine their marketing efforts.*
- *Develop and promote a "Taste of the Pee Dee Festival."*
- *Increase signage to promote roadside tourism throughout Anson and Stanly Counties*
- *Offer young people a reason to stay in the community after high school or return after college.*
- *Promote new "trails to market" for local crafts and local food.*
- *Develop and encourage a two-county community-supported agriculture (CSA) project.*
- *Encourage closer collaborations among local grocers and local food.*
- *Create a tourism information kiosk (with ATM) in downtown Wadesboro.*
- *Promote geocaching, "Go Anson Stanly" mobile app that focuses on a regional wine tour*.

Phase Two Closing Activities

Wrap-up speech

Ask the group to complete the evaluation. The evaluation questions should be printed on the back side of the agenda or attached to it. *(See evaluation on curriculum page 211.)*

Thank the Research Team, the Steering Committee and any other sponsors or guest speakers.

If you are convening a weekend or two-day workshop then you would follow this Phase Two closing with a celebratory dinner.

PHASE THREE: IDEAS TO ACTION

Research Team Goals

If the Research Team has been active in planning the Community Workshop, you will want to include them in the post Workshop meeting. It also provides a good opportunity to *thank* them, in some special way for their participation and commitment.

Steering Committee Meeting Eight: Ideas to Action

The first half of this post Workshop meeting will focus on reflection and evaluation. What was the outcome of the Community Workshop? What did the workshop participants reveal on their evaluations? Did the Steering Committee meet its goal and objectives?

The second half this meeting will focus on planning the next steps and defining the role of the Steering Committee.

Meeting Objectives:

- Evaluate the youth-adult partnership
- Evaluate the Community Workshop (the process and the outcomes)
- Plan next steps to keep the initiative moving forward
- Define the roles of the Steering Committee moving forward.
- Thank the Research Team

Nurturing the process of a community-driven initiative will mean many different things depending on the group, their goals, the different personalities, and the challenges they encounter. Think about it this way: A healthy and thriving community needs tending just like a healthy and thriving garden does.

Coaching: The role of the Steering Committee is to nurture the Project Champions and their teams in much the same way a gardener cultivates a garden.

"Coaching for communities' means offering an empathetic ear, finding the coachable moments, and engaging in joint learning…Coaches do not provide the answers. They support capacity building by helping community members learn from one another and from their own experiences in order to find their own solution.

Each coach, however, will bring his or her own art to the work. As a result, coaching is not something that one learns solely from books and training experiences, but rather something we nurture and grow as part of our being and doing in the world." Excerpt from *A Field Guide to Community Coaching.* http://kenhubbell.com/pdfs/FIELDGUIDE-version-1final.pdf

The goals for the Steering Committee would include the following:

- Help coordinate efforts
- Help the Project Champions maintain focus of the community vision
- Maintain open lines of communication between Project Champions and Steering Committee members
- Act as a mentor, coach, or a team of resources for the Project Champions

Next steps

- Write a report summarizing the events and outcomes from the Community Workshop.
- Set an appointment with the Town Council or governing officials and provide a follow-up presentation with highlights of the event.
- Attend project meetings.
- Keep the local media informed about successes.
- Maintain a scrapbook or portfolio on the projects

Steering Committee Meeting Nine:
Planning the Breakfast Meetings

Although some people seem to be born leaders, most of us need support and encouragement to develop our leadership qualities. One strategy for supporting the new Project Champions is to plan monthly breakfast meetings. *These are not project team meetings; these meetings are for project leaders and anyone interested in learning about community leadership.*

At this point they may not see themselves as community leaders, but they have taken on a leadership role and you want to make it as easy as possible for them to be successful. We suggest breakfast meetings because they do not interrupt the daily workflow and breakfast menus are generally less expensive than lunch.

Meeting Objectives:

- Establish a monthly system for operating the *Creativity Inc Breakfast Meetings*
- Set up a system to rotate the responsibility for facilitating the Breakfast Meetings.
- Identify one or more Record Keepers to upload the information from the Project Update Forms into a monthly spreadsheet for documentation.
- Identify a chairperson to watch over the *Creativity Inc. Breakfast Meetings* and make sure that the process is operating smoothly.

Breakfast Meeting Goals: The idea is to create a framework and structure where the Project Champions can come together to learn from and provide support to each other. In addition, the meetings provide an opportunity for the Steering Committee or Extension to take on the role of a coach and/or mentor by presenting short (less than 15 minute) PowerPoint presentations for building leadership skills, facilitation, and troubleshooting strategies.

Also, the meetings provide a good opportunity to collect project reports. The curriculum provides a simple form *(page 145).* People have a negative attitude towards reporting forms, so we call them project update forms.   A member of the Steering Committee should be responsible for uploading the information into a monthly spreadsheet for documentation.

Some final thoughts

There is a retired gentleman living in Glouster, Ohio a small rural community in the Appalachian foothills. Finding himself at loose ends after his wife passed on, he decided to repaint an old fire hydrant and then a building in his neighborhood.   After he completed a few buildings, some of the community residents joined in and one thing led to another.   Soon his story was aired on national TV. Apparently, the story struck a chord and not long after, buses with youth groups and volunteers began rolling into Glouster armed with buckets and paint brushes.

(CBS News http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=7407522n)

The community work you are planning has the potential of having the same snowballing affect. Keep in mind that this was just one retired gentleman with a paint brush and ladder. There were no meetings and no funding and yet his singular effort turned into an army of good will and support. The moral of this story is to look for small wins; you do not have to take on monumental challenges to make a difference. Your efforts may not make national TV but it may spark another idea for another project and that sparks another idea and who knows where it will end.

Flow Chart illustrating the step by step process for CultivateNC

Color Key: ■ **Organizing activities**   ■ **Steering Committee meetings**   ■ **Research Team work sessions**   ■ **Monthly meetings of both teams**

IDEA
Formulate an idea for community-based planning

GENERATE INTEREST
Talk with extension staff and other community leaders

LEADERSHIP
Choose Steering Committee

RESEARCH
Choose Research Team

KICK-OFF MEETING
Steering Committee and Research Team members are introduced

ASSET MAPPING INTRODUCTION

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING 1

Curriculum Overview

Clarifying the Role of the Steering Committee

Creating a History Wall

ASSET MAPPING (DATA MINING AT THE LIBRARY)

ASSET MAPPING (DATA MANAGEMENT)

PREPARE ASSET MAPPING REPORT

INTRODUCTION TO APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING 2
Establishing a Youth-Adult Partnership

SET INTERVIEW APPOINTMENTS

CONDUCT INTERVIEWS

WRITE INTERVIEW SUMMARY REPORT

PREPARE RESEARCH PRESENTATION

STEEERING COMMITTEE MEETING 4
Review Research and Develop Workshop Activities

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING 3

Write the Community Profile

BUILD AN ASSET MAPPING EXHIBIT MAP

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING 4
Develop Communication Plans

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING 5
Prepare Communication Materials for Distribution

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING 6
Finalize Workshop Plans

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING 8
Workshop Evaluation and Plans for Moving Forward

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING 9
Ideas to Action/Breakfast Club