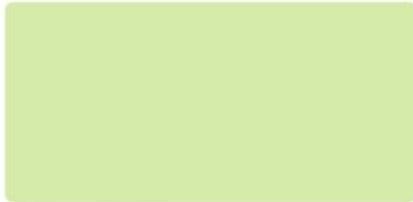
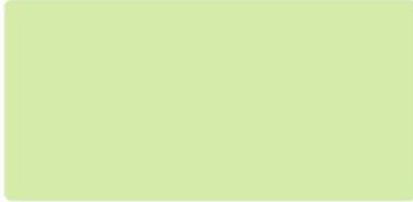


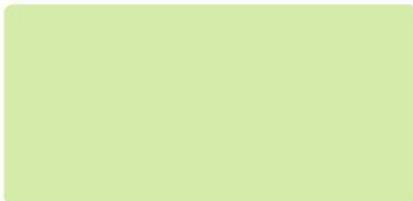
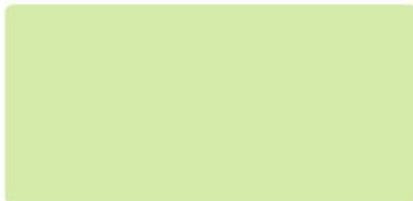
# Sustainable Communities in Appalachia Technical Assistance Program



Strengthening  
Community Livability:  
Actions and Strategies for  
North Wilkesboro, NC



October 28, 2014



## 1. Community Story

North Wilkesboro is a town of about 4,200 people in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The town was founded in 1891 when railroad tracks reached Wilkes County along the north side of the Yadkin River. North Wilkesboro quickly sprung up as the industrial center of Wilkes County, while Wilkesboro remained the county seat and center of government. The railroad brought jobs in the timber, glass, and furniture industries. The town also played an important role in the advent of stock car racing and is home to the North Wilkesboro Motor Speedway, one of the original NASCAR tracks. The town is also the birthplace of Lowe's, the national home improvement company.

Today, like many small towns in the Appalachian region, North Wilkesboro is going through a period of economic transition. Many of the original industries and startup companies have left. Lowe's moved its corporate headquarters to the Charlotte area, and the speedway hosted its last NASCAR race in 1996. While some industrial and

corporate jobs continue to support the regional economy, including the Tysons chicken processing plant and a call center for Lowe's, the town is focusing its economic development efforts around its unique assets. These include a walkable historic downtown, access to the Blue Ridge Mountains, the local arts and crafts culture, local foods, and its popular festivals.

North Wilkesboro is already tapping into the value of its cultural and agricultural assets through the Merlefest, which each spring brings thousands of people to town to celebrate and enjoy traditional Appalachian music, and the Brushy Mountain Apple Festival, which is one of the largest arts and crafts festivals in the Southeast. The Town is now looking to build on its successful festivals and reputation as a cultural hub of Wilkes County by expanding its farmers' market into the Yadkin Valley Marketplace. This project will move the Wilkes County Farmers' Market from a park on the outskirts of the downtown to



Figure 1 - Main Street images, North Wilkesboro

### Principles of Livability

- Provide more transportation choices
- Promote equitable, affordable housing
- Enhance economic competitiveness
- Support existing communities
- Coordinate and leverage federal policies & investment
- Value communities and neighborhoods

a central location that is only one block from the town's most prominent intersection and across the street from its historic train depot. The Town hopes to leverage redevelopment of the Depot and revitalization of its downtown by moving the market into a permanent site at 9<sup>th</sup> Street and the Central Business District Loop, and expanding the programming to include more arts, crafts, local food vendors, and programs.

The Town also has plans to improve the streetscape of Main Street in an effort to make it more walkable and attractive. However, this plan, like several others prepared by the town, has not moved forward as quickly as some officials and citizens would like. One of the important underlying issues in the town is that it has prepared several plans that have identified more projects than it can realistically implement. The Town is in search of a roadmap forward that will identify the most important projects to advance in the near term the most prominent of which is to make progress on developing the Yadkin Valley Marketplace at the 9<sup>th</sup> street lot downtown.

North Wilkesboro's vision for the Yadkin Valley Marketplace and its Main Street improvements made it a natural fit for the Sustainable Communities in Appalachia program. This program, conducted through a partnership of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), supports community planning in small towns and cities throughout the Appalachian region that want to improve community livability and strengthen their local food system. The agencies selected North Wilkesboro as one of nine communities to receive technical assistance in 2014.

Livability is a fairly new term for describing several timeless concepts in community planning. Cities and towns that are focused on improving livability, including North Wilkesboro, are taking steps to increase transportation choices so that people can walk, bike, or drive to meet their daily needs; add affordable housing close to work, school, and shops; diversify their economies to increase resiliency; and encourage growth and development in existing neighborhoods that already have supporting infrastructure in place.

Many cities and towns also found that supporting local foods is an effective way to attract investment and bring more people to traditional downtown areas. One community that participated in the Sustainable Communities in Appalachia program - New Albany, Miss. - has experienced this benefit first hand since moving its Biscuits and Jam Farmers' Market to a temporary downtown location in 2012. Downtown vendors have reported on average a 25 percent increase in business on the second Saturday of each month, when the market expands to include folk art and music. North Wilkesboro is working to leverage similar economic development opportunities, using the farmers' market to attract people downtown and help them visit shops on Main Street, and generally bring more activity and foot traffic downtown.

North Wilkesboro's participation in the Sustainable Communities in Appalachia program included a two-day workshop that provided the information and ideas on which this action plan is based. The Town is also eligible for an implementation award from ARC of up to \$20,000 to help advance one or more of the ideas identified in this plan. The following sections describe the workshop and process leading to the action plan, describe the Town's vision and values that are guiding its investments, and lays out a series of initiatives and next steps the Town can take to realize its vision of a more livable future.

## 2. Community Engagement

A centerpiece of North Wilkesboro's participation in the program was a two-day workshop that brought together key stakeholders from the town and officials from regional, state, and federal agencies that are in a position to help North Wilkesboro achieve its vision. One of the greatest benefits of the workshop was the development of new relationships within the town and between town stakeholders and these regional, state and federal agencies. Participants in the workshop included elected officials; local business owners; local farmers; the North Carolina Department of Transportation; the Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership; Wilkes County; the Wilkes County School District; the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project; the Health Foundation; and the North Carolina Cooperative Extension, along with program sponsors EPA, USDA-RD, and ARC.

Participants worked to improve upon a plan to move the Wilkes County Farmers' Market to a new downtown location and expand it with new programs and offerings under the Yadkin Valley Marketplace name. They also worked to identify actions from existing Town plans that will improve the connection from the market to Main Street, allowing the expanded market to leverage economic development throughout the downtown area. The workshop started with a tour of key sites in the city including Main Street, a former industrial site that is now the town's Block 46 redevelopment area, the future Yadkin Valley Marketplace, the historic train depot, the Wilkes Art Gallery, and park space. A two-day work session involving more than 25 participants followed the tour. This first day included presentations on livability and the importance of local food systems, and a discussion about the attendees' vision for the city's future. The second day explored North Wilkesboro's goals and potential actions to achieve them, resulting in a refined concept plan for the Yadkin Valley Marketplace site. The goal was to make the Marketplace a vibrant public space not only when the market is in session, but throughout the year. The workshop was just one event, albeit an important one, in the Town's participation in the Sustainable Communities in Appalachia Program. The steps in the process that resulted in this action plan are described in Figure 3 below.



*Figure 2 - Workshop photos, day 2, site design and programming exercises followed by action planning.*



Citizens and workshop attendees also participated in an exercise during the first session of the workshop that revealed some of their hopes for the future. They broke into small groups and created a hypothetical news headline from 20 years into the future that describes a significant event that has happened, or milestone achieved, in North Wilkesboro. The headlines from this exercise were:

- North Wilkesboro Named the Healthiest Community in America.
- North Wilkesboro Celebrates Success of Local Distilleries with Frank Foster Concert.
- Downtown North Wilkesboro is the Premier Retirement Community in the Blue Ridge.
- Assisted Living Farmers' and Craft Market Opens for Season.

While some of the headlines are humorous, they reveal a desire in the community to grow from within, tapping into the existing assets of its people, place, and natural environment. North Wilkesboro is situated in a beautiful part of the country with deep traditions in arts, crafts, and agriculture. These can be a source of the Town's economic renewal and growth in the future. Workshop participants turned their attention during the second day to identifying specific actions that will help North Wilkesboro realize its vision. The outcomes of these discussions are summarized in the next section and presented in more detail in Appendix A.

#### 4. Action Plan for Implementation

An important conclusion from the workshop is that achieving North Wilkesboro's vision of a vibrant downtown filled with successful local businesses and anchored by the Yadkin Valley Marketplace will require new partnerships and funding resources. The Town has identified many projects and programs in prior plans that would move it towards this vision, but lacks the financial resources to implement most of them. The workshop narrowed the Town's focus on three major goals (Figure 5) and a focused set of actions to achieve each one. The action plan is based around these three major goals for the downtown. The goals are shown overlapping in the diagram to demonstrate that they are all related to the overarching vision and goal of improving livability for all of North Wilkesboro's citizens.



*Figure 5 Major goals of the action plan.*

Corresponding actions are outlined below for each of the major goals listed in Figure 5. The goals are listed in their more specific form below, and each is accompanied by a set of actions to achieve the goal. The goals and actions are also presented in Appendix A with additional information about the time frame, lead person or agency, a list of supporting people and agencies, funding sources, cost estimates, and some near term steps to keep the momentum going.

***Goal 1: Rethink the design and programming of the Yadkin Valley Marketplace to make it a successful place 365 days per year.***

- **Action 1.1** - Reach out to existing farmers' market vendors to gather input from everyone on how the market should grow and evolve.
- **Action 1.2** - Start a "Local Foods Restaurant Walk" focused on getting people connected to the Yadkin Valley Marketplace and downtown.
- **Action 1.3** - Reach out to the Wilkes Art Gallery and art community to get feedback on integrating art into future Yadkin Valley Marketplace.
- **Action 1.4** - Develop a revised concept plan for the Yadkin Valley Marketplace that considers the ideas discussed during the Sustainable Communities in Appalachia workshop.
- **Action 1.5** - Create a new committee under the Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership to manage the Yadkin Valley Marketplace and the site.
- **Action 1.6** - Revisit the farmers' market bylaws to ensure they still meet the goals of the farmers' market.

***Goal 2: Target walkability improvements to Main Street and the streets that connect Main Street with the Yadkin Valley Marketplace.***

- **Action 2.1** - Install curb extensions at the intersection of 9th and Main Streets.
- **Action 2.2** - Install way-finding signage directing people to the historic downtown and to key destinations in the downtown area, such as the Yadkin Valley Marketplace.
- **Action 2.3** - Improve the streetscape on Main Street from 4th Street to the CBD Loop. This will include new sidewalks, curb ramps, street trees, street lights, and underground utilities.
- **Action 2.4** - Improve walkability from the Yadkin Valley Marketplace to Main Street.
- **Action 2.5** - Extend the Yadkin Valley Greenway along the rail line that runs behind the train depot and connect Block 46 into the greenway system with a bridge over the Reddies River.
- **Action 2.6** - Improve the walkway that runs along the police department (at 8th/Main) and connects Main Street with the Yadkin Valley Marketplace. The improvements could include way-finding signage, human-scale lighting, seating, flowers, and public art.

***Goal 3: Beautify Main Street and adjoining streets through low cost interventions and partnerships with businesses and other agencies.***

- **Action 3.1** - Transform portions of the concrete walls that form three sides of the Yadkin Valley Marketplace into living walls (plantings).
- **Action 3.2** - Partner with sponsors to add flower pots, beds, and street trees where possible along Main Street.

## 5. Design and Programming Concepts

Workshop participants spent a half-day session devoted to thinking through some design considerations and programming concepts for the market property. They started by reviewing a few “best practices” for creating a public space that is well-utilized, using images of existing elements in the downtown area of North Wilkesboro. This presentation is in Appendix F. Various time-lines for projects and initiatives were explored that could influence the use of the parking deck plaza, which is currently situated at the future site of the Yadkin Valley Marketplace. This portion focused on identifying the programmatic needs of a space that could be improved upon and utilized immediately, while still allowing for the flexibility of use that is needed to accommodate the growth of the farmers market over time as well as the impacts of the business activity generated by the development of Block 46 and other nearby properties.

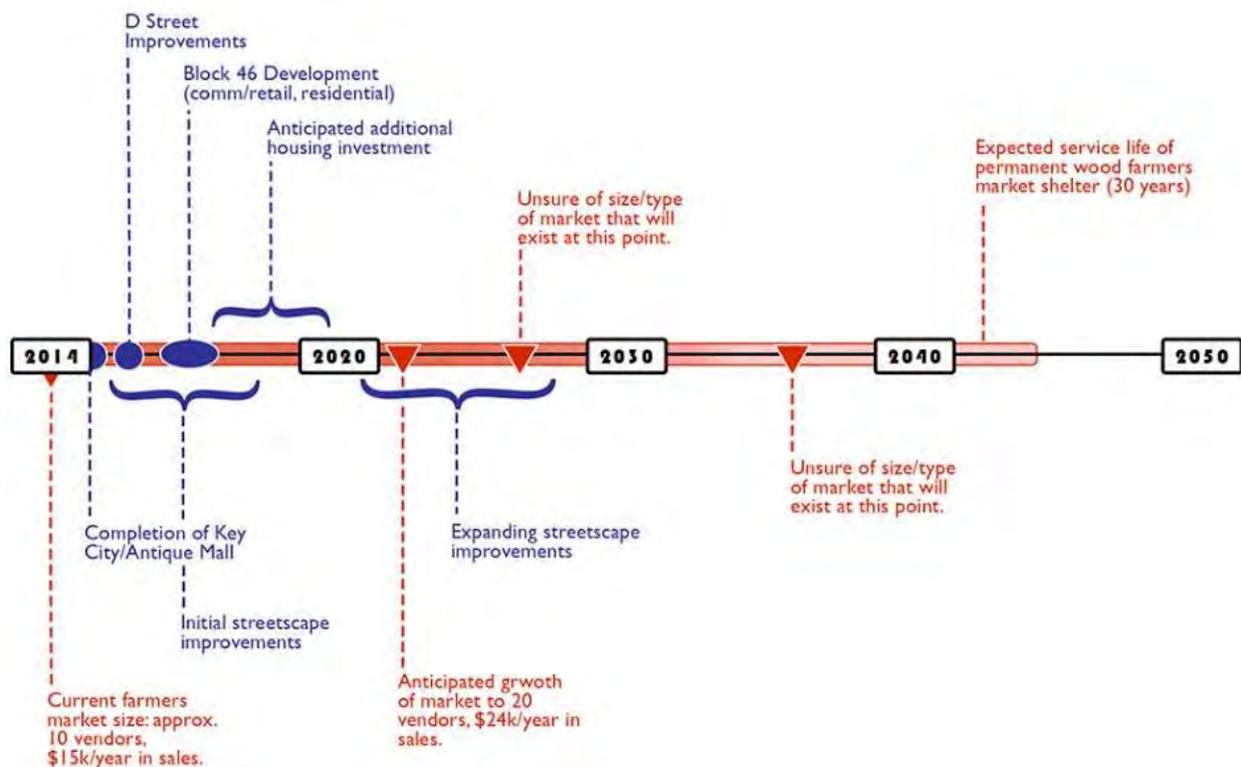


Figure 6 - Results of the timeline exercise.

From the timeline exercise the group learned that much business and downtown development will happen in the next 5 years and the growth of the farmers markets (both what is desired by the participating farmers and what is possible) could take much longer, especially considering the current lack of producers in the immediate area willing to sell at the market. Therefore, the construction of market structures that are flexible both in their use (encouraging non-farmers market use of the space) and their layout and capacity will better serve the short and long-term needs of the North Wilkesboro community. Participants expressed the need for design solutions to be flexible in size, use, and configuration to allow for a more dynamic and multi-purpose public amenity than the currently proposed market shelter building and configuration.

The participants talked about the particular assets and challenges of the plaza site. Participants worked in three groups, and the following graphic summarizes the lessons learned:

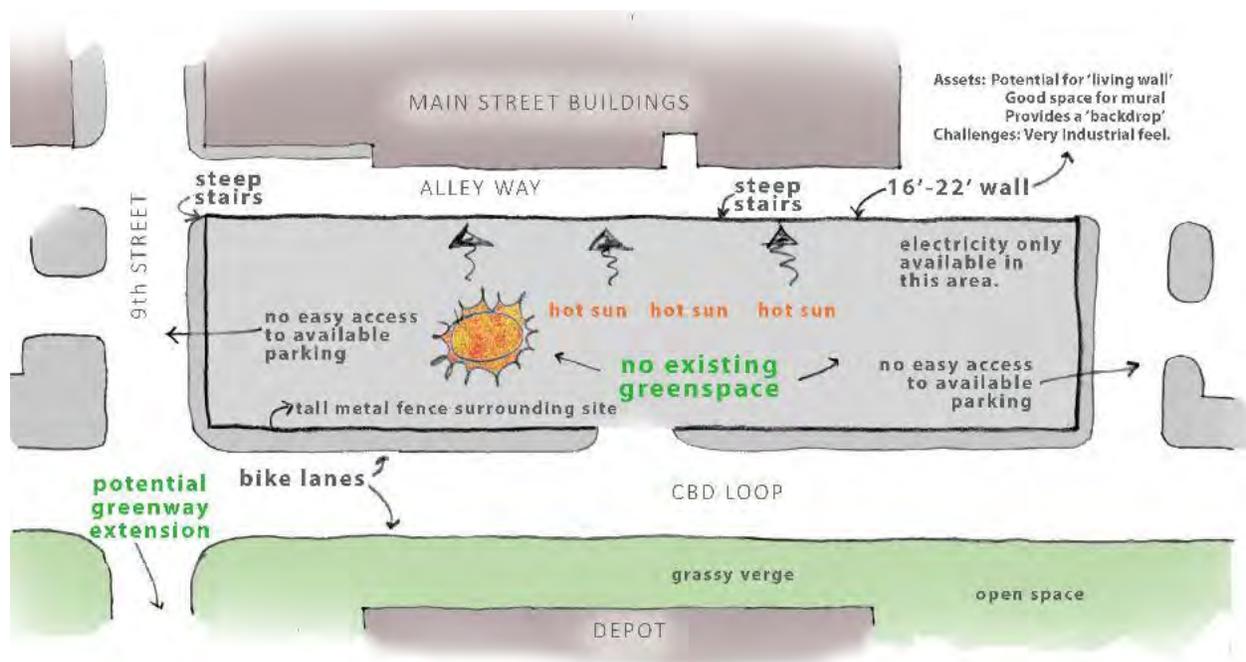


Figure 7 - Graphic summarizing strengths, features and assets of site in its current condition.

Many aspects of the site, such as the sun and the high wall, are seen as both assets and challenges. Proximity to the Main Street and 9th Street intersection and the potential for linkages to a proposed greenway extension make the plaza a particularly good “node” for public space in North Wilkesboro.

Workshop participants listed a number of elements that they would like to see included in the plaza design:

- Space for local musicians to perform
- Potential for Merlefest to expand to include this site in some activities
- A larger variety and quantity of fresh produce, accessible for SNAP/EBT
- Wireless capability
- Cooking demonstrations and nutrition education during farmers market
- Programmed activities throughout the week (and throughout the year) to draw people to the space: art classes, other community gatherings
- Shady places and plants that will help to break up the space and provide shelter from the hot sun
- Better access from the street and nearby parking lots
- Connection to the depot and the proposed greenway extension, possibly linking to the people who workout at the nearby gym
- An entryway that is inviting
- Murals
- Living walls

- Shade and rain structure for farmers market as well as other activities
- Clean restrooms
- Lighting
- Specific to the farmers market:
  - 12-foot center aisles
  - 10x20' stall spaces, with plenty of room for trucks to back in and out
  - Vendor parking
  - Parking solution for market patrons that have accessibility issues

Workshop participants worked within three small groups to discuss site designs that responded to those programmatic elements, and several themes emerged which are listed below. The images from the workshop sketch sessions are included in Appendix B

- The “pocket park” area (tree grove, planted areas, park seating, etc.) should stay on the western end of the park: the proximity to the 9th and Main Street node make this end the ideal “entrance” to the park, and trees on this end will help mitigate the hot afternoon sun coming from the west.
- The stage should probably be on the eastern end because that is where the electrical service is, and—more importantly—since most performances will be in the afternoon or early evening, it would be more comfortable for the crowd to not face the setting sun. The stage can include a shade structure such that the performers are protected from the harshest angles of the sun. Additionally, the suggestion was made that the stage can be set at an angle in the northeast corner of the plaza so that it is not facing directly west.
- There was much discussion about the location of a market structure: one suggestion was for the market to be located centrally—perhaps even on a raised platform—so that it would exist as a central feature of the market. Although this would present accessibility challenges for visitors with mobility issues, the core idea of making a shaded market structure the central feature of the plaza is highly workable.
- Other participants suggested building shaded market structures on the periphery—along the high wall lining the northern edge of the plaza, as well as along the southern and eastern edges of the plaza, creating a more defined public space similar to urban squares or plazas that are typically surrounded by buildings or outdoor market stalls. This creates a more flexible public space and also helps to define the plaza as a “place” and not simply a walk-through area.
- Parking considerations remain a concern, and there are several unknowns that once resolved will provide clarity on how much parking is needed, and how close to the plaza site it should be. The rehabilitation and use of the Depot, the development of Block 46, the impact of other downtown streetscape improvements, and the potential for extending the greenway along the railed across the CBD loop all play a role in determining the parking type and amount needed. Workshop participants also pointed out the need to balance convenience and accessibility for lower-mobility visitors with public safety and the “greening” of the plaza.

Following the workshop, the consultant team produced a number of visualizations to illustrate some concepts and desired design features expressed during the workshop exercise.

Figure 8 depicts a pleasant, pedestrian gateway entrance at the corner of 9<sup>th</sup> Street and the CBD Loop. Workshop participants identified the need for a better, more accessible entryway

to the marketplace—a gateway that would establish a better sense of place, as well as one that would connect to the 9<sup>th</sup> and Main Street, Block 46, and the Depot nodes.

Figure 9 illustrates how the addition of street trees along the edge of the lot could both offer shade and “soften” the industrial feel of the property. There was much discussion about the solar aspect of the market property—shade structures built on the site would provide little protection from the sun due to the southern exposure, but the use of street trees on the south side would provide some shade, in addition to softening the industrial feel.

Figure 10 shows how the addition of trees to the interior, as well as a decorated mural along the rear retaining wall could serve to enliven the space and soften the industrial feel. Workshop participants shared mural ideas that illustrate the history of North Wilkesboro and specifically this location adjacent to the depot that revolved around trains, railways, and the different products of note that have been produced in the region over its history. The addition of trees within the park site may be problematic, and the city should consult permitting records to determine the depth and configuration of the concrete pavement and any footers that remain from its use as a parking deck before proceeding too far in the design process.



Figure 8 - Illustration of a pedestrian entrance at the corner of 9th and CBD Loop.



Figure 9 - Photo rendering depicting the addition of street trees and a pedestrian entrance.



Figure 10 - Photo rendering showing addition of trees and a mural.

In addition, as an alternative to a permanent structure for the farmers' market there are a number of temporary, yet safe and attractive, shelters options available. Below are some examples of temporary structures that could provide more flexible use of the space while still allowing for the shade and comfort of both the farmer's market vendors and patrons, as well as visitors of the space year round. These structures allow for greater flexibility for non-farmers market uses such as community events, small group gatherings, and everyday use, as well as allowing for easy removal of the shade structure in the case of strong winds, though many of the design shown below are rated for up to 80 mph winds.



Figure 11 - Examples of tensile shade structures, Las Vegas, NV, <http://www.tensionstructures.com/portfolio.htm>.



Figure 12 - Community Church, Vero Beach Florida. <http://www.tenshon.com/>.



Figure 13 - Or the site could be outfitted with a number of tensile umbrellas  
[:http://shadesails.com/galleries/commercial/tensile-umbrellas](http://shadesails.com/galleries/commercial/tensile-umbrellas).

The existing plaza area is the original base level of a 2-story parking deck which presents a number of potential construction difficulties, especially in relation to the planting of trees and shrubs. An exact assessment of the current site situation can be made through researching the permits that were required to build the original parking deck and conducting concrete scanning with ground penetrating radar or x-ray machines to determine depth, location of footings, and the existence of any reinforcing steel imbedded in the concrete.

In areas where it is deemed possible to remove portions of concrete for planting trees and other plant material, the root zones for the plants must be protected both from foot traffic compaction and from a lack of drainage. Like many urban trees, those that are planted in this plaza are essentially planted in sub-surface planter boxes: the surrounding compacted soils and concrete serve as barriers to water and air movement. Fifty percent of a tree's roots exist in the top 6 inches of soil, and groundwater flow of rainwater typically happens in the top 3 inches, especially in urban areas that have experienced long-term soil compaction. One way to mitigate these issues is to use "structural soils" and engineered systems to plant trees within the plaza. Cornell University has produced an informative document <sup>1</sup> about the need for and the creation of structural soil systems for urban environments.

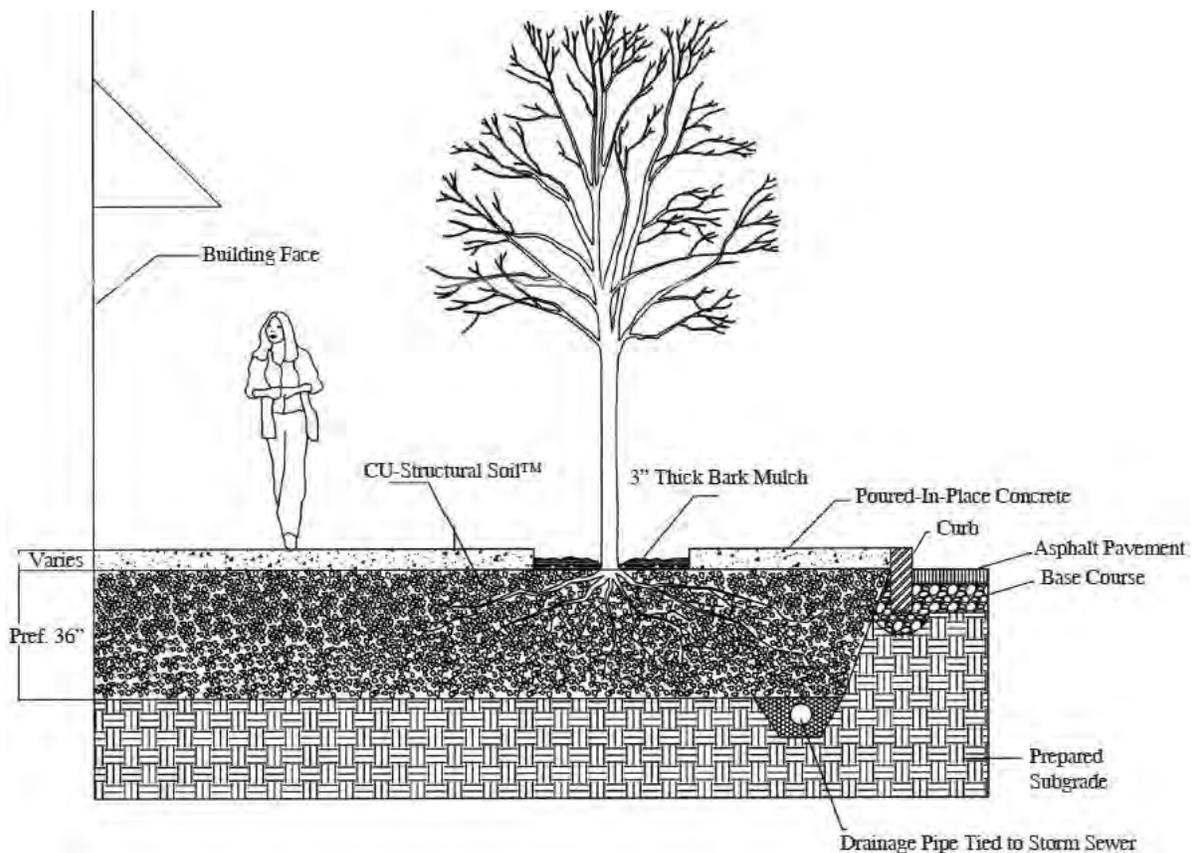


Figure 14 - A cross-section of a structural soil system.  
<http://www.hort.cornell.edu/uhi/outreach/pdfs/custructuralsoilwebpdf.pdf>.

<sup>1</sup> Bassuk, Nina. Jason Grabosky, Peter Trowbridge. 2005. Using CU-Structural Soil™ in the Urban Environment. Cornell University, Urban Horticulture Institute.  
<http://www.hort.cornell.edu/uhi/outreach/pdfs/custructuralsoilwebpdf.pdf>.

## 6. Implementation

ARC provided a grant of up to \$20,000 to support implementation of projects or supporting programs identified in the previous section. The Town’s top priority is building the Yadkin Valley Marketplace, which is expected to cost \$244,500. As of September 2014, the Town had raised \$100,500 from Wilkes Communications, the Health Foundation, the N.C. Rural Economic Development Center, the Town of North Wilkesboro, the Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership, and the Wilkes County Health Department. The Town has also applied for a \$50,000 “hometown grant” from the Lowe’s Charitable and Educational Foundation. The ARC grant would bring the Town closer to completely filling the funding gap.<sup>2</sup>

Farmers Market	Source	Amount	Status	Date
Farmers market structure	ULRC Grant Program	\$50,000	proposed	01/16/15
Farmers market structure & restrooms	Lowes Home Improvement	\$50,000	committed	12/02/14
Farmers market & pocket park	STEP Program	\$50,000	committed	12/01/14
Farmers market stage	Health Foundation of Wilkes	\$25,000	committed	12/01/14
WiFi & Sound system	Wilkes Communications	IN-KIND	committed	12/01/14
Site Development	Town of North Wilkesboro	\$44,500	committed	01/01/15
EBT equipment	Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership	\$5,000	committed	12/01/14
Design & engineering	Appalachian Regional Commission	\$20,000	committed	01/01/15
Tobacco-free signage	Wilkes County Health Department	IN-KIND	committed	01/25/15

### Livability Principles Advanced through Action Plan

- Provide more transportation choices:** Building a more walkable Main Street is one of the Town’s top priorities, and is the focus of one of this action plan’s three goals. The Town also plans to strengthen the pedestrian paths and sidewalks between Main Street and the Yadkin Valley Marketplace. In the longer term, the Town would also like to acquire the former rail right of way on the south side of downtown and extend the Yadkin Valley Greenway along it.
- Enhance economic competitiveness:** The Yadkin Valley Marketplace will be a cultural hub for the entire Yadkin Valley region. It will be a place where tourists and residents can come to purchase produce and unique arts and crafts from throughout the region. Streetscape improvements that strengthen the connection between Main Street and the Marketplace will also enhance the economy by making it easier for Marketplace shoppers to also visit Main Street businesses. This spillover effect has been

<sup>2</sup> Storrow, Emily. “New farmers market key part of plans.” *Wilkes Journal-Patriot*. September 24, 2014

pronounced in some small towns, such as New Albany, Mississippi, where downtown businesses saw a 25 percent boost in sales on the Saturday each month when the downtown farmers' market included music, arts, and crafts.

- **Support existing communities:** The Yadkin Valley Marketplace will fill a noticeable gap in the downtown. The former parking deck where the Town plans to build the Marketplace has an austere and industrial feel due to large wall and predominance of concrete. The Yadkin Valley Marketplace will turn that space into an inviting place that welcomes people to downtown and provides a public space where people can congregate and enjoy their Town. It has the potential to be a magnet for people and development, including helping to foster the future redevelopment of the historic train depot.
- **Coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment:** The workshop efforts identified several opportunities to leverage different local, state, and federal funding sources to support the Yadkin Valley Marketplace vision and the walkability improvements in downtown. For example, the Town may be able to tap into funding programs from North Carolina DOT, state ARC funds and the USDA-Rural Development office. The workshop also set up North Wilkesboro to tap into ARC implementation assistance at the federal level. Moving forward on the goals of the action plan will take a coordinated effort and will require funds from several different sources. This is especially true for the streetscape improvements that are still unfunded.
- **Value communities and neighborhoods:** The actions identified in this plan will help strengthen the vibrancy of the existing downtown area and increase the attractiveness and livability of the surrounding neighborhoods by providing access to healthy, local foods and expanding transportation choices.

In addition to the implementation support provided by the ARC, Appendix H lists several other federal and state funding sources. The ARC grant could potentially be bundled with other funds to pursue a project beyond the financial limits of the ARC grant.

## 7. Appendices

- Appendix A: Implementation Action Plan Tables
- Appendix B: Design Exercise Photos
- Appendix C: Information on Wilkes County Food System
- Appendix D: Workshop Participants and Contact Information
- Appendix E: Presentation Slides
- Appendix F: Design Considerations Slideshow
- Appendix G: Workshop Photo Album
- Appendix H: Funding Resources
- Appendix I: Additional References and Resources

# Appendix A: Implementation Action Plan Tables

**GOAL 1: Rethink the design and programming of the Yadkin Valley Marketplace to make it a successful place 365 days per year.**

<b>Action 1.1:</b>	Reach out to existing farmers’ market vendors to gather input from everyone on how the market should grow and evolve.	
<b>Why is this important?</b>	The existing farmers and producers are key to the success of the Yadkin Valley Marketplace. They need to be involved in discussions about how the market will grow and evolve.	
<b>Measures of Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most vendors have a positive view on the new farmers’ market venue and programming.</li> </ul>	
<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>	Short term (1 to 6 months)	
<b>Taking the Lead</b>	Crystal Keener and Sam Hinnant	
<b>Supporting Cast</b>	Bill Hanlin (Wilkes Cooperative Extension) and Hollis Wild (ASAP)	
<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Dollars</b>	<b>Time</b>
	Low/No cost	Staff/volunteer
<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	N/A	

<b>Action 1.2:</b>	Start a “Local Foods Restaurant Walk” focused on getting people connected to the Yadkin Valley Marketplace and downtown.	
<b>Why is this important?</b>	The Restaurant Walk will strengthen connections between the farmers and restaurants, build the sense of community and raise awareness of where food comes from, and support downtown businesses.	
<b>Measures of Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people paying to participate in the Restaurant Walk.</li> <li>• Number of people visiting downtown the night of the Restaurant Walk.</li> </ul>	
<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>	Short term (1 to 6 months)	
<b>Taking the Lead</b>	Crystal Keener (Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership/Town of North Wilkesboro)	
<b>Supporting Cast</b>	Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership	
<b>Cos Estimate</b>	<b>Dollars</b>	<b>Time</b>
	Low cost (announcement, advertising, flyers, schedule with restaurants)	Staff
<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership	

<b>Action 1.3:</b>	<b>Reach out to the Wilkes Art Gallery and art community to get feedback on integrating art into future Yadkin Valley Marketplace.</b>	
<b>Why is this important?</b>	As a former parking deck, the site is currently bare of art and landscaping. Adding public art to the site will make it beautiful.	
<b>Measures of Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public art is incorporated into the design.</li> <li>Artists use the Marketplace site for shows and programs.</li> </ul>	
<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>	Short term (1 to 6 months for outreach), long term (1 to 2 years) for installation	
<b>Taking the Lead</b>	Crystal Keener (Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership/Town of North Wilkesboro)	
<b>Supporting Cast</b>	Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership	
<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Dollars</b>	<b>Time</b>
	Low (outreach), Medium (art installation)	Staff and artists
<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	<a href="http://www.artplaceamerica.org/loi/">http://www.artplaceamerica.org/loi/</a>	

<b>Action 1.4:</b>	<b>Develop a revised concept plan for the Yadkin Valley Marketplace that considers the ideas discussed during the Sustainable Communities in Appalachia workshop.</b>	
<b>Why is this important?</b>	A revised design will generate more community buy-in, and address some of the issues that people identified during the workshop.	
<b>Measures of Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The revised design works better for farmers and other users of the Yadkin Valley Marketplace.</li> <li>If the farmers’ market agrees to move because they love the new plan.</li> </ul>	
<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>	Short term (1 to 6 months)	
<b>Taking the Lead</b>	Sam Hinnant and Crystal Keener (Town of North Wilkesboro)	
<b>Supporting Cast</b>	Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership	
<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Dollars</b>	<b>Time</b>
	\$1,800 for design	Town staff
<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	Town of North Wilkesboro	

<b>Action 1.5:</b>	<b>Create a new committee under the Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership to manage the Yadkin Valley Marketplace and the site.</b>	
<b>Why is this important?</b>	The Marketplace needs an organization to manage, market, and schedule the space.	
<b>Measures of Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A committee is established</li> </ul>	
<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>	Short term (1 to 2 months)	

<b>Action 1.5:</b>	<b>Create a new committee under the Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership to manage the Yadkin Valley Marketplace and the site.</b>	
<b>Taking the Lead</b>	Crystal Keener (Town of North Wilkesboro) and Committee Chair	
<b>Supporting Cast</b>	Vendors and Committee members	
<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Dollars</b>	<b>Time</b>
	Low or None	Staff and volunteers
<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	N/A	

<b>Action 1.6:</b>	<b>Revisit the farmers’ market bylaws to ensure they still meet the goals of the farmers’ market.</b>	
<b>Why is this important?</b>	The market is evolving into the Yadkin Valley Marketplace. As new vendors and programs are added, it will be important that any rules that change are aligned with the type of experience that farmers and customers are expecting.	
<b>Measures of Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vendors meet to discuss market rules and suggest possible changes</li> </ul>	
<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>	Short term (1 to 6 months)	
<b>Taking the Lead</b>	Market manager	
<b>Supporting Cast</b>	Vendors, neighboring markets	
<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Dollars</b>	<b>Time</b>
	Low	Staff and volunteers
<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	N/A	

**GOAL 2: Target walkability improvements to Main Street and the streets that connect Main Street with the Yadkin Valley Marketplace.**

<b>Action 2.1:</b>	<b>Install curb extensions at the intersection of 9<sup>th</sup> and Main Streets.</b>	
<b>Why is this important?</b>	The intersection of 9 <sup>th</sup> and Main Street is the most prominent intersection in downtown North Wilkesboro. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street is an important north-south connector and Main Street is an important east-west connector in downtown. Curb extensions would reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians and make them more visible to motorists. The project could catalyze other investments in the downtown streetscape.	
<b>Measures of Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of pedestrians using the crosswalk at 9<sup>th</sup>/Main.</li> <li>• Number of accidents involving pedestrians at 9<sup>th</sup>/Main.</li> </ul>	
<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>	Mid-term (7 to 12 months); or perhaps longer term may be required.	

<b>Action 2.1:</b> Install curb extensions at the intersection of 9 <sup>th</sup> and Main Streets.		
<b>Taking the Lead</b>	Town of North Wilkesboro	
<b>Supporting Cast</b>	Design consultant and funding partners	
<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Dollars</b>	<b>Time</b>
	\$75,000 - \$100,000	Staff time
<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	To be determined; NC DOT; USDA RD; local funding.	

<b>Action 2.2:</b> Install way-finding signage directing people to the historic downtown and to key destinations in the downtown area, such as the Yadkin Valley Marketplace.		
<b>Why is this important?</b>	Way-finding will help pedestrians and other travelers find interesting places in North Wilkesboro while also marketing those places.	
<b>Measures of Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signs are uniform and attractive</li> <li>• People can find downtown attractions more easily</li> </ul>	
<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>	Long term (1 to 2 years)	
<b>Taking the Lead</b>	Town of North Wilkesboro staff	
<b>Supporting Cast</b>	Non-profits, churches, parks, greenway, art gallery, civic organizations, town hall, markets. Partner with churches to get wayfinding.	
<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Dollars</b>	<b>Time</b>
	\$75,000 - \$100,000 3000 per sign fixture	Staff and volunteers
<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	USDA-Rural Development’s Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG). Downtown Partnership has applied. Partnership with churches. Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor is donating a kiosk (Eddie Barnes, County Planning Director).	

<b>Action 2.3:</b> Improve the streetscape on Main Street from 4 <sup>th</sup> Street to the CBD Loop. This will include new sidewalks, curb ramps, street trees, street lights, and underground utilities.		
<b>Why is this important?</b>	The streetscape project will transform Main Street into an inviting gateway to the downtown and a more pedestrian-friendly environment. The project will improve appearance, pedestrian safety, and convenience.	
<b>Measures of Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ease of pedestrian movement.</li> <li>• Improved appearance.</li> </ul>	
<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>	Long term (1 to 2 years)	
<b>Taking the Lead</b>	Town of North Wilkesboro	
<b>Supporting Cast</b>	Design consultants, NC DOT, Duke Power	

<b>Action 2.3:</b>	<b>Improve the streetscape on Main Street from 4<sup>th</sup> Street to the CBD Loop. This will include new sidewalks, curb ramps, street trees, street lights, and underground utilities.</b>	
<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Dollars</b>	<b>Time</b>
	\$125,000	Staff time
<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	NC DOT, USDA RD; Health Foundation	

<b>Action 2.4:</b>	<b>Improve walkability from the Yadkin Valley Marketplace to Main Street.</b>	
<b>Why is this important?</b>	The Yadkin Valley Marketplace will be one block south of Main Street. But the Marketplace is not very visible from Main Street. It is downhill and the buildings along Main Street block the view. Way-finding is part of the solution, but the Town can also strengthen the connection by improving the sidewalks and alleyway connections from Main Street to the Marketplace. Such as project will also support redevelopment of the train depot, pedestrian safety, and access to the existing parking along CBD Loop.	
<b>Measures of Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people visiting the Marketplace that also visit merchants on Main Street.</li> <li>• The depot reopens with a new use.</li> </ul>	
<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>	Long term (2 years or more)	
<b>Taking the Lead</b>	Town of North Wilkesboro, private developer	
<b>Supporting Cast</b>	NC DOT, Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership, private parties	
<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Dollars</b>	<b>Time</b>
	\$75,000 to \$100,000	Staff time
<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	NC DOT, USDA RD, ARC (state program funds); Health Foundation	

<b>Action 2.5:</b>	<b>Extend the Yadkin Valley Greenway along the rail line that runs behind the train depot and connect Block 46 into the greenway system with a bridge over the Reddies River.</b>	
<b>Why is this important?</b>	The project will create a more complete and connected greenway system that will make North Wilkesboro more walkable and enhance development prospects at the train depot and Block 46.	
<b>Measures of Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The railroad relinquishes ownership so a trail can be built.</li> <li>• The new greenway section opens.</li> </ul>	
<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>	Long term (1 to 2 years or more)	
<b>Taking the Lead</b>	Yadkin Valley Greenway Council	
<b>Supporting Cast</b>	Norfolk Southern (railroad), Town of North Wilkesboro	
<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Dollars</b>	<b>Time</b>

<b>Action 2.5:</b>	Extend the Yadkin Valley Greenway along the rail line that runs behind the train depot and connect Block 46 into the greenway system with a bridge over the Reddies River.	
	\$200,000	Volunteers and Town staff
<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	NC DOT (Transportation Alternatives funds)	

<b>Action 2.6:</b>	Improve the walkway that runs along the police department (at 8 <sup>th</sup> /Main) and connects Main Street with the Yadkin Valley Marketplace. The improvements could include way-finding signage, human-scale lighting, seating, flowers, and public art.	
<b>Why is this important?</b>	The parking lot and walkway next to the police station is an important connection down to the Yadkin Valley Marketplace. The connection should be well marked and inviting.	
<b>Measures of Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This project will be successful when the walkway alongside the police station, between Main Street and the Yadkin Valley Marketplace, is better utilized.</li> </ul>	
<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>	Mid-term (7 to 12 months)	
<b>Taking the Lead</b>	Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership (DNWP) Town of North Wilkesboro	
<b>Supporting Cast</b>	Design consultant	
<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Dollars</b>	<b>Time</b>
	\$10,000 to \$15,000	Staff oversight and volunteers
<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	Local funding; USDA, state or federal.	

**GOAL 3: Beautify Main Street and adjoining streets through low cost interventions and partnerships with businesses and other agencies.**

<b>Action 3.1:</b>	Transform portions of the concrete walls that form three sides of the Yadkin Valley Marketplace into living walls (plantings) and/or murals.	
<b>Why is this important?</b>	The plantings will add green space in downtown North Wilkesboro and enliven the Yadkin Valley Marketplace.	
<b>Measures of Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The plantings are thriving.</li> <li>The site is more attractive.</li> </ul>	
<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>	Short term (1 to 6 months)	
<b>Taking the Lead</b>	DNWP/Art Gallery	
<b>Supporting Cast</b>	Midtown Market/Master Gardeners; North Wilkesboro staff; Wilkes Community College (art department)	
<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Dollars</b>	<b>Time</b>
	Medium	Town staff and volunteers to maintain plantings

<b>Action 3.1:</b>	<b>Transform portions of the concrete walls that form three sides of the Yadkin Valley Marketplace into living walls (plantings) and/or murals.</b>
<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	To be determined

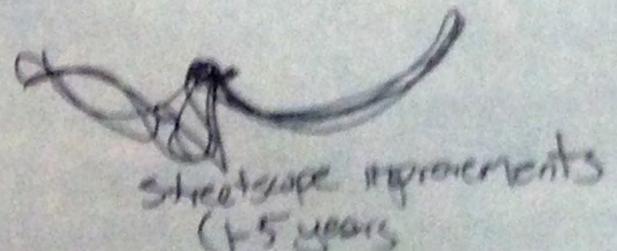
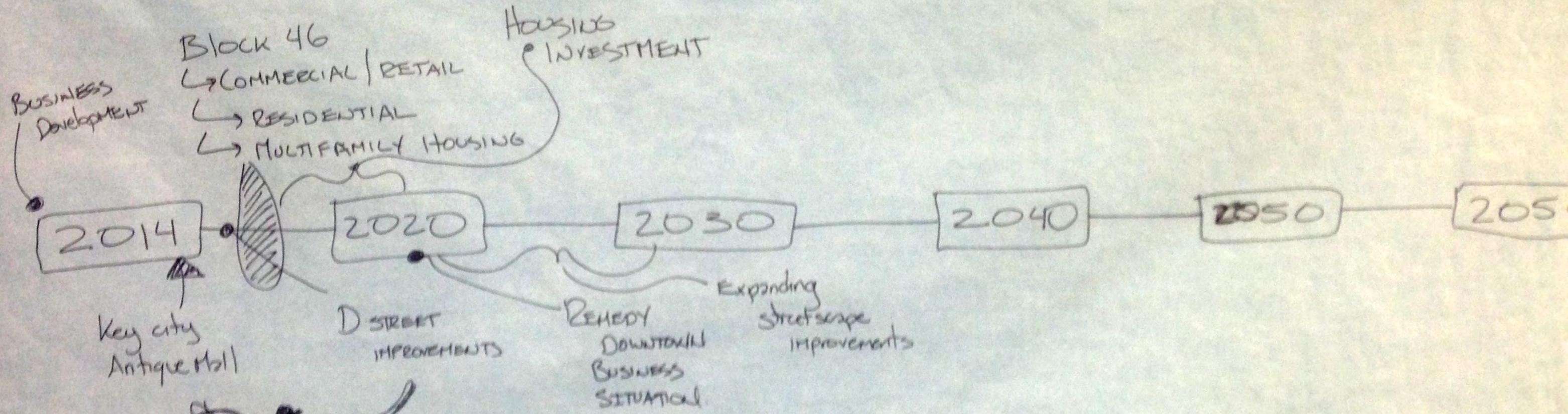
<b>Action 3.2:</b>	<b>Partner with sponsors to add flower pots, beds, and/or street trees where possible along Main Street.</b>	
<b>Why is this important?</b>	The Town can beautify Main Street through some relatively low cost plantings.	
<b>Measures of Success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When the plantings are added.</li> </ul>	
<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>	Mid-term (7 to 12 months)	
<b>Taking the Lead</b>	Town of North Wilkesboro, Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership.	
<b>Supporting Cast</b>	Town and merchants, Yadkin Valley Marketplace, Midtown Markets/Master Gardeners. WCC Horticulture Tech Dept (Donna Riddle); NC Forestry Service (Eric Muecke)	
<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Dollars</b>	<b>Time</b>
	Low cost	Volunteers
<b>Possible Funding Sources</b>	Donations and sponsorships	

# Appendix B:

## Design and Programming Exercise Photos

The design illustrations and images portrayed in the main body of the report were produced from a series of design and programming exercises held the morning of the second day of the workshop. The main report illustrations are a summary of the exercises findings. This appendix contains images of the design exercises, to document the process and record of what some groups put on paper that day. It should be noted that these images are process documents, and do not represent the final summary of findings or conclusions. They are included here to show the range of ideas and assets discussed during the process.

# TIMELINE



~10 vendors  
\$15k  
(13-14 = park)

24 vendors  
\$25k  
(? potential)

? What is possible growth? - are there limits? - some size?  
Visibility may improve.

Variety  
↳ What type of market

# Local Foods and Livability Workshop - North Wilkesboro, NC

EPA/ARC Sustainable Communities in Appalachia Technical Assistance Workshop, September 23-24, 2014

Aerial Provided by N Wilkesboro, 1"=100' scale



## NOTES

23 neighbor hood

- 1 - Brushy Burton
- 2 - Train Depot - historic / future use
- 3 - Store center - used all year long
- 4 - ~~Ball field~~ Ball field
- 5 - greenway trail (start) (dashed line = proposed)
- 6 - Bridge from W. Park to lot 46
- 7 - Bridge (grassy) into W. Wilkesboro
- 8 - Libeal's Theatre
- 9 - Concord Deck
- 10 - Greenway (Madkin & Reddies)
- 11 - Main St TRAK
- 12 - Pathway
- 13 - Reddies Greenway
- 14 - 4 Season Farmer's market
- 15 - D Street / CBD Loop - Entrance to historic downtown
- 16 - Talia's Brancifortes / Mural
- 17 - Talia's / Music on Main
- 18 - NU-WAY
- 19 - Drive in / 115 entrance to town
- 20 - Library
- 21 - WAS
- 22 - Cole + Laves Mural

### MEANINGFUL PLACES

Where you want more activity, more people, or more life.

### GATHERING SPACES

Where you want people to hang out, socialize, or just be together. Think of it as a place where people can be together, but not necessarily talking.

### PATHWAYS / GATEWAYS

Places that are "open" to the road. Think of it as a place where you can see the road, but you can't get into it. Think of it as a place where you can see the road, but you can't get into it.

\* Please use the sheet to the right to flesh out details of places you mapped.



# MEANINGFUL PLACES

(Where you would take visitors,  
what you point at to friends)

# GATHERING SPACES

(Where you meet folks, or go to  
be outdoors with a friend, or small group.  
Could be indoors, but preferably outdoors.

# PATHWAYS / GATEWAYS

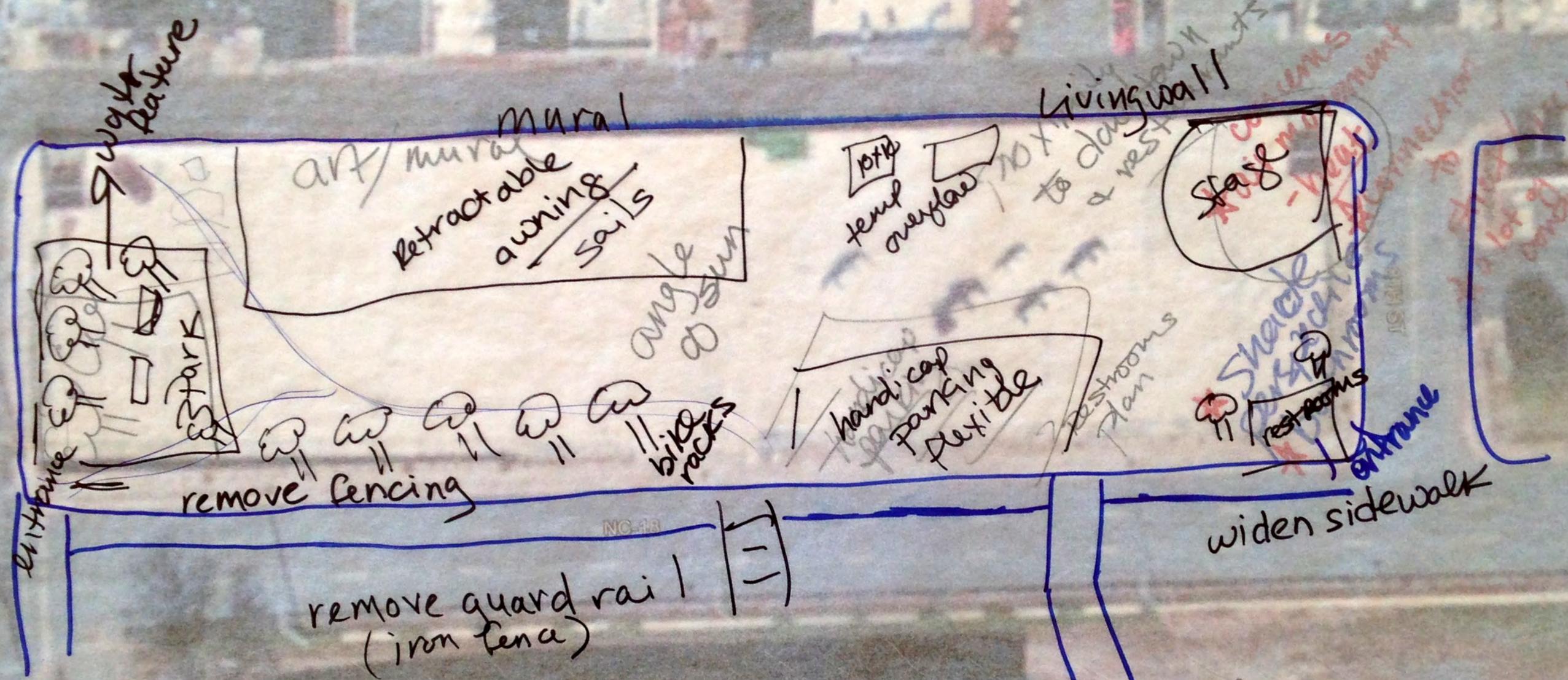
Moving from one "space" to the  
next. Examples: places where you  
feel like you are "entering" downtown,  
or how you prefer to get from one  
place to the next.

\* Please use the sheet to  
the right to flesh out details  
of ~~the~~ places you mapped.

# NOTES

23 neighbors

- 1 - Brushy Burton
- 2 - Train Depot - historic (future use)
- 3 - Stone center - used all year long
- 4 - ~~Foot path~~ Ball field
- 5 - greenway trail (start) (dashed line = proposed)
- 6 - Bridge from W. Park to Lot 46
- 7 - Bridge (driveway) into W. W. Keabero
- 8 - Liberty Theatre
- 9 - Concert Deck
- 10 - Greenway (Yakku & Reddies)
- 11 - Main St PARK
- 12 - Pathway
- 13 - Reddies Greenway
- 14 - 4 Season Farmer's market
- 15 - D Street/CBD Loop - Entrance to historic downtown
- 16 - Talia's Brancifortes / Mural
- 17 - Talia's / Music on Main
- 18 - NU-WAY
- 19 - Drive in / IIS entrance to town
- 20 - Library
- 21 - WAS
- 22 - Cole & Laves Mural



15th ST

NC-18

coffee  
table

community  
connection  
to lot of trees

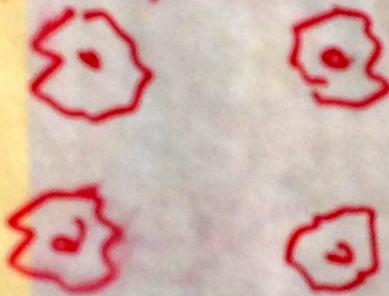
Shack  
restrooms

15th ST

Two-Way  
(REAR)  
Facade  
Grants

removable awnings

'Big  
Asc.  
Ceiling  
Fans



Sun facing  
west in  
evenings.  
Reverse  
stage

Handicap  
parking



poorly  
park

sign

steps/Ramp  
to tie into  
the  
Depot

Condemned  
Railroad

2:1 to

ADA

ADA

ADA

ADA

ADA

ADA



# Appendix C:

## Information on Wilkes County Food System

## North Wilkesboro’s Local Food System

The Wilkes County Farmers’ Market is an important pillar of the community’s local food system. USDA defines local food as “food produced, processed, and distributed within a particular geographic boundary that consumers associate with their own community.”<sup>1</sup> Essentially, the local food system connects local growers (supply) with local eaters (demand), allowing them to interact face to face.<sup>2</sup> In North Wilkesboro, as in many communities across the nation, locally-grown foods account for a very small percent of all foods eaten by local citizens. Wilkes County’s farmers sold \$285 million of agricultural products in 2012, but only \$687,000 of those sales were from direct to consumer channels, such as roadside stands, farmers’ markets, and pick-your-own sites.<sup>3</sup> These statistics indicate there is potential to increase local sales of locally-grown agricultural products.

Table 1 shows some key facts and figures on farming and the local food system in Wilkes County. While the number of farms decreased between 2007 and 2012, the acreage in vegetable farming increased and local sales direct to consumers more than doubled during the same period. This is consistent with national trends of greater awareness and consumption of locally produced foods during the last decade.<sup>4</sup>

Table 1 - Key Local Agriculture Statistics for Wilkes County, NC

Wilkes County	2007	2012	Change
<b>Total Farms</b>	1,095	972	-11%
<b>Total Farm Acres</b>	109,970	111,118	+1%
<b>Vegetable Farms</b>	19	29	+52%
<b>Vegetable Acres</b>	20	59	+195%
<b>Fruit Orchards</b>	39	36	-8%
<b>Total Agricultural Sales</b>	\$390 million	\$285 million	-27%
<b>Agricultural Sales Direct to Consumers</b>	\$311,111	\$687,000	+121%

The town’s emphasis on building a stronger local food system can bring several benefits to public health, the economy and the environment. The region suffers from high rates of obesity, diabetes, and high blood pressure, which are closely linked to diet.<sup>5</sup> Better access to local fresh foods,

<sup>1</sup> USDA ERS. *Local Food Systems: Concepts, Impacts, and Issues*. May 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture. Regional and Local Food Systems. Accessed March 3, 2014. [http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/marketing/food\\_systems](http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/marketing/food_systems).

<sup>3</sup> USDA. 2012 Census of Agriculture. Accessed October 10, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> Tropp, Debra. “Why Local Food Matters: The rising importance of locally-grown food in the U.S. food system – A national perspective.” National Association of Counties Legislative Conference, Agriculture and Rural Affairs Steering Committee Subcommittee on Agriculture. March 2, 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Center for Disease Control. Health Indicators Warehouse. Accessed October 10, 2014.

combined with education on how to prepare them, can help people live healthier lives. The farmers' market in North Wilkesboro improves residents' access to fresh local produce, especially those living in or near the downtown area.

Federal food assistance programs provide an opportunity to improve access to healthy local foods. For example, the National School Lunch Program provides free or low cost lunches and snacks for North Wilkesboro children living in low income families. Several communities across the country have successfully incorporated locally-grown foods into these lunches. Meanwhile, about 17 percent of the county's population participated in the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in 2012.<sup>6</sup> The farmers' markets can accept the EBT cards on which SNAP benefits are exchanged, and a new program created under the 2014 Farm Bill SNAP will provide funding for local programs that enhance the purchasing power of SNAP benefits.<sup>7</sup>

A strong local food system also brings several environmental and economic benefits. On the economic side, strong demand for local foods keeps more food dollars in the local North Wilkesboro economy. This brings more income to local farmers that sell their produce at the market. The economic benefits are related to the environmental benefits because a financially viable farm is more likely to stay in production rather than be developed for other uses. And farmers that sell local foods typically travel shorter distances to the market, which can reduce transportation costs for farmers and emissions related to transportation.

Strengthening the local food system also provides economic benefits for downtowns and the older neighborhoods that surround them. Farmers' markets are popular attractions nationwide and typically offer more than food. Many popular markets incorporate live music, cooking demonstrations, artisan vendors, and other features that attract more people. When the markets are placed downtown, they can increase traffic for nearby stores. The Sustainable Communities in Appalachia Program recognizes the potential synergy between the local food system and a community's downtown economy. The remainder of this action plan describes North Wilkesboro's approach to plan for enhancing this connection.

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<sup>6</sup> USDA Economic Research Service. Food Environment Atlas. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-environment-atlas.aspx#.U4yP4PldX3Z>. Accessed June 2, 2014.

<sup>7</sup> Martin, Jennifer. "USDA Announces up to \$31 Million to Empower People to Make Healthy Eating Choices." United States Department of Agriculture. September 29, 2014. [http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2014/09/0215.xml&navid=NEWS\\_RELEASE&navtype=RT&parentnav=LATEST\\_RELEASES&deployment\\_action=retrievecontent](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2014/09/0215.xml&navid=NEWS_RELEASE&navtype=RT&parentnav=LATEST_RELEASES&deployment_action=retrievecontent).

# Appendix D:

## Workshop Participants and Contact Information

Steering Committee (participated in pre-meeting conference calls, and the working sessions)				
First	Last	Title/Occupation	Affiliation	E-Mail
Bill	Hanlin	County Extension Director	NC Cooperative Extension	<a href="mailto:wghanlin@ncsu.edu">wghanlin@ncsu.edu</a>
Sam	Hinnant	Planning Director	Town of North Wilkesboro	<a href="mailto:planning@north-wilkesboro.com">planning@north-wilkesboro.com</a>
Heather	Murphy	Executive Director	Health Foundation	<a href="mailto:heather@healthfoundation.org">heather@healthfoundation.org</a>
Larry	South	Town Manager	Town of North Wilkesboro	<a href="mailto:townmanager@north-wilkesboro.com">townmanager@north-wilkesboro.com</a>

EPA/ARC/USDA and Consultants (technical assistance team)				
First	Last	Title/Occupation	Affiliation	E-Mail
Jason	Espie	Project Manager	Renaissance Planning Group	<a href="mailto:jespie@ciesthatwork.com">jespie@ciesthatwork.com</a>
Stephanie	Bertaina	Senior Policy Analyst	US EPA – Washington, DC	<a href="mailto:Bertaina.stephanie@epa.gov">Bertaina.stephanie@epa.gov</a>
Mike	Callahan	Senior Planner	Renaissance Planning Group	<a href="mailto:mcallahan@ciesthatwork.com">mcallahan@ciesthatwork.com</a>
Anne	Keller	Senior Sustainability Advisor	US EPA Region 4- Atlanta	<a href="mailto:Keller.anne@epa.gov">Keller.anne@epa.gov</a>
Wilson	Paine	Program Analyst	Appalachian Regional Commission	<a href="mailto:wpaine@arc.gov">wpaine@arc.gov</a>

Workshop Attendees				
First	Last	Title/Occupation	Affiliation	E-Mail
Eddie	Barnes		Wilkes County Planning	<a href="mailto:ebarnes@wilkescounty.net">ebarnes@wilkescounty.net</a>
Angela	Day	Business owner	Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership Board	<a href="mailto:angela@ivyridge.com">angela@ivyridge.com</a>
Debbie	Ferguson	Commissioner	North Wilkesboro	<a href="mailto:Debbie_ferguson@embarqmail.com">Debbie_ferguson@embarqmail.com</a>
Vickie	Hugger		Wilkes County Schools	<a href="mailto:huggerr@wilkes.k12.nc.us">huggerr@wilkes.k12.nc.us</a>
Dennis	Huggins		Wilkes County Schools	<a href="mailto:hugginsd@wilkes.k12.nc.us">hugginsd@wilkes.k12.nc.us</a>
Dale	Isom	Developer	Spectrum Hospitality	<a href="mailto:daleisom@shmgmt.biz">daleisom@shmgmt.biz</a>
Crystal	Keener	Director	Downtown North Wilkesboro Partnership	<a href="mailto:tourism@north-wilkesboro.com">tourism@north-wilkesboro.com</a>
Dean	Ledbetter		NC DOT	<a href="mailto:dledbetter@ncdot.gov">dledbetter@ncdot.gov</a>
Jason	Roehrig	Farmer	Tumbling Shoals	<a href="mailto:farmer@tumbingshoalsfarm.com">farmer@tumbingshoalsfarm.com</a>
Debbie	Sexton		USDA	<a href="mailto:Debbie.sexton@nc.usda.gov">Debbie.sexton@nc.usda.gov</a>
Larry	Stone	Citizen		<a href="mailto:Lstone67@charter.net">Lstone67@charter.net</a>
Emily	Storrow	Reporter	Wilkes Journal Patriot	<a href="mailto:estorrow@journalpatriot.com">estorrow@journalpatriot.com</a>
Dwayne	Swink		Cubic Design Group	<a href="mailto:Dwayne.swink@cubicdesigngroup.com">Dwayne.swink@cubicdesigngroup.com</a>
Hollis	Wild		Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project	<a href="mailto:hollis@asapconnections.org">hollis@asapconnections.org</a>

# Appendix E:

# Presentation Slides



This presentation will introduce the concepts of community livability and local foods.



Talk about the presentation.

A key point is that the workshop is about their town. The consulting team is here to help the community realize their own vision of a livable community.



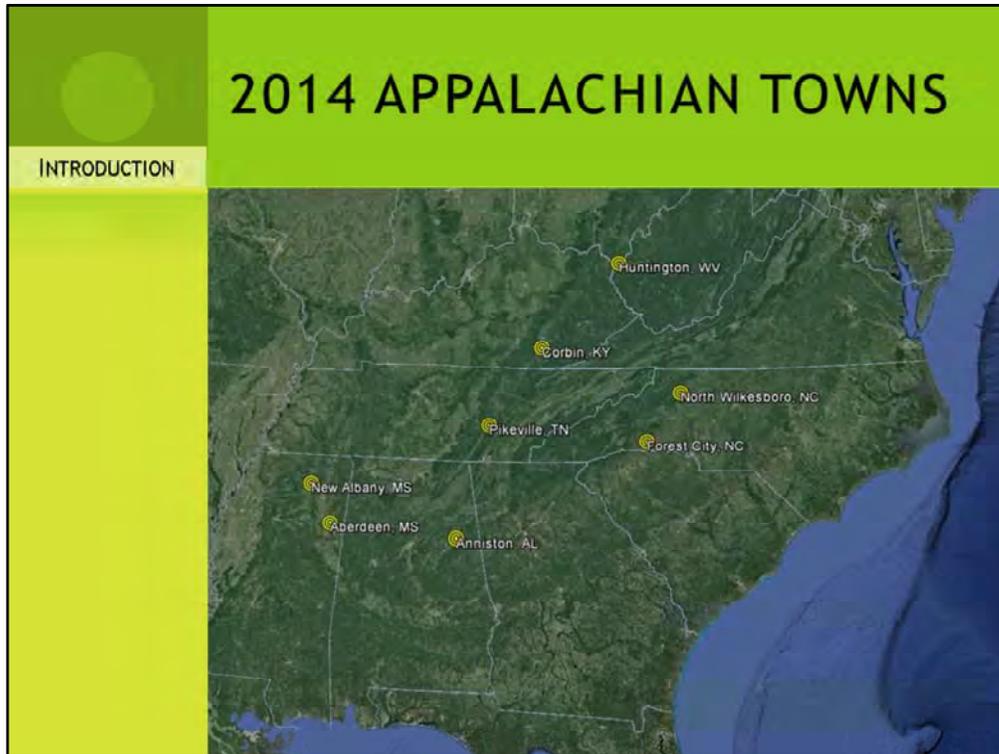
# SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES IN APPALACHIA

INTRODUCTION

- ④ **Joint project:**
  - ④ Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)
  - ④ US Department of Agriculture – RD (USDA)
  - ④ US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- ④ **Purpose:**
  - ④ Advance local efforts to create vibrant, sustainable communities and improve economic vitality by building consensus and capacity for action around local foods.
  - ④ *“Help you get from point A to point B.”*

But first, a little more about the program under which we are delivering this workshop today...the workshop is jointly funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development Division, the U.S. EPA and the Appalachian Regional Commission.

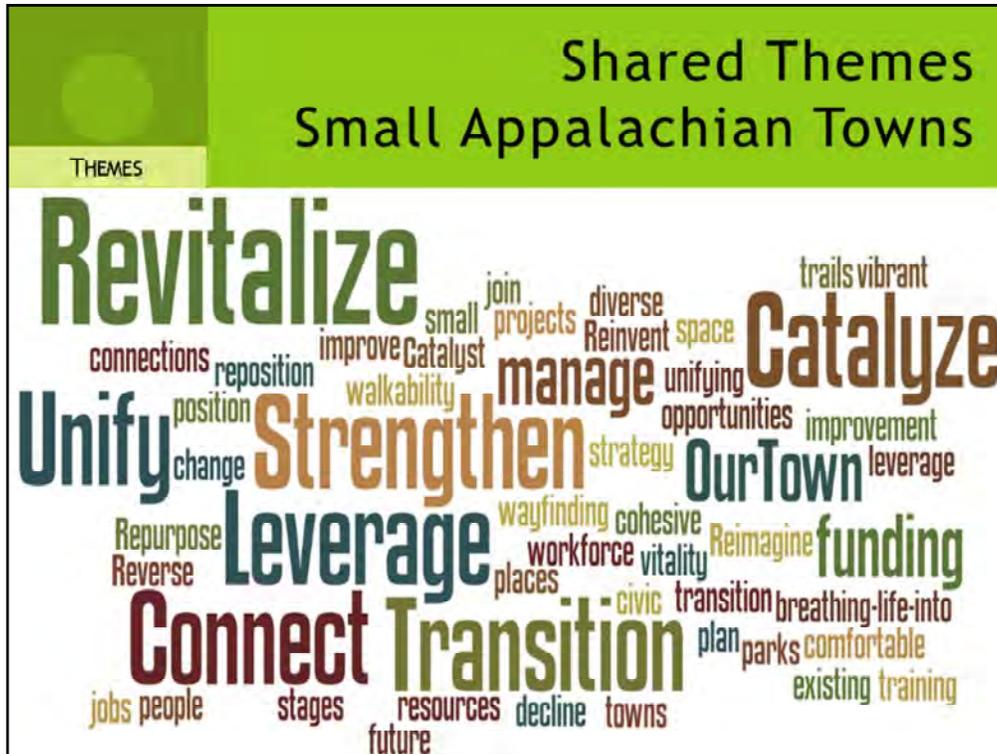
Technical assistance, such as this workshop, is one way of helping communities move towards their livability goals.



This map shows all of the communities participating in the Sustainable Communities in Appalachia program in 2014.

The presenter may also want to mention some of the key facts about the Appalachian region:

- The Appalachian region covers 205,000 square miles in 13 states.
- Home to 25 million people.
- Includes 420 counties.
- Extends about 1,000 miles from Mississippi to New York.
- 42% of the population lives in rural areas compared to 20% nationally.



Reading the letters each community submitted requesting the assistance, and through conversations with leaders in each community, a set of themes has emerged. They are represented on this slide.

Some of the major ones are:

- Revitalize
- Strengthen
- Unify
- Leverage
- Connect
- Transition
- Catalyze
- Our Town

# OUR TOWN - WHAT WE HAVE HEARD

INTRODUCTION

- ⊙ Need for more feet on the streets
  - ⊙ Increase vitality by adding downtown housing and local retail, through repurposing assets (train depot, Block 46), and moving the farmers' market to a downtown location.
- ⊙ Shortage of neighborhood park space.
- ⊙ Need to calm traffic on the downtown streets.
- ⊙ Potential for economic development through agribusiness and tourism.
- ⊙ Done a lot of planning. Now is the time for action!

Complete this slide before the first presentation. This slide should include some of the key findings and themes that emerge through initial discussions with the community and the tour.

# WORKSHOP AGENDA

INTRODUCTION

- ⊙ **Day 1:**
  - ⊙ Community Tour
  - ⊙ Work Session 1: Vision and Values  
*Where do we want to be?*
- ⊙ **Day 2:**
  - ⊙ Work Session 2: *What needs to happen?*
  - ⊙ Work Session 3: *How to make it happen.*

This slide is a summary of the agenda for the 1.5 day workshop.

The first day is about learning about and seeing the community. The first work session is about listening to community values and vision.

The second day is about moving towards an action plan that will bring about the vision.



The technical assistance program is an offshoot of the federal Partnership for Sustainable Communities. EPA, HUD, and DOT are working together to promote livability. The Partnership is tailoring present and future funding resources to program and communities that show and want to meet these goals.

The next few slides illustrate the livability principles, which guide the Partnership for Sustainable Communities:

1. Provide more transportation choices.
2. Promote equitable, affordable housing.
3. Enhance economic competitiveness.
4. Support existing communities.
5. Coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment.
6. Value communities and neighborhoods.

# 1) Provide More Transportation Choices

LIVABILITY



This principle is about developing 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.

This slide shows images from Connellsville, PA. The town is located on the Great Allegheny Passage Trail, which runs from Pittsburgh to Cumberland, MD. The town has tapped into this resource to improve biking within the community, and also attract long-distance trail riders to stay overnight in the town and spend their money in the local economy.

## 1) Provide More Transportation Choices

LIVABILITY



ANNISTON, AL TRANSIT SERVICE. IMAGE CREDIT: RENAISSANCE PLANNING GROUP

Transit is also an important part of the transportation mix. Transit services in small towns and rural areas are especially important for seniors, people with disabilities, and people that lack access to an automobile. This photo shows a transit bus in Anniston, AL. Service demand is fairly light in smaller communities, so the Anniston area uses smaller vehicles and vans.

## 2) Promote Equitable and Affordable Housing

LIVABILITY



CORBIN, KY: 20+ APARTMENTS IN REPURPOSED DOWNTOWN BUILDING DOWNTOWN NEAR FARMERS' MARKET. IMAGE CREDIT: RENAISSANCE PLANNING GROUP.

This principle is about expanding 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.

This slide shows a building in downtown Corbin, KY that was repurposed for housing. The building now has more than 20 apartments and is just a block away from the farmers' market.

### 3) Enhance Economic Competitiveness

LIVABILITY



This principle is about improving 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.

This slide shows the Tanglefoot Trail in New Albany, MS. The trail runs for 44 miles from Houston, MS to New Albany. The two buildings shown on this slide have been converted to uses that cater to trail riders. The building on the right is a bike shop while the building on the left is now home to a coffee shop. The building on the left had been vacant for decades.



This slide showcases one of several efforts in Williamson, WV to enhance their economy through renewable energy. The city's economy has traditionally revolved around energy resources. They are positioning themselves to be an energy community for decades to come by investing in renewable resources and training people to install and manufacture renewable energy equipment. This slide shows a water heater on the roof of the fire station that relies on solar energy. This has significantly reduced the fire station's energy consumption.

### 3) Enhance Economic Competitiveness

LIVABILITY



DUFFIELD, VA: APPALACHIAN HARVEST FOOD HUB. IMAGE CREDIT: APPALACHIAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

This slide shows the Appalachian Harvest Food Hub in Duffield, VA. The food hub serves institutions and retailers in southwest Virginia. The hub aggregates produce from several local farms, packages it, and distributes to more than 100 grocery stores in the region. This local initiative supports dozens of local farmers and keeps more food dollars local.

## 4) Support Existing Communities

LIVABILITY



PIKEVILLE, TN: DOWNTOWN STAGE. IMAGE CREDIT: RENAISSANCE PLANNING GROUP

Pikeville, TN built a downtown stage on a vacant lot next to its Fire Station. The stage is a place for concerts, movies, and other events that bring the community together.

## 4) Support Existing Communities

LIVABILITY



Salamanca has embraced a similar strategy. This small town, in upstate NY, took advantage of an open space between two building to put in a small park. Such efforts can eliminate blight that discourages investment.

## 5) Coordinate & Leverage Federal Policies and Investment

LIVABILITY



This is about aligning federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.

Connellsville, PA is an example of leveraging a federal investment to enhance a community's livability goals. The new train station allows trail riders to arrive in the town and bike back to their origin. It supports the town's efforts to make downtown more vibrant and bikeable.

## 5) Coordinate & Leverage Federal Policies and Investment

LIVABILITY



PIKEVILLE, TN: DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS FUNDED BY ARC, USDA, TDOT. IMAGE CREDIT: RENAISSANCE PLANNING GROUP

Pikeville, TN is another good example. A bypass was built around the town in the mid 2000s, which diverted traffic off of Main Street. To revitalize the downtown, and attract tourism dollars, the town redesigned its Main Street.

Pikeville tapped into several federal resources to accomplish this project. It paid for the streetscape improvements with a \$99,500 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission, a \$50,000 grant from USDA-Rural Development, and a \$596,000 federal Transportation Enhancements grant awarded by Tennessee DOT.

<http://www.cumberlandregiontomorrow.org/featured/nado-publication-preview-downtown-and-corridor-reinvestment-in-pikeville-tn/>

## 5) Coordinate & Leverage Federal Policies and Investment

LIVABILITY



Highways



Water



Sewer

Telecom

IMAGE CREDITS: APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION

Federal policies and investment can set the stage for more livable communities by improving infrastructure. Infrastructure is more than just streets. It includes water and sewer pipes and pumps, treatment facilities, telecommunications and internet connections, highways, and much more. It is more efficient to fix and invest in existing infrastructure.

## 6) Value Communities and Neighborhoods

LIVABILITY



This principle is about enhancing the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods – rural, urban, or suburban.

This slide shows a community garden in Williamson, WV. Some notes on Williamson community garden:

- Started with 24 raised beds.
- Collaboration of the Williamson Redevelopment Authority, Central Appalachian Sustainable Economies (CASE), West Virginia University Extension, and the Wildwood Garden Club.
- It took 3 to 5 years to take it from an idea to a reality.
- The farmers' market is selling produce from the garden. Profit goes back into supporting the gardens.
- The mayor provided city property for the garden.
- Organizers of the community garden have put on educational workshops.

[http://www.williamsondailynews.com/view/full\\_story/18221640/article-Ribbon-cutting-held-for-community-garden?instance=popular](http://www.williamsondailynews.com/view/full_story/18221640/article-Ribbon-cutting-held-for-community-garden?instance=popular).

- Intentionally located next to Williamson Towers, a low income housing development.

- Many gardeners are disabled or elderly.
- Expanded to 30 beds with the help of Amizade (a service learning group).
- Beds rent for \$5, \$10, or \$20 per year based on their size.
- Added 12 arbors for growing grapes or other vine plants.
- 3 high tunnels.

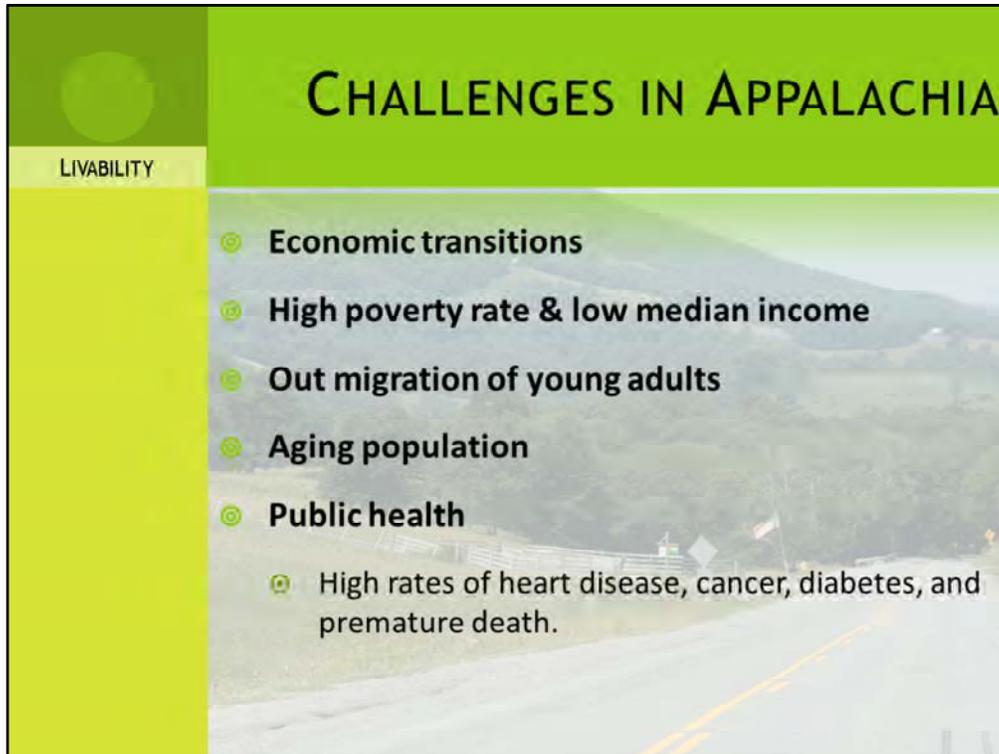
<https://www.berea.edu/grow-appalachia/partner-sites/williamson-health-wellness-center/>

## 6) Value Communities and Neighborhoods

LIVABILITY



This slide shows a refurbished bridge that created a new pedestrian connection between a neighborhood and downtown. When the bridge went out of service, it became difficult for people to walk to the nearby downtown. The town refurbished the historic bridge for pedestrian/bike use only.



Appalachia faces several challenges that underscore the importance of investing in community livability.

**Economic transitions**

36% of Appalachia lives in non-metro areas compared to 15% nationally.

Region's income lags national average by about 20% and the poverty rate is about 13% higher.

High rates of out migration for young adults. In non-metro counties between 2000 and 2008:

Population under 25 **down 5%**

Population 65 and older **up 12%**

Traditionally strong job sectors including manufacturing, mining, and farming.

Manufacturing jobs sharply declined since 2000.

**Public health concerns**

Higher rates of death for heart disease, cancer, and diabetes.

Rates of premature death in portions of Appalachia are among the highest in the nation.

**Sources:**

ARC Data: <http://www.arc.gov/data>

ARC Economic Assessment of Appalachia: <http://www.arc.gov/images/programs/ardi/EconomicAssessmentofAppalachiaJune2010.pdf>

ARC Health Disparities Study: [http://www.arc.gov/assets/research\\_reports/AnalysisofHealthDisparitiesIntroductionExecutiveSummary.pdf](http://www.arc.gov/assets/research_reports/AnalysisofHealthDisparitiesIntroductionExecutiveSummary.pdf)

**OPPORTUNITIES IN APPALACHIA**

**LIVABILITY**

- **Abundant natural resources**
  - Fresh water, forests, and energy resources.
- **Substantial biodiversity**
  - Supports tourism, recreation, and agriculture.
- **Most diverse food shed in the United States**
  - Local foods an opportunity to improve economic development, livability, and public health.
- **The People:** An eager and available workforce.

The Appalachian region is blessed with many resources that make an emphasis on livability and local foods possible.

Sources:

“Assessing the Landscape of Local Food in Appalachia” by Jean Haskell.

[http://www.arc.gov/assets/research\\_reports/AssessingLandscapeofLocalFoodinAppalachia.pdf](http://www.arc.gov/assets/research_reports/AssessingLandscapeofLocalFoodinAppalachia.pdf)

# LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

FOOD SYSTEMS

**Local Food Systems - A Key Tool Supporting Livability and Small Town Revitalization**

IMAGE CREDITS: APPALACHIAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (BOTTOM LEFT), WHITLEY CO. FARMERS MARKET (TOP LEFT, BOTTOM RIGHT), HOT SPRINGS FARMERS MARKET (TOP RIGHT)

Appalachia's opportunities and assets point towards a focus on local foods. The next several slides demonstrate how local foods and livability are related.

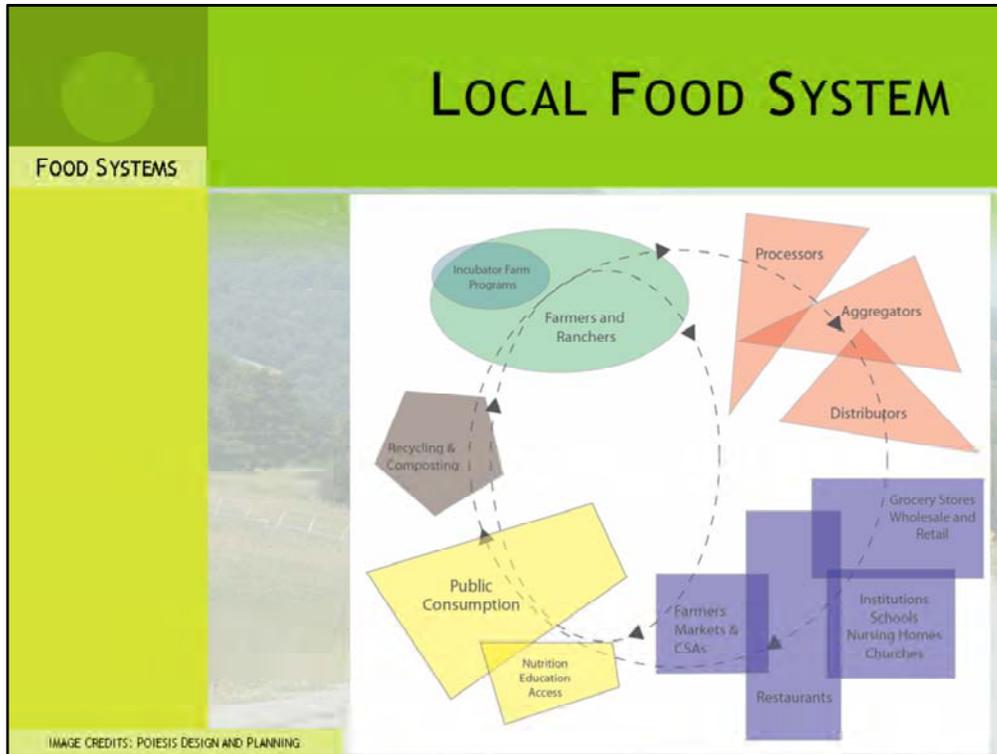
**LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS**

FOOD SYSTEMS

**@ What is a local food system?**

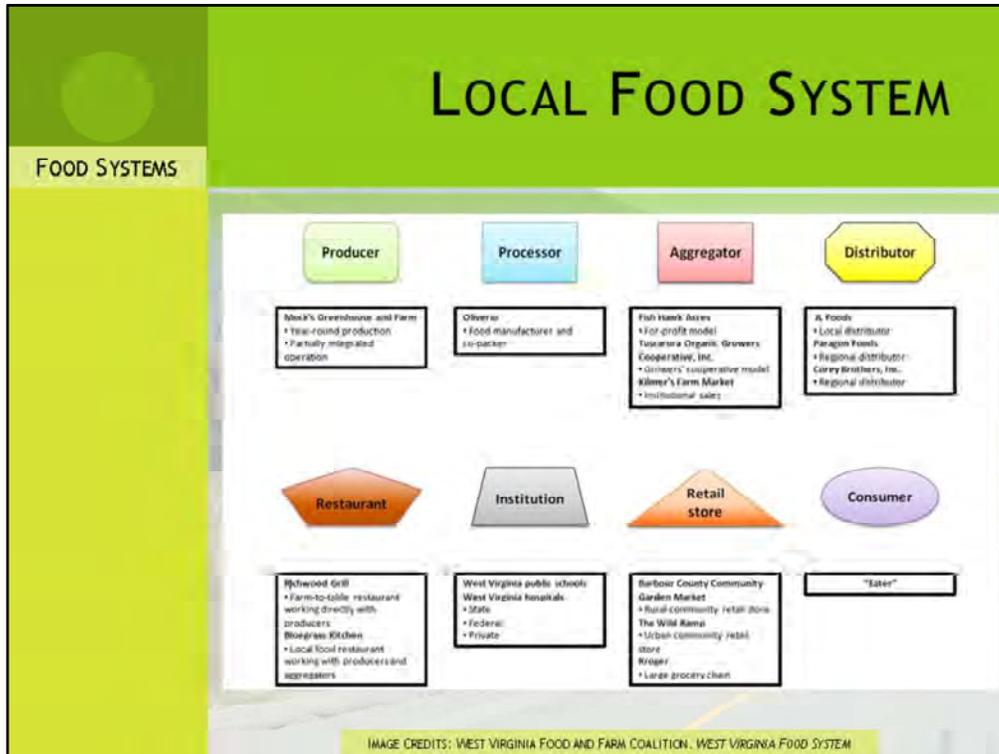
- ⦿ Everything involved in taking food from the grower to the consumer.
- ⦿ Local food systems allow for local growers and consumers to interact.
- ⦿ Matches local supply and demand.

Source: Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture.  
[http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/marketing/food\\_systems](http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/marketing/food_systems)



A fairly common local food system is outlined by the circle on the left. Farmers and consumers are connected through a farmers' market or other direct to consumer channels.

A more advance local food system is outlined by the circle on the right. This adds in aggregation, processing, and distribution functions. These are important for connecting local foods with larger buyers, such as schools, grocery stores, and restaurants. A food hub can serve these functions.



Here is another example of the players in a local food system. This slide shows examples of the various players. This example comes from West Virginia.



This slide presents some basic agricultural data for Wilkes County. The slide shows that Wilkes is losing farms and farms sales. But local direct to consumer sales have surged, reflecting national trends, and the number of vegetable farms and acres harvested for vegetables is also surging.

Data for the county level of every U.S. state are available here:

[http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full\\_Report/Volume\\_1,\\_Chapter\\_2\\_County\\_Level/](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_2_County_Level/)

# KEY DEFINITIONS

## FOOD SYSTEMS

### Local Food

- Food produced, processed, and distributed within a particular geographic boundary that consumers associate with their own community.

### Community Supported Agriculture

- Marketing arrangement in which members purchase shares of a farmer's expected yield before planting. Each week during the growing season the farmer delivers each member's weekly share of food to predetermined locations or packs the share for members to pick up.

Source: USDA ERS. *Local Food Systems: Concepts, Impacts, and Issues*. May 2010.

**FOOD SYSTEMS**

# KEY DEFINITIONS

- ⊙ **Farmers Market**
  - ⊙ Marketing outlet at which farmers sell agricultural products to individual customers at a temporary or permanent location on a periodic and recurring basis during the local growing season or during the time when they have products available, which might be all year.
- ⊙ **Farm to School Programs**
  - ⊙ Collaborative projects that connect schools and local farms to serve locally grown, healthy foods in K-12 school settings, improve student nutrition, educate students about food and health, and support local and regional farmers.

Source: USDA ERS, *Local Food Systems: Concepts, Impacts, and Issues*, May 2010.

The next few slides present some definitions. Local food systems are a relatively new area of focus for many planners and city or town officials. It's important that we are all on the same page regarding some of the key terms we will be using.

# KEY DEFINITIONS

## FOOD SYSTEMS

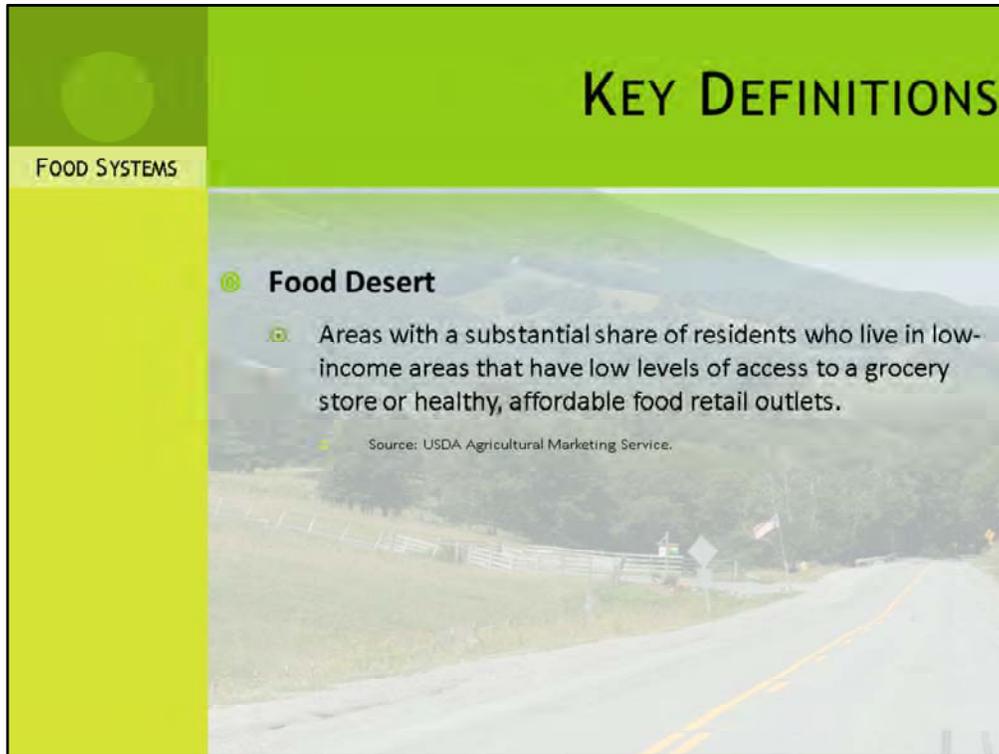
**Food Hub.** A business or organization that actively manages the aggregation, distribution, and marketing of source-identified food products primarily from local and regional producers to strengthen their ability to satisfy wholesale, retail, and institutional demand.

Source: USDA *Regional Food Hub Resource Guide*, April, 2012.



IMAGE CREDIT: CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA LOCAL FOOD HUB

A food hub could be an organizational structure or a shared use facility (heavily organized)



Definition Source: <http://apps.ams.usda.gov/fooddeserts/foodDeserts.aspx>

Food deserts are far more extensive when looking at census tracts with low access and low rates of auto ownership.

Map source: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas.aspx#.Uugsg9lo7mg>

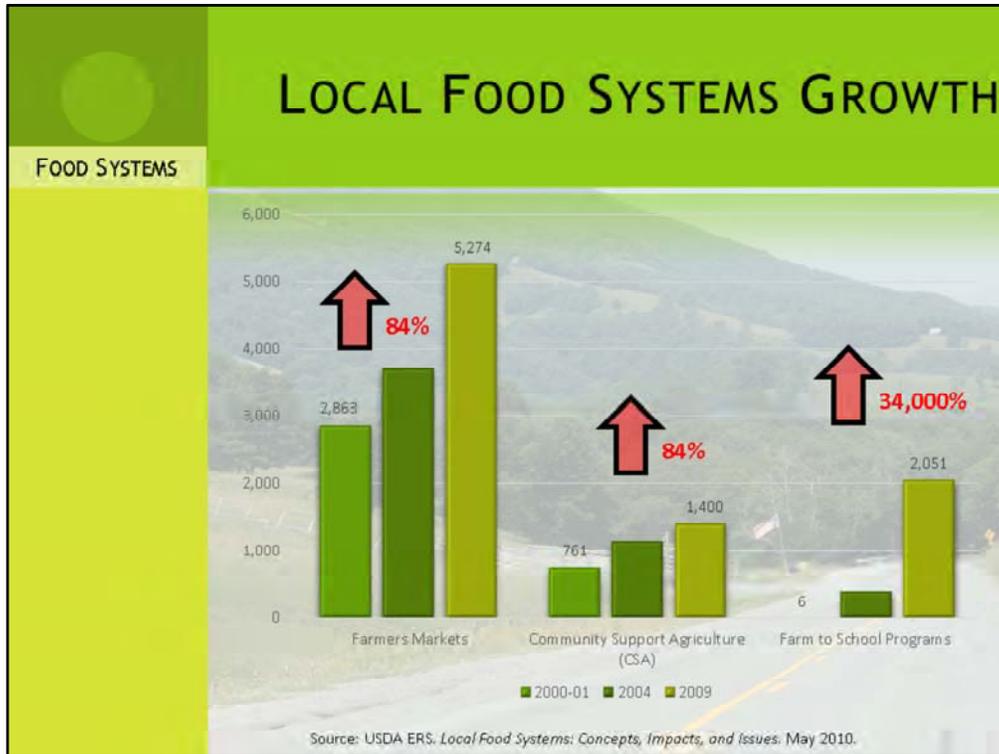


Definition Source: <http://apps.ams.usda.gov/fooddeserts/foodDeserts.aspx>

Food deserts are far more extensive when looking at census tracts with low access and low rates of auto ownership.

Map source: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas.aspx#.Uugsg9lo7mg>

In Aberdeen there are people without vehicle access and without transit.



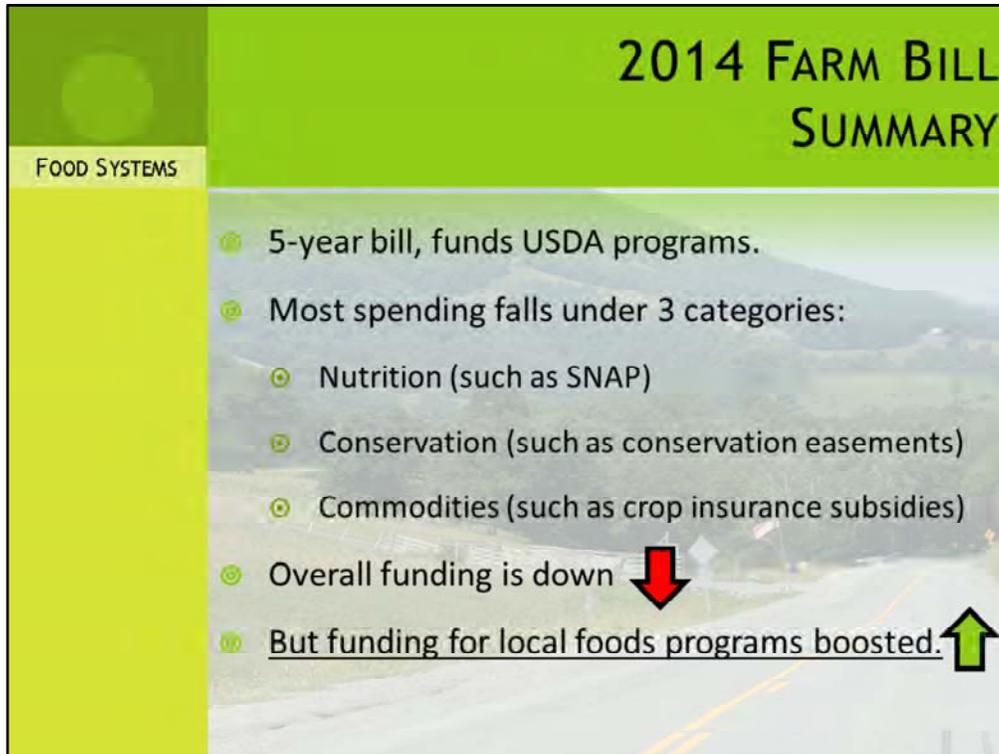
Source: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/err-economic-research-report/err97.aspx#.Uufla9lo7mg>

There are a lot of people exploring how to do local foods. Small scale, aggregation businesses, road side stands. The bottom line is there is a lot of interest, increasing demand and lots of opportunity and avenues for local communities to explore going forward. There are models of success, but this is an area that could benefit from entrepreneurial attention.

Also, the numbers presented on this slide continue to grow. The USDA's farmers' market directory reported more than 8,000 as of July 2014: <http://search.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/>.



Source: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/err-economic-research-report/err97.aspx#.Uufla9lo7mg>

A presentation slide titled "2014 FARM BILL SUMMARY" with a sub-header "FOOD SYSTEMS". The slide features a background image of a rural landscape with a road and mountains. The text is presented in a list format with green circular icons. A red arrow points down from the text "Overall funding is down" and a green arrow points up from the text "But funding for local foods programs boosted."

## 2014 FARM BILL SUMMARY

### FOOD SYSTEMS

- 5-year bill, funds USDA programs.
- Most spending falls under 3 categories:
  - Nutrition (such as SNAP)
  - Conservation (such as conservation easements)
  - Commodities (such as crop insurance subsidies)
- Overall funding is down
- But funding for local foods programs boosted.

Sources:

<http://sustainableagriculture.net/blog/2014-farm-bill-outcomes/>

<http://sustainableagriculture.net/blog/2014-farm-bill-by-numbers/>

The infographic features a green header with the title '2014 FARM BILL LOCAL FOODS PROGRAMS'. On the left, a vertical yellow-green bar contains the text 'FOOD SYSTEMS'. The main content area, set against a background of a rural landscape, lists five programs with their respective funding changes:

- ⊙ **Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program.** Funding tripled, project eligibility expanded to allow for more local food hub activities.
- ⊙ **Community Food Projects Grant Program:** Funding doubled, supports projects that improve food security.
- ⊙ **Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Program:** New program that markets can use to double SNAP benefits up to a certain dollar amount for veggie/fruit purchases.
- ⊙ **Beginning Farmers and Rancher Development Program** funding increased.
- ⊙ **Organic Certification Cost Share Program** funding doubled.

Sources:

<http://sustainableagriculture.net/blog/2014-farm-bill-outcomes/>

<http://sustainableagriculture.net/blog/2014-farm-bill-by-numbers/>

<http://sustainableagriculture.net/blog/2014-drilldown-bfr-sda/>



These benefits have strong connections to the livability principles and goals described earlier. In particular, local food systems can support environmental preservation, vibrant town centers, better public health, and more economic opportunities.

# LOCAL FOODS AND LIVABILITY

LOCAL FOODS

- ⊙ **Preserves Viable Working Lands that:**
  - ⊙ Support local jobs.
  - ⊙ Supply healthy and fresh food to local markets.
  - ⊙ Contribute to region's identity.
  - ⊙ Preserve natural and rural landscapes.

This slide lists several ways in which investing in local foods helps preserve viable working lands.

# LOCAL FOODS AND LIVABILITY

LOCAL FOODS

- Improves Public Health**
  - Poor access to healthy food contributes to diet-related health problems such as diabetes, obesity, and heart disease.
  - Can help alleviate rural food deserts

Health Indicator	Wilkes County	North Carolina
Adults with Diabetes	10.8%	9.6%
Adults with High Blood Pressure	34.5%	30.9%
Adults Eating Fewer than 5 Veggie/Fruit Servings per Day	88.3%	79.4%

This slide lists a couple of ways in which investing in local foods can improve public health. The data presented in the table help explain why this is so important. Diabetes, high blood pressure, and low consumption of fruits and vegetables are national problems.

Source: CDC Health Indicators Warehouse - <http://www.healthindicators.gov/>.

# LOCAL FOODS AND LIVABILITY

LOCAL FOODS

- ⊕ **Increases Economic Opportunity**
  - ⊕ Keeps money in the region with local producers.
  - ⊕ Better public health supports a strong work force and lower health care costs.
  - ⊕ Jobs in growing, processing, distribution, etc.
    - ⊕ Appalachian Harvest supports 175 farm jobs & brings in > \$1 million annually.
  - ⊕ Higher income potential with veggies and fruits
    - ⊕ Example: Net income per acre is often less than **\$300** for corn but more than **\$2,000** for apples.

This slide lists some of the ways in which investing in local foods can increase economic opportunity.

Source for income per acre: NY Times. "Seeds of a Generation." February 4, 2014.  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/05/dining/the-seeds-of-a-new-generation.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/05/dining/the-seeds-of-a-new-generation.html?_r=0)

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/wholefarm/html/c3-65.html>

# LOCAL FOODS AND LIVABILITY

LOCAL FOODS

- **Supports Vibrant Town Centers**
  - **Feet on the Streets** - When located in town centers, local food hubs and farmers markets can attract people, which adds vibrancy.
  - Economic benefits spillover to other businesses.
  - Markets can become community gathering places that showcase the town's and region's unique local culture and products.

This slide lists some of the ways in which investing in local foods supports vibrant town centers.

# CONCLUSION

## LOCAL FOODS



IMAGE CREDITS: HOT SPRINGS FARMERS MARKET (BOTTOM LEFT AND RIGHT), WHITLEY COUNTY FARMERS MARKET (TOP LEFT), APPALACHIA SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (TOP RIGHT)

Image credits: Upper Left Whitley County Farmers Market; Upper Right local food tour in Abingdon, VA courtesy of Appalachian Sustainable Development; Bottom, Hot Springs, Arkansas farmers market

THIS I BELIEVE...

EXERCISE

- ⦿ This I believe about:
  - ⦿ The Future Yadkin Valley Marketplace
  - ⦿ Downtown North Wilkesboro

This is the first exercise. This exercise helps the facilitators and community understand their core values.

First the facilitator asks everyone in the audience to say something they believe about their community. People in the audience should stand up one at a time and say something they believe (should be no more than a few words). The exercise continues until everyone has stood up and said something. People should remain standing after they say something they believe in, so by the end of the exercise, everyone is standing.

Then move on to the second item (local foods) and final item (downtown).

## OUR COMMUNITY, OUR FOOD, OUR FUTURE

### EXERCISE

- ⑤ Divide into groups (ideally with persons you don't know).
- ⑥ As a group, create a news story about an event 20 years from now. Something good has just happened in North Wilkesboro.
  - ⑦ What happened?
  - ⑦ Why is it important?
- ⑥ Develop a headline that captures its essence. Write the headlines on index cards.
- ⑥ Report out: Summarize the story and aspirations for the future.

This is an exercise that aims to get at the vision and values. Ask people to think mentally how old they will be in 20 years.

**GOAL AFFIRMATION**

EXERCISE

**Affirm, modify, or add to goals:**

- ④ Identify design features to include in the new downtown farmers' market and pocket park.
- ④ Identify programs for the new downtown farmers' market.
- ④ Make downtown a more vibrant place.
- ④ Improve the downtown streetscape.

Revitalize – housing as relates to overall site success. Linkages between mill site and existing businesses.

# VISION AND ASSET MAPPING

## EXERCISE

- ⊙ Larger scale Maps
  - ⊙ Whole City (1"=1000')
  - ⊙ Downtown (1"=200')
- Assets, Opportunities, Connections
  - ⊙ Identify key existing assets (red)
  - ⊙ Identify opportunity areas (blue)
  - ⊙ Identify connections (black)
    - ⊙ Bike (dashed)
    - ⊙ Pedestrian (solid)

# CASE STUDIES

## CASE STUDIES

- ④ Farmers' Market – Corbin, KY
- ④ Food Hub – Southwest VA
- ④ Incubator Kitchen – Burgaw, NC
- ④ GAP Trail – Cumberland, MD



# WHITLEY COUNTY FARMERS' MARKET (WCFM)

CASE STUDIES

⑤ Corbin and Williamsburg, KY



# WCFM TIMELINE

## CASE STUDIES

2007

- UK Agricultural Extension helps launch market
- 1 location with 4 vendors.
- Runs for 2 months (June/July)

2008

- Vendors increase to 7.
- Extension receives a \$3,500 grant for Old Time Music events.
- Expand to a 3-month season (August).

2009

- Vendors increase to 15.
- Begin education workshops with vendors.
- Extension approves \$110K for permanent market structure.

# WCFM TIMELINE

## CASE STUDIES

2010

- Open under new pavilion with restrooms and ADA access.
- Season expands again (June – September).
- 18 vendors, including value-added producers and artisans for 1<sup>st</sup> time.

2011

- Season expands again (May – October).
- 28 vendors.
- Add a senior voucher program, sales reach \$15,000
- Expand vendor education with marketing and booth design workshops.

2012

- Add a mid-week market in downtown Williamsburg (July/August only).
- Sales reach \$23,000.
- Start charging \$2 per day vendor fee.

# WCFM TIMELINE

## CASE STUDIES

2013

- Become a non-profit Whitley County Farmers' Market Inc.
- Add third venue in downtown Corbin.
- 33 vendors. Average 12 per market.
- \$35/season vendor fee.



# WCFM ORGANIZATION

## CASE STUDIES



- ⦿ Initially housed under the UK Cooperative Extension.
- ⦿ After 5 years, Extension encourages Market to become independent.
- ⦿ Kentucky Center for Agriculture & Rural Development (KCARD) helps board create Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, & Regulations.

# WCFM ORGANIZATION

## CASE STUDIES



- ④ Filed Articles of Incorporation with Kentucky Secretary of State in March 2013.
- ④ Organized as a Not for Profit Cooperative.
- ④ Opened bank account at local community bank with \$312 from gate fees.

# WCFM RULES / REGULATIONS

## CASE STUDIES



- ⦿ Market is open to all farmers in Whitley County and any bordering county.
- ⦿ 7 counties total.
- ⦿ Open to value-added producers and artisans.
- ⦿ Allow sale of prepared foods.

# WCFM FUNDING

## CASE STUDIES

- ⊗ UK Cooperative Extension.
- ⊗ City of Corbin.
- ⊗ Corbin Tourism.
- ⊗ Williamsburg Tourism.
- ⊗ Community Farm Alliance.
- ⊗ Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy.
- ⊗ State of Kentucky.

# WCFM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## CASE STUDIES

- Selected as one of five Kentucky markets to participate in Community Farm Alliance Farmers' Market Training Program.
- Selected as the State Farmers' Market of the Year – Small Market Category.



# WCFM NEXT STEPS

CASE STUDIES



- ④ Hire a part-time paid market manager in 2014.
- ④ Use an EBT machine for food stamps in 2014.
- ④ \$100,000 in sales in 2014.
- ④ Launch a year-round indoor market in 2 years.
- ④ Launch an online shopping option and a local foods hub in the long term.

# METHODS OF FARMERS MARKET DIVERSIFICATION

CASE STUDIES



- ④ Partner with Downtown Businesses. (Coupons, vouchers, sales on non-market days, co-marketing events.)
- ④ Pop-up shops and events.
- ④ Mobile markets.
- ④ Restaurant/wholesale sales days or times.

# APPALACHIAN HARVEST: LOCAL FOODS HUB

CASE STUDIES



# APPALACHIAN HARVEST BACKGROUND

## CASE STUDIES

- ⦿ Tobacco farming in decline in SW Virginia
- ⦿ Appalachian Harvest formed in 2000
  - ⦿ Local foods hub
  - ⦿ Fills a gap between large national distribution models and local models such as farmers markets/roadside stands
  - ⦿ Helps tobacco farmers transition to organic vegetables

# APPALACHIAN HARVEST OPERATIONS

## CASE STUDIES

- ④ 15,000 square foot facility houses local food hub in Duffield, VA (population 91)



IMAGE CREDIT: APPALACHIAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

# APPALACHIAN HARVEST OPERATIONS

## CASE STUDIES

- Services include aggregation, packaging, distributing, branding, and marketing.



# APPALACHIAN HARVEST OPERATIONS

## CASE STUDIES

- Also provide training, technical assistance, and mentoring to growers.



IMAGE CREDIT: BREAD FOR THE WORLD

# APPALACHIAN HARVEST OPERATIONS

## CASE STUDIES

- Support more than 175 farm jobs plus jobs in processing, distribution, and sales



IMAGE CREDIT: APPALACHIAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

# APPALACHIAN HARVEST OUTCOMES

## CASE STUDIES

- Sell produce in supermarkets throughout the region under the Appalachian Harvest brand.
- Sell to White's Fresh Food (local 18-store chain) and Food City (a regional 100-store chain in SW Virginia)
- More than \$1 million sales in 2012.

Photo Credit: Bread for the World

# APPALACHIAN HARVEST FUNDING

CASE STUDIES

- Appalachian Regional Commission
- Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation (throughout the Southeast)
- Wallace Genetic Foundation (national)
- Farm Aid (national)
- Blue Moon Fund (worldwide)
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation (national)
- Virginia Environmental Endowment (state)
- Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (national)
- Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission
- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Appalachia Harvest relied on several funding programs for its start up costs. Grants continue to support about 10% of its operating budget.

# APPALACHIAN HARVEST FUNDING

CASE STUDIES

- ④ **U.S. Department of Agriculture Funding**
  - ④ Rural Business Enterprise Grants Program
    - ④ Used this USDA-Rural Development program to purchase a delivery truck
  - ④ Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program
  - ④ Farmers Market Promotion Program
    - ④ Supported activities by Appalachian Harvest's larger parent program, Appalachian Sustainable Development

Appalachia Harvest relied on several funding programs for its start up costs. Grants continue to support about 10% of its operating budget.

# APPALACHIAN HARVEST LESSONS LEARNED

CASE STUDIES

- Study the market and have a solid business plan. Don't rely on "if you build it, they will come."
- Consistent supply is a bigger challenge than demand. Work closely with suppliers to ensure quality/quantity.
- Diversify into value added products that can be sold year round.
- Market the "social" aspect of the food. Customers like that it benefits the town and region.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses. Partner with organizations that can help overcome the weaknesses.

Appalachia Harvest relied on several funding programs for its start up costs. Grants continue to support about 10% of its operating budget.

## OTHER FOOD HUB EXAMPLES

CASE STUDIES

### Pilot Mountain Pride

- 📍 **Location:** Aggregation Center in Pilot Mount, Market Store in Mount Airy, NC
- 📏 **Size:** 6,000 sq. ft.
- 🔗 **Capabilities:** Cold Storage, Packing, Grading, and Aggregation. They also provide training and marketing assistance to farmers.

Appalachia Harvest relied on several funding programs for its start up costs. Grants continue to support about 10% of its operating budget.

## OTHER FOOD HUB EXAMPLES

CASE STUDIES

### Pilot Mountain Pride

- **Markets:** Downtown (Mt. Airy) market store, online CSA, distribution to Lowes, Ingles, School Districts, and other institutions.
- **Structure:** Public/Private partnership. PMP is privately held, but was started with financial and technical assistance from foundations, universities, and governmental sources.

Appalachia Harvest relied on several funding programs for its start up costs. Grants continue to support about 10% of its operating budget.

# BURGAW INCUBATOR KITCHEN (BIK)

CASE STUDIES



IMAGE CREDIT: TOWN OF BURGAW, NC



## BIK BACKGROUND

- Burgaw is a town of 4,000 in rural SE North Carolina.
- Region looking to diversify economy, partially in response to concerns about the long-term viability of tobacco.
- Strong and diverse agricultural region with potential for more value-added products.

# BIK OPERATIONS

## CASE STUDIES

- ④ Permitted by Pender County and NC Department of Agriculture.
- ④ Managed by Town's Planning Department.
- ④ Use a renovated rail depot downtown.
- ④ Charge users between \$10 and \$20/hour.
- ④ Equipment includes gas range with 10 burners, 2 ovens, 3 grills, 2 fridges, 2 freezers, food processor, mixer, ice maker.

# BIK OPERATIONS

## CASE STUDIES

- ④ First success story is Custom Fit Meals.
  - ④ Provide healthy meals to members at Cross Fit gyms in the region (compared to Jenny Craig for CrossFit).
  - ④ Expanded to other East Coast regions.
  - ④ Moved into larger facilities after 2 years in the Burgaw Incubator Kitchen.
- ④ Also serves bakers and caterers.

# BIK OPERATIONS

CASE STUDIES



IMAGE CREDIT: TOWN OF BURGAW, NC

# DEPOT PHOTOS

CASE STUDIES



2 rail cars at the Depot. One is used for the kitchen, the other is used for cold storage and freezer.

# DEPOT PHOTOS

CASE STUDIES



IMAGE CREDITS: JENNIFER WALKER

# BIK CHALLENGES

## CASE STUDIES

- ④ Management:
  - ④ Original plan was Community College.
  - ④ Then a contractor was hired by town.
  - ④ Then a local foods hub (Feast Down East).
  - ④ Finally the town's planning department.
- ④ Management needs knowledge in food business and food regulation, these are areas in which most tenants struggle.

# BIK CHALLENGES

## CASE STUDIES

- ⦿ Low interest by local farmers – They were a key initial target for the incubator kitchen.
- ⦿ Agriculture and food business are very different and both time intensive.
- ⦿ Farmers express more interest in co-packing facilities that can process and add value to their produce with less demand on their time and resources.

## BIK LESSONS LEARNED

### CASE STUDIES

- ⑤ Management – Ideally the kitchen would be run by an on-site manager with knowledge of running a business and food regulations.
- ⑤ Scheduling – Facilities will likely have high demand outside the 9 to 5 business hours.
- ⑤ Layout - Separate and private storage areas are very important for security and safety.
- ⑤ Regulations – Management should be up-to-date on food regulation and new rules.
- ⑤ Realized they really needed a co-packing facility

## SOUTH SIDE INNOVATION CENTER

### CASE STUDIES



- A program of the Whitman School of Management at Syracuse University.
- Began in 2006. Includes 4 staff people and a team of advisors.
- Center includes a *Test Kitchen*, but when entrepreneurs are ready to start businesses, they partner with Nelson Farms, a small scale food processing center run out of Morrisville State College.

## SOUTH SIDE INNOVATION CENTER

### CASE STUDIES



- Nelson Farms' activities include processing/co-packing, product development, distribution, marketing, and sales.
- They offer consulting to farmers and food businesses, as well as other food system innovators.
- Their operation is a mix between a co-packer and a shared-use processing facility.

## CO-PACKERS



- Allows farmers to work with a facility and food processing experts to produce a private label for their farm.
- Can include contract packaging, wholesaling, private labels, and other value-added services.
- North Carolina examples: D'Vine Foods in Elizabethtown and Quinn Specialty Foods in Dunn,

# METHODS OF FARMERS MARKET DIVERSIFICATION

## CASE STUDIES



- ④ Partner with Downtown Businesses. (Coupons, vouchers, sales on non-market days, co-marketing events.)
- ④ Pop-up shops and events.
- ④ Mobile markets.
- ④ Restaurant/wholesale sales days or times.

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### CASE STUDIES



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## OTHER COMMUNITY OR SHARED KITCHENS

### CASE STUDIES

- ⑤ **Montgomery Community Kitchen (Star, NC)** Opened in Mid-November 2012; Open to farmers who want to produce value-added products for sale
- ⑤ **Anson Community Kitchen (Wadesboro, NC)** “The kitchen was established by New Ventures Business Development, Inc., in collaboration with South Piedmont Community College. Anson Community Kitchen is approximately 900-square-foot kitchen adjacent to the Ingram Community Room in the Lockhart-Taylor Center. The kitchen equipment is professionally designed to accommodate the needs of caterers/chefs and food entrepreneurs.”

<https://www.facebook.com/notes/central-park-nc/produce-value-added-products-at-anson-community-kitchen-in-wadesboro/10150118548903402>

# VALUE ADDED PRODUCT CENTERS

## CASE STUDIES

- ④ **Blue Ridge Food Ventures (Asheville, NC)**  
<https://www.advantagewest.com/food-and-natural-products>
- ④ **Piedmont Food and Processing Center (Hillsborough, NC)**  
<http://pfap.virb.com/>
- ④ **The Cookery (Durham, NC)**  
<http://www.durhamcookery.com/>

## EXPLORING OUR FOOD SYSTEM EXERCISE

EXERCISE

*“Food systems aren’t just about food; they are also about people and their relationships.”*

- ⦿ **Exercise Purpose**
  - ⦿ Identify the people and organization, places, things, and relationships that make up our local food system.
  - ⦿ Draft map or diagram...not striving for perfection or identifying every fine detail.
  - ⦿ Identify elements, relationships, and external factors (outside our control)

Quote and basic parameters of the exercise are from “Community-Based Food System Assessment and Planning” by the Virginia Cooperative Extension.

Its about relationships. Connections.

Producers

Aggregators

Processors

Distributors

Customers

# LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

EXERCISE

**Local Food Systems - A Key Tool Supporting Livability and Small Town Revitalization**



IMAGE CREDITS: APPALACHIAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (BOTTOM LEFT), WHITLEY CO. FARMERS MARKET (TOP LEFT, BOTTOM RIGHT), HOT SPRINGS FARMERS MARKET (TOP RIGHT)



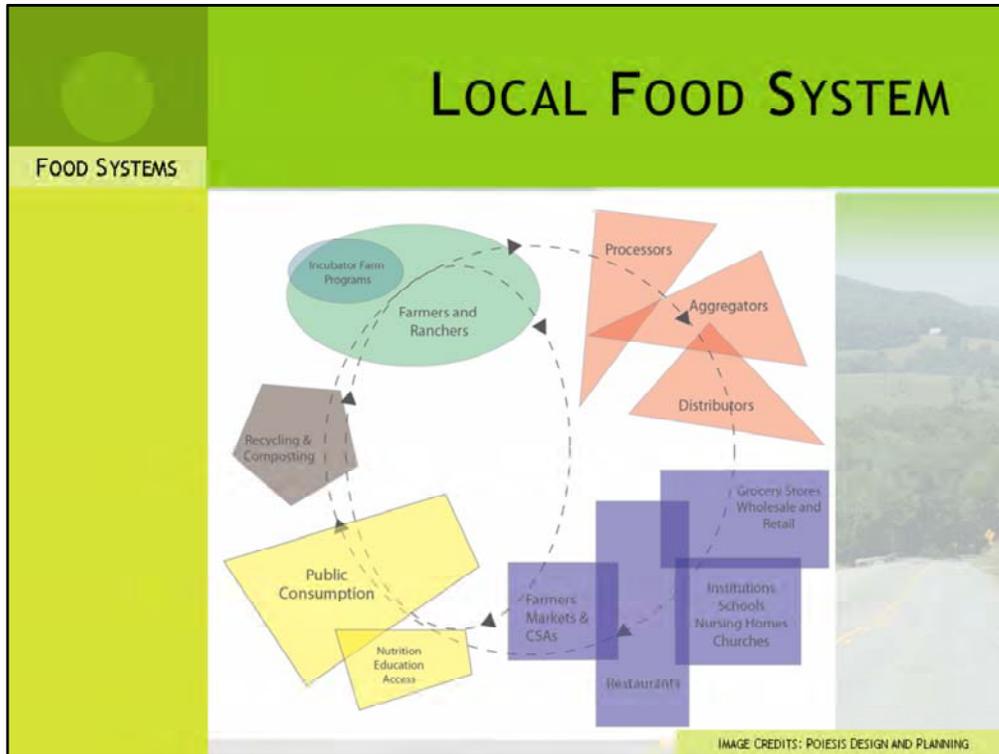
## WHAT IS A LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM?

EXERCISE

- ⦿ A food system is everything involved in taking food from the grower to the consumer.
- ⦿ Local food systems allow for local growers and consumers to interact
- ⦿ Matching demand with supply
- ⦿ Within a particular geographic boundary that consumers associate with their own community.

Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture.

[http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/marketing/food\\_systems](http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/marketing/food_systems)



Common local food system on the left.

More advance local food system on the right.

# EXPLORING OUR FOOD SYSTEM

EXERCISE

📌 **Questions to Consider:**

1. Who is growing what?
2. Who connects growers and customers?
3. Are there elements that add value to local foods
4. How strong are the relationships?
5. What are the strengths and weaknesses?

Key questions we may want to ask:

1. What are the central elements of your food system?
2. Whose producing what? What are you current growing?
3. Who are your current customers, who are potential customers?
4. What are their needs, what are they demanding?
5. Are those needs being met?
6. How do they interact currently? What works well about the market?
7. What connects with what? Is there a direction to the relationship? How strong or weak is it?

# EXPLORING OUR FOOD SYSTEM EXERCISE

## EXERCISE

### Steps

- ④ Identify a “map drafter” and a “presenter.”
- ④ Brainstorm the key assets and elements.
- ④ Write down the elements, grouping like ones.
- ④ Connect elements with lines:
  - **Solid line** indicates a strong relationship
  - **Dashed line** indicates a relationship that needs to be strengthened or is lacking.
- ④ Use question marks (?) to indicate areas of confusion or potential controversy



# DIAGRAM EXAMPLES

EXERCISE





# BRAINSTORMING EXERCISE

## EXERCISE

- ④ In small groups of 4 or 5, brainstorm answers to the question:
  - ④ ***What needs to happen to achieve our local food system goals?***
  - ④ Scribe summarizes answers on a flip chart.
  - ④ After 30 minutes, choose the top 5 to 8 ideas and write them down in 6 words or less on a large sticky note.
  - ④ These are actions that will be fleshed out in the next session.



EXERCISE

## ACTION PLANNING EXERCISE

- ④ Assign each action to a goal area.
- ④ Turn the idea into SMART action language.
- ④ For each action, describe:
  - ④ Time frame.
  - ④ Lead role and supporting cast.
  - ④ Cost and funding sources.
- ④ **100-Day Challenge:** What can be done by November to keep the momentum going?

# SMART ACTIONS MATRIX

GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_

S.M.A.R.T. Actions	Measurable	Achievable	Relevant	Time-frame	Lead Role	Supporting Cast	Resources Costs	Resource Sources	First 100 Days
<small>Actions should contribute to success of a project or SMART Goals, Objectives, Milestones, Milestones and Issues or Time Goals.</small>	<small>How are resources, progress or issues? How will we know we have achieved success?</small>	<small>Is this something we can control?</small>	<small>How does this support quality and maintenance?</small>	<small>Short, medium, long</small>	<small>Who is the primary responsible party of (SMART)?</small>	<small>Who else can help?</small>	<small>Resources or Funding needed (Estimating at the end of year)</small>	<small>Identify sources</small>	<small>What can we do better? How can we improve? What can we learn from doing in the past year?</small>
Specific Action:									
Specific Action:									
Specific Action:									
Specific Action:									

# Appendix F:

## Design Considerations

### Slideshow



**City assets treated with care, unique spaces help to create cohesive identity.**



**Bike lanes!**

Community celebration.



**WILKES COUNTY**

★ **AGRICULTURAL** ★

**FAIR**

Rotary Park - West D St.  
N. WILKESBORO

Rides ★ Games ★ Food ★ Lawnmower Racing

**SEPT. 30 thru OCT 4**

Midway by INNEPS

TRIANGLE PRINTER & PHOTO



**City support for facade  
improvements.  
Enlivened spaces.**

outdoor seating,  
objects of interest





WE SHUTTLE

STOP # 13 Wilkes Towers on Main

Boarding Zone

7:13 AM	8:13 AM	9:13 AM	10:13 AM
11:13 AM	12:13 PM	1:13 PM	2:13 PM
3:13 PM	4:13 PM	5:13 PM	6:13 PM

Attention to transportation needs of citizens.



**Places to gather.**



RESTAURANT

ROGER'S  
PALE PLACE CAFE

DGS  
PUMPS

921

Crosswalks that  
lead to interesting places.



**Benches are utilized! (with dogs)**



Care of pedestrian spaces,  
well-maintained and interesting  
landscapes.



Plenty of infrastructure ripe for rehabilitation.



**Murals add character and  
downtown identity.**



uh-oh.



**Partnerships with  
downtown businesses.**



**Planning for future improvements  
that encourage pedestrian activity.**

Community pride.

WORLDS BEST POPCORN SINCE 1932





**Adaptive reuse of historic infrastructure.**



**Public art, adding interest  
to long facades  
encourages walking.**



**Stranded pedestrians.**



**Street trees are an asset,  
but need specific and  
flexible infrastructure.**



Way-finding markers that educate  
(market) and are used!



**Wide sidewalks, benches, and good pedestrian crosswalks.**

# Appendix G:

## Workshop Photo Album



Figure 1 – Future Yadkin Valley Marketplace



Figure 2 – Current Farmers Market Pavilion



Figure 3 – Yadkin Valley Greenway Access



Figure 4 – Downtown North Wilkesboro



Figure 5 – Downtown Businesses



Figure 6 – View from Main Street Park



Figure 7 – Downtown Brushy Mountain Apple Festival Park



Figure 8 – Wilkes Art Gallery



Figure 9 – Workshop Discussion



Figure 10 – Asset Mapping



Figure 11 – Reporting Out Following Group Discussions



Figure 12 – Action Planning

# Appendix H: Funding Resources

## Local Food Systems Funding Programs – Federal/State

Cities and towns can strengthen their local food systems through a variety of federal projects and programs. The USDA and other federal agencies are committed to supporting local food systems – whether it's by working with producers, engaging with communities, financing local processing and distribution, or helping retailers develop local food connections. Below is a list of just some of the resources available. This information and more can be found on the **USDA's Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food** initiative website at [www.usda.gov/knowyourfarmer](http://www.usda.gov/knowyourfarmer).

### *USDA Agricultural Marketing Service*

#### **Farmers' Market and Local Food Promotion Program**

This new program makes \$30 million available annually to farmers markets, other direct producer-to-consumer venues, and other businesses in the local food supply chain. Funding is evenly split between two components: Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) for direct consumer-to-producer marketing opportunities, and Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) for local and regional food business enterprises. Both FMPP and LFPP have a maximum grant of \$100,000, and the LFPP applicants must have 25% matching funds or in-kind donations. By supporting development and marketing activities for farmers markets, food hubs, roadside stands, agri-tourism activities and other producer to consumer markets, the program can help small and mid-sized farmers access markets. For more information, visit <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/FMPP> (FMPP) or <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/LFPP> (LFPP).

#### **Specialty Crop Block Grant Program**

The purpose of USDA's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) is to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops, including locally grown crops. These investments strengthen rural American communities by supporting local and regional markets and improving access to fresh, high quality fruits and vegetables for millions of Americans. These grants also help growers make food safety enhancements, solve research needs, and make better informed decisions to increase profitability and sustainability. Organizations or individuals interested in the SCBGP should contact their state departments of agriculture – which administer the grant program – for more information. The 2014 Farm Bill significantly increased funding for the program. More information is available here: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/ams.fetchTemplateData.do?template=TemplateN&rightNav1=SpecialtyCropBlockGrantOProgram&topNav=&leftNav=CommodityAreas&page=SCBGP&resultType>.

#### **Organic Cost Share Programs**

The 2014 Farm Bill also gave USDA new tools and resources to support the growing \$35 billion organic industry by more than doubling previous support through the organic cost-share programs, making certification more accessible than ever for even the smallest certified producers and handlers. Organic producers and handlers can now apply directly through their State contacts to get reimbursed for up to 75 percent of the costs of organic certification, up to an annual maximum of \$750 per certificate. More information is available at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/ams.fetchTemplateData.do?template=TemplateO&leftNav=>

[NationalOrganicProgram&page=NOPCostSharing&description=Organic%20Cost%20Share%20Program&acct=nopgeninfo](http://www.nopgeninfo.com/NationalOrganicProgram&page=NOPCostSharing&description=Organic%20Cost%20Share%20Program&acct=nopgeninfo).

### **Federal State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP)**

This grant program provides matching funds to state departments of agriculture, state agricultural experiment stations, and other appropriate state agencies to assist in exploring new market opportunities for U.S. food and agricultural products, and to encourage research and innovation aimed at improving the efficiency and performance of the marketing system. FSMIP is designed to support research projects that improve the marketing, transportation, and distribution of U.S. agricultural products. FSMIP is a collaborative effort between Federal and State governments – matching funds go toward projects that bring new opportunities to farmers and ranchers. More information is available at [www.ams.usda.gov/fsmip](http://www.ams.usda.gov/fsmip).

### ***USDA Rural Development***

#### **Business and Industry Guarantee Loan Program**

The purpose of USDA's Business and Industry (B&I) Guaranteed Loan Program is to improve, develop, or finance business, industry, and employment and improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities. Through this program, USDA provides guarantees on loans made by private lenders to help new and existing businesses gain access to affordable capital by lowering the lender's risk and allowing for more favorable interest rates and terms. A recent change to the program allows projects that are physically located in urban areas if the project benefits underserved communities. The Business and Industry Loan Guarantee program is available on a rolling basis throughout the year. More information is available here: ([http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/b&i\\_gar.htm](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/b&i_gar.htm)).

#### **Value-Added Producer Grants (VAPG)**

The primary objective of USDA's Value-Added Producer Grant Program (VAPG) is to help agricultural producers enter into value-added activities related to the processing and/or marketing of bio-based value-added products. VAPG grants are available to producers or producer groups in urban and rural areas. Eligible projects include business plans to market value-added products, evaluating the feasibility of new marketing opportunities, expanding capacity for locally and regionally-grown products, or expanding processing capacity. More information is available here: [http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP\\_VAPG.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_VAPG.html).

#### **Community Facility Grants**

USDA's Community Facility grant program provides infrastructure support in rural communities under 20,000 people. Grants and loans have been used for commercial kitchens, farmers markets, food banks, cold storage facilities, food hubs and other local food infrastructure. Grants are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, and special-purpose districts, as well as non-profits and tribal governments. Grant funds can be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities and can include the purchase of equipment required for a facility's operation. More information is available here: [http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HCF\\_CF.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HCF_CF.html)

### **Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program (RBEG)**

The USDA's Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program (RBEG) funds projects that facilitate the development of small and emerging rural businesses, including acquisition or development of land, building construction, equipment, training and technical assistance, and project planning. Funding is available for local and state governments, tribes, and nonprofits in rural communities where the population does not exceed 50,000, or is next to a city or town with more than 50,000 people.

[http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP\\_rbeg.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_rbeg.html) .

### **Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG)**

USDA's Rural Business Opportunity Grant Program (RBOG) promotes economic growth in rural communities by supporting training and technical assistance for business development and to assist with regional economic development planning. A specific emphasis within RBOG is support for collaborative economic planning and development through regional food systems. RBOG grants can support regional economic planning, market development studies, business training and technical assistance, and establishing business incubators. Local governments, economic development organizations, non-profit organizations, Indian tribes, and cooperatives are eligible to apply. Funding available to rural communities where the population does not exceed 50,000, or is next to a city or town with more than 50,000 people. More information is available here: [http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/bcp\\_rbog.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/bcp_rbog.html).

### ***USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service***

#### **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**

EQIP provides cost-share and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers in planning and implementing conservation practices that improve the natural resources (e.g. soil, water, wildlife) on their agricultural land and forestland. A practice supported through EQIP is the installation of seasonal high tunnels (also known as hoop houses), which are unheated greenhouses that can extend a producer's growing season while conserving resources. In addition, EQIP can help producers transition to organic production or help those growers already certified maintain their certification. More information is available

here: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip/>

### ***USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture***

#### **Community Food Projects**

Community Food Projects are designed to increase food security in communities by bringing the whole food system together to assess strengths, establish linkages, and create systems that improve the self-reliance of community members over their food needs. Grants are intended to help eligible private nonprofit entities in need of a one-time infusion of federal assistance to establish and carryout multipurpose community food projects. More information is available

here: [http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/cfp/cfp\\_synopsis.html](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/cfp/cfp_synopsis.html).

#### **Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) Grant Program**

The 2014 Farm Bill created this program, which supports projects to increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables among people participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Applicants may propose small pilot projects (up to \$100,000 for 1 year), multi-year community-based projects (up to \$500,000 for up to 4 years), or larger-scale multi-year projects (more than \$500,000 for up to 4 years). USDA is looking to fund innovative projects that will test community based strategies for how to increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables by SNAP participants through incentives at the point of purchase. USDA will give priority to projects underserved communities and to projects that provide locally- or regionally-produced fruits and vegetables. Applications are due December 15, 2014. More information is available here: [http://www.nifa.usda.gov/newsroom/news/2014news/09291\\_FINI.html](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/newsroom/news/2014news/09291_FINI.html).

### **Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Development Program**

This program provides grants to organizations that train, educate, and provide outreach and technical assistance to new and beginning farmers on production, marketing, business management, legal strategies and other topics critical to running a successful operation. The Agriculture Act of 2014 provided an additional \$20 million per year for 2014 through 2018. The reasons for the renewed interest in beginning farmer and rancher programs are: the rising average age of U.S. farmers, the 8% projected decrease in the number of farmers and ranchers between 2008 and 2018, and the growing recognition that new programs are needed to address the needs of the next generation of beginning farmers and ranchers. More information is available here: <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/beginningfarmersandranchers.cfm>.

### **Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program**

SBIR grants help small businesses conduct high quality research related to important scientific problems and opportunities in agriculture. Research is intended to increase the commercialization of innovations and foster participation by women-owned and socially and economically disadvantaged small businesses in technological innovation. Grants can be applied towards many areas or research, including projects that manage the movement of products throughout a supply chain, develop processes that save energy, and capture and relay real-time market data. More information is available here: <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/sbir.cfm>.

### **Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)**

The mission of the SARE program is to advance sustainable innovations in American agriculture. SARE is uniquely grassroots, administered by four regional offices guided by administrative councils of local experts. Non-profit organizations, researchers, and individuals producers are eligible to apply. More information is available here: <http://www.sare.org/>.

### **Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)**

AFRI is charged with funding research, education, and extension grants and integrated research, extension, and education grants that address key problems of National, regional, and multi-state importance in sustaining all components of agriculture, including farm efficiency and profitability, ranching, renewable energy, forestry (both urban and agroforestry), aquaculture, rural communities and entrepreneurship, human nutrition, food safety, biotechnology, and conventional breeding. Providing this support requires that AFRI advances fundamental sciences in support of agriculture and coordinates opportunities to build on these discoveries. This will necessitate efforts in education and extension that deliver science-based knowledge to people, allowing them to make informed practical decisions. More information is available here: <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/afri/afri.html>.

### *USDA Farm Service Agency*

#### **Microloan Program**

The Farm Service Agency's (FSA) microloan program is available to agricultural producers in rural and urban areas and provides loans of up to \$35,000 on a rolling basis. Streamlined paperwork and flexible eligibility requirements accommodate new farmers and small farm operations. Larger loans are also available through FSA. Contact your local FSA office at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) for more information.

#### **Farm Storage Facility Loans**

These loans finance new construction or refurbishment of farm storage facilities. This includes cold storage and cooling, circulating, and monitoring equipment, which can be particularly important to those growing for local fresh markets. Interested producers should contact their local FSA office at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

### *USDA Food and Nutrition Service*

#### **Farm to School Grants**

Farm to School Grants are available to help schools source more food locally, and to provide complementary educational activities to students that emphasize food, farming, and nutrition. Schools, state and local agencies, tribal organizations, producers and producer groups, and non-profits are eligible to apply. Planning, implementation, and support service grants are available from \$20,000 to \$100,000. More information and resources are available at [www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school](http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school).

#### **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**

As of 2014, more than 2,500 farmers' markets nationwide are set up to accept SNAP's electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards. Benefits can be used to purchase many of the foods sold at farmers' markets, including fruits and vegetables, dairy products, breads and cereals, and meat and poultry. They can also purchase seeds and plants which produce food for the household to eat. More information about SNAP benefits at farmers' markets is available from USDA here: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/ebt/learn-about-snap-benefits-farmers-markets>.

#### **WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)**

This program provides coupons for local food purchases to women, infants, and children that are eligible for WIC benefits. The coupons can be used to purchase eligible foods from farmers, farmers' markets, and roadside stands. Only farmers, farmers' markets, and roadside stands authorized by the State agency may accept and redeem FMNP coupons. Individuals who exclusively sell produce grown by someone else such as wholesale distributors, cannot be authorized to participate in the FMNP. For more information, visit: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fmnp/overview>.

#### **Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program**

This program, similar to FMNP, awards grants to States, United States Territories, and federally-recognized Indian tribal governments to provide low-income seniors with coupons that can be

exchanged for eligible foods (fruits, vegetables, honey, and fresh-cut herbs) at farmers' markets, roadside stands, and community supported agriculture programs. For more information, visit: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfmnp/overview>.

## Funding Programs in Support of Other Livable Community Projects

The programs listed below are popular resources that support a variety of livability projects. The publication “Federal Resources for Sustainable Rural Communities” is a useful guide from the HUD-DOT-EPA Partnerships for Sustainable Communities that describes several additional resources: [http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/SupportDocuments/RD\\_FedResourcesSustainableCommunities.pdf](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/SupportDocuments/RD_FedResourcesSustainableCommunities.pdf)

### National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grants

The National Endowment for the Arts’ Our Town grant program is the agency's primary creative placemaking grants program. Projects may include arts engagement, cultural planning, and design activities. The grants range from \$25,000 to \$200,000. Our Town invests in creative and innovative projects in which communities, together with their arts and design organizations and artists, seek to:

- Improve their quality of life;
- Encourage greater creative activity;
- Foster stronger community identity and a sense of place; and
- Revitalize economic development.

More information: <http://arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town/grant-program-description>.

### EPA Brownfields Programs

- **Area-wide Planning Pilot Program:** Brownfields Area-Wide Planning is an EPA grant program which provides funding to recipients to conduct research, technical assistance and training that will result in an area-wide plan and implementation strategy for key brownfield sites, which will help inform the assessment, cleanup and reuse of brownfields properties and promote area-wide revitalization. Funding is directed to specific areas, such as a neighborhood, downtown district, local commercial corridor, or city block, affected by a single large or multiple brownfield sites. More information: [http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/areawide\\_grants.htm](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/areawide_grants.htm).
- **Assessment Grants:** Assessment grants provide funding for a grant recipient to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct planning and community involvement related to brownfields sites. Eligible entities may apply for \$200,000 and up to \$350,000 with a waiver. More information: [http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/assessment\\_grants.htm](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/assessment_grants.htm).
- **Revolving Loan Fund Grants:** Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) grants provide funding for a grant recipient to capitalize a revolving loan fund and to provide subgrants to carry out cleanup activities at brownfield sites. More information is available here: <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/rflst.htm>.
- **Cleanup Grants:** Cleanup grants provide funding for a grant recipient to carry out cleanup activities at brownfield sites. An eligible entity may apply for up to \$200,000 per site. More information is available here: [http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/cleanup\\_grants.htm](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/cleanup_grants.htm).

### **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)**

The Federal Highway Administration’s TAP provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail program projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways. In rural areas, these funds are typically allocated by state departments of transportation. For more information,

visit: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guidetap.cfm>. For more information on Safe Routes to School projects and programs (which are eligible for funding under TAP),

visit: [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/safe\\_routes\\_to\\_school/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/safe_routes_to_school/).

# Appendix I: Additional References and Resources

## Local Food Systems Resources – National

### *USDA Know Your Farmer Know Your Food*

The **Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food** initiative is a USDA-wide effort to carry out the Department's commitment to strengthening local and regional food systems. The Know Your Farmer Know Your Food website provides a "one stop shop" for resources, from grants and loans to toolkits and guidebooks, from agencies and offices across the Department. The website also contains the Know Your Farmer Know Your Food Compass Map, which shows efforts supported by USDA and other federal partners as well as related information on local and regional food systems.

- <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/knowyourfarmer?navid=KNOWYOURFARMER>

### *Farmers' Markets General*

#### **USDA National Farmers Market Directory**

Provides members of the public with convenient access to information about U.S. farmers' market locations, directions, operating times, product offerings, and accepted forms of payment.

- <http://search.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/>

#### **USDA's "National Farmers Market Manager Survey"**

Nearly 1,300 farmers' market managers responded to this national survey conducted in 2006.

- <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5077203&acct=wdmgeninfo>

#### **USDA's "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) at Farmers Markets: A How-To Handbook"**

This 2010 report from USDA describes how farmers' markets can accept SNAP benefits. SNAP is the federal government's nutritional assistance program. It was formerly known as food stamps.

- <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5085298&acct=wdmgeninfo>

#### **Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project's "Sharing the Harvest: A Guide to Bridging the Divide between Farmers Markets and Low-Income Shoppers."**

This 2012 report from ASAP describes strategies for bridging the divide between farmers' markets and low income shoppers.

- <http://asapconnections.org/downloads/asap-farmers-market-access-guide.pdf>

#### **Connecting Local Farmers with USDA Farmers Market Nutrition Program Participants**

This 2010 report from USDA describes how providing transportation can help low-income individuals overcome barriers to accessing farmers markets.

- <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5083319&acct=wdmgeninfo>

### *Farmers' Markets Management*

#### **Oregon State University's "Understanding the Link Between Farmers' Market Size and Management Organization."**

This report, supported by the USDA, explored internal management issues of farmers' markets and describes tools that can help make farmers' markets sustainable.

- <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5071342>

#### **Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project's "25 Best Practices for Farmers' Markets."**

This report describes 25 best practices in the areas of management, regulations, risk management, food safety, improving vendor sales, and marketing/outreach/promotion/social media.

- <http://asapconnections.org/downloads/market-makeover-25-best-practices-for-farmers-markets.pdf>

### *Food Hubs*

#### **USDA's "Moving Food Along the Value Chain: Innovations in Regional Food Distribution"**

This 2012 report from USDA examined eight case studies of food value chains and provides some practical lessons about the challenges they face and lessons learned.

- <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=stelprdc5097504&acct=wdmgeninfo>

#### **USDA's "Regional Food Hub Resource Guide"**

USDA released this primer on food hubs and the resources available to support them in 2012.

- <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5097957>

#### **Michigan State University's and Wallace Center's "State of the Food Hub – 2013 National Survey Results"**

This survey of more than 100 food hubs across the United States quantifies the scope, scale, and impacts of local food hubs.

- <http://www.wallacecenter.org/resourcelibrary/state-of-the-food-hub-2013-national-survey-results>

#### **Wholesome Wave's "Food Hub Business Assessment Toolkit"**

The toolkit provides tools to assess a food hub businesses' readiness for investment.

- <http://www.wholesomewave.org/our-initiatives/healthy-food-commerce-investments/foodhubbusinessassessmenttoolkit/>

### *Community Kitchens*

#### **Culinary Incubator's Community Kitchen Database**

This site provides a description and interactive map of community kitchens across the United States.

- <http://www.culinaryincubator.com/maps.php>

### *Community Gardens*

#### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Community Gardens Website**

- <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/healthtopics/healthyfood/community.htm>

#### **Vermont Community Garden Network's Garden Organizer Toolkit**

- <http://vcgn.org/garden-organizer-toolkit/>

### *Farm to School*

#### **USDA's Farm to School Website**

USDA provides information on its website about Farm to School programs and how to get one started in your community.

- <http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmentoschool/implementing-farm-school-activities>
- <http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmentoschool/farm-school>

### *Land Use*

#### **American Planning Association's (APA's) "Zoning for Urban Agriculture"**

The APA in 2010 prepared an article on urban agriculture zoning in its March 2010 *Zoning Practice*.

- <https://www.planning.org/zoningpractice/2010/pdf/mar.pdf>

#### **American Planning Association's (APA's) "Zoning for Public Markets and Street Vendors"**

The APA also prepared an article on zoning for public markets in its February 2009 *Zoning Practice*.

- <https://www.planning.org/zoningpractice/2009/pdf/feb.pdf>

### *Other*

#### **Food Value Chains: Creating Shared Value to Enhance Marketing Success**

The report provides an overview of how food value chains are initiated, structured, how they function and the business advantages and challenges of this approach.

- <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5107776>

#### **Wholesale Markets and Facility Design**

Provides technical assistance and support to customers regarding the construction of new structures or the remodeling of existing ones. These facilities include wholesale market, farmers markets, public markets, and food hubs.

- <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/ams.fetchTemplateData.do?template=TemplateN&navID=WholesaleandFarmersMarkets&leftNav=WholesaleandFarmersMarkets&page=WFMWholesaleMarketsandFacilityDesign&description=Wholesale%20Markets%20and%20Facility%20Design&acct=facdsn>

### **Organic Agriculture**

USDA is committed to helping organic agriculture grow and thrive. This is a one-stop shop with information about organic certification and USDA-wide support for organic agriculture.

- [www.usda.gov/organic](http://www.usda.gov/organic)

### **Fruit and Vegetable Audits**

Audits for Good Agricultural Practices and Good Handling Practices can help producers access commercial markets by verifying that fruits and vegetables are produced, packed, handled, and stored in the safest manner possible to minimize risks of microbial food safety hazards.

- <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/ams.fetchTemplateData.do?template=TemplateN&page=GAPGHPAuditVerificationProgram>

### **USDA Certification for Small and Very Small Producers of Grass-fed Beef and Lamb**

Allows small and very small-scale producers to certify that their animals meet the requirements of the grass-fed marketing claim standard, helping them differentiate themselves and communicate value to their customers.

- <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/GrassFedSVS>

### **Local and Regional Market News**

Provides reports on local and regional food outlets, providing producers and consumers with instant access to prices from farmers markets, farmers' auctions, food hubs, and direct-to-consumer sales, providing support to even the smallest farmers and producers.

- Link coming soon

## **Local Food Systems Resources – State of North Carolina**

### **North Carolina Cooperative Extension Local Food System Resources**

The North Carolina Cooperative Extension has prepared several resources of interest to farmers market managers, vendors, and residents interested in strengthening the local food system. Links are provided by topic:

- Farmers Markets: <http://localfood.ces.ncsu.edu/local-food-farmers-markets/>
- Local Food Production: <http://localfood.ces.ncsu.edu/local-food-production/>
- Distribution and Aggregation: <http://localfood.ces.ncsu.edu/local-food-distribution-aggregation/>
- Processing: <http://localfood.ces.ncsu.edu/local-food-processing/>
- Marketing: <http://localfood.ces.ncsu.edu/local-food-marketing-markets/>

- Community Gardens: <http://nccommunitygardens.ces.ncsu.edu/>
- Farm to School: <http://localfood.ces.ncsu.edu/local-food-farm-to-school/>
- Food access: <http://localfood.ces.ncsu.edu/food-access-food-security/>
- Community Economic Development: <http://localfood.ces.ncsu.edu/local-food-economic-development/>

### **North Carolina Farm Fresh**

Provides information on all North Carolina farmers markets, roadside stands, and pick-your-own farms.

- <http://www.ncfarmfresh.com/>

### **North Carolina Farm to School Program**

This site describes North Carolina's Farm to School program.

- <http://www.ncfarmtoschool.com/index.htm>

### **ASAP Local Food Guide**

The Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project prepares an annual guide to farms, farmers markets, wineries, grocers, restaurants, CSAs, and other local agriculture resources in the Southern Appalachian Mountains.

- <http://asapconnections.org/find-local-food/local-food-guide/>