



# New River Valley Livability Initiative

Livable Regions and Communities in  
Appalachia

Thursday, July 12

Kingsport, TN



# NRV LIVABILITY INITIATIVE

## What we're trying to do...

- **9 topic areas**
- **today, trends, future vision**
- **regional *and* local approach**
- **innovative outreach**
- **scenarios - tradeoffs**
- **preferred regional plan**
- **build capacity to implement**



# Public

## Why...How? Kick-Off Summit

### Why Participate?

The planning process ne  
own way. We lead differ  
backgrounds and differ





# Kick Off- Summit

## Understanding Challenges...

- Aging population
- Rising energy costs
- Long commuting distance, high cost
- Changing economy, lack of job opportunities
- Loss of industry and manufacturing
- Balancing growth with rural character
- Lack of internet access

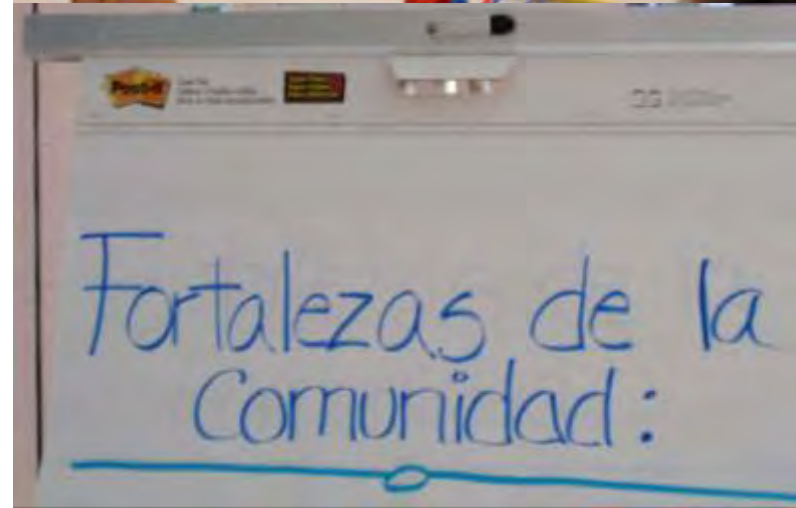
## Building on Strengths...

- Cultural Assets
- Natural Resources, Scenic Beauty



# SECONDARY SURVEY EFFORT

- Focus Groups
- Online Survey
- Spanish-language
- Accessibility for Lower Income & Lower-Literacy Groups
  - NRCA
  - Head Start Families
  - Literacy Volunteers
  - Emergency Services



# BUILDING HOME- STORY CIRCLES

- **Harder to reach groups**
  - **Women's Shelter**
  - **Very Low Income**
- **Self-Identified communities**
  - **Wake Forest**
- **Service Groups or Agencies**
  - **RSVP**
  - **Agency on Aging**
  - **Friendship Cafe**



# Working Group Process



- **Housing**
- **Arts and Culture**
- **Economic Development**
- **Natural Resources**
- **Energy**
- **Transportation**
- **Community Health**





# BUILT Game



Re-Imagining  
Expertise

# BUILT Game: Individual Perspective

**FLEA  
MARKET**

**PHARMACY**

**LIBRARY**

**SLAUGHTER  
HOUSE**

**LIVE MUSIC  
VENUE**

*Carol D.*

**ASSISTED  
LIVING**

# BUILT Game

- Individual Priorities
- ↓
- Collaboration –  
*Neighborhood/Town*



- ➔
- Integration –  
*Town/County*

# Lessons Learned

- Adaptive management- Don't be afraid to change course and try something new.
- Meaningful engagement- Quality not quantity, it takes time to build trust.
- Create opportunities for citizens to talk with each other.
- Good partners are critical to opening doors to hard to reach groups.
- Don't wait too long to think through a qualitative data management system!

[www.nrvlivability.org](http://www.nrvlivability.org)



Kim Thurlow, Project Coordinator  
New River Valley Planning District Commission  
[cdavis@nrvpdc.org](mailto:cdavis@nrvpdc.org)  
540-639-9313 ext. 202