Sustainable Communities in Appalachia

Technical Assistance Program

Action Plan for Sustainable Williamson Initiative

January 31, 2013

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[Inside Cover]

About This Document

This report is the result of technical assistance provided to Williamson, WV, from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). EPA contractor Renaissance Planning Group provided support for the efforts. For more information contact:

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1. Community Story

Williamson is in southwestern West Virginia on the Tug River. The Norfolk and Western Railway, now known as Norfolk Southern, extended its rail lines into Williamson in 1892. Economic development ensued and modern Williamson began to take shape. The railroad linked southern West Virginia with the Ohio River to the west and the Atlantic on the east. Vast deposits of coal and fields of timber became accessible to the rest of the country and Williamson's economy grew along with these industries. Williamson's rail yard became the largest between Portsmouth, Ohio and Bluefield, West Virginia. It remains a key component of Norfolk Southern's system to this day.

Williamson grew rapidly following the arrival of the railroad. The population grew from 27 in 1893 to nearly 10,000 in 1925. In addition to the coal and timber industries, Williamson was, and remains, an important center for commerce for residents of Mingo County. However, the population has slowly declined and stands at approximately 3,100 people.

A major event in Williamson's recent history is the 1977 Tug River flood. Now the river is surrounded by high flood walls that protect Williamson, but in 1977 flood waters poured into downtown damaging several businesses that never reopened. Another flood hit in 1984, further damaging the City. The region's economic base has also suffered from a decline in coal mining jobs resulting from a combination of factors from legal to market based.

The City's economic difficulties have been accompanied by health problems. Williamson's diabetes and obesity rates exceed national averages. High poverty rates compound the problem, as many people lack access to healthy food and health care.

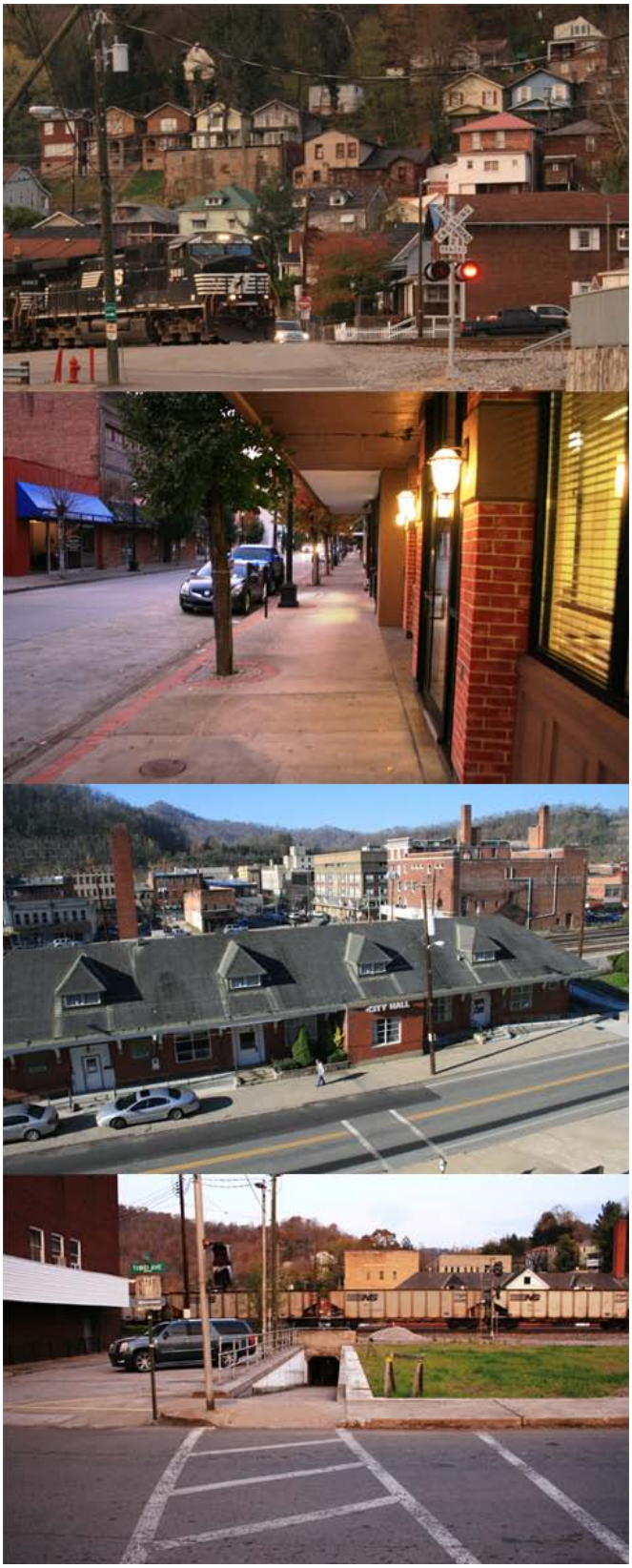

Figure 1 – Miscellaneous context photos of Williamson.

Concern over the City's economic and health problems led citizens to form Sustainable Williamson [1] – a joint initiative of the City of Williamson and the Williamson Redevelopment Authority. Today this group is working to diversify the region's job market, upgrade worker skills for new job opportunities, and improve access to healthy food and recreation. Sustainable Williamson's mission is to "re-energize the local economy be connecting health, wealth, and innovation and to attract past, present, and future generations to Williamson."[2]

Under the direction of the Williamson Redevelopment Authority, an arm of the City government, Sustainable Williamson has experienced early successes. The group started a community garden on Williamson's east side, helped install thermal hot water on the roof of the City's fire station, and launched a farmers market, among its many achievements. The Williamson Redevelopment Authority has also secured a Federally Qualified Health Clinic (FQFC) planning grant to develop the Williamson Health and Wellness Clinic. They are working to secure funding for the Smart Office, which will provide office space for Sustainable Williamson and host job training opportunities in energy efficiency and renewable energy installation. They are also initiating a crowd funding fundraising campaign, which will go toward retaining a paid staff member to oversee the implementation of specific projects and planning efforts as well as initiate a comprehensive implementation strategy for sustainable development across the central Appalachian region

In addition to the local initiatives of Sustainable Williamson, WRA has begun the initial development of the Central Appalachian Sustainable Economies or CASE network with

Figure 2 –Photos from the community tour conducted the morning of November 9, 2012.

[1] City of Williamson, Sustainable Williamson Projects Website: http://cityofwilliamson.org/Projects.html; Sustainable Williamson FaceBook Site: https://www.facebook.com/SustainableWilliamsonWV
[2] Williamson Redevelopment Authority. "Letter of Interest – Livable Communities in Appalachia." 2012.

the end goal of positioning Williamson as a regional training hub for economic diversification through sustainable development. CASE is an interactive regional network of innovators cultivating new ideas and resources in Central Appalachia to grow healthy communities. Appendix C contains more information about the Case network.

2. The Workshop

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) provided the Williamson Redevelopment Authority with technical assistance to help the City plan its sustainability initiatives. A key component of the technical assistance was a workshop led by EPA staff and a consulting team on November 8 and 9, 2012. The workshop brought community stakeholders together with staff and officials from the City of Williamson, the Williamson Redevelopment Authority, and Sustainable Williamson. Workshop participants focused on identifying obstacles and opportunities for moving forward with a plan for making Williamson a more sustainable community, and in turn to serve as a regional hub for sustainable economic diversification for central Appalachia as a whole.

The workshop agenda included two work sessions and a public session on the first day. The work sessions brought together stakeholders to identify and map community strengths and weaknesses, and to identify the key decision makers and stakeholders that directly and indirectly support Sustainable Williamson. The second day included an additional work session and a tour of several key sites, including City Hall, the Smart office, the community garden, and the fire station. Each of the sessions had high attendance and quality participation. Among those in attendance were representatives of local businesses, churches, non-profit organizations, City department, and state agencies. A complete list of attendees is available in Appendix B.

Figure 3 - Photos from the workshop sessions.

The workshop was just one component, albeit a large one, of the larger Williamson technical assistance effort. Figure 4 lays out the technical assistance steps for arriving at this plan.

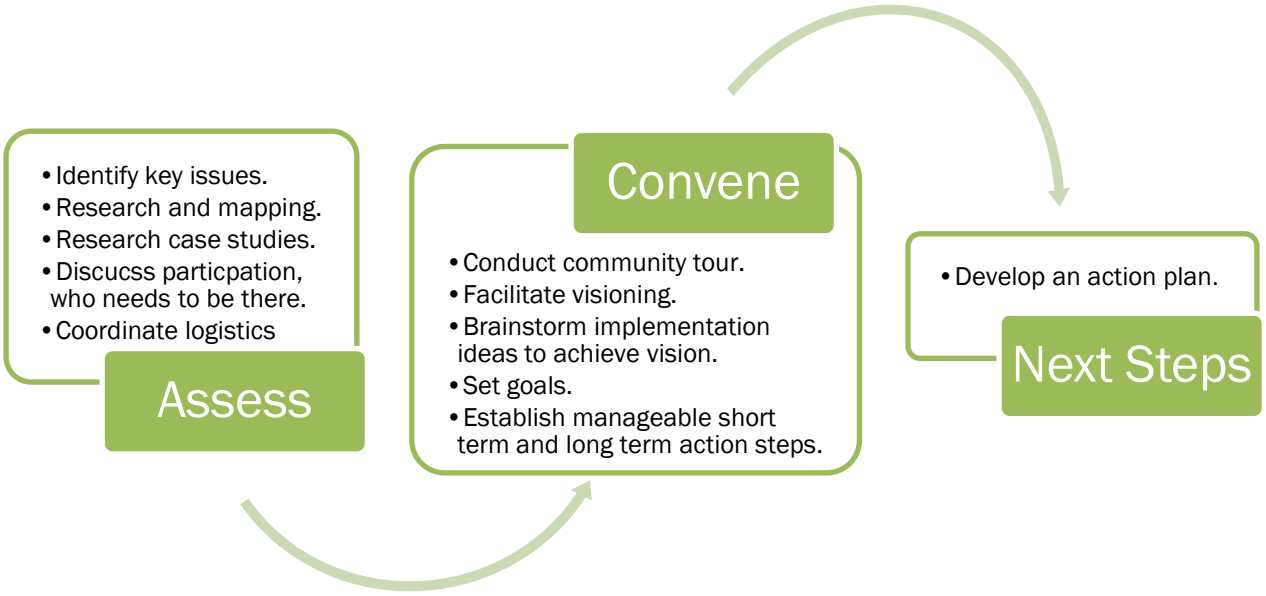

Figure 4 - Technical Assistance Process Diagram

3. Community Assessment – Issues and Opportunities

A key step in developing a community sustainability plan is to take stock of where the community stands. Therefore, workshop participants focused on identifying strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities during the first day of the event. They also established an organization chart of the various agencies and organizations that will be involved in implementing a sustainability plan. Foremost among these is the Williamson Redevelopment Authority, which created Sustainable Williamson.

In addition to documenting strengths and weaknesses, workshop participants reviewed the goal areas established by Sustainable Williamson. The community is already engaged in several program and strategies within each goal area. Reflecting CASE, the goal areas are:

- Sustainable Tourism.
- Food Systems.
- Healthy Communities.
- Energy Optimization.
- Integrative Education.
- Sustainable Construction.

Williamson Strengths/Weaknesses Group Exercise

An important part of the workshop entailed reviewing these six goal areas and comparing them with community strengths and weaknesses identified by workshop participants. During the first day of the workshop, the consulting team led an exercise in which participants

worked together in small groups to identify Williamson's top strengths and weaknesses. The results of this exercise are listed below.

Top Strengths

- Tourism, recreation, and culture potential (ATV trail, Hatfield/McCoy history, railroad history, beautiful scenery, and music).
- The community has good bones – building stock, public service infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, police/fire), and downtown form.
- Core group of people and community officials that care deeply about the City's future and have a vision.
- Closely knit community.

Top Weaknesses

- Lack of economic diversification, loss of jobs.
- Poor health among residents.
- Lack of quality housing.
- Lack of a tourism and recreation plan for the region.
- Lack of financial resources to implement projects and programs.
- Low motivation and hope among residents.
- Outmigration, especially of young people.
- Lack of county wide and regional cooperation.

Relation between Strengths/Weaknesses and Goal Areas

A more exhaustive list of strengths and weaknesses developed by each group is organized in the table below by the six goal areas of Sustainable Williamson. The table shows how the strengths play into Sustainable Williamson's goals, and where the community's weaknesses are being addressed. The weaknesses may also present obstacles towards Sustainable Williamson achieving its goals, and therefore are issues the group should consider addressing.

Strengths	Goal Area	Weaknesses
• Potential of ATV trails, Hatfield-McCoy history, and railroad history. • Natural beauty. • Sporting facilities. • Hospitality and friendliness.	Sustainable Tourism	• Poor signage, resulting in low awareness of local attractions. • Lack of a tourism and recreation plan for the region. • Lack of amenities, such as hotel rooms and restaurants. • Litter.
• Community garden. • Farmer's market.	Food Systems	• Poor health. • Topography constraints.
• Hospital. • Community garden and farmer's market. • Sporting facilities. • Recreational assets. • Intergenerational living.	Healthy Communities	• High rate of substance abuse. • Poor health. • Low educational attainment. • Cycle of poverty. • Low morale, motivation, and hope among residents.

Strengths	Goal Area	Weaknesses
• Strong religious/spiritual community. • Diversity. • Family friendly. • Closely knit community.		• Poor accessibility for people with disabilities and pedestrians.
• Innovation around renewable and alternative energy. • Potential for coal to liquids. • Willingness to diversify the economy.	Energy Optimization	• Lack of quality housing. • Inefficient buildings (broken windows, poor insulation, etc). • Lack of financial resources.
• Community college. • Good labor pool with strong work ethic. • SMART Office.	Integrative Education	• Low educational attainment. • Outmigration of youth. • Low tolerance of new ideas and change.
• Good bones – building stock, infrastructure, and downtown. • Repurposed mining lands.	Sustainable Construction	• Condition of infrastructure. • Low tolerance of new ideas and change.

Williamson is fortunate to have a strong organization in place to address many of these pressing issues. The next section presents a manageable roadmap forward to align the goals areas and programs of Sustainable Williamson with the community's top needs.

Assets and Opportunities

In addition to the strengths and weaknesses exercise, the workshop participants conducted an asset and opportunities mapping exercise. Basemaps of the community were provided and participants spent time identifying the assets, such as places or elements of the community that are sources of pride, are highly valued or desirable. They also identified areas of opportunity for future investment or community improvement. Large versions of the maps, as well as a map of the Hatfield McCoy Trail System are available in Appendix A. On the maps, the identified assets are shown in blue squares. Opportunity areas are identified by the green circles. A brief description of the opportunities is provided below. The numbers correspond to the numbers on the maps.

Opportunities to Improve

1. West End general improvement opportunities include new homes and a better mix everyday retail establishments, especially a grocery store.
2. An improved pedestrian and bicycle connection is needed between downtown and the West End. 3rd Avenue is the obvious location, although right-of-way and topographic conditions constrain the opportunities.
3. Harvey Street performs a number of important functions, including gateway, pedestrian street and, vehicle throughway. There is an opportunity to improve this roadway from 1st Avenue to 4th Avenue with sidewalk maintenance and/or widening, landscape, and gateway and directional signage.

4. There is an opportunity for future retail and business downtown. There are a number of successful businesses, but some empty storefronts as well.
5. The round house and rail yard are an asset as historical elements of the community. There is an opportunity to create a parking and viewing area there. The parking component can be shared parking for those who want to use the flood wall pedestrian facility.
6. The airport represents opportunity for new development and redevelopment.
7. Sidewalk improvements are needed at the east end of town in the neighborhood and along 4th Avenue.
8. The Sycamore Campground is an opportunity to attract more visitors to the area and can be used by local residents.
9. The utility of the pedestrian facility on the flood wall would be enhanced by adding lights to the facility and providing additional parking.
10. There is potential for the physical and programmatic expansion of Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College.
11. There is the opportunity to enhance and better screen the wastewater treatment plant from the street and the flood wall pedestrian facility.
12. The Community Center tennis courts and ball field area need rehabilitation.
13. Flowers bakery is now closed, presenting an opportunity for repurposing the building.
14. The field house is an underutilized asset in the community. The building is in need of rehabilitation.
15. The methadone clinic is not an asset for the neighborhood.
16. The buildings and grounds in the Victoria Courts residential complex are in need of improvement.
17. There is the opportunity for a cultural/historical mural on the water tank.
18. The sidewalks on 3rd Avenue are in poor condition and need improvement.
19. There is an opportunity for creating a walking bridge connection across the river to connect neighborhoods and uses on the other side to the West End.
20. There is a pedestrian crossing needed at railroad tracks.
21. This area is a great location for a riverside community park, including parking and access to the flood wall trail and location for a boat launch.
22. A river clean up is needed to remove waste, such as tires, out of the river. An annual clean up with community participation will go a long way in managing waste in the river.
23. The Sycamore Inn has an empty restaurant, presenting an opportunity for a new use. This is a specific opportunity to have additional restaurant space for visitors and community members.
24. The historic district walking tour pamphlet needs updating and a tourist-oriented map of Williamson needs to be created.
25. Brick Street Artifacts is an example of a unique business that could benefit from a higher exposure in the community and to visitors.
26. The library is perceived to be too small and not accessible. There is the potential for having another space downtown house the library.
27. There is the need for more retail on 3rd Avenue. There are a number of legal, medical uses, other professional opportunities.
28. There is a bad smell of sewer gas on street in areas of downtown and in some of the buildings.

29. There is a need to improve the safety, lighting and quality of the Harvey Street underpass and the other pedestrian tunnels in downtown.
30. The Cinderella Theater has the potential to expand its utility beyond its current use of bingo.
31. The demolished Daily News building would be a great location for a park or other community use.
32. There is potential for a welcome mural on the Rt 52 wall in this location.
33. The high school has been closed and sold. The site should be repurposed with a use that will improve the job base and available services in the community.
34. The Strosneider building could be restored and repurposed.
35. There are great park opportunities by the old high school
36. There is the need to renovate old buildings like the synagogue.

4. Next Steps Plan

There are several actions that Sustainable Williamson should consider taking in order to address the community's most pressing issues. This plan lays out four goals and accompanying actions that will help Sustainable Williamson achieve even greater success and community buy-in. These four goals were developed through conversations among City leaders, Sustainable Williamson, and the consulting team.

Goals and Actions

GOAL 1: Adopt a community-wide sustainability plan incorporating Sustainable Williamson and other quality of life and community enhancements.

Action 1.1. – Compile, organize and refine the documents already in existence to put together a Sustainable Williamson Community Plan.

- There could not be a more important thing to do than put a plan together and adopt it at this point in Sustainable Williamson's development. There are two compelling reasons for this. One is to give the community as a whole the opportunity to participate in identifying, vetting and consensus building around a set of projects and programs. The second is that potential funding partners from outside the community need and want to know that they are participating in something official with community support, something that has momentum, and something that has understandable benefits that match their goals as a funding agency. The plan can readily demonstrate all of those things. The document should be a professional quality document, which takes advantage of the many photographs available of the community and the people and projects that comprise the Sustainable Williamson initiative.
- The planning process should identify projects and priorities for funding and community investment. Financing from the **Indiegogo** crowd funding campaign (see action 3.4 below) is needed to support plan development and implementation, and to build the capacity of the Sustainable Williamson as well as the regional CASE network.

- To support the plan development there are a number of documents already in existence, the key one being the Sustainable Williamson white paper [3]. There is also the Central Appalachian Sustainable Economies 2011 Convening Report (CASE) [4], and a ARC supported Local Energy Action Plan [5] (2011) These three documents, along with this report and the outcome of the workshops associated with this technical assistance, provide most of the base content that would be needed for a plan. The following is a suggested outline of sections with source content in parentheses.

  - *Executive Summary* (white paper) – Describe the content of the plan. Update content in white paper to be current.
  - *Challenges, Assets, and Opportunities* (white paper, CASE, this report) – This section should profile the community and make the case for needs. The Sustainable Williamson topic areas should be highlighted here. Assets and opportunities should be mapped. Other thematic maps, such as a bicycle and pedestrian facilities plan, should be considered for inclusion.
  - *Strategic Partnerships* (white paper, CASE) – The players involved should be profiled here, including perhaps an organizational chart showing the relationships. Key organizations should be given a paragraph or two so the reader understands their goals and relationship to the overall initiative.
  - *Completed Projects* (white paper) - There is significant content already in existence. This is very important section for potential future funding partners.
  - Community Involvement (new content) – Summarize what has happened. Document efforts to adopt the Sustainable Williamson Community Plan.
  - *Strategies and Projects* (white paper, CASE, this report) – This is listing and description of all projects the City and the WRA are involved with in some way. The information should include the lead agency, partners and a general timeframe. Specifics on funding and schedule should be left to the project listing appendix. These projects should be mapped where possible.
  - *Implementation* (new content) – Provide a brief section on how the City and WRA have and will continue to implement projects. Think of potential future funding partners as the audience.
  - *Project Listing* (list of WRA initiatives) – Maintain an up-to-date listing of projects including status. This listing should be very brief (current format appropriate) and be referenced as an appendix to the Plan. WRA has a draft workplan document that could serve as a starting point for this appendix.

Action 1.2. – Conduct a series of community briefings and open house meetings to present existing, identify new, vet and prioritize projects and programs that are to be included in the Sustainable Williams Community Plan. Where appropriate, meetings should also include participants in the CASE network.

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[3] SW White Paper http://www.scribd.com/doc/124393351/Sustainable-Williamson-White-Paper
[4] CASE 2011 Convening Report: http://www.thegreenaccelerator.com/file_cabinet/download/0x000076d28
[5] LEAP 2011, https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B6Bd1B0fL_fjRXpyeWl5cTdTcFNqZmxfOWhtMkF6UQ/edit

- Since a significant number of projects have been identified, these meetings can focus on education and awareness raising. They are important in bringing consensus to a set of strategies and providing an opportunity for feedback. Preparing a presentation and getting on the agenda of community and business groups would be helpful during this process.

Action 1.3. – Present and adopt the plan at the Williamson City Council.

- In addition to Council adoption, the City should seek endorsements from other key community and business groups.

GOAL 2: Have a targeted, ongoing communication strategy to raise the awareness and understanding of Sustainable Williamson, its projects and its partnerships.

Action 2.1. – Publish online a list of completed, ongoing, and planned projects.

- This can be done in preparation for, and support of, putting together a plan document. The list of projects should have brief descriptions and responsible parties. Timeframes should be included where possible. This list will support the community engagement effort needed to finalize the plan. High profile or current projects, such as the Smart Office, should be highlighted in one or two page summary documents.

Action 2.2. – Update, create, and enhance website content for the City of Williamson[6] and the Williamson Redevelopment Authority to better include and communicate the Sustainable Williamson plan.

http://www.cityofwilliamson.org/

- The Projects section gives a good overview of Sustainable Williamson, but does not clearly lay out the City's role in the project. An official City statement of support for the initiative should be included up front (the Overview could be retooled for this purpose), followed by a description of who is overseeing Sustainable Williamson and then a description of the specific projects.
- Pictures and document links (e.g. to the document on the Sycamore Trail Project) would add a lot of value for those who want to learn more about the initiative.
- Consider adding links to other publications and past reports associated with the initiative.
- Create a page within the City site or an independent site for the Williamson Redevelopment Authority or complete the Sustainable Williamson site to include that type of information.
- Link users to social media and other sites from the City website.

Action 2.3. – Formulate a clear message about what Sustainable Williamson is with respect to City and WRA communications.

- The Sustainable Williamson initiative is presented in two general lights: sometimes as a City-wide, comprehensive community development strategy, and sometimes as a targeted set of projects to address the goals within the six key topic areas established by the WRA. These characterizations are not mutually inclusive. This could be resolved by preparing

[6] As of the publishing of this report, January 31, 2013, some of these actions and website updates have started to occur.

and adopting a community-wide plan that is comprehensive, while clearly articulating what areas WRA is responsible for. In essence, the City should consider putting a stronger stamp on the initiative from a community standpoint while highlighting the specific goals and efforts of the WRA.

Action 2.4. – Create an opportunity for ongoing community forums and events to discuss and advance plans, programs and projects.

- The community would benefit from a monthly breakfast or pot luck dinner to receive information on public projects and connect regarding the numerous organizational initiatives and projects in the City of Williamson and Mingo County.

GOAL 3: Have a set of finalized funding strategies and partnerships for the next phase of priority projects.

Action 3.1. – Create Sustainable Williamson Community Plan, documents, website content, and grant application content with the potential funding audience in mind.

- Potential funders ask themselves a number of questions in reviewing grant applications and applicants web-based presentation of materials. To the maximum extent possible documents should attempt to answer the relevant questions from among the following:
  - Does the project have community support and is it part of a plan or local policy? Is the project part of a plan or policy officially adopted by the City?
  - What organization will lead the project and be the fiscal agent? What organizations will play supporting roles?
  - What is the mission of the lead organization? Does that mission align with goals of the funding program?
  - What are the key components of the project? What benefits will come from them?
  - What are the roles of the public, non-profit, and for profit sectors? Who will own and manage the asset in the end?
  - What has this organization already done? Is it reasonable to assume they can accomplish the project at hand? What are the obstacles to implementation?
  - How long will it take for the project to be accomplished and when will money be needed? Can the project start right away?
  - What other funds will be used to leverage the funding source? What other organizations have already given money to the project? What other organizations have already given money to the community or organization leading the project?

Action 3.2. – Create a list of grant sources and tracking mechanism.

- Identify grant sources and cycles from various sources. Identify personal contact information for administrators for funds that show the most promise. Focus efforts a select number of resources and projects until staff can be identified.
- Solicit professional help to identify community investment vehicles that constitute a comprehensive funding strategy for sustainable Williamson. In addition to grant resources and general public funds, other financing strategies could include such mechanisms as revolving loan funds, community investment groups, equity investment groups, local investment opportunity network, and other traditional and non-traditional finance strategies. .

Action 3.3 – Encourage donations, volunteering, and community enterprise initiatives, such as pop up restaurants, etc.

Action 3.4 – Initiate a Crowd Funding for start up financing.

This action plan also serves as a guiding document for "backers" of the Smart-Office **Indiegogo** campaign which will be launched March 1st, 2013. This crowd funding platform will provide the necessary funding for initiating a robust transitional strategy targeting the coalfield region of central Appalachia, and will support projects and implementation activities identified by the planning process recommended in Goal 1 of this document.

One of a number of fundraising platforms dubbed "crowd funding," Indiegogo facilitates gathering monetary resources from the general public, a model which circumvents many traditional avenues of investment. Given the innovative nature of crowd funding, this campaign seeks to set a precedent within contemporary approaches to regional sustainable development programs by providing sustainability practitioners with an alternative funding strategy for ensuring the success of their projects. With this goal in mind, this campaign will have the following components based upon a approach to campaign design Sustainable Williamson calls "Regenerative Impact":

- Open-Source Appropriate Technology
- A series of integrative forums and fundraising events
- Numerous articles and press coverage
- Action based campaign update videos

This crowd funding initiative will link The City of Williamson's Smart-Office with Sustainable Williamson. The Smart-Office will serve as a "sustainability hub" of the coalfield region of central Appalachia (see Figure 5 below). The Smart-Office is an Open-Source Appropriate Technology [7] that is designed with special consideration to the cultural, social, political, ethical, environmental, and economical conditions found within the coalfield's of central Appalachia. The Smart-Office is located next to the City of Williamson's Chamber of Commerce housed in the Coal House [8], a building almost entirely made from coal, and is envisioned to be the center hub for both the Sustainable Williamson projects as well as ties to the regional CASE network. The following examples will play an important role in guiding the decisions made during the planning process recommended in Goal1 of this document:

- Identify and implement several novel Energy Optimization financing models targeting municipal, commercial and residential applications. These models will be replicable for broader applications throughout the region. *(See Energy Optimization program description on Indiegogo Campaign Home page)*
- Development of Sustainable Williamson's Health Innovation Hub. As a part of this project, our team will design and implement an entrepreneurial accelerator/incubator for emerging coalfield based companies. This program will be kicked off by the region's first entrepreneur week. *(See Healthy Communities program description on Indiegogo Campaign Home page)*

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[7] Open-Source Appropriate Technology, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open-source_appropriate_technology
[8] Coal House, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coal_House_(Williamson,_West_Virginia)

- In collaboration with Amizade Global Service-Learning, we will create a regional integrated education program. *(See Integrated Education program description on Indiegogo Campaign Home page)*
- Full implementation of the CASE network's "nested policy strategy." *(See 2011 CASE Report on Indiegogo Campaign Home page)*

Along with the above programs, additional funding provided by backers will support the development of food systems, sustainable construction and sustainable tourism programs as well as other identified opportunities outlined in this report. The full scope of these programs will be determined through the planning process recommended in Goal 1 and will consider the emerging regional programs that have been implemented through the CASE network in partnership with both Wayne and McDowell Counties as well as Pike County Kentucky.

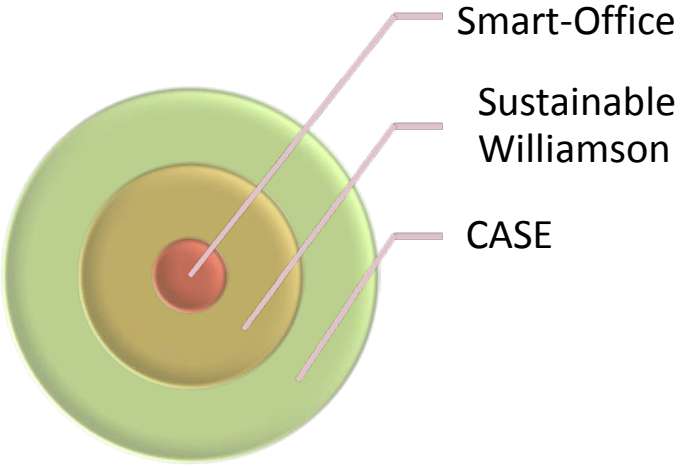

Figure 5 – A graphic by Sustainable Williamson that illustrates the relationship between the Smart-office, the initiative itself, and the regional CASE efforts. The Smart-Office is envisioned as a hub center for both.

GOAL 4: Have available the staff and organizational resources needed to manage the Sustainable Williamson initiative and identify, plan and implement projects.

Action 4.1. – Identify a full or part time staff to assist the City of Williamson and Williamson Redevelopment Authority in operational and financial matters.

- This position, if full time, could perform a number of functions. The best arrangement would be to have the position be a City staff member that is partially funded by grant opportunities. This staff person could implement the Sustainable Williamson identified list of projects and programs and perform the role of community planner. The position should be able to serve a staff to the WRA and special projects manager for the City.

Action 4.2 - Additional Technical Assistance Support

- Staff identified for 4.1 for the planning and implementation may need some additional assistance or support in creating and implementing the plan and process. To this end, further actions will be needed to a) secure funding, b) apply for additional technical assistance opportunities, c) solicit, or retain technical assistance to provide staff with

additional expertise in specialized areas which may be needed as part of the plan development and implementation phases. The type of specialized technical assistance should be tailored to the needs or gaps of the planning and implementation process. Examples of technical assistance could be in marketing and economic development, developing a financing strategy or marketing plan, transportation and connectivity strategies, community engagement and outreach strategies, etc.

5. Appendix

Appendix A: Assets and Opportunities Maps

Appendix B: List of workshop participants

Appendix C: CASE Network Linkages

Appendix D: PowerPoint presentation slides

Appendix E: The Partnership for Sustainable Communities' Rural Resources Guide for Sustainable Rural Communities.

Appendix A:
Assets and Opportunities Maps

Workshop participants conducted an asset and opportunities mapping exercise, the results of which are documented in this appendix. Basemaps of the community were provided and participants spent time identifying the assets, such as places or elements of the community that are sources of pride, are highly valued or desirable. They also identified areas of opportunity areas for future investment or community improvement. On the maps, the identified assets are shown in blue squares. Opportunity areas are identified by the green circles. A brief description of the opportunities is provided below. The numbers correspond to the numbers on the maps.

Assets or Valued Elements

1. Historic District walking tour
2. Community Garden
3. Southside Mall
4. Flood Wall Parking
5. Lefty Hamilton Park and ball fields
6. Southern WV Community and Technical College
7. Community Center and Recreation Complex
8. Riverside Elementary
9. Four lane highway
10. Hatfield McCoy Trail (see additional map for full trail system)
11. Flood wall walk is utilized by a lot of people
12. Library and Health Department
13. Coal House / Tug Valley COC, Tourism
14. Mountaineer Hotel and the SmartOffice
15. Farmer's Market
16. Veola Water North America
17. Williamson Memorial Hospital
18. Shopping

Opportunities to Improve

1. West End general improvement opportunities include new homes and a better mix everyday retail establishments, especially a grocery store.
2. An improved pedestrian and bicycle connection is needed between downtown and the West End. 3rd Avenue is the obvious location, although right-of-way and topographic conditions constrain the opportunities.
3. Harvey Street performs a number of important functions, including gateway, pedestrian street and, vehicle throughway. There is an opportunity to improve this roadway from 1st Avenue to 4th Avenue with sidewalk maintentance and/or widening, landscape, and gateway and directional signage.
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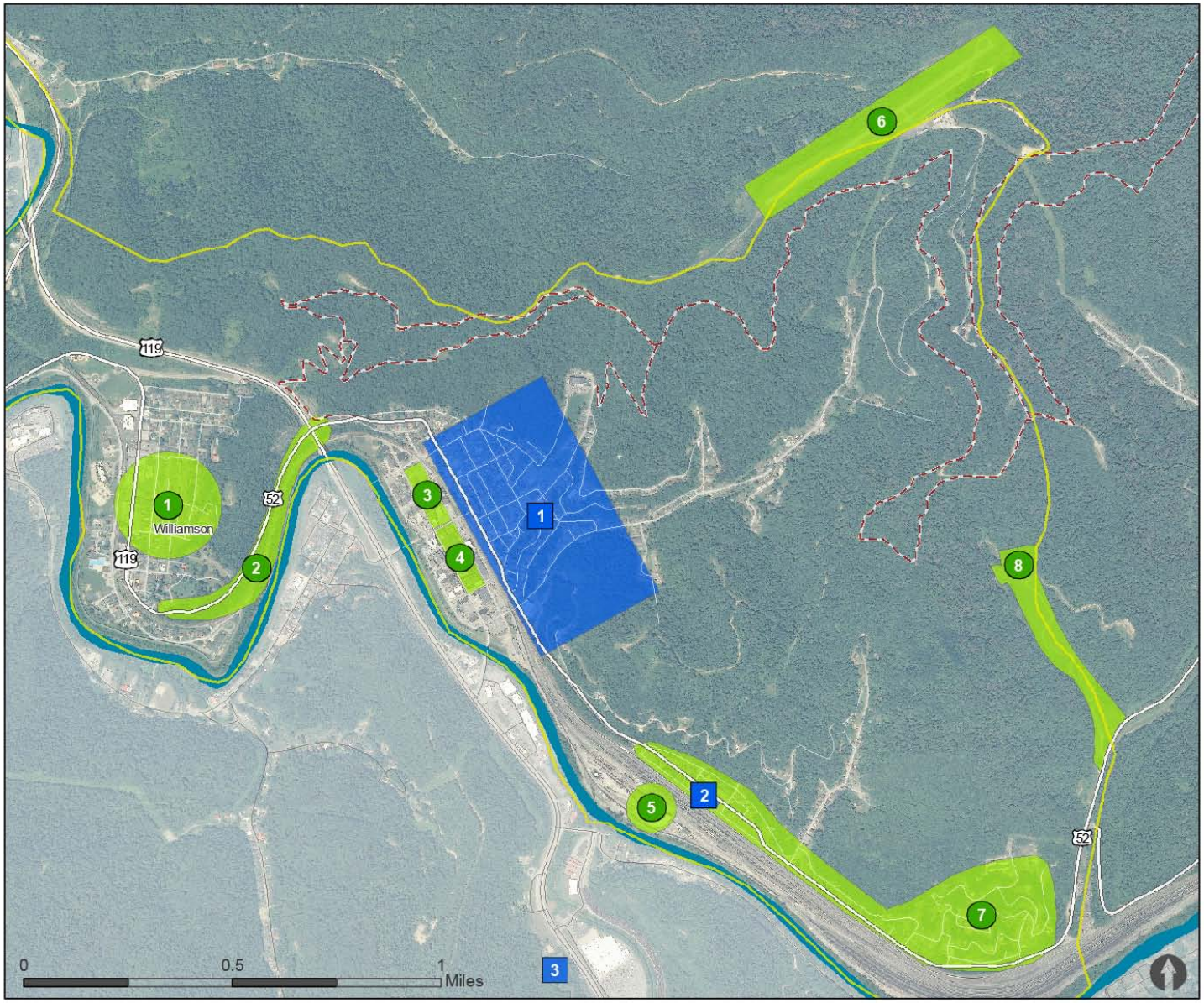
9. The utility of the pedestrian facility on the flood wall would be enhanced by adding lights to the facility and providing additional parking.
10. There is potential for the phycial and programmatic expansion of Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College.
11. There is the oppotunitiy to enhance and better screen the wastewater treatment plant from the street and the flood wall pedestrian facility.
12. The Community Center tennis courts and ball field area need rehabilitation.
13. Flowers bakery is now closed, presenting an opportunity for repurposing the building.
14. The field house is an underutilized asset in the community. The building is in need of rehabilitation.
15. The methadone clinic is not an asset for the neighborhood.
16. The buildings and grounds in the Victoria Courts residential complex are in need of improvement.
17. There is the opportunity for a cultural/historical mural on the water tank.
18. The sidewalks on 3rd Avenue are in poor condition and need improvement.
19. There is an opportunity for creating a walking bridge connection across the river to connect neighborhoods and uses on the other side to the West End.
20. There is a pedestrian crossing needed at railroad tracks.
21. This area is a great location for a riverside community park, including parking and access to the flood wall trail and location for a boat launch.
22. A river clean up is needed to remove waste, such as tires, out of the river. An annual clean up with community participation will go a long way in managing waste in the river.
23. The Sycamore Inn has an empty restaurant, presenting an opportunity for a new use. This is a specific opportunity to have additional restaurant space for visitors and community members.
24. The historic district walking tour pamphlet needs updating and a tourist-oriented map of Williamson needs to be created.
25. Brick Street Artifacts is an example of a unique business that could benefit from a higher exposure in the community and to visitors.
26. The library is percieved to be too small and not accessible. There is the potential for having another space downtown house the library.
27. There is the need for more retail on 3rd Avenue. There are a number of legal, medical uses, other professional opportunities.
28. There is a bad smell of sewer gas on street in areas of downtown and in some of the buildings.
29. There is a need to improve the safety, lighting and quality of the Harvey Street underpass and the other pedestrian tunnels in downtown.
30. The Cinderella Theater has the potential to expand its utility beyond its current use of bingo.
31. The demolished Daily News building would be a great location for a park or other community use.
32. The is the potential for a welcome mural on the Rt 52 wall in this location.
33. The high school has been closed and sold. The site will be repurposed with a use that will improve the job base and avialable services in the community.
34. The Strosneider building could be restored and repurposed.
35. There are great park opportunities by the old high school
36. There is the need to renovate old buildings like the synagogue.



Assets and Opportunities - Map 1

Existing Assets, Valued Elements

Opportunity Areas for Improvement

Hatfield McCoy Trail

City of Williamson

Assets or Valued Elements

1 Historic District walking tour
2 Community Garden
3 Southside Mall

Opportunities to Improve

1 West End improvement opportunities for new homes and grocery.
2 Improved connection needed between downtown and the west end is needed.
3 Expand the same look and feel of the pedestrian quality on the south side of Harvey Street.
4 Fill empty storefronts. There is an opportunity for future retail and business downtown.
5 Round house and rail yard viewing and parking
6 Airport represents opportunity for redevelopment
7 Sidewalk Improvements
8 Sycamore Campground

Source: Asset and opportunities identified by community participation during a workshop, November 8, 2012.
Map produced by Renaissance Planning Group - November 16, 2012

Assets and Opportunities - Map 2

Existing Assets, Valued Elements

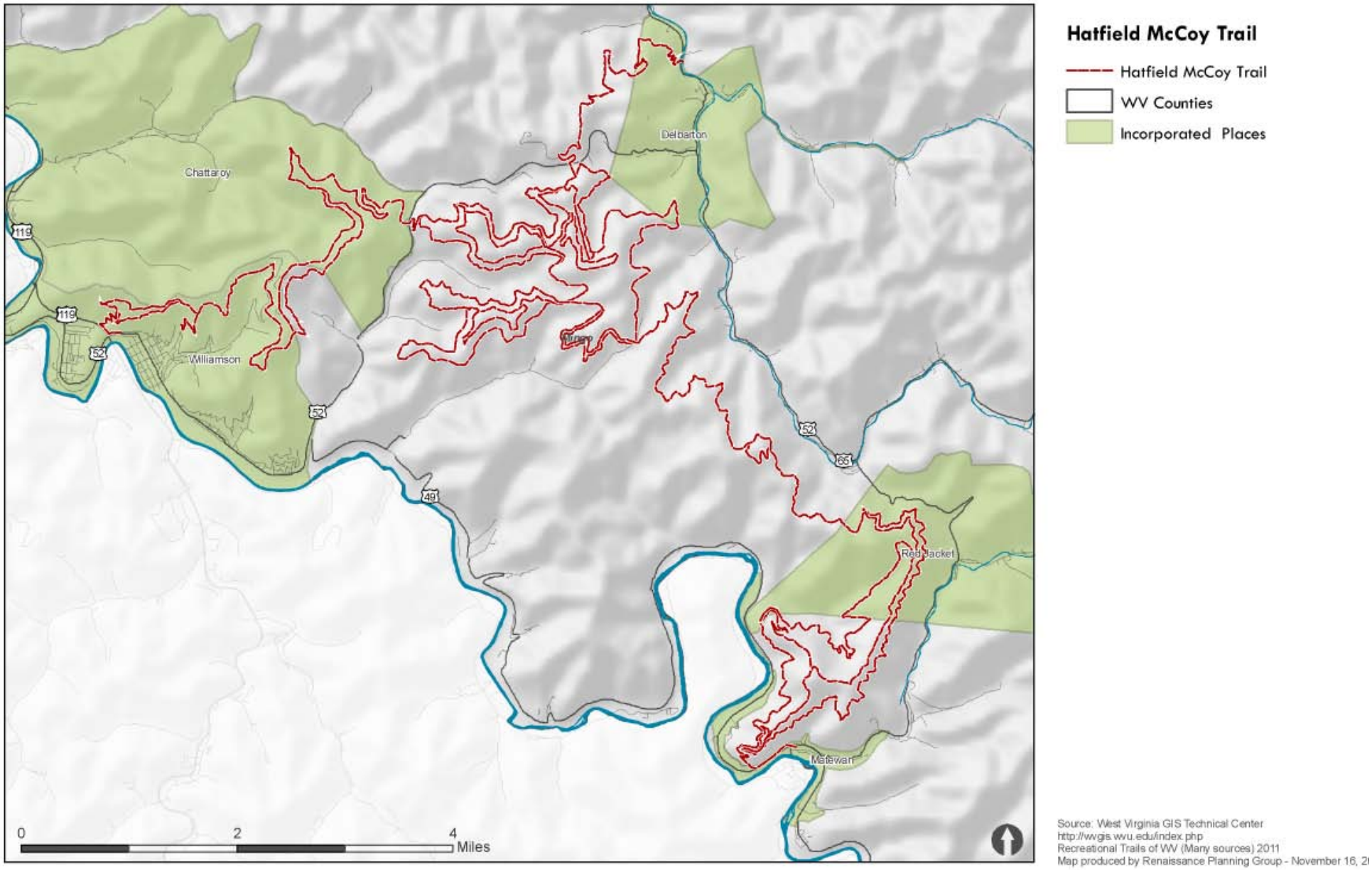
Opportunities for Improvement

Hatfield McCoy Trail

City of Williamson

Assets or Valued Elements
4 Flood Wall Parking
5 Lefty Hamilton Park and ball fields
6 Southern WV Community and Technical College
7 Community Center and Rec Complex
8 Riverside Elementary
9 Four lane highway
10 Hatfield McCoy Trail
11 Flood wall walk is utilized by a lot of people
12 Library and Health Department
13 Coal House / Tug Valley COC, Tourism
14 Mountaineer Hotel and the SmartOffice
15 Farmer's Market
16 Veola Water North America
17 Williamson Memorial Hospital
18 Shopping

Opportunities to Improve
9 Clear brush, add lights
10 Potential expansion area for Southern
11 Treatment Plant
12 Community Center courts are run down
13 Flowers bakery is now closed
14 Field House
15 Methadone Clinic
16 Victoria Courts is rundown, needs improvement
17 Welcome mural on Water Tank
18 Sidewalks in poor condition, needs improvement
19 Walking bridge
20 Pedestrian crossing needed at railroad tracks
21 Great location for a community park (boat launch)
22 River clean up needed
23 Sycamore Inn has an empty restaurant
24 Historic district walking tours updating, parking.
25 Brick Street Artifacts
26 Library is too small and not accessible
27 More retail on 3rd Ave.
28 Bad smell of sewer gas on street
29 Improve the safety and quality of underpass
30 Cinderella Theater (currently bingo)
31 Demolished Daily News building lot becomes a park
32 Welcome mural on Rt 52 wall
33 High School closed and has been sold
34 Strosneider building restored and repurposed.
35 Great park opportunities by old HS
36 Renovate old buildings like the Synagogue


Hatfield McCoy Trail
Hatfield McCoy Trail
WV Counties
Incorporated Places
Chattaroy
Delbarton
Williamson
Red Jacket
Matewan
119
52
49
65
0
2
4
Miles
Source: West Virginia GIS Technical Center
http://wvgis.wvu.edu/index.php
Recreational Trails of WV (Many sources) 2011
Map produced by Renaissance Planning Group - November 16, 2

Appendix B:
Workshop Participants

Steering Committee (participated in one or more pre-meeting conference calls, and the working sessions)

First	Last	Title	Organization
Maria	Arnot	Staff	Americorps VISTA/Williamson Redevelopment Authority
Dr. Dino	Beckett	Chair	Williamson Redevelopment Authority
Bruce	Curry	Program Manager	Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College
Jenny	Hudson	Staff	Mingo County Diabetes Coalition
Eric	Mathis	Board Member	Williamson Redevelopment Authority
Darrin	McCormick	Mayor	City of Williamson

EPA/ARC and Consultants (technical assistance team)

First	Last	Title	Organization
Mike	Callahan	Facilitator	Renaissance Planning Group
Jason	Espie	Project Manager	Renaissance Planning Group
Ed	Fendley	Project Manager	EPA Office of Sustainable Communities
Alan	Steinbeck	Lead Facilitator	Renaissance Planning Group

Stakeholders (attended one or more sessions)

First	Last	Organization
Peni	Adams	McDowell County EDA
Nathan	Acosta	Tom Acosta Studios
Tom	Acosta	Tom Acosta Studios
Pamela	Alderman	Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College
Allyn Sue	Barker	Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College
Peggy	Barnett	5th Avenue Church of Christ
Alexis	Batausa	Mingo County Diabetes Coalition
Tom	Bias	WVU School of Public Health
Sally	Blackburn	Farmers Market
Michael	Brewster	Starters Restaurant
Zach	Browning	Region II Planning and Development
Matthew	Buccelli	International Economic Development Council
Nathan	Darity	Amizade Global Service Learning
Kelly Jo	Drey	Sustainability Insitute @ Bridgemont
Doug and Mary Jo	Dudley	Farmers Market
Michael	Durante	Compass Partners
Tamilia	Elkins	Appalachian Leadership
Jessica	Fields	ALA
Brandy	Francis	ALA
Darrel	Gibson	

Matthew	Gilliam	Gilliam Solar
Stacy	Gloss	Energy Efficient West Virginia
Nathan	Hall	Green Forests Work
	Hamrick	Solid Waste Authority
Vicki	Hatfield	Mingo County Diabetes Coalition
Bernice	Johnson	Mingo County Health Department
Leasha	Johnson	Mingo County Redevelopment Authority
Vinnie	Kudva	Rotary Club
Justin	Lewis	
Charley	McCoy	Tug Valley Chamber of Commerce
Jenny	Mounts	Williamson Unsafe Building Commission
Michael	Mounts	Williamson Fire Department
Joshua	Murphy	STOP Coalition
Doug	Pauley	Mingo County Diabetes Coalition
Allie	Paxton	STOP Coalition
Grover	Phillips	Winsor Park Board
George	Poole	City Insurance Agency
Pat	Poole	City Insurance Agency
Seth	Poole	City Insurance Agency
Neena	Purohit	The Man's Shop
Leigh Ann	Ray	Williamson Womens' Club
Jeremy	Richardson	Union of Concerned Scientists
Joyce	Roddy	First Baptist Church
Tracey	Rowan	USDA – Rural Development
Vickie	Rowe	First Baptist Church
Heather	Sammons	Change the Future WV
Jay	Savage	
Cynthia	Sellards	Robert C. Byrd Institute
Hootie	Smith	Mingo County Commission
Helen Ann	Stanley	Farmers Market
Paul and Arlene	Starr	Farmers Market
Adam	Warren	Hatfield & McCoy Guided Tours
Alan	Webb	Open Master's Program
Linda	Von Miter	First Baptist Church of Williamson

Appendix C:
CASE Network

CASE is an interactive regional network of innovators cultivating new ideas and resources in Central Appalachia to grow healthy communities. This project's goal is to transform the Central Appalachian economy through enriching existing networks, by building a "nested policy strategy" informed by the following:

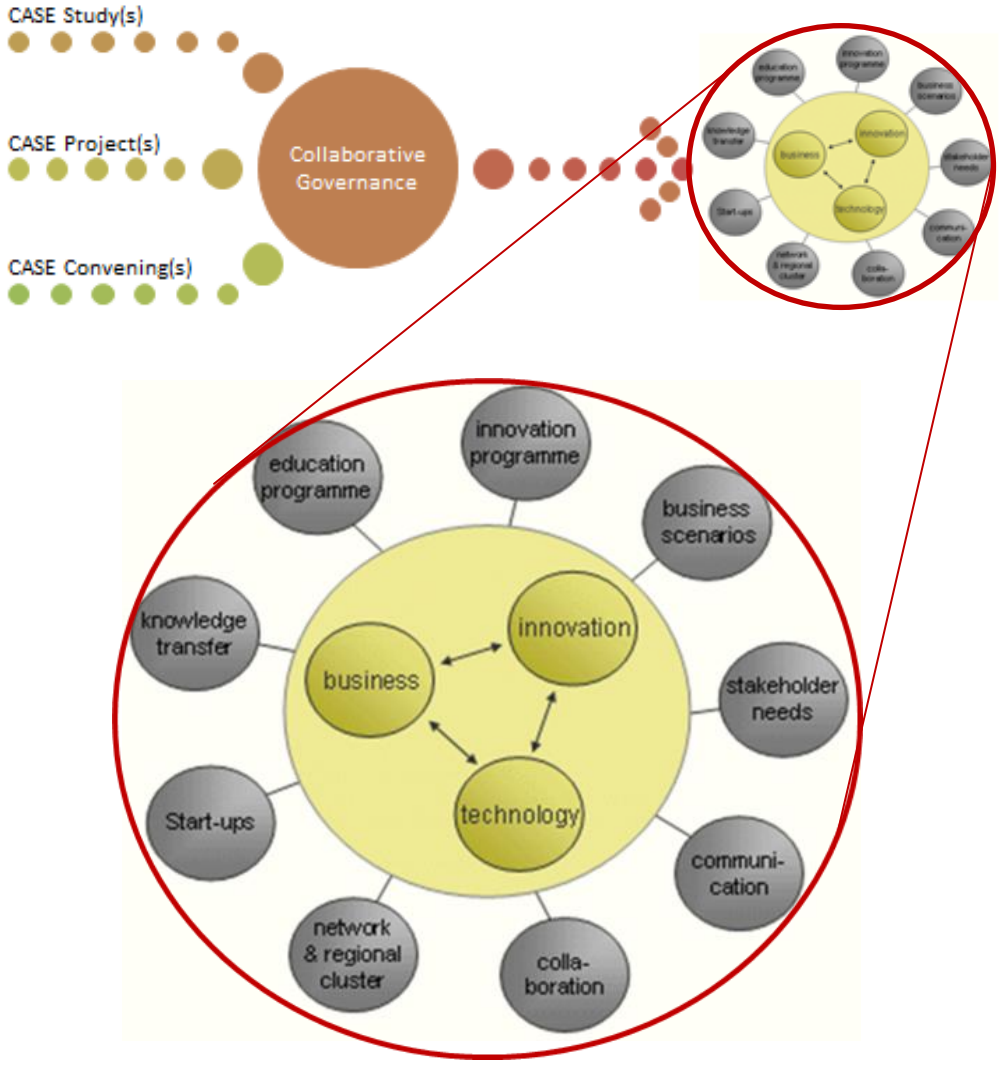
1. **CASE project(s):** Initiating connections to complete replicable, on-the-ground projects and identifying those presently being developed throughout the region as well as the country. Over time, the CASE project will grow to encompass more counties. The CASE network will be defined by these emerging projects.
2. **CASE study(s):** In relation to the above project-centered aspect of CASE, the research portion will expand upon past and present regional successes. The research component will also actively identify "smart-growth approaches" for expanding CASE projects as well as assessing the growth of sustainable development in the region.
3. **CASE convening(s):** Meetings such as the November 2012 Sustainable Williamson workshop and the 2011 CASE workshop, bring together sustainable development experts and community representatives; highlight concrete innovative projects in our focus counties; and set the stage for future strategic gatherings that will solidify Central Appalachia as what the U.S. Economic Development Administration calls a Regional Innovation Cluster; that is, an area that fosters new ideas because of existing innovation linkages and low transactions costs, much like Silicon Valley in California.
4. **Collaborative governance initiative:** Along with our national partner, Policy Consensus Initiative (PCI), the CASE Team will develop and initiate a regional governance process where participants (parties, agencies, stakeholders) representing different interests will collectively make policy decisions or recommendations to the CASE network as a whole, which will not substantially change consensus recommendations from the group participants.
5. **Smart Clusters program:** Building upon EDA's Regional Innovation Clusters program, a confirmed method for creating jobs and growing regional economies, the Smart Clusters program (presently being developed by the CASE Team) expands the scope of EDA's RIC program by emphasizing sustainable development or an adherence to a triple-bottom-line approach to development, as well as ensuring that the urban centers where these clusters typically emerge also expand their scope by creating knowledge linkages that benefit their rural counterparts. More importantly, this project provides insight into applying "open" or "distributed" innovation approaches within the energy sector, as well as enriching the region's institutional capacity within the R&D sector using Charleston, West Virginia as a nodal point for the surrounding distressed and at-risk counties of Central Appalachia.

The CASE team sees a need for creative collaboration across county and state lines, in order to develop a regional policy for inclusive economic growth and development that advances community health and well-being. A replicable strategy will be built around the successful projects that are presently being developed by many local, regional and national organizations working with the city of Williamson's nationally acclaimed project, *Sustainable Williamson*. The CASE projects are broken down into the following (*mechanism independent*) components of the emergent whole, that is, the CASE network:

- Energy Optimization
- Community Health

- Food Systems
- Integrative Education
- Sustainable Tourism
- Sustainable Building

Synthesis of Nested Policy Strategy



For more Information about the CASE network, see the 2011 convening report, available here: http://www.thegreenaccelerator.com/file_cabinet/download/0x000076d28

Appendix D:

Project Overview Presentation

This appendix contains the PowerPoint presentation given by the technical assistance consultant team the first day of the workshop. It provides an overview of the purpose of the technical assistance in the small town Appalachian context, a primer on smart growth and livability, and the exercise instructions, as projected during the workshop.

LIVABILITY in SMALL APPALACHIAN TOWNS

STAR – Small Town Appalachian Revitalization

RENAISSANCE PLANNING GROUP

STAR –SMALL TOWN APPALACHIAN REVITALIZATION

- **Joint project of:**
  - Appalachian Regional Commission
  - US Environmental Protection Agency
  - US Department of Agriculture – Rural Development
  - National Association of Development Organizations
  - Development Districts Association of Appalachia

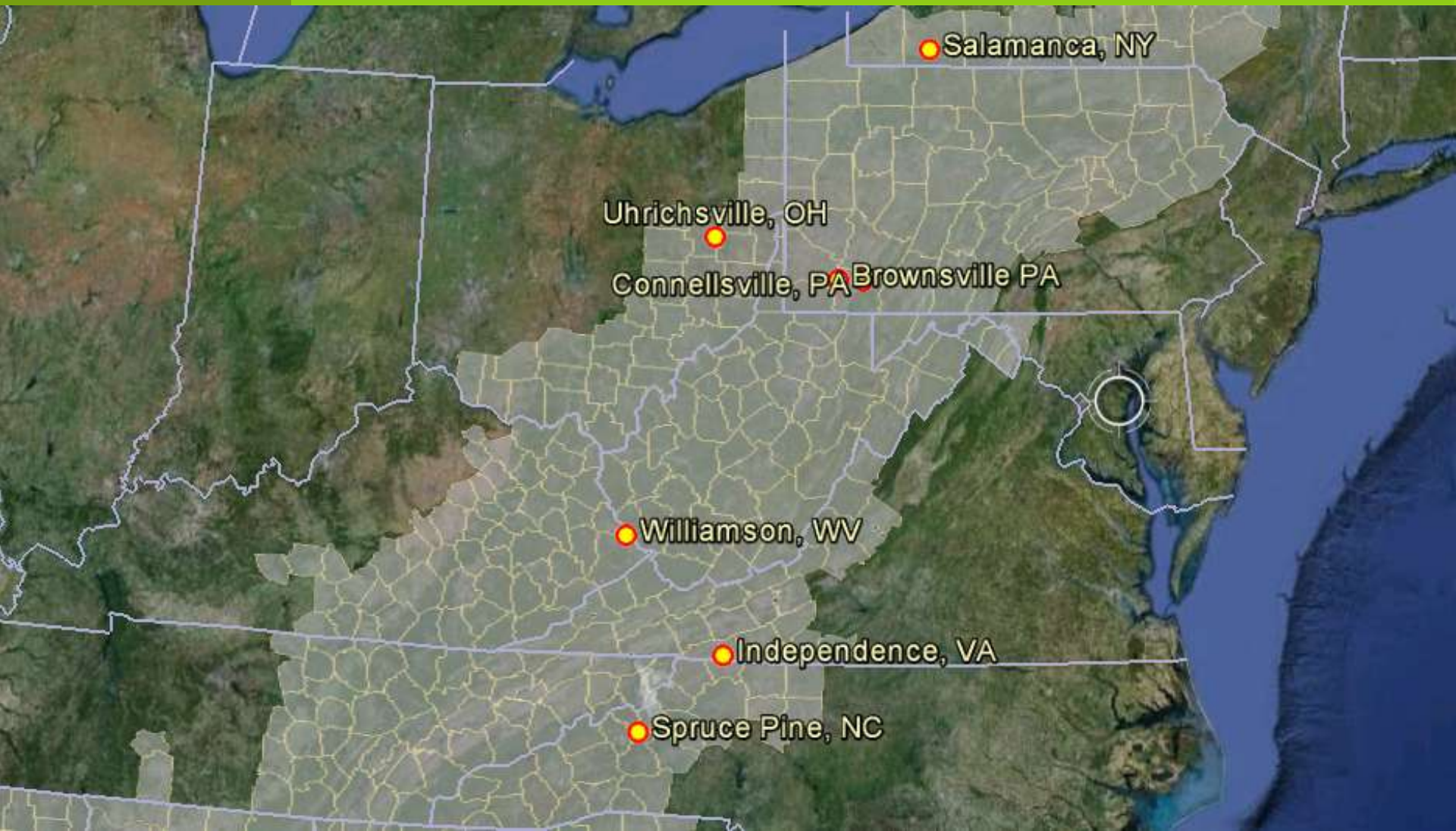
STAR –Small Town Appalachian Revitalization

Introduction

Technical Assistance Purpose

- Advance local efforts to create vibrant, sustainable communities and improve economic vitality by building consensus and capacity for action.
- In other words, ***"help you get from point A to point B."***
- Williamson: Become a model sustainable community for Appalachia. Spread knowledge and foster collaboration among stakeholders.

Seven Pilot STAR Towns



STAR TOWN THEMES

Seven Pilot STAR Towns

Town	Main Community Issues
Brownsville, PA	Downtown revitalization and action planning for a downtown stage and park designed by local high school students.
Salamanca, NY	Revitalization of downtown business district, development of arts and cultural district, and streetscape improvements.
Connellsville, PA	Connectivity between the Great Allegheny Passage Trail, new Amtrak Station, and downtown. Attract trail users into town.
Independence, VA	Establish a downtown farmers market and improve connectivity through new sidewalks.
Uhrichsville, OH	Plan for expanded Clay Museum as a focal point of downtown revitalization and coordinate groups interested in downtown.
Williamson, WV	**Become a model sustainable community for Appalachia. Spread knowledge and foster collaboration among stakeholders.**
Spruce Pine, NC	Revitalization of downtown business district. Build park, improve river access, attract tourists from Blue Ridge Parkway.

Partnership for Sustainable Communities

Livability Principles

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**.

Background

Partnership Goals for Livable *Rural* Communities

1. Promote rural prosperity
2. Support vibrant rural communities
3. Expand transportation choices
4. Expand housing choices

Sustainable Williamson Six Goal Areas

- Food Systems
- Energy Optimization
- Sustainable Tourism
- Integrated Education
- Health and Wellness
- Sustainable Construction

This Workshop

Today

- Share, Listen, Explore Ideas, Understand

Tomorrow

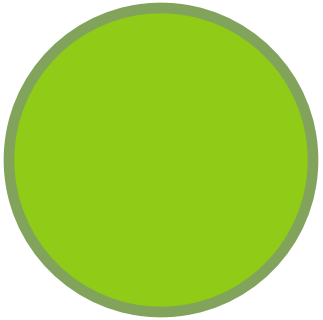
- Tour - more learning and understanding
- Synthesize –*Bring it Together*
- Action Planning – *Making it Happen*
- Commitments

Strengths and Weaknesses

- Go around table
- Quick identification of topics
- Exhaust ideas
- Rank top three independently
- Compile scores

Mapping Exercise

Gold Stars – Places you value most, your greatest assets



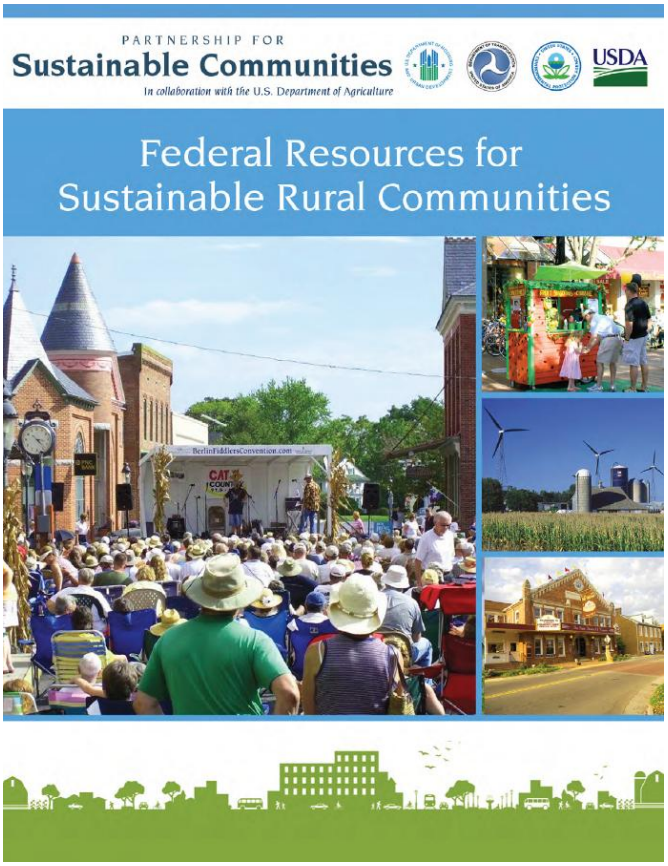
Green Dots – places that could benefit from near term actions or improvements.

Write detail on cards (numbering helps)

The group will share their map

Appendix E:
List of Funding Resources

Federal Resources for Sustainable Rural Communities
A Publication from the Partnership for Sustainable Communities and USDA



The Partnership for Sustainable Communities—made up of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency—and the U.S. Department of Agriculture have many programs that rural communities can use to promote economic competitiveness, protect healthy environments, and enhance quality of life.

Federal Resources for Sustainable Rural Communities provides key information on funding and technical assistance opportunities available from the four agencies, as well as examples of how rural communities across the country have put these programs into action.

This guide provides a menu of resources to help small towns and rural communities capitalize on their assets, encourage homegrown economic development, create vibrant neighborhoods, and preserve the character that residents value.

Download *Federal Resources for Sustainable Rural Communities* from the Resources tab on the Partnership for Sustainable Communities' website, www.sustainablecommunities.gov. Current funding and technical assistance opportunities are listed on the Grants tab of the website.