



The Mountain Landscapes Initiative A Bottoms-Up Approach to Regional Planning

The Mountain Landscape Initiative represents a long-range strategy by The Community Foundation of Western North Carolina for convening communities and marshalling resources to help citizens and their leaders guide land use planning in our mountains.

The Pilot

To get the Initiative rolling, The Community Foundation invested \$100,000, the largest single discretionary grant in its history, to partner with the Southwestern Commission, the Council of Governments organization in the seven westernmost counties. The pilot project is a “Tool Box” of best planning and building practices. A broad-based coalition of additional funders, including the counties themselves, will supply the remainder of what’s expected to be a budget of at least \$400,000.

The Process

In May of 2008, after an extensive outreach effort to document community concerns, a team of consultants will lead a public, multi-day workshop called a “charrette.” Together, citizens and their leaders will sort through ideas and choose among alternative solutions for the “Tool Box,” which will be published in the summer.

The Model Projects

Besides publishing the “Tool Box,” the MLI pilot will also demonstrate how key tools might be applied in specific situations or on specific land parcels. These models are chosen to be representative of key challenges in the mountain region. Including: Development on slopes, farmland preservation, town and village master planning, and drafting equitable regulating plans.

