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## Community and Economic Development in North Carolina and Beyond Blog: A Little Creativity Goes a Long Way: Aiding Distressed Communities in Precarious Economic Times

By CED Guest Author

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North Carolina's chapter of the American Planning Association will hold its annual conference in Charlotte from October 5-7. The Community-Campus Partnership, in conjunction with the North Carolina Rural Center and the for-profit firm LandDesign, Inc. will convene a panel discussion to provide professional planners and other interested attendees with information about creative strategies that have been and are currently being implemented to improve economically distressed communities.

Four initiatives will serve as the focus of the talk –

- **CCP** (Community-Campus Partnership) is a campus-wide initiative to test whether multi-disciplinary teams of faculty, students, and staff from Carolina can partner effectively with two economically distressed or "Tier I" communities (at the county level) to help address local challenges.
- **LGSC** (Local Government Service Corps) deploys recent Master of Public Administration graduates from Carolina and Appalachian State University to work on economic development projects in small, rural communities. Each LGSC Corps Member works for three individual jurisdictions and assists local governments with a range of community and economic development projects.
- **NC STEP** (North Carolina Small Towns Economic Prosperity Program) is a NC Rural Center initiative that focuses in on how to help individual small towns reinvigorate their economies. It has three primary goals: (1) *Support* economic development in small towns adversely affected by structural changes in the economy or recent natural disasters, (2) *Implement* a comprehensive model of technical assistance and grantmaking to aid in revitalization efforts, and (3) *Provide* information vital to the development of public policies that support long-term investment in the economic vitality of North Carolina's small towns.
- Design Revival 24® is rooted in the conviction that helping communities in need is a core calling of design professionals everywhere. That the LandDesign team's talents and training should not stand idle while neighborhoods, towns and cities struggle to find the fiscal resources to advance positive social and economic change on multiple fronts.

Via this discussion, it is hoped that attendees will:

1. Understand the elements necessary for successful planning and economic development interventions in capacity and resource strapped communities.
2. Learn a variety of funding mechanisms available to local governments that enable program and project implementation.
3. Understand the non-profit and private sector process behind delivering these types of services to distressed jurisdictions.

The following individuals will serve as panel discussants:

- Kendra Cotton, project director, UNC Community-Campus Partnership



- Elton Daniels, town administrator, Sharpsburg, NC (*former NCLGSC member*)
- Scott Lagueux, partner & director, International Planning & Design Studio, LandDesign, Inc.
- Kate Pearce, LandDesign, Inc.
- Chilton Rogers, NC Rural Center