



# From Commitment to Action

Success stories from local government sustainability efforts

Capstone conference presentation

Jackie Ashley – April 17, 2008

# Agenda

---

- ▶ Background
- ▶ Methodology
- ▶ Results
- ▶ Recommendations
- ▶ Questions



# Background

**SIERRA CLUB**  
Solving Global Warming One City at a Time

Home | About | City Profiles | Resources | Forums | FAQ | Contact Us

Chapel Hill, NC

**Mayor: Kevin C. Foy**  
[Contact the Mayor](#) ([most cities](#))

**Date of Adoption:**  
1969-12-31

**Primary Contact:**  
[Tom Jensen](#)  
919-833-8467

**Why My City is Cool**

"The Mayor of this city has signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement--the first step to becoming a Cool City. Be the first to [sign up as an activist in this city](#) and help the mayor follow thru on his or her commitment.

**Find Out How You Can Get Involved!**

**Milestones Completed** ([about](#))

0 1 2 3 4 5

**Milestone 1: Establish Campaign**

**Milestone 2: Engage The Community**

**Milestone 3: City Signs Agreement COMPLETE**

- Municipality makes formal commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, (US: Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement or Cool Counties Agreement, Canada: Canadian Partners for Climate Protection)

**Milestone 4: Initial Solution Steps**

**Milestone 5: Advanced Smart Energy Solutions**

Image from <http://coolcities.us/cityProfiles.php?city=869&state=NC>

## Background

---

# Sustainability

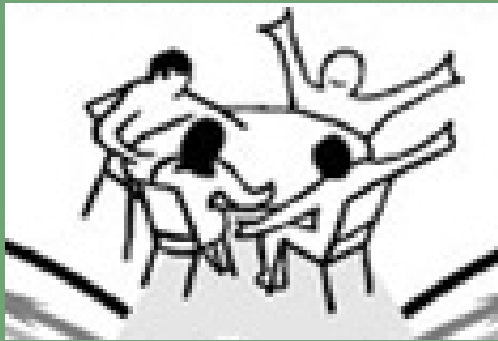
Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.



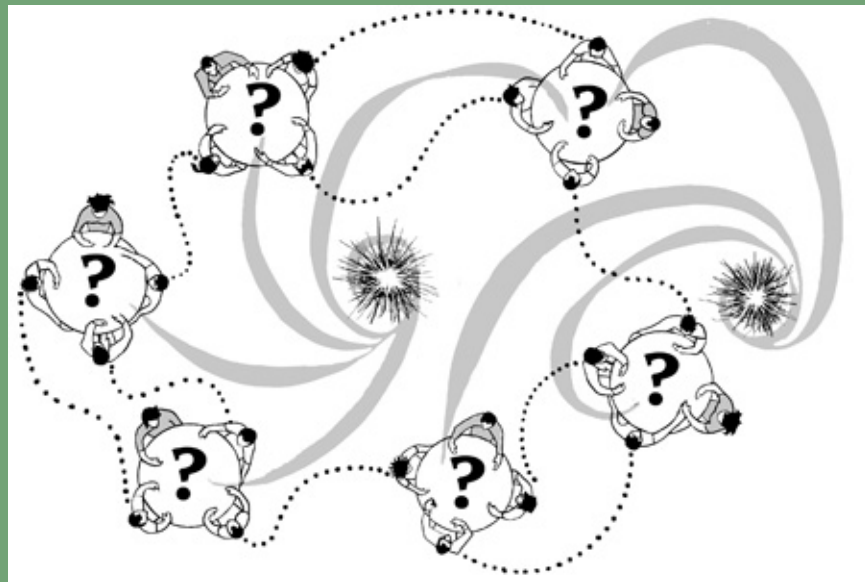
# Methodology – “Story Café”

- ▶ The model combines elements of Story Circles with the more structured research design of World Café.

## Story Circle



## World Cafe



*Images from [http://www.theworldcafe.com/bank\\_book.htm](http://www.theworldcafe.com/bank_book.htm)*

# Methodology – “Story Café”

---

- ▶ Each round began with a different prompt.
  - ▶ **Tell a story** about your local government’s internal sustainability efforts.
  - ▶ What forces or **incentives** are and/or were promoting the effort?
  - ▶ What forces and/or **barriers** present or presented challenges to the effort?
  - ▶ What were/are your **strategies for achieving success** in the sustainability effort?



# Results

---

## Barriers

- ▶ Misunderstood or unfocused definition of sustainability
- ▶ Limited financial resources
- ▶ Scarce human or time resources
- ▶ Difficulty gathering data or establishing measurements
- ▶ Organizational structure
- ▶ Resistance to change



# Results

---

## Incentives

- ▶ Sense of a crisis
- ▶ Political will to do the right thing
- ▶ Saving or making money
- ▶ Personal motivation/commitment
- ▶ Leading by example
- ▶ Outside recognition programs or requirements



# Results

---

## Strategies

- ▶ Attach monetary values to green projects
- ▶ Find alternative funding sources
- ▶ Measure and monitor
- ▶ Education and outreach
- ▶ Communicate, communicate, communicate
- ▶ Hire a full-time sustainability manager or contract with a consultant



# Recommendations

- ▶ Identify sustainability assets
- ▶ Develop a strategy that fits these factors

Common Barriers	Successful Strategies	Helpful Incentives
Misunderstood or unfocused definition of sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hire a full-time sustainability manager or contract with a consultant</li> <li>● Measure and monitor</li> <li>● Communicate, communicate, communicate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Outside recognition programs or requirements</li> </ul>
Lack of financial resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Find alternative funding sources</li> <li>● Attach monetary values to green projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Political will to do the right thing</li> <li>○ Saving or making money</li> </ul>
Scarce human or time resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hire a full-time sustainability manager or contract with a consultant</li> <li>● Communicate, communicate, communicate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Personal motivation/commitment</li> </ul>
Difficulty gathering data or establishing measurements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Measure and monitor</li> <li>● Hire a full-time sustainability manager or contract with a consultant</li> <li>● Education and outreach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Outside recognition programs or requirements</li> </ul>
Organizational structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hire a full-time sustainability manager or contract with a consultant</li> <li>● Communicate, communicate, communicate</li> <li>● Education and outreach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Political will to do the right thing</li> <li>○ Personal motivation/commitment</li> </ul>
Resistance to change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Education and outreach</li> <li>● Communicate, communicate, communicate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Political will to do the right thing</li> <li>○ Leading by example</li> </ul>





Questions?

Thank You