



Community Action Plan for Duck Hill, Mississippi

LOCAL FOODS, LOCAL PLACES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

September 2018



For more information about Local Foods, Local Places visit:

<https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/local-foods-local-places>

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COMMUNITY STORY

The town of Duck Hill is in north central Mississippi, on U.S. Route 51 in Montgomery County. The town was chartered in 1852 and received its name from the Choctaw Indian Medicine Man “Chief Duck.” It is rural, with the largest nearby cities being Memphis (105 miles south) and Jackson (95 miles north). The population of 1,461 is typical for a small, rural Mississippi Delta town: 72% black or African American and 27% White, a median household income of half the state average at \$21,000, and an unemployment rate of 10.2%.¹ The Montgomery County population is 53% White and 45% African-American, and most of the African-American population lives in the northern section of the County where Duck Hill is located.

The population of Duck Hill has nearly doubled since 2010. The increase is attributed to the re-migration of adult children moving back to Mississippi to care for aging parents and retirees and young families looking to raise their children in safer environments², but despite its population growth, Duck Hill is still declining economically and the town has been experiencing extensive flooding due to poor storm water and flood protection measures.

The census numbers for Duck Hill are not encouraging. The average income, child poverty, low educational attainment, and other numbers are below state averages on all accounts.³ From a health perspective, there are several issues confronting the community, including a 42.85% percent obesity rate,⁴ and the census tract the town is in is considered a food desert.⁵ The closest full-scale grocery stores are 15 miles to Winona, the county seat, and 15 miles to the City of Grenada.

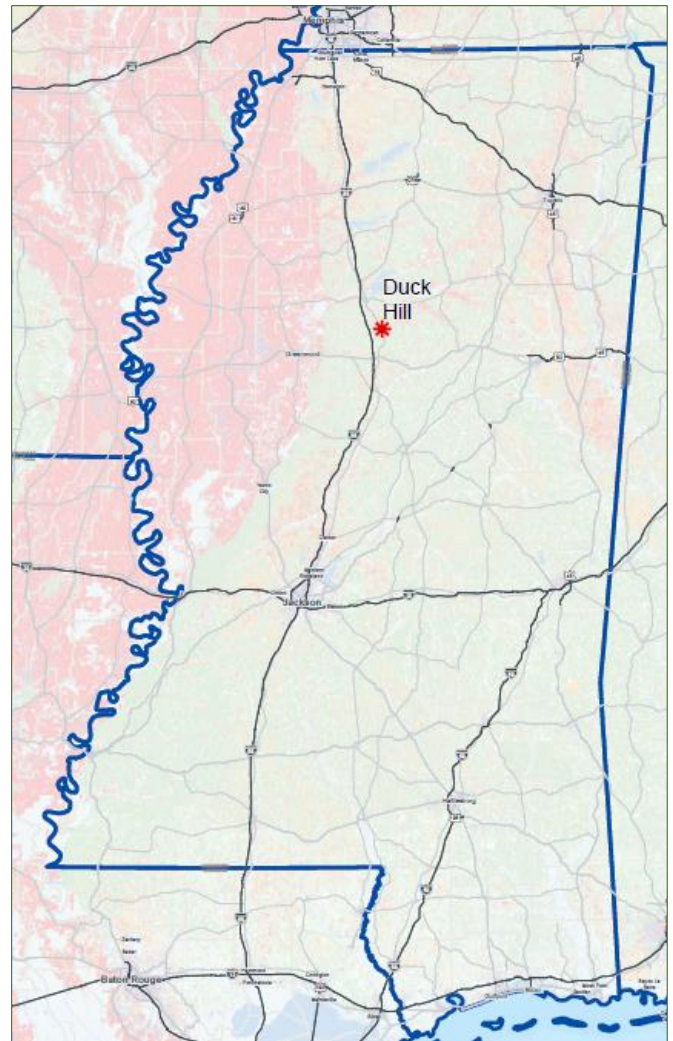


Figure 1 – Context map, Duck Hill, Mississippi. Map credit: EPR PC

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/16_5YR/DP05/1600000US2820260. Accessed September 12, 2018

² Action Communication and Education Reform (ACER). Letter of Application to Local Foods, Local Places, July 2017

³ U.S. Census profile summarized by EJSscreen: Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool. <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>. See appendix D for demographic and socioeconomic profiles collected from EJ Screen. Accessed June 1, 2018.

⁴ Healthy Foods Access Portal. <http://www.healthyfoodaccess.org/access-101/research-your-community>. Accessed June 1, 2018.

Despite the challenging socio-economic picture, this region is rich in culture, history, natural resources, institutions of higher learning and talent. The people in Duck Hill and surrounding Montgomery County are resolved to take on the overwhelming challenges to address their community and economic development needs through the lens of equity, inclusion and sustainable principles and practices. There are local groups, organizations, churches and individuals taking concrete steps to address a long history of inequity and inter-generational poverty that is common throughout many rural areas and towns in the Delta. These groups have a strong emphasis on creating opportunities for the county's most vulnerable citizens, those in poverty, youth, or with limited access to resources and quality education for all students.

One key local initiative is ASEEDS, which stands for Achieving Sustainability through Education and Economic Development Solutions. ASEEDS is an effort supported by the Southeastern Sustainability Directors Network (SSDN), the Kendeda Fund and the Delta Regional Authority. ASEEDS is a diverse coalition of people and organizations who are working on a model to make vulnerable communities in Mississippi more sustainable and resilient. Some key ASEEDS partners are listed in Figure 2. Duck Hill was chosen for a two-year project, and together with partners and the leadership of the town has convened a task force that is focusing on the following initiatives:

1. Develop a comprehensive master plan for Main Street and Neighborhood Redevelopment;
2. Address storm water runoff and flooding;
3. Revise the Town's 1975 land use and zoning plan to incorporate smart growth and sustainability principles;
4. Build upon the town's culture, rich history and natural resources to become a tourist attraction;
5. Improve the health of all Duck Hill residents through active living and healthy eating;

ASEEDS Partner Organizations

- Mayor Cooley and Board of Aldermen/women, Town of Duck Hill
- Action Communication and Education Reform (ACER)
- County Board of Supervisors
- North Montgomery County Communities United for Prosperity (M-CUP)
- EcoAdapt
- MS State University College of Architecture, Arts and Design
- State Bank and Trust
- Sustainability Works, LLC.
- Montgomery County Main Street
- Montgomery County Arts Council
- Grenada Tourism Council

Figure 2 – ASEEDS partners, a coalition working to make Duck Hill and the region more sustainable, healthy, resilient and prosperous. ACER was the applicant organization for the Local Foods, Local Places technical assistance, in close support with other partners



Figure 3 – Local Foods, Local Places visiting technical assistance team poses with members of the local committee and the ASEEDS sign, June 28, 2018

⁵ USDA Economic Research Service, Food Access Research Atlas. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas.aspx>. Accessed June 1, 2018.

6. Repurpose the vacant historic Lloyd T. Binford High School into a Center for Arts, Culture and Social Impact;
7. Implement youth centered activities and after school programming; and
8. Facilitate aging in place and give seniors something creative to do.

The ASEEDS initiative consists of several partners that started meeting in May of 2017, and they began to prioritize the initiative above, identifying the stormwater flooding as the primary priority to address. The SSDN awarded Duck Hill \$300,000 to mitigate storm water runoff, flooding, engage community in EPA Seven Elements of Collaborative Problem Solving and develop Conservation Saturday School the trains youth to be conservationist and creek rangers. The storm water mitigation work began in the spring of 2018. The project had an economic impact by providing green infrastructure training and hiring 6 local hard to employment men. The creek rangers are also being trained in green infrastructure projects like the creation of green space and rain gardens.

Another key organization, and ASEEDS partner is the Action Communication and Education Reform (ACER). In July 2017 ACER, with the support of the Town, requested assistance through the Local Foods, Local Places program to develop an action plan to help with the various initiatives underway, many of which included increasing access and education of local food, building places and community centers, involving youth, and repurposing old buildings into community assets. These initiatives all resonated closely with the goals of the Local Foods, Local Places program, which are to create:

- More economic opportunities for local farmers and businesses.
- Better access to healthy, local food, especially among disadvantaged groups.

Local Foods, Local Places Steering Committee

- **Romona Taylor Williams**, Project Consultant, Action Communication and Education Reform (ACER) Local point of contact for Local Foods, Local Places.
- **Joey Cooley**, Mayor, Town of Duck Hill
- **Al White**, Executive Director, ACER
- **Shernell Everett**, Board Member, North Montgomery Communities United for Prosperity (M-CUP)
- **Melba Rogers**, Board Member, (M-CUP)
- **Rieko Wells**, VP Community Development Manager, State Bank and Trust
- **Steve Russell**, Executive Director, North Central Planning and Development District

Figure 5 – Local Foods, Local Places Steering Committee Members



Figure 4 – Panorama picture of the auditorium inside the Lloyd Binford School Building. Image credit: EPR PC

- Revitalized downtowns, main streets, and neighborhoods.

The Local Foods, Local Places program is supported by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Delta Regional Authority. Duck Hill was one of 16 communities across the United States selected to participate in the program in 2018, from over 80 applicants.

In addition to getting selected for the Local Foods, Local Places award in October 2017, the Township and ACER also applied for other proposals to help with the ASEEDS initiatives. One was to the Delta Regional Authority for a Creative Place Making for the Arts program. These many proposals and efforts are all working to move Duck Hill closer to the goal of planning for renovating and repurposing Binford High School into the Lucy E. Campbell and Lloyd T. Binford Center for Arts, Culture and Social Impact. The Local Foods, Local Places workshop, timed for June 2018, was an important part of this overall holistic sustainability process, and addressed some critical next steps with the action plan that would result.

As part of the Local Foods, Local Places application process, a steering committee was formed in Duck Hill. The committee (see Figure 4) is comprised of a variety of community partners that have already been as part of the on-going ASEEDS initiative. They were supported by a technical assistance team comprised of consultants and multiple federal and state agency partners (Figure 7). The Steering Committee expressed a desire to continue working on the various food and place related aspects of the ASEEDS initiative and identified these general focus areas for the workshop.



Figure 7 – Renovation and re-use of the Binford School Building was a major focus of discussion at the workshop. Image credit: 3TP Ventures

Local Foods, Local Places Technical Assistance Team

- **Lucretian Hamilton**, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Community Revitalization, Washington, D.C.
- **Deborah Ortiz**, EPA Region 4, Office of Environmental Justice and Sustainability, Atlanta, GA
- **Rafaela Moura**, EPA Region 4: Office of the Regional Administrator, Atlanta, GA
- **William Kenneth Dean**, EPA-MDOT Liaison, EPA Region 4, Jackson, MS/Atlanta, GA
- **Gregory Dale**, United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development (USDA RD)
- **Justin Wilkes**, USDA RD, Jackson, MS
- **Ron Batcher**, Architect, USDA Agriculture Marketing Service, Washington, D.C.
- **Jerrie Magruder**, Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Mississippi Field Office, Jackson, MS
- **Ziva James**, HUD
- **Gloria Huang**, Economic Development Agency (EDA), Atlanta, GA
- **Spencer Lucker**, Delta Regional Authority, Washington, D.C.
- **Randy Jansen**, Transportation FHWA Mississippi Division (Jackson, MS)
- **David Guthrie**, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Atlanta
- **Jason Espie**, EPR PC (technical assistance lead consultant), Charlottesville, VA
- **Ebony Walden**, Ebony Walden Consulting (technical assistance consultant) Richmond, VA
- **Alan Steinbeck**, 3TP Ventures (technical assistance consultant), Chapel Hill, NC

Figure 6 – The Local Foods, Local Places Technical Assistance Team consists of federal, state and regional agency representatives, along with technical assistance consultants.



Figure 8 – Lucie E. Campbell was a nationally known performing artist from Duck Hill, and a strong source of local pride. Many Delta towns honor and celebrate their local artists and musicians, who are a rich part of the regions’, and our nation’s, cultural identity and heritage. The music and blues of the Delta draws thousands of tourists from around the world every year. Image credit: EPR PC

- Engage and empower the community at large to be a part of the process of community development and sustainability.
 - Promote a clear understanding of the importance of local food, including nutrition and health awareness.
 - Identify strategies for applying grass roots strategies that will improve the conditions of buildings and infrastructure.

The remainder of this report and appendices document the engagement process, the workshop activities, and most importantly, the outcome: a community action plan to achieve Duck Hill’s goals.

ENGAGEMENT

The technical assistance engagement process for Local

Foods, Local Places has three phases, illustrated in Figure 9 below. The plan phase consists of three preparation conference calls with the steering committee and technical assistance team to clarify goals and arrange workshop logistics. The convene phase includes the effort’s capstone event—a two-day workshop in the community. The act phase includes three follow-up conference calls to finalize a community action plan and strategize on how to maintain momentum generated during the workshop. The community workshop was held over a two-day period from June 28-29, 2018 and the activities on those days are described below. Workshop exercise results are summarized in **Appendix A**, workshop sign-in sheets are provided in **Appendix B**, a workshop photo album is provided in **Appendix C**, a data profile in **Appendix D**, funding resources in **Appendix E**, and general references in **Appendix F**.

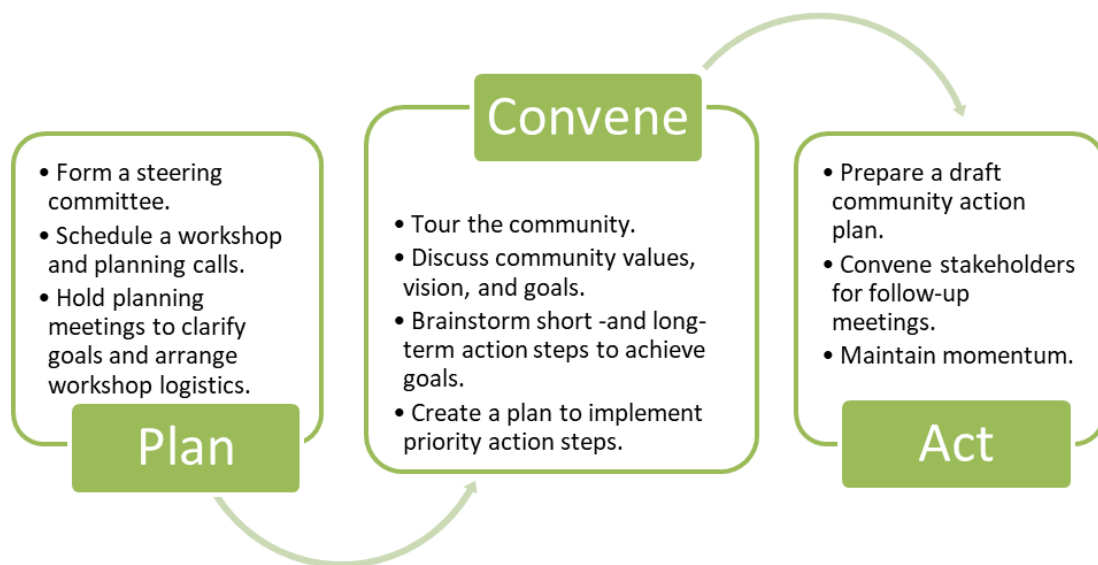


Figure 9 - Local Foods, Local Places Technical Assistance Process Diagram

COMMUNITY TOUR

In advance of the first community session on June 28th, the local Steering Committee conducted a driving tour of Duck Hill's neighborhoods, downtown, community assets and historical sites. Visiting federal partners and the technical assistance team joined the tour.

The tour began at the Lloyd T. Binford High School building (built 1936). The building has been vacant for several years due to school consolidation and it is currently owned by the Town. The adaptive reuse of the building is central to the many elements of Duck Hill's community development and sustainability strategy. The plan is to turn the building into the Lucie E. Campbell and Lloyd T. Binford Center for Arts, Culture and Social Impact. The social impact element of the programming will seek to address issues of health, education, economic opportunities and safety/crime reduction. Elements of the center will include studios, makers' spaces, performing arts facilities and community meeting space. There is also the potential for a history room and cultural center designed for preservation and presentation of the community's history. Spaces and activities for the community's youth are also being planned as there is the need for structured activity after school and in the evenings. One wing of the old school – an addition to the original school - could potentially become a new Town Hall. At the time of the workshop, a master planning effort was underway to include exercise equipment and walking trails on the campus that would connect with a larger trail and sidewalk system on adjacent properties and streets.

The tour included information about an innovative, low cost stormwater management technique. The approach is being taken at the front of the Binford building along both sides of Main Street. Localized flooding risk is being mitigated through new trenching, drainage pipes and gravel fill (see Figure 11). The installations collect, store and filter water on the way to a primary drainage ditch just east on Main Street.



Figure 10 – The tour stopped by the ATV recreation park just outside of town. This park represents an economic driver for the town. Image credit: EPR PC



Figure 12 - Stormwater drainage being installed. Image credit: EPR PC



Figure 11 – Chief Duck and the park between the commercial area of downtown and the rail line. Image credit: 3TP Ventures

After spending time at the Binford building site, the tour proceeded around town to view several important community assets. This included many of the neighborhood streets and some specific residential developments that told the story of past housing decisions and current housing issues. There has not been much housing investment at all in the past several decades. Many of the properties need rehabilitation or redevelopment. There are some vacant sites and lots throughout town that would be appropriate for infill development. Many neighborhood areas are somewhat isolated from the town's assets and services due to lack of sidewalks and some residents that do not own cars. There are plans for adding sidewalks to many of the streets, but funding has yet to be secured for these needs. Another significant issue in the neighborhoods is flood risk. Many houses were sited in flood prone areas and there is a general lack of stormwater infrastructure to protect against flooding.

The tour included a stop in downtown. The downtown business district has the majority of businesses in town but does not have a full set of services for the community. One common issue raised by community members is only having one gas station. Many of the shopping needs of the community are going unmet, despite there being a small, relatively new discount store at the edge of town.

There are two important sites to the west of town. One is the privately-owned ATV park that attracts many visitors throughout the year. There is also the Grassroots Blues Festival Site that is home to the annual music event.

The tour also included a trip to the 1937 lynching site off Highway 404. The site of the lynching and the site of the robbery that led to the arrest of the two persons lynched are currently unmarked. This event received national attention as it happened at a time of national policy debate given the violence happening in Nazi-

Tour Highlights and Observations

- The Binford High School adaptive use project is a major undertaking, but will be a transformative catalyst for community development and further investment
- Much of the community's history is not fully documented, but needs to be preserved and reconciled through present day initiatives
- There is a need for structured activities and programs for the youth and a desire for intergenerational activities
- The US 51 corridor is a food desert for its entire stretch in Montgomery County
- There are a few properties in town that can be used for community use and local food production
- Housing is aging, and many members of the community cannot afford maintenance
- More sidewalks and transportation services are needed
- The stormwater system is not adequate and there are flooding issues

Figure 13 – Key takeaways from the community tour and observations on the key community issues partners are working to address.



Figure 14 – A delicious meal was generously cooked by the steering committee members and friends and served outside the gym. Image credit: EPR PC

occupied Germany against Jews and other groups. The community is working to better document the events and be able to tell the story of what happened there.

VISION AND VALUES – DAY ONE

Over forty residents and community stakeholders attended the first public session of the workshop on the evening of June 28th. Ramona Williams, project consultant and local point of contact, welcomed attendees to the event and spoke about the Steering Committee’s objective in bringing the community together for this event. Ramona focused on the progress made of ASEEDS thus far, noted the current installation of stormwater mitigation, talked about the visit of the MS State architecture design studio, ultimately their desire to make progress on the Binford building, community gardens, farmers markets and other health and food-related place-making efforts in that part of town. She called upon participants to utilize the LFLP technical assistance opportunity to further the collaborative, communicative, and systematic approach in order to work more effectively and quickly towards building a more sustainable, healthy and prosperous Duck Hill.

After initial remarks, the technical assistance team introduced the Local Foods, Local Places program with a short presentation. The team highlighted the elements and benefits of a local food system, as well as the importance of incorporating ‘equity’ as a measure of the system’s success. Additionally, the team shared demographic and regional data that demonstrated useful baseline measurements of health and wealth. More publicly available data about Duck Hill and Montgomery County can be found in **Appendix D**.

This I believe about Duck Hill...

... It is a great place to live; It has the potential to do great things; We have many gifts and talents; We have the resources we need to succeed; We can do great things if we work together; We can integrate the youth and the seniors; Persistence can carry us forward; The money is usually there, you just have to ask for it and have a good idea

Figure 15 -- Vision and Values Exercise Results called “This I Believe” where participants were asked to complete the statement “This I believe about my community.” Above are some of the words that came from this exercise that reflect the positive aspects that framed the workshops action planning sessions on day two.



Figure 16 – The community gathering welcomed Duck Hill residents, state officials and food system and health stakeholders from around the region. Image credit: EPR PC

The primary purpose of the community meeting was to hear from residents and other stakeholders about their hopes for the future of food and revitalization in Duck Hill. The technical assistance team led attendees through the “This I believe...” exercise designed to bring up core values of the community. The group generated a lot of energy with this exercise and overarching themes emerged that are important for the community to keep in mind as it moves forward with all its goals. These themes are the commitment to embracing the community’s diversity, passion, and youth, recognizing and leveraging a history of coming together to solve problems, collaborating for better utilization of resources, and building upon the



Figure 18 – Participants on day one at the Duck Hill Missionary Baptist Church.

community’s beauty and values for resilience and an enduring quality of life.

The technical team also asked workshop participants to write aspirational headlines for 5-10 years into the future around the topics of the Community Center (future Binford/Lucie Campbell Center), food and downtown. Their thoughts are summarized in Figure 17. The night concluded with a review of the workshop goal areas and people who would not be attending on day two were encouraged to give comments or suggest actions.

Aspirations and Ideas for the Future

Community Center

- Performing arts center and agricultural center
- High-tech training center
- Fun places and things to experience
- Youth center for healthy eating

Food

- Community garden
- Farmers market
- Selling food from local farmers
- Healthy youth bar
- Youth wins fruit salad competition
- Americanized Mexican food truck
- Fast food restaurants replaced with grocery stores

Downtown

- Grocery store
- New restaurant
- Coffee shop with breakfast service
- Community health center
- Another gas station
- Clothes store
- Train to hill trail (and 10,000 visitors)
- 5 kilometer walk and grass roots blues show
- Recreational buildings
- More festivals
- More activities

Figure 17 – Summaries of thoughts about the future grouped by category: community center, food and downtown.

ACTION PLANNING - DAY TWO

Case Studies

The second day of the workshop began with examples of strategies used by other communities to advance their food system and place-making initiatives. The Richmond Food Justice Alliance work in Richmond, Virginia was presented highlighting local, neighborhood efforts to increase food access and health in lower-income, high minority areas. Other case studies included arts-oriented place making and job training programs of the Griot and Meraki groups in Clarksdale, Mississippi. An example from High Point, North Carolina, of the library as an anchor for neighborhood health, food, community gathering, and revitalization and a series on organizing farmers markets was presented. Around each of these case studies there were plenary discussions about lessons learned and takeaways for what Duck Hill wants to accomplish.

Asset Mapping and Idea Generation

Workshop attendees participated in an asset mapping exercise designed to generate ideas for the community in advance of action planning. Participants were asked to identify quick fixes (red), food system elements (yellow), favorite things (blue), and opportunities (green). Working in groups around maps, participants plotted and inventoried locations downtown, city-wide, and across the region. An example of the downtown map is included below and the full set of asset maps are included in **Appendix A**.



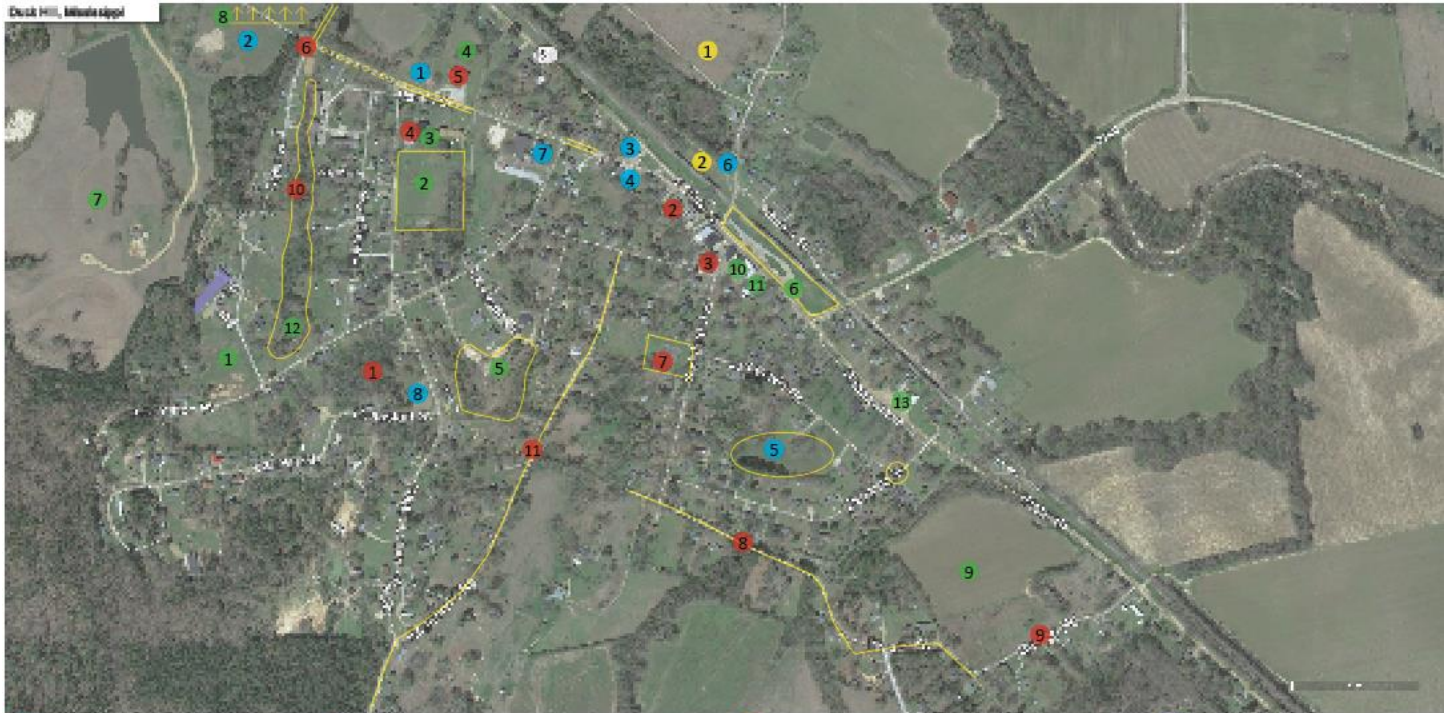
Figure 19 – The morning of day two started with a recap of night one and case studies from other communities, interspersed with discussion.



Figure 20 – Day two asset mapping.



Figure 21 – Mayor Cooley of Duck Hill reports out from his asset mapping group exercise.



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|--|--|---|--|
| <p>● Fixing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Old school building 2. Downtown 3. Old grocery store 4. Binford building 5. Gym (floor, AC) 6. Pave all roads 7. Repair park & tennis court 8. Repair & pave road 9. Repair & pave road 10. Drainage repair flooding 11. Repair road | <p>● Opportunities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Playgroun possibility (clearing land now) 2. Playground & basketball court 3. Arts/Culture impact 4. Gardening/food 5. Housing 6. Farmers market/location opportunity (city owned) 7. Housing opportunity 8. Job opportunity 9. Housing opportunity 10. Old grocery store 11. Old pool hall --> rec center 12. Housing opportunity 13. Store Opportunity | <p>● Favorites</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Church/His. 2. Dollar General 3. Duck Hill food market 4. Postal Service 5. Bogue Creek Festival (privately Owned) 6. Bride of Christ Church 7. Duck Hill Baptist Church 8. Binford Chapel Church | <p>● Food System</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Food market/growing (city owned) 2. Food opportunity |
|--|--|---|--|

Figure 22 - Example of the results of the asset mapping exercise which was designed to generate ideas and discussion in advance of the action planning session. The other two maps generated can be found in Appendix A.

ACTION PLAN

The action planning process during the workshop consisted of a few phases of work. First there was a brainstorming session, where participants were asked to write down on post-it notes an action in a complete sentence for one or more goals. These post-it notes were then placed on posters with goal statements. As they were placed, the duplicate actions, or similar ones were clustered and/or merged. The next phase included a dot voting exercise where participants were given a set number of dots and were asked to place them next to specific actions, or clusters of actions, to indicate which ones either were most important or needed immediate attention. The final phase included small working groups, assessing the prioritization voting and transferring the top 2-5 actions onto a blank action planning poster, identifying actions first and then completing the details of each one, such as importance, timeframe, lead role, etc. The goals and supporting actions are listed below. The tables that follow provide additional detail for each action.

- Goal 1 – Transform the Binford Building and grounds into a center for arts, culture and social impact.
 - *Action 1.1* – Organize community cleanup day for the Binford Building and surrounding property.
 - *Action 1.2* – Develop a community garden on the Binford School property.
 - *Action 1.3* – Resource funding for the renovation of the Binford School into a center for arts, culture and social impact to include educational and agricultural programming.
 - *Action 1.4* – Obtain historical landmark designation for Duck Hill buildings focusing on the Binford School.
- Goal 2 – Identify strategies for applying grassroots approaches that will improve the condition of buildings and infrastructure.
 - *Action 2.1* – Organize a team to assess and propose a route for the community walking trail.
 - *Action 2.2* – Research current university programs that provide student work for green technologies for the Binford complex and roads.
 - *Action 2.3* – Teach youth and residents to use green technology for buildings and public infrastructure and develop research and training modules and curriculum for top priority green technologies to implement in Duck Hill.
- Goal 3 – Promote a clear understanding of the importance of local foods, including nutrition and health awareness.
 - *Action 3.1* – Develop and host a series of community events that engage the young, the old, growers, gardeners, and any other interested parties to come together around the subjects of food, health, and helping each other thrive and survive.
 - *Action 3.2* – Engage the churches to promote healthy foods and physical activity for general health and wellbeing.
 - *Action 3.3* – Formalize and expand a backyard gardeners network to activate community members already engaged as advocates and teachers to establish a community teaching and demonstration garden at the gym or Binford property.
- Goal 4 – Engage and empower the community.
 - *Action 4.1* – Make the local public aware of the Achieving Sustainability through Education and Economic Development Solutions (ASEEDS) initiative.
 - *Action 4.2* – Develop a network map of resources provided in the community and examine gaps.
 - *Action 4.3* – Form local team to do outreach to state and federal agencies.

- *Action 4.4* – Develop a list of performing and visual artists within Duck Hill.
- *Action 4.5* – Decide on a working group to continue this process for each goal.

GOAL 1: Transform the Binford Building and grounds into a center for arts, culture and social impact.

The Binford building and former school complex is currently owned by the Town of Duck Hill, and its restoration and re-purposing represents many opportunities for hosting different community events and functions. What is envisioned is a community center for arts, culture and social impact; a place that people may use, value, congregate, hold events, hold training sessions; and a potential site to house the municipal offices. It is adjacent to the gym and land that could become gardens and represents huge potential for transformation into a valuable community asset. The actions listed below describe some near-term efforts that can be taken towards this transformation.

Action 1.1: Organize community clean-up day for the Binford Building and surrounding property.

What this is and why it is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provides community ownership ● Provides vision for the community for buy-in to the project ● Brings the community together for a common goal ● Serves as a necessary step to meet other goals ● Facilitates investment
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A community cleanup group has been established ● An initial walk-through and game plan for the cleanup has been established ● The site is cleaned (construction cleanup) and prepared for the event ● The event is repeatable on an annual basis
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 month for pre-cleanup and organizing community volunteers ● 3-6 months for final cleanup
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Town of Duck Hill ● Organized community volunteer group ● Monique Cooley
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ron Batcher (architectural assistance) – United States Department of Agriculture ● Millennium Men’s and Women’s Club ● Local church groups and members ● County Supervisors
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● City equipment ● Waste removal fees ● Potential contract for one or more major pieces of work

Action 1.1: Organize community clean-up day for the Binford Building and surrounding property.

Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States Department of Agriculture • Community fundraising • State Bank • Entergy • Town of Duck Hill • Festivals (revenue) • County Supervisors
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Action 1.2: Develop a community garden on the Binford School property.

What this is and why it is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides healthy food • Encourages and facilitates healthy eating • Gives people a reason to come to the school • Promotes community involvement • Provides an opportunity for revenue generation
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Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The yield of the first harvest • The plantings grow • The number of families who use the garden • Gardening programs have been established • The number of families fed • The success of farmers market sales • Food producers for summer programs and student education
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Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-12 months • 1-7 months to establish planting beds • 7-12 months for the first crop
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Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Al White and ACER • Individual gardeners and farmers • Sharee McCarroll • Town of Duck Hill • Napoleon Grantham • Canary Grantham
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Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Millennium Men’s and Women’s Clubs • Mississippi State Extension • Local church groups and members • County Supervisors • Charles Houston’s Delta Community Farms Coop • Vickie Roberts - Ratliff
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Action 1.2: Develop a community garden on the Binford School property.

Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design plan • Equipment and building materials • Soil and seeds • Greenhouse or hoop house for starting seeds
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States Department of Agriculture High Tunnel System Initiative • Delta Regional Authority’s Local Food, Local Places grant • Home improvement stores’ donations • State Bank • Town of Duck Hill • County Supervisors

Action 1.3: Resource funding for the renovation of the Binford School into a center for arts, culture and social impact to include educational and agricultural programming.

What this is and why it is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes community goals and realizes visions • Provides community benefits • Facilitates historic preservation of the building • Provides activities for persons of all ages
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding is realized • The building renovations are completed • The building and facilities are being utilized • There is an increase in community participation
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-12 months for submitting funding applications • 1-3 months to acquire funding
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramona Williams • Al White • Town of Duck Hill
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Millennium Men’s and Women’s Clubs • Mississippi State Extension • Mississippi State Development Authority • Local churches • County Supervisors • Mississippi Hill Heritage Alliance • Delta State University’s Delta Music Institute
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mississippi Preservation Archives and History • Paid project manager to see the project through • Hard and soft costs for building renovation • Program funds for operations

Action 1.3: Resource funding for the renovation of the Binford School into a center for arts, culture and social impact to include educational and agricultural programming.

Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development – Community Facilities grants and loans • Delta Regional Authority’s Local Foods, Local Places grant • State Bank • Town of Duck Hill • County Supervisors • Main Street America
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Action 1.4: Obtain historical landmark designation for Duck Hill buildings focusing on the Binford School.

What this is and why it is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitates the acquisition of additional funding • Helps to achieve renovation goals
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A historical landmark designation has been obtained • Tourism increases • Community traffic increases • The community tax base increases
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-2 years per structure
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramona Williams • Al White • Town of Duck Hill
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duck Hill Preservation Community
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time to complete documentation and designation process
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Preservation Society • Mississippi Archives and History • Appalachian Regional Commission • Mississippi Hill Heritage Alliance • Mississippi Development Authority

Goal 2: Identify strategies for applying grassroots approaches that will improve the condition of buildings and infrastructure.

Beyond the specific activities of Goal 1 and the Binford building and property, there are a number of community improvement actions that were discussed that could be grassroots-organized, and direct approaches to clean up and fix specific buildings or work together on new assets such as walking trails. A lot is

already being done to address some of the flooding from storm water that occurs on Main Street, but more efforts may be needed.

Action 2.1: Organize a team to assess and propose a route for the community walking trail.

What this is and why it is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides an early success, which builds interest and morale among the community members for the future trail Presents and resolves issues in master planning the site for other uses
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A team of at least 3 people has been organized Potential properties and land owners have been identified Potential routes have been mapped and determined feasible Cost estimates and funding strategies are completed
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 months to assemble a team 6 months to generate a proposal
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor Joey Cooley (5K walk) Al White (ACER)
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landowners County person Eddie (owner of Powell Mountain) The current organizers of walks. Melba Laster Nannette
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concept design and drawings needed to construct facility Time for organizing and documenting team's process and findings
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delta Regional Authority Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks

Action 2.2: Research current university programs that provide student work for green technologies for the Binford complex and roads.

What this is and why it is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable development includes storm water management (reducing flooding)
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find at least one university and one student to conduct the research Identify programs and initiatives at Mississippi State, Jackson State, and Mississippi Valley State, including engineering, architecture, building construction and planning
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall 2018 (search) January 2019 (start research) May 2019 (research done) Follow up collaborations established prior to the 2019-2020 school year
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MCUP / ASEED

Action 2.2: Research current university programs that provide student work for green technologies for the Binford complex and roads.

Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mississippi State College of Architecture and Design Sustainability works ASEED partners and sponsors
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local point of contact time to reach out to schools and organize information Student time to perform research
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University-funded classes and research

Action 2.3: Teach youth and residents to use green technology for buildings and public infrastructure and develop research and training modules and curriculum for top priority green technologies to implement in Duck Hill.

What this is and why it is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trains and hires locals who can apply these trades elsewhere Builds local skills and capacity Ongoing training Saves money Emphasizes green infrastructure and sustainability practices, i.e., buildings and roads
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority technologies have been developed The first class of workers is trained and certified (5-10 people)
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get research from student by summer 2019 Start this process summer 2019, complete by end of calendar year 2019 Identify needs and establish training in first half of 2020 Recruit and train first class in 2020
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MCUP / ASEED
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mississippi Department of Environmental Policy Delta Electric Town of Duck Hill (roads) Small businesses Groundwork USA (youth/green)
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time and money to create program design and budget Cost of training Cost of projects including materials and labor
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> United States Department of Energy United States Environmental Protection Agency Delta Regional Authority University partnerships Revolving Loan Fund for specific building, site and infrastructure improvements (USDA Rural Development, state or local)

Goal 3: Promote a clear understanding of the importance of local foods, including nutrition and health awareness.

Duck Hill has been focusing on a number of community-driven initiatives that include sustainability, notably through the Achieving Sustainably through Education, Economic Development Solutions (ASEEDS) program. It is one of six communities chosen by the Southeastern Sustainability Director’s Network (SSDN), the Kendeda Fund and the Delta Regional Authority to invest in much needed planning and infrastructure. Mayor Joey Cooley describes ASEEDS as a program that will plant the seeds for creative place-making around arts and sustainability. A large part of sustainability is also health and food, which lead the Town to apply for the Local Foods, Local Places assistance program. This goal is focused on broadening the access of healthy food, local food and nutrition awareness and education in the community. Food is life and a catalyst that brings people together.

Action 3.1: Develop and host a series of community events that engage the young, the old, growers, gardeners, and any other interested parties to come together around the subjects of food, health, and helping each other thrive and survive.

<p>What this is and why it is important</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Some ideas for a series of community events focused on food could include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Participating in October Fest and Harvest Fest ○ Hosting a collard greens fest ○ A 5K walk ending in a pot luck dinner and music ○ Programming activities and engagement ○ Hosting a taste testing of locally-grown food as part of a health event ○ Creating a healthy youth club of students who can learn about foods grown in a community garden and how to prepare them. ○ Developing a network mapping database of who is doing what in the area (identifying gardening in community, engaging in lunches, chat and chews, grub and grow activities) ● These events are important because they <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide ○ an opportunity for civic interaction over food and community ○ Create space for dialogue ○ Build social capital ○ Generate interest in people ○ Provide opportunities for learning and sharing
<p>Measures of success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A person has been identified to organize the events ● The number of events held per year increases, e.g., 4 meetings or events per year ● Events are held quarterly or in conjunction with other events
<p>Timeframe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tie into existing milestones and coordinate with ASEEDS’ sustainability plan timeline
<p>Lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Millennial Men’s and Women’s Clubs. Shernell will reach out to Jackie Eskridge about taking the lead on this.

Action 3.1: Develop and host a series of community events that engage the young, the old, growers, gardeners, and any other interested parties to come together around the subjects of food, health, and helping each other thrive and survive.

Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACER • M-CUP • Working groups for each goal from the Local Foods, Local Places participants
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer time • Food donations from growers
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Bank • Local business sponsors

Action 3.2: Engage the churches to promote healthy foods and physical activity for general health and wellbeing.

What this is and why it is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faith is part of most people’s lives here • Churches are important and are organized • There are 11 churches in Duck Hill, and the group Christian Women on a Mission could be an effective group for collaborating on food-related issues and increasing the options of healthy food at church events • The Holy Ground Collaborative is an example that could be a model for partnering with churches and working with ministers
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a coordinator • There is a bulletin for announcements at churches • Most churches in Duck Hill are engaged in some way • A key person at each church who will be involved and committed to help with activities and outreach has been identified
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tie into existing milestones and coordinate with ASEEDS’ sustainability plan timeline
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shernell and Christian Women on a Mission • Stephanie Hollis and Nora White (need to contact)
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Millennial Men’s and Women’s Clubs • Community Unity Group (4th of July)
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office space • Supplies to operate • Volunteer time
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership with the Urban Institute • Mississippi State Department of Health

Action 3.3: Formalize and expand a backyard gardeners network to activate community members already engaged as advocates and teachers to participate in a community teaching and demonstration garden at the gym or Binford property.

What this is and why it is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the existing network of vegetable growers in and around Duck Hill by adding such things as off-season (fall and winter) hoop houses (high tunnels) • It would involve reaching out to area growers to gauge their interest in selling their produce at a future farmers market in Duck Hill • Establish a place where people could come together to work and learn about growing, share knowledge and raise produce together • Opportunity to utilize services provided by Mississippi State Extension Service • Identifies master growers and finds champions • Teaches skills and connects mentors to mentees • Empowers people to grow their own food, raising self-esteem and pride in self-sufficiency • Connects people and creates efficiencies through shared knowledge, tools and resources
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of every harvest season there is a showing of products • The number of members • The number of gardens per year
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tie into existing milestones and coordinate with ASEEDS' sustainability plan timeline
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Canary (Master Gardener) and team of gardeners
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Montgomery County Extension • Master gardener network • Creek Rangers • Any interested Local Foods, Local Places committee members
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High tunnels, tools, equipment for a demonstration garden
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States Department of Agriculture High Tunnel System Initiative • Delta Regional Authority Local Food, Local Places grant • Home improvement stores' donations • State Bank • Town of Duck Hill • County Supervisors

Goal 4: Engage and empower the community.

The ASEEDS initiative is a two-year program that has a number of activities that seek to engage and empower community members to improve aspects of their community. In February of 2018, an ASEEDS community engagement forum was held, and now the LFLP workshop is seen as a continuation of the same effort of community engagement. Goal 4 focused on keeping the momentum of ASEEDS and incorporating food and creative place-making as part of the engagement and empowerment efforts of the community at a very grassroots level. Working with people takes time, effort and continual attention. The actions below address some next steps to keep the momentum of ASEEDS and LFLP going.

Action 4.1: Make the local public aware of the Achieving Sustainability through Education and Economic Development Solutions (ASEEDS) initiative.

What this is and why it is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps empower community members • Highlights the benefits and opportunities of the program • Acts as resource guide for project development and program participation
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategy for communications is complete, including newspapers, flyers and social media • A website is completed
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commence activities immediately • Communications strategy complete within 3 months • Website complete within 6 months • Ongoing communication is needed to succeed
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shernell Everette • Ramona Williams
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Churches • Schools • City organizations • Community leaders • Radio and TV stations
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part-time communications lead identified • Volunteers that serve in the communications network • Publication costs for materials • Maintenance costs for website
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be established as part of ASEEDS' annual budget

Action 4.2: Develop a network map of resources provided in the community and examine gaps.

What this is and why it is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines who is currently at the table doing community work • Reveals potential project, program and funding partnerships
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network map of resources is published and services are being used
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define format and scope within 3 months • Publish first version within 9 months
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramona Taylor
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Al White, ACER • Shernell Everette • Nollie Jenkins Family Center
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time and publication costs
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be established as part of ASEEDS' annual budget

Action 4.3: Form local team to do outreach to state and federal agencies.

What this is and why it is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows proactive outreach to learn what programs are available • Reinforces community priorities for projects and programs • Garners feedback from potential partners on the feasibility and scope of initiatives
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A running list of agencies to meet with has been developed • Formal tracking of funding cycles of potential partners has begun
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-6 months for initial push
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town of Duck Hill, Mayor Joey Cooley or designated person(s)
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justin Wilkes – United States Department of Agriculture – Mississippi • Gregory Dale – United States Department of Agriculture • Mississippi Development Authority
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time dedicated to meetings and coordination • No cost
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A

Action 4.4: Develop a list of performing and visual artists within Duck Hill.

What this is and why it is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies artists and facilitates participation in community initiatives Distributes information in the Campbell Center for community and visitors
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The task is completed and published Ongoing through documentary
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List to be completed within 4-6 months Engagement will be an ongoing process
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Al White, ACER Willie Farmer
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duck Hill community
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No cost
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A

Action 4.5: Decide on a working group to continue this process for each goal of the Local Foods, Local Places action plan.

What this is and why it is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures that progress is being made Provides structure in decision making Creates forum for formal organization around specific projects and events Promotes exchange of ideas across organizations
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly meetings are held for the first ninety days, then quarterly to report out Continuous coordination for at least one year An accounting of implementation success is reported back to community and Local Foods, Local Places partners
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings to commence immediately following Local Foods, Local Places workshop
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duck Hill Coalition
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town of Duck Hill to make sure conversations are happening and productive
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No cost
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A

IMPLEMENTATION AND NEXT STEPS

Duck Hill stakeholders are working to advance the goals and actions described in the previous section. The Steering Committee is working with the Delta Regional Authority, which made available \$15,000 in assistance for Duck Hill to implement elements of this action plan. The project stakeholders met prior to the last conference call associated with the Local Foods, Local Places technical assistance and identified priorities for using the assistance. In addition to using these funds, the local stakeholders are raising money to rehabilitate the Binford Building and open the Lucie E. Campbell and Lloyd T. Binford Center for Arts, Culture and Social Impact. There is also a need to prioritize raising operating funds for the ASEEDS initiative to spearhead project implementation.

APPENDICES

- Appendix A – Workshop Exercise Results
- Appendix B – Workshop Sign-in Sheets
- Appendix C – Workshop Photo Album
- Appendix D – Community Data Profile
- Appendix E – Funding Resources
- Appendix F – Reference