Planning a Healthy and Sustainable Community

Sharice Davids, Deputy Director | Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation
Oglala Lakota
“Scatters Their Own / First to Attack”

Nine Reservation Districts:
1. Eagle Nest
2. LaCreek
3. Medicine Root
4. Pass Creek
5. Pine Ridge
6. Porcupine
7. Wakpamni
8. White Clay
9. Wounded Knee

Tribal/Agency Headquarters: Pine Ridge, SD
Counties: Bennett, Jackson, Shannon
Languages: Lakota, English
Total Area: Approximately 2,700,000 acres
Tribally Owned: 706,340 acres
Allotted Owned: 1,064,840 acres
Total Tribal/Allotted Owned: 1,771,180 acres (65.5%)

Federal or Non-tribally Controlled: 928,820 acres (34.5%)
Pine Ridge Reservation Today

- Second-largest Indian Reservation in the United States (land base)
- Almost 40,000 residents, predominantly Native American
- Overwhelming majority of population below Federal poverty threshold
- Over 50% of the population is under the age of 18 years & growing
- Remote location & scattered sites / heavily transportation dependent
- High rates of unemployment / lack of economic opportunity
- Opportunity hampered by lack of technological, industrial, commercial, and/or physical infrastructure
- Severe housing shortage (over +4,000 homes)
- Much of the existing housing stock is substandard
Many Challenges

- Life expectancy low – about 50 yrs for men & 54 for women
- Substance abuse affects 8 out of 10 families
- Alcohol/drug related events 300% higher than the U.S. average
- Teen suicide rate 150% higher than the U.S. average
- Infant mortality rate 300% higher than the U.S. average
- Diabetes rate 800% higher than the U.S. average
- Cervical cancer 500% higher than the U.S. average
- High drop-out rates in schools / 800% teacher turnover rate
- Limited access to suitable home sites due to land fractionation
- Younger generations often times have little options for land ownership
MISSION STATEMENT

“Empowering Lakota youth and families to improve the health, culture and environment of our communities through the healing and strengthening of cultural identity.”
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Beginning with what is valued by the People
Major Findings

• Determine the NEEDS AND DESIRES of the community

• Living Laboratory for exploring NEW WAYS OF LIVING while honoring tradition

• Restore identity and regenerate pride through LANGUAGE & CULTURE

• Provide a nurturing, healthy and well-connected SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT for youth and families to learn, advance and prosper

• Be prepared to adapt to the effects of CLIMATE CHANGE

• Restore and strengthen SELF-SUFFICIENCY

• Make a foundation for a better future for our CHILDREN & GRANDCHILDREN

• Change the course of history through HEALING & ACTION

• Reinforce our respect our MAKA INA (Mother Earth)
ACTION STEPS

• Help solve the **HOUSING** shortage and create opportunity for stable home life

• Increase infrastructure for growth of **BUSINESSES & JOBS**

• Promote pathways to **BUILD CAPACITY** at home

• Create synergy and clearly communicate the sequence of what is needed to **OUTSIDE INVESTORS**

• Build up resilience to outside markets through seeking **FOOD SOVEREIGNTY**

• Create a **MODEL** for how to realize homegrown Native solutions

• Create a planned **NET ZERO GREEN COMMUNITY**
## Equity and Opportunity Study 2015

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BUSINESSES & JOBS

Worker Owned Enterprise Program

Northwest Area Foundation / Democracy Collaborative

- Learning Action Lab
- Evergreen Cooperatives

- Construction Company
- Sustainable Food: Greenhouse & Grocery Store
- Business Services and Technical Assistance
Building Capacity

Workforce Development through Sustainable Construction Program

Administration for Native Americans

• 5 year $2.5 Million Grant

• Initial year of funding
• 10 participants
• Eligibility Requirements
  • Not employed
  • Not in school
  • Between the ages of 18 and 26

• Benefits
  • Life Skills organized through Individualized Success Plans
  • Individualized Education Plans
  • Construction Skills
Now What???

REGENERATIVE COMMUNITY
GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY
JUNE 22, 2015

• Funding announcement regarding infrastructure.

• Obtained Designation as a Promise Zone.

• Recently announced as a site for Rose Architecture Fellow.

• Secured significant subsidies enabling low and very low income families to become homeowners for reduced prices.
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