

FOREWORD

As part of the implementation of the Technology Opportunities Program (TOP) project Getting Rural Virginia Connected: A Vision for the Future, funded by the United States Department of Commerce, we would like to provide you with a detailed report of project-related activities that were undertaken in King and Queen County. We hope it will be useful to local government leaders, Virginia Cooperative Extension agents, Technology Leadership Team members, and all county residents with an interest in technology and economic development in King and Queen County. Many of you were closely involved with the project on a regular basis, and much of the information provided is well known. At the same time, we thought it was important to provide background material along with a detailed description of how the project unfolded and how decisions were made, for those learning about it for the first time.

We wish to again acknowledge the matching funds of \$6,000 provided to us by the King and Queen Board of Supervisors which helped to make King and Queen County's participation in this program possible. All of us in Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Blacksburg Electronic Village have enjoyed working with you over the past two years. We hope the King and Queen Information Trail <http://www.kqinfotrail.net> will continue to make a difference in your community and that this report will be helpful as you continue to move ahead in the deployment of information technology to support the vision of your local leadership.

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Blacksburg Electronic Village

INTRODUCTION

Getting Rural Virginia Connected: A Vision for the Future, funded through the Technology Opportunities Program (TOP) of the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC), had its beginning in Spring 2001. At that time Dr. John Dooley, Associate Director for Family and Consumer Sciences and Community Initiatives in Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE), and Dr. Andrew Cohill, Director of the Blacksburg Electronic Village (BEV) at Virginia Tech, learned of this funding opportunity. The TOP project was designed to help rural communities in Virginia develop the capacities needed to prosper in the Information Age economy. The underlying purpose of the project was to empower citizens with the knowledge and tools to become active participants in their economic futures. This was accomplished through a participatory process of education on trends in the county, visioning for an improved future, and ways to make that future a reality. Technology was identified as one of the tools to create the kind of future citizens wanted in their counties.

The initial step in each county was the formation of a Technology Leadership Team with a broad representation of citizens from across the county that served as a steering committee to provide on-going direction to the local project. The next step was the implementation of *Take Charge*, an educational program designed to enable leaders, decision-makers, and residents in rural communities to review their strengths and weaknesses and develop a vision for the future. One component of this vision focused on how technology could be used to address issues in their communities. A central piece of the TOP program was the development of a community electronic network and web site that would increase citizen participation in local government, promote community connectedness, and support economic development.

The community networks were modeled after the Blacksburg Electronic Village and provide various features to assist communities in meeting the goals described above. The Community Connections program supports web sites for civic, faith-based, and other community organizations to inform county residents of the services and opportunities for personal development available in their county. A Community Calendar keeps folks informed of government meetings, church or club meetings, or recreational events. Posting the meeting times and agendas of the local Board of Supervisors promotes citizen participation in local government, and the web site Discussion Forum encourages public conversation and dialogue on matters of importance to the county. The Village Mall lists individual businesses, and county residents needing a particular product or service can use this business directory to find a provider in their own community and support the local economy. Tourists planning to visit the locality can find the name of a local bed and breakfast. Finally, the Virtual Business Incubator helps start-up businesses develop their own web site describing their products or services. Technology training for local citizens was also part of the TOP plan so that residents could develop the skills needed to use the web site and volunteers would be prepared to administer the site after the grant funding was completed. (A detailed description of the network services made available to each county by the Blacksburg Electronic Village can be found in Appendix A.)

In addition to their visioning process and community networks, each county received a technology assessment from which a technology master plan was developed. John Nichols, Information Technology Manager for Network Infrastructure and Services, spent time in each county interviewing and researching businesses and network providers to provide a custom

report for each county. This individualized master plan can serve as a blueprint for future plans to acquire high speed Internet access or other technology development.

The TOP program presented an opportunity for two entities within Virginia Tech, VCE and BEV, to develop a working partnership that would benefit rural Virginia communities. VCE has expertise and experience in helping small communities plan for and take control of their future, and BEV brings expertise and experience in technology assessment and building community networks. With this in mind, Dr. Dooley and Dr. Cohill developed a collaborative proposal that targeted nine rural, economically challenged counties across Virginia. They targeted counties with lower education and income levels and higher outward migration rates as compared to Virginia as a whole, and a need for economic growth. Each participating county pledged a contribution of \$6,000 (\$2,000 per year over three years) to meet the technical costs associated with maintaining their community networks on the BEV server. At the completion of the project, counties would decide if they wished to continue to host their community network sites with the BEV, or move to another Web hosting service provider.

As the target counties were identified, Dr. Dooley approached the local VCE agent regarding his/her willingness to serve as the local leader of the county project. The local agent carried the project forward to representatives of county government to obtain their approval and financial commitment. The grant proposal was submitted in Spring 2001 with letters of commitment from Carroll, Dickenson, and Grayson Counties in the VCE Southwest District; Craig County in the VCE Northwest District; Cumberland County in the VCE Central District; Louisa County in the VCE Northern District; King and Queen County in the VCE Northeast District; and Accomack and Northampton Counties in the VCE Southeast District. In Fall 2001 Virginia Tech was notified that the proposal was funded, with a start date of October 1, 2001. (The project scope was modified in August 2003 to exclude Grayson and Carroll counties since they had completed many of the project objectives prior to the onset of this project, and there were not sufficient resources to implement a modified project plan for these two counties.)

Unfortunately, personnel turnover at Virginia Tech delayed the start of the project. First, Dr. Dooley, the project leader for VCE, was assigned a new set of responsibilities as Interim Associate Provost for Outreach. About the same time Dr. Cohill resigned his position with the BEV. Also, State budget reductions resulted in the loss of VCE agents in several of the TOP counties and new local leadership had to be identified.

The VCE agents with TOP responsibilities in each of the nine counties were brought together in Blacksburg for a two-day orientation in March 2002. Project policies and procedures were established and a time line was developed for moving the project forward. Shortly thereafter, Dr. Eleanor Schlenker took over Dr. Dooley's responsibilities with the project, and Mathew Mathai was appointed Director of the BEV and Project Director for TOP. Tabitha Combs who was hired as the TOP Project Coordinator resigned her position at the BEV and Jaime Shetrone took her place in May 2002. The new project team met for the first time in June 2002, and work on the project was finally underway – eight months after the funding was awarded.

The geographic separation of the target counties presented a tremendous challenge in communication. To keep everyone informed, the BEV set up a TOP web site on which meeting minutes, publicity materials, PowerPoint programs, pictures of local meetings and activities, and

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a calendar of events for each county were posted on a regular basis (<http://top.bev.net/>). A comprehensive Project Implementation Plan developed by Mathew Mathai provided a step by step outline with benchmarks to measure progress and the completion of required tasks. A handout describing the BEV in a BOX features was made available for local distribution. These materials were also posted on the TOP site for use by BEV and VCE staff. The Project Implementation Plan is found in Appendix A.

GETTING STARTED

Securing County Support

Early in 2001, Dr. John Dooley spoke with Family and Community Sciences Agent Alinda Uzel about including King and Queen County in the TOP project. She brought this opportunity to the attention of the King and Queen County Administrator and Board of Supervisors who expressed strong support for the project and pledged the \$6,000 required for participation.

King and Queen County leaders informed of the project at this time included:

- County Administrator, Christopher Layton
- Board of Supervisors member, Lee Busick
- Board of Supervisors member, Earl Ball
- Board of Supervisors member, Ed Hall
- Board of Supervisors member, Sherrin Alsop
- Board of Supervisors member, Lawrence Simpkins
- Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Mary Linton
- Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Alpheus Arrington
- Principal of Central High School, Dr. Linda Noel-Batiste
- Principal of Lawson-Marriott School
- Principal of King and Queen Elementary School, Susan Leggett
- King and Queen Woman's Club
- King and Queen Ruritan Club
- County church leaders

Based on this local commitment, King and Queen County was included in the TOP proposal submitted to the DOC. In Fall 2001 Virginia Tech was notified that the grant was funded with the official start date of October 1, 2001. (A copy of the King and Queen County letter of commitment can be found in Appendix A.)

Extension Agent Training

The first step in the Project Implementation Plan was orientation and training for the VCE agents who would be leading the county programs. Agriculture and Natural Resources, Family and Community Sciences, Food, Nutrition and Health, and 4-H agents were involved in respective counties. A two-day training held on March 6-7, 2002 at Virginia Tech provided an overview of the timeline and benchmarks for project tasks. Agents representing all nine counties along with their District Directors attended. Dr Andrew Cohill, the BEV Director, demonstrated the various options that would be included on the county sites. VCE Community Initiatives specialists Pamela Gibson and Gary Larowe described the *Take Charge* process and the preparation required for those sessions.

A second training took place on November 12, 2002 at the Virginia Tech Center in Richmond. Mathew Mathai, TOP Project Director, and Jaime Shetrone, TOP Project Coordinator, reviewed the basic concepts of telecommunications infrastructure and the issues that rural communities

face in obtaining Internet access for their homes, schools, and businesses. VCE Community Initiatives specialist Gary Larowe explained the CSPP model to be used in evaluating current technology access and equipment in each county. (It was decided at a later time that John Nichols, Information Technology Manager with Network Infrastructure and Services at Virginia Tech, would carry out this assessment.) Finally, agents discussed the applications of community networks that could be helpful in their particular communities.

Forming a Technology Leadership Team

The next step in the Project Implementation Plan was recruiting a Technology Leadership Team (TLT). The TLT was the steering committee for the local project, and needed to include representatives from all geographical locations and population groups in the county. TLT members were expected to keep their local groups informed of on-going project activities and encourage their participation. The proposal submitted to the DOC indicated that each community within the county would have its own TLT. However, as the project began to move forward, it became obvious that all geographic areas of a county had to work together to support technology infrastructure and economic development, and all would be better served if there was one TLT providing leadership for the county. Ensuring broad representation from all areas of the county was a priority in recruiting TLT members.

Efforts to Recruit a Technology Leadership Team

Extension Agent Alinda Uzel used several methods to recruit a TLT that would represent all geographical and occupational sectors of King and Queen County.

- 1) Informal presentations were made to local civic and service organizations in an effort to generate interest. These groups included the King and Queen Community Involvement Team, government department heads, the King and Queen Woman's Club, and the King and Queen Ruritan Club. She also met with VCE Area Specialist Jon Johnson and introduced him to county contacts.
- 2) Two advertisements were submitted to the local newspaper (delivered to all county households free of charge) to generate interest in the countywide informational meeting scheduled for late summer.
- 3) Posters and flyers were distributed across the county at stores, the post office, and government offices inviting residents to the countywide meeting.
- 4) 130 personal letters were mailed on July 19, 2002 inviting county leaders to the scheduled meeting. These invitations were sent to:
 - All clubs and organizations in the county including fire/rescue, service organizations, NAACP, and the Prevention Council

- Every church in the county
- Board of Supervisors and County Administrator
- School Board and Superintendent of Schools
- Principals and staff of all county schools
- Chief, Tribal Council, and members of the Rappahannock Tribe
- Directors and members of the King and Queen Historical Society and the Graves Museum
- Business heads that had shown support for progress in the county over the years
- Private residents that had shown interest in economic growth in the county in the past
- Miscellaneous other “movers and shakers” in the county
- Directors of senior citizens groups

A countywide informational meeting was held on August 1, 2002 and those who attended were invited to serve on the TLT. It was gratifying that several residents volunteered to join the TLT prior to the meeting, including representatives from Black churches, the Community Involvement Team, the Rappahannock Indian Tribe, and the Ruritan Club, along with a production farmer, a retiree, and other private citizens. Plans were made for recruiting others, if needed, including at least two youth involved in technology education at the high school.

Establishing the Technology Leadership Team for King and Queen County

The countywide meeting that took place on August 1, 2002 at the Courts and Administration Building in King and Queen Courthouse (C.H.) indicated strong community interest in the project.

Number of attendees: 16
 Returned “*Why Take Charge*” surveys: 9
 Returned Internet/Computer Usage surveys: 12
 Volunteered to serve on the TLT: 11

(Copies of these surveys can be found in Appendix B.)

Those attending also represented a cross-section of the County with the following occupations:

- Auto parts salesperson
- Self-employed
- Administrative assistant/operations assistant
- Social worker/educator
- Computer C.S.E.
- Storeroom operations leader and member of Board of Supervisors
- Secretary/receptionist
- Travel consultant
- Truck driver
- Graphic designer
- Farm owner/graphic designer

- VCE administrative assistant
- County administrator
- One participant did not provide an occupation

Participants were distributed across various age groups:

- Ages 18-21: 1
- Ages 22-29: 1
- Ages 41-50: 6
- Ages 51-60: 3
- Ages 61-70: 1

The majority of those attending had experience with technology as indicated by their answers on the Computer/Internet surveys:

- Do you own or have access to a computer? Yes 12; No 0
- Do you have Internet service in your home? Yes 10; No 2
- Do you use the Internet from your office or another location? Yes 10; No 2

Based on this meeting the TLT for King and Queen County was organized. A list of these members as well as those added at a later time is included in Appendix B.

Beginning Activities of the King and Queen Technology Leadership Team

The TLT of King and Queen County met regularly from that date forward to put in motion the development and promotion of their web site and arrange for *Take Charge*. The meeting minutes document the activities planned, the issues discussed, and the decisions made.

Technology Leadership Team - August 27, 2002 – Courts and Administration Building, King & Queen C.H.

Present: 10 TLT members, Extension Agent Alinda Uzel, VCE Area Specialist Jon Johnson

Alinda Uzel opened the meeting with a brief overview of Virginia Cooperative Extension and its connection to Virginia Tech and Virginia State University. Following introductions and the sharing of interests and expectations for the project, Jon Johnson led the first training for the group on telecommunications and infrastructure needs in rural communities. Following questions and discussion, the group brainstormed ideas on how to get started.

Name contest: To attract public attention, the TLT decided to sponsor a contest to name the web site. The TLT would make the final decision, but a contest would generate interest and enthusiasm. TLT member Jean Shepard agreed to write a news article and a promotional flyer. TLT member Donna Elliot volunteered to create a poster to promote the effort. The news article

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will go to the newspapers as soon as possible and will run several times. The promotional flyers will be sent home with elementary school students the second week of school and committee members will pick up a supply of posters to place in visible locations.

The deadline for entries in the name contest will allow time for several to be chosen and displayed at Community Pride Day on October 19, 2002, and people can vote for their favorite. A subcommittee of TLT members including Debra Branham, Norm Dauphinee, Donna Elliot, and Jon Johnson will develop plans for Community Pride Day, and include, if possible, an interactive display that will allow people to cast their vote electronically. After Community Pride Day, the TLT will make its final decision and present it to the Board of Supervisors at their November meeting. The winning entry writer will be awarded a \$100 savings bond funded by VCE and will be recognized on the web site and in news releases.

Computer/Internet usage survey: Alinda Uzel and Jon Johnson reported on their meeting with the technology director and teacher at Central High School about a survey to learn how many students had computers and Internet access at home. TLT members from all areas of the county volunteered to help with the survey; however, youth participation is also needed.

Goals for the web site: The TLT spent some time talking about the goals/vision for the project and their role in moving it forward. Dom Stolfi posed the question, "What do we want to see on this web site?" The team's homework assignment was to poll folks in the community with whom they came in contact and ask them, "If a web site existed for the entire King & Queen community, what are some things you might look for or wish to find there?" The group will bring their answers back to the next meeting.

Technology Leadership Team - September 17, 2002 – Courts and Administration Building, King & Queen C.H.

Present: 15 TLT members, VCE Extension Agent Alinda Uzel, VCE Area Specialist Jon Johnson

There were four new TLT members present, all high school students.

Name Contest: The Name Game registration forms were given to members to be distributed to anyone who might be interested.

Poll on web site content: The informal poll conducted with community members since the last meeting yielded the following ideas for the web page:

- Business listings
- Links to the county government site, schools, and the King and Queen Genealogy Society
- Local news and obituaries
- Community calendar
- Message board (moderated)
- Civic organizations and clubs
- Churches

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- Outdoors clubs
- Demographic information (historical)

The new student members will begin compiling information for the web site, help to distribute materials, and help seek local sponsors.

Information on local businesses: The question was asked, “Do we have an idea of how many local businesses there are in the county, and how many have a web site?” All members will look in their community and compile a list to bring to the next meeting.

TLT representation: It was noted that the Buena Vista and Shanghai districts did not have representatives on the TLT. Members will be recruited for the next meeting.

Take Charge schedule: The *Take Charge* program was explained and sessions scheduled for January 2003 in one of the county schools.

Technology Leadership Team - October 8, 2002 – Courts and Administration Building, King & Queen C.H. – 7:00 pm

Present: 9 TLT members, VCE Agent Alinda Uzel, VCE Area Specialist Jon Johnson

Name contest: Alinda reported that no web site name suggestions were received from parents at either of the two elementary schools. There were 2 submissions via e-mail, 1 submission via post mail, and 3 verbal suggestions from employees in the government complex. Reggie Brown submitted 2 suggestions from students. He commented that there have been a lot of things going on at the high school, and he would like to see the contest continue. The consensus was for Reggie to announce the contest to students on Wednesday and continue to accept suggestions until Friday. All new suggestions must be submitted to Alinda by Monday.

The TLT discussed the names already submitted and members were asked to put forward any ideas that they might have. The names already submitted were:

- The Royal Connection
- King & Queen Community Portal
- Crown Colony Connected
- The King & Queen County Express
- Technology Zone
- King & Queen Royal Net
- New Millennium Digital Wave
- King & Queen Information Center
- Royal Rivers
- The Trail

A TV/VCR/Radio/Alarm Clock combination has been purchased by the Community Involvement Team as a door prize for the Community Pride Day celebration. Entries for the Name Game will be posted, and anyone who votes will be eligible for a door prize. Each voter will be given a blue dot to place on their favorite name. Posters will be placed throughout the building and grounds directing folks to the location of the voting place.

Community Pride Day web demonstration: Discussion turned to the idea of displaying the Blacksburg Electronic Village web site at the Community Pride Day celebration to give people an idea of what a working community web site might contain. Debra Branham announced that the company she works for has a 52 inch screen that can be connected to a computer, making the site more visible than using a computer screen. The company is willing to have one of their technicians come and make the connections and be available for technical support. The Community Pride Day Subcommittee will coordinate this effort.

Take Charge arrangements: The best location for the *Take Charge* sessions was the county high school. The dates were set for January 9, 16, and 23, 2003. In case of bad weather, meetings will be moved to the following Thursday and a telephone number for information will be established and publicized. Alinda Uzel will arrange for the facility, work on promotion (e.g., news release, letters to families via students, letters to churches and other community leaders, invitations to government leaders), and negotiate a meal function.

Technology Leadership Team - November 19, 2002 – Courts and Administration Building, King & Queen C.H.

Present: 8 TLT members, VCE Agent Alinda Uzel, VCE Area Specialist Jon Johnson, TOP Project Coordinator Jaime Shetrone

Following introductions, Jaime Shetrone provided the second training for the TLT, Introduction to Community Networks.

Her presentation raised some important questions from the group:

- Does the grant provide assistance for existing businesses that do not currently have a web site and wish to have one?
- What time-frames could existing businesses expect for learning about how the TOP grant could assist them?
- Don't most incubator programs create for-profit businesses?
- How can BEV host start-up companies that will operate for profit if BEV policy is not to compete with local ISPs and web hosting companies?
- Will the TLT be able to view the templates during the *Take Charge* process?
- How does *Take Charge* serve as a backbone for TOP?
- Can the site be manipulated with javascript?
- What happens to the site at the end of the grant?

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Jamie indicated that she would be responding to these questions using the TLT list serve.

TLT Discussion Board: Dom Stolfi explained how to use the Discussion Board he established for the benefit of the TLT. The site address is <http://www.geocities.com/Domscomp>.

Rural Utilities Service proposal: Alinda reported that a grant proposal seeking in excess of \$700,000 was submitted to USDA under the Rural Utilities Service to support broadband access throughout the county. If funded, this grant would provide free community-access stations for individuals and businesses at several community centers for two years and connect all vital services across the county. (This grant was not funded but will be submitted again when funds are made available.)

Community Learning Centers proposal: A grant submitted to the 21st Century Community Learning Centers as a joint project of VCE, the King and Queen County School System, the Community Involvement Team, and Day-by-Day included \$5,000 to support a teen component for the electronic village project and technology training. These funds would support teen/adult mentoring, help those wishing to purchase a computer decide what to buy, and assist local residents with the set-up of computers and printers in their homes. (This grant was received and supported the participation of teen members on the TLT; the web site for children, described later in this document, was also made possible in part through this grant.)

Permission for web site listing of TLT members: Because the TOP project is a federal program falling under the jurisdiction of the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, it is necessary for TLT members to give their permission for their names to be listed on the TOP project web site. Forms were provided for members to sign.

Name Contest: Plans were finalized for Community Pride Day and the vote for the electronic village name. The top ten names and responses will be brought to the next meeting.

Technology Leadership Team – December 10, 2002 – Courts and Administration Building, King & Queen C.H.

Present: 3 TLT members, VCE Agent Alinda Uzel, VCE Area Specialist Jon Johnson

Responses to questions from previous meeting: TLT member Debra Branham was concerned that members have not received a follow-up to the questions asked of Jaime Shetrone at the November 19th meeting. Debra wanted to know if she was on target telling businesses that this project would provide a web presence as free advertising for their business. Debra will e-mail Jaime about these matters.

Name Game: The top two selections from the vote conducted at Community Pride Day will be presented at the first *Take Charge* Meeting for a final vote.

Take Charge: The draft letter/brochure announcing the *Take Charge* sessions should include statements about the technology end of the project which could motivate attendance. Businesses

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and community members have been approached with the technology opportunities that this project will offer them and the letter should make them connect with it. This letter/brochure will go to churches before the holidays and to officials after the holidays. Local businesses are being approached for contributions to support the supper meals to be provided.

The TLT should take all the information gathered in *Take Charge* and develop a document that could be used in grant writing, county planning, etc. This could be a very beneficial tool to be presented to boards and commissions (readiness guide).

Clarification: The Rural Utilities Service grant is not a part of the TOP Project.

IDENTIFYING COUNTY ISSUES AND SETTING GOALS

TAKE CHARGE

The *Take Charge* process led by Pamela Gibson, VCE Community Initiatives specialist, was the next step for the TLT. *Take Charge* is an educational program designed to enable leaders, decision-makers, and residents in rural communities to effectively address local problems and develop a vision for the future. It provides a process that empowers groups to be proactive in setting the course for their community. The program used in Virginia is adapted from "*Take Charge: Economic Development in Small Communities*" published by the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development.

Objectives of the *Take Charge* Program

The objectives of *Take Charge* are to:

- Assemble a broad cross-section of people from the community with various positions and interests, and enhance communication among them.
- Help community residents explore short term and long term development strategies and gain a consensus vision for their own future.
- Gain broad community involvement and support through the empowerment of local citizens.
- Assist community residents in analyzing their strengths and vulnerabilities and choosing the most appropriate development opportunities.
- Develop strategies to realize community residents' vision for the future.
- Utilize and build upon existing financial, physical, social, human, civic, and natural resources (assets) to help realize the vision.
- Implement an action plan whereby the community can begin to *Take Charge* of its future.

The *Take Charge* Workshops

The *Take Charge* process begins with three, three-hour workshops designed to 1) foster collaboration among the citizens in the community, 2) move the group toward consensus, and 3) provide a framework for creating a vision for the future.

Workshop #1 - Where are we now?

The goals of the first workshop are 1) to examine historical and current trends and characteristics of the community and consider implications for the future, and 2) to conduct a self-examination of the community's strengths and vulnerabilities as related to financial, social, human, and natural assets.

Workshop #2 - Where do we want to be?

In the second workshop, participants develop a collective vision for the future of the community and assess the opportunities and threats to achieving that vision.

Workshop #3 - How do we get there?

In the third workshop, participants identify and frame overarching development issues, identify existing resources to help address the issues, and explore alternative ways to organize the community for action.

Expected Outcomes of *Take Charge*

The expected outcomes of *Take Charge* are to:

- Increase level of participation and ownership in the community decision-making process
- Increase the general level of understanding of the community and its strategic position in the global economy
- Expand the pool of leadership and entrepreneurial talent
- Increase support for crucial decisions on strategic community issues
- Enhance utilization of local resources

King & Queen County's *Take Charge* Sessions

The *Take Charge* sessions were held on January 9, January 16, and January 23, 2003 at Central High School.

Letters of invitation were sent to local elected and appointed officials, the parents of every student in the school system, and to local churches and civic leaders. Several public relations pieces were run in the local newspapers prior to and during the *Take Charge* process.

The first session "Where are we now," took place on January 9, 2003 with 15 persons attending. Pamela Gibson, VCE Community Initiatives specialist, led the participants through a series of slides describing the educational level, economic situation, and employment trends in King and Queen County as compared to Virginia as a whole. Several trends were recognized including lower educational attainment, a lower median income, and a higher dependence on manufacturing for jobs. Using these facts as an introduction, the group compiled a list of county strengths and weaknesses.

The second session of *Take Charge*, "Where do we want to be," was held on January 16 and had 17 participants. The group reviewed the strengths and weaknesses identified at the first session and ranked the importance of each to county well being.

Strengths and weaknesses receiving the highest rankings are listed below.

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Strengths	Number of Votes Received
Natural resources (scenic beauty, the Mattaponi and Dragon Run, agriculture and timber)	12
Rural character	10

Weaknesses	Number of Votes Received
Communication	11
Technology drawbacks (no DSL or high speed access available to the general public or businesses)	11
Perceptions of schools	9

The group also participated in a visioning exercise and outlined their dreams for King & Queen County in the year 2020. Their goals fell into the following categories:

Schools

- A new elementary school at the lower end of the county to replace King & Queen Elementary with wings for grade levels to include middle school ages
- Additions to Lawson-Marriott to accomplish a similar division layout
- Creative community involvement
- Job-focused training and re-training opportunities for all ages

Business and Retail Development

- Keep major business corridors on Routes 360 and 33
- Business park development near Caroline line, near St. Stephens Church, near the Middlesex line, and at Walkerton
- Hospitality areas near the Courthouse
- Work with the Rappahannocks on development of their “Village” to encourage tourism and appreciation of our complete history
- Encourage and support micro-enterprise

Technology Development

- Develop the community village web site connecting the community and the world
- Infrastructure to support high speed access to the Internet across all areas of the county
- All core services connected
- Training and assistance in the use of technology to all ages
- Establish a radio or TV studio at the high school

Agriculture

- Farmers' Markets on Routes 33 and 360
- Keep most of the central section of the county zoned for agriculture and timber
- Agri-tourism micro-businesses

Recreation and Leisure

- Convert the old King & Queen Elementary School to a community center
- Equestrian center near Powhatan area
- Develop recreational and cultural programs at all schools year-round
- Bike and hiking trails in the Courthouse, Dragon Run, and Rappahannock Tribal areas
- Development of river recreation, such as canoes and camping

Medical

- Wellness centers at the community centers
- Health/medical centers at Shacklefords, St. Stephens Church, and in the upper part of the county
- Retirement community development on the upper and lower ends of the county

The third session, "How do we get there," took place on January 23 and 12 people attended. After reviewing the vision and goals developed at Session 2, they explored ways to bring about the community involvement and resources needed to reach these goals. The ideas suggested are given below.

- Complete development of the community village web site
- Survey assessment of current computer/Internet usage
- Seek grant funding to support infrastructure, equipment, and training
- Host an Agri-Tourism Regional Conference to help develop micro-business

This concluded *Take Charge*.

DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF THE WEB SITE

Following completion of *Take Charge*, the TLT moved ahead on the development of the home page, site map, and content of their site. Their highly productive meetings in Spring 2003 made possible the live deployment of the King and Queen site in early June 2003. A summary of actions taken and decisions made at these meetings are provided below.

Technology Leadership Team - February 25, 2003 – Courts and Administration Building, King & Queen C.H. – 7:00 p.m.

Present: 7 TLT members, VCE Agent Alinda Uzel

Review of *Take Charge*: A PowerPoint presentation describing the three *Take Charge* sessions was shared with the group. Printed copies were distributed to all TLT members and all *Take Charge* participants. Alinda Uzel gave a brief summary of the *Take Charge* process and results at the February meeting of the Board of Supervisors, and provided a complete printed report. Copies were made available to the County Administrator, the County Attorney, and the Chair of the County Planning Commission.

Name contest winner: Tiffany Wyatt, a sixth-grader at Lawson-Marriott School and the daughter of Marie and David Wyatt, was presented with a gift certificate for \$100 to commemorate her

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winning entry to name the new electronic village web site—King & Queen Information Trail. A news release will be sent to all local newspapers.

Web site content: The remainder of the meeting was dedicated to identifying information categories for the web site. The categories for immediate posting were:

County Map

- Showing points of origin—The Trail, Courthouse, Shacklefords, Walkerton, Newtown, etc.

Community Connection or Village Mall

- County Courthouse department heads and telephone numbers
- Church/religious groups directory
- Health services directory
- Business directory

Community Calendar

- Public events only

Emergency Services

- Fire and rescue non-emergency contact numbers
- Who and what to do in case of emergency, by location
- Upper King & Queen Fire Department
- Upper King & Queen Rescue
- Central King & Queen Fire Department
- Lower King & Queen Fire Departments (2 locations)
- Walkerton Fire Department
- Mattaponi Rescue
- Others that may have been overlooked
- County emergency plan—this should already exist (is required by the federal government) and should be available on the site in case of a terrorist or biological attack in the region

Government/Law Enforcement

- Link to web site

Arts and Culture

- King & Queen Historical Society—links to web site
- Provide annual arts and cultural events information

Schools/Education

- Link to web site

Transportation

- Bay Transit—check for web site; post schedule and pick-up/drop-off locations
- Airport—provide information and any services, check for web site

Libraries

- Listing or check for web site link to King & Queen branch

Community Activities

- Adult—clubs, organizations, civic groups
- Youth—4-H, Boy/Girl Scout troop #s and leaders, Little Leagues
- Recreation
- Boating—public boat landing locations
- Hunting/Fishing—license requirements, Game and Fisheries web site
- Skydiving—get contact information from airport
- Camping—Rainbow Acres, others
- Busch Gardens/Kings Dominion—discount ticket information
- Canoe/Kayaking—river tour information and contacts

The following topics were identified for the second phase of site development:

- Weather
- Jobs
- Obituaries/engagements/wedding announcements/birth announcements
- Senior interests
- Advertising
- Bulletin board
- Neighborhoods

Technology Leadership Team - March 11, 2003 – Courts and Administration Building, King & Queen C.H. – 7:00 pm

Present: 12 TLT members, VCE Agent Alinda Uzel, VCE Agent Matt Lewis, VCE Area Specialist Jon Johnson, TOP Project Coordinator Jaime Shetrone

Publicity for the web site: Alinda showed the group three of the four articles that appeared in local newspapers describing the winner of the naming contest, Tiffany Wyatt, and the new name of the electronic village. She requested that TLT members who attend public meetings of any kind report to her the type of meeting, the date, and the number of people present. This

information will be included in the final report to the Department of Commerce, to document any increase in the attendance at public meetings over the course of the project.

Web site layout: Jaime Shetrone worked with the group on development of the web site and shared the proposed site template for their review. It was agreed that the tabs would be listed down the side. Jaime will set up an e-mail list for review and discussion of the amended site.

Domain name: Jaime will try to acquire the domain name of www.kqinfotrail.net as suggested by the group. Since there is a charge for a domain name, Alinda Uzel agreed to approach a local bank or business to fund the fee, or the Extension office will donate the fee for the first two years. There is urgency because people are asking “When will this be ready?” The general public as well as the TLT is frustrated that nothing is yet visible to show all the work that has already been completed.

Web site content: The TLT has made a good start in the collection of information for the site. TLT member Donna Elliot provided a list of the businesses and churches in the County. The lists were reviewed to identify any omissions. Forms will be sent to TLT members for gathering information on businesses they find in their communities along with local organization and civic groups.

Technology Leadership Team - May 13, 2003 – Courts and Administration Building, King & Queen C.H. – 7:00 pm

Present: 5 TLT members, VCE Agent Alinda Uzel, VCE Agent Matt Lewis, VCE Area Specialist Jon Johnson

Computer/Internet usage survey: Alinda Uzel discussed the community survey instrument being prepared to determine computer use and Internet access among residents of King and Queen. Michael Lambur, a VCE evaluation specialist at Virginia Tech, has taken the submitted questions and is in the process of developing the instrument. When it is completed, the TLT will determine how it will be administered.

Review of test site: The TLT then worked through the test web site, section by section, evaluating the need for additions or changes. Their decisions are listed below:

About the Trail

- Add a picture of the student that submitted the winning name if the parents agree, in writing

The County

- Gene Martin is still working on this section and expects to be finished in a few days. The information will be sent to everyone via e-mail for discussion.

People

- Change the question “Who is a Villager?” to “Who are the people of the Information Trail?”

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The answer to these questions should be “Known as Villagers, we are local citizens, businesses...” and continue as it now reads.

Transportation

- Add any Medicaid taxis that serve King and Queen
- For the public and private boat landing sites, add tidal charts to each
- Under the “Roads” section, link the map that is on the local government site to this

Things to Do

- Change the name of this section to County Attractions, then add listings for:
- Courthouse Tavern Museum
- J.C. Graves Historic Museum
- Rappahannock Tribe Cultural Center
- Rainbow Acres Campground
- Tucker’s Recreational Park and Marina
- Mattaponi River Boat Cruises on the Mattaponi Queen
- Dragon Run
- The Mattaponi River
- Melrose Boat Landing
- Waterfence Boat Landing
- Walkerton Boat Landing
- King & Queen Fish Hatchery
- Newtown Dragway
- Locust Grove Farm
- The Old School House Bed and Breakfast
- The TLT would prefer a link from this listing to the descriptive information on the appropriate connection, either a descriptive link or a link to their web site

Calendar

- Jon will talk to Jaime about the format of the calendar when it becomes interactive

Emergency Services

- Add information about the Laurel Shelter for King and Queen battered/abused women and children

Village Mall

- Leave the entire list, but underline with a link only those categories that we know already exist in the county. That way folks will be able to readily see which ones we already have and perhaps someone wishing to start a business can see which ones we need

Community Groups

- In the listings, change Arts to Arts and Culture
- Add Museums to the listing
- The team will decide which listings need to be eliminated

Schools and Libraries

- Add a description (name/location) for each school.

Other issues to be discussed with either Jaime Shetrone or Mathew Mathai are:

- Will there be a counter so we can track the number of visitors to the site?
- Clarify the free/fee questions as related to business sites
- Links that open the browser and keep the KQInfoTrail running while going to a link

Public launch of the site: The final topic of the evening was how to announce the opening of the site to the public. Ideas for public promotion of this event included:

- Make a presentation at the meeting of the Board of Supervisors on June 9—the TLT decided to follow through with this immediately
- Discuss with the Technology Director of the school system the possibility of having a kick-off session at each of the three schools with technology labs
- Discuss with the County Treasurer the possibility of sending an announcement in tax bills
- Run an ad in the *County Courier* and *County Parade*, if funding is available
- Put up posters in local businesses
- Make bookmarks to place in the public library
- Send flyers home with each elementary school student
- Provide flyers to be placed in grocery bags at the Walkerton Market
- Ask the County Administrator if a link can be added to the government web site, and the school system web site
- Send PSAs to radio stations that serve King & Queen citizens

The King and Queen County web site, the Information Trail (www.kqinfotrail.net) was deployed on June 10, 2003.

Technology Leadership Team - June 9, 2003 – Courts and Administration Building, King & Queen C.H. – 7:00 pm

The TLT meeting on June 9, 2003 was held in conjunction with the regular meeting of the County Board of Supervisors. The Board and county residents in attendance were introduced to the King & Queen Information Trail site. Alinda Uzel recognized the TLT members for their hard work and dedication to the development of the site. Jon Johnson and Matt Lewis led the

group through the features and information accessible on the site. Bookmarks with the web site address were distributed to all. After the presentation to the Board, Team members withdrew for their regular meeting.

Promotion of the web site: All were pleased about the positive response of the Board to the site. At the suggestion of Mathew Mathai, it was agreed to hold off on active promotion of the site for about a week, to be sure that all options were working smoothly. Flyers will be sent home with elementary school students prior to the last day of school. Other activities will include distributing bookmarks to the library, asking the *County Courier* to insert a flyer into a future newspaper run, and developing a poster for use around the county.

Technology Leadership Team - July 15, 2003 – Courts and Administration Building, King & Queen C.H. – 7:00 pm

Present: 3 TLT members, VCE Agent Alinda Uzel, VCE Area Specialist Jon Johnson

Promotion of the web site: TLT members reported on the reactions they have seen or heard about the site from local residents – all have been positive and supportive. A reporter for the *News Messenger*, a paper serving Montgomery County, interviewed Alinda Uzel about the web site and local response to it.

TLT members agreed there needed to be a continuous effort to keep the web site in the public eye each time the *County Courier* is published. If each TLT member wrote an article, it would not be a burden on any one member. Scott Mitchell, owner of Scott's Store, agreed to set up a laptop computer, connect it to his phone line, and take pictures of customers viewing the web site. These pictures will be used for a news article to be submitted for the next issue of the *County Courier*.

Web site visits: Site statistics are now available to the web site administrators. In June there were 446 visits from 191 addresses. TLT members expressed interest in comparing these statistics to those collected for July, now that some promotion has taken place.

User policy: Clarification is needed on the "How to add a listing" instructions for the Village Mall. It must be made clear that a potential Villager must either live in or own property in King and Queen County. A Villager registered with a 757 phone number became very rude and indignant when told that he could not list his business because he did not meet either specification. Even though the concept is implied, it must be spelled out to avoid future misunderstandings. Requests have come from the public to add a Quick Link on the front page to the tidal charts. These corrections were forwarded to Jaime.

Computer/Internet access survey: Louisa County has added an on-line survey to their community site to capture information about the computer and Internet usage of folks visiting their site. After looking at the survey, the TLT decided to add something similar to the King and Queen site, but responses would be submitted electronically.

King and Queen Kids Club site: The King and Queen Community Involvement Team provided the TLT with \$2,000 to support a King and Queen Kids Club web site that will be linked to the KQInfoTrail and the county school system site. The King and Queen Kids Club site will be developed and maintained by Shelly Marshall, a professional child substance abuse counselor and educator. Ms. Marshall will work with students, school administrators, and others to implement the site which represents a collaborative effort between the TOP group and youth-support groups in the county. In addition to targeting latch-key kids, this site will serve as a central location for posting local activities available to children. A central youth calendar will aid community leaders, parents, and our youth, and arm parents with responses to the complaint “There is nothing to do in KQ!” This new site will be similar to the Charles City Kids Club site, and TLT members were urged to look at that site (<http://www.charlescitykidsclub.org>) for ideas.

Business plan workshop: Registrations for the workshop Writing a WINNING Business Plan scheduled for Wednesday, July 23, 2003 at the Courts and Administration Building are coming in slowly but steadily. This workshop grew out of a need expressed on the evaluations collected at the Agri-Tourism Conference held on May 9, 2003.

Technology Leadership Team - August 19, 2003 – Central High School Computer Lab, King & Queen C.H. – 7:00 pm

Present: 6 TLT members, VCE Agent Alinda Uzel, VCE Area Specialist Jon Johnson, Blacksburg Electronic Village Staff Member Robert Roberts

Web site visits: Use statistics from the web site were shared. In June there were 860 visits to the site, but some of these visits reflected traffic by the TLT preparing listings. In July there were 794 visits, and by mid-August, there were 445 visits. TLT members reported learning about businesses and opportunities on the web site that they were unaware of before. Others reported actually using businesses after finding them on the web site.

Site Discussion Forum: Robert Roberts led a hands-on training session on use of the Discussion Forum. The TLT learned how to post a topic, reply to a posted topic, and approve a posting. The Forum will need an administrator and a moderator. The Forum was made available for testing at <http://kingandqueen-test.bev.net> .

Several management questions must be addressed before the Forum can become operational:

- Should postings be immediate, or go through an approval process?
- What type of disclaimer should there be?
- What consequences should there be for unacceptable behavior?

King and Queen Kid’s Club site: The template for the Kids Club site sponsored by the King and Queen Community Involvement Team can be viewed at <http://www.thetigertrail.net> .

Promotion of the web site: Members commented on the article published in the *Country Courier* with pictures of folks viewing the KQInfoTrail at Scott’s Store. The pastor at St. Stephen’s

Baptist Church has made a point to mention the site each Sunday, and bookmarks were sent to him for distribution to his congregation.

Technology Leadership Team - October 21, 2003 – Courts and Administration Building, King & Queen C.H. – 7:00 pm

Present: 1 TLT member, VCE Agent Alinda Uzel, VCE Agent Matt Lewis, Blacksburg Electronic Village Staff Member Robert Roberts

This scheduled meeting was the day prior to the arrival of Hurricane Isabel, and most TLT members had responsibilities with community preparedness. After Robert Roberts explained the Community Connections and Virtual Business Incubator programs the meeting adjourned.

Technology Leadership Team - February 24, 2004 – Courts and Administration Building, King & Queen C.H. – 7:00 pm

Present: 2 TLT members, VCE Agent Alinda Uzel, VCE Agent Matt Lewis, and John Nichols, Information Technology Manager, Network Infrastructure and Services, Virginia Tech.

Technology assessment: John Nichols described the Technology Assessment and Master Plan to be completed with the TOP project. Interviews with County administrators and others will be arranged to enable John to collect the information needed.

Technology Leadership Team - March 23, 2004 – Courts and Administration Building, King & Queen C.H. – 7:00 pm

Present: 2 TLT members, VCE Agent Alinda Uzel, VCE Agent Matt Lewis, VCE Community Initiatives specialist Pamela Gibson,

TOP evaluation: Pamela Gibson conducted an evaluation of the TOP project in King and Queen County with those present. TLT members had the opportunity to share their impressions of the successes and obstacles to the local project. Team members absent from this meeting were given the opportunity to share their perceptions by e-mail.

Technology Leadership Team - May 15, 2004 – Courts and Administration Building, King & Queen C.H. – 7:00 pm

Present: 3 TLT members, VCE Agent Alinda Uzel, VCE Agent Matt Lewis

Site Discussion Forum: The Discussion Forum has been added to the site, and can be activated whenever the TLT chooses. It is intended to encourage discussion among citizens and local

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government leaders by providing the opportunity to share opinions about issues of concern. Alinda will talk with the Board of Supervisors about the Forum at their June meeting, and ask that they provide discussion questions whenever appropriate. There will be a deadline for citizen input on a particular topic, comments will be compiled, and the results provided to the Board.

Community information sessions: Plans were developed for community meetings to promote use of the web site. Instead of having five community meetings and separate TLT meetings, the two will be combined. The regular TLT meeting will follow the presentation to the general public. This would encourage other county residents to become involved with the design, promotion, and continuation of the project. TLT members were asked to attend all of the community meetings, and a different TLT member will facilitate at each. A script and CD containing the web site and features will be provided to each leader.

Dates, locations, and leader for the five community meetings are:

June 15, 2004 – Newtown District – 7:00 pm – Upper KQ Volunteer Rescue Squad Building (Extension Agent Alinda Uzel)

July 20, 2004 – St. Stephens District – 7:00 pm – Lawson-Marriott Elementary Cafetorium (TLT member Donna Elliot)

August 17, 2004 – Stevensville District – 7:00 pm – Central High School Cafeteria (TLT member Carole White)

September 21, 2004 – Buena Vista District – 7:00 pm – Lower KQ Fire Department (leader to be determined)

October 19, 2004 – Shanghai District – 7:00 pm – KQ Elementary School Gymnasium (Extension Agent Matt Lewis)

Web site business card: A business card has been developed as a promotion piece to replace the bookmark. The card is easier to reproduce and more economical in terms of supplies and time. The Superintendent of Schools was asked to allow the site business card to be included with report cards sent home to students at Central High School. A flyer that encourages support for the local economy by supporting local businesses is being developed, and a business card template will be added to the web site for local businesses to print their own.

Changes to the web site: A suggestion to keep the site in the public eye was to change what a person sees first when logging on - maybe local events with a focus on an event coming up in the near future. Another possibility was a scrolling banner with announcements about upcoming events. The feasibility of establishing a link to the restaurant inspection site of the Virginia Department of Health was investigated.

Getting youth involved: A promotional idea targeted to a particular user group was a scavenger hunt with a fact hidden somewhere in the web pages that could be connected to some type of award if found. An idea for government classes at the high school was to have them review the agendas for the meetings of the Board of Supervisors and other public meetings to encourage them to get actively involved in local government.

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**Combined Community and Technology Leadership Team Meeting - June 15, 2004 –
Upper King & Queen Volunteer Rescue Squad Building, Newtown – 7:00 pm**

Present: 7 community residents, 2 TLT members, VCE Agent Alinda Uzel, VCE Agent Matt Lewis

The first of the five community-wide meetings had only seven people attending. Team speculation for the light attendance included the problem that the local free newspaper chose not to run the announcement of the meeting. Also, it was a very hot and humid day and the facility was not well-equipped with air conditioning. Since the next meeting was to be held at the elementary school that served that area, people may have chosen to attend that meeting instead.

Reactions to the web site: The people attending indicated that they had gone into the web site on occasion, but it had been a while since they had done so. They voiced that they were impressed with what has been done already, especially the monthly calendar of events, and would assist in promoting the use of the site. They were surprised at the number of resources available in the County and listed on the site, and saw it as a real benefit to the community. There was a request to offer some classes for the general public on basic computer skills.

Comments from the evaluations included:

- “liked the site’s appearance, don’t make any major changes”
- “it is nice to go into a calm, peaceful representation of our county while at the same time finding the businesses and what is occurring here”
- “I like the look and feel of the site and am impressed with the list of businesses—I didn’t realize there were so many and, I guess, there are more that haven’t been identified yet”

The group was encouraged to seek out unlisted businesses and notify the TLT so they can be added. Everyone enjoyed the wonderful homemade refreshments contributed by the Auxiliary of the Upper King and Queen Volunteer Rescue Squad.

Arrangements for future meetings: Following the public session the TLT held a brief meeting. The TLT will provide simple refreshments for the next meeting to be held July 20, 2004 at the Lawson-Marriott Elementary School. Based on feedback at the first meeting, the presentation was shortened and simplified, with special focus on the Village Mall, the value of becoming a Villager, the Community Calendar, and the Discussion Board. Donna Elliot will facilitate the next meeting and as she makes the presentation, another TLT member will navigate the site. The presentation script can be found in Appendix C.

Changes to the web site: The web administrators will continue to explore placing a marquee on the site that scrolls either an upcoming event or some point or person of interest to county residents. To acquire a set of pictures for the home page that will appear randomly each time a person logs in, the TLT will sponsor a photo contest with junior and senior categories, with the final winners chosen at Community Pride Day in October 2004.

It was announced that the team would be losing one member. Matt Lewis will be leaving King and Queen and moving to the Northumberland Extension Office on July 12.

COMMUNITY READINESS WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING

The community readiness workshops described in the Implementation Plan were intended to provide citizens with the skills needed to participate in site programs such as the Virtual Business Incubator and Community Connections. Another goal for these workshops was to train TLT members and local volunteers to administer the site and assume responsibility for its content when the grant was completed.

Training for the Technology Leadership Team

Training was offered to the TLT with the expectation that they would share what they learned with others in the organizations or communities they represented. At the first meeting of the TLT on August 27, 2002 VCE Area Specialist Jon Johnson introduced the group to telecommunications issues relevant to Internet access in rural communities. On November 19, 2002 TOP Project Coordinator Jaime Shetrone presented an Introduction to Community Networks. BEV Staff Member Robert Roberts trained the group on the use and administration of the Discussion Forum on August 19, 2003. He met with the group again on October 21, 2003 to explain the components and registration procedures for the Community Connections and Virtual Business Incubator options.

Training for the Community

A major goal of the TOP program was development of entrepreneurship as measured by an increase in new business start-ups and Virtual Business Incubator accounts. A recent initiative of VCE has been the development of agri-tourism enterprises that provide income to rural communities and support family farms. These micro-enterprises include farm vacations, birding trails, farm visits, corn mazes, bed and breakfast operations, and fishing sites. Other tourist attractions involve direct marketing of crafts and products such as carved woods, homemade soaps, or candles. Fruit, vegetable, or flower markets encourage visits to rural communities. Web sites describing these opportunities attract vacationers from Virginia and elsewhere or lead to product sales over the Internet, all fostering economic growth. Workshops offered under the umbrella of the TOP program fostered awareness of such opportunities and provided strategic information for those interested in starting such a business.

Regional Conference: Agri-tourism: Business Opportunities Conference

This regional conference serving Virginia Planning District 18, including King and Queen, King William, Essex, Gloucester, and Middlesex Counties, took place on May 9, 2003 in the Courts

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and Administration Building in King and Queen C.H. As a cooperative effort of the King and Queen TLT and VCE, agents representing Family and Community Sciences, Food, Nutrition and Health, and Agricultural and Natural Resources participated in the planning. More than 60 persons registered for the conference including the Director and Associate Director of Virginia Cooperative Extension, a staff member of local Congresswoman J.A. Davis (District 1), and economic development officers from surrounding counties. The conference spoke to the development of new businesses and the expansion of existing businesses, building on the use of the community web site and the Internet for economic growth. Speakers included Dr. Ann Lastovica and Dr. Andy Hankins from Virginia State University. The day-long session concluded with a panel of entrepreneurs currently engaged in agri-tourism and direct marketing who shared their experiences and advice. (A conference brochure can be found in Appendix C.)

Evaluations indicated that the conference had met a need of local residents:

- 72% learned ways to determine the opportunity that best suited their situation
- 60% learned of resources available for beginning an agri-tourism business
- 52% gained some new ideas for their agri-tourism business
- 48% planned to begin the start of their agri-tourism business
- 12% planned to expand a current business

Suggested topics for future workshops included developing a business plan, identifying and reaching my customer, marketing on the Internet, tax and legal issues for my business, and funding resources.

Workshop: Cashing in on Business Opportunities: Developing a WINNING Business Plan

Based on the evaluations and suggestions for future workshops from those attending the Agri-tourism conference on May 9, a second all-day workshop was planned for July 23, 2003 at the Courts and Administration Building in King and Queen C.H. This hands-on workshop, taught by Dr. Ann Lastovica from Virginia State University, was intended to walk participants through the process of developing a business plan, with the expectation that they would have the skills to move forward on a plan by the close of the program. Of the 21 persons who attended, 13 had participated in at least four hours of instruction from VCE on related topics over the past several months. (See Appendix C for a descriptive brochure.)

According to completed evaluations:

- 100% learned more about the purpose of a business plan
- 100% learned more about use of computer software to assist in business plan development
- 92% learned how to conduct a market analysis
- 85% learned more about potential sources of funding

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- 77% learned how to compile financial data

Actions they planned to take immediately following the workshop included:

- Begin writing a business plan (7)
- Study the resource material I received (4)
- Do research on future enterprises (2)
- Conduct preliminary market analysis (1)
- Determine my market (1)
- Contact government officials about zoning (1)
- Contact a representative at a nearby Small Business Center (1)

Workshop: Using Community Connections and the Virtual Business Incubator

A community-wide informational meeting about the Community Connections and Virtual Business Incubator programs was held on February 12, 2004 in the Courts and Administration Building at King and Queen C.H. TOP Project Coordinator Jaime Shetrone assisted those attending with establishing a web site for their business or organization. There were 12 participants representing churches, local businesses, and nonprofit organizations. Four signed up for new accounts. During informal discussion several businesses shared how they could direct their clients to take advantage of products or services from other local businesses, thereby increasing the local economy. The day after the meeting five messages were received from people who had not been able to attend, requesting information about establishing a web page at no charge.

Presentations to Government and Civic Groups

Upper King and Queen Ruritan Club

On March 16, 2004 Extension Agent Alinda Uzel was invited to provide an overview of the King and Queen Information Trail site and the opportunities it presented for education, civic involvement, local business, and entrepreneurship. The response was extremely positive. Perhaps the greatest comment was “This was the best thing that has happened in King and Queen for decades!” When asked how they thought this could impact the county, other than as just a communication tool, their answers were right on track, especially regarding economic development and supporting the economy from within. The Ruritans are going to develop their

own web page and one of the members is a technology person who is interested in joining the TLT.

King and Queen Board of Supervisors

Extension Agent Alinda Uzel gave a brief update on the KQInfoTrail to the Board of Supervisors on April 12, 2004. Following her presentation William Sanders, the incoming Director of the Blacksburg Electronic Village, spoke to the Board about the important role the web site can play in advancing economic growth in their rural community.

On June 14, 2004 Extension Agent Alinda Uzel alerted the Board to the upcoming five community-wide meetings planned to increase visibility of the web site and make citizens aware of how they might benefit from it. An outline of her presentation is located in Appendix C.

Promotional Events for the Public

Community Pride Day - 2002

The TLT arranged for a demonstration of the Blacksburg Electronic Village web site at Community Pride Day on October 19, 2002 to give local residents a preview of the content they could expect to see on the King and Queen web site and generate interest in the project. Those who attended also had the opportunity to vote on the name of the King and Queen Electronic Village. More than 1,400 residents turned out for this annual event.

Community-Wide Information Meetings

Five information sessions to build awareness of the web site and generate feed back from local residents were scheduled for Summer-Fall, 2004. These events will take place at different locations about the county to allow easy access to at least one meeting. TLT members have developed a PowerPoint presentation and live demonstration of various features on the KQInfoTrail with an emphasis on the Villager, Business, and Organization Directories and the Community Calendar. The dates of these programs are listed below:

June 15, 2004 – Newtown District – 7:00 pm – Upper KQ Volunteer Rescue Squad Building

July 20, 2004 – St. Stephens District – 7:00 pm – Lawson-Marriott Elementary Cafetorium

August 17, 2004 – Stevensville District – 7:00 pm – Central High School Cafeteria

September 21, 2004 – Buena Vista District – 7:00 pm – Lower KQ Fire Department

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October 19, 2004 – Shanghai District – 7:00 pm – KQ Elementary School Gymnasium

MARKETING AND PUBLICITY EFFORTS

In an effort to inform all county residents about the TOP program and the opportunities to participate, the following articles were published in newspapers serving King and Queen County. Other promotional materials including bookmarks, business cards and posters were distributed throughout the county. Copies of these articles and materials are located in Appendix C.

The following news releases were sent to the five newspapers serving King & Queen County—the *Tidewater Review*, the *Rappahannock Times*, the *Southside Sentinel*, the *Country Courier*, and the *Daily Press*.

“Getting Rural Virginia Connected Initiative Kicks Off in King & Queen,” August, 2002.

“King & Queen...Connecting the Community and the World,” September 2002.

“KQ’s Electronic Village Named!” February 2003.

“Checking Out the InfoTrail,” July 2003

“Attention King & Queen-ers!” July 2003

“Let’s Explore While We Connect with King & Queen County,” June, 2004.

The King and Queen Information Trail: Bookmark describing the web site features and address.

The King and Queen Information Trail: Business card describing the web site features and address.

The TLT developed bookmarks advertising the web site that were placed in libraries, distributed at Community Pride Day, and otherwise circulated around the county. A total of 3,000 bookmarks were made available to county residents and the supply was exhausted. The TLT recently decided to replace their bookmarks with business cards. Over 800 business cards were distributed from May 1, 2003 through June 30, 2003.

Support the Local Economy: Keep \$\$\$ in Our County: Flyer encouraging local residents to support local businesses

Brochures advertising the Agri-tourism Conference and Business Plan Workshop

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Promotional posters and flyers advertising the KQInfoTrail.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The TOP Implementation Plan included several expected outcomes that could be used to measure the success of this project. First, we hoped to increase the interest of county residents in community issues, and their participation in local government and decision-making. Second, it was important that community members and groups participated in the web site by registering as a Villager, registering their organization on the Community Connections, or visiting the Discussion Forum. Finally, we hoped to contribute to local economic development and new business start-ups as measured by listings on the Village Mall and new accounts on the Virtual Business Incubator.

We also wanted to learn what seemed to go well along with suggestions on how we might have done things differently. As VCE and BEV continue our partnership, it is important for us to recognize how to better help individuals and rural communities take advantage of technology to spur their economic growth.

We were not able to obtain quantitative information on each of these outcomes, but we have presented below the evaluation material that is available to us. Included are comments obtained from the TLT regarding the overall success of the project. We also have presented statistics describing the levels of participation in web site features and the number of individuals signing up for Virtual Business Incubator and Community Connections accounts. Additional information is being collected by an external evaluator, and will be available to each county.

Take Charge Program

Take Charge was intended to bring together people from all economic and geographic sections of the county to identify problems and set priorities for the future. Everyone who attended was asked to complete an evaluation at the end of each session. The evaluations were anonymous to ensure that comments could not be attributed to a particular individual.

Previous participation in a community planning process

Attendance at the *Take Charge* sessions in King and Queen County ranged from 15 at Session 1, to 17 at Session 2, to 12 at Session 3. The *Take Charge* meetings were publicized across the County in an effort to attract not only people who had a history of participation in government and local decision-making, but also those who might become involved for the first time. Letters of invitation were sent to government officials and others whose title or office would give them an expected role in the community. About half of the participants in Sessions 1 and 2 learned of the meetings by letter. In contrast only 3 of the 12 participants at Session 3 had received a letter, but learned of the meeting through the newspaper announcement or word of mouth, telling us that they likely did not hold a county office at the time.

Another indication that the project attracted new citizen involvement was the proportion of folks attending *Take Charge* who told us they had not participated in a community planning meeting at any time before. For 33% percent attending Session 1, 35% attending Session 2, and 42% attending Session 3, respectively, a community planning meeting was a new activity. The growing proportion of new participants at each successive meeting suggests that the sessions were perceived as worthwhile and all opinions were welcomed.

When asked why they attended, most told us that they wanted to learn more about their community and wished to have a voice in its future direction, including the growth in technology. As mentioned by one participant, “This is my county, my home, and I want it to be the best it can be, using all if its attributes.” Most of those attending considered the sessions to be generally useful to the future of their county.

Reactions to the Overall Process and Outcomes

Involving more citizens in community affairs brings new and diverse opinions to the table, and helps folks learn from each other. The evaluations from *Take Charge* indicated that all but two of the people attending learned something new about their community. All but one thought their ideas were acknowledged, and everyone viewed the small group assessments and assembly assessments as handled fairly. Reactions to the process were generally positive.

The Goals for King and Queen County by the Year 2020, developed through *Take Charge*, will provide a basis for continuing discussion and community development.

The tabulated responses from all *Take Charge* questionnaires can be found in Appendix D.

Thoughts From the TLT

To gain a perspective of the local reaction to the project and its limitations and accomplishments, Pamela Gibson, VCE Community Initiatives Specialist, met with the TLT on March 23, 2004. The questions asked and responses received are given below.

What are your general impressions of the project?

It was very positive, and a good thing for the county. As someone at a Ruritans meeting said, "This is the best thing to happen to King & Queen in decades."

What are your feelings on the issue identification process you used?

We resisted having to do *Take Charge* at first, because of the added work. But, it ended up being a positive process, and worked well with the work on the county's comprehensive plan. The process brought together people who had never participated in county business and prompted discussion of issues. It created community. Doing *Take Charge* also helped move the technical aspects of the project along quicker.

How do you feel about the technology related to this project?

We got it up and going fast. After the *Take Charge* process, everything seemed to come together and move quickly.

To what extent did the issues identification process influence the development of the technology piece?

By discussing the value of technology in the *Take Charge* meetings, we were able to get more people involved and move the process along quicker.

What were some of the things that went well?

We got the web site up and running quickly, despite the confusion at the beginning. Because of our hard work, our site has been used as a model for the other TOP counties.

What were some things that didn't go well?

Whoever wrote the grant didn't factor in the money needed for marketing. There should have been better planning on the front end to make the process flow smoother. There should have been more discussion with agents before the grant was written so they knew exactly how much work was involved.

One problem that has occurred since the web site was launched is that the county has a new Administrator and some new Board of Supervisors members who don't see the value of technology. This means that the marketing has to start all over again to bring them on board.

If you had to pick one major success as a result of this project, what would that be?

Going from 34 businesses in the Village Mall to over 100 in only three weeks time.

What would you do differently?

Spend more time visiting with technology teachers to get the schools more involved.

What additional or unanticipated things, positive or negative, happened as a result of this project?

Because of *Take Charge* and the web site, we have held an Agri-Tourism conference to address the needs of the agricultural community. We have held two workshops on developing a business plan. We have agencies offering to partner with us to help address issues.

What collaboration has resulted from this project?

We've partnered with the economic development organizations, a regional micro-enterprise organization, the schools, PDC, churches, and the Ruritans.

Additional comments

Additional comments were provided by King and Queen County TLT members who answered the questions via e-mail. The e-mail was delivered to all TLT members to give those who did not attend the meeting on March 23, 2004 a chance to give their feedback.

From your perspective, what were the program's greatest strengths, contributions, and successes?

"Strengths? People involved that stayed with the project through their continued commitment. Contributions? Peoples time, energy, and creativity. Successes? The site being online with content that is worth knowing."

In your opinion, what were the program's weak points and how might they be improved?

"The project lacked the spark needed to keep everyone involved at the level that it was in the beginning. It has taken almost 2 years to get where we are at and the forum area is still not functional. The rate of progression has been too slow and I am afraid that interest will further decline if the content isn't made current, and the forum remains offline. I have watched through my involvement the TLT team dwindle to a few participants. Myself included due to the slow progression. Efforts at the last meeting to develop ways of advertising the site, while promising, leaves the burden on a few instead of the entire team."

What do you think are the most important things that need to be done to sustain and build upon the program going forward?

"More community involvement, forum up and running with a moderator never far away from the computer terminal. We still need to know how many people access the Internet within the

county so as to make some projection of the audience. Daily added news content will help to keep an interest in viewers coming back. If nothing else, it will bring viewers in to see what's happening within the county. News editorials from county officials would be nice. The word needs to get out to community facilities that this is a viable communication tool that all can use and access. To my knowledge we have just scratched the surface. It may be that there is a fear of the unknown that prevents involvement. We have to address these issues and more to move ahead. Training on computers. Computers for low income families that are willing to step up and accept technology, more reciprocal links to other points of interest would be nice. We may find that more viewers from outside the county are willing to log on than inside the county.”

What are the major points you would like us to make in our report about what has happened in your county as a result of being part of the TOP grant?

“That's a tough one. While we have progressed in the development of the site, little else has been accomplished. The content in my opinion now has become stale. I find myself not returning to the site because nothing has really changed so why view it again. I'm not trying to put the site down, just pointing out the obvious. I think the hook necessary to keep an interest will be the forum. Without it, it will be just another site that will be viewed a few times and not returned to.”

Major project successes and concerns as expressed by all county TLTs will be addressed in Lessons Learned.

Participation in the King and Queen Information Trail

VISITS TO THE KING AND QUEEN SITE

(Data compiled August 1, 2004)

Month	Total Visits	Unique Visitors	Calendar Visits	Village Mall Visits	Organization Directory Visits
5/2003	69	20	13	37	39
6/2003	858	304	168	432	289
7/2003	771	383	143	285	196
8/2003	504	335	70	159	96
9/2003	375	252	59	96	78
10/2003	531	328	88	163	156
11/2003	353	242	65	95	87
12/2003	307	208	47	80	44
1/2004	420	277	67	126	78
2/2004	471	300	73	147	97
3/2004	662	426	88	204	142
4/2004	570	422	55	194	123
5/2004	748	470	51	234	133
6/2004	919	521	150	235	170
7/2004	756	512	95	220	144
Grand Totals	8314	5000	1232	2707	1872

LISTINGS ON THE KING AND QUEEN ELECTRONIC VILLAGE DIRECTORIES

(Data compiled August 1, 2004)

Total Villagers	Total Businesses	Total Organizations
179	150	57

VIRTUAL BUSINESS INCUBATOR AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS ACCOUNTS

(Data compiled August 1, 2004)

Virtual Business Incubator	Community Connections
5	5

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EVENTS AND MEETINGS POSTED ON THE COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Government Meetings (recurring)

King and Queen Board of Supervisors
King and Queen Board of Zoning Appeals
King and Queen School Board
King and Queen Wetlands Board
King and Queen Parks and Recreation Commission
King and Queen Planning Commission

Civic and Community Groups (recurring)

Zion Baptist Vacation Bible School
Bruington Baptist Vacation Bible School
Escobrook Vacation Bible School
Poroporone Vacation Bible School
St. Stephen's Vacation Bible School
Upper King and Queen Vacation Bible School
New Morning Star Vacation Bible School
Ole People's Riding Club
King and Queen Ruritan Club
King and Queen Information Trail Technology Leadership Team Meeting
King and Queen Community Ministries
King and Queen Book Club
Community Involvement Team

Youth

Tae Kwon Do classes
High School Basketball Schedule

Events

Rappahannock Pig Picking Barbeque and Horseshoe Tournament
Nuts and Bolts of Marketing
King and Queen County Community Pride Day
King and Queen Elementary School Spring Carnival
Ruritan Bluegrass Concert and Barbeque
Developing A Winning Business Plan Workshop
Annual Christmas Song Service
Upper King and Queen Fire Department Chicken Supper
Walkerton Community Fire Association Barbeque
Walkerton Day Parade
West Point Crab Carnival
St. Stephen's Church Yard Sale

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The King and Queen Information Trail was deployed on May 1, 2003. Since then, it has attracted over 5,000 unique visitors and increasing numbers of listings on the village directories and community calendar. The Technology Leadership Team (TLT) has established partnerships with other community agencies that have led to the development of a Kid's Club site for the children of King and Queen and agri-tourism and business workshops for those thinking about starting a business. Marketing materials developed by this group are cost-effective and have wide appeal. The unique accomplishments of the King and Queen program are described below.

- King and Queen was the first county to begin active work on the TOP program and served as a model for the counties that followed. The Technology Leadership Team (TLT) recruited in King and Queen was exemplary in its broad representation from all geographical and occupational sectors of the County. The list of affiliations of the King and Queen TLT was posted on the TOP web site as a guide for the counties that followed.
- The King and Queen program developed partnerships with other community groups such as the Community Prevention Council and Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) to garner additional resources and expand the offerings on the Information Trail site. Funding from a 21st Century Learning Grant made possible the development of the Kid's Club link (thetigertrail.net) to the main web site. Targeted toward latch-key children this project also provided help with homework, messages related to substance abuse prevention, and listings of youth activities in the county, making available a safe site for web exploration by children. Garnered funds also supported the participation of several high school students on the TLT, adding valuable input from this group as well as developing leadership capacity. The TLT cooperated in the preparation of the Rural Utilities Grant proposal to set up public access computer stations across the county. Although not funded at this time, the proposal will be resubmitted in the next funding round.
- The King and Queen TLT established a major connection between the *Take Charge* process and the King and Queen Information Trail. The overall goal of the TOP project was to prepare rural counties to move ahead in the Information Age, providing not only the tools for technology, but also encouraging the use of that technology to develop leadership, community capacity, and shared decision-making. Over one third of the residents attending at least one of the sessions had not taken part previously in a community planning process. TLT members noted that the *Take Charge* sessions helped to build 'community' for the next phase of the project, and the emphasis on the value of technology in economic development helped speed the web site development process. Recurring government meetings including the monthly meetings of the King and Queen Planning Commission, the King and Queen Board of Supervisors, and the King and Queen Public Schools are posted on the Community Calendar, along with the agendas.
- The TLT approached the King and Queen Public Schools to evolve ways to work together. A survey on computer availability and Internet access among families in King and Queen was developed in partnership with the TLT and an Extension evaluation specialist at Virginia Tech and is being sent home with children in the school system. Promotional materials about

the KQInfoTrail such as the bookmark reached parents by way of their elementary age children.

- The King and Queen program developed a model for on-going cooperation and interaction with the County Board of Supervisors. Regular updates by the local leader kept the Supervisors apprised of progress. Local issues and topics from the Supervisors are to be posted on the web site Discussion Board, encouraging citizen participation in their community and providing feedback for the Supervisors to review when making decisions.
- The King and Queen TLT developed unique marketing ideas that proved useful to other TOP counties. Holding a contest to name the King and Queen electronic village attracted the attention of both youth and adults, and additional exposure for the web site by gained by the opportunity to vote at Community Pride Day in Fall 2002. The contest idea was adopted by another county, based on the success in King and Queen. The bookmark and business card with the web address were attractive and cost-effective. The popularity of these items is noted in the fact that 3,000 bookmarks were distributed in less than a year, and over 800 business cards in about two months.
- The Agri-tourism Business Conference, involving all the counties in Planning District 18, attracted regional attention to entrepreneurship opportunities existing in rural communities. Both tourism and direct marketing of local products and crafts present income opportunities for farm and rural landowners, and posting such goods and services on the web site can attract visitors and customers from Virginia and around the world. Among the 60 participants in the agri-tourism conference were the Director of Virginia Cooperative Extension, a staff member of the District 1 Congressional representative, and economic development officers from surrounding counties. Evaluations indicated that the conference had met an existing need, and a follow-up workshop on developing a business plan had 21 people registered. Faculty from Virginia State University provided content for both of these events. A panel of local entrepreneurs shared their expertise and advice at the agri-tourism program.
- The King and Queen program has placed on-going emphasis on promoting new business start-ups and supporting existing small fledging enterprises, a goal at the very heart of this project when it was first conceived. Five King and Queen residents have taken advantage of the Virtual Business Incubator and several businesses are receiving assistance with their web pages through the Internship Program developed by the Blacksburg Electronic Village. King and Queen has attracted the greatest number of listings on the Business Directory of any TOP county (150), and has recorded over 2,700 visits to that site. Local residents have pointed to discovering businesses offering goods and services in their home county that they never knew existed. An attractive colored flyer produced by the TLT encourages folks to visit the web site and patronize local businesses, thus boosting the internal economy.
- The King and Queen web site has continued to attract visitors and listings on its various

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directories. Over 5,000 unique visitors have been recorded and over 8,300 total visits, rather extraordinary outreach for a county with an estimated population of 6,600 (based on the 2000 census). King and Queen has the highest number of individuals registered as villagers (179) and a total of 57 organizations on the community directory. The five community-wide information meetings scheduled in different locations and still in progress will likely bring about additional registrations. The marketing efforts in King and Queen have focused more on the web site and its potential for economic development, rather than on the role of technology alone. This approach appears to have been very successful in gaining the attention of residents in King and Queen and elsewhere.

- The project has had an intangible effect in building the esteem of county residents. In the words of one resident. “This was the best thing to happen to King and Queen in decades.”

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

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The King and Queen TLT is actively working on some new ideas to update their web site and attract continuing visits from local residents. A scrolling marquee, interviews with county administrators, and feature stories on local residents are some of the innovations being developed. Support of local entrepreneurs and nonprofit organizations who wish to develop a web presence is a major concern for the TLT. Student interns with the Blacksburg Electronic Village will be assisting these folks at no charge, and gaining work experience through the process. Extension Agent Alinda Uzel is working with the Center for the Study of Technology and the Family on initiatives with youth and schools in King and Queen.

Seeking a high speed Internet provider remains a goal for the county and possible funding sources are being evaluated. The Technology Assessment and Master Plan developed by John Nichols from Virginia Tech provides a blueprint for installation when resources become available.

LESSONS LEARNED

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The TOP Project was developed to bring a new vision of prosperity through technology to seven rural Virginia counties. Although previous experience provided a basis for the TOP project, counties are different just as individuals are different, and methods successful in one situation may not be successful in another. With this in mind, we have looked back across all counties and developed a series of “Lessons Learned”— things that might have been done differently and would have contributed to overall project success. These lessons could be guideposts for future projects, assisting both counties and implementation teams as they develop new approaches to bring technology to rural communities.

Conduct a Situation Analysis

Identifying competing projects

In several TOP counties community networks had already been established under public or private sponsorship. Although the TOP project was intended to complement, not replace these existing networks, on-going questions about duplication of effort hampered progress and prevented the community from seeing alternative benefits.

Recommendation: Implement new technology projects in counties or communities where the concept of a community network is brand new.

Focusing on counties rather than individual communities

The TOP proposal defined the working unit for the project as individual participating communities within a county, rather than the county as a whole. In some rural counties there are no incorporated towns, and units within the county are actually “settlement areas” or voting districts. Also, local government leaders became concerned that working with individual communities would promote the idea that one area of the county was being targeted and not another. The driving force for this project was economic development and the growth and support of new micro and home-based businesses. Funding for small business incubators and overall initiatives for rural economic development are more effective when launched as part of a county-wide rather than an individual community effort.

Recommendation: In rural areas focus on the county rather than on individual communities to provide stronger support for the development of technology infrastructure and overall economic growth.

Ensuring availability of sufficient volunteers

Individual communities with very small populations present a limited number of volunteers to support the project. Agents in all counties were having trouble recruiting Technology Leadership Team members from participating communities with few residents. To illustrate this point, a table containing the grant-listed participating communities and their populations appears below.

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Populations, Based on U.S. Bureau of Census Estimates (2000)

County	Community	Population
Accomack County		38,305
	Onancock	1,525
	Locust Mount (Wachapreague)	236
	Horntown	No data
Craig County		5,091
	New Castle	179
	Sinking Creek Valley	No data
	John's Creek Valley	No data
	Paint Bank	No data
Cumberland County		9,017
	Cartersville	No data
	Cumberland Courthouse	No data
Dickenson County		16,395
	Clintwood	1,549
	Haysi	186
Louisa County		25,627
	Mineral	424
	Bumpass	No data
King & Queen County		6,630
	King & Queen Courthouse	No data
	Newtown	No data
Northampton County		13,093
	Cheapside	No data
	Cape Charles	1,134
	Bayview	No data
	Nassawadox	572
	New Road	No data

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Recommendation: Select a unit of organization, either a county or a combination of counties, with a large enough population to provide the necessary number of volunteers to carry out the tasks required.

Seeking an enthusiastic leader

When the project leader is overburdened with too many competing responsibilities or lacks commitment to the project, for whatever reason, progress is slow. An enthusiastic leader keeps people interested and the project moving ahead. Moreover, the leader doesn't necessarily have to understand all the technical details as long as he/she has a good idea of the general breadth of the project and its goals.

Recommendation: Actively seek a volunteer to lead the project, rather than assigning an individual who may not have a true interest in the project or bring the enthusiasm necessary to recruit others. The county leader may be paid staff or a community member who is willing to donate his/her time.

Arranging for training facilities

Several counties did not have a local facility for hands-on computer training. When a computer-equipped facility was not available, both TLT members and the general public did not receive the same quality of training as in those counties with an accessible computer laboratory.

Recommendation: Identify and secure a suitable technology training facility when the project is in the planning stage. If none can be found in the county, arrange for a site nearby, and include fees for facility use and travel in the budget.

Plans for Project Implementation

Conducting *Take Charge*

Several participating counties had completed a community planning forum and developed a county comprehensive plan within two years of the start of the project, and chose to use that plan to guide their vision, rather than carrying out *Take Charge*. In these counties there tended to be less direction as to the potential benefits of technology in support of economic growth, and the project had less momentum to move it forward. *Take Charge* not only provided a means to identify issues in the county and specifically relate them to technology, but also attracted people to the TOP project in general and helped to build a sense of community that supported future activities of the TLT. Even among those counties that carried out the *Take Charge* program, the connectivity between the community network and economic development and community participation became less clear as the project continued.

Recommendation: Complete *Take Charge* in all counties. Schedule follow-up sessions to *Take Charge*, about every six months, to link the issues and goals identified by the community and the emerging technology.

Recruiting a Technology Leadership Team

In some counties the TLT was recruited primarily through letters of invitation to county leaders holding office in local government or in civic or community organizations. People who already are very active in county-based projects or programs may not feel that they have the time or energy for yet another monthly meeting. A broad mix of people including youth provided a source of energy and enthusiasm for technology that helped to keep a project moving forward.

Recommendation: Develop a broad-based strategy to assemble members for the TLT, using newspaper and radio advertising, letters to the faith-based community, and flyers or posters in public places such as stores, the post office, and theaters.

Attracting volunteers both with and without technical skills

The use of the term Technology Leadership Team to designate the local steering committee may have implied that members were expected to have a high level of technical proficiency. Overall, rather few residents with limited technology background volunteered to serve on their TLT. When this project was first conceived, it was based on the idea that volunteers would not have to be technically proficient in order to participate. We still hold this belief to be true. A variety of skills added strength to the team, especially when participants were willing to learn and move outside of their established comfort zone. Sometimes those who are very technically adept are less experienced at marketing or presenting. There was room for and need in this project for people with a variety of skills, abilities, and interests.

Recommendation: Select a name for the local steering committee that is more inclusive, and will attract not only those with technical expertise, but others who bring skills in communication, group facilitation, and marketing.

Scheduling meeting times

Technology Leadership Teams that met during the work day or at noon had lower attendance. People often find it difficult to attend a voluntary meeting during the work day, especially when they have a long commute as was true for many of the people in these rural communities.

Recommendation: Schedule meetings in the evening, possibly with a supper option, to encourage people to attend.

Estimating time commitment

The time commitment required of local leaders turned out to be more than was expected when the project was conceived. The project became a burden on the team leader, and there was no provision for a back-up person to assume responsibility when the team leader was called away because of personal or work issues.

Recommendation: Provide funding to support a paid, part-time person in each county to assist the local agent or volunteer leader with project tasks.

Setting web site policies and procedures

Web site security was an issue with all of the county projects.

Examples of questions forwarded to the BEV team included:

- What security measures are/will be in place to protect the county sites?
- How is content regulated during the life of the grant? For instance, can a local witchcraft shop be prevented from listing its address on the village mall?
- How can links to porn sites or other sites not supported by the community be prevented?
- What kinds of policies should be in place after the grant is completed and the county site continues to operate?

Recommendation: 1) Develop security and operating procedures before the project starts, so questions can be answered in a timely manner. 2) Make available a resource on web site policies, because volunteers do not feel qualified or able to create policy. 3) Involve the university attorney or other qualified person in developing web content policy.

Appendix A – Project Implementation Materials

Contents:

- Services Provided to TOP Counties by Blacksburg Electronic Village
- TOP Implementation Plan
- Letter of Commitment from the King and Queen Board of Supervisors

SERVICES PROVIDED TO THE TOP COUNTIES BY THE

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BLACKSBURG ELECTRONIC VILLAGE

BEV IN A BOX

Community Web Site Hosting

Each community received web space and server administration for a community web site. This is a full service, permanent site with nightly backups, complete statistics reporting, full text search engine, and 125 megabytes of space.

Community Web Site Design

BEV web design staff designed a community web site in collaboration with the Technology Leadership Team. The BEV elicited input from the committee, developed an overall site design, developed pre-coded HTML templates for all content areas on the site, and provided training to the committee on how to update and maintain the pages.

Community Village Mall (Business Directory)

The BEV provided an automated online business directory (identical in functionality to the BEV Village Mall) for each community to help local businesses gain more recognition online, especially from local customers. The BEV Village Mall is the most popular part of the BEV web site, and use continues to rise steadily. Local businesses can create and edit their own entries/links--no manual support is needed. The look of the pages will be fully integrated into the community web site.

Online Community Directory

The BEV provided an automated online directory (identical in function to the BEV Community Directory). The directory allows individuals and organizations in the community to create and maintain their own directory entries, which include their name, e-mail address, and URL/link to a web site (if one exists). Directory entries can also include telephone numbers and addresses if the person/organization wants to share that.

Online Community Calendar

The BEV provided each community with an online, interactive community calendar. The community web site committee will be able to add, delete, and update events as needed. The calendar will be integrated into the main web site.

Online Discussion Forum

The BEV provided a complete online forum system for use by community and civic groups and local government. Online conference systems make it easy to talk about and organize community projects and initiatives, to hold town meetings about important issues, or just to help people meet and learn about their neighbors.

Community Connections (Community Group Web Sites)

The BEV is providing community and civic groups with the same web site hosting services that the BEV provides in Blacksburg. Currently, over 150 organizations use BEV Community Connections services.

The BEV will set up an online registration system so that no local technical or setup support is required, and will provide the community a URL (e.g. civic.ourtown.org, or whatever is requested).

Groups receiving a Community Connections account get:

- A web site (up to 20 megabytes of text and graphics)
Sample URL: *http://civic.yourcountyaddress.net/yourgroup/*
- Two permanent email addresses for group use (with forwarding, if needed), and webmail access.
Sample address: *yourgroup@civic.yourcountyaddress.net*
- A broadcast mailing list that makes it easy to send messages to your members (up to 100 subscribers).
Example: *yourgroup@civic.yourcountyaddress.net*

Please note: This package does not include web site design and development. Community groups are responsible for the development of their own web site.

Virtual Business Incubator

BEV provides a virtual business incubator service to help home-based and microbusiness enterprises (businesses with fewer than 5 employees) get started. This service is similar to the Community Connections service.

Groups receiving a Virtual Business Incubator account get:

- A web site (up to 20 megabytes of text and graphics)
Sample URL: *http://vbi.yourcountyaddress.net/yourgroup/*
- Two permanent email addresses for group use (with forwarding, if needed), and webmail access.
Sample address: *yourgroup@vbi.yourcountyaddress.net*
- A broadcast mailing list that makes it easy to send messages to your members (up to 100 subscribers).
Example: *yourgroup@vbi.yourcountyaddress.net*

Participating businesses also receive marketing and business management assistance to help understand how to successfully integrate the Internet into their business.

Please note: This package does not include web site design and development. Businesses are responsible for the development of their own web site.

Implementation plan for the "Getting Rural Virginia Connected" TOP grant funded project

Goal

To allow counties listed below (also referred to as "participating communities" in this document) to use technology effectively to improve local social and economic conditions while including as many citizens as possible in each community's decision-making process.

Counties

- Accomack
- Craig
- Cumberland
- Dickenson
- King and Queen
- Louisa
- Northampton

Key Outcomes

1. Increased attendance at public meetings on key community issues by 15% per year.
2. A technology plan for each community with measurable milestones that directly address at least four serious social and/or economic issues identified by the community itself.
3. Increased Internet use in each community by 15% per year.
4. A fully functional, community network using local community members to manage content.
5. At least three new home-based and small business startups in each community each year.
6. At least six civic groups and organizations online in each community each year
7. An Information Technology Master Plan for each community
8. Permanent increased capacity in each community to use technology and the
9. Identification of and planning for regional technology corridors linking multiple communities

Implementation Task List

1. **Conduct Extension Agent Training**
Extension agents will be briefed about the proposed implementation plan for this project. They will also receive training in the following areas:
 - a. **Introduction to telecommunications infrastructure**
Help extension agents become familiar with the telecomm infrastructure issues facing rural communities. Agents will learn how to help communities become more independent in setting local agendas for telecommunications.
 - b. **Community assessment**
Extension agents will learn how to conduct community assessment, with a special focus on telecommunications. An Extension specialist will lead this section, with assistance from Information Systems staff. The CSPP model will be used as a starting point for technology assessment.
 - c. **Introduction to community networks**
Extension agents will learn how community networks make local communities more effective in solving problems, engaging citizens in local issues and creating a stronger sense of community.

In addition to these training sessions, agents will also be informed about the evaluation component of this project and their role in collecting relevant data for the evaluation process. See [Appendix A: Evaluation Plan for Key Outcomes](#) for an overview of the evaluation process.

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2. **Obtain support from county administrators and leaders within the county**

For this project to be a success, administrators and other leaders within each of the nine counties must support this effort in their respective counties. Extension agents will contact county administrators and leaders (preferably with a personal phone call) to explain project goals and outcomes and request their support for the project. The list of people to be contacted includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- Board of Supervisors
- County administrator
- Chamber of Commerce
- Representatives of Industrial/Economic Development groups
- Superintendent of Schools
- School Board
- Extension Leadership Council

Agents will also request these leaders to provide names of citizens that they know especially within participating communities who they think might be willing to serve on the technology leadership teams.

3. **Identify Local Technology Leadership Teams**

Each **participating community** will have a citizen team, referred to in the grant document as the Technology Leadership Team. Using the process described in the section titled Recruiting members for the TLT, agents will recruit ten to twelve citizens from each participating community. These individuals will have a strong interest and commitment to the effort and willingness to contribute time and energy to provide leadership and direction. This group will include representatives from local governments, business and agribusiness, industry, public education, the faith community, civic organizations, youth, and seniors. **Technology Leadership Teams will play a pivotal role in the overall success of this project.**

These teams will perform the following functions:

0. Serve as the core group for planning and implementing the *Take Charge* program that will reach out to the entire community. In their capacity as the planning committee for the *Take Charge* process, they will undertake the preparatory tasks needed to facilitate this process successfully within their communities. These tasks are listed in [Appendix B: Getting Ready for the Take Charge Process](#)
1. Advise and coordinate local program planning and to communicate and advocate the process to all segments of the community.
2. Work with project staff and Virginia Tech faculty to perform an assessment of current technology in the community using the CSPP model and other instruments.
3. Serve as facilitators in community workshops and forums to enhance the understanding of the general public on the potential of technology.
4. Work with project staff to identify and secure the resources necessary to fulfill and sustain the strategies of the local plan.
5. Remain in place after the end of the TOP funding with a commitment to continuing to provide technology leadership in the county.

Recruiting members for the TLT: Extension Agents are fundamental to the process of recruiting these members because they know their communities and the members that represent the power base. They will use the following process to recruit members for the Technology Teams *in each participating community*:

6. Begin by inviting members of the local government board or council. This is usually best accomplished by a personal phone call explaining the process and intended outcomes. Agents should get a firm commitment from at least one member of the board or council in each of the participating communities.

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7. Create a list of other leaders in the communities using [Appendix C: Significant Segments of the Community and Decision Makers](#) as a guideline. Every effort should be made to include as many sectors as possible. Inform these individuals about the project and invite them to join this effort.
8. Contact individuals identified by local leaders as most active and likely to champion the process. Request these individuals that if they cannot participate that they recommend likely individuals who could then be invited to serve on the leadership team. In most cases, several follow-ups may be necessary to fill all segments of the community.
9. Publicize the project and the need for participants from within the general population using a combination of the following suggestions:
 1. Plan an informational meeting to collect interested parties
 2. Meet and make informal presentations to local groups to generate interest
 3. Run advertisements for the informational meeting in the local papers
 4. Distribute and flyers place posters within the community
 5. Send out personal invitations to groups such as, but not limited to:
 - Clubs and organizations in the community
 - Fire/Rescue
 - Service organizations
 - NAACP
 - Churches
 - Principals and staff of all schools
 - Historical societies
 - Business heads that have shown support for progress in the county
 - Private residents that have shown interest in economic growth
 - Senior Citizens groups

This process is designed to provide an opportunity for citizens from all walks of life within participating communities to volunteer for this project. Standardizing on a recruitment process ensures that all interested parties have the same opportunities for volunteering for this effort. It also allows the project management team to document and report efforts made within each community to the Department of Commerce (the organization that's funding this effort).

Selecting team members for the TLT: TLT members will be selected based upon the following criteria:

10. They have a personal commitment to using technology to improve the community
11. They are willing to participate actively in both training and ongoing citizen team training
12. They represent a broad cross section of the community
13. They remain in place past the end of the grant period in order to help their communities with their ongoing technology needs

As part of the selection process, **agents will inform each member that unless otherwise requested, their names and the community they are representing will be displayed on the TOP Website and also supplied to the Department of Commerce for record keeping purposes.** *No other personal information will be displayed on the Web site or provided to the Department of Commerce.* Members have the freedom to list other information in the community directory if they choose to do so.

Agents will email the TOP Coordinator (jaime.dunton@vt.edu) the following:

14. A summary of the steps they took to recruit the team
15. A list of its members selected including name, occupation (specific companies are not required)/segment of society they represent, and community they are representing.

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Note: Where appropriate, activities of the various community citizen teams will be combined and coordinated at the county level in order to simplify the logistics of providing training and related information to these teams.

4. **Train Technology Leadership Teams**

TLT members receive training in three areas:

- **Introduction to telecommunications**

Team members will become familiar with the telecomm infrastructure issues facing rural communities. Team members would learn how to help their communities become more independent in setting local agendas for telecommunications.

- a. **Take Charge**

Team members will learn how the *Take Charge* program works, key aspects and phases of the initiative, and how to participate effectively in *Take Charge*. During this session, responsibilities for finding suitable locations in three areas of the county, establishing dates for the community meetings, finding sponsors for food, notebooks, copying, workshop materials, and establishing a plan for advertising the *Take Charge* program will be divided among various team members. See [Appendix B: Getting Ready for the Take Charge Process](#) for details.

- b. **Introduction to community networks**

Team members will learn how community networks make local communities more effective in solving problems, engaging citizens in local issues, and creating a stronger sense of community. Team members would also receive training in how to use email and the Web (if needed), and how to use online tools effectively to support communication within the community.

5. **Conduct Take Charge Workshops**

Extension agents will facilitate the *Take Charge* program that includes three, three-hour workshops. These workshops are designed to foster collaboration among the citizens of each community, to move the group toward consensus, and to provide a framework for creating a vision for the county. *All participating communities within a county will come together for these workshops.*

Workshop #1 - Where Are We Now?

- Examine historical and current trends and characteristics of the community and consider implications for the future.
- Self examination of the community's strengths and vulnerabilities in terms of financial, social, human, and natural assets.

Workshop #2 - Where Do We Want To Be?

- Develop a collective vision for the future of the community. Findings for each community will be combined to develop a collective vision for the future of the county.
- Assess the opportunities for and threats to achieving that vision.

Workshop #3 - How Do We Get There?

- Identify and frame overarching development issues
- Identify existing resources to help address these issues
- Explore alternative ways to organize the community for action

Issues identified by the Technology Leadership Teams during the Take Charge process will be highlighted on each community's Web site.

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6. **Hold Community Readiness Workshops**

These workshops are open to citizens at large and local community teams. Topics include:

- . Why community networks and technology investments help communities make the transition to the Information Economy
- a. How community networks increase worker job skills and expand the pool of high tech workers
- b. How technology can help rural communities retain traditional "small town" qualities and remain active, vibrant communities
- c. What communities have to do to attract high tech companies
- d. How to set up and run a community network

7. **Perform Community Technology Assessments**

Extension agents work with TLT members to perform an assessment of current technology in the community, using the CSPP model and other instruments developed by Virginia Tech. These assessments will be used to guide the development of technology master plans for the community.

8. **Deploy Community Network**

Each community will receive professional support and all systems needed to have a complete local version of the Blacksburg Electronic Village services referred to as **BEV in a Box** customized for the community. Design team meetings will be held with each community team to design the community Web site and services. This deployment of BEV in a Box will be done in stages and will include the following activities:

- 0. Meeting to discuss and finalize design issues
- 1. Training on the use of the various components of BEV in a Box i.e. discussion forum, community calendar, community directory, community village mall
- 2. Training on maintaining the Community Network and Community Connection accounts.

9. **Develop Technology Master Plan**

BEV staff and Extension agents will meet with community leaders over a nine month period to develop Technology Master plans for each community. They will also develop regional Master Plans that will help develop regional technology corridors.

10. **Conduct Citizen Team Meetings**

Each community team will have ongoing meetings with the project coordinator and the local Extension agent. Community teams will also participate in cluster meetings and quarterly project meetings (all communities) to ensure constant communication and the development of regional technology corridors.

11. **Prepare Report for communities**

A comprehensive report will be produced in partnership with local teams and disseminated to all project partners within three months following the completion of the 24 months of TOP funding.

12. **Prepare Public Report**

Write, edit, review, and print the final public report on the effort. This report will document the model used throughout the life of the effort, include all relevant assessment data, will document the impacts of the program, and be oriented specifically to be useful by other communities and regions.

13. **Perform Assessment Research**

The assessments conducted for each community will be used as the basis of an ongoing research effort during the two years of the project to document differences and similarities in the communities related to technology needs and impacts. BEV staff and VCE researchers will seek to discover common issues among these communities, try to identify common strategies that worked across multiple communities, and document this work in technical reports and published papers, including peer-reviewed journals.

Appendix A: Evaluation Plan for Key Outcomes

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Outcome 1: Increased attendance at public meetings on key community issues by 15% per year.

Evaluation plan: Attendance lists and agendas of all public meetings will be maintained and examined through the project (this will include any public meetings that take place to address issues identified in the *Take Charge* Program). This tracking should begin with the *Take Charge* public meetings. Items will include: meeting topic, date, location, agenda items, and total number of participants.

Outcome 2: A technology plan for each community with measurable milestones that directly address at least four serious social and/or economic issues identified by the community itself. An information technology master plan for each community.

Evaluation plan: A format for the technology master plan will be developed by project personnel. A panel of experts will be formed to review the technology master plan for each community. The panel will critique the master plan for appropriateness and practicality using a review sheet that will be developed. Once the measurable milestones have been identified, the evaluation team will work with the community to determine measurement strategies.

Outcome 3: Increased Internet use in each community by 15% per year.

Evaluation plan: Once the community website is developed and online, usage statistics will be monitored on a monthly basis to determine change in Internet use over time.

Outcome 4: A fully functional community network using local members to manage content.

Evaluation plan: Establishment of a functional and operating technology team will serve as evidence that this outcome has been achieved.

Outcome 5: At least three new home-based and small business startups in each community each year.

Evaluation plan: The community web site will be monitored for new business presence (e.g., Virtual Business Incubator, Village Mall). A survey may be developed and administered to the new startups to determine the extent to which the web presence affected their business.

Outcome 6: At least six civic groups and organizations online in each community each year.

Evaluation plan: The community web site will be monitored for civic groups' and organizations' presence (e.g., Community Connections, Organization Directory).

Outcome 7: An Information Technology Plan for each community.

Evaluation plan: The Information Technology Plan for each community will be reviewed to ensure that it contains the outcomes of the Technology Assessments conducted in each community.

Outcome 8: Permanent increased capacity in each community to use technology and the *Take Charge* planning process to address community needs well beyond the end of the grant period.

Evaluation plan: The *Take Charge* process will be evaluated at each of the three meetings as well as a follow-up survey/interview with members of the planning committee.

Outcome 9: Identification of and planning for regional technology corridors linking multiple communities.

Evaluation plan: Evidence to document this outcome will be contained in the technology master plan.

Appendix B: Getting Ready for the Take Charge Process (Pam Gibson)

Before the three community-wide meetings can take place, a planning committee made up of a cross-section of the community leadership whose activities will be coordinated by the county extension agent will have to perform the following preparatory tasks to ensure the success of this process:

1. The planning committee should reflect the various interests of the community. Please see the checklist in [Appendix C: Significant Segments of the Community and Decision Makers](#) for use as a guideline. Getting commitment from community sectors to work on the *Take Charge* program will help to guarantee that those sectors of the community will come to the community meetings. For success, there needs to be community wide buy-in by every sector in the community. It is imperative that members of the county board and town council participate. They control the budget and will have the power to implement the changes the community identifies.

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2. The three community wide meetings typically occur one night a week for three consecutive weeks for three (3) hours. Typically the meetings run from 6pm to 9pm or 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm. The meeting dates should be established. Every attempt must be made to publicize these meetings at least two weeks in advance.
3. The meeting locations should vary according to the community. By varying the location, it makes at least one meeting very accessible to one portion of the county. The meeting room should accommodate 50 to 100 people with tables for work areas, room for food set up, accessible restrooms. School lunchrooms have worked well.
4. Once dates and locations are established, it is time to find some sponsors to prepare food for the three evenings. Many people have to come directly from work to attend the meeting and don't have time to eat dinner, so having things like sandwiches available makes it easier for them to attend.
5. There will need to be commitments by the planning committee to purchase or find sponsors for notebooks, create notebooks, photocopy materials, stuff notebooks.
6. Participants will need to be registered for each meeting, given name tags and notebook materials.
7. The meeting locations need to have numerous flipcharts with paper, overhead projector or other audio visual aids.
8. After dates and locations have been established, the planning committee can begin to identify how to ensure that every member of the community knows about the meetings. Pam Gibson has a brochure in MS Word that can be adapted for each county. Putting ads in the newspaper, community newsletters, hanging posters in prominent places, sending notices home with school children are some of the ways to reach members of the community. It is also important that the identified movers and shakers attend the meetings and invite their constituencies.
9. As it closer to the time of the community-wide meetings, facilitators will want to enlist others to help work with the break out groups.
10. Facilitators may also want input from local historians for the first meeting. In the past, it has been popular to have the community history prepared for the notebooks on the first night and have the local historian(s) talk about the founding of the community.
11. Someone has to agree to take notes, collect information and have it ready for the notebooks the following week.

Appendix C: Significant Segments of the Community and Decision Makers

(Reproduced from the Take Charge Manual, Appendix A Page 81)

- Agriculture
- Banks/Financial Institutions
- Chamber of Commerce/ Commercial Clubs
- Churches
- Civic Organizations
- Community Improvement/ Betterment Groups
- Educational Organizations
 - Schools
 - Extension Service
 - Other
- Elderly
- Health Care
- Industry
- Local Development Organizations

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- Local Government
 - Town Board or City Council
 - Park Board
 - Zoning Board or Planning Commission
 - Economic Development Commission
- Professionals (Attorneys, Accountants, Architects, Marketing Specialists)
- Real Estate
- Retail Businesses
- Unions
- Utility Companies
 - (Electric, Gas, Railroads)
- Youth

LETTER OF COMMITMENT FROM THE KING AND QUEEN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

King and Queen County
KING AND QUEEN C.H., VIRGINIA 23085

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

March 19, 2001

Dr. Andrew Cohill
Director, BEV
840 University City Boulevard
Suite 5
Blacksburg, Virginia 24060

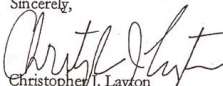
Dear Dr. Cohill:

I am writing to express my support and interest in the "Getting Rural Virginia Connected: A Vision for the Future" project that is currently being developed in a partnership between the Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Blacksburg Electronic Village. King and Queen County is a small, rural county with a population of approximately 6,600. Often, and particularly as it relates to new technologies, King and Queen County is left to play catch up with more prosperous and less rural localities. I believe that the "Getting Rural Virginia Connected" project will assist the Board of Supervisors and other community leaders in the development and implementation of a vision that takes advantage of established and emerging technological and telecommunications systems.

While I support the "Getting Rural Virginia Connected: A Vision for the Future" project, the King and Queen County Board of Supervisors has not taken any official action on the project. It is my intent to address the issue with the Board at their March 21, 2001, meeting.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 804-785-5975.

Sincerely,


Christopher J. Layton
County Administrator

Appendix B – Recruitment and Composition of the Technology Leadership Team

Contents:

- List of King and Queen Technology Leadership Team members
- Why *Take Charge* Survey
- Computer and Internet Survey

Members of the King & Queen County Technology Leadership Team (Effective September 25, 2002):

Member	Town	Occupation/Affiliation
Abbi Norman		Student
Alinda Uzel	King & Queen C.H.	FCS & CI Agent, Virginia Cooperative Extension
Anne Richardson	Indian Neck	Tribal chief
Carol Patton	Bruington	Auto parts sales
Carole White	King & Queen C.H.	Travel consultant
Debra Branham	Buena Vista	
Dee Bogetti	Cauthornsville	Graphic designer
Donna Elliot	Stevensville	
Dom Stolfi	St. Stephens Church	Self-employed, webmaster for school system
Donald Pemberton		
Donna Thompson	St. Stephens Church	Director, non-profit housing
Ed Matthews	Newtown	
Gene Martin		
Gladys Hickman	King & Queen C.H.	Administrative Assistant, Virginia Cooperative Extension
Jack Spain	Walkerton	
James Burns		
Jean Shepard	St. Stephens Church	
Lawrence Simpkins	St. Stephens Church	Storeroom operations leader, member of Board of Supervisors
Letitia Walker	Walkerton	Farm owner, graphic designer
Linda Stolfi	St. Stephens Church	
Liz Cascone	Walkerton	Youth social worker
Louise Carlton		
Matt Lewis	King & Queen C.H.	ANR Agent, Virginia Cooperative Extension
Maureen Whited	Newtown	Home-based genealogy business

Member	Town	Occupation/Affiliation
Nancy Herman-Thompson	Shacklefords	Land surveyor
Norm Dauphinee	Richmond	Computer C.S.E.
Reginald Brown	King & Queen C.H.	Teacher
Sally Mills	Gloucester Point	Sea Grant Communications
Sharon Beattie		
Steve Haase	King & Queen C.H.	Truck driver
Steven Walton	Plainview	Student
T. Abigail Collins		
Vincent Harris	Shanghai	
Wallica Gaines	St. Stephens Church	School Board, Rural Housing Development
William T Henley, IV	Walkerton	Organic farmer

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WHY TAKE CHARGE SURVEY

Why Take Charge? | (9 Returned)

Agree Disagree (Please check 4 one for each statement)

- 9 1. Citizens of my county have a clear understanding of our county's future goals for development and/or maintaining our quality of life.
- 1 8 2. All members of my community and county are well informed of issues facing the county and county government.
- 9 3. Manufacturing, service, and e-businesses are common in this county.
- 8 1 4. Roads, water, sewer systems, natural gas, and electricity are important to maintaining and improving the quality of life in my county.
- 8 1 5. In today's growing "electronic" age a modern, efficient, communications infrastructure is an important component of a sustained and growing community.
- 9 6. All citizens of this county, including me, fully understand the basic concepts of telephony.
- 3 5 7. This county has existing resources to foster entrepreneurship.
(1 "Don't Know")
- 4 5 8. It is easy for the citizens of this county to utilize on-line, distance learning courses from their homes to enhance their skills and career opportunities.
- 8 9. Our county has a long-term master plan that includes or is dedicated to planning for technological infrastructure.
(1 "Don't Know")
- 3 3 10. Our county is strategically positioned to apply for and receive grants to further develop a technological infrastructure.
(3 "Don't Know")

Thank you for your assistance!

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Computer and Internet Use Survey

King & Queen Information Trail Community Survey

I live in the following Voting District:

- Buena Vista Shanghai Stevensville
 Newtown St. Stephens Not Sure

Do you own or use a computer at HOME? Yes No

Do you use a computer at WORK? Yes No

Do you use the Internet? Yes No

If so, WHERE do you use the Internet? Home Work Library Other _____
(Check all that apply)

How OFTEN do you use the Internet? None Daily Weekly Monthly

If you normally DON'T use a computer or the Internet, why not? _____

If you are connecting to the Internet, who is your Internet Service Provider (who do you pay for service)? _____

What type of service do you have? Dial-Up (Phone Line) Cable
 Satellite/Wireless Other _____

For what purpose(s) do you use the Internet? Work/Business Telecommuting E-mail
 Bill Paying Distance Learning Research
 On-line Purchases Entertainment Other _____

Thank you for your participation. Your answers may help us find funding to continue this project and other technology projects in King & Queen.

The KQ Technology Leadership Team for the King & Queen Information Trail

Appendix C – Marketing and Publicity Materials

Contents:

The following six news releases were sent to the five newspapers serving King & Queen County—the *Tidewater Review*, the *Rappahannock Times*, the *Southside Sentinel*, the *Country Courier*, and the *Daily Press*.

“Getting Rural Virginia Connected Initiative Kicks Off in King & Queen,” August, 2002.

“King & Queen...Connecting the Community and the World,” September 2002.

“KQ’s Electronic Village Named!” February 2003.

“Checking Out the InfoTrail,” July 2003

“Attention King & Queen-ers!” July 2003

“Let’s Explore While We Connect with King & Queen County,” June, 2004.

The King and Queen Information Trail: Bookmark describing the web site features and address.

The King and Queen Information Trail: Business card describing the web site features and address.

Support the Local Economy: Keep \$\$\$ in Our County: Flyer encouraging local residents to support local businesses

Brochure: Agri-tourism Business Opportunities Conference

Brochure: Developing a WINNING Business Plan Workshop

Other Promotional Posters and Flyers advertising the KQInfoTrail

Outline: Presentation to the King and Queen Board of Supervisors, June 14, 2004

Outline: Community Meetings to Promote the King and Queen Information Trail, June-September, 2004

Getting Rural Virginia Connected Initiative Kicks Off in King & Queen –Press Release - August, 2002

“Getting Rural Virginia Connected” Initiative Kicks Off in King & Queen.

On Thursday, August 1, a community informational meeting was held at the Courts and Administration Building in King and Queen to kick off the development of an “electronic village” for King and Queen County. Jon Johnson, Community Technology Development Specialist, VA Tech, shared with attendees an overview of the TOP project, benefits that can be gained and how the community will be involved. A citizen committee will give direction to the naming, design and marketing of this exciting project. When this “village” is completed, each church, fire department, civic organization, business, government agency and others can be linked and communicate across the County. Not only can residents access information about the county in which they live, people from all over the world can discover the uniqueness of King and Queen County. This is a joint project of VA Tech, the Blacksburg Electronic Village and VA Cooperative Extension with support from local government. If you would like more information or would like to be involved in the process, please call Alinda Uzel at 785-5979 or 769-5005. (To see an example of an “electronic village” connect to the Internet and go to www.bev.net). Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, veteran status, national origin, disability, or political affiliation. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.



Jon Johnson, Community Technology Development Specialist, VA Tech, discusses the implementation of an “electronic village” in King and Queen with county residents.

King & Queen...Connecting the Community and the World – Press Release - September 2002

KING & QUEEN... CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY AND THE WORLD King & Queen County residents are invited to propose a name for the soon to-be-developed community's electronic village web site. The site will host, among other things, a resident directory, business directory, civic and arts directory, online conferencing system and a message board. The individual or group submitting the winning name entry will receive a \$100.00 U.S. Savings Bond, courtesy of Virginia Cooperative Extension, and be recognized officially on the site.

King & Queen County is one of nine rural Virginia counties selected by The Technology Opportunity Program (TOP) project grant, funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce, and will join in efforts to "Get Rural Virginia Connected."

Led by the Blacksburg Electronic Village (BEV), Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) and a Project Team of King & Queen citizen volunteers, the TOP Program is designed to permit communities to take control of and use technology as a tool to improve local economic conditions and include more citizens in community decision-making processes.

"TOP provides technical expertise, network systems and leadership, but it is the citizens of King & Queen County who must support and sustain this effort through involvement at a grass-roots level," notes Alinda Uzel, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, VCE. "The first step residents of King & Queen County can take is to help the Project Team name the proposed community web site."

The deadline for name submissions is Friday, October 4. This allows time for the selection committee to choose ten (10) entries that will be displayed at Community Pride Day so county residents can vote on

the name they feel best reflects the county's heritage, history and uniqueness. **Submit your suggested site name** by dropping it off at the Extension office at the Courts and Administration Building, e-mailing it to auzel@vt.edu, or mailing it to: "The Name Game", c/o Alinda Uzel, K&Q Cooperative Extension, P.O. Box 68, King & Queen C.H., VA 23085. (Be sure to include your name, mailing address, telephone number and, if applicable, e-mail address.) Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, veteran status, national origin, disability, or political affiliation. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

KQ's Electronic Village Named! – Press Release - February 2003

KQ's ELECTRONIC VILLAGE NAMED!

At the February meeting of the Technology Leadership Team (TLT) for the implementation of an electronic village for the King and Queen community, Tiffany Wyatt was honored for submitting the winning name for the "village." Prior to Community Pride Day in October, name suggestions were submitted and then narrowed down to ten entries. At Community Pride Day, county residents voted on their preferences and the field was narrowed to two names. At the recently conducted "Take Charge" participants voted on the two final selections: the winner was "*King and Queen Information Trail*" submitted by Tiffany Wyatt, a 6th grader at Lawson-Marriott, daughter of Marie and David Wyatt. Ms. Wyatt's winning entry garnered her a letter of congratulations, a certificate of recognition, and a \$100 US Savings Bond.

In March, Jaime Shetrone, VA Tech, will meet with the TLT to begin the design of the site. Hopefully, the basic site will be available by mid-April. King and Queen residents interested in assisting with this project are invited to attend the meeting on March 11, 7 p.m., in the 2nd floor conference room at the Courts and Administration Building. For more information, call Alinda Uzel at the King and Queen Office, Virginia Cooperative Extension, (804)785-5979 or (804)769-5005. Virginia Cooperative Extension programs are open to all regardless of race, age, veteran status, national origin, disability or political affiliation. If you are a person with a disability and desire assistance or

accommodation, please call Alinda Uzel at the above number at least 5 working days prior to the event.

(Here are the names that go with the picture)

Front: Alinda Uzel, Tiffany Wyatt
Rear: Donna Elliott, Lawrence Simpkins, Debra Branham, Lewis Hickman, Carole White, Dom Stolfi

Picture Accompanying Article Above



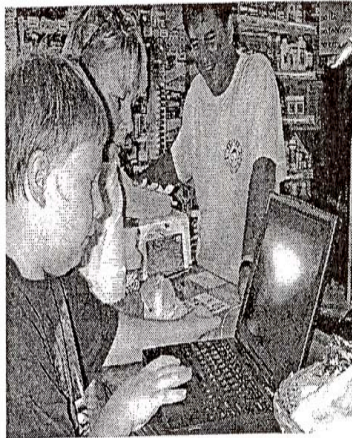
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Checking Out the InfoTrail – Press Release - July 2003

“CHECKING OUT” *THE INFOTRAIL*.....

Stopping at Scott’s Store in Walkerton last Wednesday gave some customers a chance to sample more than their morning snacks. With the help of a laptop computer connected to the phone line, Dickie Pendleton was the first to view the list of King & Queen businesses under the “Village Mall.” Rebecca Farmer and her son, Nathan, checked the Calendar tab to see the listing of Vacation Bible School dates and locations available to local residents. This “electronic village” can be accessed via the internet at:

www.kqinfotrail.net



Attention King & Queen-ers! – Press Release - July 2003

Attention King & Queen-ers!

Looking for a Vacation Bible School for the kids? Want to check the tidal charts or the location of a church near you? LOOK FOR IT ON YOUR KQ INFORMATION TRAIL!!! Using any computer with internet access, go to: www.kqinfotrail.net and you can find this and MUCH, MUCH MORE! A project of VA Tech, the King & Queen Office of Virginia Cooperative Extension and a local citizen team, this is a community service that you won't want to miss out on!!! Anyone wanting to serve on the Team to keep this project moving forward, call Alinda Uzel, Unit Coordinator, at (804) 785-5979.

Let's Explore While We Connect with King & Queen County – Press Release - June, 2004

Lets Explore while we Connect with King & Queen County

Have you been wondering just what is the "KQ Info Trail"? Well wonder no more. The KQ Info Trail Committee Members will be hosting a hands-on seminar for those who would like to know more about the website. Have you ever wanted to know just how many businesses are in King & Queen County? Want to know what is there to do in King & Queen County? Are you new to the area, and need to know more about the county's attractions? Then let's explore King & Queen County's businesses, churches, calendar of events and our local business directory on Tuesday, June 15, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. at the Upper King & Queen Rescue Squad Building located on Route 721, Newtown Road in the Newtown District. Refreshments will be provided and served by the Rescue Squad Auxiliary. If Newtown should not be a close or convenient location, then come join us when we move our seminar throughout the county's election districts. On July 13, 2004 at 7:00 p.m., the committee will host a seminar at the Lawson Elementary School located on Route 721, Newtown Road in the St. Stephens Church District; August 10, 2004 at 7:00 p.m., King & Queen Central High School, located on Route 14, The Trail in the Stevensville District; September 14, 2004, at 7:00 p.m., Lower King & Queen County Fire Department located on Route 605, York River Road in the Buena Vista District; and October 12, 2004 at 7:00 p.m., King & Queen County Elementary School located on Route 14, The Trail in the Shanghai District. The KQ Info Trail is a great way to increase and improve communication throughout King & Queen County. Come see and explore just what the KQ Info Trail is all about and what it has to offer you. Don't miss out on our upcoming workshop for local businesses, organizations and churches to create their very own website. What a great way to advertise in the 21st century. For more Information please contact the King & Queen County Extension Office at (804) 785-5979 or (804) 769-5005.

Bookmark With Web Address



Business Card With Web Address



Flyer - Support the Local Economy: Keep \$ in Our County



Flyer – Looking For Services in King and Queen County

Enjoy a new resource for KQ residents!!

**Explore The King and Queen
Information Trail to find:**

- . Local Businesses
- . Local Churches
- . Local Clubs and Organizations
- . Local Weather and Tidal Charts
- . Links to Local Schools, Libraries and Government
- . Calendar of Local Events & MORE!!!

DON'T HAVE INTERNET ACCESS AT HOME? Go to your local library and log in to the newest resource in the County!

www.kqinfotrail.net

Funded by the US Dept. of Commerce. A project of VA Tech, VA Cooperative Extension and the Blacksburg Electronic Village. Design and development done by a local Team of citizens. Anyone wishing to be involved with this project, call the King and Queen Extension Office at (804) 785-8979 or (804) 769-5005.

Brochure – Agri-tourism Business Conference

Virginia Cooperative Extension enables people to improve their lives through an educational process that uses scientific knowledge focused on issues and needs.

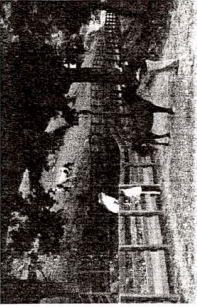
Special Thanks to the following who provided generous contributions to help make this conference possible.

BB&T, Mattaponi Branch
BB&T, Gloucester Branch
Colonial Farm Credit, Tappahannock Branch
Virginia Cooperative Extension

Thanks also to:

Jerry Walker & Family, Locust Grove
The Peninsula Artillery Re-enactors
Bus Drivers from King & Queen Public Schools

**AGRI-TOURISM
BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES
CONFERENCE**



Turning YOUR Land into Profit!

MAY 9, 2003
King & Queen Courthouse
King & Queen, VA

Time: 8:30 AM – 2:30 PM

Virginia Cooperative Extension
Knowledge for the Common Wealth

Virginia Tech
VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
AND STATE UNIVERSITY VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

www.ext.vc.edu

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Keynote Speakers

- **Dr. Ann Lastovica**, Extension Specialist with the 1890 Cooperative Extension program at Virginia State University, initiated and coordinates Extension's Home-Based and Micro-Business Program (HBMB), serves on the National HBMB Design Team, serves on the Agri-Tourism Task Force, and initiated the "Minding My Own Business" youth entrepreneurship program. Dr. Lastovica has received numerous awards including the Extension's Achievement Award and a Certificate for Excellence for innovative programming.
- **Andy Hankins** is an Extension Specialist in Alternative Agriculture and professor at Virginia State University. He has extensive experience with sustainable production, value-added processing, marketing and conservation of forest-grown medicinal plants and determining the plants' potential for local-level economic development. He has traveled extensively to lecture and assess the overseas market potential for a variety of woodland botanicals.

Afternoon Entrepreneurs

- Ken Pounsberry, Linden House, Champlain, VA
Bed and Breakfast
- Brenda Parker, Sassy Springs Farm, Gloucester, VA
Dairy goats and Related Products
- Brian Barnes, Maple Lawn, Wicomico Church, VA
Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch
- Charles Maloney, Dayspring Farm, Cologne, VA
CSA operation (subscription farm)
- Karen and Jeff Merrill, The Farmer's Daughter, Gloucester, VA
Farmer's Market - Vegetables, Plants,
Pick-your-own Strawberries

Schedule of Events

- 8:30 AM – Registration
- 9:00 AM – Welcome & Introductory Comments
- 9:30 AM – *Setting the Stage – Opening the Doors*,
10:30 AM – Break
- 10:45 AM – *Planning for Agri-tourism: Do You and Your Resources Match Up*
- 11:45 AM – *Lunch and Tour*
Locust Grove - Walkerton, Virginia
(Board Buses at Courthouse to Site)
- 1:00 PM – Return to Courthouse
- 1:30 PM – *Successful Agri-tourism Entrepreneurs*
representing a variety of local successes and some "in the works"
- 2:30 PM – Evaluations and Adjourment

Thanks for Your Participation!

CASHING IN ON BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES...
DEVELOPING A WINNING BUSINESS PLAN – A workshop

Have you thought about starting your own business? *Where do you begin?* The basis for starting any business, large or small, is the development of a winning business plan. The business plan is your guide and, if done properly, provides the support you need to seek financial support, assess and re-assess your goals and help you avoid future stress.

Virginia Cooperative Extension invites future business owners to attend a workshop to get them off on the right foot. If your current plan isn't working for you, this workshop may provide additional information you can use.

"Developing a Winning Business Plan" is scheduled for Wednesday, July 23, at the King & Queen Courts and Administration Building. Starting with registration at 8:30 a.m., the workshop will run from 9:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. Some of the topics to be explored are the purpose of the business plan and what it includes, legal business structure, personnel needs, financial data development, accessing funding, and a review of several computer software programs for the development of your business plan.

Sponsored by the Extension offices in Planning District 18, leadership for the workshop is given by Dr. Ann Lastovica, Virginia State University, Extension Specialist in Micro- and Home-Based Business Development. Additional local business leaders will assist in the presentations and interactive sessions.

Pre-registration and a \$10.00 fee is required. The fee covers the cost of morning refreshments, all materials and lunch. You may mail your registration fee by Friday, July 18, to: VCE-King & Queen; P. O. Box 68; King & Queen, VA 23085.

For more information, call Gladys Hickman at the King & Queen Extension Office between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at (804) 785-5979 or (804) 769-5005.

If you are a person with a disability and desire assistance or accommodation to participate in this workshop, please notify the King & Queen Office at the numbers listed above no later than 4:00 p.m., July 14, to make arrangements.

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, veteran status, national origin, disability or political affiliation. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

Flyer Advertising the Information Trail

Enjoy a new resource for KQ residents!!

**Explore The King and Queen
Information Trail to find:**

- Local Businesses
- Local Churches
- Local Clubs and Organizations
- Local Weather and Tidal Charts
- Links to Local Schools, Libraries and Government
- Calendar of Local Events & MORE!!!

DON'T HAVE INTERNET ACCESS AT HOME? Go to your local library and log in to the newest resource in the County!

www.kqinfotrail.net

Funded by the US Dept. of Commerce. A project of VA Tech, VA Cooperative Extension and the Blacksburg Electronic Village. Design and development done by a local Team of citizens. Anyone wishing to be involved with this project, call the King and Queen Extension Office at (804) 785-5979 or (804) 769-5005.

Flyer Advertising the Tiger Trail for Children

The Tiger Trail.net
Everything KIDS in King & Queen County

YOUTH ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

HOMEWORK HELP
SCIENCE PROJECTS
LIBRARY LINKS

SCOUTS ACTIVITIES
FAITH-BASED EVENTS

4-H HAPPENINGS
SPORTS SCHEDULES

FREEBIES & FUN
CRAFTS & GAMES
411 YOUTH INFO

LOG ON AND LINK UP TO YOUR FRIENDS

SIGN UP FOR E-MINDERS

This site sponsored by the KQ-Community Involvement Team as part of the King and Queen Information Trail www.kqinfotrail.net In co-operation with **DARE**

www.TheTigerTrail.net

Take Charge... in King & Queen County

The **Take Charge** program will provide residents of King & Queen the opportunity to come together to collaboratively develop a roadmap for the future.

The **Take Charge** process provides a framework for identifying and addressing a wide variety of community development issues.

Objectives of the Take Charge Program

- Assemble various interests within the community and enhance communication among these interests.
- Provide a framework for analyzing the county's strengths and weaknesses
- Develop strategies to implement King & Queen residents' vision for the future.
- Utilize and build upon existing financial, physical, social, human, and environmental resources to help realize the vision.

The Workshops

The **Take Charge** program starts with three, three-hour workshops. These workshops are designed to foster collaboration among the citizens of King, Queen, to move the group toward consensus, and to provide a framework for creating a vision for the county.

Workshop #1 – Where Are We Now?

- Examine current trends and characteristics of King & Queen and implications for the future
- Assess economic, social, and other opportunities for the county's future through analysis of county strengths and weaknesses.

Workshop #2 – Where Do We Want To Be?

- Develop a vision for the future of the community by focusing on the most realistic strategies.

Workshop #3 – How Do We Get There?

- Identify and discuss the critical issues that will enable King & Queen County to move forward.
- Organize King & Queen for Action.

Benefits of the Take Charge Program


- Increased level of participation and ownership in the community decision making process
- Increased understanding of King & Queen County and its strategic position
- Expanded pool of leadership and entrepreneurial talent
- More support for crucial decisions on strategic county issues
- Enhanced utilization of local resources


CALL (804) 785-5979 OR 769-5005 BY JANUARY 5TH TO REGISTER

Know ledge for the Common Wealt h

Flyer Advertising the Name Game Contest

King & Queen County's Electronic Village "Name Game"





The King & Queen Technology and Community Planning Committee is looking for a catchy title for the County's Electronic Village Website.

The top 10 entries will be chosen by the committee and they will be voted on at King and Queen's Annual Community Pride Day on October 19, 2002.

The winning entry holder will receive a \$100 Savings Bond and will be recognized on the website and in the news releases.

Remember: The title should reflect King & Queen County's history, heritage and uniqueness!

Deadline: October 4, 2002

✂

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Title: _____
(Website Name)

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Presentation to the King and Queen Board of Supervisors – June 2004

Presentation to the Board of Supervisors
June 14, 2004

Good Evening, I'm Alinda Uzel, Virginia Cooperative Extension

Mr. Chairman, Board Members, Mr. Hachey, Attorney Hefty and King and Queen citizens. (Hand informational packet to Board)

I just briefly want to share 2 items with you:

- 1) An update on the community electronic village
- 2) Information for the home gardener and landscaper

The material I just handed to you is in the order of discussion

1. The Technology Leadership Team has given a lot of thought and planning into ways to promote and increase the usage of this resource – the community electronic village – the information trail.

The business cards are more efficient and economical than bookmarks – over 800 have already been distributed, including, with the cooperation of the school system, in the report cards mailed home to parents of the high school students.

A series of 5 community meetings are scheduled – one in each voting district – the first being tomorrow evening at the Upper KQ Rescue Squad Building in Newtown. We are requesting that, if possible, the Board member from their district as well as the School Board representative be present.

The "Support the Local Economy" flyer was sent home with every elementary school student prior to schools' closing. Many of these will also be placed in grocery bags at the Walkerton Country Market and distributed in a variety of locations.

Other promotional plans are "in the works" but these are the most current.

The next document shows the Home Page when one goes into the web site. The latest addition is the link (on the left) to DISCUSSION. This is in keeping with your request to let residents have the ability to share ideas and comments regarding up-coming issues.

Right now, if one clicks on this link, they will see the message on the next page. When you have a topic you would like to get local discussion on, please notify us and we will place it on the site (Be sure to give a deadline for when comments need to be submitted. We will compile these and provide that information to you on the day following the closing date.)

Another link I would like to bring to your attention is the CALENDAR. As you can see on the next page, when one clicks on Calendar, this is what comes up. Please move down the page to the 4th listing – Community Pride Day.

For clubs, individuals or organizations wishing to participate in the parade, set up a display or sell a product, there are now links to the forms which they can fill out and submit.

Another calendar-related bit of information – more and more churches and groups are adding meeting and event information to the MONTHLY CALENDAR section. As

you probably know, the agendas for your Board meetings and other government meetings are now included here. I have had several local residents to comment about how nice it is to be able to have that in advance.

There is a lot of valuable information available to our citizens that can all be accessed from this "one stop shopping" location. A point of reference to that comment would be if one goes to the COMMUNITY GROUPS link and is looking for information about OUTDOORS opportunities for local residents.

If they choose this area, the next page is what they see. As you can see, the first connection is to the KW/KQ Dept. of Forestry.

If one clicks on the web link there, the next page is what they see. Just look at all the pertinent information to be found there...auctions, fire danger notices, where to get tree seedlings, logger forms, grants, tree identification, financial incentives for planting pine seedlings – just a mountain of information

AND THEY DON'T HAVE TO GO LOOKING IN A LOT OF DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS.

Local Community Groups are taking advantage of the free web page linked to the site. Currently, 14 are working on the development of their pages. We have 2 interns at VA Tech now to assist them in the process.

THERE WILL BE ADDITIONS AND CHANGES ALONG THE WAY. THE TEAM IS WORKING HARD TO MAKE THIS SOMETHING USEFUL FOR OUR RESIDENTS. SUGGESTIONS ARE WELCOMED – PLEASE CHECK IT

OUT FREQUENTLY TO SEE HOW IT IS
PROGRESSING.

More and more calls are coming in to our office from the individual having trouble with voles OR needing to know something about pruning trees OR any number of gardening or landscaping-related topics.

The last page is a copy of a handout with a listing of publications that are available at Extension's public web site along with directions of how to find the materials. If an individual doesn't have access to a computer, they can call the local office and we will provide the materials they need.

I want to thank you for your continued support. Are there any questions?

Outline for Community Meetings to Promote the Site – June to September, 2004

COMMUNITY MEETING TO PROMOTE WWW.KQINFOTRAIL.NET

(MAKE SURE ALL PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE THE "SUPPORT THE LOCAL ECONOMY" HANDOUT, THE BUSINESS CARD AND AN EVALUATION FORM PRIOR TO STARTING)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS – If Supervisor and/or School Board Member present, be sure to thank them for being there

BRIEF BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT – it is for and by the people of King & Queen

LET'S TAKE A JOG DOWN "THE INFOTRAIL" – WE WON'T STOP AT ALL POINTS, BUT WILL LINGER AT A FEW.

- HOMEPAGE – POINT OUT THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS TO NAVIGATE – TABS TO THE LEFT OR QUICK LINKS

- TRANSPORTATION
Point out explanation and directions for Bay Transit
Point out connection to Tidal Charts (Walkerton)

- COMMUNITY GROUPS – This includes churches, clubs and organizations

Click on Religion – briefly discuss the information found there and how it can benefit them. Remind them that each church, club or organization can have a free web page connected to this site so encourage their leaders to pursue it. Currently, we have an intern at VA Tech who will work directly with the individual responsible for the group web page. Check to be sure your church information is listed.

- COUNTY ATTRACTIONS – MAKE THIS BRIEF – Bring attention to one attraction – maybe Mattaponi Queen or Old Schoolhouse Bed and Breakfast

- VILLAGE MALL (Refer to handout “Keep \$\$\$ in the County”)

Click on “Bed and Breakfast”

Click on “Auctioneers”

Click on “Logging”

Discuss the need to identify and support local businesses. Ask folks to let us know of any businesses in their vicinity – give us a name/phone number and we’ll follow up on it.

- EMERGENCY SERVICES

Click on “Emergency Shelters” – indicate the mailing addresses for folks who want to make contributions to the agency. If anyone sees an error in address, have them write it down so we can make changes.

- CALENDAR

At the opening, this lists re-occurring events.

Look at Community Pride Day – point out the availability of the links to the forms needed for this event. Others can be added.

Click on “Monthly Calendar of Events” and encourage addition of their church/group events.

Here is where, if your church or organization is having an event they want to get the word out about to the community, a member of your group can go in and add their own information by clicking on “Add Your Event to the King & Queen County Calendar.”

If you want to know what’s on the agenda for the Planning Commission or Board, point to that meeting and click and the entire agenda is there for you to see.

- DISCUSSION BOARD

Sometimes there may be issues the Board of Supervisors want input from the community prior to a Board meeting. These will be posted on the Discussion Board with a deadline for submissions and that information will be given to the Board for consideration.

This is an opportunity for folks who cannot attend the Board meeting or meet personally with their Supervisor to voice their opinions.

Eventually, this will be an open discussion board but for now we are limiting it to the supervisors' issues.

THANK EVERYONE FOR COMING – SEE IF ANYONE HAS QUESTIONS

REMIND THEM TO SIGN THE REGISTRATION FORM AND LEAVE THEIR EVALUATION – THIS IS IMPORTANT SO WE CAN CONTINUE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

Appendix D – Program Evaluation Materials

Content: *Take Charge* Evaluations

Reason for participation

- Desire to use our human and natural resources better.
- Planning Commission.
- Concerned about community.
- Improve the county.
- On Board of Supervisors and interested in the program.
- Would like to help direct where we go.
- Personal interest.
- On Comprehensive Planning Committee.
- See technology get a foot hold.
- Concerned about county growth.
- This is my county/my home and I want it to be the best it can be, using all of its attributes.
- I want to know more about King and Queen, and what I might do to help improve county.
- On committee.
- Interested in future of King and Queen.

Additional Comments: (feel free to continue comments on back of page)

- Very well prepared and presented.

Reason for participation

- Member of Board of Supervisors.
- I did not know much about the county.
- To determine economic development status of the county, and areas to develop.
- I want our county to join together to enhance the opportunities for its citizens, especially the youth, our schools need help and support.
- Interested in future of our county.
- Want to work with others who share a deep affection for our county.
- Interested in future of county.
- I want to get more involved in my community to know what's going on.
- Interested in county growth.
- Member of Planning Commission.
- Technology improvements needed, improved communication.
- Interested in community.
- Because I still can.
- Improve King and Queen.
- Importance of internet resources.

Additional Comments: (feel free to continue comments on back of page)

- Important to me to know that the outcomes will be presented to our Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission and Wetlands Board.
- Name badges would help.
- Additional sessions would be helpful.
- Very well prepared and presented.

Reason for participation

- Technology interest.
- Because I can.
- Member of Board of Supervisors.
- To have input in the decision making process in the needs of the county.
- Improve the county.
- On committee.
- I did not know much about what was going on in the county.
- Interested in future of county.
- Information on county.
- Invited.

Additional Comments: (feel free to continue comments on back of page)

- Very well prepared and presented – again!

Appendix E – Benchmark Report

BENCHMARK REPORT

Prepared by

Pamela Gibson
Community Initiatives Specialist
Virginia Cooperative Extension

Early in the process, specific benchmarks were identified as necessary for successful completion of this project. The following table lists the fourteen benchmarks identified in the project. While each of the counties included in the study satisfied completion of these benchmarks, there were differences among the localities. This report includes some of the notable differences.

TOP Benchmarks							
	Accomack	Craig	Cumberland	Dickenson	King & Queen	Louisa	Northampton
1	Extension agent training	11/7/02	11/7/02	11/7/02	11/7/02	11/7/02	11/7/02
2	Obtain support from county leaders	3/9/01	3/13/01	3/16/01	3/3/01	3/19/01	3/12/01
3	Technology Team recruitment	11/17/02	6/5/02	1/21/03	7/16/03	7/22/02	12/20/02
4	Technology Teams formed	9/26/02	4/28/03	11/14/02	7/18/03	8/1/02	1/15/03
5	Technology Team training	11/20/02	4/28/03	4/28/03	7/18/03	11/19/02	1/15/03
6	Take Charge Mtg 1	2/5/03	N/A	3/20/03	N/A	1/9/03	N/A
7	Take Charge Mtg 2	2/25/03	N/A	3/27/03	N/A	1/16/03	N/A
8	Take Charge Mtg 3	3/4/03	N/A	4/3/03	N/A	1/23/03	N/A
9	Community Readiness Workshops	5/20/04	3/15/04	10/15/03	10/1/03	5/9/03	10/29/03
10	Technology Assessments	9/03-04/04	9/03-04/04	9/03-04/04	9/03-04/04	9/03-04/04	9/03-04/04
11	Initial web site development mtg	3/12/03	7/14/03	5/15/03	7/18/03	3/11/03	2/11/03
12	Transition training	N/A	2/10/04	3/8/03	3/10/03	3/24/04	3/17/04
13	Web site deployment	N/A	10/1/03	10/1/03	10/1/03	6/10/03	5/27/03
14	Technology Master Plans	6/30/04	6/30/04	6/30/04	6/30/04	6/30/04	6/30/04

Extension personnel from each of the participating counties attended a day-long training program in Richmond, VA on November 7, 2002. The program provided introduction to the TOP team from Extension and BEV who would

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be in each county, the process involved to complete the project, and the commitment needed from agents in each county. This program was taped so that others working on the project could review information.

For the second benchmark, support from county leaders was identified. The date in the table represents the initial letter of intent from each of the participating counties. This information was important to assure that the \$6,000 required from each county would be committed. It was hoped that the support would include participation by local leaders in the project. Participation by local leaders in the Technology Leadership Teams and the *Take Charge* meetings was not consistent across the seven participating counties. Extension agents were given guidelines for recruitment that included securing participation of key local leaders. In some counties, participation was active in the beginning of the project but waned months later. Several counties have had consistent participation from a variety of local leadership throughout the project. Cumberland county maintained consistent participation from local leaders, and Van Petty won a seat on the Board of Supervisors.

Technology Team recruitment was the third benchmark. The dates in the table reflect the beginning dates for this process. In some cases, the recruitment process went much slower than expected, suffered lapses because of personnel turnover, and often did not meet the expectations of the recruitment process. The process for recruitment stressed the need to attract members of all segments of the community, but there was a perception that one needed to be technologically savvy to participate. For a few counties such as Craig and Dickenson, this perception created a significant roadblock in recruiting the number of members needed for the longevity of the project. All of the counties found the necessity to have members of all sectors of the community to do things such as information gathering, speaking to clubs and organizations, and general brainstorming. Northampton and Accomack counties had unique problems. First, they had a competing website for the eastern shore and didn't see the need for a duplicate site and being next door to one another had difficulty determining whether it was best to work on the county level or as a shore (regional) basis. Initial efforts were on a county level with each county recruiting members but later folded membership into the Networked Futures Task Force that served the shore technology efforts. Many of the members of the TLTs were already active in this task force and found it useful to put energy into one organizational effort.

Formation of Technology Leadership Teams was the fourth benchmark. This process involved getting commitments from those members of the Technology teams who would be responsible for the updating and maintenance of the websites. In the counties of Accomack and Cumberland, this phase took place before general recruitment took place. They organized teams of leaders in the community to begin the initial process. Those leaders were instrumental in recruiting other members for the team.

For all of the counties, team recruitment has continued to be part of the process to keep the project alive. Counties having the most difficulty with this step were those who didn't advertise broad base recruitment. By limiting team membership to only those known to have technical skills, participation by the community became significantly restricted and left all of the work to a few.

The Technology Team training was an ongoing process during the course of the project. The date in the table reflects the first major training opportunity for technology team members. The BEV team gave each county a set of job titles and descriptions for TLT members who will be needed to maintain the website:

- 1) Web Site Administrator-responsible for managing the content on the Community Web site
- 2) Directory Administrator-responsible for People, Business, and Organization Directories:
 - a) Approves or blocks requests of individuals who register using the "Become a Villager" link on the County Web site.
 - b) Add, modify, delete or reassign business entries as needed if individuals who created them can't do so (for some reason e.g. forgot their password.)
 - c) Reset passwords for individuals, community connections and virtual business incubator accounts.
- 3) Calendar Administrator-responsible for Online Calendar:
 - a) Approve calendar entries sent in by individuals in the community.
 - b) Add, modify and delete entries from the Online Calendar
- 4) Discussion Forum Administrator-responsible for Online Discussion forum:
 - a) Appoint and train moderator
 - b) Stop discussion forum

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- 5) Discussion Forum Moderator-monitor Discussion Forum
 - a) Ensure appropriateness of posts
 - b) Hide or delete threads
- 6) Registrar-responsible for BEV Incubator Services
 - a) Verify credentials for community connections accounts
 - b) Verify credentials for virtual business incubator accounts

For a small county such as Craig, identifying willing volunteers to take these positions became a challenge and took some time. Because Accomack and Northampton chose not to develop their unique websites, they needed fewer volunteers to maintain the elements that would be incorporated into the Eastern Shore Virginia Portal website.

The three *Take Charge* meetings comprise benchmarks 6-8. This program provided a bone of contention from the very beginning. Extension Agents said that they were not aware that they had to go through this program in order to be part of the TOP project. In order to compromise on the considerable time this program would require of agents, the TOP leadership agreed to use comprehensive plans if they were up-to-date or a comparable community visioning process. Craig and Louisa used their comprehensive plan to identify community issues for their TOP site. Dickenson county was part of another study in which community focus groups were organized to identify issues and used the data from this project for the TOP program. The four remaining counties used the *Take Charge* process to involve citizens in issue identification and action plans. Of those four counties, Cumberland and King and Queen counties embraced the project enthusiastically and followed the guidelines for success. Agents in Northampton and Accomack had little time to devote to the project and did not make its success a priority. They did not publicize and invite attendees and had fewer participants than anticipated and fewer attendees participating in all three meetings. Evaluations from the *Take Charge* meetings indicate that the programs were well received by participants and led to further involvement in the TOP project and community activities. Even the two less successful counties, found that this community empowerment program resulted in new involvement for citizens and their communities. In addition, this process provided improved membership in the TLTs.

The next benchmark is Community readiness Workshops. These workshops provided a great opportunity for communities to share with citizens all of the things technology and networks could do for them. Members of BEV traveled to communities and provided demonstrations. Several counties readily took advantage of this opportunity to use experts to share the technology and held several of these workshops, with the initial workshop date appearing in the Benchmark table. A few counties such as Accomack and Dickenson devoted little attention to this process and held only one meeting for citizens. The workshops not only informed citizens of opportunities but gave county extension agents and TLT members models for future demonstrations throughout their counties after the BEV support ended.

Technology assessments were performed by John Nichols toward the end of the funding period. The TOP team was fortunate to have this expert join the project and perform this process. John began meeting with counties and doing assessments in the Fall of 2003 and completed the process in April 2004.

The initial web site development meeting was enthusiastically attended by TLT members in most of the participating counties. Because of the existing website in Accomack and Northampton counties, some issues had to be settled. It was ultimately decided that the unique Bev-in-a-box tools could be added onto their existing site, thus eliminating two competing websites. This website development meeting helped TLT members select those elements that would make the site personal for their particular county. This is where counties could plug in the issues identified in their issue identification meetings, determine methods for naming their site, and particular pictures they wanted to showcase. For many of the TLTs, this meeting sparked renewed enthusiasm for the project.

The twelfth benchmark was the transition training meeting. This meeting served the purpose of training the responsible TLT members to take over particular duties for website maintenance. Volunteers for the specific positions were either trained at Virginia Tech or in their communities and were given reference materials to keep for the continuation of their site. Because Accomack and Northampton opted to use the Portal Website, this step and the deployment were not needed in these counties. Appropriate county members were trained to do the selected components of BEV to the existing Portal website.

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Web site deployment is probably the most significant benchmark as identified by a number of counties in their focus group evaluations. The fact that they actually got a site up and running was seen as a big step. Several counties had celebrations to mark the unveiling of the county website. Cumberland and King and Queen counties had articles in the local newspapers and community meetings to demonstrate their new sites.

John Nichols used the information he gathered doing the Technology Assessments in each of the counties to develop a Technology Master Plan. The Technology Master Plans are the 14th and final benchmark for this project. These plans will be completed at the end of the funding cycle and will be shared with the counties.