

McDowell County

Heritage

Development Plan



Developed
By The
McDowell Heritage Council
In
Cooperation
With The
Blue Ridge National Heritage Area
Updated October 2008

McDowell County Heritage Committee - 2006

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Contact Information</u>
Carol Price	Executive Director McDowell Tourism	1170 W. Tate Street Marion, NC 28752 828-652-1103
Ellen Pfirman	Owner Eljapa Media Group	13 1/2 Eagle Street Asheville, NC 28801 828-442-9252
Skip Carson	Manager – Orchard at Altapass	1025 Orchard Rd. Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-735-8284
Terrell Finley	Director/Curator Mountain Gateway Museum	22 Catawba Avenue Old Fort, NC 28762 828-668-9259
Dr. James Haney	McDowell Historical Commission & Historic Carson House Board	1850 Highway 70 West Marion, NC 28752 828-724-4948
Susan Pyatt	Executive Director – McDowell Arts Council Association	50 S. Main Street Marion, NC 28752 828-652-8610
Bill Carson	Owner – Orchard at Altapass	1025 Orchard Rd. Spruce Pine, NC 28777 888-765-9531
Freddie Killough	Marion Downtown Business Association	275 Holly Hills Dr., Marion, NC 28752 828-652-2215 828-668-9259
Heather Cotton	Planning & Development Director City of Marion	194 North Main Street P.O. Drawer 700 Marion, NC 18752
Terry McKinney	Musician & Author	13 Circle Street Marion, NC 28752
<u>Advisors</u>		
Anne Swann	Curator - Historic Carson House	1850 Highway 70 West W. Marion, NC 28752 828-724-4948

Mary Smith	Rutherford/Polk McDowell Health Dept. Health Educator/McDowell Trails Assoc.	140 Spaulding Road Marion, NC 28752 828-652-6811
Liz McCormick	Director – NC Gold Foundation	251 Lucky Strike Lane Marion, NC 28752
Ashely Wooten	Assistant County Manager	60 East Court Street Marion, NC 28752 828-652-7121
Frankie McWhorter	Heritage Tourism Development Officer N.C. Dept. of Commerce	1990 Hwy. 221 South Forest City, NC 28043 828-245-1492

SUMMARY CHART
McDowell County

Initiative Name	Estimated Costs
Historic Carson House	\$ 840,000
McDowell House	\$ 650,000 Purchased 12/07 Phase II Update 10/08
Orchard at Altapass – Building Renovations	\$ 200,000
Orchard at Altapass – Parking Extension	\$ 15,000
Round Hill Cemetery Preservation and Purchase	COMPLETE
McDowell County Greenway	\$ 500,000 +
McDowell Arts Council Association – Renovation	\$ 750,000
County Sign Program	\$ 250,000
Civil War Trails	COMPLETE – 2 Sites
Overmountain National Victory Trail	\$ 450,000 (includes \$200,000 for trail repair & \$250,000 interpretive sites)
Historic Marion Main Street Renovation	To be determined Completed Selected for NC STEP Program
Rutherford Trace Trails & Interpretive Site	\$ 950,000
North Carolina’s Gold an Mining Heritage	To be determined
Davidson’s Fort Replica Project	\$ 850,000
McDowell Oral History	\$16,000
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 4,821,000

INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Historic Carson House Renovation
-------------------	----------------------------------

Project Narrative:	<p>The Carson House owned and operated by the Historic Carson House Foundation, a non-profit organization. The property is used as a museum and is open to the public. It also serves as a resource for genealogy researchers. The home was built in 1793 by Colonel John Carson and is located beside Buck Creek in the Pleasant Gardens community. The original structure was a two-story log with one room over the other and a cellar. Later, two more rooms were added, again one over the other, with an open hallway. The third story and back porch were added still later. In 1963, the home was purchased for restoration and preservation.</p> <p>Colonel Carson is a significant historical figure serving in the Revolutionary War. He was later elected to the Constitutional Convention in 1789, to the House of Commons in 1805 and was an active participant in county affairs allowing his home to be used as the county seat. In 1844, Samuel Price Carson, son of John, gave the county 50 acres to establish a county seat in Marion and to build a courthouse.</p> <p>The Carson home was an active plantation. Among the plantation slaves, a princess from the Barbados Islands was purchased in Charleston, South Carolina. Kadella was Carson's seamstress and quilter. One of her beautiful quilts and one made by her daughter, Sari, are among those displayed at the Carson House today. Colonel John Carson owned gold mines in the southern portion of the county. Many of his slaves worked the gold mines. Their contributions are noted in various books citing the gold history of the county. The Carson family slave burial site is located off site on private property along Highway 70 West, less than a mile away from the home.</p> <p>The property has also served as a stagecoach stop. The owners were known for their hospitality. Nationally known politicians came on horseback to enjoy its hospitality. Samuel Price Carson, a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence and the first Secretary of State of the Republic of Texas was born here. As such, Sam Carson's associates including Davey Crockett visited the home.</p> <p>During the Civil War, the home saw many Union troops including a detachment from Stoneman's Raiders led by Colonel Gillem. His troops marched through McDowell County, stopping at the Carson House on their way to Asheville through the Swannanoa Gap. Emma Rankin, a school teacher living at the home during this era, wrote accounts of Union soldiers coming to house raiding their supplies and</p> <p>looking for family valuables. Her documented encounters are also cataloged at the museum.</p> <p>The valuable archives housed at the Carson House, along with irreplaceable antiques are in danger of being permanently damaged and possibly disappearing.</p>
--------------------	--

In the summer of 2008, the first floor was equipped with central heat and air conditioning. At the suggestion of the western office of the N.C. Department of Archives and History, the first floor is the only portion of the home to receive the new system due to adverse affects in the remainder of the structure. Textiles and other climate sensitive artifacts will be stored on the first floor in the newly created storage area, formerly the restroom. The restroom was relocated and is not handicapped accessible. Visitors requiring handicap access may enter the rear of the building via the new handicap walkway leading to the enclosed back porch and restroom area.

The second need is to restore and secure the barn. The barn is open and stores antique farm equipment and implements. The tack room has been finished and may also be used for a storage area. The barn stores a J. Nissen wagon, one of two in North Carolina. The museum has applied for grant funding to assist with restoration of the wagon.

The addition of a separate, storage facility would allow the museum displays to be changed periodically and provide additional space for new artifacts as they are donated to the museum. Ideally, the storage facility would house a small retail area with public restrooms.

The board approved the addition of a new security system for the home. The estimated cost is \$2,150 and has been partially funded by the McDowell Tourism Development Authority and the McDowell Chamber of Commerce.

Plans exist to increase the number of months per year the property will be open and are in the process of researching new staffing opportunities. The Carson House Society is also preparing a volunteer program to assist with staffing needs.

Other on-going maintenance is needed for a home of this age.

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Carson House Foundation, McDowell Historical Society, McDowell Preservation Commission	\$35,000 heating and air addition	2008 for heating and air addition – 1 st floor COMPLETE
	\$26,000-30,000 for barn renovation	2009 barn renovation – Grant application BRNHA
	\$750,000 – 3 rd Bldg.	Date to be determined for storage/retail space
	\$2,150 Security System	\$750 – McDowell Tourism \$750 – McDowell Chamber

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
---------------	---------------------	--------------------

Quotes given for each item	Man hours to call and receive quotes	Volunteers of organizations listed
Locate grants to fund each project	Same as above	Same as above
Locate architect to design third, new addition	Same	Same

Performance Measures:	Increased number of visitors
-----------------------	------------------------------

Status:	New signage is in place including the N.C. Civil War Trail sign, house repainted and is now handicap accessible with a handicap accessible restroom. A new security system is being installed and funds were received from the McDowell Tourism Authority and the McDowell Chamber of Commerce. The next priority is renovation to the barn and wagon. The museum has and is applying for various grants to cover these costs.
---------	--

INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	McDowell House – Purchase and Preservation
-------------------	--

Project Narrative:	<p>The “McDowell House,” known as John McDowell’s Pleasant Gardens, is the only existing home place for which a county was named in North Carolina. The land was purchased in 1768 and the home was built in the late 1780s. The site and family history includes extensive Revolutionary War history. Colonel Joseph McDowell, son of “Hunting John” McDowell, was a hero at the Battle of King’s Mountain and was honored for his leadership there as a representative in the Third United States Congress. General Griffin Rutherford’s Trace, the route he traveled on his way to drive the Cherokee away, parallels the site and at one time a fort existed across the street from the existing structure.</p> <p>The property borders the Catawba River and could be included in a proposed greenway following the path of the river. The Natural Resources Committee, appointed by the county commissioners, completed a master greenway plan. The proposed trail travels along the river edge behind the house.</p> <p>The home requires complete renovation including demolition of existing additions to the original structure. The property would be used as a county museum and interpretive center. Estimated costs for renovation continue to rise and will escalate further due to the current “floor” of the building. The original hardwood floors have been removed. Concrete has been poured in place of the original floor and is attached to the interior frame of the house. The concrete pad must be removed before replacement hardwood can be installed.</p> <p>The property is being advertised for commercial development. In order to save this valuable site, action needs to be taken as soon as possible. It is located in a flood plain. Its existence in a flood plain requires significant expense to new owners of the property. Before new construction can take place, the property must be altered significantly to meet current county building code. Sale to a commercial developer would also require either the destruction of the house or for it to be moved to another location. Estimated costs to move the site to the Carson House property exceeds \$300,000. This figure does not include renovation costs needed once it is relocated.</p> <p>If the home is restored on its original site, alterations to the land are not necessary.</p> <p>Since the time of this original document twelve months ago, the project has been assumed by a steering committee working under the non-profit umbrella of the Historic Carson House. The committee is composed of volunteers from various city and county agencies and local business owners including a part-time employee hired to research funding possibilities.</p> <p>Professionals within the historic preservation community have contributed their opinions on the project. The committee’s conclusion is that they will attempt to raise funds to purchase and restore the home on its original site. Several grant resources have been identified and are being pursued. Once funds have been located for the purchase, the restoration process will begin. It is the committee’s goal to locate an appropriate non-profit organization to</p>
--------------------	---

	<p>assume the management of the facility once the project is completed.</p> <p>The house, and additional 4.09+/- acres, was purchased in December, 2008 through an inter-local agreement between McDowell County Government, the City of Marion and the McDowell County Tourism Authority. The county and city contributed \$25,000 each towards the purchase. The Tourism Authority agreed to pay the remaining debt, financed by the county, for a fifteen-year period with proceeds from the additional 2% occupancy tax revenue collected as of January 1, 2009. McDowell County owns the property.</p> <p>The committee working towards creating a restoration plan consists of county government, city government, tourism authority staff, local historians and other interested citizens with specialized skills. They have two years to conduct research and present the plan to the McDowell County commissioners for approval. To date, an archaeological survey is scheduled for December, 2008 and the group will enter into an agreement with the historical restoration architectural firm of Joseph Opperman to create the structural restoration plan.</p>
--	---

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Steering Committee for the "Save The McDowell House Project" under the direction of the Historic Carson House	List price as of 8/8/06 is \$650,000	Update - Purchased 12/08 with funding from the following, \$25,000 City of Marion \$25,000 McDowell County Loan balance to be repaid through the McDowell County Tourism Authority as a result of increased occupancy tax collections over the next 15 years.

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Submit offer to purchase agreement to owners	None	Steering Committee
<p>Quotes for renovation of property. Archaeologist Ken Robinson with Wake Forest University contracted to perform an archaeological survey in December of 2008.</p> <p>Joseph Oppermann Architects have agreed to prepare the structural restoration plan and submitted a proposal of services. Committee is in the process of submitting grant applications to cover this cost.</p> <p>Committee agreed to work with</p>	Architects and engineers experienced with historical restoration	<p>Steering Committee. As of 8/8/06 reports from members of NC Office of Historic Preservation have been received along with structural engineering and pest control reports and an estimate for grading costs. The City of Marion Planner provided guidelines for necessary site grade work including those for flood plain status of the property.</p> <p>Funds for archaeological survey are in place with a balance of \$1,300 to be raised through private</p>

grant writer.		donations. Grant applications have been submitted for funding the architectural firm.
---------------	--	--

Performance Measures:	Purchase of property must take place first.
-----------------------	---

Status:	<p>Property purchased in December 2008 through an inter-local agreement described above. A county appointed committee with members representing the City of Marion, McDowell County, the McDowell County Tourism Authority, local historians, the McDowell County Chamber and other interested residents meet regularly to determine a restoration plan for the site. On September 29th, 2008, the house and property were dedicated as an official site on the National Park Service's Overmountain National Historic Victory Trail. This designation will assist with future funding opportunities and create public awareness to the needs of the property.</p> <p>The committee has secured the services of archaeologist Ken Robinson with Wake Forest University to conduct an archaeological survey in December of 2008. They have also contracted with the historical architectural firm of Joseph Opperman and Associates in Winston-Salem to complete a restoration plan in the first quarter of 2009 and architect John Horton.</p>
---------	---

INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	The Orchard at Altapass – New performance and community building.
-------------------	---

Project Narrative:	<p>The Altapass Foundation, a 501(c)(3) founded in 2002 is planning a performance center and meeting place for other non-profit and community organizations. The project is scheduled for completion in Spring of 2006. The Foundation sponsors music and special programs at the Orchard and has out grown the performance space. In 2004, 14,000 visitors attended free concerts and events there. As the Orchard’s popularity increases the numbers of visitors, the need for larger facilities is urgent.</p> <p>Altapass Foundation’s mission is the preservation of local history, heritage and culture and to protect the Orchard property including its wetlands and wildlife. Educating the public about this unique area and authentic Appalachian experience is also a critical part of the Foundation’s mission.</p> <p>The Orchard contributes to the economic growth of the region in several ways. As the Orchard grows so does the need for additional employees. The Orchard contracts with local artisans and musicians providing opportunities to market and sell their products. Orchard visitors remaining in the area frequent local shops, restaurants and lodging properties increasing their profits and contributing to the local tax base. Many visitors choose to return purchasing second homes and some relocating their primary residence here. By providing a forum for other non-profits and community organizations, these groups are partnering with the Orchard in community growth and small business development.</p>
--------------------	---

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Altapass Foundation	\$600,000	Spring 2010

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who’s Responsible:
Complete building plan	In-Kind Donation	Altapass Foundation
Fund Raisers	Volunteers, grants	Volunteers & Foundation

Performance Measures:	Numbers of increased visitors and community groups leading to a sustainable operation.
-----------------------	--

Status:	Draft building plan is in place.
---------	----------------------------------

INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Orchard At Altapass – Extended Parking Project
--------------------------	--

Project Narrative:	<p>The Orchard’s free performances have grown in popularity, therefore the need for additional parking has grown. With growth, large groups also have increased their visits bringing larger vehicles, motor coaches and RVs. By extending parking areas, a separate area for large vehicles could be designated providing easier access for these visitors. Single-family vehicles would have a separate space and handicapped parking would also be increased. This convenience enhances the overall visitor experience when ample parking is available and clearly designated into proper categories.</p> <p>The Orchard’s non-profit status will assist in locating funding sources.</p>
---------------------------	--

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who’s Responsible:
Site preparation	\$8,000	Altapass Foundation
Gravel purchase and delivery	\$7,000	Altapass Foundation

Performance Measures:	Increased attendance
------------------------------	----------------------

Status:	Identifying funding sources.
----------------	------------------------------

INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Round Hill Cemetery – Right of Way and Preservation
--------------------------	---

Project Narrative:	<p>The Carson family was one of the original pioneer families in McDowell County. Their home served as the original county seat until a courthouse was built in 1845.</p> <p>The Carson family is buried at Round Hill Cemetery. In addition to preserving this historical cemetery, there are archeological indications that this same site originally served as a burial ground for the Native Americans in this region. Preserving the site would provide an opportunity for archeologists to prove the existence of an Indian burial ground. The topography suggests the hill was a former burial ground.</p> <p>Close to this site, in the same “field” close to the Catawba River, archeologists excavated part of the site in 1978 and again in 1986. The portion excavated was approximately 2-3 acres. Proof of a Native American village was found that was surrounded by a palisade of wooden posts. Proof of square houses measuring 20 to 22 feet in diameter existed there. Pits filled with village refuse including stone tool fragments, potsherds and animal bones were found. A remnant of a low earthen mound originally serving as a platform for a temple or council house was discovered. It is estimated that between 100-200 people lived on this site. A carved stone pipe with the design of Uktena or “winged serpent” powerful in the Cherokee tribe known as a creature of the underworld was found and is housed in the Cherokee Museum now. Because few excavations have taken place here, it is difficult to describe a complete history. Archeologists determined this site was an excellent example of a Catawba Valley Mississippian site. Also, archeologists have determined the area’s Native American history is over 12,000 years old.</p> <p>This site is in an expanding commercial area including a Wal-Mart shopping center. The current owners plan to continue developing the site for commercial use.</p> <p>There are protections provided, to an extent, by North Carolina General Statue 10 regarding access to maintenance, removing or altering cemetery sites, etc. However, the ideal resolution would include county ownership of the cemetery.</p>
---------------------------	---

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
McDowell County, McDowell County TDA, McDowell County Historical Society & Carson House	Court costs to record a deeded right of way. If property is donated to the county, no land purchase is involved.	One to two years.

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Obtain documentation of archeological finds.	State records and Cherokee Museum records.	Carson House staff, Historical Society and McDowell TDA
Produce inventory of Carson descendants buried there.	Carson House family records.	Carson House staff and historical society.

Performance Measures:	
-----------------------	--

Status:	<p>As of August 10, 2006, the McDowell Trails Association, in partnership with the City of Marion and Great Meadows Corporation, is working towards the implementation of a greenway that would include the Round Hill Site. Great Meadows has given permission to the trails group to proceed with a feasibility study to determine whether or not this project is plausible. The City of Marion has agreed to pay half of the cost of the study.</p> <p>A possible starting point for the greenway is the McDowell House. Another non-profit group is working towards purchasing this property for renovation as a historical site. This would allow public access, behind the house, by the shopping center, past Round Hill for a distance between 1.5 and 2.0 miles.</p> <p>In the spring of 2008, the Great Meadows Corporation provided the McDowell Trails Association with preservation rights to the cemetery. The group is in the process of restoring the graveyard section including an inventory and headstone restoration project.</p>
---------	---

INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	McDowell County Greenway
-------------------	--------------------------

Project Narrative:	<p>As McDowell County continues to grow and develop, the needs of its citizens and visitors also continue to expand and change. Recreation is an essential and integral part of our future development. The proposed greenway would not only provide recreational opportunities, it would also strengthen and build pride in the community. There are rewards to be gained, including improved physical and mental health of residents, which would transfer to both work and home environments. The addition of a greenway would also positively impact the local economy by attracting visitors to the county. Overall, the greenway would enhance the community's quality of life.</p> <p>The greenway will be a non-motorized trail protecting and minimizing disturbance to the county's natural environment, cultural and historic resources. By preserving these assets we have the opportunity to celebrate the history and character of McDowell County. The proposed greenway is designed to reach the entire community affecting lifestyle, health and economic development.</p> <p>The greenway is also an educational tool providing access to historic areas, wetlands and other undisturbed landscapes. Children and adults will benefit from learning about plants and animals specific to those areas. A significant portion of "Rutherford's Trace" parallels the Catawba River. Efforts are underway to promote the trace including the addition of historical markers and interpretive sites. The Historic Carson House is within a mile of the greenway. A short "arm" of the trail could be established for visitors' use to the Carson House. The McDowell House is located along the Catawba River. This site is surrounded by history including a former fort site prior to and during the Revolutionary War, is adjacent to Rutherford's Trace and is the only standing home for which a county was named. Both the McDowell and Carson houses are named in separate initiatives for the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area.</p> <p>There are multiple types of funding opportunities. These include grants at the federal and state levels such as the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program, Clean Water Trust Fund, Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance and the Rural Community Assistance Program. The private and corporate sectors also have grants available for greenway development. Once this process is in place, there must be a management entity ready to accept and administer funds. A local, non-profit organization is needed to do so. The McDowell Trails Group will be developed as a 501(c)(3) to fill this need. Management/officers will be on a volunteer basis reporting to a board of directors.</p> <p>Members of the Natural Resources Committee of McDowell County have completed the articles of incorporation and by-laws for the non-profit and are awaiting approval from the county commissioners before filing the appropriate</p>
--------------------	---

	<p>applications to form this organization.</p> <p>The greenway will follow the path of the Catawba River, the primary source of water to Lake James. Beginning at the head waters, Catawba Falls, the trail will eventually connect the county beginning in the west at the falls and ending on the east side at Lake James. The Lake James portion of the trail will join Burke County's existing greenway planned to expand and loop around Lake James. Lake James is the starting point for the Catawba River Paddle Trail. The Catawba River Paddle Association has agreed to add a new "leg" of this trail beginning at the existing McDowell County Park located on Old Greenlee Road. At present, the county is in the process of making physical changes to the park including riverbank reinforcement.</p> <p>The greenway will also intersect another trail at Lake James, the Overmountain Victory Trail. The National Park Service is in the process of completing plans to work with the Overmountain Victory Trail Association to insure the trail is clear and accessible to the public, particularly the section between the Orchard at Altapass and Lake James.</p>
--	--

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
McDowell County Trails Association	Cost is ongoing. Initial, first year approximately \$500k, continuing cost of materials and labor as property/easements are gained for inclusion to the greenway.	First section at the county park on Old Greenlee Road by the end of 2007. This project must be completed one section at a time as property and easements are acquired. The complete trail is projected for completion in 2015.

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Formal greenway plan	Hire outside contractor for completion.	McDowell Trails Association.
Greenway Master Plan	McDowell Trails Association	McDowell Trails Association
McDowell Trails Group Association formed and non-profit status achieved.	Steering committee to apply for non-profit status and establish board of directors	McDowell Trails Association

Performance Measures:	Completion of greenway master plan and architectural landscape plan. McDowell Trails Group Association formed and non-profit status received. MTGA acquires individual properties and easements to be used for the greenway. Community use of greenway and number of visitors the greenway attracts.
-----------------------	--

Status:	<p>Greenway Master Plan completed. McDowell Trails Group Association Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws completed. Federal application for non-profit status achieved. Board of directors established as of 8/1/06 and membership totals 81 persons. McGill and Associates of Asheville have been hired to complete a greenway feasibility study. The City of Marion is working with the trails association on potential links of the trail and has agreed to provide fifty percent of McGill's fee for study. The two links are 1/The 1.5 mile section of the Catawba River located behind the Wal-Mart Shopping Center in Marion and 2) The Old Pea Vine Railroad bed located inside the Marion City limits and currently owned by Norfolk Southern Railroad.</p> <p>UPDATE – October, 2008</p> <p>During the summer of 2008, the City of Marion received two grants that will be used to construct Phase I of the Catawba River Greenway including the NC Recreation Trust Fund Grant for \$167,300. The trails association is in the process of raising \$67,000 as their matching portion of the grant. Once these funds are received, Phase I construction will begin and will include an interpretive sign for Round Hill Cemetery in 2009.</p>
---------	---

INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	McDowell Arts Council Association Renovation Project
--------------------------	---

Project Narrative:	<p>The McDowell Arts Council Association is located in Historic Downtown Marion. At the time Marion applied to be designated as a historical district, the building owned by the arts council did not qualify due to exterior and interior structural changes. The council is in the process of renovating both the façade and interior of the building. At present, the exterior has undergone significant change. The original windows have been restored to the façade.</p> <p>The arts council has contracted with an architect and the next step to the façade change involves the display windows in the front of the building. The original building had two entrances with display windows on either side and in the space between the two doors.</p> <p>There will be a retail space in the front portion of the building to display and sell local artisans works. The gallery will be in the middle portion of the building. The theater will move to the back portion of the building and is designed to seat up to 200 people. The current space seats 99.</p> <p>On the second level of the building, there will be loft space available to artists on a monthly rental basis. Classrooms will also be located on the second floor. At present, there is one classroom available.</p> <p>Also included is the addition of an elevator for handicap access, theater lighting, heating and air conditioning renovations plus the electrical upgrades to support it, and a system of moveable walls for the gallery space.</p> <p>The goal is to provide maximum space to the public for classroom instruction, gallery space for exhibitors, retail and display space for artisans and a theater capable of comfortably seating. At the same time, the design is being performed in a manner that will allow the building to be included in the Historic Downtown Marion on the National Register of Historic Places.</p>
---------------------------	---

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
McDowell Arts Council Association Susan Pyatt – Director	\$793,000	5 years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Main Street Façade	\$57,500	MACA

Interior Renovations	\$736,375	MACA
----------------------	-----------	------

Performance Measures:	Increased membership, performance attendance and classroom participation as well as an increase in annual revenue.
-----------------------	--

Status:	<p>The Main Street Façade is funded, at present, and scheduled for completion by September, 2005. The electrical upgrades have been partially completed and new duct work has been installed for the HVAC system. The floors, theater, theater lighting, seats, gallery walls, retail space, gallery lighting, bench seating, I-beams to support new construction at the rear of the building, exterior and interior brick replacement work, sprinkler and security systems, elevator, and kitchen upgrades are still incomplete.</p> <p>UPDATE – October 2008 The façade restoration is complete including replacement windows for the first and second stories. In October of 2008, new signage was installed to the exterior of the building.</p> <p>Due to a change in staff, the additional physical changes have not moved forward. Susan Pyatt was hired as the new director in the fall of 2007. Since that time, instead of building an artisan retail shop, a retail space was created within the gallery itself and is being managed and staffed by the artisans.</p> <p>The board is researching funding options for the interior renovations including second story renovations for classroom and possible retail space.</p>
---------	---

INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Project Name:	County Resource Sign Program
----------------------	------------------------------

Project Narrative:	<p>Signs are needed to provide clear and correct directions and access to the county's natural, cultural, historic and recreational areas. Signs are needed on Interstate 40, primary and secondary roads. The following list will show destinations in need of directional and identification signs.</p> <p>Recreational: Tom's Creek Falls Woodlawn Fitness Trail Mountains to the Sea Trail Lake James Public Access Areas and Camping Waterfalls Trails Hiking Trails</p> <p>Cultural: Old Fort Mountain Music McDowell Arts Council Association – New Banners Installed October 2008 Orchard at Altapass – Directional from Marion Old Fort Railroad Museum</p> <p>Historical: Overmountain National Victory Trail Civil War Sites, Trail – Installed NC Civil War Trail Signs Old Fort Depot & Railroad Museum – New signs/Banners To Be Installed 11/08 Marion Historic Depot – Historic Sign Installed 2007 Historic Carson House – New Sign Installed 2007 & NC Civil War Trail Sign</p>
---------------------------	---

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
McDowell County TDA	\$25,000	2-3 Years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Documentation on both skirmish sites.	Public & Private	McDowell TDA coordinating efforts
Prepare documentation on "slave cemetery."	Same as above	Same as above

Performance Measures:	Increased number of visitors to identified sites.
------------------------------	---

Status:	<p>Two Civil War sites identified and submitted to state's sign program. UPDATE</p> <p>The two N.C. Civil War Trails markers have been installed. A National Park Service Overmountain National Historic Victory Trail sign has been installed at the Joseph</p>
----------------	--

McDowell House and the Historic Carson House has new signage installed. There is a new, historic sign installed at the Marion Historic Depot. In October of 2008, the McDowell Arts Council Association installed new, exterior signage in the form of four individual banners using the acronym MACA with a smaller, fifth banner installed by the entry area identifying the current gallery exhibit(s).

The town of Old Fort and the City of Marion are working with the N.C. Rural Center with their N.C. STEP program and have agreed to partner on a way-finding sign system that would provide visitors and residents with a uniform sign system. The project is to be completed by the fall of 2009.

The Old Fort Depot and Railroad Museum sign is installed. The McDowell Tourism Authority has appropriated funds to install new signs in the form of banners identifying the site as a visitor information location.

INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Civil War Trails
-------------------	------------------

Project Narrative:	<p>McDowell County is developing a “Civil War Trail” which will join adjacent counties providing visitors with a self-driving tour. The trail will include stops at museums and historical sites, i.e. Historic Carson House, to provide visitors with photographs and artifacts of the period. The creation of a Civil War interpretive area for the Carson House will be developed.</p> <p>From the Burke County side, Winding Stair in McDowell is the site of a Union mission involving Kirk’s Raiders. McDowell resident Joseph Valentine Franklin was hired as a local guide to bring Kirk’s troops through Burke County where a skirmish ensued close to Winding Stair, also close to the current Bark House Picnic Area. Kirk’s men proceeded west towards Mitchell county along the ridge.</p> <p>Also from the Burke County side, originally assigned to Stoneman’s Raiders, Colonel Gillem was ordered to Asheville after participating in the burning of Morganton and proceeded towards McDowell through the Glenwood community. A stop was made at the home of George Gardin and Mountain Valley Plantation. From there, troops proceeded to the Carson House and Emma Rankin’s account of Gillem’s “visit” begins. Gillem’s troops were on their way through Pleasant Gardens then to Paxton Creek, stopping at the Paxton home traveling through Old Fort and up through Swannanoa Gap. At Swannanoa Gap they were fired upon by Thomas’ legion and retreated. Thomas’ legion was comprised mostly of Cherokee Indians and were attached to General Martin’s unit. During this time, close to the end of the war, Emma Rankin documented other encounters with both Union and Confederate soldiers providing facts to be interpreted at the Carson House.</p> <p>Gillem’s troops retreated back through the town of Old Fort and decided to approach Asheville from Hickory Nut Gap and Hendersonville. At this point, General Lee had surrendered and the war was over. Gillem returned to Tennessee and his men ravaged Asheville.</p> <p>Prior to the Civil War, slaves were used to mine gold. At one time, it was reported that thousands of slaves worked the mines daily. In 1831, there was a “plot” for the slaves to rebel against their owners. This incident was widely reported and documented including a trial where the conspirators were later released to their owners. This piece of history is also not interpreted or marked and involves McDowell, Burke and Rutherford counties. The event is also unusual in that slaves were treated as citizens, arrested and placed on public trial.</p> <p>At present, no state or federal markers citing these events exist.</p>
--------------------	---

Another potential trail to be developed is that of southerners known as members of the “Heroes of America” or “Red String Society.” These residents were loyal to the Union. Many of them assisted slaves and participated in the underground railroad. Many of these members provided food and other supplies to the Union army as they marched through this part of the state. According to records provided by the Southern Claims Commission, formed by Congress on March 3, 1871, there were 19 McDowell residents approved for reimbursement by the commission for participation as Union supporters. These residents supplied verification of supplies and services provided to Union soldiers and the commission provided financial reimbursement. Many North Carolina residents were part of this organization.

There are several slave cemeteries in the county. As part of the trail, the McDowell County slave cemetery, located at “Gold Hill” is in need of repair, signs and maintenance. A second slave cemetery exists near the Carson House, on private property on Jesse James Drive. Access to the site and preservation of the site is needed. The purchase of this tract from the current owner would be preferred. The Carson House would own the property and coordinate maintenance and repair as needed. A complete list of slave cemeteries and locations is attached.

Dr. James L. Haney working towards copying the diary of James Harvey Greenlee covering the years of 1847 through 1902. Several volumes include the Civil War period and will provide additional information for the trail. Financial assistance will be needed to prepare and publish this work once completed. Mr. Greenlee’s slaves were also sent to work the gold mines. His accounts of this time are uniquely detailed.

By establishing a Civil War Trail with the adjoining counties of Burke, Rutherford, Buncombe, Yancey, Avery and Mitchell a significant piece of Civil War history will be available to the public and ancestors of the region. Facts involving the “home guard,” and residents serving in the war at other locations will provide additional information for the trail.

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
McDowell County TDA	\$25,000	2-3 Years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who’s Responsible:
Provide documentation on both skirmish sites.	Carson House, McDowell Library and McDowell Historical Society	McDowell TDA will coordinate efforts between resources and sites.
Prepare documentation on “slave cemetery.”	Same as above	Same as above

Performance Measures:	Increased visitors to area and each site.
-----------------------	---

Status:	<p>Signs are in place at Carson House and at Andrew's Geysers.</p> <p><u>UPDATE</u></p> <p>Both Historic Carson House and Andrews Geysers have been accepted as sites on the N.C. Civil War Trail with interpretive signs installed at both sites.</p> <p>A third potential site is being researched by Anne Swann, the Getty farm. Funds are available for a third sign and once research is completed, it will be submitted for approval.</p> <p>The efforts to interpret the Civil War history of several surrounding counties is still under way. The upcoming 150th anniversary in 2011 is a target date to unveil this project.</p>
---------	--

INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Overmountain Victory Trail
--------------------------	----------------------------

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
McDowell Trails Association, Overmountain Victory Historic Trail Association, National Park Service	\$200,000 for trail repair and maintenance with \$250,000 interpretive sites.	1-3 years.

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Coordinate McDowell Trails Association and NPS efforts for trail maintenance.	Volunteers, materials	McDowell County Trails Association and NPS coordinating with Paul Carson and Bob Hardin of the Overmountain Victory Trail Association
Natural Resources Committee to form a McDowell County Trails Association, a non-profit to receive and manage funds and properties.	Legal counsel to approve application for non-profit status and county commissioners approval of plan.	McDowell Co. Natural Resources Committee members

Performance Measures:	Increased resident and visitor use of trail.
------------------------------	--

Status:	<p>McDowell Trails Association articles of incorporation and by-laws are complete awaiting county commissioner approval.</p> <p>As of June, 2006, the McDowell Trails Association received their federal non-profit status. The Natural Resources Committee is no longer in existence and the trails association will assume the responsibility of coordinating activities with the park service, in addition to any projects entered into between McDowell County government and the park service.</p> <p>On September 29, 2006 at the Historic Carson House, the Overmountain National Historic Victory Trail Association will present re-enactments throughout the day beginning with an interpretive program in the afternoon for school children. They will camp on site and beginning at 7 p.m. in the evening perform a final re-enactment and interpretive program for the general public, beginning at 7:00 p.m. This program will become an annual event.</p> <p>UPDATE:</p> <p>The Joseph McDowell House was dedicated as an official site on the National Park Service's Overmountain National Historic Victory Trail on September 28, 2008. The Overmountain Victory Trail Association performed a re-enactment the day of the dedication ceremony followed by a children's interpretive program on September 29th at the McDowell House. This will be the future site of educational, children's programming.</p>
----------------	---

INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Marion Main Street Program
-------------------	----------------------------

Project Narrative:	<p>Marion has been part of the North Carolina Main Street Program since 2003. As a member of this program, Marion is in the process of revitalizing the downtown area in order to increase new business start-up and to grow existing business. The North Carolina Main Street Program Resource Team completed an evaluation of Marion in June of 2004. The study results include a business and development plan including suggestions for building renovations, traffic flow and design, promotions, and economic restructuring.</p> <p>Following the guidelines created by the National Trust For Historic Preservation, “Main Street Approach,” Marion will undergo significant physical changes by restoring buildings’ original facades. Downtown Marion is categorized as a “Historic District” and is listed in the “National Register of Historic Places.” Façade changes must meet these guidelines as well. The Downtown Business Association does offer grants to assist with the cost of façade renovation that meet their criteria.</p> <p>Renovations made in keeping with historical guidelines are costly. The business association and downtown advisory council need additional funding to accomplish these projects.</p> <p>In order to receive funding for other projects such as second story residential development, the Marion Downtown Advisory Council is in the process of forming a non-profit, 501c(3) corporation. The non-profit will accept funds and gifts for this and other projects falling under the guidelines of the Main Street Program.</p>
--------------------	---

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
Marion Downtown Advisory Council and the Marion Downtown Business Association	Not known at this time. Individual properties will vary in cost.	3-5 Years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who’s Responsible:
Traffic Flow Study	Traffic Engineer and the NC DOT	City of Marion
Streetscape/Landscaping Changes	Landscape Architect and Designer	City of Marion
Economic Re-Structuring	Local banks, downtown property owners and potential buyers	City of Marion, Downtown Advisory Council, Downtown Business Association

Performance Measures:	Increased vehicle count, increased retail customers, increased number of new retail shops and restaurants.
-----------------------	--

Status:	<p>The Downtown Business Association is in the process of working with current property owners with one property undergoing façade changes at the present time. City is consulting area landscape architects. The Downtown Advisory Committee has established a sub-committee to develop plans and methods for economic restructuring. Two area banks have agreed to participate in an incentive loan program for potential buyers interested in renovating downtown properties.</p> <p>The city is a participant in the N.C. Step Program through the N.C. Rural Center and “kicked off” the program August 4th with a public ceremony. The city planner continues to work through the appropriate steps with N.C. DOT to complete the streetscape plan including routing changes for U.S. Highway 70 Business and Logan Street diverting commercial trucks from the immediate downtown area and around the shopping district by way of Logan Street and the N.C. Hwy. 221/226 By-Pass.</p> <p>The city has received a grant for \$6,000 from the Isothermal RPO for a bike and pedestrian plan. This plan will be included in the N.C. DOT 2008 county plan. The city is also partnering with the McDowell Trails Association, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization for the purpose of implementing two trails within the Marion city limits.</p> <p>UPDATE</p> <p>The City of Marion completed the N.C. STEP program with City Council’s approval of the economic development plan in October of 2008. The Marion Downtown Advisory Committee has ended their commitment with the city and the Downtown Business Association has changed its design and is now the Marion Business Association expanding and promoting all business in the city of Marion. The city will re-submit the final, adopted plan to the N.C. Rural Center including a detailed initiative budget(s) and request funding to implement the initiatives beginning in 2009.</p> <p>In September, 2008, Arnett Muldrow provided results from their recent market study of downtown businesses indicating less than 5% of downtown purchases are from visitors. Their results suggest increasing visitor traffic, increased use of branding, buying locally, creating a strong “Made in McDowell” branding effort amidst other economic development tools.</p> <p>Streetscape improvements are pending N.C. DOT approval with the city drafting construction plans followed by resourcing funds and implementation.</p>
---------	--

INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Rutherford Trace
-------------------	------------------

Project Narrative:	<p>McDowell County and in particular the community of Old Fort contributed to General Rutherford's efforts to remove the Cherokee from their lands in western North Carolina. A large group of local militia joined him and his troops in Old Fort as they began to ascend the mountain across Catawba Falls and into Buncombe County. While this event is difficult to conceive today, it is of great historical significance to the community of western North Carolina. The action paved the way for settlers to enter the area and to cross into Buncombe County on their way west.</p> <p>Funds are needed in order to complete the Rutherford Trace trail through McDowell County to the top of Old Fort Mountain where it joins Buncombe County. The Old Fort Mountain Gateway Museum would serve as an interpretive site for the Rutherford Trace Trail. The purchase of property along the trail in the Old Fort community would provide a public park and interpretive area. Markers and a published trail map would be obtained at the Mountain Gateway Museum. Visitors would follow the designated trail from the museum to the park area along Old Catawba River Road.</p>
--------------------	--

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
McDowell County Natural Resources Committee	\$950,000	4-5 Years

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Coordinate Rutherford Trace effort with Buncombe County.	Planning Staff	Each county's committee
Obtain funding for development of the trail.	McDowell NRC	McDowell NRC
Natural Resources Committee to form a McDowell County Trails Association, a non-profit, to receive and manage funds and properties.		McDowell NRC

Performance Measures:	Increase in heritage visitors.
-----------------------	--------------------------------

Status:	<p>Maps produced are distributed in a variety of locations including the Old Fort Depot and McDowell Tourism Authority Visitor Center.</p> <p>Senator Joe Sam Queen in his work with the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources and the Eastern Band of Cherokee, produced a map of Rutherford's Trace. The map includes the history of the trail and brief biography of General Griffith Rutherford.</p> <p>The McDowell Trails Association has been formed and continues to work with Senator Queen and the state as needed.</p>
---------	---

INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	North Carolina's Gold and Mining Heritage
-------------------	---

Project Narrative:	<p>The event initiating the Carolina Gold Rush occurred in Cabarrus County in 1799. Conrad Reed saw a shining piece of what he took to be metal in a stream, recovered it and took it home. This “nugget” weighed seventeen pounds. The reported yield from the Reed Mine between 1799 and 1848 was \$10,000,000.</p> <p>The area affected by “gold fever” was the mountainous southwestern part of Burke/McDowell county and adjacent parts of Rutherford County. Small areas/towns popped up to accommodate the miners. These fortune seekers came from varied locations, backgrounds and cultures ranging from large slaveholders in the eastern part of the state to more prosperous plantation owners in the immediate area including Colonel John H. Carson, John E. Butler, John Erwin Patton, Charles McDowell, Isaac T. Avery and William Alberto Erwin.</p> <p>The Bechtler Mint founded in 1831 was located close to what is today the McDowell/Rutherford County line. The first gold, \$1 coin, minted in the nation was minted at the private Bechtler Mint located off Hwy. 221 near the town of Rutherfordton. More \$2 and \$5 gold pieces were also minted. From 1831 to 1840 about 2 million pennyweights of gold valued at \$1,384,000 were melted into bars and ingots and \$2,241,840 in gold coins minted. Until 1840, the elder Bechtler actually processed more gold than both the Philadelphia and Charlotte U.S. Mints by \$625,000. (Source: <i>Our State</i>, September 2005) The mint is an important element in the history of gold mining in western North Carolina. The activities taking place in the Bechtler Mint spurred interest in establishing a federal mint in the region and in 1835 Congress established a federal mint in Charlotte.</p> <p>In 1879, the Marion Bullion Company acquired several tracts of land totaling 1,079 acres in southern McDowell County. Post Civil War activities sparked renewed interest in the gold mines of the region. In December of 1886, the Marion Improvement Company was incorporated for the purpose of mining gold, silver, mica and other metals, minerals and gems, crush and smelt ores and to carry on a general mining business. In 1896 the two companies shared common executives and administered the affairs of both companies through the offices of the Marion Improvement Company. Their activities were primarily focused in the Brackettville and Dysartsville areas of the county. The company also focused on mining mica with their Old Fort company. Other products mined were monazite, xenotime containing yttria and erbia. They were successful in selling gemstones in the European market as well. Gold mining activity in the Vein Mountain area and Huntsville mine was extensive and productive. Other gem mining activity surrounded McDowell County. Neighboring Mitchell and Yancey counties were also successful with their mining companies and became well known for their gemstones.</p>
--------------------	---

The North Carolina Gold Foundation, a non-profit organization, was formed three years ago for the express purpose of preserving our gold and mining heritage. Several popular mines remain operational today and provide exciting experiences for tourists. The Gold Foundation sponsors an annual “Gold Festival” each spring in May. It is an important attraction for the region and draws visitors from all over the country. The foundation is in the process of working with neighboring counties to form a marketing alliance for future promotional activities.

McDowell County has a rich and colorful gold heritage. Many accounts and photographs remain in circulation today. Dr. James Lawton Haney and Anne Landis Swann wrote the most recent publication, Gold: “Shining Dust” in the Cultural History of McDowell County, North Carolina in 2004.

The purpose of this initiative is to preserve and promote our mining history. We have the opportunity to work with neighboring communities such as Rutherford, Burke, Yancey and Mitchell in educating the public on this important time in our regional history.

Goal:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To assist the non-profit Gold Foundation in its efforts to coordinate heritage mining related projects and promotions. 2. To form a multi-county marketing opportunity. 3. To support and supplement local efforts in McDowell County and other gold and mining heritage counties to preserve the heritage. 4. To develop collaborative efforts to promote and market to a regional, statewide, national and international audience the mining heritage through the annual Gold Festival, a two day event held at Tom Johnson’s Rally Park, as well as other mining, gold and gem festivals and events.
-------	---

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
N.C. Gold Foundation	Depends upon project.	Annual festival and an ongoing advertising/promotional effort is needed.

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who’s Responsible:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Broaden the scope of the N.C. Gold Foundation to become an alliance of groups, organizations and individuals interested in the preservation of the region’s mining heritage. 2. Establish a multi-county and regional self-sustaining marketing organization with regularly scheduled 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. N.C. Gold Foundation board identifies interested persons, etc. from each county. 2. Request the Division of Tourism, Department of Cultural Resources, Advantage West and the N.C. Dept. of Commerce Division of Community Assistance help with projects, efforts, etc. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. N.C. Gold Foundation board of directors and volunteers.

<p>meetings that are dedicated to the promotion of our mining heritage.</p> <p>3. Assist in the organization and promotion of the annual Gold Festival and other mining related events and festivals.</p>	<p>3. Determine sources of funding including donations, grants, appropriations to market festivals and events via all media types.</p>	
---	--	--

<p>Performance Measures:</p>	<p>Attendance at festivals and events, increases in tourism revenues and tourist expenditures as an indicator of promotional success.</p> <p>Broad based regional participation in the marketing organization and its advertising success.</p>
------------------------------	--

<p>Status:</p>	<p>The N.C. Gold Foundation is in the process of producing their 6th festival scheduled for May 2009.</p> <p>UPDATE</p> <p>In the spring of 2008, members of the N.C. Golf Foundation, the McDowell Tourism Authority, Mountain Gateway Museum, the town of Rutherfordton and Frankie McWhorter, N.C. State Heritage Tourism Officer met to discuss creating a regional gold trail partnering McDowell County, Burke County and Rutherford County. Rutherford County has been successful with their promotions of the Bechtler Mint and local celebrations. The group agreed to meet again in the late fall of 2008 to continue plans to develop a print piece promoting the trail and local events in these three areas.</p>
----------------	--

INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	Davidson's Fort Replica Project
-------------------	---------------------------------

Project Narrative:	<p>The project began in March of 2006 as a partnership between Mark Hall and Gary Jones. Hall had previously formed a non-profit and established Grant's Museum at Old Fort to house Native American artifacts. The museum operated for some fifteen years before closing.</p> <p>As Hall operated Grant's Museum, he began to research the entire history of Old Fort and became especially interested in the Revolutionary War era. Working in collaboration with Gary Jones with whom he had worked on other projects, he researched the history of Davidson's Fort and conceived the idea of an authentic replica of the fort.</p> <p>Hall and Jones then contracted to purchase eighteen acres visible from Interstate 40 and accessed from U.S. Hwy 70W onto Lackey Town Road. The property is located within the Old Fort city limits. They too met with and obtained support and a willingness to cooperate from Old Fort Alderman and Mayor Garland Norton.</p> <p>The history of Davidson's Fort is well documented. Historical records indicate Samuel Davidson was owner of hundreds of acres surrounding the area known as Old Fort. The area included a grist mill on Davidson's Mill Creek, today known as Mill Creek.</p> <p>In the April 1933 edition of the <u>N.C. Historical and Genealogical Record, Vol. 2, Number 2</u>, in an article by Mary M. Greenlee is stated: <i>During the Revolutionary War, the Davidson family lived in Old Fort on property owned by Samuel Davidson including a grist mill. John Davidson lived on the property for many years.</i> (Source: Wheeler's Historical Sketches of North Carolina, page 17.) This reference was important to determining the fort's location.</p> <p>As further documentation an article dated 1852, David L. Swain (Source: <u>University of North Carolina Magazine, Volume 1, Number 4</u>) discusses he stockade at the old fort built by General Griffith Rutherford in August 1776 during his Cherokee expedition. Pension applications from members of Rutherford's militia describe their duties under Rutherford's command including construction of a fort on property owned by Samuel Davidson.</p> <p>Other publications and articles written by Mary M. Greenlee provide additional information from members of the Old Fort community who speak to the fort site and its place in the community. Greenlee's interviews with family members and documentation of family diaries and papers refer to the fort and its location. These place the fort close to the "community house" that once stood where the</p>
--------------------	---

	<p>Mountain Gateway Museum stands today.</p> <p>Descriptions provided by Greenlee include mention of an underground spring on the site. The spring is noted in an archeological survey performed on the Museum property in recent years. Greenlee’s notes from Martha Matilda Greenlee Burgin dated September 24, 1929, confirm these statements. In addition to a written account by Mary Howard McEntire, Greenlee’s diary dated June 14, 1795, describes a conversation with her grandmother during a summer outing and also notes the 1916 flood that destroyed the remaining foundation of the fort.</p> <p>Former NC Senator Joe Sam Queen who is an architect serves on the board of the Davidson’s Fort project. He is rendering the architectural plan for the fort and a welcome center designed to function as a museum.</p> <p>Mark Hall Vice President of the Davidson’s Fort Board of Directors is providing his collection of Native American artifacts that once were part of the Grant’s Museum collection exhibits. These will be displayed in the new museum.</p> <p>The proposed architectural plan for the replica is a palisade style fort including two block houses, small cabins, blacksmith area, powder magazine surrounded by an earthen berm which was used to offer protection from sparks and other structures described in the original 1776 Davidson’s Fort plan.</p> <p>Visitors entering the fort will first enter the welcome center/museum area and then move into the fort for a self-guided tour. The site will include a replica Cherokee village where reenactments will be performed. The area will also be used for an annual Revolutionary War era reenactments and programs for visitors and school groups. A local Civil War reenactment group has expressed interest in using the site for their educational programs which are contracted with the county and local school systems.</p> <p>Another potential use for the replica will be its inclusion on a Rutherford Trace national historic trail that has been proposed and toward which Joe Sam Queen is working to achieve National Park Service designation. The trail that is known as the Rutherford Trace travels throughout western North Carolina including this fort built in 1776.</p> <p>The projected completion date for a fully functioning replica of Davidson’s Fort at Old Fort is March of 2010.</p>
--	--

Goal:	Provide an educational venue interpreting the lifestyle and events of early settlers and Native Americans during the pioneer/Revolutionary War era in and around the former Davidson’s Fort and western North Carolina.
-------	---

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to
----------------------------------	--------------------	-------------------

		Complete:
Davidson's Fort Board of Directors	Estimated cost \$850,000	March 2010

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Complete Architectural Plan	Architectural Contract	Joe Sam Queen – Service to be donated.
Construction Phase	Construction materials and labor, contracting costs	Managing directors, Mark Hall and Gary Jones
Assembling museum artifacts	Donated artifacts	Vice Pres. Mark Barker
Coordinating educational programs, reenactments and school groups	N/A	Mark Barker, Mark Hall
Promotional/Marketing of Site	Advertising Funds	Mark Hall, Gary Jones
Employing staff and coordinating volunteer staff to operate the site.	Administrative Budget/Funds	Mark Hall, Gary Jones

Performance Measures:	As each phase takes place, actions are reviewed and coordinated by the board of directors prior to board approval for implementation. Once construction phase is completed, appropriate staff will be in place for site operation.
-----------------------	--

Status:	<p>Acreage has been purchased. Public activities include a dedication ceremony on July 15th at the site attended by U.S. House of Representatives member Charles Taylor, Joe Sam Queen, N.C. House Representative Mitch Gillespie, McDowell County Manager Chuck Abernathy and McDowell County Commissioner Barry McPeters, Old Fort Mayor Garland Norton and McDowell County Tourism Director Carol Price. Other Old Fort community members included the Old Fort Chamber of Commerce and town residents.</p> <p>The board of directors is in the process of planning fund raising activities and researching grant opportunities to assist with the site construction.</p> <p>UPDATE: The organization has their 501c(3) status and McGill and Associates completed a feasibility study in 2007. As of October 2008, the organization is in the process of locating additional and perpetual funds to purchase the remaining three parcels needed to construct the fort and historical park. Part-time employee Rick Acivos continues to work to secure grant funds and to organize fund-raising events.</p>
---------	---

INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Initiative Title:	McDowell County Oral History Archive – NEW 2008
--------------------------	---

Project Narrative:	A digitally recorded, oral history of McDowell County interviewing locally recognized historians such as Anne Swann, Dr. James L. Haney and local residents to be used in a variety of mediums and formats for the purposes of marketing McDowell County as a heritage tourism destination. The project creates a historical archive allowing other non-profit historical organizations access to footage they may use and edit for their own marketing and/or project's purpose(s). Because it is an oral history, the archives may receive new footage throughout the years at varying times.
---------------------------	---

Goal:	To create a multi-purpose marketing tool to be shared with various non-profit and governmental agencies interpreting local history and individual sites. The resulting instrument may be edited in a variety of ways, i.e. future commercials produced by the McDowell Tourism Development Authority, a DVD interpreting the Historic Carson House history and projects to be used as a fund-raising item to be sold on their new website, at the museum and to be distributed and sold at local/regional visitor centers, an edited version used to supplement educational programs such as the Overmountain National Victory Historic Trail and the 2008 National Endowment for the Humanities' Educational Program, "Picturing America" that includes a quilt made by Hannah Greenlee during her life as a slave on the Greenlee Plantation (Historic Carson House). There are an infinite number of ways in which this footage may be used in the future. Those outlined using the Historic Carson House as an example and first non-profit to receive the shared footage.
--------------	--

Person/Organization Responsible:	Cost to Implement:	Estimated Time to Complete:
McDowell County Tourism Development Authority	\$7,500 to film plus an additional \$3,500 to \$5,000 for editing costs.	October 1, 2009

Action Items:	Resources Required:	Who's Responsible:
Contract with professional videographer.	Funding	McDowell TDA
Prepare and execute filming schedule.	McDowell TDA Staff	McDowell TDA
Coordinate editing for the McDowell TDA's future projects and other non-profit and governmental agencies.	McDowell TDA	McDowell TDA

<p>Performance Measures:</p>	<p>Each edited version will require an individual project completion date. The McDowell TDA will contract to edit a version for use as a promotional tool on their website, to be run weekly on the McDowell County Government Cable Channel, and it will be offered to the City of Marion for their cable television channel and their website.</p> <p>The TDA will seek separate funding to use a different, edited version for use as a television commercial to be aired regionally in the Raleigh/Durham, Greensboro/High Point/Winston-Salem, Charlotte and Greenville/Spartanburg markets.</p> <p>The TDA will pay for an edited version that will serve the Historic Carson House as a promotional DVD with edits for their website, www.historiccarsonhouse.com.</p> <p>The TDA will offer the footage to other non-profits and local government for other uses as approved by the McDowell Tourism Development Authority's board of directors.</p> <p>Increased activity on websites featuring this footage and increased number of heritage tourists will assist in determining this project's future performance.</p>
------------------------------	--

<p>Status:</p>	<p>The TDA is seeking funding for the project.</p>
----------------	--

McDowell County Asset Inventory October 2006

Historic Sites

Historic Carson House
McDowell House – Only remaining home in NC for which a county was named.
Old Fort Historic District
McDowell Public Library – Genealogic Library
Mountain Gateway Museum
Blue Ridge Parkway
Gold and Gem Mining History/Sites
Overmountain National Historic Victory Trail
Main Street Marion Program
Orchard at Altapass
Marion Depot
Old Fort Depot and Railroad Museum
Carson Slaves Cemetery
Round Hill Cemetery – McDowell and Carson Burial
Bob's Creek Pocket Wilderness
Linville Caverns
Welsford Parker Artz House in Old Fort
First Presbyterian Church Marion
Albertus Ledbetter House – Montford Cove
Lone Beech House
St. John's Episcopal Church in Marion
St. Matthew's Lutheran Church – Marion
Yellow Mountain Trail Marker – Montford Cove
Andrews Geysers – Old Fort, N.C. Civil War Trail Marker

Natural Resources

Catawba Falls Access
Catawba River Greenway Plan
Mountains to the Sea Trail
Lake James State Park
Catawba River
Canoe Access at Pleasant Gardens Park
Trout Streams and Fishing
Blue Ridge Parkway Public Areas and Parks
Newberry Creek
Curtis Creek
Buck Creek
Overmountain National Historic Victory Trail
Kitsuma Peak Trail
Point Lookout Trail

Pisgah National Forest
Tom's Creek Falls
Curtis Creek Recreational Area
Hickory Branch Trail Falls
Linville Caverns
Andrews' Geyser and Park
Armstrong Creek Hiking Trail and Fish Hatchery
Bad Fork Trail
Betsy Ridge Trail
Lead Mine Gap Trail
Little Buck Creek Trail
Mackey Mountain Trail
Woodlawn Fitness Trail
Woods Mountain Trail – Joins Mountain to Sea Trail
Young's Ridge

Cultural Resources

Mountain Glory Festival
Old Fort Mountain Music – c. 1986
McDowell Arts Council – Renovation to historic building
Lake James Bass Tournament
Mountain Gateway Museum Pioneer Day
Subsistence Farming Demonstrations, i.e. Providence Farms
Peaceful Valley Farm
South Creek Winery and Vineyard
N.C. Gold Festival
First Friday Concerts – Historic Downtown Marion
Mountain Glory Quilters Guild
Mountain Gateway Museum
Orchard at Altapass – Weekend mountain music/arts and crafts demonstrations
Historic Carson House Genealogy Library
Appalachian Potters' Market
Octoberfest – Old Fort
Medicine Moon – Native American Healing Program at Mountain Gateway Museum
Archeological Dig Results – Performed by David Moore in McDowell County, field adjacent to Round Hill Cemetery
Old Fort Granite Arrowhead – Dedicated to first peace ceremony between Cherokee and Catawba Tribes in 1930
Saturday Night Square Dancing at Little Switzerland/Geneva Hall July and August
Foothills Theater Group
Orchard at Altapass – Storytelling and theater programs
Civil War Re-enactment each June in Dysartsville Community
Overmountain Victory Trail Association – Re-enactment each September retracing two routes through McDowell County

Trails

Civil War History – Historic Carson House and Andrews Geysers are sites on the N.C. Civil War Trail Applications for 2 sites to be included in state's Civil War Trails

Revolutionary War History – Overmountain National Victory Trail, Joseph McDowell House, Dysartsville site on OVTA, nine Revolutionary War-era forts

Rutherford's Trace

Bicycle Trails including Point Lookout Trail dedicated October 30, 2008

Equestrian Trails – Two new trails in progress – Bear Creek Marina

Assault on Mt. Mitchell

Off-Road Assault on Mt. Mitchell

Armstrong Creek Fish Hatchery

Arts/Crafts Trails including Highway 80/Buck Creek Road

Mountain to Sea Trail

Catawba River Greenway

Waterfall Trails including Hickory Branch Trail, Catawba Falls Trail, Tom's Creek Waterfall Trail, Linville Falls Trail

Yellow Mountain Trail – First connection between the Piedmont and Watauga Settlements