Guilford Going Green
Through
Enlivening Neighborhoods

*How can citizens, at the grassroots level, demonstrate resolve and initiative
in meeting the challenges of global climate change
in ways that create eco-futuric neighborhoods for present and future generations?*

Emerging Ecology, a Greensboro-based non-profit organization, is seeking individual and organizational partners to create a network of self-consciously Eco-futuric Neighborhoods within Guilford County. These neighborhoods will share insights and resources as they intensify their efforts to enhance their communities in ways that both improve the quality of life of the residents and enrich the ecological conditions of their surroundings to provide for the well-being of future residents and the long-term vibrancy of the natural world. Thus, they will bend the future toward ecological responsibility.

Since its incorporation in 2013, Emerging Ecology has been building a comprehensive framework for the current transition into a time when the human species lives in a mutually enhancing relationship between people and Planet. These understandings and perspectives provide a foundation for guiding its planning and implementation of creative projects across Guilford County. As an Associate Member of the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) International, Emerging Ecology has access to the ICA's more than 50 years of practical experience in grassroots community development. This work is based on the principles (see page 2) outlined by its founder, Dr. Joseph W. Mathews. The ICA's *Technology of Participation (ToP)®* methods, in particular, provide useful processes for ensuring that all voices within the neighborhoods are included in the decision-making processes. The *ToP* methods, tested over several decades in communities across North Carolina, will enable neighborhood residents to work together among themselves, and with individuals and organizations bringing technical assistance, to analyze the local conditions and envision workable plans for initiating and enlivening the longed-for changes.

Emerging Ecology intends to engage six neighborhoods – one in each city council district and one in Guilford County outside the city limits of Greensboro – in this project. These six neighborhoods will be in dialogue to provide understanding and mutual support. Each of the neighborhoods will begin by creating a practical, ecologically focused multi-year vision for their community using a tested 5-session participatory planning process. In the concluding session of the neighborhood planning events, participants will develop a timeline for taking initial steps with an eye toward achieving more long-range objectives.

Emerging Ecology uses trained facilitators in its Neighborhood Guide Team to work with the selected local groups. These teams will call on additional professional technical support as needed. Additional members are welcome to join this team. They will work, initially, as volunteers, and get training in *ToP* facilitation methods as well as study ICA's historical wisdom for fostering successful, sustained grassroots change.

In order to ensure a comprehensive approach to neighborhood growth, this project will incorporate action categories from the US Green Building Council's LEED for Neighborhood Development initiative and broad themes from Paul Hawken's *Drawdown Project.* Green**schemes** will provide consultative services for participatory planning events using *ToP* methods   Emerging Ecology will equip neighborhood facilitators with its contemporary social analysis tools and grassroots development methods from decades of ICA experience.

Individuals, organizations and neighborhood associations interested in working with this project should contact Nelson Stover at NStover@EmergingEcology.org or Tim Leisman at TimLeisman@Outlook.com or visit https://emergingecology.org/neighborhoods/ (or use the QR code at the right) for further details and sign-up information.

Comprehensive Community Reformulation
Foundational Presuppositions

"The Institute is firmly convinced that any effective resolution to the problems of cities and communities must be comprehensive. We believe that any other approach is finally harmful to the situation and wasteful of funds and human effort. The fragmented approach with one project here and another there, unrelated by a common inclusive model, is but sophisticated benevolence, never penetrating to the real issues. Such methods only tend to put proud flesh over the deep wounds of the forgotten communities.

During the 1960's, the Institute developed a model program of comprehensive community reformulation in a 16 square block community on the West Side of Chicago. Out of this experimentation, certain operational principles, methods and constructs emerged. A description of some of these will indicate what is meant by comprehensive community reformulation.

1. The *first operating presupposition* has to do with geography. Comprehensive reformulation begins with a **carefully defined area**, set apart by clear boundaries. This reduces the sense of chaos created by the seeming impossibility of the task. It curtails dissipation and duplication of effort. It enables penetration in depth that reaches to the last citizen. It makes possible a clearer picture of the maze of problems that paralyze the citizens. The delimited are fosters a sense of community identity which is essential to the comprehensive approach.
2. The *second operating presupposition* requires that the **depth human problem** in the community be filtered out and directly dealt with. This is crucial to comprehensiveness. All other facets rest directly on this foundation. Unless the imagination of the citizens is refurbished, re-programmed, if you please, nothing else can lastingly be altered in communities.
3. The *third operating principle* is that **all the human and ecological problems** in the community must be addressed simultaneously and in a coordinated fashion. Piecemeal approaches never get at the real issues and cannot create the needed morale for action. In order to move one problem toward significant solution it is finally necessary to move them all. The education, economic, social, political, cultural and ecological problems cannot be disjoined from one another if effective resolution is intended. Each individual is a total human being.
4. *Fourth*, **all age levels** among the citizens must be dealt with at once. Just as community problems reinforce one another, so the postures of the various age groups dramatically influence each other. If the elders are neglected, they will unintentionally communicate their images of submissiveness to the young. Programs must be created that will operate from the cradle to the grave. The comprehensive approach to community reformulation requires a network of interrelated and coordinated projects which deal with all the various levels and groups representing the beginning, rising, emerging, established and elder generations.
5. The *fifth operating principle,* the **use of symbols**, may be the most important, even though its function is also the most difficult to articulate. Every effort that deals with a substantial body of people is deeply dependent upon symbols. In creating a community, large or small, a sense of commonness in mission must be created. A task and a corporateness relative to the task define community, and this is mediated through living symbols. These include songs, festivals, the geographical area itself, its distinguishing name, landmarks, art pieces, rites, insignia, local leaders and respected persons, and on and on. Symbols are crucial to the morale and expectation that make the difference between social despair and creative society. Symbols are foundational to inclusive social change."