

Additional thoughts for others in getting started on a similar project:

- **Start where your community is.**
 - What works for first steps in one place may not be the first steps in your space. Gauge & respond.
- **Create opportunities to engage & discuss with purpose.**
 - Sometimes people just need to feel heard and be given the opportunity to express themselves. Create spaces and times to do this constructively.
 - Examples from the initial RC year: Community Book Club, Ag Growth Initiative discussions, Housing Committee discussions.
- **Create programs that have visual/physical returns.**
 - When people can see the results, they can believe and support the process.
 - Talking to other community development professionals, I have often heard, “Nobody knows what I do!” Or, “They think I don’t do anything!” By creating programs and projects where the public can visually see the results, this doubt lessens.
 - Examples from the initial RC year: Storefront & Signage Incentive, Housing Incentives (ie: demo assistance, paint the county incentive, vacant property sale incentives), and Cross-County Murals and Live Music Series.
- **Communicate. But don’t overshare.**
 - Communication is key, but give yourself space to work through issues before taking them to the public eye.
 - Examples from the initial RC year: Quarterly email newsletters, Social media posts, emails, every door direct mailers.
- **Build a good base of cheerleaders.**
 - Find who supports your causes. Share with them. Become friends.
- **Be Positive**
 - Don’t engage or indulge in any negativity towards yourself, someone else, a project, your city or county, etc.
- **Build/Mend Bridges.**
 - *It is not possible for one area of the constituency to be prosperous and successful while other parts do poorly. We rise together or we die together. ‘13 Ways to Kill Your Community’ by Doug Griffiths, Pg 55*
 - Build and/or mend bridges between the city and the county, between the chamber and visitors bureau, and other organizations. Be a friend. You’re all on the same team.
- **Plan for your end.**
 - *The goal of community work is bigger than you. The race is not a sprint, it is a marathon with many individuals that will carry the torch.*
 - *"Long-term success requires you to work as hard as you can for your allotted time with the realization you must pass off the baton to someone else when your leg of the race is done."*
13 Ways to Kill Your Community’ by Doug Griffiths, Pg 129