



**YOUR TOWN: THE CITIZENS' INSTITUTE ON RURAL DESIGN
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS, 2010**

We are pleased to announce that the National Endowment for the Arts will be funding four *Your Town: The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design* workshops and are seeking your interest in producing a workshop between now and November 2010. This is an opportunity to bring design professionals to your community to help you tackle critical regional planning and design issues. (To be considered a rural community, your town must have a population of less than 50,000 people and/or be located in a non-metropolitan county or a metropolitan county on the urban fringe.) Up to \$22,000 will be available to a non-profit organization for each workshop. Responses to this call should be approximately three to five pages with no more than five letters of support and five images of the community. Please submit your proposal as one PDF document.

The Department of Landscape Architecture at SUNY Syracuse directs *Your Town: The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design* in partnership with consultant Shelley Mastran. Since 1991, workshops have been produced in all regions of the country with the intention of bringing together approximately 35 community leaders (who are not design professionals) to learn the importance of design in building a future for their communities. The workshops, which take place over two and a half days in a retreat-like setting, are organized according to a specified format. They expose participants to experts in a range of planning, landscape architecture, architecture and historic preservation issues and challenge them to work in small groups to solve a series of design problems. If you are selected to produce a *Your Town* workshop, a *Coordinator's Manual* will guide you through the planning process, and you will receive limited technical and logistical support from the program's co-directors.

Your Town workshops may bring together participants from one community or several communities in a geographic region. They may focus on design problems in a real community; or a hypothetical, representative community may serve as the model for problem solving. The workshops should address specific regional planning and design issues that have a rural impact—for example, downtown revitalization, growth management, transportation, greenway development, and subdivision design. Past organizations that have hosted a workshop include university Community Design Centers, Chambers of Commerce, county governments, Main Street organizations, local preservation organizations, and historical societies, among others.

The Your Town workshops have created an extensive network of speakers and faculty dedicated to the design issues facing rural America. We will work closely with each community to identify the most appropriate speakers and faculty from this network. An important part of each workshop is the selection of a keynote speaker. Three potential speakers familiar with the Your Town program who have agreed to be available if their schedules permit are Jeff Speck, AIA; Ed McMahon, Senior Fellow at the Urban Land Institute; and Kennedy Smith, with the Community Land Use and Economics (CLUE) Group.

Typically, all the participants' expenses (food, lodging, materials) are paid for, except transportation. Participants are expected to attend the **entire** workshop and must agree to full attendance before being accepted.



If you are selected to produce a Your Town workshop, the funds will be provided through a fee-for-service contract with SUNY Syracuse. Although \$22,000 should cover most expenses, workshop organizers should demonstrate a match for the Endowment funds. Past successful applications have included matches of approximately \$10,000. The contribution may take the form of funds raised or donated by local organizations, including goods and services (food, printing, space, staff time, for example). You will be expected to maintain budget records for all expenditures. If substantially fewer than 30 participants attend the full workshop, funding from the Endowment will decrease accordingly. Securing committed attendance at the workshop is critical.

We are particularly interested in workshops that produce substantial results and want to know the follow-up activities you propose—public meetings, educational sessions, publications, photo documentation, creating Web site forums or listservs—for extending the impact of the workshop. The funds you receive from the Endowment and other funds you raise may be applied toward follow-up work, including hiring students to produce publications or Web-based materials, but these costs should not exceed 10 percent of the total project costs.

More information on Your Town is available at our website: www.yourtowndesign.org.

If you are interested in organizing a 2010 Your Town workshop, please submit a brief proposal that includes the following information:

1. Sponsoring Non-profit Institution/Organization
2. Principal Organizer/Contact (*Name, Address with ZIPCODE, Phone, E-mail*)
3. Proposed Location of the Workshop (*Facility, Town, State and ZIPCODE*)
4. Principal Issues and Problems to be Addressed. *Describe both the general rural community issues and proposed design problems that the workshop would address. Why is the timing of this workshop important?*
5. Proposed Faculty and Speakers. *List key individuals you propose to be involved as faculty, speakers, and/or resource persons. For each, describe his or her area of expertise in a sentence or two. For the most important speakers, please provide some indication -- even a simple email message -- of their commitment to attend the workshop if their schedules permit.*
6. Proposed Strategy for Recruiting and Retaining Participants. *Describe the audience for the workshop and explain how you would invite them to apply. Please provide a strategy for keeping participants engaged and at the workshop for its entirety.*
7. Organizer Experience. Briefly describe the experience of the principal organizer or organization with the Your Town program, event planning, the rural community or communities proposed, and rural community issues. While a design background is not



required, if you or your organization has no design expertise, please provide a paragraph explaining how design issues will be addressed during the workshop.

8. **Statements of Support.** *Include statement(s) of endorsement from your local governmental entity and other partners. Please send no more than five (5) such statements of support. Statements should indicate a commitment to provide logistical, technical, or financial support **and** a willingness to participate in the workshop or send a representative.*
9. **Logistical Support.** *Briefly explain the available clerical and computer support for preparing the workshop and producing a Your Town notebook (a suggested format for the notebook will be provided). We strongly encourage you to partner with an academic institution, or other institution, organization, or agency with experience and commitment to rural design issues that can assist you in developing the Your Town workshop and provide follow-up technical assistance. If you want to see a version of the notebook online, please contact Richard Hawks at rshawks@esf.edu.*
10. **Proposed Source(s) of Matching Funds or In-Kind Services and Materials.** *Please indicate which funds are committed and secured versus those that are simply proposed.*
11. **Follow-up to Workshop.** *Describe what follow-up work you propose in order to carry the results of the workshop forward. If you have previously held similar workshops, describe any implementation that resulted.*

Please organize your proposal and respond to all eleven elements contained in this RFP. You may send a maximum of 5 digital images of places or locations in your community that the Your Town workshop would address. Please submit your proposal as one PDF.

If you need more information about Your Town, you may contact one of the following previous workshop coordinators.

Pratt Cassity, University of Georgia – pcassity@arches.uga.edu
Michelle Jones, Mississippi State University - mjones@caad.msstate.edu
Evan Medley, Wyoming Main Street - evan.medley@wybusiness.org
Peggy Pings, National Park Service - mpings@wvu.edu
Doug Self, Driggs, Idaho – pzdriggs@pdt.net

Please send e-mailed or mailed proposals to each of the following for receipt no later than C.O.B. on Friday, January 8th.

Richard Hawks
rshawks@mailbox.syr.edu
Chair, Department of Landscape Architecture, CESF/SUNY, Syracuse, NY 13210

And

Shelley S. Mastran
shellmast@comcast.net

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The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design



11454 Hollow Timber Court, Reston, VA 20194