A vital rural community has the capacity (the ability to plan, make decisions, and act together) to realize positive social, economic, and environmental outcomes.

The Ford Institute for Community Building continues its commitment to rural community vitality through the new Pathways to Community Vitality program.

**Purpose:** Pathways is a facilitated process intended to serve as a springboard for motivated and self-reliant communities to engage as innovators in efforts to realize community vitality. The purpose is to inspire and empower community leaders to set in motion a plan to act on a significant community priority.

**Process:** Convene and facilitate a series of community dialogs to:
- assess what is important to your community and how you work together
- clarify your community priorities
- organize and move to action to build capacity and strengthen vitality

**Why get involved?**
- Meet new people and feel more connected
- Get more informed about what’s going on in your community
- Exercise creativity and innovative thinking
- Participate in positive community action
- Learn about other resources and opportunities to make a difference

**Results:** Early examples of Pathways community initiatives include:
- Siskyou County has launched a major regional bicycle tourism initiative
- Vernonia formed the Vernonia Connects Network and is hosting a series of “Community Conversations” on education, livability, economy and more
- Sutherlin held a youth expo that engaged 450 youth in exploring opportunities for community involvement

Pathways to Community Vitality is a program developed by the Ford Institute and its partners, Rural Development Initiatives, Nonprofit Association of Oregon and Human Systems. Program development is guided by community input, best practices related to capacity building and a dedication to learning.

For more information please visit www.tfff.org/pathways or email fordinstitute@tfff.org
The Alumni Celebration brings alumni together to celebrate accomplishments, dialog about community needs and learn about Ford program opportunities. Following the event, a team further considers needs and best program fit, and determines if/when to submit a proposal for Pathways to Community Vitality. Pathways is a 12-18 month process that includes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step on the Path</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <em>Community Vitality Inventory and Outreach</em></td>
<td>Gather a snapshot of community perceptions on what is important and how you work together. Reach out to engage your community in the process.</td>
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<td>2. <em>Community Vitality Forum</em></td>
<td>Dialog about the inventory results. Identify a community priority to strengthen capacity and vitality.</td>
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<td>3. <em>Moving to Action Workshop</em></td>
<td>Clarify goal, develop strategies and action steps to move your community priority forward.</td>
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<td>4. <em>Action Support and Coaching</em></td>
<td>Implement and move to action with consulting, facilitation, and/or technical support.</td>
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<td>5. <em>Reconvening</em></td>
<td>Come together to celebrate progress and consider next steps.</td>
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