

HYPERVILLAGE

A Model For Revitalizing Rural Life

USA Model By Bruce Weaver



THE
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A HyperVillage revitalizes rural living through a hybrid of self-reliant, artisanal technologies and high technologies. It is a rural living-workspace where bio-diversity and technological diversity merge. Where human beings are stewards of the natural world, their local ecology, environment, economy and culture, "making a living" locally for a healthy and sustainable society.

The Need:

There is an urgent need for a renaissance of imagination. We are living in times of unprecedented economic, environmental and social uncertainty that demand a collective imagination to usher-in true innovation. Just one estimate foretelling of further uncertainty, forecasts 75% of the world population living in megacities by the year 2050. This coming period may be remembered as the Urbanization Period, marked by a mass human migration to urban centers, away from rural, village communities, bankrupting biological and technological diversity, leading further collapse of the delicate web that symbiotically connects humans to nature.

We see this migration taking a toll on rural communities today, as unemployment rates have soared, business bankruptcies, home and farm foreclosures, as food, water and energy supplies are threatened and the communities that harbor them near extinction. Rural communities and their landscapes are the food, and culturesheds that supply a vast majority of our basic, human necessities. They are the homesteads of generations of land and earth stewards to come, and represent the largest coalition of land, water and animal husbandry expertise, able to pay forward these values and skills so essential for innovations to address the changes we face. We need rural renewal-- people willing to live in extreme immersion in rural life, to seed local village economies, and revitalize rural culture. Entrepreneurs and ecopreneurs are recognizing this need, and actively exploring ways to reinvent agriculture and farming, evident in local food and Slow Money movements today, reviving the DIY maker-cultures, artisanal crafts-- individual signs of the times, and each one a potential "Trim Tab" as Buckminster Fuller coined it, to guide innovations and help us, "...spread our wings of intellect and fly or perish."

How does it work?

A HyperVillage stresses fluency in nature and technology, placing equal value on both. It begins with a rural land-base for food production with organic agriculture and farming as the basis of sustainable, self-sufficiency and cultural-reliance. The “village” is a rural workspace and a starter-culture* to both preserve rural cultures interdependent with nature, and to inoculate innovations in local and seasonal food production, watersheds, culturesheds, land conservancy, alternative energy production, artisanal crafts such as cheeses, beer and bread making or bee-keeping, and DIY and “Farm Hacking” projects and local arts. High-technology is essential to the “village” of tomorrow, by integrating the best advancements in broadband internet, and video cameras for video blogging and videocasting. For Example:

- Networking technologies for monitoring and managing agricultural or conservation habitats.
- Virtual Classrooms via Google Hangouts
- E-commerce & open-source share networking via Google Hangouts

A Hypervillage would emphasize “open-source” and open-exchange as a means to engage the global community for the greatest collaborative experience. The village would be a workshop where locals would gather in a hands-on environment while high-tech would hyper-connect to promote a renaissance of imagination for a more self-reliant, sustainable future.



Impact:

The HyperVillage firstly impacts the rural community and economy in which it is located, spreading to the surrounding urban centers and rippling beyond to the global community via high-tech, social and new media technologies. By reinventing village/rural life, we address head-on the issues of climate change, economic uncertainty, healthcare and biodiversity, by securing access to arable land and clean water in order to grow food, develop personal maker skills for self reliance and re-imagine what it means to “make a living.”

Source of Inspiration:

In 2012 Sony (Europe) and sustainability non-profit, Forum For The Future together with the Pipeline Project, developed an open collaborative project called a Hypervillage, a part of their FutureScapes initiative. >>
The Hypervillage concept has been laying dormant as a conceptual idea for the past several months, and I propose to take it from the conceptual stage to a start-up phase, and ultimately a working model.

Inspirational Working Models:

Factor e Farm:

Now being called Open Source Ecology. This farm is one of the most innovative working models of DIY/ Makers Culture. Essential to this model is the concept of “open-source” or sharing of ideas. This is in its infancy, as an Open Source Global Village construction site or a life-size erector set and workshop of for constructing essential machines for building a “small civilization with modern-day comforts,” including housing and the means for food, energy and technology production.

Open Source Ecology Website >>>

WormFarm Institute:

Creating artistic placemaking projects from Farm art dTour to custom Road-side Culture Stands which are new forms of Farm Stands.

WormFarm Insitute website >>



Crosshatch- Institute For Sustainable Living Art & Natural Design:

Crosshatch is a non-profit arts and ecology center dedicated to connecting people with nature, art and community. ISLAND helps people become native to place. This is an excellent working model of rural community building around land, nature, food, self-reliance, arts and sharing ideas for a more sustainable future.

Crosshatch website >>>

These models inspire and inform the HyperVillage. Each implements one or many of the ideas of a HyperVillage and expresses the essential values of “open-sourcing” while not expressly stated as core values, open-source and open-innovation are clearly being revalued in each. A HyperVillage is distinctly guided by this principle and borrows further from “Biomimicry,” differentiating it in these ways:

A HyperVillage is a “starter culture” in it’s rural community. Mimicking fermentation where an inoculant or microorganisms, are introduced to foods to transform them to more stable, nutrient-divers and symbiotic nutrition. Kefir grains, for example, are the starter culture to ferment milk into kefir, biotransforming milk by predigesting and converting proteins, fats and carbohydrates while manufacturing from the chemistries, novel and symbiotic compounds. Where do the novelties come from?

Starter Culture



Did the substrate have them hiding or did the microorganisms make them from the substrate or was it the combination of the substrate inoculated by a unique combination of microorganisms, fermented at the right time, in the right place? We submit the later. Through introducing a “starter culture” to a unique media, the combination of media, the intelligence of the microorganism

culturing for a specific time, gives rise to never-before-seen chemistries that are unique to that transformed substrate. It is no surprise that fermented foods are fast becoming the subject of research today. It is the same process at the base of organic gardening where compost, teeming with microorganisms transforms soil into a living system. A HyperVillage is founded on this principle; introducing a HyperVillage into a rural community to start inoculating and culturing with open-sourced ideas as a rural workshop like the Trim Tab of the community, for transforming sustainable futures.

Social, high-tech media allows the HyperVillage to extend its reach around the world, utilize high-tech and nature-tech, to transform inert systems into living systems, connected globally, making the “village” a HyperVillage.

Implementation plan:

The first and very important step to connecting the virtual, urban community to the rural, is to have an established web presence, which I have implemented with my video blog and social media network. Brave New Earth www.BraveNewEarth.com is an established video blog, connected by social media; Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Youtube, Vimeo, Google+, LinkedIn and Flipboard, all feeding one another and building a virtual community to establish a community of like-minded folks, eager for more education, and garner potential funding for the HyperVillage.

Next critical step is to locate, and secure a suitable landbase which would include organic agricultural land, access to clean water, and viable structures.

Concept Ideas

- Acquire the use of homestead, farm or retreat
- Create a brand name for the first, U.S. Hypervillage/Farm
- Acquire and implement necessary computer systems and video/camera equipment for regular video blog social media platform updates to begin posting about HyperVillage.
- Evaluate and draft a priority of projects with deadlines based on the specific farm/land to be acquired: any structural improvements needed, small short-range DIY projects for posting immediately to blog. Example: compost, vermicomposting, garden beds developed etc.
- Evaluate and draft outline for the long term off-the-grid energy plan with proposed equipment needs, and estimates for cost, with a long-range implementation plan.
- Evaluate land and draft plan for a Permaculture Design.
- Permaculture Design initiated to include food from garden, animals and long term use of land-base.
- Cottage Industry models explored and identified; local makers, artisans, bee-keeping and crafters.
- Creative Placemaking: develop community events and programs such as but not limited to; food fairs, farm art tours, food stands.
- Evaluate and draft a plan for implementation of art residency programs, ecotourism, FarmStays and Workstay's.
- Define and plan HyperNodes* which will be the components that support and fuel the HyperVillage model.

* HyperNode - vital tangent points that integrate whole living systems; food systems, human wellbeing and health, energy, ecotourism, agritourism, art, etc. (see addendum)

- 100% Off-Grid Energy

Risk – Potential Barriers:

Building the first Hypervillage Model will present multiple non-linear opportunities (HyperNodes), many of which will evolve from the rural environment, dictated firstly by nature, followed by the land and community assets or needs. The first risk evaluation will come from the location itself. Where is the location and what is it capable of producing? Other barriers may come from local zoning, and or building codes, which may or may not present hurdles due to potential outdated policies, or paperwork. But the main barrier I see is lack of imagination. Truly innovative, transformative ideas require collaboration to implement, and change is often met with fear of the unknown. Mitigating these challenges by inspiring vision, and tapping into undervalued assets through networking with like-minded people to help nurture ideas into working models will be key to success.

Funding:

“The big question remained: How do you obtain the money to live with and to acquire the materials and tools with which to work? ...Answer: Procession”

- Buckminster Fuller, Critical Path

Purchasing the NH farm/land will be by personal funds contingent on the size and suitability of the property and/or Crowdfunding and philanthropic investors.

Investment in computer, technology, experimental technology such as solar energy, and equipment will be funded through sponsorship, donation, crowdfunding and or a combination.

Long-term funding from partnerships both private philanthropic, development of sponsorship programs; videoblog ads, event sponsors, and cottage industry development will be key to generating income via products, example farm foods and culture stands.

Bucky's epiphany of procession applies here. When one is fully committed, procession leads to the means to realize the vision. My vision for human beings is for “making a living” through regarding nature as source, not resource. By revaluing rural communities, human beings are symbiotically bound to nature, which includes reciprocity with and for nature and through reciprocity life-sustaining solutions emerge as necessity and genuine innovation. This is an organic, even karmic human imperative -- by trusting in nature and investing in it, we will be economically sustained.

Bruce Weaver Change Agent - Filmmaker

Project Director Bio:



“Life is full of missed opportunity and options of the unknown.”

Bruce’s life and professional experience is a patchwork of diversity, and procession if not the making of a “renaissance man.” Raised in rural MO, Bruce came by “DIY” naturally, out of necessity, marked by an insatiable curiosity, and fertile imagination. His father’s workshop was the mother load for making stuff, but it was his mother, a prolific artist, who influenced Bruce’s free-thinking and fueled imagination, exposing him to a creativity that seemed to know no boundaries: poetry, pottery, painting, pen & ink, airbrush and photography. When it came time to “make a living” Bruce never divorced himself from nature in the pursuit of money. He owned a handyman business helping others “do it yourself,” which led to professional caretaking gigs where he lived and worked caring for vegetable gardens, landscapes, building and vehicle maintenance, and at times pinch-hit as chef! He discovered Permaculture gardening, primitive skills schools and spent years learning and working with a cadre of back-to-the-landers. He inspired the vision for and implementation of an heirloom seed garden for propagating indigenous, heirloom seeds from the Hopi and Navajo nations, replanting them inside Canyon de Chelly--once the agricultural and farming homeland of the Navajo, long-since abandoned for modernity and “urban” living. To support the rehabilitation of the garden project, Bruce was the founding partner in an ecotourism business-- Time Passages, conducting eco-tours inside the belly of the sacred labyrinth that is Canyon de Chelly. At Time Passages he worked closely with expert guides in archaeology, geology and anthropology of the Southwest region, together with the native Navajo guide, who together conducted week-long expeditions for eco-travelers in this sacred land. It would be some years later that Bruce found his love of new-media and film, which prompted him to pursued a scholarship at Vancouver Film School, where he was the recipient of a first-place award, garnering him a full scholarship, and where he earned his degree in New Media and is a graduate of Vancouver Film School. Uniting his love of nature with film and media skills, fueled by boundless imagination, Bruce took to backpack broadcasting, and single-handedly made a documentary film, and video shorts on eco-oriented subjects, traveling to rural and indigenous communities as diverse as Montana and post-Katrina New Orleans to Columbia South America and Darjeeling India, to learn and share what he was learning virtually with a community of like-minded others. In short, Bruce’s life is a processional one, on a quest to bring nature and “making a living” together, and where the only thing we need is imagination.

To help create the first U.S. Hypervillage
contact Bruce - ecohood@gmail.com

