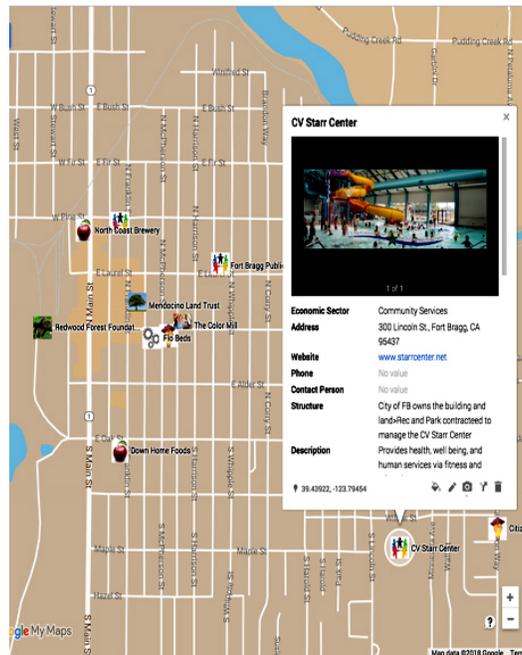**Building an Economy for the Common Good**
Mapping Community Organizations Building an Equitable and Sustainable Future

Workshop 6 — UNDERSTANDING THE MAP/DATABASE INTERACTION

Purpose: To Explain how the Database interacts with the mapping program

Materials: Database Titles, Economic sector logos,

Paradigm: The map focuses on organizations in your community working to make socio economic change for the common good. It allows you to scrutinize which relationships and actions are working and why. The database and the mapping program are intertwined. How they are arranged impacts how the map appears and can be used.

Context: Both the database and the mapping program are the most critical and difficult aspect of making the whole project work. Note that neither is a group process but instead involve two people: one who takes charge of the database and the other who oversees the mapping. In our case we found the facilitators, not the workshops participants, assumed those two projects. You might find that you have several participants who can do this work, which is fine as long as they realize that it takes coordination and considerable time.

To make the best decision on how you set up the map and database, you have to go back to the initial question of why you are putting the map together and what are you going to use it for. Answering this question will help you understand what kind of information is important, what kind of searches or sorting you want to do on the map, who will be using the map and what their interests might be.

The database is a spreadsheet and we use Excel. If you do not know how to use Excel there are plenty of tutorials. Most of the information in the database is collected at the interview or been researched online. The purpose of the database is to hold the information about each organization that will be presented on the map. The rule of thumb is to collect salient and focused information —too much information will be unwieldy

We found that when we entered the information into the database we wanted to order the columns with the basic contact information first. When we finally put together our public map, we put the columns with the most pertinent information first.
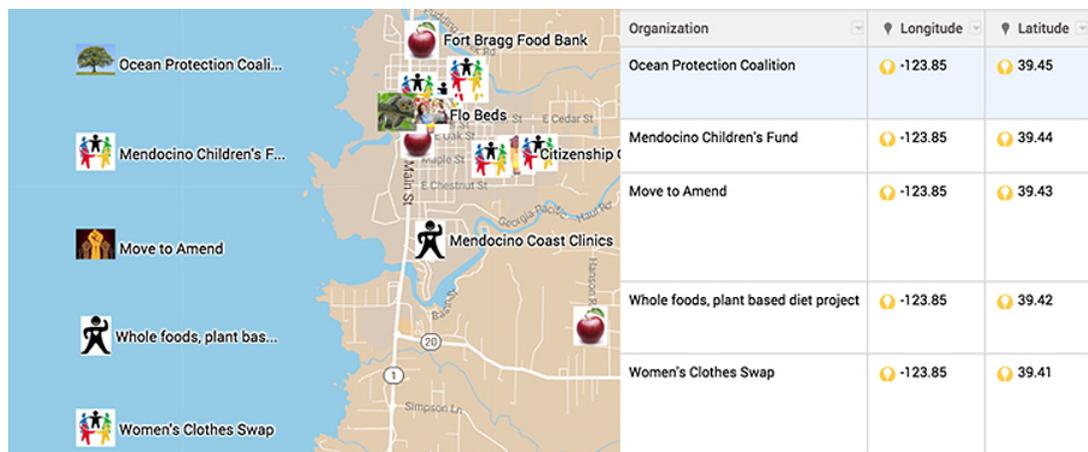
The first job in setting up the database is titling the columns. Here is a list of the column titles we are using now. These titles come from the survey form.   It is easiest to edit and spell check the information you receive from the interviewers before it goes into the database. This can be done in a separate Word document. Then the information can be cut and pasted into the database, which can then be imported into a mapping program.

There are myriad mapping programs. We debated between using Story Map and Google Maps. Story Map would give us broad ability to essentially make our mapping experience into a documentary, but would take more expertise and probably require hiring a professional cartographer. Google Maps was something we could learn ourselves, but would give us a much more limited product.

We started simple, with Google Maps. The Grassroots Institute, which is based on concern of the power of multinational corporations, has some qualms about using a Google product. That quandary illustrates the conundrum of trying to create a better world out of the one we live in. Since the collected data can be used in either one, we decided that we could always utilize StoryMap later.

Google maps is free to use and fairly easy to learn. There are multiple tutorials of how to use Google maps. Make sure you use one on building a Google map from a database. Below are six pointers that will help you create your map:

• You can locate organizations on your map either by street address or by latitude and longitude. At this point in your list of organizations, you probably have some with street addresses and some with only a P.O. Box or no address at all. To solve this problem we created two basic databases, one with street addresses and one without. We used a longitude coordinate to locate the list of the organizations without a street addresses out in an empty space on our map. This space could be an ocean, or an uninhabited area of land or in a neighboring region that is not part of the region you are mapping. We put ours out in the ocean. Then we differentiated the organizations on this list by giving them a separate latitude coordinate. Here is how both the map and the database look:

Organization	Longitude	Latitude
Ocean Protection Coalition	-123.85	39.45
Mendocino Children's Fund	-123.85	39.44
Move to Amend	-123.85	39.43
Whole foods, plant based diet project	-123.85	39.42
Women's Clothes Swap	-123.85	39.41

• You can import up to ten different databases into Google maps as separate layers. If you want to make a map that easily displays the organizations by Economic Sector, you can make a database and layer for each sector. If you wanted to display your organizations by structure — i.e. non-profit, B-Corporation, public agency etc., — you can make a different

layer for each structure. Or, you could organize them by Economic, Environmental, Social or Political Actions that can be differentiated by the prompts.
• Whatever layers you use, differentiate each layer with an icon—-either use stock icons provided by the software or import custom icons. Here is a list of our icons.
• Then within each layer you can style your map by organizations with labels for each organization, which will make their names show up on the map.
• When you click on an organization on your map, a pop-up box appears with all of the information you have entered in your database for that organization. The information is presented in the order of the columns in your spreadsheet. You can organize the columns in your spreadsheet to make sure that the information you want the reader to see, shows up first. This information will hopefully encourage the reader to scroll down and read the information further down the box.
• You can add photos or videos of the organization that will appear at the top of the pop-up box. You do that by clicking on the camera at the bottom of the pop-up box when you are in edit mode. You can also edit any of the information in the box by clicking on the little pencil in the bottom of the box. But beware, this only edits the information in the map's data table, it does not change anything in your database.

Preparations: Review all the above processes carefully before the workshop. Create a spreadsheet and proto-type map with some of the nominated organizations.
        You should make sure that you have Internet access, a projector and a screen in the space where you are holding the workshop, so that the database and proto-type map can be shown while you discuss all the considerations in making the database and map.
        The facilitators should discuss all of the crucial decisions that must be made around the database and the map, and brainstorm the ways you can encourage class involvement. The gist of the matter is to stimulate and consciously encourage the participants' ownership in the project

Activities: Start off with a discussion about the interviewing process. How are people doing with the process? What kind of problems are they having? Has anyone completed an interview? What was learned? What difficulties were encountered? What went well? Was the survey form useful? What specific economic, social, environmental or political actions are entities taking to build an Economy for the Common Good? How was the experience? Have they put the interviews in digital form?
        Once everyone has fully discussed the interviewing process go on to the database/map discussion. Talk about all of the decisions that have to be made here including what the map going will be used for and how to the best facilitate that outcome. Show the database and talk about how you can move columns around and sort each of the entries for different purposes. Moving on to the map, show them how the information from the database is translated onto the map. Make different layers, and highlight different styles showing how information can be formatted differently. Get input from the class on how many layers you should use or what the icons should look like. Show them how you can put photos or videos in the pop-up boxes.
        If you have extra time at the end of the workshop you can always show a video about the Solidarity Economy or the Economy for the Common Good from our list of videos. A good one for this workshop might be the one on the Evergreen co-ops in Cleveland at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gt_ZHUDhKjs
        Before the end of the workshop, make sure you leave time for announcements and hand out the questions for Workshop 7.

The day after the workshop, email everyone the list of interviews to be done and the list of questions for workshop seven. Remind them they only have a couple of weeks to get the interviews done.

Then the day before the next workshop, send a reminder email that the workshop is coming up. Remind people who have done interviews to bring their interviews to the workshop in a digital format and attach the list of questions for Workshop seven.