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**To:** ejackson@ashevillenc.gov  
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News, updates, and announcements from Code for Asheville

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## Open NC Collaborative: Brigades Working Together

North Carolina is lucky not only to have more brigades per capita than any other state, but also to have a network of strong personal relationships that connect them. On top of that, the proximity of Triangle-area brigades to one another helped foster early inter-brigade collaboration, a tradition strengthened recently by Greensboro and Asheville in their work on the [NC reentry resources hub](#). No formal state-wide association of NC brigades has existed, but there has long been a sense that such a thing might be a good idea.

On Saturday, December 9, 2017 representatives from Code for Asheville, Code for Cary, Code for Charlotte, Code for Durham, Code for Greensboro, and Code for Raleigh gathered in a snowy Greensboro to talk about whether Code for NC should be a thing and, if so, what sort of thing it should be.

And, lo, a thing we became. At 11:35 AM ET the Open NC Collaborative was formed.

The goal of Open NC is to connect, support & strengthen NC brigades and help them extend their benefits to the entire state. We want to forge deeper connections between

members of different brigades, make it easier for brigades to collaborate, and support projects like Open Data Policing and the NC Reentry Hub that extend the benefits of civic tech beyond just communities big enough to support a brigade.

Because the local brigades are the heart of the organization, we decided not to build around statewide gatherings that would necessarily limit participation by non-local brigade members. Instead, we are planning a statewide "multi-hackathon" in August, a coordinated set of local brigade hackathons with video links between them. Stay tuned for more information.

You can find more details in Jason Hibbett's [Medium post](#) after the event and the [notes from the meeting](#) itself.



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## Writing our principles and values, together... Part 2: Policy

Last month we shared [Jen Pahlka's invitation](#) to help develop the Code for America network's statement of shared values and principles. This month Jen invites us to continue that conversation by exploring whether Code for America brigades have a role in driving policy change and, if so, how?

In her [latest post](#), Jen's answer is

... yes, the vision is to not just change policy, but also to change how policy is changed, and how it is made in the first place. We are not starting with the high level policy decisions that set the goals, but rather with the details of the policies and regulations that matter so much to whether the high level policies actually achieve their outcomes ...

She goes on to [ask for help](#) figuring out how to realize that vision:

So I have a few questions to ask back to the community. What does delivery-driven policy mean to you, and what examples would you like to share? Every movement in the country is advocating for policy change; what do we bring to the table that no one else can (or conversely, that everyone else can if we share what we've learned and grow the movement?) With whom can we partner to have the greatest impact on policy?

These questions are important for Code for America, but they are just as important for Code for Asheville itself (in fact, Jen cites Code for Asheville's efforts as a example of

precisely this kind of policy work).

We'd love to hear your thoughts as well - hit us up on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#), or email us at [code4asheville@gmail.com](mailto:code4asheville@gmail.com).

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## News From the Network

### City of Asheville Open Dataset Notifications

The City of Asheville's [open data portal](#) has a rich and growing collection of data about our community and about City programs. New datasets appear on a regular basis, but until now there's not been a good way to find out what they are without reviewing the entire site regularly.

Now it's easy. The City's open data program just created a Google group mailing list for those interested in being informed whenever a new dataset is added. To subscribe, just email [open-data-notifications+subscribe@ashevilenc.gov](mailto:open-data-notifications+subscribe@ashevilenc.gov).

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### Have a Story to Share?

We'd love to have your contribution. You can write something up about a Code for Asheville event or share something else going on in the civic tech world. Email us at [code4asheville@gmail.com](mailto:code4asheville@gmail.com).

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## Upcoming events

### 1/9 Brigade Planning Meeting

Our next regular planning meeting will take place on Tuesday, January 9 at 5:30pm at the Battery Park Book Exchange. RSVP [here](#) or just stop by.

### 1/11 Monthly Community Meetup

Our next Community Night will be on Thursday, January 11, 2017 at 5:30pm, at the Stephens-Lee Recreation Center. Details to follow in the January 2 newsletter. RSVP on [meetup](#) or just show up.

Community nights occur on the second Thursday of each month at Stephens-Lee Recreation Center.

### Transportation for Seniors Hackathon (t4s) - 1/13/18

Come and explore creative information technology solutions to transportation challenges faced by the elderly. You will be working with seniors and other interested parties (government organizations, non-profits, businesses, volunteers). The Transportation for Seniors Hackathon (t4s) will take place on Saturday, January 13, 2018, from 12:30pm to 5:00pm at the Land of Sky Regional Council offices, 339 New Leicester Highway, Asheville.

Visit the [Meetup event page](#) to learn more and RSVP.

If you want to help plan for this hackathon, contact Jim March, Code for Asheville member, at [jimcmarch@yahoo.com](mailto:jimcmarch@yahoo.com).

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