



CASE STUDY

HAVEN VILLAGE, TENNESSEE

By

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Brenna St. Onge



Why? We are living in a time of system breakdown. The structures we have depended on for generations are changing rapidly and we can no longer rely on them for stability (food, healthcare, government, infrastructure etc.). As the poly-crisis (multiple crises that fuel each other) intensifies, how we organize locally to strengthen community fibers will determine our experience and well-being in the years to come.

What? Regenerative Living represents a way of living in deep connection with self, each other and the natural world. It is a paradigm shift beyond extraction, and consumption that represents a way of being, acting, governing, and living in deep harmony with nature. It is the fullest expression of self-sufficiency and resilient community design. Rather than simply mitigating future climate impacts, regenerative living seeks to enhance the vitality, abundance, and long-term health of social, economic, and ecological systems; creating the conditions for all life to thrive through holistic management.

How? The systems break down we are living through was human generated and we can recode the systems to create shared prosperity on a healthy planet. This way of living is alive all over the world, it is just not evenly distributed or widely known.

The Regenerative World Quest (Quest) is an immersive research project to study and uplift communities all over the world that are living in a regenerative way. We will explore the systems, successes, challenges, and insights to create a database of scalable solutions. How can we redesign human systems that are healthier, more resilient and holistically managed? By honoring indigenous wisdom, and modern innovations, the Quest seeks to uplift and replicate best practices to craft a blueprint for shared prosperity on a healthy planet. There are three phases to the Regenerative World Quest: 1- immersive, international research, 2- content creation and awareness building and 3- local implementation.

Who? The project was founded by Brenna St. Onge and is fiscally sponsored by Savory International, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. This case study is part of a series of ten projects researched in Costa Rica as part of the Regenerative World Quest's 2025 fieldwork.



HAVEN VILLAGE

FOUNDERS:

Imani Mamalution and Paul River Richardson

WEBSITE:

<https://havenvillage.net/>

SHORT YOUTUBE VIDEO:

Regenerative World Quest Channel [Haven Village]

and

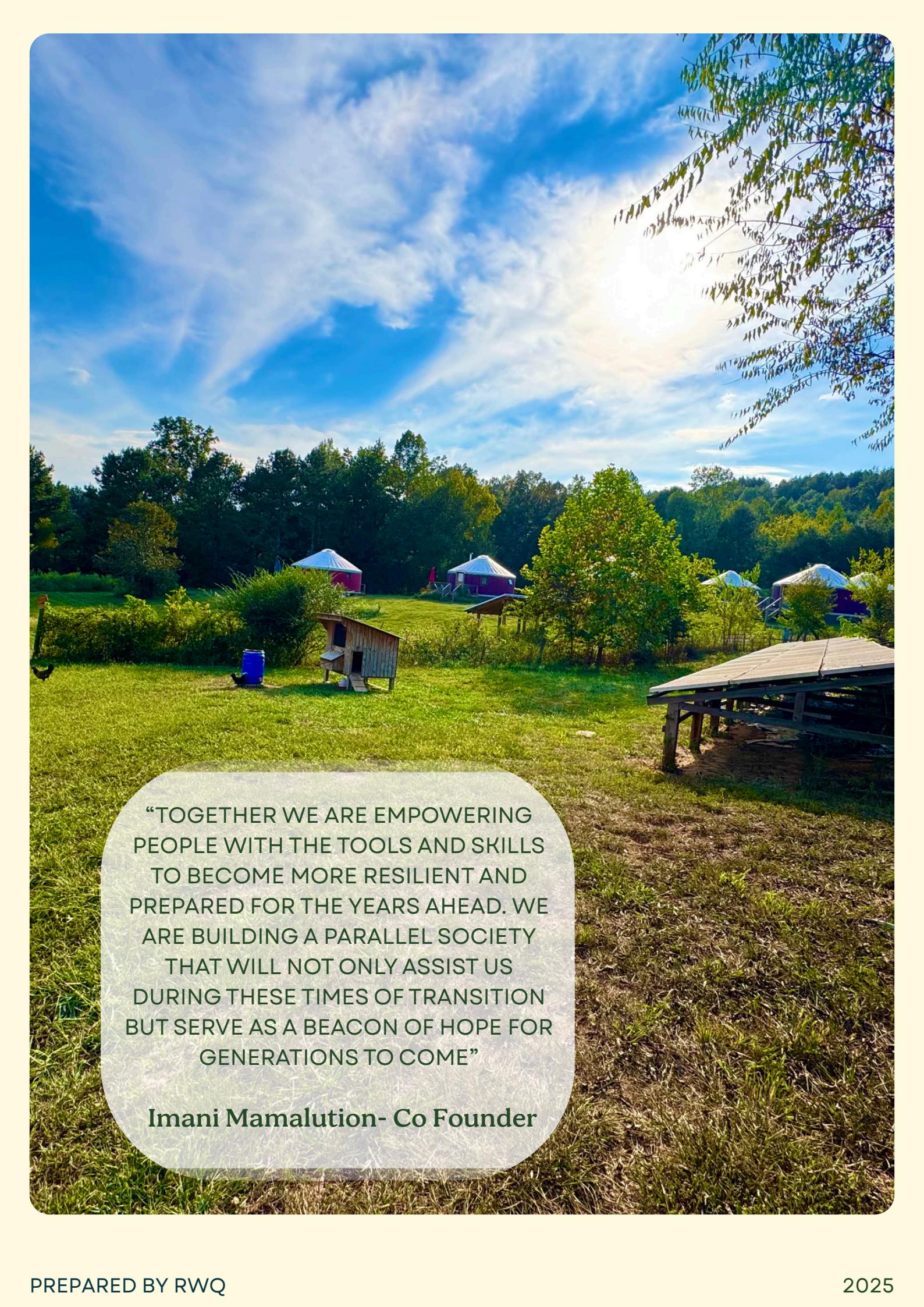
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7WbF1KAk2w>

“Haven Village (the Village) empowers and inspires a renewed model of community life grounded in a healthy connection with the land and each other”. The Village is 216 acres nestled in the national forest of South East Tennessee and deeply values sovereignty and freedom. They have set up every item from the smallest detail to the biggest vision for all its residents to live sovereign lives while remaining deeply connected to the natural world and the values-aligned community living at Haven Village. The Village is a private residential model operating as a Private Membership Association (PMA) and Ministry. This requires membership to become a resident. The land and its various neighborhoods are held in Irrevocable Trusts. Members of the PMA serve on the Legacy Board of Directors and various Councils and sub-committees that govern the community.

Haven Village represents a revolution in how we live, starting with our homes. Hemp is an ancient building material that is emerging as a truly regenerative building style. It shifts the toxic, degenerative construction process into a tool for healthy and resilient living. Hemp is mold, pest, and fire resistant. When mixed with a lime mortar it is actually self healing over the years because it is a breathing structure that is constantly regulating moisture.

The Haven Earth Trade School supports others looking to Return to the Land by teaching how to build Healthy Hemp Homes. Through the trade school the Village is building internal capacity to construct Hemp health homes within their members supported by a cadre of local trades people all this learning to resilient and crucial skill sets to build and rebuild in the years ahead. The founders of Haven Village are leading the way into regenerative construction with hemp-crete.





“TOGETHER WE ARE EMPOWERING
PEOPLE WITH THE TOOLS AND SKILLS
TO BECOME MORE RESILIENT AND
PREPARED FOR THE YEARS AHEAD. WE
ARE BUILDING A PARALLEL SOCIETY
THAT WILL NOT ONLY ASSIST US
DURING THESE TIMES OF TRANSITION
BUT SERVE AS A BEACON OF HOPE FOR
GENERATIONS TO COME”

Imani Mamalution- Co Founder

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS:

- Zoned as an 'Unrestricted Zone'
- 216 Acres
- 40 potential lots with target population around 150 people
- 20% of the land will be developed leaving 80% green spaces

SHARED AMENITIES:

- Community co-building and "hemping"
- Community gardens
- Community Livestock
- Composting areas
- Community Center & Kitchen
- Yoga and movement spaces
- Childrens play area
- Haven Trade School for hands on learning
- Solar hot tub and sauna
- Library and community kitchen with internet connection
- Glamping cabins and yurts for transitional housing



HAVEN VILLAGE SITE MAP



SOCIAL STRUCTURES, GOVERNANCE, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNITY:

The 216 acres of Haven Village is secured in private, Irrevocable Trusts. Each neighborhood is secured in a subsidiary Trust and each resident (Beneficiary) must have their own private Trust for their lot. Each Beneficiary receives a Unit of Beneficial Certificate for their specific 'right to build lot'. The PMA Committees and Councils govern and guide the daily operations and specific neighborhoods. Members are asked to serve on one council in their area of skill, or interest.

The Village was founded in 2023. In 2025 a handful of residents live in the Village along with seasonal interns and 'hempers' who come to learn the trade. The foundational elements are in place regarding economics, infrastructure, food, water, and governance. The founders have set up processes for ongoing community engagement in governance. Their goal is to have community members who join to guide the development and implementation of systems from education, to integrated healthcare as well as elder care and structures to age in place etc.

The Haven Earth Private Membership Association (PMA) runs the day to day operations. PMAs provide opportunities for members to pursue and protect their interests while enjoying benefits of community life and services that Haven Village offers. In general PMAs offer more privacy and sovereignty allowing members to have more autonomy in how they live their lives without government regulations. It is sovereign land governed by the PMA to meet the needs and wants of its members.

The community frequently enjoys meals together, shared farm days, group 'hemping' and Sundays at the "Hemple". The trade school offers a vibrant hands-on learning and demonstration center attracting students from all over the world.



LAND REGENERATION EFFORTS AND MEASUREMENTS:

- 80% of the 216 acres saved as green space.
- **Vastu Sastra and Permaculture Design Principles** implemented in the Master Plan to optimize building placement, water, and sunlight.
- Regenerative farming boosts soil health, biodiversity, and water retention.
- Planted 30 trees in first two years with a goal to plant 100 more.
- Thanks to the praetorships through the RWQ they will receive 6 ancient Redwoods and 6 ancient Sequoias from the Archangel Tree Project to aid in the reforestation.



FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY:

- They currently supply 80% of their own protein (cows, chickens, rabbits, goats) and some produce.
- The goal for the Village is 90% food self-sufficiency via on-site production.
- "Agrihood" model provides a source of fresh, healthy food for residential members while teaching the necessary skills to ensure food sovereignty for generations to come.
- Local farm partnerships are in place to supplement food supply (near by Mennonite market pictured to the right above).
- The barn, commercial kitchen, hoop houses, seed bank, food storage walk-in cooler have solar power backup in place.

WATER MANAGEMENT:

- Haven Village is on well water and is exploring innovative water solutions.
- Rainwater catchment systems in place for community and residential units.
- There are three ponds providing ability for future water harvesting.
- The Village utilizes swale and terrace design to slow and spread water through the landscape.
- Key community areas are backed up with gravity fed water tanks.



REGENERATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Healthy Living:** Hempcrete allows water vapor to pass, creating a healthy airflow that reduces the build-up of potentially toxic gasses indoors and mold development. It also blocks EMFs.
- **Carbon Negative:** Hemp plants rapidly sequester CO₂ during growth, and when combined with a lime binder in hempcrete, the material locks it away for the building's lifetime, making it a carbon-negative building solution.
- **Highly Sustainable Source:** Hemp is a fast-growing, renewable crop (matures in 3-4 months) that requires minimal water/pesticides and regenerates soil health.
- **Natural Air Regulation (Hygroscopic):** Hempcrete is breathable (hygroscopic), actively regulating indoor humidity and moisture, which prevents mold, rot, and pest development and ensures a healthy indoor air quality.
- **Hemp is Regenerative:** It provides an efficient insulation system that regulates indoor environments. Because of its hygroscopic nature, it is also self healing and can reseal its own cracks.
- **Durable & Resilient:** The material is naturally fire-resistant, non-toxic, and durable, contributing to a longer, healthier building life.
- **Circular & Zero-Waste Potential:** At the end of its life, hempcrete is non-toxic and biodegradable, allowing it to be safely composted or reused/recycled as aggregate.

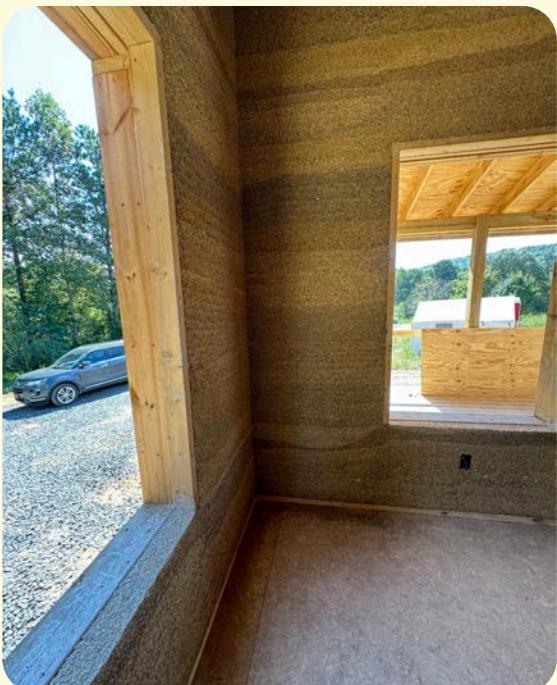


RESOURCE FLOWS AND CIRCULARITY:

- Hempcrete is made from the stalks of the hemp plant, usually a waste product. At the end of its life, it is biodegradable, allowing it to be safely composted or reused/recycled.
- Hemp and lime are regenerative building materials, see 'Regenerative Infrastructure' above.
- The Village does not have community recycling, but encourages personal recycling, minimal waste practices, and composting via the animals and gardens.
- The Yurts and common areas have Composting Toilets.
- Haven residents are encouraged to develop aligned business models with a focus on serving the Village residents creating a community economy, encouraging entrepreneurship with and without the members.

ENERGY:

- Haven Village is connected to the local grid. There is no master plan for switching to renewable energy at this time.
- Main community spaces are backed up with 15 KW of solar and battery storage.
- Residents are invited to consider solar for their own lots.



CARBON FOOTPRINT REDUCTION: MEASUREMENT:

- The Village is not actively measuring their footprint but they do have multiple practices detailed in this case study to sequester carbon.

SOCIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION:

- Learning and connecting with local residents, farmers and leaders has been a priority since its founding and the locals lovingly refer to it as “The Village”.
- The founders created the “Got Your Back” (or GYB) initiative with partnerships in the local area to support each other (work trades, gear trades, volunteer days, bail outs in hard times etc).
- The Haven Earth Trade School is an educational model offering a fellowship, work-trade program to a diverse group of global learners providing valuable knowledge and resiliency skills for the future.
- The Village is debt free and is seeking members who come with full cash liquidity to join. This is a key self-sufficiency strategy and will be a barrier for some to join. They are looking into internal financing options, but loans for financing from banks will not be accepted.
- They offer transitional housing for future residents to live in during the design and build of their home for a fee.
- Haven Village is growing their own economy while also investing in local partnerships for the surrounding economy as well.



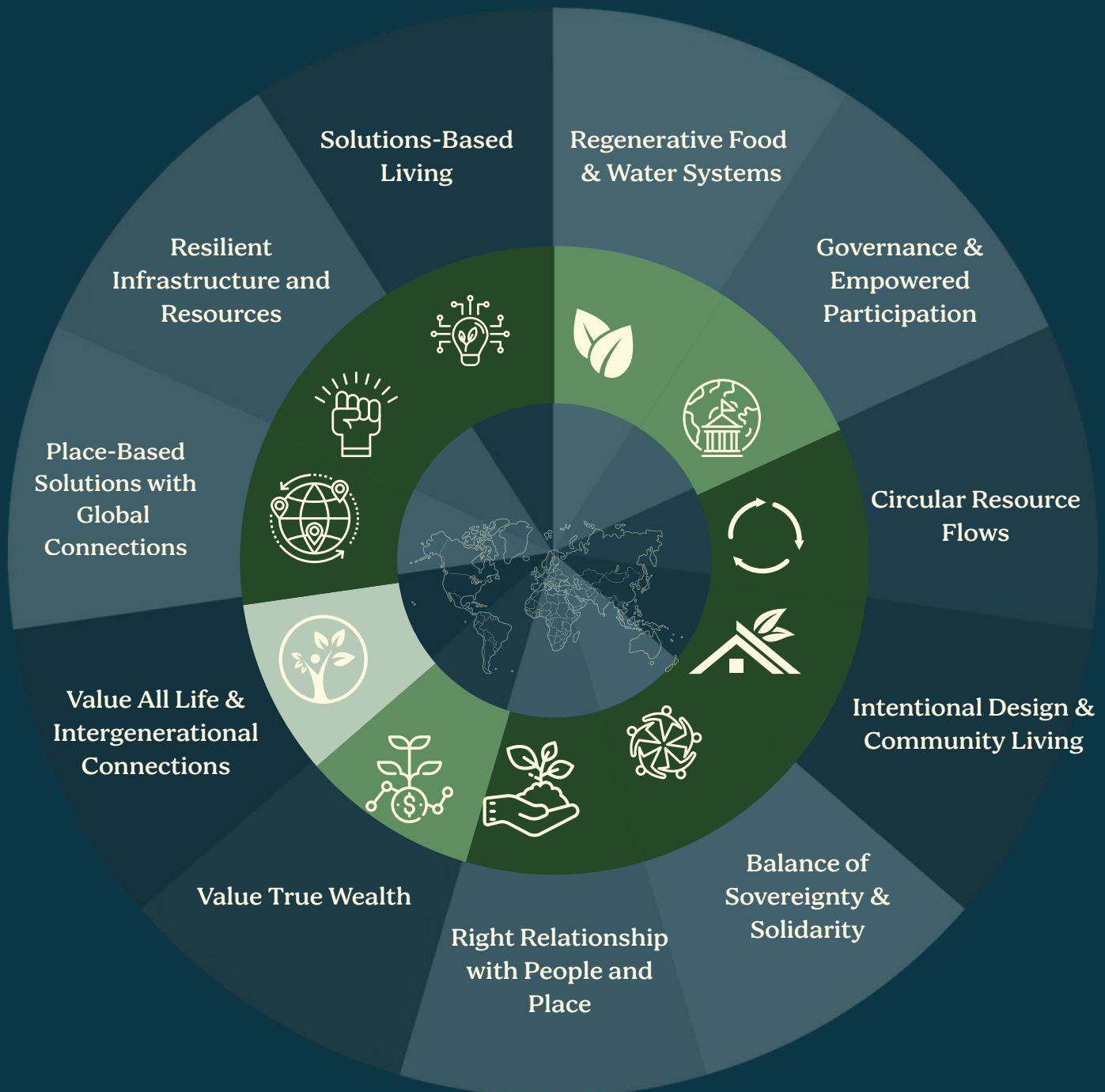


“I HAVE BEEN TO HUNDREDS
OF ‘ECOVILLAGES’ AND
INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES.
HAVEN VILLAGE IS SO UNIQUE
IN HOW THEY BUILD. NO ONE
IS DOING WHAT THEY DO. IT
IS WHAT DREW ME IN AND IT
IS WHY I AM CALLING IT
HOME!

Nikko-
Started as worktrade, now resident

HAVEN VILLAGE

REGENERATIVE ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT



Key

Not Present

In Progress

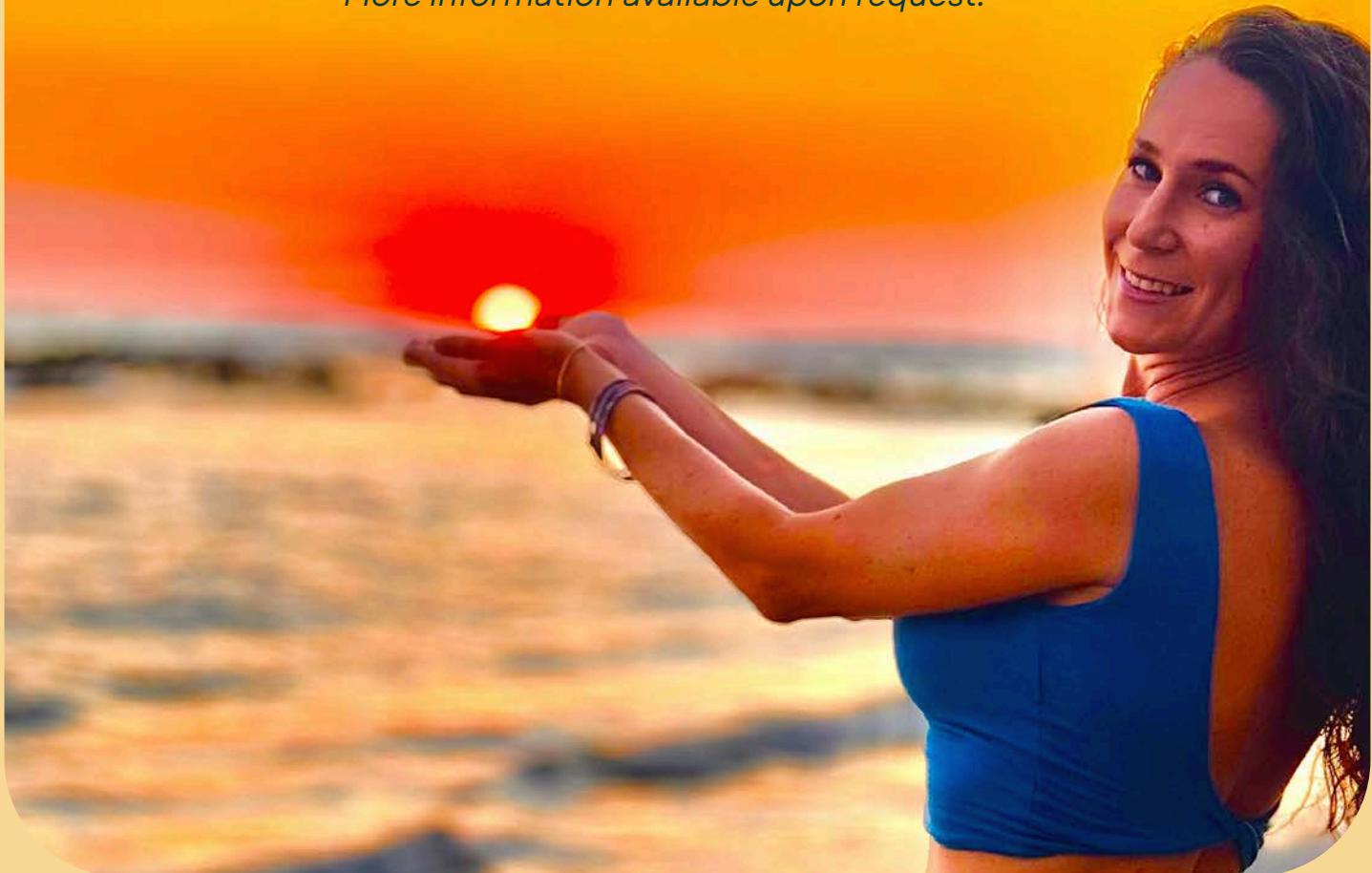
Operational

Thriving

A NOTE ABOUT THE ASSESSMENT:

There are many ways to assess communities. Each person must identify their own best use case. This assessment was created by studying leading regenerative frameworks and mapping them to regenerative living (defined on page one) and holistic management. The community's ability to maintain a thriving lifestyle if/when global supply chains are interrupted is a key element in all areas. Aspects of community life and culture are essential parts of resiliency, as well as food, water, education, healthcare and infrastructure systems etc. The Quest has a weighted numerical scale to assess each project which provides the qualitative and quantitative data behind the assessment.

More information available upon request.



REGENERATIVE ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT DEFINITIONS AND HAVEN VILLAGE SCORING



Regenerative Food and Water Systems: farming as a service to restore landscapes, connect people with nature and provide a healthy and holistic diet in a way that restores the carbon cycle, builds soil, heals watersheds and ecosystems. Healthy soils=healthy communities.

Haven Village's score here is **Operational**. Their goal is to get as close to 100% food self-sufficiency as possible. Currently they provide most of their own livestock (80-90%), some dairy and produce (40-50%). Local partnerships are in place with other farmers to supplement what they do not produce themselves. Water catchment systems are in place and gravity-fed, back up tanks supply key community zones. As they continue to produce more and more of their food their score has the potential to increase.



Communal structures for **Governance** that enable **empowered participation** by all in the ecosystem through transparent and just decision making, holistic management, distributed authority with clear delineation of duties and responsibilities.

Haven Village's score here is **Operational**. The PMA governance system is well thought out and organized, but in practice with only a handful of residents. It has the potential to reach a Thriving score as the community grows and the well thought out systems are fully activated. The PMA model centers on sovereign governance by members through committees, and liability blockers through layered land trusts.





Circular Resource Flows (energy, water, trash, recycling, compost, information etc.) where there is no waste, no extraction and all elements from one system can be inputs into another system. Communities are designed to not just minimize but neutralize and heal any negative impact to the land and surrounding areas, while flourishing economically.

Haven Village's score here is **Thriving**. They are a leading example of regenerative building, circular resource and economic flows. The hemp stalk is traditionally agricultural waste and is used to build the homes. On-site food production and composting are established, and the transitional housing units have composting toilets or verma-composting. The Haven Trade School serves as a foundation for circular economics as members join together to learn the skills and help build each other's homes. Members are encouraged to develop business models with a 'resident' first customer mentality without limiting opportunities to outside business.



Intentional Design and Community Living by which individuals in the community can share living, working and communal space that honors place and people while holding appropriate boundaries for the unique needs of each individual and the community through holistic management.

Haven Village's score here is **Thriving** as the governing team emphasizes sovereign living with community cohesion. Shared amenities provide spaces to gather, residents co-create community infrastructure and engage in collective projects, events, workshops and education. Different community neighborhoods have been intentionally designed with permaculture principles tying the entire 216 acres together. Each lot and home site comes with design guidelines for coherence while enabling each member to live true to themselves.



Balance of Sovereignty and Solidarity where the good of the community does not come at the cost of an individual and the good of the individual does not impair the community at large.

Haven Village's score here is **Thriving** as one of their key values is sovereign living through financial freedom and community governance in the PMA model. Residence can engage in both strategic and day to day decision making via the committee structure. Shared amenities and events help to bring cohesion and celebrate a diversity of culture and economic flows.



Right Relationship to Place and People is living through love of place, honoring its history, people and ecology. Living this way heals the land, as the inhabitants view their relationship to earth as deeply connected to the web of life and act as stewards to protect and honor our collective home. It heals the community as well by honoring the ancestral lands, indigenous wisdom and presence in the region. Symbiotic relationships with local communities are key examples of Right Relationship.

Haven Village's score here is **Thriving** as there is a deep respect for people and place. They started the "Got Your Back" (GYB) network with neighbors outside the Village to care for each other. They are affectionately known in the region as "The Village" and have brought diversified trade skills and economic opportunities to the region through the Haven Trade School. The community has a shared ethos as stewards of the natural world and are creating systems for thriving based on this value. Connections with indigenous leaders in the area is unclear.



Valuing True Wealth where money and finance are not the end goals. Wealth is defined as quality of life, a sense of belonging, purpose and meaning and all resources are holistically managed.

Haven Village's score here is **Operational** as they value wealth beyond finances while also living as a debt free community. With no outside investors, financial flows stay within the community, and they are creating economic pathways for members to support each other. Members must be able to self-fund their own project or secure private lending as no public lending/financing is accepted. While this is a benefit to most, it will limit who is able to call Haven Village home. Real wealth is valued in healing the land, growing food and caring for one another.



Value all life and the contributions to the larger ecosystem where communities treat both the youth and the elderly with respect and intentionally create cross-generational connections. The value of ecosystem services are revered and service roles (teaching, health care, youth and elderly care etc.) are respected and valued.

Haven Village's score here is **In Progress** as they are looking to create an intergenerational community. Youth and elder care programs will be shaped by future residents. Several workshops and educational programs around 'hemping' bring a diverse age of visitors. This is an expressed value that is yet to be actualized. Given the timeline of the project this score will likely increase as intergenerational members join and programs/offerings blossom.



Resilient Infrastructure and Resources The necessary skills, resources and infrastructure to sustain life are within the community, from growing food to energy production, to building shelters and water systems, education, health care, community economic systems, arts, and entertainment etc. Focus on sourcing locally with little to no reliance on global supply chains.

Haven Village's score here is **Thriving** due to their unique and regenerative building methods with hemp and lime. The community has a robust skill set internally to build and/or rebuild as needed and is training more on this skill through their onsite trade school. Food and water autonomy are advancing, and land management supports ecosystem resilience. The Village is grid connected, and residents can add solar if they want. Main power and water to the key community area is on solar back up, but there is no grid back up for the entire project.



Place-Based Solutions with Global Connections While knowledge, connections, and sharing are connected globally; solutions, actions and projects are nuanced for local culture and climate, led by people from the area and living in the community.

Haven Village's score here is **Thriving**. The founders have both global and local connections. They are applying leading practices in regenerative building and are developing partnerships to grow this work regionally and internationally. The Haven Earth Trade school is attracting students from around the world to stay with them while learning how to "hemp".



Solutions Based Living whereby the simple act of HOW the community lives is a solution to climate change, inequality, injustice, violence and greed. It is not about telling others how to live, rather living the solutions in day to day lives as a model.

Haven Village's score here is **Thriving**. Haven Village reflects a systems-level shift in how people can live regeneratively with a focus on building healthy homes, sovereign governance, circular economics and regenerative food systems.





THANK YOU

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