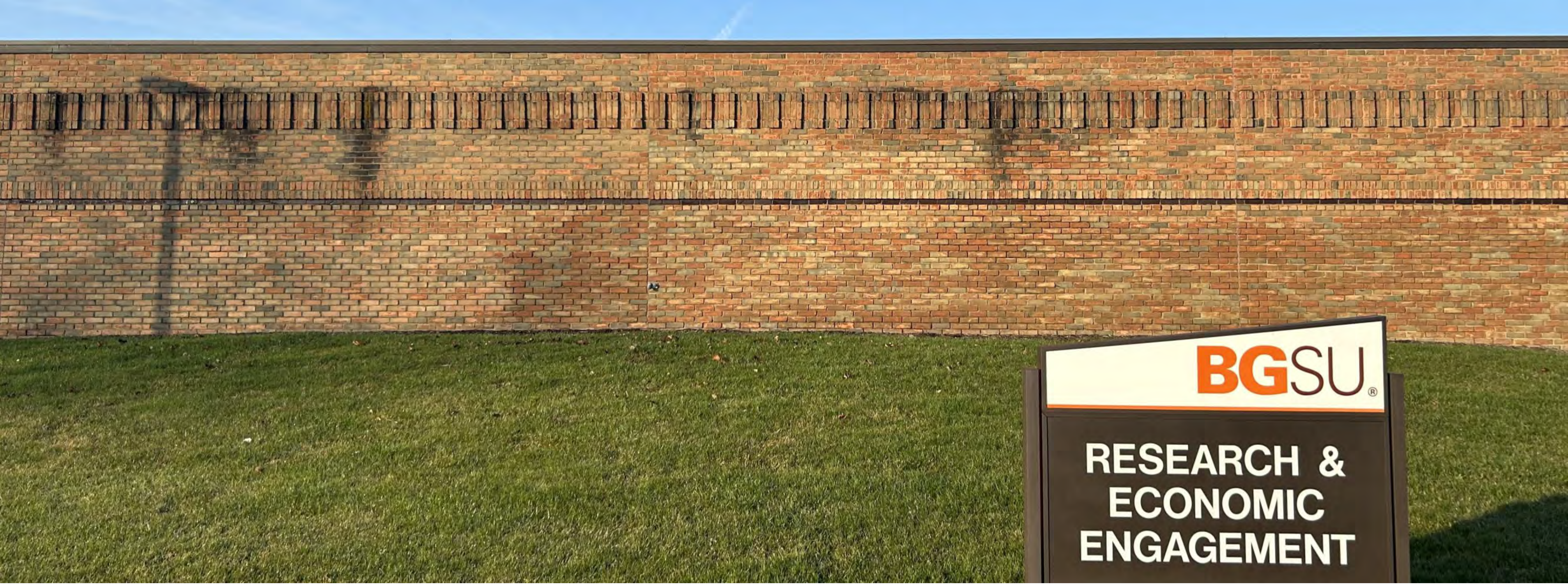
BGSU®

NADO Annual *Training Conference*

Dr. Nichole Fifer | Melissa Hopfer | Lisa Lawson


BGSU
RESEARCH & ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT

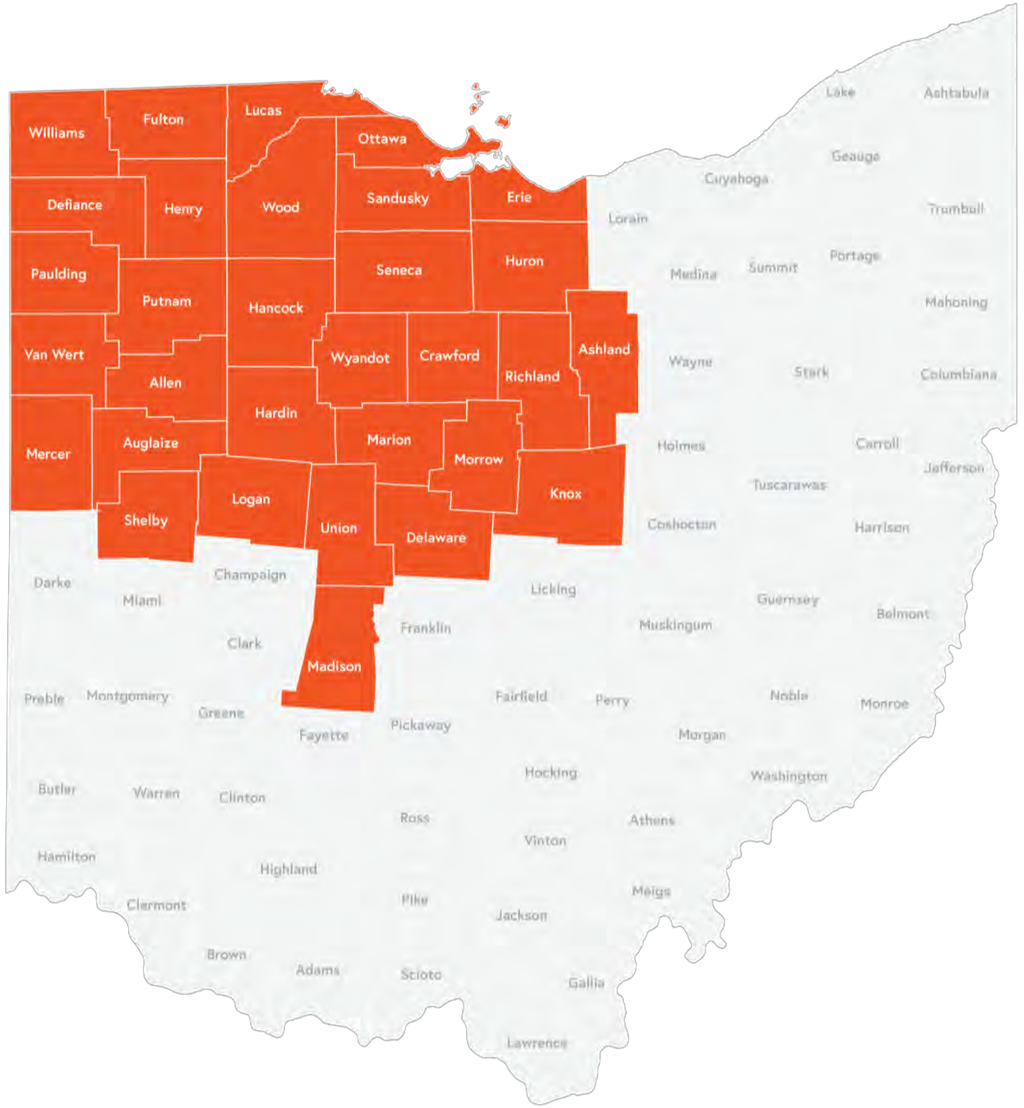
Overview *of CRD*

About CRD

The Center for Regional Development at BGSU us a community asset with expertise in regional economic, workforce, and community development serving 31 counties in northwest Ohio.

CRD is a capacity builder and trusted partner:

- Cutting-edge economic and demographic data analysis and visualization
- Economic and community development project and grant development
- Neutral and well-respected convener of planning processes
- Social service and education program evaluation
- Applied research including original survey research
- Thought-leadership through annual State of the Region Conference



Williams
Fulton
Lucas
Ottawa
Lake
Ashtabula
Defiance
Henry
Wood
Sandusky
Erie
Geauga
Cuyahoga
Lorain
Trumbull
Paulding
Putnam
Hancock
Seneca
Huron
Medina
Summit
Portage
Mahoning
Van Wert
Allen
Wyandot
Crawford
Richland
Ashland
Wayne
Stark
Columbiana
Hardin
Mercer
Auglaize
Marion
Morrow
Holmes
Carroll
Jefferson
Tuscarawas
Knox
Logan
Shelby
Union
Delaware
Coshocton
Harrison
Darke
Miami
Champaign
Licking
Guernsey
Belmont
Franklin
Muskingum
Clark
Madison
Preble
Montgomery
Greene
Fayette
Pickaway
Fairfield
Perry
Noble
Monroe
Morgan
Hocking
Washington
Butler
Warren
Clinton
Ross
Athens
Vinton
Hamilton
Highland
Clermont
Pike
Jackson
Meigs
Brown
Adams
Scioto
Gallia
Lawrence

Ohio Rural Universities Program

BGSU
KENT STATE UNIVERSITY
MIAMI UNIVERSITY
OXFORD, OH • EST. 1809
1804
OHIO UNIVERSITY

Technical assistance for economic and community development projects including grant application development

Data & analytics to support community planning processes

Funding for the R3 Program

EDA University Center Program

- Partnership with Ohio University (Rural University Consortium)
- Provide technical assistance for community, economic, and workforce development projects across 31 counties in northwest Ohio
- CARES Act Award provided initial funding for the R3 Program

Funding for the R3 Program

Committed to the future of rural communities.

USDA Rural Development Placemaking Innovation Challenge

- Builds on the initial R3 funding from the CARES Act
- 2022 represents the second cohort of R3 communities
- Funding period: October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2023

IF NOT NOW THEN WHEN?
HISTORIC MAIN STREET VAN WERT
TWO HOUR PARKING 8AM-4:30PM
Van Wert County Foundation

Overview of the *R3 Program*

What is Placemaking?

> “
>
> The process of creating quality places that people want to live, work, play, and learn in
>
> – Michigan State University Land Policy Institute Placemaking Tool

> “Placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value
>
> – Project for Public Spaces

> “
>
> Transformative Placemaking supports vibrant and connected local economic ecosystems, restructuring of the built environment to advance health and sustainable communities, prioritizes a cohesive social environment, and supports local governance and civic structures to confront challenges and inequalities facing their communities

– Anne T. and Robert M. Bass Center for Transformative Placemaking, Brookings Institution

Reimagining Rural Regions (R3) Program

- Small and rural communities face significant challenges in attracting and retaining jobs and workers.
- Workers are making decisions on where they will live based on the amenities, assets, and experiences available in communities where they feel they can lead interesting, meaningful lives
- Rural communities have a unique opportunity to position themselves to compete for workers by identifying their existing assets and investing in new amenities and experiences that create an interesting, unique sense of place in their communities.

R3 Program Objectives

Objective #1

Facilitate deep, on-going public engagement and partnership development within communities to build capacity for placemaking projects

Create a unique sense of place that enhances the quality of life of residents to assist in talent attraction and retention efforts

Objective #2

Assist in the development of a comprehensive placemaking strategy for each community

Identify existing assets or amenities to expand or reimagine as well as gaps in assets and amenities

Synthesize the input gathered during the public engagement process

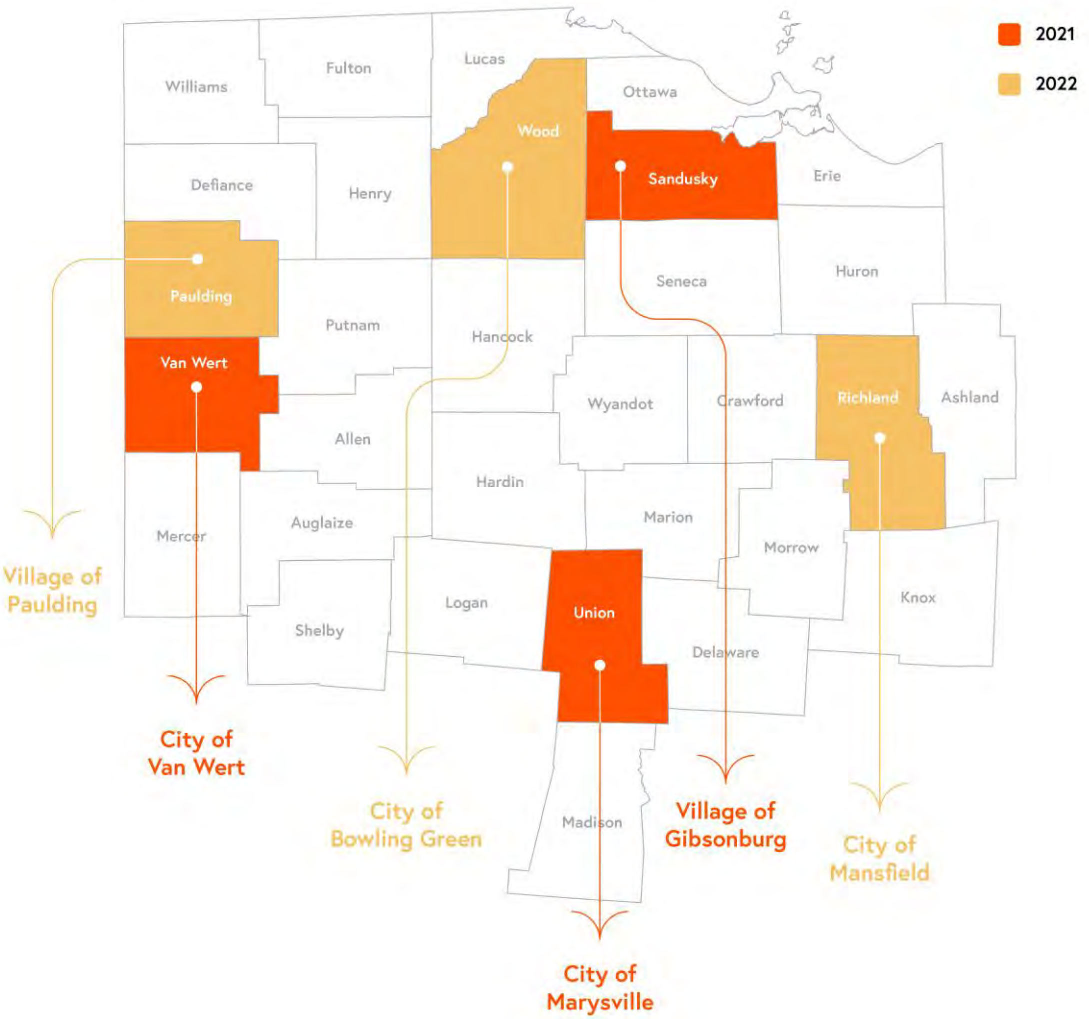
Prioritize placemaking projects and outline an implementation strategy for each project.

Objective #3

Provide initial capacity through BGSU students and staff to assist communities with implementation of priority placemaking projects.

Provide students with meaningful applied learning experiences.

R3 Communities


2021
2022
Williams
Fulton
Lucas
Ottawa
Wood
Sandusky
Erie
Defiance
Henry
Paulding
Putnam
Hancock
Seneca
Huron
Van Wert
Allen
Wyandot
Crawford
Richland
Ashland
Mercer
Auglaize
Hardin
Marion
Morrow
Knox
Shelby
Logan
Union
Delaware
Madison
Village of Paulding
City of Van Wert
City of Bowling Green
Village of Gibsonburg
City of Mansfield
City of Marysville

R3 Program Application Criteria

Applications were evaluated using the following criteria

- Capacity of community to work collaboratively with CRD to implement the objectives of R3
- Demonstrated need for placemaking, beautification, talent retention/attraction, and/or economic development efforts
- Potential of the community to identify and implement successful placemaking projects
- Commitment of applicant organization to assist in leading the placemaking process and project implementation
- Ability of placemaking process and project(s) to improve economic and workforce development conditions

R3 Program Interview Process

- Following the review of applications, CRD conducts in-person interviews and site visits with applicant communities selected as finalists.
- Site visits include stops at potential or existing community project sites and a meeting with partners/organizations identified in the application.

PaCE Fellows Training Program

BGSU undergraduate students were selected to serve as Placemaking & Community Engagement (PaCE) Fellows

PaCE Fellows undertook a paid 16-week training program led by R3 graduate students and the R3 program manager. PaCE Fellows learned about:

- Economic and community engagement
- Placemaking and the arts
- Public engagement and meeting facilitation
- Surveying and data analysis

R3 Program Timeline

Spring Year 1: Application process & community selection

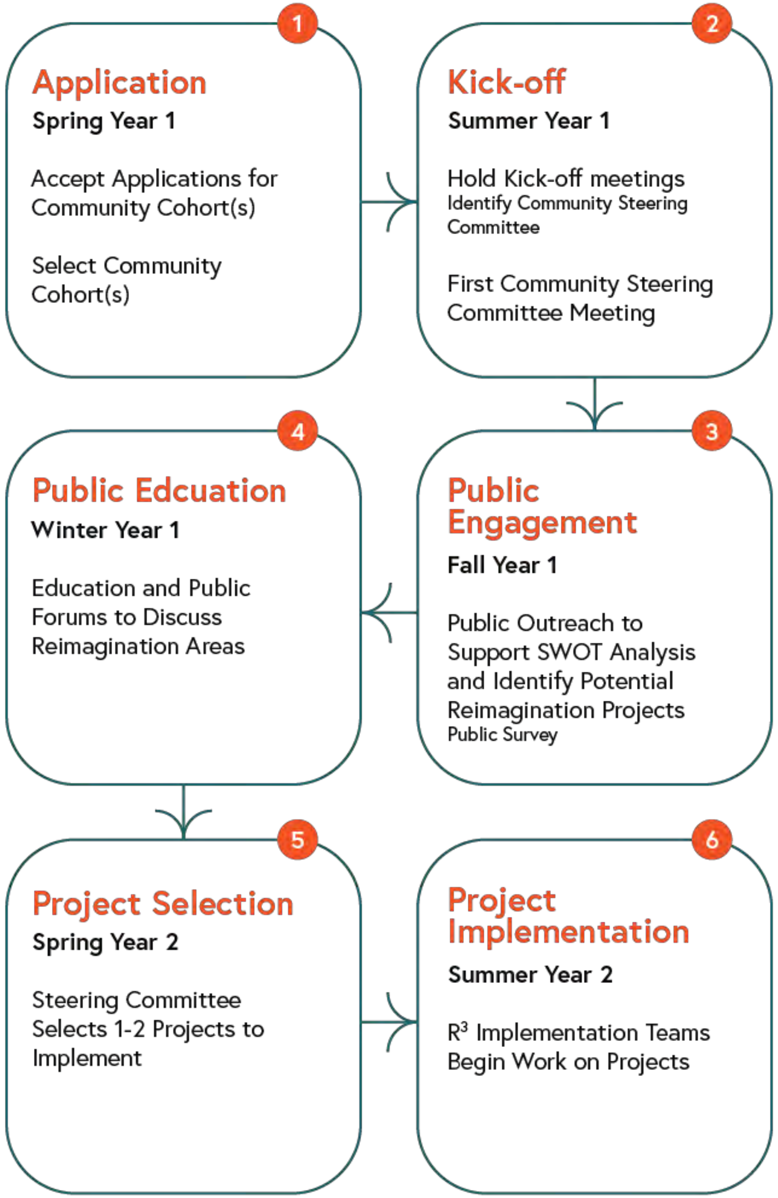
Summer Year 1: Kick-off meeting & steering committee development

Fall Year 1: Public engagement to develop SWOT analysis & identify potential community projects

Winter Year 1: Public engagement to discuss community projects

Spring Year 2: Steering committee selects projects for further development

Summer Year 2: PaCE Fellows and graduate students move project(s) toward implementation



1

Application

Spring Year 1

Accept Applications for Community Cohort(s)

Select Community Cohort(s)

2

Kick-off

Summer Year 1

Hold Kick-off meetings

Identify Community Steering Committee

First Community Steering Committee Meeting

3

Public Engagement

Fall Year 1

Public Outreach to Support SWOT Analysis and Identify Potential Reimagination Projects

Public Survey

4

Public Edcuation

Winter Year 1

Education and Public Forums to Discuss Reimagination Areas

5

Project Selection

Spring Year 2

Steering Committee Selects 1-2 Projects to Implement

6

Project Implementation

Summer Year 2

R^3 Implementation Teams Begin Work on Projects

FALCONS
500
MARBLES!
Gazebo

Community Placemaking Strategic Plan

Which includes:

- Results of public engagement efforts
- Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, & threats (SWOT) analysis
- Analysis of proposed community projects and next steps
- Identification of funding sources for potential projects
- ArcGIS StoryMaps

The Community Placemaking Strategic Plan will serve as a starting point for the projects identified by the community

Community Capacity Building Projects

- CRD will work to identify and assemble BGSU students and faculty teams to assist the community in determining ways to implement the placemaking projects in the Summer of the 2nd year
- Examples of community capacity building projects may include feasibility studies, background research, benchmarking/best practices research, and initial project design

Feasibility studies

Background research on grant opportunities

Benchmarking, best practices, and models

Project design

Community Capacity Building Projects

- Examples of projects selected by R3 communities include:
  - Partnership models and financial viability of a joint YMCA/Community Recreation Center
  - Public engagement and identification of grant funding to better utilize the county fairground as a hub for family friendly activities & events
  - Designing public uses and amenities for a remediated brownfield (former gas station)
  - Models for a public-private partnership to provide recreational kayaking at a local quarry
  - Identification of challenges to downtown business owners with keeping more traditional hours and suggesting mitigation strategies
  - Development of a way-finding strategy
  - Creation of a plan for public art

RICHLAND CARROUSEL PARK

IF NOT NOW THEN WHEN?
HISTORIC MAIN STREET VAN WERT
TWO HOUR PARKING 8AM-4:30PM
Van Wert County Foundation
MAIN STREET

Village of *Paulding Process*

Community Engagement

Task #1
Interviews

- Hispanic residents
- Educators
- Seniors of Paulding

Task #2
Focus Groups

- Kiwanis club
- Young professionals
- Coffee talk group

Task #3
Community Survey

- Collect greater community feedback
- Identified more of Paulding's assets and needs

Placemaking Plan for Paulding

Promoting Public Art in the Village of Paulding

- Benefits of public art
- Placemaking and public art planning
- Step 1: Project preparation
- Call for artists
- Step 2: Project implementation
- Step 3: Public education and engagement
- Community engagement processes
- Art installation signage
- One the Square Arts Festival
- Art competitions
- Paulding art guide and map
- Artist talks and workshops
- Step 4: Preservation of the art
- Public art examples
- Murals
- Sculptures
- Community art installations
- Performance art
- Art in nature

Placemaking Plan for Paulding

Parks & Trails

Based on the community survey and other feedback, the local parks department is working on a plan to connect trials and replace a pedestrian foot bridge.

They are also making improvements at the reservoir to make it more walkable.

MAKE YOUR MARK
ON PAULDING
WITH YOUR ART!
VBS

Community Engagement

We also conducted outreach at a large community event to educate community members about public art and collect names of potential volunteers if the project came to fruition.

1833
BOWLING GREEN
ACE Hardwa
For Keeps

City of Bowling Green
Downtown Forward

Community Engagement Process

August – September 2022

Formation of Plans & Committees

On August 2, 2022, the CRD and the Downtown Forward core team met to begin the R3 process. The teams discussed multiple topics. First, they identified and assembled a 16-member steering committee to lead the placemaking process. Second, they devised a strategy to integrate R3 into the Heritage 2025 project. The teams announced their collaboration during a Downtown Forward kickoff event on September 6, 2022.

October 18–20, 2022

Community Feedback Session

On September 27, 2022, the steering committee decided to hold two community feedback sessions to start the public engagement process. The first session was held the morning of Tuesday, October 18, 2022. The second session was held during the evening on Thursday, October 20, 2022. CRD asked attendees to attach stickers to posters set up around the room, noting their most and least favorite parts of BG. After brief introductions to the R3 program and process, the citizens were split into groups to discuss various placemaking topics.

November 28, 2022 – February 9, 2023

Focus Groups

After the CRD presented its findings from the community feedback sessions to the steering committee, members began narrowing down areas they felt were most important to the public and the groups they would like to interview for further insight. Ultimately, the CRD performed eight focus groups, including BGSU Thompson Scholars, BG High School students, downtown business owners, the BG Rotary Club, downtown property owners, the Aktion Club, the BGSU Undergraduate Senate, and downtown residents.

February 15 – March 15, 2023

Community Survey

After discussions about the focus group results involving the R3 members, the steering committee, and the Downtown Forward core team, the CRD released a community-wide survey on February 15, 2023. It was open for one month until March 15, 2023, and received 1,092 responses, with 991 people answering at least one question.

April 20, 2023

Survey Results & Project Decisions

The CRD met with the Downtown Forward steering committee to finalize project ideas. From the survey results, the groups decided to create a pedestrian experience plan that, in detail, outlines projects within the topics of alley beautification, public art, and signage/wayfinding for Bowling Green to consider to enhance its downtown.

BOWLING GREEN

Pedestrian Experience Plan

Monday, Sept. 18, 2023

BG
CITY OF BOWLING GREEN OHIO

DOWNTOWN FORWARD

BGSU. Center for Regional Development
BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

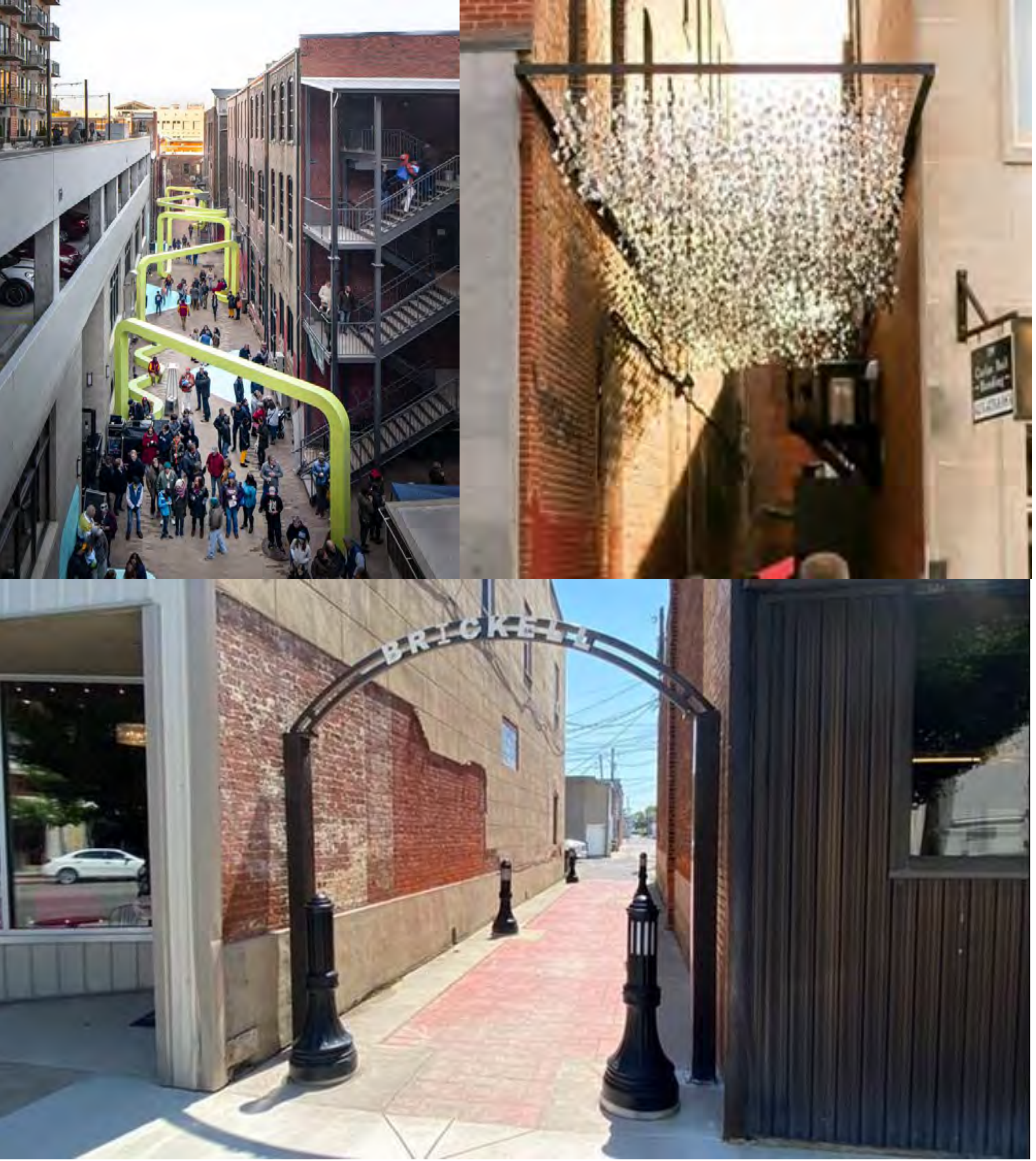
Pedestrian Experience Plan Focus Areas

Alley Beautification | Public Art | Signage/Wayfinding

Case Studies

- Community population
- Project description
- Project cost
- Funding source
- Time to complete
- Project background
- Project partners
- Planning process overview
- Regulatory considerations
- Positive outcomes
- Lessons learned

Downtown Forward Community Feedback Session, October 28, 2022



Alley Beautification

Case Studies

City Thread – Chattanooga, TN

- A space featuring murals painted on the enclosing walls of the alley surrounded by unique planters and seating for restaurants & bars.

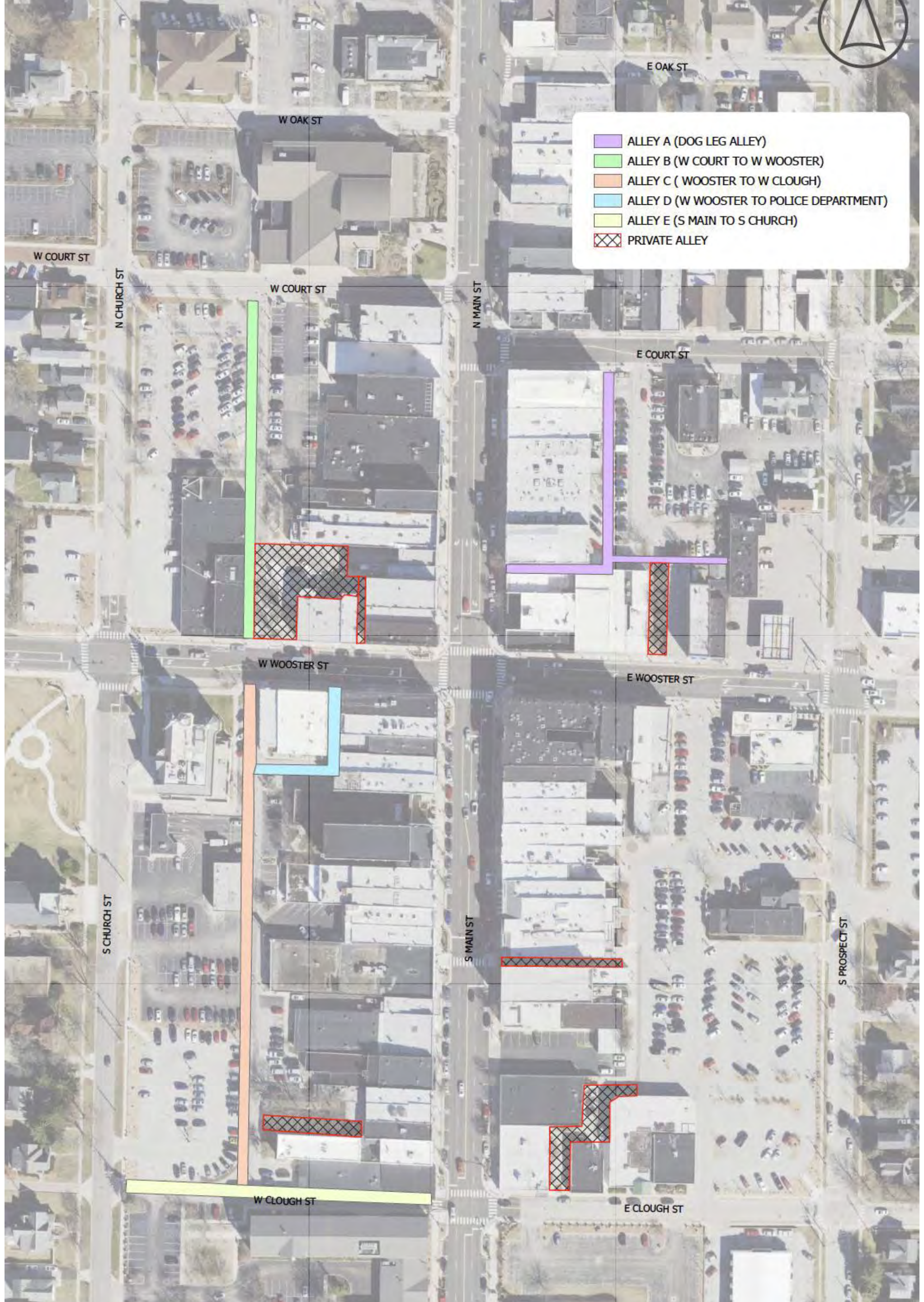
Passageways 2.0 – Chattanooga, TN

- Temporary, interactive art pieces set up throughout the central business district.

Alley Arches – Defiance, OH

- A series of four archways that serve as a gateway too pedestrian paths connecting downtown infrastructure.

Alley Inventory


E OAK ST
W OAK ST
W COURT ST
W COURT ST
N CHURCH ST
N MAIN ST
E COURT ST
W WOOSTER ST
E WOOSTER ST
S CHURCH ST
S MAIN ST
S PROSPECT ST
W CLOUGH ST
E CLOUGH ST
ALLEY A (DOG LEG ALLEY)
ALLEY B (W COURT TO W WOOSTER)
ALLEY C (WOOSTER TO W CLOUGH)
ALLEY D (W WOOSTER TO POLICE DEPARTMENT)
ALLEY E (S MAIN TO S CHURCH)
PRIVATE ALLEY

Alley Conditions

Alley A – Dog Leg Alley

Undergoing development through neighborhood group. Alley west of Insomnia Cookies was renovated around 20 years ago and features a community mural.

Private Alley (Connected to Alley A) – Neighboring Insomnia Cookies

Significant development. This portion frequently features student groups selling food for fundraisers, live music, and a community mural along the west side of the alley.

Alley B – West Wooster to West Court St.

Local business and building owners are working on development along the West Wooster side of the alley.

Private Alley (Connected to Alley B) – North Side of W. Wooster (by Call of the Canyon Café

Features parking for local businesses and walkways from the main parking lot. Development in this portion has been dependent on the businesses that occupy the space, with some outdoor seating featured behind the bars in the area that is mainly utilized by staff, not the public.

Alley C – West Wooster & West Clough St.

This alley also features outdoor seating for local businesses. Alley entrance on W. Clough could also benefit from additional development.

Alley D – West Wooster to Police Department

Alley is mainly used by businesses and features private parking. Alley has had a history of trash and smell-related complaints.

Alley E – South Main to South Church

Could benefit from additional development. On the edge of the downtown core but still surrounded by local businesses.

Private Alley – Mini Mall Walkway (Parallel to Alley E)

Alley is maintained by private owners but could use upkeep for enhanced safety due to the natural brick base that surrounds the space and narrow walkway.

Private Alley – Neighboring Juniper & Becketts

Alley has maintained significant upkeep by the surrounding businesses. The space features murals and a metal staircase that is a popular spot for pictures.

Private Alley – Public Parking Lot to Clough St.

Limited development. The area is mainly utilized by neighboring businesses for parking.

The Plant Library
THE MURAL GALLERY
T Wilson

Mr Moon
Savannah Garrett
1st Place

Public Art

Case Studies

Mural Gallery – Gahanna, OH

- An abandoned car wash transformed into an art gallery by local artist Matt Roberson.

Greene Children's Art Competition - Xenia, OH

- An art competition held by the Greene County Library and Greene County Juvenile Courts to promote the artistic talent of students.

Signage/Wayfinding

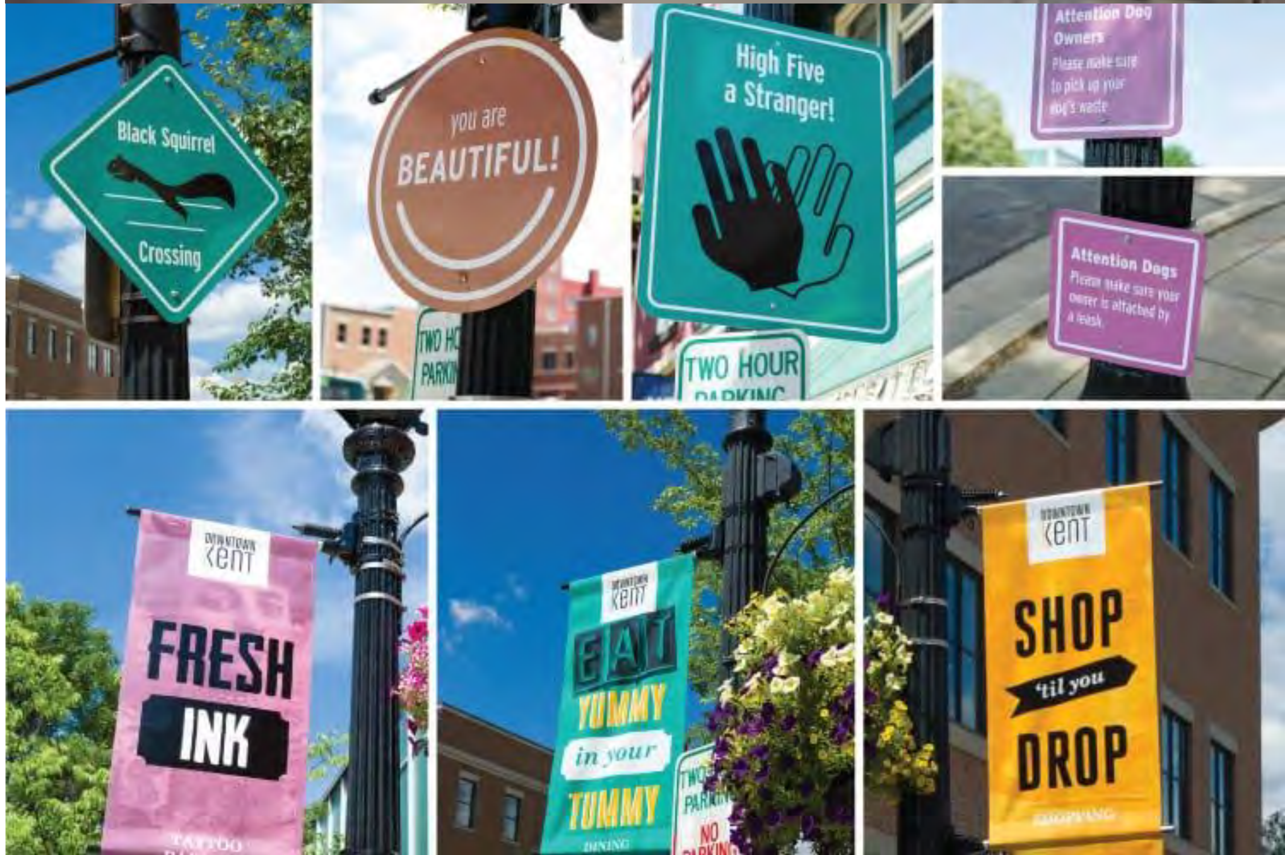
Case Studies

Wayfinding Project – Sandusky, OH

- A wayfinding project led by Guide Studio to create new signage and branding what would draw more people to visit the downtown.

Wayfinding Project – Kent, OH

- A wayfinding project that places an emphasis on the expression of Kent's unique personality in its signage.


Black Squirrel Crossing
you are BEAUTIFUL!
High Five a Stranger!
TWO HOUR PARKING
Attention Dog Owners Please make sure to pick up your dog's waste
Attention Dogs Please make sure your owner is attached by a leash.
DOWNTOWN kent
FRESH INK
EAT YUMMY in your TUMMY
SHOP 'til you DROP

Challenges

- What exactly is placemaking?
- Funding
- Ongoing steering committee engagement
- Hesitance to engage new people on the steering committee
- Managing expectations of communities (process vs. product)
- Recruiting undergraduates
- Incorporating undergrads into the planning process

Celebrating 20 years of the Black Swamp Arts Festival
Can you find 20 salamanders?
Created by the 2013 BGHS Senior Studio Art Class

Changes to the R3 Program for 2024

To address some of the challenges, we made the following changes:

- Streamlined the process from about **1 year** to **3-5 months**
- Eliminated the PaCE component with undergraduate students

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Questions?