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A map of the United States with a dark blue background. Yellow stars are placed on the following states: California, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and Florida.



THE COMMUNITY THAT GROWS TOGETHER THRIVES TOGETHER

At Kaiser Permanente, we don't see health as an industry. We see it as a cause. That's why we're excited to be a part of National Civic League. Our doors, hearts, and minds are always open to help every Colorado community thrive.

May you live long and thrive.

kp.org

KAISER PERMANENTE®  **thrive**

2020 All-America City Award Supporters



WELL BEING TRUST HONORS 2020 ALL-AMERICA CITY FINALISTS

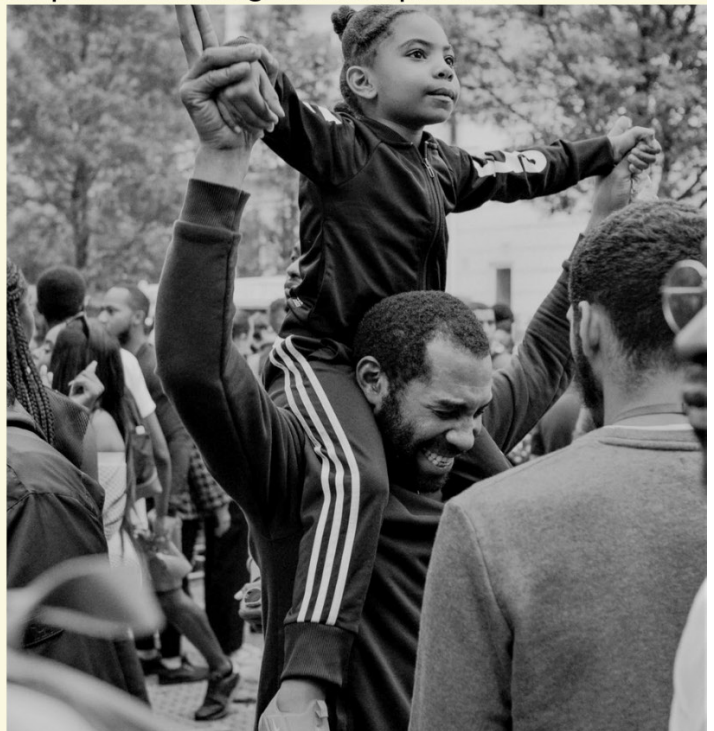
We celebrate the National Civic League's 125 year history in shaping effective models of community governance, ensuring inclusive civic engagement, and creating tangible pathways for diverse local leaders to set the pace in renewing our nation.

Learn more about: Thriving Together: A Springboard for Equitable Recovery and Resilience in America's Communities at www.thriving.us

The Springboard lifts up a series of "pivotal moves" and "trendbenders" that can be locally adapted to help our communities and country heal, while laying a foundation for long term well-being and resilience that serves all in America.
Our vision: All people and places thriving, no exceptions!

Engage in this year's All-America City programming on The Springboard, designed for community participation:

- Visit Well Being Trust's "Virtual Booth" focused on The Springboard at: <https://www.nationalcivicleague.org/aac-awards/virtual-booth-well-being-trust/>
- Participate in the Well-Being Round-table, 8/17 at 1:30 pm (MT) to discuss how your community can build the vital conditions.



"Mental health and addiction touch every one of us, either directly or through someone we love. Creating the community conditions for intergenerational well-being is vital- because trauma, violence, and exclusion undercut the freedom to flourish. Nothing less than the future of our nation is at stake."

Tyler Norris, MDiv, CEO, Well Being Trust
(Director, Civic Assistance Program, National Civic League, 1990-1995)

Michael B. Hancock
Mayor



City and County of Denver

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY AND COUNTY BUILDING
DENVER, CO 80202-5390
TELEPHONE: (720) 865-9090 • FAX: (720) 865-8787
TTY/ TTD: (720) 865-9010

All-America City Award Participants
Hilton Denver City Center
1702 California St.
Denver, Colorado 80202

Greetings!

As the former Chairman of the Board of the National Civic League, it is my pleasure and honor to welcome the 2020 All-America City Award & Conference participants to the Mile High City. This year, we are spotlighting inclusive engagement practices that enhance the health and well-being of communities and bring all voices to the table to help solve our country's most pressing and complex issues. With this focus, the National Civic League hopes to learn more about the inclusive decision-making processes that communities use to problem solve and move forward.

The All-America City Award is the National Civic League's flagship program. I congratulate you for living in and representing a community that has demonstrated collaboration, innovation, engagement, inclusiveness and a can-do spirit. In the eyes of the National Civic League board, staff and the All-America City volunteers, every community here is a winner! We urge you to take full advantage of this unique opportunity to tell your story, bond with your community's participants and learn from others. I am inspired by your All-American stories expressing the full diversity of dedicated people working together in your community to make things better for all.

I encourage you to take the time to reflect and celebrate the great things that have been accomplished, as well as recommit to addressing the challenges that lie ahead.

On behalf of the City and County of Denver, please accept my gratitude for your dedication to bringing all of your community's unique voices to the table. I wish all of you a successful and productive event!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Hancock", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael B. Hancock
Mayor





COLORADO
Governor Jared Polis



August 17, 2020

Greetings:

On behalf of the State of Colorado, it is my distinct pleasure to welcome you to the 2020 All-America City Awards and Conference.

We recognize your commitment to civic engagement and thank you for your dedication to enhancing the health and well-being of your community. Intentional involvement of diverse perspectives in community decision-making is key to these efforts. It is imperative that innovative communities collaborate and learn how to best solve our country's most pressing and complex issues.

Here in the Centennial State, public, private and non-profit partners have worked together to help Colorado become the healthiest state in the nation and to strengthen our early literacy programs. We will continue to look for collaborative and innovative solutions to address some of the most pressing challenges that our residents face. We welcome and respect all individuals who want to live and work in our great state and look forward to their contributions toward the well-being of all Coloradans.

Once again, Colorado is privileged to host leaders from across our great nation for this virtual conference. We are confident the 2020 All-America City Awards will be a transformative experience that will inspire you with new ideas and will equip you with new tools.

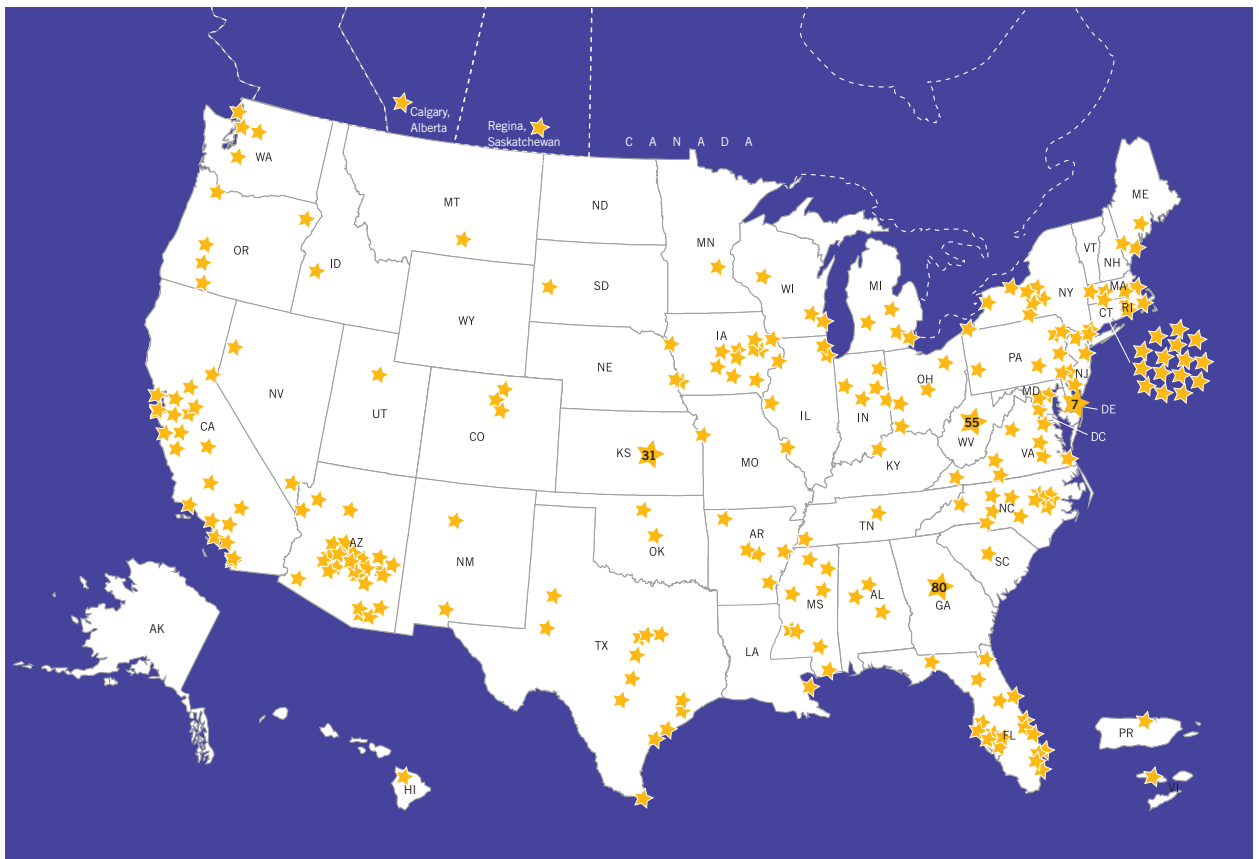
You have our best wishes for a successful and memorable event!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jared Polis".

Jared Polis
Governor





COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE NATION ARE MOBILIZING

to give more children and families the resources they need to develop as early readers and
succeed academically — and in life. Working together with parents, schools and teachers,
we can ensure that every child is on a path to a more hopeful future.

ARE YOU WITH US? FOLLOW THE MOVEMENT  @READINGBY3RD



gradelevelreading.net

2020 All-America City Finalists

in alphabetical order by city/county

Algoma, WI
Danville, VA
Douglasville, GA
El Paso, TX
Franklin, TN
Harlingen, TX
Hopkinsville, KY
Logansport, IN
Mason City, IA
Miami Gardens, FL
Miami Lakes, FL
Muncie, IN
Pitt County, NC
Portsmouth, OH
Rancho Cucamonga, CA
Roanoke, VA
Rochester, NY
Sumter, SC



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YOU'RE AN ALL – AMERICA CITY!
TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR WIN!**



Let Us Help You Celebrate This Prestigious Award
...through our free Banner Program

- ▶ *Enhance Civic Pride*
- ▶ *Beautify Your City*
- ▶ *Boost Community Identity*
- ▶ *Promote Local Businesses*
- ▶ *#ShareYourShield*



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TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS PROGRAM

- 📞 **CALL** Vice President of Marketing and Acquisitions, Nicole Rongo at 800-398-3029 x203
- ✉ **EMAIL** nicoler@cgicomunications.com
- 🌐 **VISIT** nationalcivicleague.org

To request an updated shield logo with your winning year(s) please email aac@ncl.org

At the Colorado Health Foundation, our mission is to improve the health of Coloradans.

WE BELIEVE THAT THE PROMISE OF LIFELONG HEALTH BEGINS WITH
A HEALTHY START. HEALTH HAPPENS WHERE WE LIVE, WORK AND
PLAY, AND IS LARGELY DETERMINED BY FACTORS OUTSIDE OF THE
HEALTH CARE SYSTEM ITSELF.

WE ARE PROUD TO SUPPORT THE ALL-AMERICA CITY AWARDS.



The Colorado Health Foundation™



www.coloradohealth.org

Event Timeline

71st All-America City Awards & Conference: Enhancing Health and Well-Being Through Civic Engagement

Virtual Event Agenda

As part of our partnership with this year's Co-Title's Sponsor, [Well Being Trust](#), we are collaborating with the WIN Network and WE in the World to offer specialty tracks on equity and youth leadership.



Indicates sessions being hosted by [The Well Being In the Nation \(WIN\) Network](#), a growing strategic network of organizations and communities coming together to advance intergenerational well-being and equity.



Indicates sessions being hosted by [WE in the World](#), a diverse team of change agents who are passionate about igniting transformation for well-being and equity in the world.

Monday, August 17, 2020

All Times are Mountain Time

All Day

Throughout the day, attendees are encouraged to explore content within the [event platform](#). Attendees will find: sponsor booths, community's civic action fair booths, cultural entertainment performances, pre-recorded sessions, speeches and more.

9:00am – 10:25am

Block 1 of finalist presentations

Roanoke, VA @9:15am; Rochester, NY @9:40am; and Miami Lakes, FL @10:05am

[WATCH](#)

9:00am – 1:00pm



Youth Leadership Academy: Leading from Within

This involves one's inner journey as a leader, including the story of a personal journey considering the current health pandemic, the new wave of police brutality, and issues of racism and systemic inequity.

[JOIN HERE](#)

10:45am – 12:20pm

Block 2 of finalist presentations

Muncie, IN @10:45am; Miami Gardens @11:10am, FL; Portsmouth, OH @11:35am; and Sumter, SC @12:00pm

[WATCH](#)

12:30pm – 1:30pm

Lunch on Your Own

1:30pm – 3:00pm

Well-Being Roundtable Learning Exchange

Attendees will join breakout rooms to discuss their community's work around the [Well Being Trust's 7 vital conditions](#): Thriving Natural World, Basic Needs, Humane Housing, Meaningful Work and Wealth, Lifelong Learning, Reliable Transportation, Belonging and Civic Muscle.

[JOIN HERE](#)

1:30pm – 3:00pm



Take Action on Racial Justice: Leading from Within

Attendees are invited to go on a racial equity journey using the WIN Framework for Change. This four-part series begins with Leading from Within - examining our own stories, our own history and our community's history and legacy of colonialism and racism. This session will invite those who are ready to explore where they are and deepen into conversation to develop some skills in exploring their own journey in addressing racial justice.

[JOIN HERE](#)



3:15pm – 4:15pm

All-America City Awards Opening Ceremony

Attendees will be welcomed to the virtual event by League President, [Doug Linkhart](#) and Board Chair, [Valerie Lemmie](#).

Keynote speaker, [Rev. Alvin Herring](#), Executive Director of Faith in Action.

[JOIN HERE](#)

Tuesday, August 18, 2020

All Times are Mountain Time

All Day

Throughout the day, attendees are encouraged to explore content within the [event platform](#). Attendees will find: sponsor booths, community's civic action fair booths, cultural entertainment performances, pre-recorded sessions, speeches and more.

9:00am – 10:35am

Block 3 of finalist presentations

Pitt County, NC @9:00am; Danville, VA @9:25am;
Douglasville, GA @9:50am; and Logansport, IN @10:15am

[WATCH](#)

9:00am – 10:25am



Youth Leadership Academy: Leading Together Part I

[JOIN HERE](#)

This session focuses on building relationships and building brave spaces for transformation. These skills are grounded in the perception of the community as a dynamic network of interacting people, organizations, structures, and systems that are related to a place.

10:15am – 11:45am



Take Action on Racial Justice: Leading Together

[JOIN HERE](#)

This session, the second of a racial equity journey series, will focus on Leading Together - developing relationships and creating the context for brave spaces, developing common language and analogies, and exploring your common history as a community together. This session will invite those who are ready to lead together to build skills to hold dialogue around race, racism and equity. You do not need to have attended previous sessions to attend this one.

10:55am – 12:30pm

Block 4 of finalist presentations

El Paso, TX @10:55am; Flex spot @11:20am;
Hopkinsville, KY @11:45am; and Rancho Cucamonga, CA @12:10pm

[WATCH](#)

12:30pm – 1:00pm

Lunch on Your Own

1:00pm – 3:00pm



Youth Leadership Academy: Leading Together Part II

[JOIN HERE](#)

This session focuses on building relationships and building brave spaces for transformation. These skills are grounded in the perception of the community as a dynamic network of interacting people, organizations, structures, and systems that are related to a place.

1:30pm – 3:00pm

Lessons on Resilience and Equity from the COVID-19 Epidemic

[JOIN HERE](#)

City officials discuss their pandemic response with a particular focus on how their civic capital and focus on equity mitigated the racial, ethnic and socioeconomic disparities of the outbreak.

[Derek Okubo](#), Executive Director of the [Agency for Human Rights and Community Partnerships for the City and County of Denver](#); [David M. Rubedor](#) Director of [Neighborhood Community Relations](#) for the City of Minneapolis, and [Stacy Schweikhart](#), Director of Strategy and Engagement for the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission.



3:15pm – 4:45pm

Infusing Racial Equity into Your Community: Practical Steps Forward

[JOIN HERE](#)

Participants will learn why addressing equity is a governmental imperative and learn how to apply an “equity lens” to city services. Additionally, participants will be given the practical tools to recognize and mitigate institutional racism.

[Dante James](#), Co-Founder & Managing Partner, The Gemini Group, LLC; Kevin Modica, former assistant police chief for Portland, OR; and Joni Pattillo, Retired City Manager at City of Dublin, CA;

3:15pm – 4:45pm



Take Action on Racial Justice: Leading for Equitable Outcomes

[JOIN HERE](#)

The third session of a racial equity journey series invites those who are ready to lead together for equitable outcomes to explore tools and processes for co-design, co-implementation and co-evaluation of outcomes. This session will introduce people to the Well-Being In the Nation (WIN) measures and how these can be used to support communities to create equitable improvement.

5:00pm – 6:00pm

Award Announcements and Keynote Address

[JOIN HERE](#)

The National Civic League will announce the winners of this year's [Robert Wood Johnson Health Equity Award](#) and the [2020 Hall of Fame Award](#).

Keynote speaker, [Bechara Choucair](#), MD, Senior Vice President and Chief Health Officer for Kaiser Foundation.

Wednesday, August 19, 2020

All Times are Mountain Time

All Day

Throughout the day, attendees are encouraged to explore content within the [event platform](#). Attendees will find: sponsor booths, community's civic action fair booths, cultural entertainment performances, pre-recorded sessions, speeches and more.

9:00am – 10:35am

Block 5 of finalist presentations

[WATCH](#)

Mason City, IA @9:00am; Franklin, TN @9:25am;
Flex Spot @9:50am; and Flex Spot, IL @10:15am

9:00am – 12:00pm



Youth Leadership Academy: Leading for Equitable Outcomes Part I

[JOIN HERE](#)

This session will focus on how to lead for sustainable and equitable outcomes. These skills will support youth in applying design skills to co-create a theory of change that supports all, including those that are not thriving, in an organized and achievable way.

10:55am – 12:05pm

Block 6 of finalist presentations

[WATCH](#)

Algoma, WI @10:55am; Harlingen, TX @11:20am;
and Flex Spot @11:45am

12:15pm – 1:15pm



Taking Action to Advance Inter-Generational Equity in Communities

[JOIN HERE](#)

This session will introduce you to the WIN Theory of Change and the WIN approach to shift relationships, narrative, measurement and policies to achieve system change over generations.



1:30pm – 3:30pm

AAC Festival of Ideas:

Peer discussion of community projects

[JOIN HERE](#)

Group 1:

El Paso, TX
Rochester, NY
Pitt County, NC
Rancho Cucamonga, CA

Group 4:

Douglasville, GA
Hopkinsville, KY
Miami Lakes, FL

Group 2:

Miami Gardens, FL
Roanoke, VA
Franklin, TN

Group 5:

Mason City, IA
Portsmouth, OH
Logansport, IN
Algoma, WI

Group 3:

Muncie, IN
Harlingen, TX
Danville, VA
Sumter, SC

1:30pm – 3:30pm



Youth Leadership Academy: Leading for Equitable Outcomes Part II

[JOIN HERE](#)

This session will focus on how to lead for sustainable and equitable outcomes. These skills will support youth in applying design skills to co-create a theory of change that supports all, including those that are not thriving, in an organized and achievable way.

3:45pm – 4:45pm



Take Action on Racial Justice: Leading for Policy and System Change

[JOIN HERE](#)

The fourth session of a racial equity journey series will discuss opportunities to dismantle systemic racism and build new systems for racial equity and justice, drawing on the policy platforms of organizations led by people with lived experience. Participants will be introduced to the WIN resource guide for policy and systems change.w

5:30pm – 7:00pm

Awards Ceremony

[JOIN HERE](#)

The moment we've all been waiting for, the announcement of the 2020 All-America City Awards!

Keynote speaker, [Tyler Norris](#), Chief Executive of Well Being Trust.



Thank You!

National Council of Advisors

Leon Andrews, Director, Race, Equity and Leadership, National League of Cities
Steven Bosacker, Director, GMF Cities, German Marshall Fund (GMF) of the United States
Mary Bunting, City Manager, City of Hampton, Virginia
Kara Carlisle, Vice President of Programs, McKnight Foundation
Jim Cloar, Chair, Tampa Housing Authority
Marcia Conner, Executive Director, National Forum for Black Public Administrators
Zach Dyer, Deputy Director, Worcester Public Health Department
Chris Gates, Senior Advisor, Bridge Alliance; Elected Fellow, NAPA
Sachi Hamai, Chief Executive Officer, County of Los Angeles, CA
Cashauna Hill, Executive Director, Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center
Mike Huggins, former City Manager, Eau Claire,
Wisconsin and member of Clear Vision Eau Claire Board of Directors
Curtis Johnson, former Executive Director, Citiscope, and former League board member
Hon. Liane Levetan, former DeKalb County CEO and Georgia State Legislator
Charles Ozaki, former City and County Manager, City and County of Broomfield, Colorado
Joni Pattillo, former City Manager, Dublin, CA
Sarah Rubin, Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, California Department of Conservation
Hon. David M. Sander, Ph.D., City Council Member and Former Mayor, City of Rancho Cordova, CA
Daniel Schugurensky, Professor, School of Public Affairs, Arizona State University and Director,
Participatory Governance Initiative
Sean Smoot, Principal Consultant, 21st Century Policing LLC
Antonella Valmorbida, Secretary General, ALDA - The European Association for Local Democracy
Michael Wenger, Senior Consultant on Race Relations and the Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation
enterprise for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Dr. Lyle Wray, Executive Director, Capital Region Council of Governments, Retiring NCL Board Member

National Civic League's Board

OFFICERS: Board Chair: Valerie Lemmie, Director of Exploratory Research, Kettering Foundation; Board
Vice Chair: Mayor Patti Garrett, Mayor, City of Decatur, GA; Board Treasurer: Heather Johnston, Former
City Manager, City of Burnsville, MN; Board Secretary: Angela Romans, Partner, AchieveMission; President:
Doug Linkhart, President, National Civic League

MEMBERS: Teree Caldwell-Johnson; Mayor Mary Casillas Salas; Hon. Brad Cole; Mayor John Dailey; Lee
Feldman; Nicole Ferrini; Alex Hannah; Alicia Lara; Mayor Sherman Lea; Hon. Ron Loveridge, Maureen
McDonald; Derek Okubo (Fmr Chair), Tony Peyton, Anthony Santiago, Hon. Angel Taveras, Wendy Willis.

Major Funders

Special thank you to our Co-Title Sponsors, Kaiser Permanente and Well Being Trust, and Southwest Airlines
– The Official Airline of the All-America City Awards.

Partners

American Society for Public Administration; Bridge Alliance, Carl and Lily Pforzheimer Foundation;
Government Finance Officers' Association; International City/County Management Association; Kettering
Foundation; National Academy of Public Administration; National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation;
National League of Cities; National Forum for Black Public Administrators; United Way Worldwide.

Staff

A special thank you to the staff of the National Civic League.



2020 All-America City Virtual Presentation Schedule

All presentations will take place over Zoom.

Monday, August 17, 2020

**All Times are Mountain Time*

Block 1 Presentations:

9:00am – 9:10am	Jury Introductions
9:15am – 9:35am	Roanoke, VA
9:40am – 10:00am	Rochester, NY
10:05am – 10:25am	Miami Lakes, FL

Block 2 Presentations:

10:45am – 11:05am	Muncie, IN
11:10am – 11:30am	Miami Gardens, FL
11:35am – 11:55am	Portsmouth, OH
12:00pm – 12:20pm	Sumter, SC

Tuesday, August 18th, 2020

Block 3 Presentations:

9:00am – 9:20am	Pitt County, NC
9:25am – 9:45am	Danville, VA
9:50am – 10:10am	Douglasville, GA
10:15am – 10:35am	Logansport, IN

Block 4 Presentations:

10:55am – 11:15am	El Paso, TX
11:20am – 11:40am	Flex spot
11:45am – 12:05pm	Hopkinsville, KY
12:10pm – 12:30pm	Rancho Cucamonga, CA

Wednesday August 19th, 2020

Block 5 Presentations:

9:00am – 9:20am	Mason City, IA
9:25am – 9:45am	Franklin, TN

Block 6 Presentations:

10:55am – 11:15am	Algoma, WI
11:20am – 11:40am	Harlingen, TX
11:45am – 12:05pm	Flex spot





HELPING COMMUNITIES MAKE IT FASTER, CHEAPER & EASIER TO GO SOLAR



The **SolSmart program**, funded by the U.S. Department of Energy, provides national recognition and no-cost technical assistance to help local governments reduce barriers to solar energy growth.

By encouraging solar energy development at the local level, SolSmart helps local governments bring new businesses to your community, promote economic growth, and foster the creation of new jobs.

SOLSMART BY THE NUMBERS

91M people in participating communities.

420 communities receiving Technical Assistance from teams led by The Solar Foundation.

374 communities designated their local solar achievements by the teams led by ICMA with the support of the National Civic League, Home Innovation Research Labs, and Cadmus Group.

55 All-America City Awardees have achieved



We congratulate the following communities for being at the forefront of civic and solar innovation, achieving both SolSmart designation and All-America City status:

Alexandria, VA
Ames, IA
Asheville, NC
Atlanta, GA
Aurora, CO
Austin, TX
Bellevue, WA
Boston, MA
Brookfield, IL
Brownsville, TX
Cedar Rapids, IA

Charlottesville, VA
Chattanooga, TN
Chelsea, MA
Chicago, IL
Cleveland, OH
DeKalb County, GA
Delray Beach, FL
Duluth, MN
Eau Claire, WI
El Paso, TX
Fremont, CA

Gladstone, MO
Hartford, CT
Highland Park, IL
Huntington, NY
Independence, MO
Indianapolis, IN
Kansas City, MO
Lakewood, CO
Lincoln, NE
Longmont, CO
Louisville, KY

Lowell, MA
Madison, WI
Maricopa County, AZ
Marin County, CA
Miami Beach, FL
Miami-Dade County, FL
Minneapolis, MN
Oakland, CA
Oklahoma City, OK
Park Forest, IL
Philadelphia, PA

Plano, TX
Providence, RI
Pueblo, CO
Richmond, VA
Roanoke, VA
Rochester, MN
San Antonio, TX
Santa Rosa, CA
Savannah, GA
Somerville, MA
West Hollywood, CA

IS YOUR COMMUNITY READY TO BE RECOGNIZED AS A SOLAR CHAMPION? Apply now at SolSmart.org.

2021 All-America City Awards Building Equitable and Resilient Communities



About

Established in 1949, the All-America City Award is given each year by the National Civic League to ten communities in recognition of their outstanding civic accomplishments. The award recognizes the work of communities in using inclusive civic engagement to address critical issues and create stronger connections among residents, businesses and nonprofit and government leaders.



Benefits of Winning the Award

Examples of other community benefits are:

- Powerful and positive economic impact
- Collaboration
- Increased ability to solve problems together
- Love of community and civic pride
- Connections with other communities
- Greater equity in community services

Save the Date for the 2021 All-America City Awards and Event

June 4-6, 2021

National Civic League invites you to participate in the 2021 All-America City Awards in Denver, Colorado. Continue to learn from your peers and experts on inclusive civic engagement to create equitable, thriving communities. Bring home more knowledge, tools and ideas to strengthen your community-decision making processes.

Learn more at www.NationalCivicLeague.org

**THRIVING
CHILDREN
WORKING
FAMILIES
EQUITABLE
COMMUNITIES**



Congratulations 2020 All-America City Finalists!

***Proud to honor the cities leading change
for children & families in their communities***



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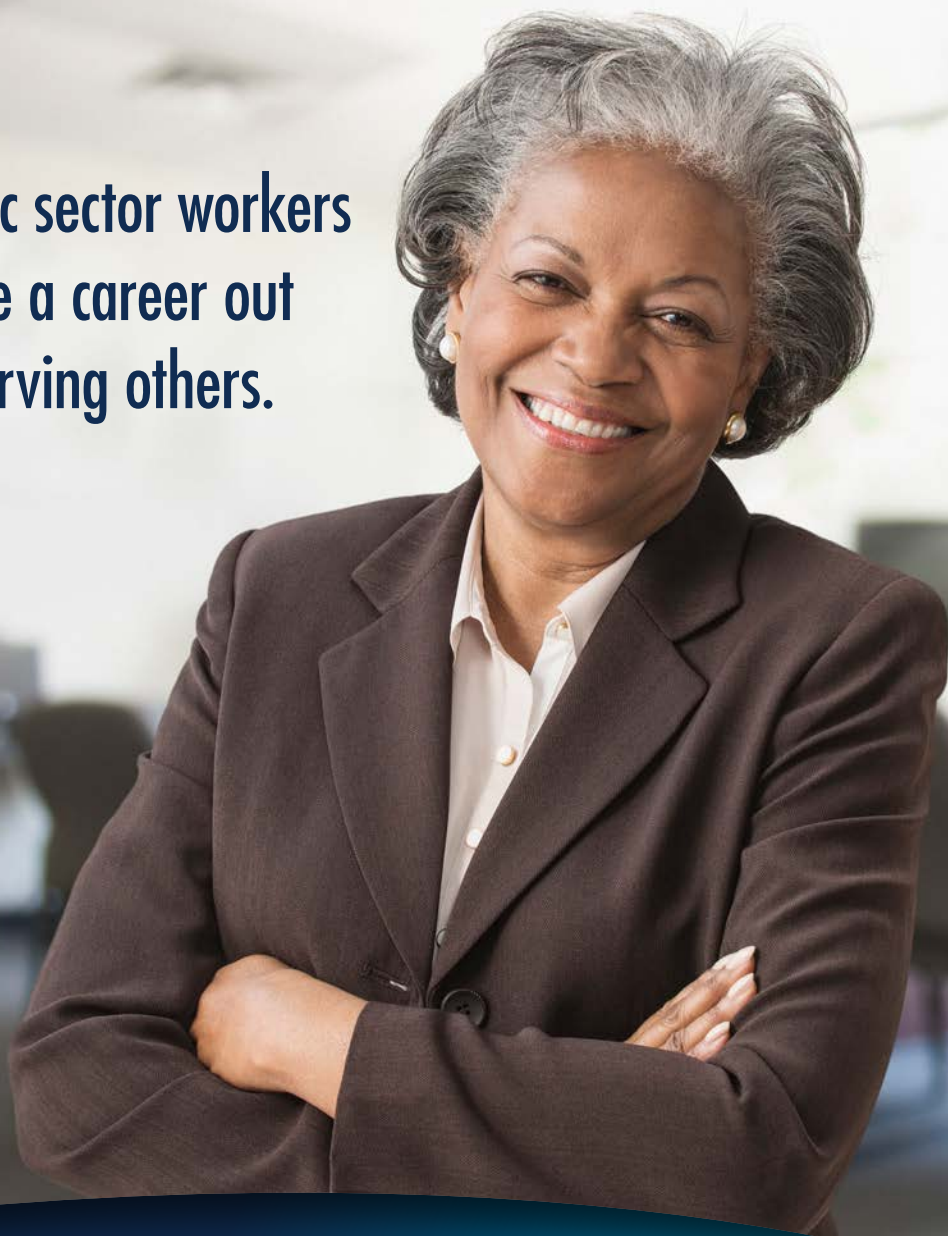
1930
90
2020

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www.wkkf.org

www.healourcommunities.org

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make a career out
of serving others.



We've made a career out of serving them.

People who dedicate their lives to serving others deserve an organization that dedicates itself exclusively to them. For over forty years, we've met the challenge to help public sector workers realize their retirement dreams.

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2020 All-America City Finalist Program Summaries

Algoma, WI

The Live Algoma initiative, powered by the Algoma School District, was created in response to a brain drain from the community. Local businesses were calling for better skilled workers and high school graduates were leaving Algoma in search of better education, training and employment opportunities. The Algoma School District partnered with local manufacturers to create a plan that would engage the youth, educate them, ignite their passion, and provide professional opportunities. In the years since, Live Algoma has resulted in innovative projects such as: Wolf Tech, a Community Wellness Center and Wolf Den.

Wolf Tech

Wolf Tech was created with the dual intention of providing manufacturers with skilled labor and offering youth opportunities to explore possibilities for local careers.

Algoma Wolf Tech evolved into a series of middle and high school classes that work together with local businesses. Businesses partner with the school to provide partial funding, equipment, staff, and expertise in exchange for subcontracts on products produced as a result of student labor and an opportunity to interact one-on-one with students.

Projects have included:

- **Community Fab Labs** offer students the chance to go out into the community and guide members through different projects ranging from building with wood to using welding to create art.
- **Olson Tech Center** added 10,000 square feet to the existing technical education space.
- **Brown County Home Builders Association** teaches middle schoolers basic tech skills and gives them the opportunity to create and build projects to scale.
- **CTI hospitality** teaches students to create blueprints.

- **D&S Machine** works with Wolf Tech to create machine parts authorized in the oil and gas industry.
- **Wolf Tech Auto** offers free oil changes to volunteers who drive seniors to appointments. Students learn basic auto maintenance and inspection skills and perform supervised routine maintenance on volunteer's vehicles.

Community businesses have benefited from Wolf Tech by creating direct relationships with students and recruiting them for future business endeavors. Youth have been given the opportunity to work with professionals in the field, and potentially obtain a job right out of high school.

Algoma Community Wellness Center

Algoma identified health and wellness as a serious challenge for local employers and residents alike. As a result, the Algoma Community Wellness Center was built to engage individuals in their physical needs.

What was originally supposed to be a football field for student athletes turned into a community center attached to the high school. The finances for the project were realized with a 50% commitment from the school district and 50% from local private sources.

To ensure that the community center was developed into a space that everyone would value, community members were engaged through a survey and community conversations. Individuals were asked to identify and focus on one area of emphasis for improvement that mattered to them, and the qualitative data was used to co-create the space, offerings, and opportunities.

The Algoma Community Wellness Center is now part of a mission to help improve the overall health and well-being of community members. Addressing equity to ensure the center is fit for all, an intergenerational space was created



DANVILLE, VIRGINIA

Reimagining Home; Reimagining Community; Reimagining Health



www.danville-va.gov

DRF is proud to cheer for our partner the

City of Danville, Virginia

as they represent our entire community as a

FINALIST

for the

2020 ALL-AMERICA CITY AWARD.



www.drfonline.org

and includes opportunities for fitness, wellness, nutrition, financial coaching and much more. To date, almost one third of the population utilizes the wellness center on a continuous basis. Only 11% of the members pay a full-fee out-of-pocket; almost all businesses cover membership fees for their employees, insurances provide exercise benefits as part of their coverage, healthcare professionals provide discounts for patients to continue their care, scholarships are available for those in need and all students receive a free membership.

Wolf Den

The Algoma School District's Equity Audit showed a discouraging link between students from low-income households and issues of truancy, suspension and low test scores. This data combined with a student-led survey analyzing various needs of students, showed a need for a cross-age mentorship program.

Wolves and Pups was launched in 2017 with high school students being recruited to be mentors through a series of presentations and personal invitations. Today, mentors (wolves) meet with their mentees (pups) for an hour, twice a week. Wolves have a designated time in their schedule to meet with their Pup, and obtain credit, instead of missing lunch or class. Weekly Lunch 'n Learns provide emotional support for the high school mentors who are often taking on the emotional stress of their Pups. As a result, high school students have felt accountable to others and elementary students felt more motivated to be in school.

After beginning the Wolves and Pups Mentoring Program, it became apparent that the Pups could benefit from more than just a mentor, so the Wolf Den After School Program was established and is fully planned, implemented, and led by high school students. The program supplies students with tools and opportunities to increase their social and emotional capacity, practice basic life skills, and develop a growth mindset in a safe and productive environment.

After-school meals are donated by the community and the Wolf Den Weekend Backpack Program, launched by a local church, provides nutritious, easy-to-prepare food to students over the weekends.

Danville, Virginia

After falling in annual health rankings over the years, the City of Danville knew they had to make a change. They formed The Health Collaborative (THC) to take a long-term approach to addressing the community's health needs. This organization focuses on policies, systems, and environmental changes, and the social determinants of health. To address health in their community, collaborative members participated in idea-generating activities, reviewed existing data, evidence and case studies, went on site visits to other communities, conducted focus groups, and prioritized strategies.

As they made decisions together, they evaluated strategies based on three guiding principles – health impact, health equity, and feasibility. The City of Danville has aligned its goals and investment strategy with the goals of The Health Collaborative. The city requires plans for Danville to be informed by the Health Equity Report. These steps form the basis of Danville's three highlighted projects.

Youth Health Equity Leadership Institute
The Youth Health Equity Leadership Institute (YHELI) is a personal development program for young people in Danville. It works to empower students to graduate high school on-time and develop an action plan for their future.

The program provides leadership development, critical thinking skills, mentoring opportunities, college preparation, resume building, and financial planning skills, while maintaining a focus on personal and community health.

Establishing a solid community foundation has been a key to the program's success through partnerships with organizations including Danville Public Schools (DPS), the Pittsylvania-Danville Health Department, and THC. Their advisory board is also an extensive and collaborative group, consisting of over 47 community partners who meet monthly to develop strategies to promote education and health equity.

Since 2015, YHELI has developed 145 student-leaders who have worked with thousands of at-risk youth every year through volunteering and mentoring.

While the YHELI leaders help the community, they are also learning to help themselves. From the most recent annual survey, 92.8% of YHELI students reported that their grades within the past 12 months were mostly A's and B's.

Long-term, Danville's YHELI will continue to achieve positive outcomes for the community by growing on-time high school graduation rates. Considering education is one of the strongest predictors of health, improvement in on-time graduation rates will also improve the community's health.

Bringing Fitness and Nutrition to Danville Residents

In community input sessions, the City of Danville found that residents had the desire to improve their overall health, but barriers such as transportation and finances often limited participation. To address these needs, Fit Mobile was created to offer onsite fitness and nutrition classes to residents.

Fit Mobile is a collaboration between Danville's Parks and Recreation, Averett University, Virginia

Cooperative Extension, Danville Redevelopment and Housing Authority, and local healthcare organizations PATHs and Gateway Health. Free fitness and nutrition education classes are taught by Averett University students at various sites in the community. Parks and Recreation staff work alongside Averett University professors and students to develop class curriculums and coordinate class schedules.

Each semester, Parks and Recreation staff meet with members of each neighborhood to help design and determine the needs of their individual program. Averett University students are involved in the process by meeting with residents throughout the semester to tweak and change the program along the way to meet their needs. Students and their academic advisors guide and change the delivery of their curriculum and requirements based on what they see in the community. Residents are involved in tailoring their neighborhood's program to their unique goals and needs.

In its first year, the Averett University students provided 12 weeks of fitness and nutrition classes in three neighborhoods, with more than 225 adults and 350 children participating and logging 300,000 steps. The 160-plus hours of classes equal more than \$5,000 of in-kind services.

Community Health Worker Initiative

Danville's rates of chronic disease and obesity are higher than the state and national averages. The region also suffers from high rates of poverty, with nearly 40 percent of children living in poverty.

The Community Health Worker (CHW) project was established to help improve population health by bringing awareness to the health disparities and social determinants that the region is facing. The primary goal of the CHW project is to decrease avoidable emergency department use by people who are frequent emergency department users and have no recorded affiliation with a medical home.

CHWs provide one-on-one care coordination assistance to individuals that are at risk or potentially becoming at risk of being non-compliant with their chronic illnesses. They educate and encourage health and wellness to



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these individuals by establishing goals during their time in the program.

The workers are community members who are culturally competent and often share ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status, and life experiences with the members they serve. They reach community residents where they live, eat, play, work, worship, and receive care.

CHWs meet with their clients during home visits over a period of up to 90 day, focusing on medical and social-support service delivery, with the ultimate goal of promoting self-management and transitioning the client to a medical home. 428 individuals have graduated from the program and they have made 326 connections to a primary care physician.

Douglasville, Georgia

The City of Douglasville, like many other towns and cities, was hit particularly hard by the economic downturn of 2008. Since this time, city staff has been working hard to make a transformative change to make up the ground lost during the recession and it was imperative that the residents be included in the process. Focus groups and steering committees made up of city residents and stakeholders were assembled to provide input on planning projects that will achieve the city's transformative goals: The Downtown, Parks and Recreation, and Northside Redevelopment Master Plans.

These plans and the projects featured in Douglasville's All-America City application are examples of how the city has worked tirelessly to create a culture of engagement and to break down the barriers between itself and the citizens that they serve.

Douglasville Becomes a Leader in Parks & Recreation

In 2018, Douglasville's Parks and Recreation Department began to pursue accreditation from the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). This is a multi-year process that requires an extended period of self-examination, including agency authority and responsibility, planning, organization and administration, financial management, and programs and service management.

To become accredited, Douglasville had to overhaul the way they structured and created their programming and how they would expand their outreach to the entire community. As a result of the self-examination, the Parks and Recreation Department created the Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

The perfect opportunity to put their new plan into action arose when the department needed to design three neighborhood parks. To ensure the redesign of these parks were driven totally by the neighborhoods they service, they held public meetings to receive input and guide the discussion.

It was also during this time that the Parks and Recreation Department created the Douglasville





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Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. The aim of this advisory board is to assist in the execution of new programming, continued community outreach, and to serve as advocates for an active community.

The impact of the CAPRA Accreditation and advisory board has been immense. Not only has the Parks and Recreation Department created lines of communication between themselves and the community, they have also created a trusting bond that will last for decades.

The Police Department's Community Outreach Program (DCOP)

The Douglasville Police Department (DPD) believes in the "We are One" philosophy of community policing, reaching out to citizens and getting involved in the daily life of the community

The DCOP program bridges the divide between the community and law enforcement through several citizen clinics and events that are open to the public.

- **Citizen Police Academy** - This 10-week program helps citizens learn about the police department by showcasing police department functions to the community for a better understanding of what law enforcement deals with daily.
- **Handgun Clinic** - Citizens are encouraged to attend and learn about Georgia firearm laws, firearms safety, handling, and marksmanship. Attendees are given the opportunity to shoot in the Police Department indoor firing range with certified firearms instructors.
- **Youth Against Violence Program** - This program is designed to educate and deter youth from using violence as a means of conflict resolution. More than a decade old, this program proactively addresses youth in order to prevent violence in the future.

In addition, each holiday season officers assist the Kiwanis Club of Douglas County and the Douglas County School System during the Christmas season to take 120 under-privileged children Christmas shopping.

Other outreach efforts include the Back-to-School Backpack Program, DCOP Street-to-Street, weekly meetings at the Hollis Street Community House,

and frequent "Chat with the Chief" events where Chief Sparks and his command staff visit local restaurants for breakfast and conversation.

Over the past 5 years crime has incrementally decreased and the amount of citations issued have dropped by 24%, while community outreach events have increased by 23%.

Coordinated Entry Programs to Help Residents Experiencing Homelessness

In recent years, it became apparent that more help and resources were needed to service people experiencing homelessness in Douglasville. To address this, the City of Douglasville reached out to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, upon hearing about grant opportunities that were available to communities who wished to implement a coordinated entry system.

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs describes the coordinated entry process as "a streamlined system that provides quick access to individuals and families seeking assistance through a coordinated referral and housing placement process."

This system provides a network of service providers to reach those with the highest vulnerability and barriers to housing. By engaging community stakeholders and developing a work plan, the city was awarded a \$70,000 grant to implement this system throughout Douglas County.

Since the program has only recently begun, the city cannot numerically measure the impact on residents. However, given the small number of Coordinated Entry systems in the state and country, the creation of a system in Douglasville is a huge impact in itself.

The city and county have agreed upon a location that will serve as the central location for Coordinated Entry and will begin providing services to the homeless community for years to come, providing secure and long-term housing and improving on the mental and physical health and well-being of those individuals.

El Paso, Texas

The City of El Paso has a longstanding history of healthy working relationships with community-based organizations, businesses, and civic organizations within the city. They do this in order to foster consensus building processes and ensure decision-making is well-informed by community input. Similarly, the City of El Paso and its partner organizations pursue various avenues for engaging residents from all segments of the community to develop solutions to problems and improve public trust.

Time and again, the people of El Paso have come together - unified and determined in resolving its challenges and rising to support its regional and international neighbors in overcoming extreme adversity and realizing far-reaching and mutually beneficial goals. As evidenced in these highlighted projects, El Paso is a community of excellence, progress, and unwavering resilience.

El Paso's Response to the Humanitarian Crisis at the Border

In 2019, El Paso experienced a record number of asylum seekers and refugees from Central and South America. El Pasoans united to volunteer at local shelters operated by various organizations, such as the Catholic Diocese of El Paso and Annunciation House, a non-profit volunteer organization offering hospitality to migrants, immigrants, and refugees.

The united approach brought together local community-based agencies, civic leaders, and countless volunteers who donated time, food, medical care, and personal hygiene products to address the immediate needs of the asylees and other migrants and to help them reunite with their families. Churches throughout the area held food and clothing drives, identified parishioners for volunteering, and raised funds to help shelters.

Annunciation House has provided shelter, clothing, food, and other basic necessities for hundreds of thousands of migrants, mostly from Mexico and Central America. Since the summer of 2014, they have organized and spearheaded the South Texas Immigrant Response network to provide short-term hospitality to the many

thousands of refugees currently arriving at the southern border.

In addition, Annunciation House facilitates face-to-face encounters between its participants and people and groups in both El Paso and Ciudad Juárez. Deeply rooted in El Paso's history and through its Border Awareness Experience (BAE) initiative, Annunciation House aims to raise awareness among the international community about everyday challenges that the region confronts.

There was also binational cooperation and collaboration that brought about advocacy and response in Ciudad Juárez as the city's officials led the way in converting an old factory into a shelter that could take thousands of migrants who had traversed the whole of Mexico to get to the U.S.

Community-Wide Mental Health and Emergency Response

As in other communities, there persists a lack of basic understanding and training for people concerning mental health and services available to community members in El Paso. With the Paso del Norte Health Foundation taking a leadership role in addressing this concern, El Paso has made significant headway in building its capacity to meet the mental health needs of its residents.

In 2012, the Paso del Norte Health Foundation commissioned a situational analysis to gauge mental health stigma within the community, including neighboring Ciudad Juárez and Southern New Mexico. The analysis revealed that stigma associated with mental illness abounded throughout the region.

In response to this finding, the Foundation launched a community-level intervention, funding organizations to implement evidence-based programs, such as Mental Health First Aid. The goal was to increase mental health literacy and service offerings for families and health workers.

The overarching goal of this initiative is to reduce stigma and negative biases with respect to mental illness. These efforts have led to implementation of Empower Change,



whereby the Paso del Norte provides funding opportunities to community-based organizations to build the region's network of mental health care providers. This Collective Impact Model is based on the assumption that a singular approach is insufficient in satisfactorily addressing complex social problems.

Access to services is supported through the city's Department of Public Health's 2-1-1 Rio Grande Area Information Center (RGAIC). It provides a free helpline 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year staffed by trained information & referral specialists. Currently, the program staff maintains working relationships with 342 organizations offering over 1,500 community-serving programs.

People and Pets – Reaching Community-wide “No-Kill” Status

The City of El Paso's Animal Shelter is the only open admission shelter in the entire region with an annual intake of nearly 27,000 homeless pets. The City of El Paso approved a bold plan that would lead to the large shelter achieving “No-Kill” status by 2020. The formula for No-Kill includes aggressive pet retention programs, spay and neuter programs, community engagement rather than enforcement, and robust adoption programs.

The first step was to reduce the number of animals being admitted to the shelter. This was accomplished by agreements with Fort Bliss, The County of El Paso and Ysleta del Sur Pueblo, a nearby Native American tribe, to participate in Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programs. Additionally, the Animal Protection Partner Academy trained officers to abide by lifesaving programs geared at keeping pets in their homes where they belong rather than being sent to the animal shelter.

The next crucial project was to provide healthier pets. The El Paso Veterinarian Association gathered data to find the hot spots in the community where disease came from and the Community Foundation's Animal Collaborative set up free vaccination clinics in those areas. Supplies and volunteers from all over El Paso showed up to vaccinate over 1,500 pets.

Another major initiative was the Kiddie Reading

Club, which provided opportunities for children to read books to the kittens in shelters. It provided needed interaction for the kittens and also provided the reader with a chance to hone reading skills and build confidence.

As of 2019, the shelter has an 87% live release rate and is on target to reach 90% by the end of 2020.

Franklin, Tennessee

Franklin seeks to preserve and confront its history while creating an inclusive and shared plan for the future by engaging in dialog with, and seeking feedback from, all residents.

Franklin is bringing the community together to authentically reflect on its history, even the hardest aspects related to the experiences of African Americans before, during, and after the Civil War. With an eye towards the future, Franklin supports healthy lifestyles for residents of all ages and abilities and seeks to destigmatize mental health issues. Their inclusive approach to addressing the past and planning for the future can be seen in their featured projects.

Franklin Tomorrow's On The Table

Results of recent surveys conducted by the City of Franklin show almost all residents rated their quality of life as excellent or good – 97 percent combined. Citizens also ranked Franklin as excellent/good for honesty and confidence in city government.

Results like this do not come easily, it requires community engagement from across the city. Much of this engagement comes from Franklin Tomorrow, an organization designed to engage residents, foster collaboration, and advocate for a shared vision for the city.

Franklin Tomorrow implemented On The Table to engage more citizens in civic conversations while discovering a deeper understanding of the needs and passions of the community. More than 100 community leaders volunteered and committed to hosting an On The Table event either in a public venue, workplace or in their private home.



Events brought people together over a meal to discuss what's good in the community and how they can preserve or improve the situation.

First held in 2018, approximately 1,000 people from more than 30 ZIP codes in and around Franklin participated, with more than 400 completing the post-event survey. Data from this survey was presented to the public as well as to community and elected officials and factored into the work of organizations like Franklin Tomorrow and the Williamson County Health Department.

In 2019, the second annual On The Table concluded its week of conversations with a new event, "Engage Franklin." Fifteen area nonprofits participated in the event and spoke to attendees about ways to become engaged in directly serving the community.

The Fuller Story

Since 1899, Franklin's Public Square has been home to a monument honoring Confederate soldiers who fought in the Civil War. Earlier conversations about the monument have drawn criticism from both those wishing to see it remain and those hoping for its removal. In 2018, several local leaders worked closely with the city to develop The Fuller Story, an initiative to deal with Franklin's past, including the controversial Civil War statue.

The spot where the statue stands marks the spot where the old courthouse once stood and where African Americans were bought and sold in a slave market. After several conversations with stakeholders, elected officials and residents, a compromise was reached that two African American history markers would be placed on the sidewalk circling the statue. Three additional markers and a U.S. Colored Troops statue would go on the Public Square near the historic courthouse.

The new markers were unveiled by the Fuller Story organizers in October of 2019 as hundreds gathered reverently on the Public Square. The markers represent the Franklin Riot of 1867, U.S. Colored Troops (USCT), Reconstruction, the Courthouse/Market House, and The Battle of Franklin.

One of the original organizers, Battle of Franklin Trust CEO Eric Jacobson, had this to say, "If they learn something here [let it be] how this community embraced its entire history — white, black, U.S., Confederate, North, South, the whole thing, the big, ugly mess that it was." In a separate effort, a local battlefield preservation group erected a headstone to honor those who died while enslaved. The stone makes note of those who came to Tennessee from Africa, only to be enslaved until the Civil War's end.

Get Fit Franklin and the Blue Ribbon Panel

Get Fit Franklin

The City of Franklin was recognized as one of three Healthier Tennessee pilot communities through the work of the Get Fit Franklin (GFF) project, which encouraged residents to be physically active.

Pilot communities were required to establish wellness councils and develop community events that support physical activity, healthy eating, and tobacco abstinence.

The existing Get Fit Franklin (GFF) committee met regularly and in partnership with other governmental, health, and interested organizations and individuals to create a variety of activities related to healthy eating, reducing tobacco use, and increased physical activity. Activities have included the Mayors' Healthy Cook-off, a weekly walk at Harlinsdale Farm, a quarterly Walk MOORE with the Mayor, and increased attention on topics related to health at Franklin Tomorrow's Breakfast with the Mayors. GFF has also participated in health fairs and community health initiatives and initiated projects to increase access to healthier food choices.

Blue Ribbon Panel

Based on discussions with residents and agency representatives, Franklin Mayor Dr. Ken Moore became concerned with the number of suicides in the county and city each year.

He created a Blue Ribbon Panel of local agencies and subject matter experts to identify root causes and develop strategies to address the city's mental health.

The task force is in the process of drafting a plan to address the following objectives:

- Educate and alert community groups about signs & symptoms;
- Compile community resources;
- Develop a referral clearinghouse; and
- Create a plan for referring those in crisis.

Additionally, a group of community-based agencies and local residents is working to develop a suicide prevention plan to address results revealed in the Community Health Needs Assessment.

Harlingen, Texas

Harlingen recognizes that the complex needs of its growing community can only be managed by inclusive, equitable involvement at all levels of decision-making. Civic collaboration is not one-sided but arrives at solutions through extensive engagement at all levels of the project process, from visioning, to planning, to implementation, to evaluation.

One Harlingen means a united community of residents pursuing a better quality of life. This is accomplished through improved parks based on civic engagement, through the Mayor's Wellness Council promoting wellness and health, and through improved access to college and technical training for young people.

Creating Inclusive and Accessible Community Parks

The City of Harlingen recognizes that parks, trails, and recreational offerings in a city of its size play a critical role in defining quality of life and can be models of equity and access.

The Harlingen community recognized that designing an accessible and truly inclusive playground goes far beyond meeting the basic requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). To be inclusive in the true sense of the word, playgrounds would need to be designed so that all children, regardless of their level of gross motor ability or developmental level, could access most, if not all, of the available equipment.

After an initial attempt at building an accessible playground fell short, with limitations to those in wheelchairs, Harlingen expanded their engagement process to seek the expertise of various stakeholders, including Miracle Kids of South Texas. Founded by Harlingen parents of children with special needs, Miracle Kids of South Texas, was a key organizational partner to the visioning and planning process as well as providing expert guidance on operational features such as restrooms and adaptive sports fields.

Several parks were identified for renovation, with concepts including an all-inclusive playground, accessible restrooms, an adaptive baseball field, lighted trails, additional parking, an amphitheater, pavilions, new lighted basketball courts, a courtyard, and a children's discovery center. Since the opening of the new playgrounds, each park location has seen an increase in visitors. The park designs continue to receive rave reviews from children with special needs and their parents, as well as the general community.

Healthy Eating and Exercising in Harlingen

Alarmed by evidence of poor community health outcomes, a group of community leaders established the Harlingen Mayor's Wellness Council to promote a healthy lifestyle and address some of the biggest health disparities faced by residents.

The council includes representatives from Harlingen's non-profit organizations, local health and fitness businesses, the school district, doctors, hospitals, health clinics, health insurance providers, local universities and colleges, for-profit corporations, as well as community members. Through extensive community input, the Council created seven collaborative workgroups to improve the health and wellness of Harlingen residents.

As part of its strategy, the council collaborated with local groups to establish Viva Streets, an ongoing community project that closes streets off to cars and transforms them into places where people of all ages and backgrounds can congregate to improve their health. Several blocks in downtown Harlingen close to traffic



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and the streets open for residents of all ages to enjoy the space for walking, running, cycling, and any other physical activity. The event includes a 5k walk/race, exercise demonstrations, a social bike ride, and informational booths where a variety of health and wellness organizations provide information and support efforts to improve health, fitness, and wellness.

A result of community input gathered during Viva Streets, the Harlingen Social Bike Ride group was established to encourage safe cycling as a way to stay physically active. The group hosts free monthly bike rides that use different community assets such as trails and parks, local businesses, and police department escorts.

Lifelong and Quality Education in Harlingen

Like many low-income border communities, Harlingen has historically faced the challenge of ensuring that its students obtain a high-quality education. The latest U.S. Census data reveals

that only 18% of Harlingen adults have a college degree and only 75% have obtained a high school diploma or GED.

School leaders, along with members of the community, local colleges and universities, and city leaders decided that a plan of action was needed to enhance job training to provide opportunities for students in different trades, professions, jobs, and careers.

In 2018-2019, the Harlingen Consolidated Independent School District (HCISD) debuted its STEM2 Preparatory Academy, equipping middle school students with skills necessary to meet the demands of the STEM field. In addition, HCISD has partnered with the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) to build a facility by 2021 that will be home to the new Early College High School. There, students will continue earning their high school diplomas while simultaneously earning university credit hours.

One school students can enroll in after graduation is Texas State Technical College (TSTC) in Harlingen. The Workforce Training and Continuing education program at TSTC has built collaborative partnerships with businesses, industries, service organizations and higher education agencies and works closely with them to help upgrade the skills of their current employees and improve competitiveness in the industry. This training meets the high-tech challenges of today's global economy.

Harlingen is now equipped to ensure that students learn the proper tools for the workforce, regardless of the field they decide to pursue.

Hopkinsville, Kentucky

After years of hearing from the public and business community alike about increasingly negative perceptions of Hopkinsville, the local Chamber of Commerce, Convention and Visitor's Bureau, and Economic Development Council initiated efforts to re-envision the Hopkinsville brand to spur growth for the city.

The group selected a vision plan steering committee, raised \$70,000 in funding through community donations, and hired a consulting firm to guide and facilitate the process. The



steering committee worked to promote the plan process widely and broadly throughout the community via focus group meetings, one-on-one interviews and paper and online surveys; feedback was used to establish four primary goals. A speaker's bureau of vision plan advocates was also developed to continue two-way communication, build support, and make adjustments based on ongoing citizen feedback. Interested community members were invited to join task groups developed around each of the four goals to set benchmarks for advancement and work toward measurable progress in each area.

The engagement in this visioning process laid the groundwork for many improvements, detailed in Hopkinsville's featured projects.

Hopkinsville is Focused on WINS

For nearly 15 years, Hopkinsville has become increasingly intentional and strategic in efforts to promote inclusive, cross sector collaboration with the singular focus of elevating opportunity for all residents.

The Hoptown-Christian County WINS Initiative is \$21 million plan focusing on the importance of Wellness, Infrastructure, and Neighborhood projects critical to the future Success of Hopkinsville.

The initiative has brought many new projects to the community, including commercial and residential updates to enhance the community and improve quality of life. After eight months of citizen engagement and debate, the revenue stream and projects were approved with extremely favorable results. Implementation is still underway with projects including:

- A 14,800 square foot addition to the convention center;
- A 48,000 square foot indoor sportsplex that spurred the private development of a new neighboring hotel;
- A 1.7 mile expansion of a 3.15 mile greenway rail trail featuring the longest pedestrian bridge in the state;
- Sidewalk construction to promote connectivity and walkability;
- 5.68 acres of new parks;

- A 45,000 square foot Ag Expo Center; and
- Considerable downtown improvements to the Historic Alhambra Theater and Pennyroyal Area Museum.

In addition to improving the quality of life of residents, the projects serve to enhance the tourism sector – the fourth largest economic generator in the area.

Eclipseville: Home to the 2017 Great American Solar Eclipse

In 2004, local officials learned that Christian County had been designated by NASA and scientists worldwide as the scientific epicenter of the upcoming Great American Solar Eclipse in 2017. At 2 minutes and 40.1 seconds of totality, this eclipse would make Hopkinsville home to the longest duration of this natural phenomenon.

Because of this news, the city had to prepare years in advance for the influx of eclipse-goers. However, Hopkinsville wanted to prepare not only for tourists who would descend on the town for this one-time event, but also benefit residents through several beautification and infrastructure priorities, such as a new welcome center.



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HopKinsville



Located in the Pennyroyal Region of Southwestern Kentucky, Hopkinsville and Christian County have a rich history, agricultural heritage, thriving arts scene and diverse culture. With two craft bourbon distilleries, new 54,000-square foot sportsplex, documented alien sighting, KY's only full service scuba diving facility and two grave sites of Native American chiefs along the Trail of Tears, our part of the countryside offers some of the best views and opportunities anywhere! The people are friendly, the land is breathtaking and the barbecue is ALWAYS served with a side of burgoo!



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Two years before the big date, the city began to prepare. They developed a marketing plan, recruited hundreds of volunteers and designated spaces for viewing as well as for a festival to celebrate the occasion. Additionally, a dry run inaugural festival was held in August 2016. All the preparation required coordinated logistical plans with city, county, and state officials, private groups and businesses, and residents throughout the region.

On August 21, 2017, all the effort and planning paid off. Hopkinsville and Christian County residents and over 116,000 visitors from 47 states, 25 different countries, and 3 U.S. territories witnessed the Great American Solar Eclipse from Hopkinsville. All told, eclipse weekend generated an estimated \$28.5 million in economic impact.

Now that the eclipse has passed, Hopkinsville is proud to remain positively committed to progress and well positioned to persist in making it happen.

Grace and Mercy

Grace and Mercy, a residential program serving women coming from incarceration or homelessness, was born from years of volunteers participating in a jail prayer group and wanting to do more to reduce jail recidivism and facilitate mainstream reentry into community life. The nondenominational faith-based program combines best practices for addiction elimination with learning about and developing a relationship with the Lord to help ones remain clean and productive in a new life.

The facility is equipped with bedrooms, including an ADA accessible room, in dormitory style with a large kitchen, pantry, dining rooms, and multiple gathering spaces including a private outdoor area. Transportation is provided as is assistance with applications for public assistance such as food stamps, so residents will have support for their basic needs even when they relocate.

When physically and emotionally prepared, the ladies are assisted in finding productive employment and transitioned into independent living along with family reunification support. The group's activities are funded through two revenue streams, the largest being donations from individuals, foundations, and churches. The second source is earned income from two thrift shops and the production of Gracefully Sweet Fudge made by residents.

The organization also relies heavily on volunteers and collaborations with nonprofit agencies. Pennyroyal Center provides residents with services in behavioral health and substance use, as well as case management, employment coaching and assistance and connection to local resources.

All told, Grace and Mercy has touched the lives of 102 women and graduated 40 individuals from families representing 174 children.



Logansport, Indiana

The City of Logansport collectively pushed its reset button in 2016 with a robust community visioning process. Consultants from two universities drove the process forward with two community co-chairs and a broad-based steering committee whose membership reflected a range of participants from high school students to senior citizens. Skilled and unskilled labor and representatives from the health care, education, social services, real estate, retail and industrial sectors participated along with members of the Extension Service, service organizations, the Chamber of Commerce and the community foundation.

A community-wide survey generated 1,994 responses and several community meetings were held to provide a vision for Logansport's future. This process produced a shared community vision that continues to pay dividends and was the catalyst for Logansport's featured projects.

Master Housing Plan

A common theme in the community visioning sessions was the old and rundown housing stock available in Logansport. An ad hoc housing task force was formed, including construction firms, builders, social service agencies and major employers. An action plan was formulated, and an external analyst was brought in to examine property values, existing structures and the demographic data for the community. The analyst ultimately recommended the addition of 400 new single-family units over the next four years.

The housing plan has resulted in:

Logan Square Office Building - repurposed with four empty floors of office space being transformed into 40 market rate apartments. Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority - awarded the city a grant to transform 30 blight elimination lots throughout the city into new single-family homes. Residents will qualify for a college scholarship program and free Internet access will be provided along with transportation for each resident.

Repurposing - The taskforce is developing approximately 20 acres of land owned by the city behind a shopping center where 20 additional homes and townhouses will be built.

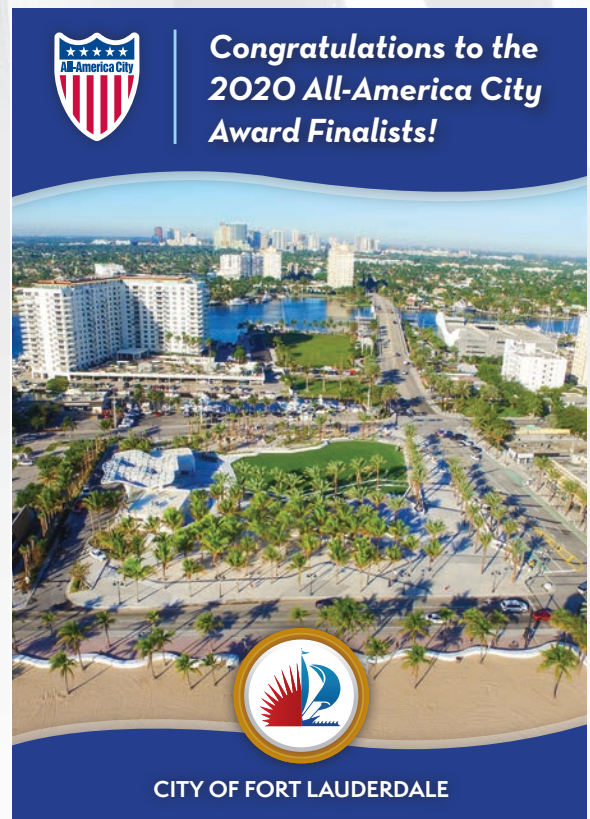
Logansport Municipal Utilities Generating Plant and the General Tire Plant - These underutilized properties were cleared for new housing.

Updated Historic Structures Inventory - The city produced an updated guide of historic housing, sponsored a Historic Preservation Week, and began the process of applying for a new historic district.

Construction is up more than 100 percent and property values are on the rise, creating a more stable tax base.

Energy Smart Initiative

Logansport turned what many would see as a setback into an opportunity when the EPA-mandated closing of its generating plant was used as an opportunity for the city to continue providing power to Logansport at a reduced and competitive rate. After a competitive process vetted eight proposals, Logansport leaders opted to award an agreement to Next Era, a solar/wind provider. The result of the new utility





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agreement was an 11.5 percent decrease in electric rates across the board. The savings alone was approximately \$70,000 a month for the city's largest employer, Tyson Foods.

With energy costs decreasing due to the agreement with Next Era, manufacturers seized this opportunity to expand. Myers Spring announced plans to double in size, Logan Stampings combined operations from other cities and moved into a larger local plant, and Cass County Protein embarked on a \$19 million expansion.

Utility savings plans didn't stop there, officials concentrated on lowering utility-related costs to the city through an Energy Savings Program. Bonded through the city, an ESP would provide energy saving installations, with the savings paying the cost of the bond issue. After exploring the potential through an energy audit, the city's leaders decided to proceed with energy-saving measures such as:

- Converting streetlights to LED lights
- Window treatments, thermostats and retrofitting golf carts with solar panels

- Retrofitting city buildings with LED fixtures
- Additional efforts have gone into promoting a culture of energy conservation and auditing the wastewater treatment plant's energy consumption.

Addressing Public Health

Since 2016, Logansport has been on an aggressive trajectory of addressing public health issues. Efforts have included:

- Installing bike lanes on the city's two major thoroughfares, providing more opportunities for cycling and calming traffic.
- Expanding drug treatment options through a grant from Four County Counseling Center, the community's only comprehensive mental health facility.
- Establishing a cancer center on the local hospital campus.
- Securing funding for two outdoor fitness areas
- Creating a national trail. The city applied for grant funding to connect Logansport with Lafayette via a 40-mile trail and to have a trail intersection in downtown Logansport.

Additionally, the local hospital Memorial has used a portion of its revenue to donate to the school corporation which has a health careers curriculum. The hospital also underwrites the cost of athletic training for the school sports teams.

Health prevention measures also were the target of a \$3.7 million capital fund drive for the Cass County Family Y. For just the second time in its 50-year history, the Y embarked on a drive to transform its facility. This drive quickly raised more than \$3.2 million and renovations and expansions of the Y campus are progressing.

In looking ahead to the future, Memorial Hospital and its foundation actively pursued a community needs assessment. A survey of community leaders assembled for a task force has identified mental health care, drug treatment and prevention and diabetes prevention as priorities in addressing well-being.



Mason City, Iowa

Mason City Iowa is known as the original 'River City' and was the inspiration for the town in composer Meredith Willson's Broadway hit musical The Music Man. Mason City began experiencing "Trouble... With a Capital 'T'" when an economic downturn forced several closures in downtown. To address this 'trouble,' the community came together to establish a regional strategic plan, Vision North Iowa. This inclusive effort drew from the input of key partner organizations; a diverse steering committee representing the entire region; and stakeholders from multiple cities, chamber of commerce organizations, school districts, banks, local businesses, industry, and the county.

The plan provided a blueprint for the following projects and the revitalization of Mason City.

River City Renaissance Project – Mason City Arena Southbridge Mall, located in downtown Mason City, had been a popular retail hub since opening but recently several retail stores closed, resulting in increased vacancies. At the same time, the North Iowa Ice Arena was deteriorating. The ice-skating facilities and equipment in the arena were in need of repair and substantial reinvestment was necessary.

As both the tenant occupancy in Southbridge Mall and the condition of the North Iowa Ice Arena continued to decline, city and community leaders came together and determined the best solution involved the construction of a multi-purpose arena at the west end of the mall that could serve as an anchor mall tenant and a new ice arena, amongst other things. The community believed that a new, larger, more visible and reliable multi-use arena would allow the users to expand program offerings and attract additional participants to various ice sports and other entertainment events.

The city spearheaded a local referendum and the chamber of commerce formed a committee that "rocked the vote," helping pass the referendum with overwhelming support. Additional support came from the local hockey organization which pledged to raise 10% of the funds.

This project has allowed Mason City to take a space that was vacant and revitalize it, turning it into a mixture of retail and entertainment. Since ground-breaking, 13 new stores have opened in the mall, doubling the occupancy rate, and established businesses have reported an average increase of over 70% in sales. The arena will continue to transform the downtown into a regional destination for food, shopping and entertainment for residents and visitors alike.

Volunteers 'Make Mason City Sparkle'

The Mason City Volunteer Program was designed to connect citizens with opportunities to enhance the community by donating their time and skills. The volunteer program educates volunteers of all ages on the benefits of volunteering and booths have been set up at various events to educate residents on volunteer opportunities.

Volunteer projects include:

- **Tree Planting** - Students planted 204 trees in the Trees Forever and Alliant Energy's Branching Out Program.





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Chula Vista, California

Chula Vista shares the commitment to engage residents in supporting vibrant, thriving and diverse communities.

- **Beautification Flower Program** - 82 volunteers donated 1,975 hours of their time to design, plant and maintain gardens.
- **Earth Day** - Volunteers participate in a city-wide cleanup and a festival consisting of games, food and educational booths is held in conjunction.
- **The River Float and Cleanup** - Volunteers canoe down the Winnebago River while cleaning riverbanks.
- **Adopt-A-Street and Adopt-A-Lot** - Volunteers sign up to 'adopt' a trail, street, lot, or a section in the community, ensuring it stays clean and cared for.
- **Park Watch** - The Police Department and volunteers patrol parks to keep them safe and free of vandalism.
- **Cemetery History Walk** - Volunteers portray a person buried in the cemetery to educate the public about the cemetery's history.
- **Before and After School Program** - Kids are provided with a safe and fun place to be.

- **Santa Calls** - Volunteers sign up to be Santa and Mrs. Claus, calling registered children to make their holiday extra special.

In 2019 volunteers made Mason City Sparkle by donating 15,130 hours of service, equaling a value of over \$350,000.

5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count

This messaging campaign tackles issues of diabetes and obesity, standing for: 5 or more fruits/vegetables; no more than 2 hours of screen time; 1 hour or more of physical activity; and 0 sugar drinks.

5-2-1-0 efforts include

- **Frame Mason City Trail** - Frames invite people to walk, run, bike, skate and post a picture.
- **Sickeningly Sweet Campaign** - Addresses the negative health properties of sugar and offers alternative ideas.
- **Healthy Food Prescription** - Residents receive a voucher from their doctor for fresh produce at their local grocery store.
- **Trees for the Town** - Students planted trees, creating a healthy walkable environment and inspiring more outdoor activity.
- **Giant Interactive Family Games Launch** - Games are loaned out to various groups, promoting physical activity and bringing people together.
- **High School Government Classes Walkability Project** - Students provide input to the city regarding barriers to walkability and students consider walking as an alternative for transportation.
- **Climb N' Crawl** - A soft play structure that provides a free, indoor play space for children.
- **Moonlight Bike Ride** - Invites children and adults to decorate bikes while learning about safe riding practices and receiving free bike bells and lights.
- **Fruit and Veggie Tracking Bracelets** - Bracelets help kids track when they eat a serving of fruit and/or vegetables.
- **Walk with a Doc** - Residents walk while having questions answered by local physicians.
- **NetWalking** - Traditional food and drink-oriented networking is replaced by mobile networking.
- **Community Garden Gleaning Racks** - Donates produce from community gardens to families facing food insecurity.



- **Active Hallways/Sensory Decals** - Small additions to school hallways help bring activity indoors.
- **5-2-1-0 Childcare Provider Recipe Books** - Encourages cooking healthier foods rather than eating fast food.

Miami Gardens, Florida

The City of Miami Gardens is the 3rd largest City in Miami-Dade County and the largest predominantly African American municipality in Florida. Miami Gardens was incorporated in 2003 out of a quest for self-determination that unfolded as a 6-year citizen advocacy campaign. At the time, escalating crime level, a dilapidated park system and flat line economic growth were at the heart of residents' angst; conditions perceived by many to be the effects of a long history of neglect by county officials.

Since 2003, significant strides have been made to provide superior services designed to enhance public safety and improve the overall quality of life, while exercising sound stewardship through open government and active civic, business and resident involvement. Highlighted projects show how the community has addressed health disparities and improved overall health and well-being for all residents.

Live Healthy Miami Gardens

In 2014, Miami Gardens was awarded a \$3.75M, six-year grant from Health Foundation of South Florida. The grant was to establish Live Healthy Miami Gardens (LHMG), a concerted, collaborative effort to unite residents, government, nonprofit practitioners, funders, businesses and researchers.

From inception, the city built in an 18-month planning period to allow for adequate community involvement, buy-in and decision making. During the planning period, a community check-in process was conducted, consisting of focus groups and surveys from more than 700 residents. With the help of over 100 stakeholders, 5 health impact areas were selected: Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs (ATOD); Healthy Eating and Improved Nutrition; Mental Health; Physical Activity; and Primary

Healthcare. A community action plan was developed with short and long-term strategies, prioritized by the community to address local challenges.

The following are just a few of the accomplishments of LHMG:

- Formed 3 Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) Clubs and trained 35 students as advocates for ATOD policy changes.
- Trained 1,013 residents in cooking classes to promote healthy eating.
- Started a Healthy Restaurant Project with 10 local restaurants to increase healthy menu options.
- Conducted a Mental Wellness Forum to demystify and normalize mental wellness.
- Developed and implemented a Worksite Wellness Program within the city and supported 3 Miami Gardens' employers in adopting worksite wellness policies and practices.



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2018



- Launched a “Take Your Loved One to the Doctor” campaign, which secured pledges from 833 community members.

City of Miami Gardens Department of Public Works

The Department of Public Works does so much more than maintain public property within the city limits. In Miami Gardens, the Public Works Department is focused on enhancing connectivity by improving bicycle and pedestrian networks. The increased active transportation contributes to healthy lifestyles and community vitality.

Recent accomplishments include:

- The city’s Comprehensive Development Master Plan (CDMP) was created after getting feedback through a series of community visioning workshops. The updated plan includes a multi-use walking trail, landscaping enhancements along major thoroughfares, and plans to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and bike lanes.
- The Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan enhances non-motorized transportation mobility and accessibility, connecting activity centers, neighborhoods, and community facilities.
- A Complete Streets policy was adopted to build streets accommodating older adults in order to create a safer environment for people of all ages.
- The Keep Miami Gardens Beautiful Advisory Board was established to make suggestions on how to improve the city’s physical appearance.
- A Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plan was developed to create safer opportunities for children to walk and bike to school.
- The Swat-A-Litterbug and Adopt-A-Road programs were created to control littering. The Miami Gardens Express was expanded from 2 to 3 free community trolleys.
- 340 shade trees were planted near walking/ biking trails and transit stops.
- Best practices for physical activity and healthy food access were incorporated into the CDMP, promoting a healthy food system with policies to improve local food access, support urban agriculture, and promote healthy food sales.



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City of Miami Gardens Department of Parks & Recreation

The Department of Parks and Recreation maintains over 170 acres of environmentally friendly parkland and operates 12 community centers, 3 swimming pools and a splash pad. The Department coordinates fun-filled city-wide special events throughout the year, providing residents with beautiful open greenspaces, healthy activity choices, walking trails, and countless programs and services.

As part of the General Obligation Bond passed by residents, a comprehensive Bond Implementation Plan was developed with community input. The plan lays out a shared vision and includes:

- Literacy – An array of free afterschool camps and summer camp programs are offered for grades K-12, where certified schoolteachers are present to assist students with homework. Free STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) workshops are offered throughout the year, as are free chess classes.



- Behavioral issues – Free anger management and conflict resolution sessions are available with a certified therapist to help youth navigate through their feelings and express themselves in a healthy manner.
- Free swim lessons are available for the entire community, and low-cost programs are available for adults and children including yoga, pilates, martial arts, line dancing, and more.
- Free Wi-Fi is available at all parks and each community center is equipped with a computer lab to assist residents with searching for services, preparing resumes, completing homework, and more.

The city continues to hold monthly Bond Oversight Committee Meetings to ensure the projects are on track and to give residents a forum to make suggestions. This valuable feedback contributes to helping shape great neighborhood and community spaces and outstanding cultural, educational and recreational opportunities.

Miami Lakes, Florida

The Town of Miami Lakes, incorporated in December 2000, is one of the youngest municipalities in Miami-Dade County. With 30,000 residents and 1,700 businesses, The Town Council's initiatives are directly focused on encouraging civic engagement, collaboration, and inclusiveness. Beginning in 2001, the Town of Miami Lakes introduced 11 volunteer committees to address the challenges the community faces and to plan future initiatives. Last year, these committees hosted a total of 227 special town events to help achieve their goals of helping Miami Lakes grow beautifully. As the town grows, it continues to strive for innovation and engagement, while remaining true to its original founders' vision of providing the highest quality of life for its residents and visitors.

Transition Skills Class for Young Adults on the Autism Spectrum

The mission of the Special Needs Advisory Board is to create a model town for inclusion, by identifying specific Miami Lakes families with an interest in matters pertaining to individuals



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with special needs; connecting them to existing programs, services and events; and, serving the Town Council in an advisory capacity to identify unmet needs and assist with the discovery of possible solutions.

Florida International University created a Special Needs Blueprint which highlighted the need for inclusion, community mindfulness, increased employment opportunities, and awareness of mental health issues that affect the special needs community in Miami Lakes. Based on the needs identified in the blueprint, the advisory board piloted a Transition Skills Class for Young Adults on the Autism Spectrum.

The class, open to young adults over the age of 22, focused on topics such as successfully transitioning to adulthood and life after high school—including health, safety, self-care, and more. The classes met for one hour over a period of 8 weeks. The class, taught by an ESE certified teacher with over 15 years of experience working with students on the Autism Spectrum, was attended by ten students during its inaugural





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year, with materials and books provided by the advisory board.

At the end of the pilot program, evaluation methods were used to ensure that participants were satisfied with the curriculum. While some constructive criticism was given, the pilot program was an overall success and will continue to be given once a year, considering the feedback from students and families.

Culinary Bike Tour

In an effort to encourage residents to be physically active while promoting local economic growth, the Town of Miami Lakes, its Neighborhood Improvement Committee (NIC), and its Economic Development Committee created the Miami Lakes Culinary Bike Tour.

The 5-mile culinary tour began at the local restaurant, NQC, an abbreviation for “Not Quite Cuban” and then continued through 10 different Hispanic, Italian, and American restaurants. The Town’s Freebee service (electric vehicles) was extended for the event to pick up guests who could not continue cycling.

The Culinary Bike Tour was a successful collaboration between the town’s committees, local businesses, the county’s bike initiative, and over 200 cyclists from in and around the Miami Lakes area.

Miami Lakes, in conjunction with the NIC, BIKE305 and Miami-Dade County, also hosts monthly community bike rides, promoting cycling as a way to connect people to communities and create a more livable, healthy, and sustainable environment. The monthly rides are attended by an average of 150 people and are promoted on all social media channels, the Miami Bike Scene website, and the Miami Laker, the town’s local newspaper. These events are family-friendly and open to all. All cycling events include police escorts to ensure the safety of riders. Town staff, certified to properly fit bicycle helmets, giveaway fitted helmets to riders of all ages at these events.

The Culinary Bike Tour and monthly bike rides will continue to be promoted for years to come, with the hope that the offerings improve residents’ moods, well-being, self-esteem, and sense of community.

Town-Wide Mental Health Initiatives

The Town of Miami Lakes and its Youth Activities Task Force and Veterans Affairs Committee, together with a local college student and resident, hosted the “Out of the Darkness Mental Health Awareness Walk” in honor of a fellow student who struggled with mental illness and committed suicide. The student was the second Miami Lakes adolescent to commit suicide in two years.

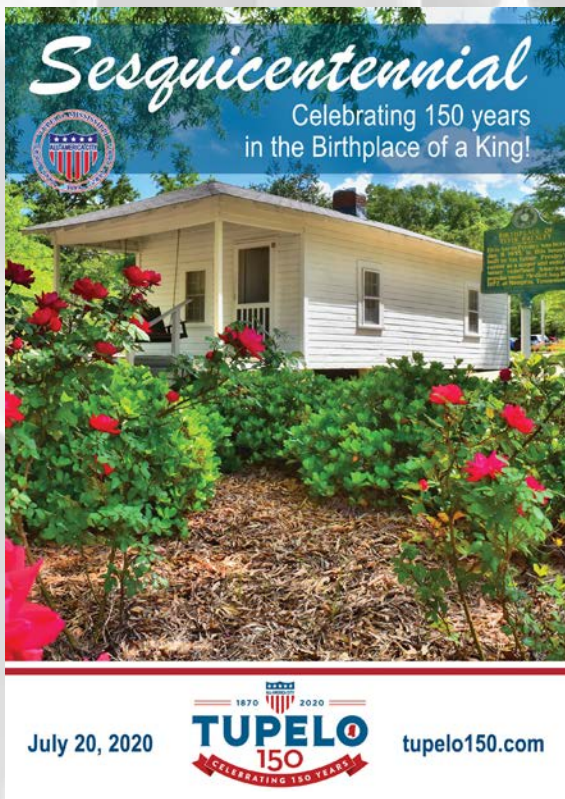
The suicide awareness walk included an interactive mural for students to write messages to their late friend or for those still struggling with mental illness. Along the track, several mental wellness resources and organizations were present to distribute information. Licensed therapists and those affected by the recent loss gave testimonies and shared ways to cope and grieve.

In addition to the mental health awareness walk, the town’s annual Health and Fitness Fair featured over twenty companies or organizations specifically related to mental health and wellness.

Continuing the community’s focus on mental health, the Miami Lakes Town Foundation awarded grant funding to a local teacher for her “Throwing Kindness Like Confetti” project. The project transformed the girl’s bathrooms in the school with hand-painted murals with inspirational messages and affirmations.

The foundation also awarded a grant to “The Open Mind, Open Arms: Mental Health Awareness Organization.” A high school student started the mental health awareness club to allow for candid conversations about mental illness.

The Town of Miami Lakes through its committees, charitable foundation and its local schools is approaching this epidemic by encouraging the community to be open, kind and seek resources.



Muncie, Indiana

A decade ago, a diverse group of citizens came together to chart a course toward a common future that reflected Muncie Indiana's shared values and aspirations. Over 2,000 residents participated in facilitated conversations designed to answer the question, "What is needed for Muncie to be the best it can be in the coming years?" This initiated a time of collaboration between local government, not-for-profits, business and community leaders, and educational institutions. The initial Muncie Action Plan (MAP) report created a compelling agenda for the future as Muncie continues to work toward becoming a community that respects diversity, manages resources effectively, and efficiently, and works together to provide an attractive, desirable place for individuals, families, and businesses. The three projects highlighted were launched under the MAP umbrella.

Web of Support

Residents consistently identified mentorship as a priority throughout a series of community conversations. Through a series of fortunate circumstances, community leaders became aware of the "Web of Support" framework.

This framework draws upon data and insights from multiple fields of study. Research shows that in order to grow into resilient, caring, and productive adults, children need to have at least five positive, caring adults, or "anchors." Anchors may be family members, friends of the family, teachers, coaches, etc. These anchors ensure that youth have their tangible needs met and model intangible attributes, attitudes, and actions that are critical to youth development. Tangible and intangible "strings," held by at least five anchors, weave a web of support to protect youth from harm and lead to thriving and resilience. Web strength also is impacted by each anchor's own web of support and social norms, which can be positive or negative.

The initiative was launched in Muncie through two community open forums and two rounds of two-day workshops for 50 adult community leaders representing local youth-serving organizations and teachers and 50 Muncie Central high school students. Students were introduced to the idea of "webbing up" by seeking out anchors and identifying tangible and intangible needs. Adults learned how to both serve as an anchor and identify their own web of support.

Moving forward, Muncie is creating an "open innovation" space where Web of Support Ambassadors can come together to practice their napkin talk and continue to develop the cross-generational friendships sparked during the workshops.

The Whitely Neighborhood and Schools Within the Context of Communities

For more than a decade, faculty members from Ball State's Teachers College have collaborated with the Whitely Neighborhood and the Whitely Community Council to develop a groundbreaking teacher preparation program called "Schools Within the Context of Community" (SCC). This multi-disciplinary, immersive program prepares socially-just, equity-focused teachers by providing

them with unique opportunities to understand the complex contexts in which children are growing and learning.

Pre-service teachers are immersed in the Whitley community to learn from and with community members. The students complete a practicum in the neighborhood's schools, assist with after school programs, and participate in guided discussions with multiple faculty members and Whitley residents, school administrators, service providers, local pastors, and community elders on issues such as race, language, socioeconomic status, privilege, and power.


Further, each student is "adopted" by a community mentor or mentor family who serves as his/her cultural ambassador. Students and mentors attend family gatherings, worship services, community meetings, and other events together. This provides valuable cultural and contextual insights for working with children and their families both in and out of the classroom.

SCC students also work with Whitley Community Council members to accomplish neighborhood priorities, such as a massive fundraising endeavor to sustain the local community center, grant writing for expanded after-school programs, and the restoration of a historic church in the neighborhood.

This award-winning approach emphasizes the intentional cultivation of collaborative relationships, elevates both contextual awareness and community cultural wealth, and offers an in-depth and direct understanding of social inequality.


8twelve Coalition

In partnership with the Vectren Foundation, Greater Muncie Habitat for Humanity spearheaded the creation of the 8twelve Coalition in 2015 to drive neighborhood revitalization in portions of two specific neighborhoods which had been disproportionately impacted by changing economic and demographic factors, resulting in a 15% population decline since 2000. Believing that the story of neighborhood decline can have a different ending, the 8twelve Coalition was formed to create and execute a quality of life plan for the area. Neighborhood residents drive all priorities and projects; non-




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profit organizations and local businesses provide structure and support.

Four action teams meet monthly and report progress to the steering committee in the following areas:

1. Housing: Projects including owner-occupied repairs, rehabilitation, new construction, transitional housing, and affordable rentals; outreach to realtors, lenders, and buyers; vacant house boarding, and development of a land bank.
2. Businesses/Jobs: Matching employers and employees; job training; creating directory of local businesses; addressing food deserts; advancing Muncie Mission aquaponics project.
3. Education and Family Support: Afterschool programs at library; resource hubs for residents; increased high quality childcare access.
4. Beautification: Sidewalks and lighting inventory; youth engagement areas; bus shelters; landscaping, community garden, vacant lot foster program.

While much of the work in the neighborhoods is supported by non-profit organizations and local businesses, all priorities and projects are driven by the residents. Residents are connected, integrated, and empowered throughout the coalition's work. In 2018 alone, residents embarked on 11 projects, including a comic book club, nature backpacks at the library, and pop-up porch parties.

Pitt County, North Carolina

The mission of Pitt County Government—to enhance the health, safety, and well-being of the community by advocating for and providing quality services in a friendly and cost-effective manner—was developed from a strategic planning process which included county departments, municipalities, agencies, not-for-profits, faith-based groups and many other stakeholders.

Identified in this common mission is an intentional commitment to engage people to determine their needs and to implement solutions. From the community health needs assessment, to comprehensive master plans, to appointments to boards and commissions, to establishing health priorities, the county listens intently to the voices of residents.

Using these resident voices, Pitt County identifies, develops and targets initiatives that connect community members with resources that improve health and well-being.

Local Reentry Council

To reduce high rates of recidivism, the Pitt County Local Reentry Council (LRC) was established to help previously incarcerated individuals navigate through the difficult transition period. LRC coordinates community resources and addresses service gaps to help recently released inmates become financially independent and productive members of society.

The LRC convened stakeholders and developed innovative strategies and solutions to the problems faced by incarcerated individuals. Administration of the LRC is conducted through LIFE of NC, an intermediary agency tasked with

coordinating all aspects of the reentry process.

Programs include:

- LIFE of NC - provides a central location that offers case management, job placement, employment training, legal counsel, substance abuse support, mentoring, transportation assistance, temporary housing, education and vocational rehabilitation through LRC partners.
- Third Street Education Center - developed a Business and Workforce Development program that acts as a bridge to gainful employment. Third Street also provides participants with assistance in obtaining their GED and National Career Readiness Certification.
- Sheriff's Heroin Addiction Recovery Program (SHARP) - led by the county sheriff, SHARP is a voluntary recovery program that addresses opioid abuse by offering a structured environment where staff provide selected inmates with a strict regimen of classes and activities throughout the day. Students from East Carolina University facilitate a weekly curriculum to develop healthy relationships and life skills, and doctoral psychology students provide weekly psycho-educational sessions with participants.

Since 2015, over 500 individuals have transitioned into the community through the LRC with a 15.9% recidivism rate, well below North Carolina's average recidivism rate of 43%.

Community Paramedic Program

Access to adequate health care is a problem that many Pitt County residents face and oftentimes leads to the overutilization of emergency services. In 2019, 28% of 911 calls in the county were for non-emergent cases and presumably did not warrant ambulance dispatch.

A series of collaborative discussions between a variety of health care stakeholders were held to identify creative ways to serve patients who lack the resources to obtain adequate healthcare and subsequently misuse emergency services.

The Community Paramedic (CP) Program was born. This unique initiative expands the traditional EMS/paramedic role to provide health care and services to underserved populations



Pitt County is a rapidly growing, diversified employment and service center for eastern North Carolina. As one of the fastest growing regions in the state, Pitt County Government strives to enhance the health, safety and well-being of our community by advocating for and providing services in a friendly, efficient, and cost-effective manner.

Since **1760**, we've proudly served the residents of this great region. For over **260** years, we have worked to build our legacy; and now continue to eagerly look forward to experiencing the fond memories of our rich heritage, and the excitement of what opportunities the future will bring for our thriving communities.



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lacking access to physicians, hospitals/clinics, pharmacies and other related resources. The CP Program employs one paramedic who assists in clinical care, coordination of and connection to services, and patient education within the patient's home environment. The CP not only serves as a paramedic and healthcare provider, but also operates as a nurse, coordinator, patient navigator, social worker, pharmacist, safety advocate, and wellness coach.

The program is guided by a diverse steering committee comprised of social workers, community health management, EMS providers, ED physicians, and executive leadership. The program primarily targets three populations: high frequency EMS users, high frequency ED visitors, and patients at high risk for readmission to the hospital within 30 days of discharge.

The CP program lowers healthcare costs and increases the availability of resource. Since July 2018, over 200 patients have been referred to the CP program, resulting in a 50% reduction in EMS ambulance usage and visits to the ED.

Farm and Food Council

In 2015, the USDA Farm Service Agency in Pitt County convened a task force of private citizens, health professionals, public officials, and North Carolina Cooperative Extension staff to discuss how a local food council could impact the county's food system. From this meeting the Pitt County Farm and Food Council (FFC) was established with a mission to promote a healthy, sustainable, equitable, and economically viable community food system; and to initiate, support, and promote programs and policies that educate the community, diminish food disparities, and protect farmland.

The FFC is comprised of 13 members. A part-time Food Council Coordinator facilitates collaboration among organizations on food and nutrition policies and programs to address food security, farm and economic development, and food and nutrition education. Programs include:

- Pitt Food Finder - an app that provides a listing and location of local food resources in proximity to the user, including food pantries, soup kitchens, social services, farmers markets, and agritourism. In the first year, the app was downloaded 653 times.

- Leroy James Farmers Market - a local market with a farm school that helped over 40 participants develop business plans for their farms.
- Eastern North Carolina Food Commercialization Center - a planned food hub for small farmers to bring their products to be packaged, shipped, and sold. The center is projected to create over 250 jobs and over \$900 million in economic impact over the next ten years.
- Making Pitt Fit Community Garden - a community garden with a full-time coordinator who teaches gardening and nutrition to over 200 students in 12 kindergarten classes.

Portsmouth, Ohio

Portsmouth was a major manufacturing hub for most of the 20th Century, but changes in both the global and national economy led to deindustrialization and depopulation. This disruption effected economic stability, as well as the larger social order, making it vulnerable to a variety of social problems.

Portsmouth was hit hard by the Opioid Epidemic, ultimately being identified as the epicenter. Despite the severity of the problems brought on by the epidemic, Portsmouth has turned to the strength of its community to fight back. The highlighted projects show how Portsmouth has been able to critically examine and improve existing social institutions and relations to ensure the community is truly supportive and inclusive of all its members.

Addressing the Opioid Epidemic in Portsmouth
In 2010, the County Health Commissioner declared the opioid epidemic a public health emergency and local health departments formed a coalition of community stakeholders. This Drug Action Team Alliance recognized the need to invest in staff development and strategic planning in order to prevent new initiates to substance use. Strategies used included:

1. Providing Information:

- Educated prescribers on controlled substance prescribing guidelines and use of the prescription monitoring program.
- Conducted community forums to educate the public about the opioid epidemic.

2. Enhancing Skills:

- Informed parents about prescription drug abuse and facilitated conversations with youth about the dangers of prescription drug misuse.
- Implemented youth-led prevention initiatives in 8 school districts.

3. Providing Support:

- Targeted prevention strategies to the county's most vulnerable youth.
- Established a treatment-friendly Supreme Court Certified Juvenile and Family Drug Court.
- Reversed potentially fatal overdoses through Community-Based Naloxone Education.

4. Changing Physical Design:

- Installed permanent Prescription Drug Drop Boxes throughout the county.
- Embedded a Code Enforcement Officer to immediately secure and condemn drug houses.

5. Modifying/Changing Policies:

- Passed legislation to shut down illegitimate pain management clinics.
- Changed laws to increase access and utilization of naloxone to reverse opioid overdose.

6. Changing Consequences:

- Enacted stiffer penalties for criminal over prescribers, resulting in convictions of illegitimate pain management clinic operators.
- Passed a Good Samaritan Law, providing civil immunity to people who respond to report an overdose.

7. Enhancing Access/Reducing Barriers:

- Increased state-certified addiction treatment centers from 1 to 14 from 2010 to 2019.
- Enhanced access to Medication-Assisted Treatment for opioid use disorders.

Over time, these efforts have led to significant reductions in youth substance use and improved outcomes in the population.

Transforming Spaces

Portsmouth is actively transforming spaces in the city for 21st Century needs to create a healthy, visually appealing and inclusive city for residents.



Examples of public art transforming spaces include:

- 60 murals along the city's floodwall, depicting key moments in Portsmouth's history.
- Two murals celebrating local athletes and musicians.
- A 'Before I Die' wall to encourage personal expression in downtown.
- Banners of notable figures from Portsmouth's history along Chillicothe Street and Second Street.

New spaces encouraging exercise and outdoor activity include:

- A paved activity path through the park and a plaza with a monument depicting a map of the original earthwork mounds that once existed.
- A 1.6 mile multi-use path designed for biking and walking, providing safety from traffic.
- Five miles of hand-built mountain bike trails in Shawnee State Park.
- A disused lot in the city's downtown,

- transformed into an off-leash dog park.
- The Portsmouth Skatepark Project is scheduled for construction.

Historical spaces that were previously assigned negative connotations as symbols of decline are now being transformed into symbols of Portsmouth's resurgence:

- McKinley Pool, significant to Ohio's Civil Rights Movement, received its most substantial funding, allowing for improvements to pool facilities.
- The Spartan Municipal Stadium, a stadium that was once home to the former National Football League team, the Portsmouth Spartans, was made safer and more secure.
- The Greenlawn Cemetery, established in 1829 and home to over 85,000 graves, has been restored through the tireless work of community volunteers.

Downtown is also being transformed through large business investments, space renovations and the addition of an entrepreneurship center.

Community Building

After years of negative media attention brought on by the Opioid Epidemic, Portsmouth needed to boost the morale of residents and has done so through various events and activities.

- Winterfest includes activities such as ice skating, Christmas lights, snow tubing, carriage rides, a vendor village, a gift shop and a children's museum pop-up.
- Glocktoberfest is the celebration of the city's past, present, and future from the perspective of the Glockner Family and their 170+ year journey to the present.
- River Days festival offers a daytime parade in which contestants from each local school compete with themed floats.
- Blues, Brews and Barbecue festival includes live music, craft beer and a barbecue competition.
- Plant Portsmouth featured 1,405 residents coming together to break the Guinness World Record for the most people potting plants simultaneously.
- Christmas Caroling highlighted 1,880 community members breaking the world record for the most people Christmas caroling.
- Present wrapping featured 1,482 people

breaking the record for most people wrapping presents together.

- Portsmouth Block Party includes free food, inflatables, a dunk tank, a petting zoo and live music.
- Final Friday in Boneyfiddle is a free outdoor concert series that enhances commerce and community in the Historic Boneyfiddle shopping district.
- The Southern Ohio Senior Games encourage older people to have healthier lifestyles.
- Annual Service Day involves churches and organizations providing community service.

Rancho Cucamonga, California

Rancho Cucamonga City Council established Healthy RC as a comprehensive system of interconnected planning, program, policy, and partnership efforts that work across sectors to promote community health and equity. The initiative was established as a genuine partnership of government, community agencies, and grass-roots residents who collectively identify their community's health challenges and work collaboratively to address them. Healthy RC led to several programs, including those highlighted, designed to improve health and well-being.

Building Trust and Los Amigos Park
The predominantly Latino neighborhood of Cucamonga faced growing barriers to accessing healthy lifestyles; there were no outlets for selling fresh produce, limited access to open spaces for exercise, and streets lacked curbs, sidewalks, and bike lanes.

A grant provided the opportunity to build a 3.4-acre park, to be built for the community, by the community. A tailored approach to engagement was implemented to reach this population that historically did not trust local government. With a majority bilingual population, all materials including mailers, social media posts and online information were translated to Spanish. Design workshops were led by bilingual staff and held at various locations, days, and times to alleviate accessibility and scheduling issues for working families. Community partners donated food and staff provided childcare.

Cucamonga children and families were intentionally engaged. At one workshop, the

children from Los Amigos Elementary School helped create an art mural which was later used as the park's logo.

Parents provided input on the layout of the park and emphasized the importance of safety and visibility. Park needs, amenities, and even the park name were all determined during these workshops. The resulting final design included a skate park, basketball court, playground, water misters, and outdoor fitness equipment.

Additionally, motivated to address the missing sidewalks and bike lanes, members of Campeones para la Comunidad took photos, and created a photo-voice project of issue areas for a federal Safe Routes to School Grant Application. Funds were awarded for infrastructure enhancements, as well as educational programming for the nearby school.

Suicide Awareness and Prevention

Within the first two weeks of the 2018 school year, four Rancho Cucamonga students committed suicide. As a result of the community-wide trauma and grief, Healthy RC conducted a comprehensive Quality of Life survey which indicated that 57% of the respondents who acknowledged a need for help did not seek it. Additionally, one in three teens reported that they have attempted to harm themselves.

Healthy RC formed a Mental Health Subcommittee, which has developed strategies to address and inform mental health challenges.

The Subcommittee developed a bilingual Your Mind Matters (YMM) digital and print campaign that targeted all segments of the community. The materials encourage residents to "Start the Conversation" and direct residents to HealthyRC.com, which features an extensive list of local mental health resources.

Healthy RC Youth Leaders used their personal experiences to develop a series of mental health awareness videos, providing support for prevalent community issues and highlighting 24-hour hotline resources.

Youth leaders also worked with city staff to create an annual Teen Summit to empower high school students and provide them with a platform to be heard, to connect with mental health resources, and to listen to motivational speakers.

Healthy RC also hosts quarterly Community Conversations on Mental Health, providing small group settings to help reduce barriers to mental health services.

In addition, all five school districts have continued these community conversations by providing suicide prevention and Mental Health First Aid trainings to staff and workshops for students and parents.

Land Development

In 2015, a local gravel mine which had long been an eyesore, closed making it available for development. The city partnered with the



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county to annex the land and develop a plan to transform the mining site into a series of healthy, walkable neighborhoods and thousands of acres of conservation.

To the city's surprise, once presented the plan, the community expressed disappointment with the lack of inclusion and felt the city was forcing new development upon them.

The city set aside the preliminary concepts and began engaging the community in the creation of a new plan. City staff began by bringing blank maps to community workshops, representing a clean slate. Together, citizens and staff shared the responsibility of crafting a strategy to develop the quarry into desired neighborhoods while preserving the natural elements of the foothills.

The city embarked on further engagement, in both English and Spanish, focusing on "meeting the community where they are at." Nine pop-up outreach events engaged over 800 community members.

Virtual workshops, surveys, and other digital engagement events were held to ensure that all residents were able to receive information, ask questions, and provide feedback.

The resulting Etiwanda Heights Neighborhood and Conservation Plan articulates a vision for extensive conservation of the foothills and alluvial fans that border the city to the north. The plan is further enabled by high quality, complete, walkable neighborhoods that reflect the rural history of Etiwanda and provide a range of housing opportunities to the south.

Roanoke, Virginia

Roanoke's civic infrastructure is focused on making a "collective impact" enabling it to effectively address complex issues by employing grassroots, collaborative, data driven, evidence-based and comprehensive framework. This approach established nationally recognized programs such as an early childhood learning initiative, addressing the opioid crisis and enhancing access to health care. Roanoke organizers have abandoned an "organizational driven approach" in favor of a "community activation approach." Leaders from Roanoke's government, healthcare and nonprofit agencies practice more effective resident engagement collectively creating better conditions of health and well-being.

The depth and effectiveness of Roanoke's civic infrastructure is evidenced in their highlighted projects.

Improved Access to Health Care

Respondents of the Roanoke Community Health Needs Assessment listed "access to care" as a barrier to good health. With this shared understanding of access challenges, Healthy Roanoke Valley was formed to include more than 50 organizations focused on the social determinants of health.

Initiatives guided by Healthy Roanoke Valley include:

- Pathways Hub - Healthy Roanoke Valley brought together executives from the city's health safety net to address the obstacles keeping their neighbors from receiving quality care. The Pathways Hub pairs those at greatest risk with neighborhood-based community care workers who work with them



to coordinate their care. Pathways might include “prescriptions” for healthy foods, rides to the doctor’s office, exercise or techniques to manage diabetes. Since its inception, more than 249 community members have participated in the program with promising results.

- **Local Impact for Tomorrow** - Carilion Hospital, Roanoke City Public Schools, Freedom First Credit Union and a dental benefits carrier are partnering together to build the Southeast Community Health Center at the new Fallon Park Elementary School in southeast Roanoke. When completed, this facility, will provide medical and wellness services to students and the community, oral health care, and financial counseling as well as educational and job training programs.
- **Community Health Clinics** - A network of free and income-based clinics exist in Roanoke, ensuring access to quality health care nearest where the most vulnerable live. Most recently, the Bradley Free Clinic expanded its behavioral health offerings, immediately adding 150 clients, serviced by more than 20 new volunteers.

Improved Access to Fresh Food

As a result of 17% of residents in Roanoke being food-insecure and 24% living in food deserts, the Local Environmental Action Project (LEAP) was formed with a mission to “nurture healthy communities and resilient local food systems.”

Initiatives of this nonprofit have included:

- A year-round, community market in Roanoke’s impoverished West End area.
- The LEAP Mobile Market, where a box truck filled with local, healthy food makes weekly stops in low-income, low-access neighborhoods.
- A shared commercial kitchen and food business incubator, which also serves as a venue for dozens of public classes on cooking and food preservation.
- A resident-driven urban farm in southeast Roanoke.
- The Fresh Foods Rx program provides weekly health education and coaching sessions with health professionals as well as regular prescriptions to receive fresh, local food for no cost.

With financial support from Carilion Clinic, LEAP initiated several programs focused on making healthy local food more affordable.

- **SNAP Double Value** - People who participate in SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) can double their SNAP benefits at LEAP markets.
- **Medicaid Match** - With LEAP’s Medicaid Match, all Medicaid members can get double the value on purchases at LEAP Farmers Markets.
- **Healthy Food Vouchers** - As part of the Healthy Start Collaborative parents can receive \$10 vouchers each week to buy fresh produce. Parents of children enrolled in the Children’s Health Insurance Program can likewise receive \$10 each week for the purchase of fresh, local food. Additionally, seniors located within a Medically Underserved Area are eligible to receive food vouchers.

Enhanced Neighborhoods

Roanoke has begun focusing federal funding on targeted neighborhoods to see a greater impact by leveraging the funding with money from businesses and area nonprofits. As part of the process, each month, residents of the Melrose and Orange Avenue area and other stakeholders meet to provide input and receive updates about development.

Improvements include:

Safe Housing - Over a hundred homes have been renovated or constructed, all benefitting very low to low income residents. Additionally, Lead Safe Roanoke has cut lead poisoning risks in 499 homes.

New Library Branch - Melrose Branch has been constructed through a partnership between the City and Goodwill Industries of the Valley. The branch includes 30 new computers, a STEM lab and a small business center.

Community Solutions Center - The center serves as a location for community members to gather and address issues of importance to them and work toward solutions.

Community Build Barrier-Free Playground - The Roanoke Kiwanis Club will open a \$400,000, barrier-free playground located next to the new Melrose library branch.

Business District Enhancements - The neighborhood’s business district will benefit from replaced sidewalks, enhanced landscaping



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and bus shelters. Each of these enhancements was the result of a series of meetings and design workshops with the adjacent business owners and area residents, led by architecture and urban planning students from nearby Virginia Tech University.

Rochester, New York

The strength of Rochester's civic infrastructure lies in their intentional efforts to develop partnerships and engage people and institutions to identify and solve problems together. For centuries Rochester has nurtured and disseminated valuable innovations that have benefited the region as well as all corners of the globe. Many highly influential ideas, products and historic figures were developed and nurtured in Rochester, and ultimately were made more accessible to people of all backgrounds and to places well beyond Rochester.

In the spirit of that great heritage, the community continues to look for creative and inclusive paths

forward that embrace collaborative engagement and decision-making. A recent model of civic engagement is the Rochester 2034 Comprehensive Plan, a culmination of nearly two years of Rochesterians coming together to dream about their future. Non-profits, corporations, local businesses, residents, city staff, elected officials and advocacy groups contributed to the plan, and are now collaborating on its implementation.

High Blood Pressure Collaborative

One third of adults in the Rochester-Finger Lakes region of New York, roughly 350,000 people, are diagnosed with high blood pressure, which contributes to one half of heart disease deaths and is a leading cause of stroke and kidney failure.

To deal with this chronic illnesses, the High Blood Pressure Collaborative was launched in 2010. Guided by leaders from healthcare, business, education and other sectors, the initiative is focused on improving blood pressure control for adults in the region.



The multi-faceted intervention has provided best-practice consulting in clinical settings and hypertension interventions in congregations, worksites, neighborhoods, barbershops and salons. Multi-media campaigns encourage residents to “know their numbers” and to develop a “reminder” to help make taking daily medication a habit.

To track progress, the collaborative created one of the nation’s few, if not only, community-wide hypertension registries.

Despite steady community-wide improvement, the control rate for Blacks and Latinos continued to lag behind Whites. Tailoring interventions to communities of color became increasingly important, so the project pivoted from conducting blood pressure screenings at large community events to more targeted screenings and from running broad communications campaigns to ones focused on target populations. Another intervention was at barbershops and salons, ideal locations for raising awareness about health disparities in Black communities.

The collaborative’s work has had impressive results. Between 2010 and 2019, the community-wide registry data show a 45% decline across the region in the rate of adults with dangerously high blood pressure and 82.1% of individuals have their blood pressure under control.

Project HOPE and El Camino Neighborhood Revitalization

The Ibero-American Development Corporation (IADC) has invested and collaborated on many projects in the diverse and low-income El Camino neighborhood.

Among several efforts, IADC spearheaded Project HOPE, which aims to improve the overall health and well-being of the neighborhood. IADC galvanized the power of resident voices to create the El Camino Charrette & Vision Plan.

From the plan, the El Camino neighborhood has been able to organize several block clubs and neighborhood groups, develop strategic partnerships, work jointly with IADC to identify funding opportunities and apply for resources.

The community also began The La Marketa project, a pop-up cultural market with food, local vendors and a stage with live musicians and performances.

Another major project that was developed was El Camino, the 2.25-mile trail that runs through the heart of the neighborhood, connecting residents to parks, recreation centers and businesses.

One of the most prominent resident-initiated efforts is the Children’s Garden on Treyer Street, created by neighborhood moms who reclaimed three vacant lots that had been a hotbed for drug activity and prostitution for years. More than just a garden, the Treyer Street space has hosted Zumba classes, karate, free lunch distribution and so much more.

Most recently, IADC is working with residents to combat the local opioid epidemic. The ¡No Más! public awareness campaign has resulted in syringe clean-up efforts and contracted safety projects with the Rochester Police Department.

Major investments will also be coming to the neighborhood and the community is excited for the collaborative work to continue.

The Community Task Force on School Climate Rochester City School District (RCSD) data showed that Black students were suspended 2.5 times as often as their White peers, and students with disabilities were suspended twice as often as their general education peers. Given the troubling research linking out-of-school suspensions to eventual incarceration, Rochester activists and community members invited the Advancement Project to help bolster local capacity to address the school-to-prison pipeline.

The Advancement Project helped launch a collaborative effort facilitated by the Rochester Area Community Foundation, along with a wide variety of community stakeholders. The Community Task Force on School Climate (CTF) was formed to develop recommendations to improve school climate in the district.

Under the auspices of CTF, a group of local advocates from the Alliance for Quality Education began compiling a report on school discipline. The report, *Breaking The School-To-Prison*

Pipeline: The Crisis Affecting Rochester's Students And What We Can Do To Fix It, was released and extensive media coverage catalyzed change.

After a lengthy revision process that involved input from hundreds of students, parents, educators and community members, the RCSD Board of Education unanimously passed a new code of conduct, detailing RCSD discipline policies. The new code removed criminal language, clarified vague guidelines, made suspensions a last resort and promoted alternatives to suspension such as restorative practices.

In the new code's first year alone, total suspensions dropped a remarkable 27% and a further 8.4% the following year. Additionally, RCSD adopted several other interventions, including professional development in restorative practices and help zones replacing in-school suspension rooms.

Sumter, South Carolina

Team Sumter is proudly represented by a diverse group of individuals from all areas of the community – civic organizations, service agencies, businesses, churches, schools, and others – offering equal representation for every citizen. This entire team plays an integral role in the overall health, safety, and welfare of the community with initiatives ranging from community beautification to more complex social problems.

The city uses formal and informal processes to identify common goals and solutions to help meet diverse community needs. Sumter's diversity is reflected in representation on City and County Councils and abundant services are offered in both English and Spanish. As shown in their highlighted projects, Team Sumter has made it a priority to include traditionally marginalized populations as it works towards an improved quality of life for all residents.

Healthy Bodies

According to research, 32% of Sumter County's population was overweight or obese, and 15% of citizens reported that access to health services was a problem. This lack of access has been largely remedied by the establishment of Tandem Health,

a federally qualified health center that combines a wide range of affordable care with community outreach.

Tandem Health locations are purposefully situated near area bus stops, where reliable, low-cost transportation is available. Tandem also accepts all insurances and offers a sliding scale discount to eligible patients to ensure that finances are not a barrier to treatment.

With the issues of accessibility and affordability largely addressed, citizen-led groups shifted their attention to prevention initiatives.

Several farmer's markets have been established in former food deserts and the Friendship Community Garden, located in a predominantly minority low-income area, allows residents to tend to free garden plots, with unused produce being donated. Exercise opportunities are also being expanded with the addition of four new parks and improvements to 20 others.

Obesity is also being addressed through the "Healthy Weight and Your Child" program, which focuses on nutrition education to encourage healthy eating habits, and physical activity to promote an active lifestyle.

The program involves both parent and child in education, healthy food choices, and physical activity. The physician-referred program, available in English and Spanish for children ages 7-13 with BMI in the 95th percentile or higher, consists of 25 bi-weekly and weekly sessions held at the local YMCA.

Healthy Minds

Sumter County has an extensive network of mental health services, from inpatient treatment facilities to community-based support groups. Local government works with health care providers, public agencies, civic organizations, and faith groups to facilitate mental and emotional well-being and provide community support for people facing mental or behavioral difficulties.

Population-Specific Interventions Include:

- Students: Sumter's public-school district employs school psychologists to coordinate services and work one-on-one with troubled students. The district also operates Brewington Academy, a self-contained alternative program

for students whose disciplinary problems prevent them from learning in a traditional setting. Students have access to tools such as the Shout Back Lab, a computer program designed to identify violent or suicidal tendencies.

- **Veterans:** Comprehensive mental health services provided at Shaw Air Force Base consist of individual and marital counseling, educational classes, relaxation interventions, psychological testing, psychiatric services including medication, command consultations, and traumatic stress response.

The Sumter Family YMCA's "StrongMIND" program helps veterans manage PTSD by promoting positive thinking habits. This 12-week program incorporates breathing and yoga exercises, aerobic activities, and strength training.

- **Individuals Struggling with Addiction:** The Sumter Behavioral Health Services (BHS) provides a continuum of care for substance abuse and related issues. Individual and group counseling address depression and anxiety, trauma and PTSD, marital or partner issues, family issues, grief and loss, and anger management.
- **Seniors:** Project CheckMate addresses the social isolation faced by seniors who live alone. The project consists of regular in-home visits, household safety assessments, general assistance in household maintenance and much more.

Affordable and Humane Housing

Stable, affordable and humane housing is a basic human need and a community priority in Sumter. Programs available to those in need include:

- United Ministries operates a 26-bed emergency shelter for families in crisis. Meals, showers, and laundry facilities are available.
- YWCA of the Upper Lowlands offers a Safe House to families experiencing domestic violence. The emergency shelter offers a supportive environment focused on healing.
- Oxford Houses provides transitional housing to recovering alcoholics and addicts.
- The Sumter County Disability and Special Needs Board operates 22 residential facilities.
- The Sumter Veterans Council is developing a transitional housing program for veterans to empower those in need, as they move from active duty to civilian life.

In addition to these services for the housing insecure, Sumter is dedicated to improving the overall housing environment through these projects:

- The Sumter Pride program provides demolition assistance to owners of vacant houses that are hazardous or hopelessly deteriorated. Once demolished, the vacant land belongs to the owner and can be sold or used for new construction.
- STEP (Santee-Lynches Tenant Empowerment Program) reduces the burden of housing costs for citizens who seek short-term assistance while pursuing educational goals or workforce development training.
- The Affordable Housing Program helps with the up-front costs of home ownership by constructing stick-built houses for qualified applicants who contribute one percent of the purchase price.
- The Restore program assists qualified applicants with home repairs and maintenance.
- The Sumter Veteran's Council helps veterans remain independent, healthy, and safe in their own homes by offering various services.



The Civic Index - the 4th Edition

The fourth edition of the National Civic League's Civic Index is now available. For more than 30 years communities of all sizes have used the Civic Index to measure their civic capital – the formal and informal relationships, networks and capacities that enable communities to solve problems and thrive.

Building on decades of work in communities, the fourth edition updates the Civic Index with a specific focus on equity and engagement; key components for healthy, thriving communities.

Use the Civic Index with gatherings of community members, partner organizations or staff to spark conversation about community strengths and areas in need of improvement.

Email ncl@ncl.org if you are interested in using the new Civic Index in your community.



Download the Civic Index at: www.nationalcivicleague.org/civicindex



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