

Rural Placemaking Innovation Challenge 2020 – 2021 Awardees by Region

Northeast

2020

- The Pennsylvania Downtown Center is using a \$140,000 grant to provide technical assistance to help develop a plan to support downtown revitalization in the city of New Castle, the town of Shirley, and the boroughs of Clarion, Emlenton, Mapleton, Mt. Union, and Reynoldsville in Pennsylvania. Funds are being used to develop community assessments, action strategies and annual work plans.

2021

- **Conservation Fund** is using \$113,000 to assist the city of Madison and Boone County in West Virginia engage with USDA Rural Development and other partners to meet community needs and overcome barriers to developing an outdoor recreational economy. The Madison-Boone Resource and Recreation Action Plan will strengthen recreational options and community health, protect natural and cultural resources and enhance the community's character.

South

2020

- **Winrock International Institute for Agricultural Development** is using a \$215,000 grant to help develop a plan to support rural tourism opportunities in the cities of Lonoke, England, Stuttgart, and Helena-West Helena, Arkansas.

2021

- **Auburn University** is using a \$247,960 grant to develop a Placemaking Action Accelerator Plan. The university will focus on key priorities, including housing, economic development, expanded broadband access, preservation and enhancement of active greenspaces, historic sites and structures, community amenities, and community-led health and wellness initiatives.

The placemaking project will support public input sessions and capacity assessments. It will help develop placemaking action plans for the towns of Newbern, Greensboro, Moundville, and Uniontown, along with Hale County in Alabama. Funds also will help the university implement technical assistance, create a process map that other counties in the region can use, and outline plans to host an annual placemaking summit with county stakeholders.

- **Center for Habitat Reconstruction Inc.** is using its \$171,295 grant to support rural communities to identify and map their assets, challenges and opportunities. The center will focus on ways communities can use vacant and abandoned spaces. The center will organize planning activities to create placemaking plans, outline community-wide goals, strategies and tasks. The center also will help communities plan, assess and prioritize pilot placemaking projects. This assistance will help strengthen and expand partnerships to create and implement the plans. The center will help the communities improve the economy and social and cultural vitality through Innovation Seed Grants, and will expand access to broadband in rural areas. The assistance will benefit La Boca, Palmas Altas, Punta Palmas, and Verdum coastal communities in the municipality of Barceloneta, Puerto Rico.
- **Communities Unlimited (CU)** is using \$250,000 to provide training to communities in Texas on how to apply for USDA and philanthropic funds to implement placemaking strategies. CU will leverage its relationships with the TLL Temple Foundation, St. David's Foundation, and local governments and partners to create four diverse leadership teams. The teams will work to enhance broadband access in each community, convert vacant and abandoned properties into pocket parks and community gardens, create recreational spaces, and support small business solutions that enhance quality of life. The assistance will benefit people in McDade, Luling, Martindale, San Augustine, and Wortham, Texas.
- **Foundation for Puerto Rico (FPR)** is using \$250,000 to provide technical assistance and training to create a plan with actionable strategies to design distinctive public spaces, events and revitalization efforts that contribute to the community's well-being. This project will engage residents, local small business owners, community-based organizations, state government agencies, and the municipality of Naguabo to develop a Route 191 ("Destino 191") Placemaking Plan.

The plan will include community-based assessments of crucial infrastructure including water, health and emergency services, power utilities, broadband access and roadways. FPR will also mentor the community working group as it implements one of its placemaking projects within the 24-month performance period. The assistance will benefit people in the municipality of Naguabo, Puerto Rico.

- **Washington, D.C.-based Housing Assistance Council (HAC)** is using \$250,000 to assemble a diverse group of up to 12 communities, and to develop plans to create a more connected rural America through enhanced telecommunications infrastructure. HAC will select the communities during the first phase of its cooperative agreement. It will use the funds to structure placemaking engagements and create high-quality curricula, site visits, community stakeholder engagements and instructions. It also will use the funds to create innovative strategies that tie into larger community development planning goals and activities, and develop best practices and resources to make quality of life improvements.
- **Kentucky Highlands Center for Development** is using \$250,000 to convene public, private and philanthropic partners to help expand capacity for broadband access to enhance the quality of life for people who live in public housing. The assistance will benefit people in Bell, Clay, Harlan, Knox, Leslie, Letcher, Perry and Whitley counties in Kentucky.
- **University of Tennessee** is using \$248,821 to support the Tennessee RiverLine Community Planning Initiative. The initiative supports investments to help rural communities along a 652-mile stretch of the Tennessee River. The funds will expand the Tennessee RiverLine's capacity to offer planning and programming efforts in nine rural communities that lack access to local capacity-building. The community planning initiative and the placemaking project proposals will advance the vision of Tennessee RiverLine, and help drive economic development, public health, environmental stewardship and equitable access across these rural communities. The assistance will benefit the city of Clifton, and Roane, Hardin and Stewart counties in Tennessee; the cities of Bridgeport and Guntersville, and the Shoals area in Alabama; and the city of Calvert, and Paducah and McCracken counties in Kentucky.

West

2020

- **Tolani Lake Enterprises** in Winslow, Arizona is using a \$215,000 grant to provide technical assistance to develop a plan to support Tribal lands and tourism for the Navajo Nation's Cameron Chapter in Coconino, County.

2021

- **Hawaii County** is using \$225,000 to develop and implement a Strategic Placemaking Implementation Plan that brings to life its Kīlauea Recovery and Resilience Plan. The plan is a community-sourced, regional placemaking blueprint that reimagines Puna district, and identifies key social and economic development opportunities following the devastating 2018 Kīlauea eruption. Funds will help the county build capacity and establish a collective action structure to support long-term implementation of the placemaking plan. The county will expand partnerships and resource opportunities, and will provide spaces to develop and leverage adaptive funding and financing mechanisms. The assistance will benefit people in Puna district in Hawaii County.
- **Enterprise Center Partners** is using \$250,000 to help Anahola, Hawaii expand housing opportunities, including rental properties for older adults, workforce housing and affordable homeownership properties. Enterprise Center Partners will use USDA Rural Housing Service programs and resources to expand housing opportunities. Funds also will be used to help increase economic opportunities and expand small businesses by developing a plan to build or improve a farmer's market, café, and infrastructure to support rodeo activities. Funds also will be used to help increase farming and ranching activities, including individual micro-growing activities to help people increase their income and food sovereignty. Funds will be used to increase recreation and tourism by connecting resources to Kumu Camp and other local recreation facilities and trails in Anahola.
- **Greater Applegate Community Development Corporation** is using \$246,310 to create a plan for Applegate Valley to make the community vibrant and livable. Funds will be used to build a community action team to implement projects in Jackson and Josephine counties in Oregon and Siskiyou County, California.

Midwest

2020

- **McClure Engineering Company** is using a \$215,000 grant to develop a plan to support housing, workforce and broadband development in the city of Sheffield, Iowa, and the cities of Atchison and Lola in Kansas. McClure is providing support through partnerships with the capacity-building organizations Sheffield Betterment Foundation and Thrive Allen County.
- **Pierce County, Nebraska** is using a \$215,000 grant to develop a plan to support outreach to students and recent graduates for rural entrepreneurship opportunities in the agricultural sector in Pierce and Madison counties.

2021

- **Bowling Green State University (BGSU)** is using \$248,938 to facilitate public engagement and partnership development to help rural communities build their capacity to implement placemaking projects. The university will help communities implement projects that create a unique sense of place that enhances the quality of life for rural residents, and attracts and retains workforce talent. Funds also will be used to help develop a comprehensive placemaking strategy for each community that identifies ways to expand or reimagine community assets or amenities. The strategy will prioritize actionable placemaking projects and outline an implementation strategy for each project. BGSU will provide capacity through its students and staff to help communities begin priority placemaking projects, which also will provide students with meaningful applied learning experiences. The assistance will benefit people in Logan, Ashland, Union, VanWert, Williams, Lucas, Wood, Ottawa, Wyandot, Richland and Crawford counties.
- **Multicultural Initiative for Community Advancement (MICA) Group Inc.** is using \$248,676 to develop a community broadband placemaking action plan to help enhance the quality of life for people in the Lower Sioux Indian Community in Minnesota, and the Pawnee Nation and Cheyenne Arapaho Tribe in Oklahoma. MICA will develop the plan in conjunction with planning sessions and workshops with leaders in Tribal governments, education, health, the arts, cultural and historical preservation, natural resources, business, and representative end-users. MICA Group Inc. will help communities apply for infrastructure grants.