FINAL DRAFT

Prepared for:
The City of Bowling Green, Ohio

Prepared by:
Camiros, Ltd.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the residents, local community members and other partners who participated in this process, especially those that served on the Community Action Plan Task Force, including:

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• Todd McGee
• Jill Inkrott
• Megan Newlove
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• Michelle Clossick
• Father Jason Kahle

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• Pastor Dana Ward
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• Bruce Jeffers
• Joel Kuhlman
• Tina Bradley
• Joe Fawcett
• Brian O’Connell
• Heather Sayler

The Community Action Plan is dedicated to the memory of Task Force Member Dr. Steve Krakoff (1955-2017), BGSU Vice President for Capital Planning and Campus Operations.
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The Bowling Green Community Action Plan (CAP) is a community-led, collaborative effort that follows in the footsteps of the vision set by the Land Use Plan Update adopted by the City in 2014. It describes strategies to improve the quality of life for residents, with a focus on identifying projects for the City’s East Side and neighborhoods surrounding downtown Bowling Green. Development of the CAP has been directed by several goals including generating a stronger owner-occupied household market, attracting and retaining young professionals and families, developing high-quality rental units, encouraging greater investment toward improving existing properties, and establishing better community connections. The CAP has also been guided by comments received during the planning process, such as the need to address lifestyle conflicts between homeowners and Bowling Green State University students, lack of housing diversity, ineffective zoning regulations, and misunderstandings related to code enforcement. In order to advance the vision of the community and address these issues, the CAP outlines and prioritizes a suite of proactive and reactive neighborhood initiatives and policy recommendations based on both local understanding and national best practices.
The Community Action Plan is a key step in implementing Bowling Green’s 2014 Land Use Plan Update (shown on the right). The Land Use Plan was developed with a diverse Steering Committee, including representation from Bowling Green State University (BGSU) officials and students. A significant outcome of the Update was the adoption of the “7 Bowling Green Principles” created to act as a tool to evaluate requests for new development and guide redevelopment and revitalization of the City’s core area. These Principles were used to evaluate the CAP’s strategies and guide the overall planning direction.

An important component of the Land Use Plan is its focus on the East Side of the City. The East Side neighborhood has been greatly impacted by the growth of Bowling Green State University, which has created a magnet for student rental properties. Over the years, the character of the neighborhood has changed from single-family owner-occupied homes into an area dominated by rental properties geared toward students, compounded by aging housing stock and falling property values. The Land Use Plan emphasizes the opportunity to attract stable households to this community, which is walkable to downtown and the university. Given the lack of private reinvestment, impact on Bowling Green’s quality of life, and relationship to the success of BGSU, the risk of not adequately addressing these neighborhood issues would be a major setback for the City, its residents and property owners. The Land Use Plan recommends broad initiatives informed by the Principles intended to attract the City’s target market (young, educated professionals and starter families). The CAP seeks to advance the Land Use Plan’s goals through an implementable set of strategies and actions that will contribute to revitalization of the East Side and other central neighborhoods.

OUR VISION

As outlined in the “Community Engagement” section, attendees at Community Meeting 2 were asked to submit three words that describe their vision for Bowling Green neighborhoods in the next 10-15 years. Results were analyzed and aggregated to create a word cloud, the size of each word indicative of its frequency among all words submitted. This vision helps to define the community’s desired outcomes for success, while informing the goals and strategies towards progress.

“The neighborhoods of Bowling Green will be attractive, walkable and bikeable, with abundant green amenities. They will include safe and clean blocks that are inviting and livable for a vibrant mix of businesses, families, students, and professionals.”
STRENGTHENING TOWN-GOWN RELATIONSHIPS

Surrounding the BGSU campus are neighborhoods of renters and homeowners, families and single professionals, students, and seniors, many of whom are BGSU alumni. These residents are proud of the campus, just as they are proud and protective of their streets, yards, and homes. The University, City of Bowling Green, and local neighborhood organizations are encouraged to work together to promote a safe, sustainable and livable community. A primary issue facing town-gown communities such as the East Side is the ability for students, higher education professionals, and community members to establish healthy neighborly relationships.

The CAP establishes priorities for community service, volunteerism, and investments that will strengthen town-gown bonds and make the area a better place to live. As part of the CAP, the award-winning Court Street Connects project demonstrated the power of hands-on community participation to bring a wide variety of stakeholders together to achieve common goals. By utilizing the CAP as a roadmap for future changes, students, faculty, staff, property owners, and full-time residents can enjoy and look forward to the work they will do together and engage in making their community stronger as a whole.
ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

The intent of this CAP is to chart a course for achieving the community vision for the East Side neighborhood and encouraging reinvestment.

Successful implementation of CAP initiatives is dependent on strong commitments from and close collaboration among all partners, with the City coordinating these efforts. Other stakeholders, such as BGSU, property owners, developers, other units of government, and nearby residents have their own sets of interests and goals for community improvement that often align with each other. The CAP outlines a sequence of actions and responsibilities to realize its goals.

The CAP provides planning-level cost estimates for a variety of near-, medium-, and long-term initiatives. These estimates should be used to help organize existing and new resources for defined action. Recognizing that implementation should be guided by the City, but not be the sole responsibility of City staff, the CAP outlines available grants, tools, and approaches for implementation that can be undertaken by a wide variety of partners. The CAP also recommends the creation and strengthening of new entities to help drive the vision of the neighborhood forward. Implementation of the Plan will only be successful through continued community engagement and collaboration between local partners and neighborhood stakeholders.
The Preferred Plan outlines overall priorities for the East Side neighborhood as well as residential areas surrounding downtown Bowling Green. The Plan reflects stakeholder and Task Force comments and feedback generated through the community engagement process, with priorities listed in order of importance.

**CORE DEVELOPMENT**
Extends from the eastern edge of Downtown and connects to BGSU along E Wooster. The area contains several properties whose design and development could improve the walkability of the area and provide a model for contemporary mixed-use development in other parts of the City.

**TARGET REINVESTMENT**
Residential sections of the northeast and southeast neighborhoods are currently showing signs of deferred maintenance and blight. The vision to improve these areas is to cater to their dominant populations, with redevelopment in the northeast focused on families, post-collegiate professionals and BGSU faculty and the southeast geared toward workforce housing.

**SINGLE-FAMILY REINVESTMENT**
Includes the neighborhoods directly adjacent to Downtown and the blocks immediately to the north of Crim Elementary. Strategies for this priority area focus on stimulating private renovations, providing catalytic public improvements that can help stimulate reinvestment, and marketing the uniqueness of these communities to the broader region.

**TRANSITIONAL DEVELOPMENT**
The blocks of E Wooster Street between Troup Ave and S Mercer Road have been slowly transitioning from a primarily single-family area to a mixed-use environment. Encourage continued transition into a walkable district that blends harmoniously with the institutional uses on campus and the lower intensity single-family neighborhood to the south.

**HIKE-BIKE TRAIL ALONG CREEK**
The Hike-Bike Trail utilizes an existing creek and public right-of-way as an asset to begin to develop a recreational corridor and trail that can benefit current and future East Side residents. The Hike-Bike Trail recognizes the need for facilities that encourage active transportation as well as supporting neighborhood beautification and restoration of the natural environment.

**MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT**
Includes the blocks immediately west of the BGSU campus and areas south of Crim Elementary and north of Carter Park. Promote medium and higher density residential development in these areas, coupled with new public investments in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

**CREATIVE DISTRICT**
The designation of a Creative District on either side of the CSX tracks between Enterprise and Summit Street on the west, Manville Avenue on the east, Clough Street on the north and E Napoleon Road on the south. The District is intended to promote and incubate creative businesses and entrepreneurship opportunities, especially those focused on sustainability.

The Preferred Plan shown on the previous page is illustrative in nature and is organized around 7 Priority Areas, each with defining characteristics. Each Priority Area includes a range of public and private implementation actions which are further detailed within the chapter "Preferred Plan.”
EXTENDS FROM THE EASTERN EDGE OF DOWNTOWN AND CONNECTS TO BGSU ALONG E WOOSTER. THE AREA CONTAINS SEVERAL PROPERTIES Whose design and development could improve the walkability of the area and provide a model for contemporary mixed-use development in other parts of the City.

Initiatives are further detailed in the Core Development Area Chapter, beginning on PAGE 42.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIMING</th>
<th>EST COST</th>
<th>INITIATIVE</th>
<th>LEAD PARTNERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>A. Establish a new core zoning district for the Core Development Area to allow for minor height increases and reduced parking requirements in comparison to the current B-5 designation.</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>B. Rezone properties at Thurstin/Manville and E Wooster, including the municipal building site to the core zoning district</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Over $1m</td>
<td>C. Create a joint development agreement between the City and BGSU to facilitate the development of the southwest corner of Manville and E Wooster</td>
<td>• • •</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Over $1m</td>
<td>D. Establish a relocation option for the municipal utilities building and work with selected developer on implementing feasible redevelopment for the existing site</td>
<td>• •</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$100k - $1m</td>
<td>E. Enhance Thurstin-Manville and E Wooster intersection through public streetscape improvements</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>F. Apply for a grant for Court Street bicycle improvements through the PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program and the Ohio Local Transportation Improvement Program</td>
<td>• •</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$10k to $50k</td>
<td>G. Consider using Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to further fund improvements within the Core Development Area</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Target Reinvestment

Residential sections to the northeast and southeast of Downtown are currently showing signs of deferred maintenance and blight. The vision to improve these areas is to cater to their dominant populations, with redevelopment in the northeast focused on families, post-collegiate professionals and BGSU faculty and the southeast geared toward workforce housing.

Initiatives are further detailed in the Target Reinvestment Areas Chapter, beginning on Page 46.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIMING</th>
<th>EST. COST</th>
<th>INITIATIVE</th>
<th>LEAD PARTNERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>$10k - $50k</td>
<td>A. Create a city-wide rental property registration program including a landlord self-certification process to improve rental property conditions</td>
<td>City: ● Private: ● Neigh: ● BGSU: ●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>$10k - $50k</td>
<td>B. Facilitate the establishment of a Community Development Corporation (CDC)</td>
<td>City: ● Private: ●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>$10k - $50k</td>
<td>C. Utilize a portion of the Community Action Plan implementation funding to implement a micro-grant program (less than $5,000/grant) for the Target Reinvestment Area</td>
<td>City: ● Private: ●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>D. Work with Wood County Habitat for Humanity to focus Home Ownership and Home Repair programs and services on the Target Reinvestment Areas</td>
<td>City: ● Private: ● Neigh: ●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$50k - $100k</td>
<td>E. Evaluate recommended potential approaches to control building use conversions through a city-wide zoning update</td>
<td>City: ●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>F. Encourage property owners to apply for assistance through Wood County’s Community Housing Impact and Preservation Program (CHIP)</td>
<td>City: ● Private: ● Neigh: ●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>G. Improve landscaping requirements for new development within the R-3 zone</td>
<td>City: ●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>H. Rezone the area between the CSX tracks, N Summit Street, Court Street and Poe Road to R-3 Multiple Family Residential – Moderate Density</td>
<td>City: ●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>I. Encourage the newly created CDC, or other mixed-income developers to apply for Competitive and Non-Competitive Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC)</td>
<td>City: ● Private: ●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>Over $1m</td>
<td>J. Work with BGSU through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) to develop vacant University-owned property west of the CSX tracks between Evers Avenue and Ridge Street as well as existing parking lots between Ridge Street and Court Street</td>
<td>City: ● Private: ● BGSU: ●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

SINGLE-FAMILY REINVESTMENT

Includes the neighborhoods directly adjacent to Downtown and the blocks immediately to the north of Crim Elementary. Strategies for this priority area focus on stimulating private renovations, providing catalytic public improvements that can help stimulate reinvestment, and marketing the uniqueness of these communities to the broader region.

Initiatives are further detailed in the Single-Family Reinvestment Areas Chapter, beginning on Page 54

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIMING</th>
<th>EST COST</th>
<th>INITIATIVE</th>
<th>LEAD PARTNERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>A. Encourage forming and strengthening local neighborhood groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>$10k - $50k</td>
<td>B. Establish a rehabbers network program through a potential collaboration with BGSU and Habitat for Humanity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>C. Dedicate funding collected through the Court Street Connects project to beautify Ridge Park and support the East Side Neighborhood Association with planning and organizing an ongoing schedule of events at the Park</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$50k - $100k</td>
<td>D. Consider a Historic Preservation Ordinance and Commission, conduct a historic building inventory of the Single-Family Reinvestment Areas, and establish one or more local historic districts deemed significant to the City’s cultural fabric</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$50k - $100k</td>
<td>E. Evaluate recommended potential approaches for variances and conditional use requests through a city-wide zoning update</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>F. Encourage local groups to apply for a National Endowment for the Arts - Our Town Grant or a National Association of Realtors (NAR) - Placemaking Micro-Grant to help activate Ridge Park</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>G. Encourage residents to apply for the Brush with Kindness program through Habitat for Humanity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$50k - $100k</td>
<td>H. Modify the zoning code to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) for owner-occupied properties within the R-1 and R-2 zones to promote housing affordability and provide additional income for homeowners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>I. Encourage local groups to apply for the Every Body Walk! Micro Grant Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The blocks of E Wooster Street between Troup Avenue and S Mercer Road have been slowly transitioning from a primarily single-family area to a mixed-use environment. Encourage continued transition into a walkable district that blends harmoniously with both the institutional uses on campus and the lower intensity single-family neighborhood to the south.

Initiatives are further detailed in the Transitional Development Areas Chapter, beginning on Page 60

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIMING</th>
<th>EST COST</th>
<th>INITIATIVE</th>
<th>LEAD PARTNERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>A. Establish <strong>additional criteria for the site plan review process</strong> to ensure that new development meets the intent of the City’s land development regulations, CAP priorities, and enhances overall character of Bowling Green</td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>$100k - $1m</td>
<td>B. Work with BGSU to <strong>formalize and improve entries into campus</strong>, especially at S College Drive and Mercer Road</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>C. Rezone the blocks between Troup Avenue and S Mercer Road, south to Clough Street to <strong>R-3 Multiple Family Residential – Moderate Density</strong></td>
<td>Neigh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>$10k - $50k</td>
<td>D. Create and promote <strong>design guidelines</strong> for the Transitional Development Areas that will help ensure that new development fits within the existing neighborhood</td>
<td>BGSU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>E. Examine whether the <strong>windmill house</strong> on University Pond is eligible to apply for historic landmark status in order to help safeguard an important neighborhood landmark</td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>$50k - $100k</td>
<td>F. Work with BGSU and other property owners to create a <strong>walking trail around University Pond</strong></td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>Over $1m</td>
<td>G. Work with BGSU and selected developer to <strong>develop vacant University-owned property</strong> with mixed-use development including townhomes between Williams Street and Baldwin Avenue as well as the corner of E Wooster and State Streets and E Wooster Street and University Lane</td>
<td>Neigh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Multi-Family Development

Includes the blocks immediately west of the BGSU campus and areas south of Crim Elementary and north of Carter Park. Promote medium and higher density residential development in these areas, coupled with new public investments in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

Initiatives are further detailed in the Multi-Family Development Areas Chapter, beginning on Page 64

### Timing Est Cost Initiative Lead Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Est Cost</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Lead Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>A. Rezone the blocks south and east of Crim Elementary to R-4 Multiple Family Residential – High Density</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>B. Reduce parking requirements in the R-4 and R-5 Districts to encourage walking and biking to campus</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>C. Connect the design of the public street environment (complete streets) to zoning approvals</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$100k - $1m</td>
<td>D. Improve Clough Street, Scott Hamilton Avenue, Thurston Avenue, and College Drive corridors with bicycle infrastructure</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$50k - $100k</td>
<td>E. Create and enforce additional screening standards for residential parking lots as part of city-wide zoning update</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$50k - $100k</td>
<td>F. Create and enforce additional landscape standards for residential front setbacks as part of city-wide zoning update</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Over $1m</td>
<td>G. Work with BGSU to install traffic calming and pedestrian-oriented measures along Thurston Ave</td>
<td>•</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>$100k - $1m</td>
<td>H. Redesign portions of Carter Park to be more attractive and usable</td>
<td>•</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>Over $1m</td>
<td>I. Encourage redevelopment of properties adjacent to Carter Park into a neighborhood that supports and connects directly to the Park</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>J. Encourage large land assemblages while incorporating a unified street system that will tie future development into a connected neighborhood</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The designation of a Creative District on either side of the CSX tracks between Enterprise and Summit Street on the west, Manville Avenue on the east, Clough Street on the north and E Napoleon Road on the south. The District is intended to promote and incubate creative businesses and entrepreneurship opportunities, especially those focused on sustainability.

Initiatives are further detailed in the Creative District Chapter, beginning on Page 68.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIMING</th>
<th>COST EST</th>
<th>INITIATIVE</th>
<th>LEAD PARTNERS</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CREATIVE DISTRICT</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>The designation of a Creative District on either side of the CSX tracks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>between Enterprise and Summit Street on the west, Manville Avenue on the</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>east, Clough Street on the north and E Napoleon Road on the south. The</td>
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<td></td>
<td>District is intended to promote and incubate creative businesses and</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>entrepreneurship opportunities, especially those focused on sustainability.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Initiatives are further detailed in the Creative District Chapter, beginning</td>
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<td>on Page 68.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
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<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Lead Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$10k - $50k</td>
<td>A. Establish and define the goals of the District and recruit members to form a <strong>Creative District Alliance</strong></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$10k - $50k</td>
<td>B. Identify <strong>dedicated, multi-year funding streams</strong> to support an annual operating budget</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$10k - $50k</td>
<td>C. Encourage the Creative District Alliance to work with the City to develop a <strong>creative zoning district</strong> that would allow a broader mix of uses to help cultivate creative production and consumption</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$10k - $50k</td>
<td>D. Establish a <strong>tool-sharing program</strong> through collaboration with BGSU to assist emerging artists and makers who lack the means to buy expensive tools</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$10k - $50k</td>
<td>E. Develop supplemental live/work and <strong>creative production design guidelines</strong> as a resource to inform design and construction of projects geared towards artisanal production</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$50k - $100k</td>
<td>F. Develop a comprehensive and <strong>targeted marketing strategy</strong> to attract allied stakeholder groups that will play critical roles in realizing the vision for the District</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$100k - $1m</td>
<td>G. Encourage Creative District leadership to implement <strong>policy and financial incentives</strong> that make the District more attractive as a place to live and work for creative professionals</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>Over $1m</td>
<td>H. Visually distinguish the Creative District by demonstrating its identity through a variety of <strong>streetscape elements and public realm improvements</strong></td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>Over $1m</td>
<td>I. Explore opportunities for new uses including a <strong>kitchen incubator, greenhouses and artist spaces</strong> in the Creative District</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HIKE-BIKE TRAIL ALONG CREEK

The Hike-Bike Trail utilizes an existing creek and public right-of-way as an asset to begin to develop a recreational corridor and trail that can benefit current and future East Side residents. The Hike-Bike Trail recognizes the need for facilities that encourage active transportation and support neighborhood beautification and restoration of the natural environment.

Initiatives are further detailed in the Hike-Bike Trail Along Creek Chapter, beginning on Page 72.

<table>
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<td>Short</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>A. Organize a committee of the East Side Neighborhood Association and “friends of the trail” volunteer team to help clean, maintain, and promote the future corridor</td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$10k - $50k</td>
<td>B. Develop a Phase 1 detailed design that utilizes public right-of-way to connect Mercer Road to Crim Elementary School</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low Cost</td>
<td>C. Apply for grants through the Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program, the Ohio Recreational Trails Program, the Clean Ohio Trails Fund and the PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$100k - $1m</td>
<td>D. Implement and construct Phase 1, including the trail surface, landscaping, seating, signage, and lighting</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$100k - $1m</td>
<td>E. To support future phases, acquire easements along the east side of the vacant property south of State Street, between Amherst Village Apartments and Ivywood Apartments running north to E Wooster Street, east of Scott Hamilton Drive and from from Briarwood Drive to E Napoleon Road</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$100k - $1m</td>
<td>F. Develop a Phase 2 detailed design that utilizes this newly-acquired right-of-way to connect the segment between Scott Hamilton Avenue and Briarwood Drive and to connect the creek segment to the BGSU Campus and Carter Park</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>$100k - $1m</td>
<td>G. Implement and construct Phase 2</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>$10k - $50k</td>
<td>H. Develop a Phase 3 detailed design that includes bicycle infrastructure on Scott Hamilton Avenue between Crim Elementary and Manville Avenue, as well as an extension of the trail between Briarwood Drive and E Napoleon Road.</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>$100k - $1m</td>
<td>I. Implement and construct Phase 3</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Community Action Plan (CAP) planning process began on July 28, 2016 and has been supported throughout by the enthusiasm and participation of local residents and stakeholders. A primary goal was to ensure that all participants had the tools and information needed to actively participate. Conversations and community engagement activities central to the planning process were structured to break down barriers and build trust so that entities responsible for project implementation are prepared to succeed. A timeline of the planning process is shown below and described on the following pages.
Since completion of the 2014 Land Use Plan Update, significant city and university-led actions and activities have provided a framework for neighborhood reinvestment. These include:

- East Wooster Street Corridor Development Strategy, including roundabouts, bicycle and pedestrian paths, and aesthetic enhancements at the I-75 entrance/exit ramps on East Wooster Street
- An ordinance regulating the location of trash receptacles
- Plans by BGSU to remove several dormitories and improve gateways into campus
- The creation of a new zoning district – B-5 Transitional Central Business District
- The development of Ridge Park
- Reservation for the 2017 Bloomberg Mayor’s Challenge - focused on an innovative neighborhood initiative
- Release of the Good Neighbor Guide as part of the CAP
- Court Street Connects event
- Donation of former water tower site to Wood County Habitat for Humanity to build new single-family homes
- A Complete Streets Resolution including an increased budget for bicycle and pedestrian improvements
LISTENING + LEARNING

The initial phase of the CAP planning process included interviewing stakeholders, creating a project Task Force, and establishing a project Facebook page. Key person interviews involved selected agencies and service providers, such as the Police Department, Planning Commission, BGSU, Bowling Green City Schools, East Side Residential Neighborhood Group and many others. These sessions were designed to gain local insights into the project area, its history, existing conditions, planned improvement initiatives, and other topics to be addressed in the development of the CAP, and to begin to build local support for implementation. This phase helped establish the community context, and provided the Planning Team important information on the assets, issues, and opportunities present in Bowling Green’s East Side.

COMMUNITY MEETING 1

The first community meeting was held on August 30, 2016. The Planning Team introduced themselves, provided an overview of the CAP development schedule of tasks, and had attendees vote on a logo for the project. The Team explained the purpose of the CAP and its relationship to previous planning efforts in general and the 2014 Land Use Plan in particular. The Planning Team summarized their own observations of the project area and interviews with people from key agencies and organizations, highlighting issues that were identified through those discussions. Attendees were then asked to identify the City’s assets, issues, and opportunities. For the final activity, audience members proposed potential early action projects to be completed during the CAP’S planning process.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LANDLORD ROUNDTABLE
The Planning Team engaged local landlords and property management companies. During this roundtable discussion, participants were encouraged to offer information, express their opinions, voice their concerns, and ask questions to the Planning Team and one another. This discussion was valuable in helping to understand the full perspective of the local housing environment in Bowling Green.

VISIONING FOR THE FUTURE
The Visioning phase involved working with neighborhood residents and stakeholders to define a broad outlook for the future of the community. This effort was designed to advance the 2014 Land Use Plan as well as other recent initiatives.

COMMUNITY MEETING 2
Community Meeting 2 took place on October 11, 2016. Held at BGSU, this meeting provided an analysis of assets, issues, and opportunities identified at Community Meeting 1, highlighting common themes of each category and specific examples that showed up repeatedly. It also reintroduced the concept of early action projects and had community members rank 10 options that were developed from the results of the first community meeting. Attendees were then asked to think about the future of Bowling Green’s East Side and the ways its improvement to could manifest over the next 10-15 years.
Each attendee submitted three words to describe their vision, which were then aggregated to create a “word cloud” that was used to inform the overall vision guiding development of the CAP.

The visioning exercise identified five smaller areas within the larger project area that generated discussion about more targeted improvements. These “focus areas” exemplify challenges within their immediate context, and attendees were asked to offer their vision for each through a visual preference survey.

FARMERS MARKET
The Bowling Green Farmers Market provided a great opportunity to engage community members that were unable to attend larger community meetings. The Planning Team staffed a booth displaying information about the CAP for public consumption and offered participants the chance to engage in similar activities that were included during Community Meeting 2.

STAFF MEETINGS
In addition to the broader Bowling Green community, it was important to the CAP development process to gather insight and address concerns expressed by City staff. Their support is essential to implementation, so it was important to improve alignment of staff resources and policies with the direction of the CAP and its various initiatives.
STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The Strategy Development phase involved consolidating information gathered through previous activities and drafting options for concept plans. Feedback was crucial to the CAP’s progression to a preferred option, so the Planning Team sought input from community members, including students and elected officials.

COMMUNITY MEETING 3
Between the second and third community meetings, information gathered through engagement with residents and City staff was organized into common themes that resulted in alternative planning concepts for the entire project area. These thematic planning concepts were displayed at Community Meeting 3, an open house held at the Wood County Courthouse. Attendees observed the displays and offered feedback that was used to generate the CAP’s preferred plan. Early action projects prioritized at Community Meeting 2 were also on display to communicate their implementation and to solicit volunteers.

STUDENT MEETING
University students are often underrepresented in traditional planning processes. The CAP was structured to include student engagement, including on the Task Force or as early action project volunteers. The Planning Team was invited to a BGSU Undergraduate Government meeting to engage students on the CAP. Results from that meeting showed that students are concerned about transportation and parking around the campus and the community, and support sidewalk and bike infrastructure improvements.
With the planning process more than halfway complete, it was time for the Planning Team to update the City Council and Planning Commission on the CAP’s development. In addition to summarizing the progress up to that point, the City Council was engaged on a review of the City’s Zoning Ordinance. Feedback is incorporated into the final version of the CAP recommendations.

DOING WHILE PLANNING

EARLY ACTION PROJECTS
Showing the Bowling Green community that their participation would result in real action was an effective way to maintain participation momentum and help establish implementation support for larger initiatives. As discussed above at Community Meetings 1 and 2, the Planning Team identified early action projects based on community input that could be implemented while the planning process was underway. These projects are described in greater detail in the section on “Early Action Projects.”
A common symptom of multiple planning processes is exhaustion or “meeting fatigue.” It can hinder development of the plan, increase agitation among the public, and lead to inertia. To avoid exhaustion, the planning process for the CAP adopted an approach that relied on early action projects. This type of initiative has proven effective for generating positive momentum in neighborhoods while encouraging larger revitalization initiatives and strategies.

Community members were asked to select from among ten options a preferred early action project during Community Meeting #2. The top two choices were 1) a “Better Block”-like festival along East Court Street and 2) a code enforcement manual for public reference. Both early action projects were implemented.
EARLY ACTION PROJECT 1: COURT STREET CONNECTS FESTIVAL

The Court Street Connects (CSC) Festival was a free, family-friendly celebration of East Court Street recognizing its importance in connecting BGSU to the City’s downtown. It was also an engagement opportunity, offering a venue for the community to consider and suggest private and public improvements to the corridor and its surrounding neighborhood. The centerpiece of the event was testing a “complete streets” approach to Court Street through the temporary installation of an on-street bicycle lane and other pedestrian enhancements.

The event was conceived at the beginning of the planning process for the CAP. As described in “Community Engagement,” attendees at Community Meeting #1 were tasked with identifying issues, assets, and opportunities that exist on the City’s East Side. An opportunity mentioned repeatedly was redesigning East Court Street to better accommodate pedestrians and bikers. This project was refined and presented, along with nine other options, to the community a month later at Community Meeting #2. Those in attendance voted on which option to prioritize, and the “Better Block” project on East Court Street (which would later be retitled “Court Street Connects Festival”) received the most votes.

A committee was formed to guide implementation of CSC. The group was composed of numerous stakeholders, including City Staff, City Council and Planning Commission members, residents, and BGSU staff and faculty. Committee members volunteered for specific responsibilities and met regularly to work on ideas for activities, entertainment, and scheduling.
CSC took place on April 22, 2017 (Earth Day) and featured a wide variety of activities, learning material, displays, and entertainment options. In the spirit of the day, activities and information booths were set-up by local organizations to engage residents on sustainable living and other healthy environmental practices. There were free tours of the historic Wood County Courthouse and a self-guided walking tour brochure for other historic structures located along the corridor. The trial bike lane was used for a children’s bike parade, which was preceded by an instructional activity educating children on bicycle safety.

The Court Streets Connect Festival was designed to accomplish multiple objectives. First and foremost, it brought necessary attention to an important community asset, East Court Street. The event also generated discussion about how to strengthen the corridor in a way that could catalyze improvements to adjacent properties.

CSC brought multiple parties together to collaborate on a community-based project, contributing their talents to the event’s success. Local businesses were able to increase their visibility and advocate for Downtown Bowling Green. Bike helmets were donated by BGSU through a grant from the Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and distributed to residents free of charge. Organizations related to public health, animal welfare, education, bike safety, and other causes were present to reach out to local residents. BGSU students designed and manufactured furniture made from recycled wooden pallets. These pieces of furniture were used and auctioned at the event. Art students set up an outdoor gallery space and brought pieces to be sold. With the Courthouse as a backdrop, performers of various ages played music and recited plays. This day-long event provided a venue for residents to interact and engage in community building activities.
From left to right: dog available for adoption brought by Wood County Humane Society; BGSU students working on assembling furniture up for auction at CSC; young bicyclist testing out the temporary bike lane on Court Street
The centerpiece of the event was a trial bike lane along East Court Street. This temporary installation, done by students from the BGSU Chapter of Habitat for Humanity, demonstrated what was possible within the existing right-of-way to enhance its multi-modal use. The temporary bicycle improvement replaced an existing parking lane, resulting in the removal of on-street spaces. Residents who used the bike lane were encouraged to submit feedback regarding its value and design. If desired by the community, then a larger discussion about redesigning East Court Street according to “complete streets” principles could occur. Over a week, observations carried out by BGSU students showed an increased presence of bicyclists along East Court Street after installation when compared to observations prior to installation. Observations also noted that auto traffic was not impaired due to the presence of the bike lane.

To implement a complementary early action project idea, “Walk BG” signage was designed by BGSU graphic art students and incorporated along the Court Street corridor, helping to direct visitors to local amenities, and providing an approximate time relating to pedestrian and bicycle distance.

CSC was also significant in that it provided a model for the community to carry out other events of similar scope and complexity. Through team work, volunteer effort, and donated resources, a passionate cadre of community members were able to collaborate and host a relatively complex event at very low cost. The success of this initiative yielded quantifiable results. The following are some of the important statistics:

- Number of volunteers: 30+
- Number of partners involved: 15+
- Number of Committee Meetings: 8
EARLY ACTION PROJECTS

• Pieces of pallet furniture created: 25+
• Money raised for Ridge Park through silent auction of pallet furniture: $900+
• Number of kids in bike parade: 20+
• Number of dogs adopted: 3
• Number of bike helmets distributed: 136
• Food consumed: 48 hot dogs, 15 brats, 40 burgers, 40 tacos, 40 nachos

Qualitative measurements provide further evidence of the event’s success. A survey of attendees showed that a majority (35) of those questioned (45) were “satisfied” to “really satisfied” with the event. Of 46 responses, 41 (89%) would be interested in more community events like Court Street Connects. CSC provides a model to achieve this goal and host more community-based and community-led events.

Graphic and video designs were created through collaboration with Kevin Cedar, a Video Communications Technology student at BGSU, who utilized the project for his senior thesis. For a summary video of the event, please visit the link, https://youtu.be/mbGJsZZ6fFA.

Court Street Connects was recognized by the American Planning Association - Ohio Chapter with a 2017 Best Practice award.

"It truly reaches a broad range of community members and goes beyond “diversity”. It reaches a full, socially interconnected community, not one person at a time, but groups of people who can visibly see their interconnectedness of businesses, families, students, and professionals.

- APA OH Award Jury"
EARLY ACTION PROJECT 2: GOOD NEIGHBOR GUIDE

A strong sentiment voiced throughout the planning process has been concern about the quality of life in neighborhoods around BGSU being compromised by nuisance properties. Observations from Community Meeting #1 include numerous statements made to that effect, accompanied by discussion of the City's code enforcement capabilities in addressing nuisance properties. It was clear that confusion surrounded the code enforcement process and public education was greatly needed.

An approach to educating community members was the development of a code enforcement manual, dubbed the Good Neighbor Guide, samples of which are shown on the following page. Designed to support a high quality of life in Bowling Green neighborhoods, it describes common issues and the process of reporting them, identifies the person or agency responsible for addressing the particular issue, and provides the relevant contact information. For some issues, an action timeline is provided, which describes the sequence and timing of activities needed to adequately address them. The Guide is highly accessible as it resides online, or can be downloaded for print. Since its completion, many Bowling Green residents have requested it for their own use and several property managers have expressed interest in providing it to their tenants.
Neighbors are having a loud party during nighttime or early morning hours

**CONTACT**
Agency: City of Bowling Green – Police Division
Phone: (419) 352-1131

**ENFORCEMENT**
Actions Typical Time
Site Visit Within hour depending on call volume

Public property, including parkways or medians have tall brush, grass or noxious weeds (over 8 inches)

**CONTACT**
Agency: City of Bowling Green – Planning Department
Person: Jason Westgate, Code Enforcement Officer
Phone: (419) 354-6218
Email: jwestgate@bgohio.org

**VIOLATION**
§ 99.20 NOXIOUS WEEDS; DUTY TO CUT.

**ENFORCEMENT**
Actions Typical Time
Initial Research 2-3 Days
Site Visit 2-3 Days
Follow Up Research 1 Day
Findings / Written Report 1 Day

**CORRECTION**
Remediation or abatement of the violation is required within 5 days after notice of violation posted. Typical time for remediation or abatement is 8-10 days. Follow up visit by agency within 8-10 days.

Trash/recycle bins being placed incorrectly on property

**CONTACT**
Agency: City of Bowling Green – Planning Department
Person: Jason Westgate, Code Enforcement Officer
Phone: (419) 354-6218
Email: jwestgate@bgohio.org

**VIOLATION**
§ 94.05 CONTAINERS STORAGE LOCATION. On non-collection days, all refuse containers, including dumpsters, shall be stored within an enclosed area or in the side or rear yard with the lid closed.

Large trash (couch, chairs, table, etc.) is being left on public property including the sidewalk or median

**CONTACT**
Agency: City of Bowling Green – Public Works
Phone: (419) 354-6227
Email: bgow@bgohio.org

**VIOLATION**
§ 94.21 LITTER IN PUBLIC PLACES. Violation constitutes a minor misdemeanor if left after 24 hours.

**ENFORCEMENT**
Actions Typical Time
Site Visit Same day as received if regular weekday (Monday-Friday)
24 Hours
Follow Up Research 2 Days
Findings / Written Report 7 - 21 Days
Follow Up Visit Next day after first Site Visit
As an initial step in development of the CAP, community members identified specific, assets, issues, and opportunities for consideration at Community Meeting 1. The elements listed on the following pages reflect the feedback received at that meeting and established a starting point for crafting neighborhood strategies.
ASSETS

A community asset is anything that can be used to improve the quality of community life. The following were identified by residents and stakeholders as assets of the City and the East Side neighborhood:

**Open Space Amenities**
The importance of local parks, including Carter Park, City Park, Simpson Garden Park, and Ridge Park, as well as the walking paths and the Slippery Elm multi-purpose recreational trail. Residents appreciate the mature trees and landscape as important parts of the community.

**History and Culture**
Bowling Green's local flavor and character is seen most prominently through its many historic buildings and cultural events. Residents recognize the City as having a strong arts community and appreciate its contributions festivals and events such as the Black Swamp Arts Festival, Farmers Market, etc.

**Commercial Options**
Accessible shopping options exist within a functioning downtown, including a variety of restaurants, small shops, and other businesses to provide services and employment.

**Neighborhood Appearance**
Many parts of the East Side have an appealing appearance, with unique and historic neighborhood character. The community takes pride in these properties and their contribution to neighborhood character.

**Educational Facilities**
The Bowling Green City School system and its facilities are recognized as a community anchor. Crim Elementary is a highly regarded neighborhood asset with its strategic location within the East Side neighborhood. BGSU is lauded for its employment/workforce impact and the cultural influences of students and faculty.
An issue represents a liability that is lowering the community’s quality of life. If left unabated for too long, its impact can grow and adversely impact the larger city or region. The following were identified by residents and stakeholders as the most critical issues to address in the CAP:

**Transportation Options**
There is a perceived lack of bicycle infrastructure within the community as well as concern about congestion at peak times involving all road users, illustrating a need for “complete streets.” Mass transit service availability is not well understood. Many community members acknowledged the lack of adequate sidewalks and parking in areas around campus.

**Code Enforcement**
There are negative views of the quality of code enforcement with respect to building and property standards. Many community members are unhappy with the number of non-conforming properties, over-occupancy, and a current lack of rental inspections.

**Renter-Homeowner Conflict**
There are real and perceived conflicts between landlords/renters and homeowners. Residents believe that the number of absentee landlords is increasing resulting in a lack of landlord accountability. Residents fear that the ratio of owner-occupied to rental housing is tipped too far toward the latter and must be balanced for neighborhood improvement to occur.

**Property Maintenance**
While areas are recognized for an attractive appearance, there are also areas that lack “curb appeal,” a condition negatively impacting property values. This condition is evidenced by poor property maintenance such as deteriorating structures and/or unkempt lawns. It also corresponds to the appearance of graffiti.

**Trash and Noise**
Issues relating to partying, loud noise, unruly behavior, trash covering properties, and other disruptions to neighborhood tranquility were identified as concerns. Some residents also note overwhelming traffic noise, including early morning trash collection vehicles in certain areas.
Once Opportunities are identified, they can be nurtured through a combination of community support, dedicated resources, and strategies structured to enhance their transformative properties. Community members identified many opportunities throughout Bowling Green. Below are the five that were mentioned most frequently:

**Transportation Improvements**
Encourage continued implementation of the 2007 Transportation Plan. Community members saw potential in redesigning Court Street to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements. There is wide recognition of potential business growth related to the completion of I-75. Some residents recommended investigation of rail transit options and additional charging stations for electric cars.

**Commercial Redevelopment**
Support commercial redevelopment focused on E Wooster from BGSU to Downtown. Community members encouraged policies to attract businesses to help make the City a regional destination. Development of creative zones to utilize vacant properties was identified, as was demolition and redevelopment of vacant buildings.

**High-Quality, Multi-Family Housing Development**
Pursue construction of well-located, high-quality multi-family and mixed-use development to serve a variety of household types, from students to seniors. Townhouses and other housing types that can attract graduate students and professors to areas around BGSU were suggested. Some proposed a concierge liaison for housing/relocation services. Many want to explore incentives to encourage owner-occupied homes.

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements**
Establish safe and frequent pedestrian crossings on E Wooster Street. Many residents also recommend repaving streets and sidewalks, supporting cycling through appealing walk/bike corridors between downtown and BGSU as an alternative to Wooster, and expanding these corridors to promote active lifestyles. Some suggested bicycle rental or bikeshare stations to encourage more active transportation.

**Open Space Improvements**
Develop green spaces at North Enterprise/Ridge (University-owned), downtown (City-owned), and South Main Street (privately-owned). Some suggested including an artistic element to the green spaces.
Based on visioning preferences, draft planning concepts were developed to help organize potential neighborhood improvements and actions. The concepts were reviewed and discussed with residents and stakeholders at Community Meeting 3 as well as with the CAP Task Force. Highly-rated elements of each planning concept were incorporated into the Preferred Plan shown on Page 43. The following pages include material that was presented at Community Meeting 3 and other local events.
CONCEPT: PRESERVE

PRESERVE promotes reinvestment in the oldest parts of the East Side neighborhood, between Downtown Bowling Green and the CSX railroad tracks, as well as south of East Wooster Street to Scott Hamilton Avenue. Within these three areas, PRESERVE identifies specific streets that currently have the highest number of buildings rated in good to excellent condition. By focusing resources on these blocks, they can be maintained and solidified as a starting point for larger reinvestment efforts, including new, high-quality medium- and higher-density development to act as a buffer to existing preservation areas. Designation of local historic districts, the promotion of walkable locations, and renovation incentives are also key elements of PRESERVE. By directing investment within existing neighborhoods, this Concept also encourages the preservation of undeveloped green spaces as important community resources.

CONCEPT: ACTIVATE

ACTIVATE promotes greater use of existing community parks, schools and open spaces as a way to focus reinvestment in surrounding neighborhoods. These important green spaces can be activated with community programming, public art, and events while adjacent areas can gain added value from these spaces. In specific areas, such as south of Crim Elementary and north of Carter Park, multi-family reinvestment can be designed to complement these neighborhood resources. A new lower-density neighborhood is also envisioned west of Carter Park to provide housing options for families and BGSU faculty in a location that is convenient to both campus and recreation uses. Areas just south of Wooster could transition over time into medium-density neighborhoods with townhomes and small-lot, single-family homes integrating with existing single-family areas. ACTIVATE also supports greater use of campus open spaces for the surrounding neighborhood, including both on- and off-campus residents.
CONCEPT: CONNECT

CONNECT is focused on the development of a series of bikeway networks that would tie together important parks, community spaces, and residential areas with the BGSU campus and Downtown Bowling Green. A centerpiece of CONNECT is the identification of an existing creek, and the areas directly adjacent, as a potential hike/bike trail corridor. This corridor would directly connect BGSU, Carter Park, and Crim Elementary with open space areas along E Napoleon Road. In tandem with this trail, on-street bike routes would be located along Scott Hamilton Avenue, Manville Avenue, Thurstin Street, E Court Street, and Clough Street, as identified in previous bike planning studies. These routes could include “sharrows” or dedicated lanes, depending on the specific need, and would contribute to the framework for neighborhood reinvestment. Higher-density housing development is promoted directly west of campus on both sides of the CSX rail line, as well as southeast of Crim Elementary and north of Carter Park. Medium- and lower-density developments are suggested north and west of Crim Elementary while a live/work community is envisioned for areas immediately west of Manville Avenue.

CONCEPT: EVOLVE

EVOLVE visualizes major redevelopment and reinvestment in several East Side locations. The neighborhood northeast of the County Courthouse is designated as “Target Reinvestment Area #1,” with a focus on the post-collegiate residential market looking to purchase a house with historic character or a new townhouse in a walkable environment. “Target Reinvestment Area #2” is located southwest of Crim Elementary School, within the “numbered streets” community. This area is envisioned to have a mixed-income character, including multi-family and senior housing along with significant public improvements. The “Campus West Development Area” is located along both sides of Thurstin Street, and could include higher-density residential geared towards the student population and potential mixed-use development. Downtown is expanded to meet the BGSU campus and the “Core Development Area” of Thurstin/Manville/East Wooster is promoted as a higher intensity node with more significant mixed-use development.
The Preferred Plan outlines overall priorities for the East Side neighborhood as well as residential areas surrounding downtown Bowling Green. The Plan reflects stakeholder and Task Force comments and feedback generated through the community engagement process, with priorities listed in order of importance.

**CORE DEVELOPMENT**
Extends from the eastern edge of Downtown and connects to BGSU along E Wooster. The area contains several properties whose design and development could improve the walkability of the area and provide a model for contemporary mixed-use development in other parts of the City.

**TARGET REINVESTMENT**
Residential sections of the northeast and southeast neighborhoods are currently showing signs of deferred maintenance and blight. The vision to improve these areas is to cater to their dominant populations, with redevelopment in the northeast focused on families, post-collegiate professionals and BGSU faculty and the southeast geared toward workforce housing.

**SINGLE-FAMILY REINVESTMENT**
Includes the neighborhoods directly adjacent to Downtown and the blocks immediately to the north of Crim Elementary. Strategies for this priority area focus on stimulating private renovations, providing catalytic public improvements that can help stimulate reinvestment, and marketing the uniqueness of these communities to the broader region.

**TRANSITIONAL DEVELOPMENT**
The blocks of E Wooster Street between Troup Ave and S Mercer Road have been slowly transitioning from a primarily single-family area to a mixed-use environment. Encourage continued transition into a walkable district that blends harmoniously with the institutional uses on campus and the lower intensity single-family neighborhood to the south.

**MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT**
Includes the blocks immediately west of the BGSU campus and areas south of Crim Elementary and north of Carter Park. Promote medium and higher density residential development in these areas, coupled with new public investments in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

**CREATIVE DISTRICT**
The designation of a Creative District on either side of the CSX tracks between Enterprise and Summit Street on the west, Manville Avenue on the east, Clough Street on the north and E Napoleon Road on the south. The District is intended to promote and incubate creative businesses and entrepreneurship opportunities, especially those focused on sustainability.

**HIKE-BIKE TRAIL ALONG CREEK**
The Hike-Bike Trail utilizes an existing creek and public right-of-way as an asset to begin to develop a recreational corridor and trail that can benefit current and future East Side residents. The Hike-Bike Trail recognizes the need for facilities that encourage active transportation as well as supporting neighborhood beautification and restoration of the natural environment.

The Preferred Plan shown on the previous page is illustrative in nature and is organized around 7 Priority Areas, each with defining characteristics. Each Priority Area includes a range of public and private implementation actions which are further detailed within the chapter "Preferred Plan."
PRIORITY 1: CORE DEVELOPMENT AREA

Reinvestment in the Core Development Area was ranked by stakeholders and the Task Force as the highest priority of the Plan. The Core Development Area extends from the eastern edge of Downtown and connects to BGSU along E Wooster. Investment in this area will improve neighborhood vitality and walkability, while providing a model for contemporary mixed-use development that may be applicable in other parts of the City. Near-term focus within the Area should be dedicated to redevelopment of properties at the intersection of Thurston-Manville and E Wooster in order to strengthen this key node as a campus gateway and to provide a center for student retail, housing and services. Initiatives in this priority area include the creation and application of a new zoning district, joint development of key properties, relocation and redevelopment of the municipal utilities building, streetscape and bicycle improvements, and evaluation of TIF as a financing mechanism for future improvements.
SHORT-TERM INITIATIVES (0-3 YEARS)

A. Establish a new core zoning district for the Core Development Area. The new zoning district should maintain allowable uses and parking requirements from the B-5 district, but allow for buildings with minor additional height increases to promote use intensity and encourage a population level attractive to commercial development. The district should be directly tied to a “complete streets” program in order to help achieve the desired mixed-use character of the Core Development Area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lead Partners</td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Rezone properties at Thurston/Manville and Wooster, including the municipal building site to the core zoning district in order to promote redevelopment of these sites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lead Partners</td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Create a joint development agreement between the City, BGSU and a selected developer to facilitate the redevelopment of the southwest corner of Manville and E Wooster. This property is ideally sited for a significant mixed-use building that could catalyze additional neighborhood reinvestment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Over $1m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lead Partners</td>
<td>City, Private, BGSU</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MEDIUM-TERM INITIATIVES (3-6 YEARS)

D. Establish a redevelopment option for the municipal utilities building site. This publicly-owned site is one of the most valuable properties within the City and is currently highly underutilized. The City should evaluate any potential soil issues that could impact development and act to relocate municipal utilities to other City-owned property, or to purchase less expensive property for construction of a new facility. An alternative, although less desirable, would be to incorporate municipal utilities into a larger mixed-use site redevelopment where they could be co-located with housing and retail uses.
**E.** Enhance the Thurstin-Manville and E Wooster intersection through public streetscape improvements to improve walkability including bulbouts, new crosswalk materials and enhanced pedestrian crossing signals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
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**F.** Feedback from Court Street Connects indicates strong support for new on-street bicycle lanes along Court Street. An ideal design would include re-striping and elimination of some on-street parking to provide a separated west-bound bike lane on the north side of Court from Thurstin Street to Prospect Street and a separated east-bound bike lane on the south side of Court. Bicyclists would ride with traffic in both directions. To implement these improvements, apply for the following grant opportunities:

1. **PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program.**
   - Provides funding for important and influential projects that leverage federal funding and build momentum for bicycling in communities across the U.S.
   - **Cost** $100k - $1m
   - **Lead Partners** City, BGSU

2. **Ohio Local Transportation Improvement Program.**
   - Provides the equivalent of one cent in gasoline tax receipts annually. The City may apply for a grant up to 100% of the project cost.
   - **Cost** Low
   - **Lead Partners** City, Neighborhood

**G.** Consider using Tax Increment Financing (TIF) within the Core Development Area to help fund public infrastructure improvements. TIF is an economic development mechanism available to local governments in Ohio to finance public infrastructure improvements and, in certain circumstances, residential rehabilitation. Payments derived from the increased assessed value of any improvement to real property beyond its base amount are deposited in a separate fund to finance the construction of public infrastructure defined within the TIF legislation. Local jurisdictions seeking to establish a TIF project must enact legislation that (a) designates the parcel(s) to be exempted from taxation, (b) declares improvements to private property within the specified area as serving a public purpose, (c) delineates the public infrastructure improvements to be made that will directly benefit the parcel[s] and (d) specifies the equivalent funds to be created for those redirected monies. Only those public infrastructure improvements directly serving the increased demand arising from the real property improvements to the parcel(s) or an Incentive District are eligible for TIF financing.

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CASE STUDY: EDDY STREET COMMONS - SOUTH BEND, IN

Eddy Street Commons is part of a “College Town” development program immediately adjacent to the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana. Built in an area owned by the University, the project grew out of a robust community planning process that identified Eddy Street as a good candidate to foster a brand new, mixed-use community designed for a variety of tenants and retailers serving the University, the Northeast Neighborhood, and the surrounding area. The project is a key component to a larger vision for the neighborhood, involving an intimate collaboration between the University, the City, and other stakeholders to improve Northeast through strategic investments in “education, housing, and infrastructure.”

Phase I of Eddy Street Commons opened during the aftermath of the 2008 recession. It was able to weather that period and is currently 100% leased. This phase boasts numerous features, including 170,000 square feet of retail/restaurant/office space, 266 apartment units, 123 condo units, 78 row/townhomes, and a parking garage with 1,276 spaces. Also located on site are two hotels with over 280 rooms.

Phase II has recently been approved for construction. The design has incorporated feedback from the University, the City, nearby businesses, and residents. Phase II will add 8,500 square feet of restaurant space, 433 apartment units, 22 single-family homes, a community center, a grocery store, and 17 “flex” units. The flex units have been designed to accommodate either residential or commercial uses depending on the demand. Their inclusion is a response to requests for more retail/office space for local businesses.

Per data from Notre Dame, the two phases represent nearly $300 million in investment for the Northeast Neighborhood.

Phase I

- 170,000 square feet of retail/restaurant/office space
- 266 apartment units
- 123 condo units
- 78 row/townhomes (100% leased)
- 1,276-vehicle multi-level parking garage
- 119-room Fairfield Inn & Suites
- 164-room Embassy Suites

Phase II

- $90 million mixed-use project
- 8,500 square feet of restaurant space
- 17 “flex” units
- Modest street-level units that can be adapted for commercial or residential use depending on demand
- Small, local specialty shops, small cafes or coffee shops or insurance or law offices
- 433 apartment units
- 22 single-family homes
- Robinson Community Learning Center
- Stand-alone grocery store

Source: news.nd.edu/news/kite-notre-dame-break-groundS-on-eddy-street-commons-phase-II/
PRIORITY 2: TARGET REINVESTMENT AREAS

The Target Reinvestment Areas are primarily residential sections of the northeast and southeast neighborhoods that are currently showing signs of a general lack of investment and increasing blight. Residents in these areas are primarily renters, and the existing buildings show a high percentage of non-conforming uses and substandard exterior conditions. The vision to improve these areas is to cater to differing populations, with redevelopment in the northeast area along N Enterprise Street focused on families, young professionals and BGSU faculty and the southeast area along Elm and High Streets geared toward workforce housing for lower- and middle-income households, including senior populations. Strategies for the northeast area build upon the community’s historic character and walkability to promote reinvestment. Medium-density development, in the form of townhomes as well as the utilization of accessory dwelling units, are encouraged. For the southeast area, high-quality, mixed-income development are encouraged through a variety medium-density residential types, from townhomes to multi-story apartments. The CAP recommends the creation of a rental property registration program including a landlord self-certification process to help improve rental property conditions as well as the creation of a local Community Development Corporation to help guide reinvestment. Establishment of a micro-grant program is designed to provide funding for small neighborhood improvement projects while collaboration with Wood County Habitat for Humanity will focus resources on these areas of need. Evaluation of approaches to building use conversion and the improving of landscape requirements are also key initiatives outlined in this section.
SHORT-TERM INITIATIVES (0-3 YEARS)

A. Create a city-wide rental property registration program including a landlord self-certification process to improve rental property conditions.

As described in the case study on page 54, peer communities have utilized similar programs to provide benefits to landlords, tenants, and all citizens in the City. This program can result in improved rental property conditions without the need for potentially intrusive home inspections conducted by code enforcement staff. The program emphasizes open communication between landlords, city staff, renters and university representatives, along with a self-certification process conducted by landlords as part of the rental registration effort. This self-certification allows the City to develop a checklist of common violations, gives landlords discretion as to whether these violations exist on the property, and provides this information to renters to help them evaluate their current or potential apartments.

Cost: $10k - $50k

Lead Partners: City, Private, Neighborhood, BGSU

B. Facilitate the establishment of a Community Development Corporation (CDC) as a mechanism for providing programs, offering services, and engaging in other activities that promote and support the Target Reinvestment Areas. For 50 years, CDCs in Ohio have empowered communities to take local action to generate economic opportunities and improve the quality of life in underserved neighborhoods. These non-profits provide a wide range of programs that have revitalized and stabilized disadvantaged communities throughout the state. These initiatives include:

- **Affordable Housing.** CDCs revitalize distressed communities by building, rehabilitating and preserving affordable, safe homes and rentals for Ohio families, senior citizens and veterans. Housing development and counseling help Ohio families and communities become stable. Stable communities attract new jobs and businesses which make neighborhoods thrive.

- **Community Economic Development.** CDCs create jobs and entrepreneurship opportunities, build individual and community wealth, and attract capital to disinvested communities.

- **Community Engagement.** Through local engagement, residents can take ownership of their community and are empowered to make lasting changes through grass roots efforts.

- **Financial Empowerment.** CDCs provide education and asset building tools so low- and moderate-income families can become financially independent, improve credit, reduce debt and foreclosure risk, and contribute to community stability.

- **Food Access.** CDCs strengthen local food systems, which improve access to healthy foods and benefits the community, its economy, and the environment.

To start a CDC, the following steps should be taken:

1. Define the community need and geographic boundaries.
2. Form a steering committee that includes key neighborhood stakeholders.

Source: Ohio CDC Association - www.ohiocdc.org
3. Discuss and refine a “statement of need” and preferred focus areas.
4. Contact the Ohio CDC Association for potential technical assistance in setting up the organization.
5. Determine whether the CDC will duplicate efforts of any existing organization, and if so, try to join them together.
6. Share the CDC vision informally with key community-wide stakeholders and incorporate their comments and priorities.
7. Provide a face-to-face forum in which interested individuals are invited to learn of the vision of the steering committee.
8. Estimate the funds needed to complete one or two early projects. By investing in local CDC projects, local supporters can have a voice in community development decisions, keep their funds close to home, and share in the positive results.
9. Utilize the City Attorney to do some early work establishing the CDC.
10. Recruit and name an initial board of directors.

C. Utilize a portion of the Community Action Plan implementation funding to implement a micro-grant program (less than $5,000/grant) for the Target Reinvestment Areas. Funds distributed through this program can provide Bowling Green organizations and neighborhood groups with empowerment and financial support for activities that promote citizen engagement, enhance neighborhood beautification, improve safety, encourage economic development and/or address neighborhood needs and aspirations.

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MEDIUM-TERM INITIATIVES (3-6 YEARS)

D. Work with Wood County Habitat for Humanity to focus Home Ownership and Home Repair programs and services on the Target Reinvestment Areas.

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E. Evaluate recommended potential approaches to control building use conversions through a city-wide zoning update. A major issue affecting the livability of the East Side neighborhood is the impact of what might be loosely termed ad-hoc student housing. This refers to existing off-campus “group quarters” accommodating student housing needs. Much of this is a result of residential conversions, overcrowding of multi-family units and the like. Many of these facilities have external adverse impacts such as excessive off-street parking, noise, littering, etc., which have adversely impacted the quality of life for many residents. Several approaches should be considered to help manage these impacts.

- **First approach** — Ad-hoc residential uses should be made nonconforming uses if they are not so already. As a result, any expansion or alteration of the use would require the granting of variances to facilitate the improvements. Specific criteria for granting variances to these nonconforming uses could be established which address actions including limiting the amount of impermeable surface on a site to a certain percentage or area; and requiring maintenance of the external
property to a given standard as a condition of approval. Noncompliance with such standards would allow the City to use the enforcement provision of the zoning ordinance including fines and penalties.

- **Second Approach** — Reduce the number of nonconforming uses within the East Side neighborhoods. This can be done by creating a category of uses unique to a campus area that should be identified and carefully defined. These uses could range from accommodating work-live or group quarters in a residential, mixed-use, or commercial district with the establishment of certain site-specific requirements to ameliorate any off-site impacts. Such requirements could be made part of a conditional use process. For example, the current conditional use standards might include a new section limiting such uses to within the East Side neighborhoods and specifying how parking, maintenance, exterior activity, and building maintenance must perform over time, subject to removal of the permit and expulsion of the use. With this in place, existing uses which meet the definitions of these “unique” uses would be rezoned as a conditional use and made subject to the new requirements. Uses that continue to remain nonconforming might be considered for amortization or “deemed conforming” until that time that they fail to meet established standards and must be replaced.

- **Third Approach** — Amortize a class of nonconforming uses out of existence within a period that could meet time and value tests. Amortization is an approach to require removal of a specific class of uses, signs, or other appurtenances from a specific district or area within an established time period, for specific legislative policy reasons made part of the provision. While sometimes difficult, often unpopular, and subject to legal challenge, amortization can be a viable approach when necessary to achieve community policy.

The short-term reality might be that these undesirable units are not going to disappear quickly. They may be financially viable for the present ownership. It may benefit the City to deem these as conforming uses within the zones in which they are located, subject to registration of the property and an agreement by the property owners to maintain the structures in sound condition. Failure to do so could result in the units reverting to nonconforming status and becoming subject to fairly quick amortization and clearance, with the property reverting to the least intense use allowed within the zoning district.

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**F.** Encourage property owners to apply for assistance through **Wood County's Community Housing Impact and Preservation Program (CHIP)**. Assistance provided in Bowling Green includes a “Declining-Deferred Loan” for Private Rehabilitation (owner-occupied home rehabilitation), Down-payment Assistance and Down-payment Assistance/Rehabilitation.

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G. Improve **landscaping requirements** for new development within the R-3 zone.

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H. Rezone the area between the CSX tracks, N Summit Street, Court Street and Poe Road to **R-3 Multiple Family Residential – Moderate Density** to help encourage redevelopment and infill development.

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I. Encourage the newly created CDC, or other mixed-income developers to apply for **Competitive (9 percent) and Non-Competitive (4 percent) Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC)** to construct or rehabilitate affordable housing within the southeast Target Reinvestment Area.

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**LONG-TERM INITIATIVES (6-8 YEARS)**

K. Work with BGSU through a **Public-Private Partnership (PPP)** to develop vacant University-owned property west of the CSX tracks between Evers Avenue and Ridge Street as well as for existing parking lots between Ridge Street and Court Street.

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CASE STUDY: RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY PERMITTING PROGRAM - AMHERST, MA

Faced with growing issues relating to student rental properties not being kept up to par, the Town of Amherst implemented the Residential Rental Property Permitting program in 2014. In developing this program, the Town brought residents, landlords, and university staff together to brainstorm approaches. Property owners resisted the initial idea of required home inspections, which led to the development of a self-certification checklist that is currently being used. The checklist includes major elements of house, fire, and building codes in an easy to understand format. Landlords pay a $100 annual fee to register their property online in the Town’s database. The self-certification checklist is submitted annually along with this fee. An initial registration of a new rental building also includes a parking layout plan, which only needs to be re-submitted if changed. The $100 fee per property is assessed to all landlords, regardless of the number of units on the property.

According to a Town representative, the majority of landlords take the self-certification process very seriously. The Town currently registers 100% of their approximately 1,300 rental properties. The $100 fee covers administration of this program and the input of data into a publicly accessible GIS mapping system. In tandem with UMass, the Town does extensive outreach with students to let them know of this resource. Renters are encouraged to evaluate their property’s checklist and to contact code enforcement if there are discrepancies. Through this approach, the inspection process is directed through residents who live in the homes and who can legally invite an inspection into the unit. In terms of staff resources, the Rental Permit Administrator spends about 50% of their time to administer and run the program.

Challenges of the program include minor difficulty in tracking down absentee landlords on a yearly basis. The Town sends out reminders two months and then one month in advance of deadline. City leaders are now discussing the $100 fee and whether it should be adjusted to reflect the size of apartment complexes to make sure everyone is paying their fair share. According to the Town representative, the program has been a real success. Not everyone was happy at first, but now people are coming together. Surrounding homeowners are very happy with the results of this effort. Amherst looks much better, and has come a long way in just a few years.

For more information, please visit: www.amherstma.gov/1839/Residential-Rental-Property-Permitting

Source: Laurel DiMasi - Town of Amherst Inspection Services
CASE STUDY: CITYWIDE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION AND THE GENESIS PROJECT - DAYTON, OH

For over 40 years, the CityWide Development Corporation has served as a non-profit Community Development Corporation (CDC) with a mission to strengthen Dayton through strategic economic and community development. The Genesis Project is a cooperative effort of public and private organizations with a common goal of rebuilding and enhancing Dayton’s Fairgrounds Neighborhood and the adjacent Brown-Warren Business District. Deteriorating physical conditions in the Fairgrounds Neighborhood surrounding the University of Dayton had led to the perception that the community was not safe. Residents, Miami Valley Hospital, the University and the City all shared the common concern that, without a stabilization plan, continued disinvestment would occur. This common concern led these major stakeholders to come together to form the Genesis Project. With leadership and management provided by CityWide, a vision for rebuilding and enhancing the Fairgrounds Neighborhood was launched.

To effectively develop a strategy to improve the neighborhood’s civic and social environment the stakeholders developed a Neighborhood Life Team. Led by CityWide, the neighborhood life team included two community based police officers, a social worker employed by Miami Valley Hospital, a city housing inspector, a credit counselor to assist people in financially preparing for homeownership, and two community organizers from the Family Service Association’s Neighborhood Development program. One of the signature achievements of this effort was the formation of a formal neighborhood organization, which helped shape the long range plans for the neighborhood.

Since the mid 1990’s over $14M has been invested in the neighborhood. In the first phase of the project, 68 residential and commercial properties were acquired and 41 demolished, 11 single - family homes were rehabilitated, and 23 new single-family units were constructed. Additionally, to spur interest in the housing that was planned, Miami Valley Hospital launched an employee benefit program called “homestead assistance,” which encouraged their employees to buy homes in the Fairgrounds Neighborhood by providing them with a $7,500 down payment assistance grant. This package proved very appealing and 14 Miami Valley Hospital employees purchased homes in the Fairgrounds neighborhood during the Genesis Project and many more joined a waiting list for future opportunities. The growth and success of the Fairgrounds neighborhood also led to significant private investment along the Brown-Warren Street corridor, as private sector developers were willing to risk their own capital in business development. Seven new townhouses were completed in 2012 and an 100,000 square feet of commercial space was added. The area is now a lively retail destination with a mix of both locally-owned retail shops and restaurants, and national chains such as Panera Bread, Chipotle, and Starbucks.

Source: www.citywidedev.com/projects/community-development/genesis/
PRIORITY 3: SINGLE-FAMILY REINVESTMENT AREAS

The Single-Family Reinvestment Areas Include the neighborhoods directly adjacent to Downtown and the blocks immediately to the north of Crim Elementary. Strategies for this priority area focus on encouraging renovations, providing catalytic public improvements to stimulate private reinvestment, and marketing the uniqueness of these communities to the broader region. The historic character and pedestrian-orientation of these areas is an important asset and provides an opportunity for young professionals and families wishing to live in a walkable in-town environment. Strategies for this priority area include strengthening local neighborhood groups, the development of a rehabbers network program, a focus on improving Ridge Park, and the potential designation of one or more local historic districts.
SHORT-TERM INITIATIVES (0-3 YEARS)
A. Encourage the forming and strengthening of local neighborhood groups. Utilize the East Side Neighborhood Association as a blanket organization, and encourage the formation of smaller block-clubs or groups for the Single-Family Reinvestment Areas. As demonstrated through Court Street Connects, the residents of the East Side have a great willingness to dedicate time and energy to make a difference in the community. Neighborhood groups play a vital role in representing the interests of residents and enhancing the local community. A well-organized neighborhood can wield powerful influence when addressing the needs and problems of local residents. Steps to create a neighborhood association or group are listed below.

1. **Define the issues.** Using the CAP as a starting point, talk to residents to find out what they think the important issues are and what should be done.

2. **Research the community.** Define the geography of the community and identify if there is a particular grouping — tenants, homeowners, students, parents — who are most concerned and most likely to join the organization?

3. **Build a core group.** Leaders should recruit a handful of people to help launch the organization. A group has more credibility than an individual and one individual cannot do all the work. Candidates can be found for the core group by talking to neighbors and looking for people who are committed to the community.

4. **Hold core group meetings.** The core group acts as the temporary steering committee until the general membership meeting is held. When the core group meets, it should come up with ideas for projects to kick off the organizing drive.

5. **Plan a general meeting.** Leaders should decide on a time, date and place that are convenient for people in the neighborhood. When an agenda is prepared for the first general meeting, the goal should be to come out of the meeting with an agreement on the issues and priorities that the organization will take on.

6. **Reach out to the community.** Getting the word out is crucial to create a well-balanced, fully representative organization.

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B. Establish a **rehabbers network program** through a potential collaboration with BGSU and Habitat for Humanity geared towards existing homeowners, renters and smaller landlords. The Rehabbers Network could include an online forum, list of available building materials, technical assistance for rehabs, pop-up workshops, and donation information. The online component would allow residents to communicate with another and discuss property rehabilitation, exchange tips, post information/tutorials, and advertise relevant community events. In an effort to curb waste, the online forum would also provide an avenue for members to list building materials freely available for pickup. The Habitat for Humanity ReStore could potentially play a part in establishing this network.

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C. Dedicate funding collected through the Court Street Connects project and other donations to **beautify Ridge Park** and encourage the East Side Neighborhood Association to develop a plan for an ongoing **schedule of events** at the Park. Beautification could include landscape improvements, additional seating, signage and pedestrian improvements. Events could include holiday parties, kids activities, sports leagues and arts and cultural events. Events that can provide a continuing source of income towards park improvements should also be considered.

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**MEDIUM-TERM INITIATIVES (3-6 YEARS)**

D. Consider a **Historic Preservation Ordinance and Commission**, conduct a **historic building inventory** of the Single-Family Reinvestment Areas, and establish **one or more local historic districts** deemed significant to the City’s cultural fabric. Historic districts can:

1. **Protect the investments of owners and residents.** Insensitive or poorly planned development can make an area less attractive to investors and homebuyers, and thus undermine property value. In contrast, historic district designation encourages people to buy and rehabilitate properties in context-sensitive ways protecting investments over time.

2. **Increase rate of appreciation.** Findings on this point are consistent across the country. Moreover, recent analyses shows that historic districts are less vulnerable to market volatility from interest rate fluctuations and economic downturns.

3. **Encourage better quality design.** Better design equals a greater sense of cohesiveness, more innovative use of materials, and greater public appeal—all of which are shown to occur more often within designated districts than non-designated ones.

4. **Improve sustainability.** Historic districts encourage communities to retain and use their existing resources in established neighborhoods. This reduces the need for cars, cuts back on pollution and congestion, and eliminates landfill...
waste. Many older buildings were designed with energy conservation in mind, taking advantage of natural light, cross-ventilation, and climate-appropriate materials.

5. **Serve as vehicle for education.** Historic buildings are a tangible link to the past and help bring meaning to history and to people’s lives. They preserve the original character of buildings and streets, while welcoming growth and innovation within those spaces. They are a living, active record of communities and their residents.

6. **Increase tourism.** An aesthetically cohesive and well-promoted district can be a significant community attraction.

7. **Enhance business recruitment potential.** Vibrant commercial cores and charming neighborhoods with character attract new business and quality industry. Companies often relocate to communities that offer their workers a higher quality of life, which successful preservation programs and stable districts enhance.

8. **Give communities a voice in their future.** By participating in the designation process, citizens can help direct their community’s path. Making these decisions together in a structured way—rather than behind closed doors or without public comment—gives everyone involved a sense of empowerment and confidence.

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| Lead Partners | City, Neighborhood |

E. **Evaluate recommended potential approaches for variances and conditional use requests** through a city-wide zoning update. Current procedures and standards for hearing variances and issuing conditional use permits merit a detailed review and revisions as appropriate. A variance is a tool to permit a property owner to make an improvement or operate a business in a manner different than normally allowed under the ordinance, if it is determined that the ordinance requirements create undue hardships or practical difficulties on the part of building or land owners. The criteria for making this judgment can be structured by the City to assure that rigorous tests to allow future variances are in place, and that specific requirements are agreeable to the petitioner if the City were to grant the variance. In place of approval standards found in the current zoning ordinance, the following are more rigorous when assessing a variance request:

- The strict application of the terms of this Ordinance will result in undue hardship unless the specific relief requested is granted.

- The particular physical surroundings, shape or topographical conditions of the specific property impose a particular hardship upon the owner, as distinguished from a mere inconvenience, if the strict letter of the regulations were to be carried out.

- The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances inherent to the subject property and not from the personal situation of the owner and has not been created by any person presently having a proprietary interest in the property in question.
Similarly, the conditional use process can be used to carefully evaluate the impact of a proposed use whose nature might have potential adverse impacts upon adjacent uses if not carefully considered or controlled, or is so located as to have a high potential of adversely affecting nearby permitted uses. Very specific criteria and requirements can be developed to establish specific conditions to be met by a proposed conditional uses for approval. These additional conditions would be site-specific and fashioned to mitigate impacts of a drive-through, for instance, requiring evergreen screening between the facility and adjacent residential properties.

If Bowling Green were to utilize these tools, it is incumbent upon the City to make sure that its procedures and requirements reflect the policies of the City, and are applied equally to all sites and uses falling within the particular categories.

### F. Encourage local groups to apply for a National Endowment for the Arts - Our Town Grant or a National Association of Realtors (NAR) - Placemaking Micro-Grant to help activate Ridge Park.

This home repair program utilizes a combination of volunteers and contractors to help homeowners with exterior painting; carpentry repairs on roofing, siding, flooring, doors, and windows; mechanical system repairs to plumbing, electrical, and heating; tree trimming and removal; and safety and accessibility modifications.

Cost: Low

Lead Partners: City

### G. Encourage residents to apply for the Brush with Kindness program through Habitat for Humanity.

This home repair program utilizes a combination of volunteers and contractors to help homeowners with exterior painting; carpentry repairs on roofing, siding, flooring, doors, and windows; mechanical system repairs to plumbing, electrical, and heating; tree trimming and removal; and safety and accessibility modifications.

Cost: Low

Lead Partners: Neighborhood

### H. Modify the zoning code to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) within the R-1 and R-2 zones.

Accessory dwelling units offer a variety of benefits to communities. They help increase a community's housing supply, and since they cost less than a new single-family home on a separate lot, they are an affordable housing option for many low- and moderate-income residents. Elderly and/or disabled persons who may want to live close to family members or caregivers, empty nesters, and young adults just entering the workforce find ADUs convenient and affordable. In addition to increasing the supply of affordable

Cost: $50K - $100K

Lead Partners: City

Source: www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/adu.pdf
Two examples of tool lending libraries are located within the State of Ohio. Rebuilding Together Central Ohio (RTCO) is a non-profit organization based in Columbus whose mission is to bring "volunteers and the community together to improve the homes and lives of neighbors in need." The organization advances this mission through providing "critical home repairs, accessibility modifications, and energy efficient" features to expand the availability of affordable housing. In 2008, they expanded their services to include a tool library, which lends tools for a limited period for free or at very low cost, depending on the tool. Their tool library is currently stocked with over 200 different types and 5,000 individual hand power tools. In order to qualify for this program, members must be an Ohio resident. The RTCO Tool Library has proven successful among a variety of clients which includes nonprofits, homeowners, renters, and community gardens. The Columbus Dispatch reported on its positive impact on rehabilitating foreclosed homes. In one instance, a couple had used the rented tools to completely redo their home’s kitchen and take care of the property’s landscape. Another resident was expressed appreciation for the affordability offered by the Tool Library because traditional rental services were prohibitively expensive. Because of its existence, he was able to make necessary improvements to his home and other areas of his property.

ReUse Industries’ Tool Library, another Ohioan tool lender, is located in Athens, OH. It too has an extensive selection of tools available to individual and organizational members. It reports to having over 500 tools, 300+ acquired through donations and 200+ that are newly purchased. This Library is an extension of ReUse Thrift Stores, whose profits from sold donated items sustain the Library’s operations. Members can borrow and return up to ten tools for up to seven days, with the exception of certain tools that are expected to be in high demand during certain seasons – like lawn mowers, tillers and a log splitter. Non-profit organizations are able to borrow larger numbers of tools in support of group events and activities. Annual membership fees for the Tool Library:

- $100 for individuals/households
- $50 for low-income individuals and students
- $300 for non-profit organizations.

Source: www.rtcentralohio.org/tool-library/
www.sites.google.com/site/reuseathensohio/home/new-reuse-fixer-space/

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Source: www.rtcentralohio.org/tool-library/
www.sites.google.com/site/reuseathensohio/home/new-reuse-fixer-space/

I. Encourage local neighborhood groups to apply for the Every Body Walk! Micro Grant Program. This program awards grantees up to $1,500 for projects related to increasing walking and walkability. Funded projects are designed to make walking safe, easy, and enjoyable for all community members, and help organizations promote walkability benefits and programs.

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housing, ADUs benefit homeowners by providing extra income that can help mitigate cost of living increases. Accessory dwelling units have other advantages as well. They can be designed to blend in with the surrounding architecture, maintaining compatibility with established neighborhoods and preserving community character. Furthermore, there is no need to develop new infrastructure, since ADUs can be connected to the existing utilities of a primary dwelling. Allowing ADUs facilitates efficient use of existing housing stock, helps meet the demand for housing, and offers an alternative to major zoning changes that can significantly alter neighborhoods.
PRIORITY 4: TRANSITIONAL DEVELOPMENT AREA

The blocks of E Wooster Street between Troup Avenue and S Mercer Road have been slowly transitioning over time from a primarily single-family area to a mixed-use environment including residential, educational, commercial and medical uses. Recently, BGSU has taken a more active role in developing property directly adjacent to E Wooster Street, including construction of the Greek Housing complex. The Community Action Plan seeks to encourage continued transition of this area into a walkable mixed-use district that blends harmoniously with both the institutional uses on campus and the lower intensity single-family neighborhood to the south. Strategies for the Transitional Development Area focus on introducing and establishing additional site plan review criteria and guidelines for new uses including medium-density residential development along with the creation of a more attractive streetscape and prominent entries to campus. Strategies also focus on preserving the historic windmill building and improving University Pond as a local neighborhood amenity.
SHORT-TERM INITIATIVES (0-3 YEARS)

A. As a city-wide application, establish additional criteria for the site plan review process to ensure that the new development meets the intent of the City’s land development regulations and CAP priorities, and enhances the overall character of Bowling Green. Consider developing criteria that address site design, lighting, landscaping, screening, open space, and preservation of existing natural resources. In addition, access management policies should be updated to ensure adequate and safe access to the site for motor vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists along with the design of off-street parking lots or garages to minimize adverse impacts.

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B. Work with BGSU to formalize and improve entries into campus, especially at S College Drive and Mercer Road. Improvements to these important gateways can help to define and brand both the University and the surrounding neighborhood as a special place within the City. Entries can be designed to incorporate historic campus features and reflect Bowling Green’s local arts community.

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<th>Cost</th>
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<td>Lead Partners</td>
<td>BGSU</td>
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C. Recognizing the attractiveness of many existing homes in this area, rezone the blocks between Troup Avenue and S Mercer Road, south to Clough Street to R-3 Multiple Family Residential – Moderate Density that is consistent with the existing neighborhood context. The R-3 zoning classification will allow developers to build townhomes on vacant or underutilized lots. This will help ensure that a
cohesive and neighborhood environment is fostered while helping to diversify local housing products in a way that will appeal to new residents.

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D. Using the initial base guidelines illustrated in this document, create and promote design guidelines to ensure that new residential development fits within existing neighborhood. The purpose of the guidelines should be to establish the framework within which proposed changes to sites, structures, or districts can be evaluated. The guidelines should be developed for the use of City staff, applicants, and other policy makers. The guidelines should not establish specific styles to be followed, but should ensure that the qualities of the neighborhood are maintained and improved. The City should survey features of existing homes to help inform design guidelines.

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LONG-TERM INITIATIVES (6-8 YEARS)

E. Examine whether the windmill house (722 Clough St.) on University Pond is eligible to apply for historic landmark status in order to help safeguard an important neighborhood landmark. Built in 1939, what is now known as the Windmill House was originally a heating plant that contained a steam boiler, which heated the apartments that are located across the street. After World War II, the owner of the Windmill House allowed two American soldiers attending BGSU to sleep in the Windmill House in exchange for running the boiler everyday. Today, the Windmill House is a one-unit apartment composed of three circular floors each with one main room.

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F. Work with BGSU and other property owners to create a walking trail around University Pond, including BGSU-owned property to the east, allowing public access to this unique resource. This scenic spot is both a local curiosity and a piece of area history. The pond began as a quarry which was dug out for its stone and used to surface major Bowling Green streets. Once filled with water, it became a swimming hole in the summer and skating rink in the winter for a number of years. By improving public access, this pond can once again function as an important neighborhood amenity.

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G. Work with BGSU and selected developer to develop vacant University-owned property with mixed-use development including townhomes between Williams Street and Baldwin Avenue as well as the corner of E Wooster and State Streets and E Wooster Street and University Lane.

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<th>Cost</th>
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CASE STUDY: LEFTON ESPLANADE - KENT, OH

The Lefton Esplanade is a brick pedestrian path that sits on the north end of Kent State and is capped by an entryway arch that greets visitors and students upon entering the University’s campus. It connects the University to the City’s latest downtown projects including the Kent Central Gateway multimodal transit center, new mixed-use development, and the new Kent State University Hotel and Conference Center. It serves as a physical link encouraging students to enjoy the City, a symbolic connection between the City and University, and a gateway welcoming residents and visitors.

The esplanade was named after Lester A. Lefton, a University president who was instrumental in forging the partnership between the University and the City. He was therefore a critical figure in the University being recognized by the International Town-Gown Association.

Source: www.record-courier.com/article/20131003/NEWS/310039251
PRIORITY 5: MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT AREAS

The Multi-Family Development Areas include the blocks immediately west of the BGSU campus, as well as areas south of Crim Elementary and north of Carter Park. The Community Action Plan recommends that the City promote medium and higher density residential development in these areas, coupled with new public investments in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. The Multi-Family Development Area west of campus is ideally situated for high quality student-oriented housing, in tandem with shops and services near at the intersection of Ridge and Thurstin Streets. South of Crim Elementary, there are opportunities for redevelopment of existing apartment complexes, as well as a large vacant greenfield site that could provide new housing within close proximity to the center of campus. South of Wooster Street near I-75, there are several disconnected apartment complexes that don’t currently take advantage of their proximity to Carter Park. Long term redevelopment of this area could ensure that the value of the park is leveraged, while creating a more attractive living environment for residents. Strategies for Priority 5 include rezoning to help promote redevelopment, reduction of parking requirements and focused transportation improvements.
**SHORT-TERM INITIATIVES (0-3 YEARS)**

A. Rezone the blocks south and east of Crim Elementary to R-4 Multiple Family Residential – High Density to encourage redevelopment and infill development. This initiative recognizes that the demand for more student housing has contributed to the student population expanding into Bowling Green’s single-family areas. The lifestyle of college students, and their transient nature, can create incompatibilities with the traditional single-family and owner-occupied portions of the neighborhood. The conflicts between year-round residents and students have escalated in recent years as previously owner-occupied homes transition to student rentals. In order to preserve valuable single-family areas and reduce development pressures within them, the CAP promotes development of high quality rental housing in key locations within walking distance to campus.

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B. Reduce parking requirements in the R-4 and R-5 Districts to encourage walking and biking to campus. High parking requirements can make new housing prohibitively expensive to build. Nationwide trends also indicate a growing preference for ride sharing services in lieu of personal car ownership, especially among younger populations.

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**MEDIUM-TERM INITIATIVES (3-6 YEARS)**

C. As a city-wide application, connect the design of the public street environment (complete streets) to zoning approvals. Bowling Green has adopted a resolution in support of “complete streets.” It has yet to adopt a Compete Streets Policy and prepare an implementing ordinance. As the City moves forward in this area, it should consider linking a Complete Streets policy to land use regulation, both through the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. This would facilitate the establishment of regulations to coordinate on-site design requirements addressing vehicular and bicycle parking, bicycle, pedestrian and vehicular access with similar off-site attributes of the street system. It will also facilitate coordination of site-based signage and landscape requirements with public way signage and landscaping. This would enable a site plan review process to consider both on-site and off-site aspects affecting the relationship of new development to the public way, a critical issue in the downtown, core and other higher density mixed use areas.

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D. Improve Clough Street, Scott Hamilton Avenue, Thurstin Avenue, and College Drive corridors with new bicycle infrastructure. An individual’s perception of safety can be an enormous obstacle to bicycling. Many novice or casual cyclists would prefer not to ride with traffic, especially on busy roads, because of such safety concerns. Building bicycle infrastructure to provide cyclists with their own designated space on the road effectively improves their perception of safety. Not only does riding in a bike lane improve a person’s perception of safety, but according to a recent study published by the American Journal of Public Health, these facilities cut the risk of injury in half, in many cases, while separated bicycle paths reduce the risk by 90%. College campuses that have
such facilities have been immensely successful at encouraging their student body to use bicycles as their primary mode of transportation to class. Providing the infrastructure needed to reduce the risk of accidents and to dispel perceptions of danger associated with cycling is a crucial preliminary step to encouraging a student body to commute by bicycle.

**Cost** | $100k - $1m  
---|---
**Lead Partners** | City

**E.** Create and enforce additional **screening standards** for residential parking lots in order to achieve a desirable and a permanent landscape screen which will, with a minimum amount of maintenance, provide a buffer to minimize the visual effect of surface parking on the sidewalk and street.

**Cost** | $50k - $100k  
---|---
**Lead Partners** | City

**F.** Create and enforce additional **landscape standards** for residential front setbacks as part of a city-wide zoning update.

**Cost** | $50k - $100k  
---|---
**Lead Partners** | City

**G.** Work with BGSU to install **traffic calming** and pedestrian safety measures along Thurston Avenue. Features could include cross-walks, distinct pavement, and signage indicating pedestrian crossings.

**Cost** | Over $1m  
---|---
**Lead Partners** | City, BGSU

**LONG-TERM INITIATIVES (0-3 YEARS)**

**H.** Work with the Eastside Neighborhood Association, City Parks Department, local athletics groups, and other partners to consider **redesigning and updating portions of Carter Park** to be more usable for surrounding residents, as well as to draw visitors from other parts of the region. Updates and redesigns for consideration include reconfigured athletic fields, natural spaces and trails, features designed for kids and seniors, and community gather spaces for picnics and events.

**Cost** | $100k - $1m  
---|---
**Lead Partners** | City, Neighborhood

**I.** Encourage **redevelopment of properties adjacent to Carter Park** into a neighborhood that supports and connects directly to the Park. This area represents the opportunity to accommodate new development, completed in a unified manner either through subdivision or as a mixed use, mixed-density planned development.

**Cost** | Over $1m  
---|---
**Lead Partners** | Private

**J.** In order to support redevelopment, the City should **encourage large land assemblages** while incorporating a unified street system that will tie future development into a connected neighborhood.

**Cost** | Low  
---|---
**Lead Partners** | City
CASE STUDY: MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT - KENT, OH

Beginning in 2006, the City of Kent, Kent State University, and other various public and private partners have collaborated to transform the once ailing downtown into a thriving mixed-use environment, boasting over 300,000 square feet of total development. Features of this redevelopment include new class ‘A’ office space to accommodate over 200 daytime professionals, the Kent State Hotel and Conference Center, over 30 new retail outlets and restaurants, a 210,000-square-foot multimodal transit facility, and a 1,000-foot-long walkway that connects the University to the redeveloped area. Following the completion of the Kent Central Gateway in 2012, a public-private partnership was formed to construct the Kent State University Conference Hotel and Center. This $15.6 million development was possible due to the collaboration between the following partners: Kent State University Foundation, the Pizzuti Companies of Columbus, City of Kent, Development Fund of the Western Reserve, and Finance Fund of Summit County. Relying on a variety of both private and public resources, including New Market Tax Credits, this project added 95 hotel rooms and a 5,400-square-foot, 300-seat ballroom/conference center.

On a lot between College Town Kent and Kent Central Gateway, Fairmount Properties added a residential component to the partnership’s program. The Landmark at Kent is a 42,000-square-foot building of 32 one- and two-bedroom loft-style apartments that opened in April 2014. The market-rate apartments, fully leased at the time of the building’s opening and now with a waiting list, are marketed to young professionals, KSU faculty and staff, and empty nesters. Although Landmark’s housing is at the high end of the rental market, no comparable housing is available in the city. The development partners drew on several sources of federal, private, university, and municipal funding to pay for these developments. The City contributed $3 million toward the redevelopment and enacted a $10 million tax increment finance district. Fairmount Properties invested $30 million toward the project, and the federal government provided a $20 million TIGER grant. The remaining funds came from the Kent State Foundation, the New Markets Tax Credit program, and private sources.

Fairmount Properties also developed Avant 220, which recently opened as one of the newest apartment complexes in Kent. With a downtown setting, it offers students a different kind of off-campus living than other options. Avant 220 has 52 apartment units and a mix of three different unit types: micro suites, studios, or one bedrooms. Micro suites are 400 square feet, and offer tenants a full size bathroom. Avant 220 does not include parking, although, tenants may keep their cars in the parking deck downtown and pay a monthly fee. Avant 220 is about 70 percent student populated, with professional adults making up the other 30 percent.

Source: www.huduser.gov/portal/casestudies/study_05222015_1.html
PRIORITY 6: CREATIVE DISTRICT

Bowling Green is home to a growing number of creative organizations, Bowling Green State University, businesses, artists and artisans. The intent of the Creative District is to establish a location where authenticity, heritage, ingenuity and collaboration can be fostered. The vision for a Creative District is about expanding and promoting local resources that are often overlooked. The CAP recommends the designation of a Creative District on either side of the CSX tracks between Enterprise and Summit Street on the west, Manville Avenue on the east, Clough Street on the north and E Napoleon Road on the south. The District is intended to promote and incubate creative businesses and entrepreneurship opportunities, especially those focused on sustainability. Current uses include a mix of heavy and light industrial uses along with aging apartments, single-family homes, and vacant land. Over time, the Creative District can become a dynamic hub of creative cultural and economic activity that transforms this unique community and environment into a vital part of Bowling Green. The goal of the District is to attract creative firms, shops, and people, connecting “creativity to commerce” while cultivating a local “creative class.” The Creative District has the potential to empower local residents, create jobs, and strengthen and create a special feature for the local economy.
MEDIUM-TERM INITIATIVES (3-6 YEARS)

A. Representatives of local business associations, community-based organizations, institutions, local property owners, artists and creative professionals, artisanal manufacturers and owners of creative industries, and local restaurateurs and brewers should be recruited as members of a **Creative District Alliance** to establish a vision and define organizational goals. Alliance members should work collaboratively to cultivate and promote creative culture in the district and serve as liaisons to their own networks. Essential to the success of the Creative District vision is expanded leadership from the City of Bowling Green to support the effort. The City should work directly with the Bowling Green Arts Council and related BGSU programs to further establish and define the goals of the District. The District should complement Downtown Bowling Green businesses, while working to attract “maker spaces” and other uses that may not necessarily fit within the downtown retail environment.

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B. Identify **dedicated, multi-year funding streams** to support an annual operating budget for District management, staffing, and programming. Operational funds may come as part of the Community Development Corporation (CDC), recommended as part of Plan Priority 2 – Target Reinvestment Areas.

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C. Bowling Green’s zoning code currently lacks a classification allowing a mix of residential and light industrial uses, which would be necessary to pave the way for legitimate live-work developments. The Creative District Alliance should work with the city to develop a **creative zoning district** that allows the broad mix of uses needed to cultivate creative production and consumption. Development standards can set minimum sizes for residential units and provide some basic performance standards for commercial production uses. The new district could also specify the location of the live and work portion of a building, for example work portions must be on the ground floor and oriented to the street whereas live portions can be behind of the work portion or on an upper level. This district could accommodate adaptive reuse of existing buildings as well as the development of new buildings tied to specific development regulations.

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**Live/Work**
D. Establish a tool-sharing program with BGSU to assist emerging artists and makers who lack the means to buy expensive tools. Tools can be stored and regularly maintained at a central location, where members borrow tools for periods of time and learn proper tool use from experienced craftspeople staffing the program.

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E. Supplemental live/work and creative production design guidelines should be developed through collaboration with Wood County Building Inspection representatives as a resource to inform design and construction projects geared towards artisanal production. These working spaces have special requirements that should be carefully developed and reviewed by design professionals. Design details including loading, fire rating, facilities for storage of hazardous waste materials, ventilation, provision of deep basin sinks, sound proofing, and so on are important to consider both to ensure the utility and safety of these spaces and mitigate impacts on nearby neighbors.

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F. A comprehensive and targeted marketing strategy is needed to attract allied stakeholders that will play critical roles in realizing the vision for the District. Creative District leadership should hire a consultant to develop a marketing plan designed to promote the District, utilizing both print and web marketing tools tailored to the specific needs and interests of various groups. These could include business owners looking to relocate, entrepreneurs seeking new opportunities, developers who may be open to investing, artists to live, work, or show their work, and potential visitors and customers.

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G. Creative District leadership should implement policy and financial incentives that make the District more attractive as a place to live and work for creative professionals. This could include recruitment strategies, including relocation assistance and financing packages tailored to the needs of artists through local banks.

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**LONG-TERM INITIATIVES (6-8 YEARS)**

H. Visually distinguish the Creative District by demonstrating its identity through a variety of streetscape elements and public realm improvements including street furniture, alternative pavement patterns, temporary streetscape treatments, murals, signage and lighting installations.

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I. Explore opportunities for the development of new uses including a kitchen incubator, greenhouses and artists spaces in the Creative District.

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CASE STUDY: LOWER TOWN ARTS DISTRICT - PADUCAH, KY

The establishment of the Lower Town Arts District began through the Artist Relocation Program in March 2000 and has become a national model for using the arts for economic development. At a time when funding for the arts was being cut, Paducah fostered an environment where artists and the arts could flourish. The goal of the program was to revitalize one of Paducah’s most historic neighborhoods through the Arts. Properties were offered by the city at little cost (often as low as $1). The intrigue of becoming a part of a true art enclave proved irresistible. The Program recruited artists from across the country who purchased and renovated properties in Lower Town and created galleries, studios and living spaces.

The Artist Relocation Program successfully recruited more than 75 artists/residents/businesses to Lower Town. More than $30 million has been invested (primarily through a generous and innovative financing arrangement offered by community partner Paducah Bank). Only $2 million of City general fund monies spent in restoring this model community to its previous glory. Every component of the plan, including 144 new street lights and increased police patrols, has been implemented with great success and positive reaction from both the artists and residents of Lower Town and the Paducah community. Attitudes of the residents have improved, many structures have been completely renovated or brought up to code, new infill construction has taken place, and once the studios and galleries opened for business, the aptly renamed “Lower Town Arts District” created a welcome addition and new dimension to Paducah’s cultural tourism product. The Lower Town Arts District features nearly 50 artists living, creating, and conducting workshops in this 26-square block area. The neighborhood is also home to a creative cluster of writers and musicians, as well as secondary and college level art instructors who have working studios.

Through collaboration between the City and West Kentucky Community & Technical College (WKCTC), the Paducah School of Art (PSA) invested $1.8 million to renovate a 6,700-square-foot historic property in the Lower Town Arts District, known as Madison Hall, to house the school’s ceramics and jewelry programs. Since opening that facility in January 2013, PSA has also completed construction of a new 7,000-square-foot sculpture building that opened in Fall 2014. A $10 million renovation of a 30,000-square-foot historic property that now houses its 2D and new 3D design programs was completed in January 2016. This final phase of construction was funded through an agency bonded by the Commonwealth in the amount of $7.5 million with a $2.5 million match from private sources.

Source: www.americansforthearts.org/
PRIORITY 7: HIKE-BIKE TRAIL ALONG CREEK

The Hike-Bike Trail utilizes an existing creek and public right-of-way as an asset to begin to develop a recreational corridor and trail that can benefit current and future East Side residents. The Hike-Bike Trail recognizes the need for facilities that encourage active transportation and support neighborhood beautification and restoration of the natural environment. The creek that primarily runs north to south from East Wooster to Napoleon offers a great opportunity to co-locate a Hike-Bike Trail along its course, providing a route that connects residential areas with Crim Elementary School, Carter Park and the BGSU campus.
SHORT-TERM INITIATIVES (0-3 YEARS)

A. Organize a committee or sub-group of the East Side Neighborhood Association and a "friends of the trail" volunteer team to help clean, maintain, and promote the corridor. The friends of the trails should collaborate, promote, and educate the community on the purpose for the hike-bike trail while providing organizational and fundraising capacities to supplement and lessen the burden on the City.

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MEDIUM-TERM INITIATIVES (3-6 YEARS)

B. Develop a Phase 1 detailed design that utilizes public right-of-way to connect Mercer Road to Crim Elementary School. This segment of the trail is approximately 2,000 feet in length.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>$10k - $50k</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lead Partners</td>
<td>City</td>
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</table>

C. Apply for a grant through the Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program. This Program is dedicated to environmental conservation including acquisition of green space and the protection and enhancement of river and stream corridors. Grant recipients agree to maintain the properties in perpetuity so that they can be enjoyed and cherished for generations to come. Apply for the Ohio Recreational Trails Program (RTP). This reimbursement grant program provides up to 80 percent project funding. It is federally funded and is administered by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration. The following types of projects are eligible for RTP funding:

- New recreational trail construction (non-motorized and motorized)
- Trail maintenance/restoration
- Trailside and trailhead facilities (for example, parking spaces, restrooms, potable water, etc.)
- Purchase/lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment
- Acquisition of easements and property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors
- Educational programs promoting trail safety and environmental protection (These projects cannot exceed 5 percent of Ohio’s annual RTP apportionment.)

Apply for a grant through the Clean Ohio Trails Fund (COTF), a reimbursement program that provides up to 75 percent project funding. This grant program is state funded and is administered by the ODNR. The following types of projects are eligible for COTF funding:

- New recreational trail construction (emphasis is on linear trails)
• Acquisition of property and easements for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors
• Trailhead facilities may be considered if a relatively small component of a trail construction project
• Planning, appraisals, title work, surveys, engineering design costs, environmental research, and archaeological surveys associated with a specific recreational trail project may be eligible

Apply to the PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program, which provides funding for important and influential projects that leverage federal funding and build momentum for bicycling in communities across the U.S. These projects include bike paths and rail trails, as well as mountain bike trails, bike parks, BMX facilities, and large-scale bicycle advocacy initiatives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Low</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lead Partners</td>
<td>City</td>
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D. Implement and construct Phase 1, including the trail surface, landscaping, seating, signage, and lighting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>$100k - $1m</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lead Partners</td>
<td>City</td>
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E. To support future phases, acquire easements along the east side of the vacant property south of State Street, between Amherst Village Apartments and Ivywood Apartments running north to E Wooster Street, east of Scott Hamilton Drive and from Briarwood Drive to E Napoleon Road. This would allow trail expansion to occur in a timely manner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
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<tr>
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</table>

F. Develop a Phase 2 detailed design that utilizes this newly-acquired right-of-way to connect the segment between Scott Hamilton Avenue and Briarwood Drive and to connect the creek segment to the BGSU Campus and Carter Park. This segment of the trail is approximately 4,900 feet in length.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>$10k - $50k</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Lead Partners</td>
<td>City</td>
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</table>

G. Implement and construct Phase 2, including the trail surface, landscaping, seating, signage and lighting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>$100k - $1m</th>
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<tbody>
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MEDIUM-TERM INITIATIVES (6-8 YEARS)

H. Develop a Phase 3 detailed design that includes bicycle infrastructure on Scott Hamilton Avenue between Crim Elementary and Manville Avenue, as well as an extension of the trail between Briarwood Drive and E Napoleon Road. This segment of the trail is approximately 3,000 feet in length.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>$10k - $50k</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lead Partners</td>
<td>City</td>
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</table>

I. Implement and construct Phase 3, including the trail surface, landscaping, seating, signage, and lighting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>$100k - $1m</th>
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CASE STUDY: HOCKHOCKING ADENA BIKEWAY – ATHENS, OH

The Hockhocking Adena Bikeway stretches 18 miles from Nelsonville through downtown Athens past Ohio University. The City of Athens says the path is a well-utilized resource in the community. "Families love it, like I said, tourists love it. It gets really well used by our university students. We feel like, as much as we can, contribute to projects that encourage walking and biking. That's also a positive in the health spectrum," says Athens County Planner Miranda Kridler. The bikeway has many points of interest along the way. There are also several places for users to rent a bike.

The City of Athens is set to begin construction on the third and final phase of a bike spur extending the Hockhocking Adena Bikeway from Armitage Road to University Estates housing development near Ohio Route 682. Ninety-five percent of the project (up to about $312,000) is funded by a grant from the Ohio Department of Transportation's transportation alternatives program; the remaining 5 percent will come from City funds. Athens Mayor Steve Patterson said that extension of the bike path to University Estates was envisioned in the original development agreement the City entered into with University Estates in 2000. ODOT also announced about $1.5 million in grant funding for extension of the bikeway to Chauncey. City Engineer Andy Stone said that much of the design of the Athens bike spur extension project already has been completed, although he said he didn’t expect construction to get underway until mid-summer into late fall 2018, or possibly early spring 2019. “What this means is people who live up at University Estates will now be able to get onto this new spur and ride it all the way into the City of Athens without having to go onto Ohio Rt. 682,” the mayor said. Patterson noted that the City has been seeing more development taking place in and around University Estates in recent years, and said he hoped that the bike-path extension will help encourage further development in the area. In order to create connections to the Bikeway, the City is now looking at adding bike lanes “strategically” to certain roads in the city, including East State Street. The City is also looking at adding “sharrows,” or shared-lane markings reminding drivers that they must share the road with bikers, to certain roads.
