

September 13-15, 2021

Cannelton Can!

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Cannelton, IN SDAT Report



Disclaimer

The ideas represented in the following report are those of the American Institute of Architects' design assistance team, based on our observations of the Cannelton community and its existing plans, the insights gleaned from City officials, and the ideas shared with us about the area and the aspirations for it in during the team's tour. This report represents our best professional recommendations in the public interest. We do not serve a client in this endeavor. The report, and the process that produced it, is a public service to the Cannelton community.

The ideas captured here represent three intensive days of work (September 13-15, 2021) and the information available to us at the time of this writing. We do not expect this report to be followed as verbatim, prescriptive advice. This work represents a beginning – we hope a new beginning – for the area. It should be understood as a developmental tool, and we expect the community will expand on these ideas and amend them as you make it your own. This report serves as an opening mechanism to begin the necessary public work and we expect the ideas to evolve and change as you utilize it and as the vision for the community begins to take shape through public processes to follow.

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Introduction



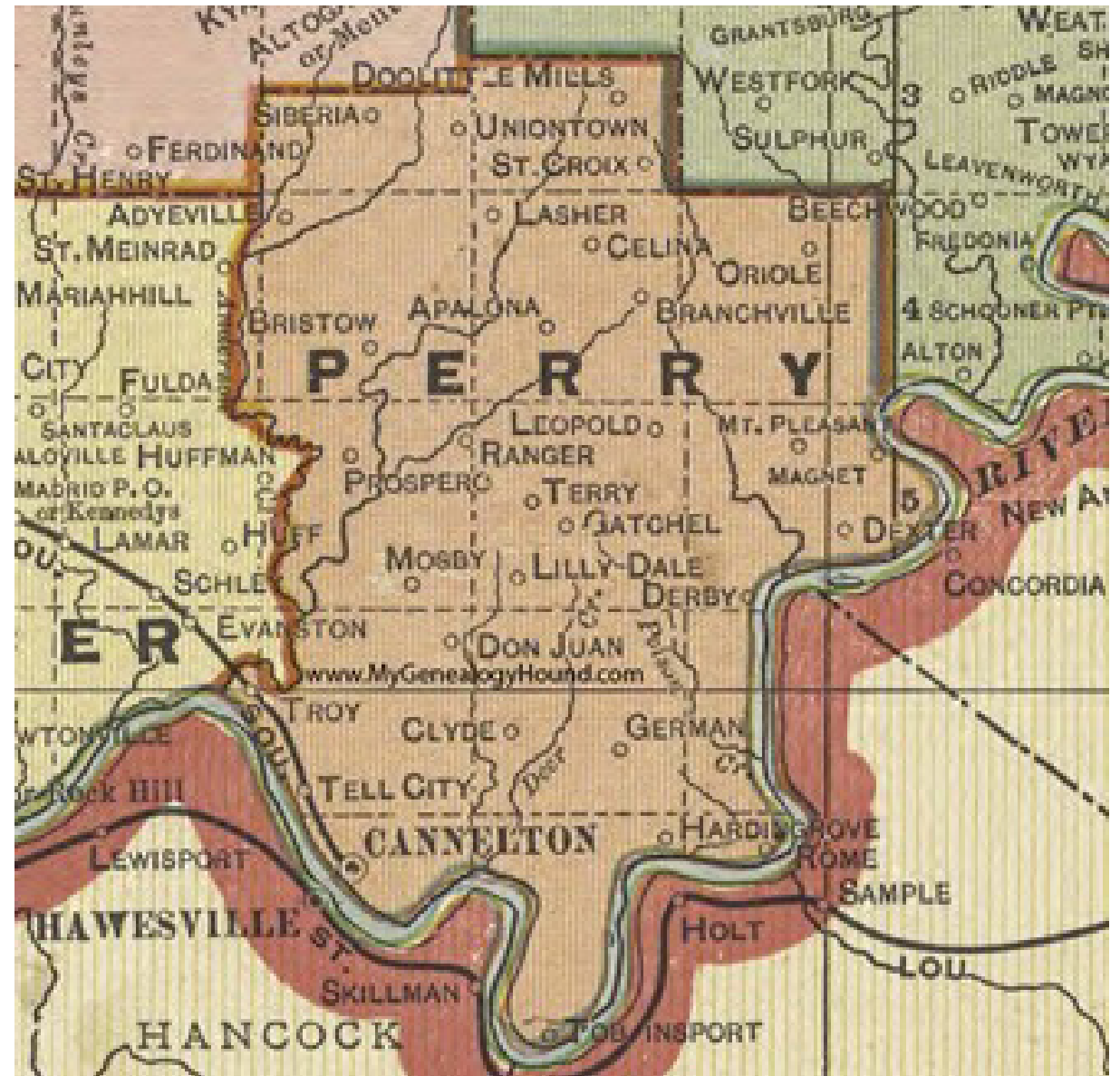
A Brief Community History

Cannelton, Indiana was founded in the 1840's as a town to serve the mining interests of the American Cannel Coal company. Through the 19th and early 20th century, Cannelton grew as a significant manufacturing center along the Ohio River and developed a supporting commercial downtown. Initially, its key industries centered around coal and cotton milling. Later in the 19th century the Cannelton Sewer Pipe Company began producing clay pipe and other clay products, eventually becoming the city's leading industry on into the mid-20th century.

Cannelton was once the county seat of Perry County with the original Perry County Courthouse serving today as Cannelton's Perry County Museum. In the mid-20th century, when the Courthouse was moved to nearby Tell City, the economy of Cannelton began to wane. This, along with the eventual closure of the Can Clay manufacturing facility, has led to the city's decline in recent decades. Today, the city is struggling to find a way to revitalize the city and bring life and vitality back to its Downtown and celebrate its industrial heritage through the clean up and repurposing of the Can Clay site.



Mid-20th century post card view of Cannelton's downtown.



1908 Map of Perry County, Indiana showing Cannelton as the County Seat before it was moved to Tell City.

General Character

Arriving in Cannelton you are immediately struck by its (mostly intact) 19th and early 20th century Downtown, where its historic commercial district still stands with many of its original landmark buildings — schools, courthouses, churches, etc – anchoring key locations throughout the city. Historic buildings along Washington Streets (its downtown main street) are highly detailed and many retain their original wood and steel sidewalk canopies, providing glimpses into its Victorian river town history when the sidewalks would have been bustling with business and trade. At the same time, you can see the effects of the last 40 years of blight and decay as businesses have left downtown and property owners have not been able to maintain their aging historic buildings.

Cannelton was built below a sandstone bluff along the Ohio River, and throughout its history this native local sandstone has been used in the construction of buildings and streetscapes. This gold and brown sandstone can be seen throughout the city in houses, commercial buildings, retaining walls, sidewalks, and curbs, and it is an important character defining feature of Cannelton.

Cannelton's industrial past dominates the landscape. The Indiana Cotton Mill, a National Historic Landmark, has been redeveloped as a historic tax credit housing project and looms over downtown, just a block off of Washington Street, the city's downtown commercial corridor. The remnants of the Can Clay Manufacturing facility still occupy an over 30-acre site adjacent to downtown and along the river front.

Although Cannelton is a river front city, today it is separated from the river by a concrete flood wall which prevents you from seeing the river and even knowing it's there. That wall plays an important role in protecting the city from the historic floods and is essential to the preservation of the city's downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.

A Brief Project History

In late 2019, Cannelton applied to the AIA for a Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) to provide recommendations for the future of the Can Clay site. In March 2020, AIA Team leader Terry Ammons and AIA staff visited Cannelton to conduct an initial scoping mission for the project. This visit occurred just days before the onset of the global COVID pandemic, which subsequently postponed the full community project indefinitely.

In early 2021, AIA and Cannelton representatives began to explore the possibility of holding a circumscribed version of a design assistance team project in an in-person but modified format. A design assistance team was formed from across the country (see team roster) to serve this role and provide a fresh set of outside eyes and unencumbered analysis and recommendations for Cannelton. The ongoing pandemic unfortunately constrained the AIA's ability to hold large-scale community engagement meetings, thereby confining the community's input opportunities to extremely limited virtual surveying. In preparation for their work, the team reviewed existing plans and background information about the Can Clay property and the adjacent downtown Cannelton area. The team then toured the project area extensively once they were on site, and held a series of small-group meetings with stakeholders selected by the Cannelton SDAT steering committee. The team feels strongly that an extensive community engagement process will be a critical element for success once the community begins to move forward with the implementation of the SDAT recommendations.



What We Heard and Felt from the Residents and Business Owners of Cannelton

- They are saddened at seeing their city decline so completely over the last 40 years.
- Many buildings throughout the historic downtown have structural problems that may be difficult to overcome and repairs will be more costly than the owners can afford.
- Most businesses have left Downtown and with so many empty buildings why would someone want to locate a new business there?
- Vacant and abandoned properties are a drag on the community.
- Introduce art and maker spaces into Downtown.
- There is no unified approach, between residents and local government, on how to deal with issues of blight, demolition risks, development, or planning.
- Communication between residents, local government, and organizations needs to be improved so everyone can be working towards common goals.
- Not enough opportunities for residents to get involved in redevelopment activities.
- Everyone wants to find ways to prevent the demolition of historic buildings.
- Residents need local services. Most service businesses have left and gone to Tell City.
- Residents want to be able to shop and eat in their own downtown.
- There is a desire for a stronger connection to the river front in some way.



- There is a sense of isolation now that so many businesses have left and traffic by-passes Cannelton.
- There is a lack of expertise in the area to support the survey and assessment that is needed to determine the actual condition of many failing buildings or structures in disrepair.
- Although people sense the potential of the Can Clay site to be an asset to the City, the size and scale of its undertaking is difficult to plan for.
- There is a need for new market rate residential Downtown.
- Residents want something to happen NOW.

What our Team Saw When We Visited Cannelton

- Cannelton has a remarkable collection of 19th and early 20th century commercial buildings in a cohesive downtown with many key corner commercial structures remaining.
- Cannelton's industrial history provides tremendous short and long term opportunities for building and reinforcing the city's character by using its own traditional materials and integrating the industrial landscapes with its planning for Downtown.
- For such small city, many of its historic landmark structures still remain and are a visible part of the landscape throughout Downtown.
- Although the condition of many of the downtown structures is poor, we saw nothing that was beyond repair and with the right professional support, any one of these buildings can be renovated and put back into use as a productive part of Downtown.
- The city feels somewhat isolated. The combination of the flood wall separating Downtown from the river, the way small windy neighborhood roads don't connect well with other parts of town, and the prevalence of large blocks and empty spaces created by the abandonment of industrial properties adjacent to Downtown contribute to the feeling.
- Residents AND leaders want to find a way to revitalize Downtown but have not found a common approach and do not always communicate well.
- There are many opportunities for small projects to start to make a difference.
- The Mill building is an extraordinary landmark but does not feel very connected to the fabric of Downtown or the open spaces around it.
- The Can Clay site can be a key to long range development ideas but Downtown needs to be a focus in the short term.

Revitalization Strategies



Cannellton has a desire to revitalize its historic buildings,

How You Act Matters! – Your Actions Should be Guided by a Set of Key Principles.

Change leadership

Recommendations:

- 1 We recommend the purchase of “The Ultimate

- Stewardship** is best defined as an ethic which embodies

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1 Create a block program for Washington St and other

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- 4. Consider phantom Main Street concept pop-ups.
- 5. Always celebrate positive improvements and acknowledge everyone involved in bringing forth positive improvements.

Develop Effective Communication /
Community Engagement

Communication is effective when the community is receptive to it and members have the ability to provide relevant feedback. Some of the supporting concepts include a clarity of ideas, language and feedback. We encourage Cannelton leadership to engage and promote a communication strategy which will provide the community with information as well as steps to engage the revitalization process. Communication is a two-way street; to be effective you must not only be an excellent speaker but an even better listener. Instead of listening to respond, pause and really comprehend what the community is saying. As a leader you don't have to have all the answers, but you do have to weigh all of the options and then lead down the best path. Below are suggested steps in promoting better, stronger and more effective communication within your community.

Recommendations:

- 1. Social Media – utilize your social media page to inform the community of activities going on in the community. Exercise this on a regularly scheduled basis – it is a mechanism to promote activities and information to citizens.
- 2. Newsletter – not every citizen will have access to social media so utilizing traditional print methods may be helpful in reaching more citizens. Consider a monthly newsletter informing the community of city happenings.
- 3. Media – provide updates to Perry County News to gain traction and publicize Cannelton activities.

- 4. Posters – place posters in high traffic areas, especially when promoting activities for people to see.
- 5. Host monthly “Meet the Mayor and City Council” at a local coffee shop, rotating participants to discuss citizen concerns or provide information about city activities. This also shows support for local area businesses. Move it around to other locations to share the opportunity across all businesses.

To have a quality result, it is important to incorporate diverse people, voices, ideas and information in the equation. Given the size of Cannelton, collaboration and shared purpose of local government and community institutions and others working together can advance the common good. For government to work well, it is important to incorporate and connect with the different voices across the community.

Recommendations:

- 1. Review and publish this report and host a public meeting to discuss results. Listen to the community and tune in to what they are excited about and work to make that happen.
- 2. Have the community help prioritize the action items. Allow them a voice in the changes and they will help support them.
- 3. Ask the community for their assistance in moving the projects forward by participating, chairing, volunteering time, donating sweat equity, etc. Let them know that positive results necessitate them to be involved in making things happen.
- 4. Create committees based on the different categories of the various projects – connect people to their passion and have them report back to the city on their efforts.
 - Committee responsibilities – formulate action items, budget (if necessary), fundraising ideas including

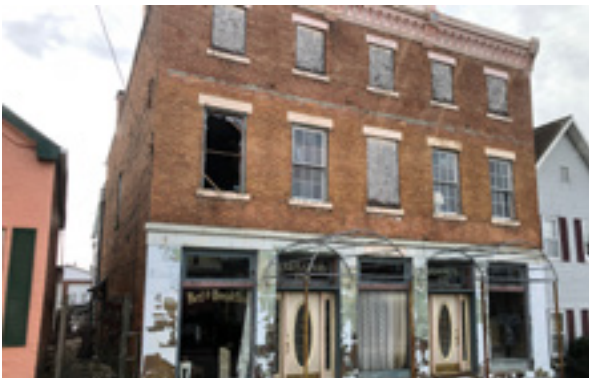
possible grants, donations, organize volunteers, schedule work days (if necessary)

Preserve Your Historic Resources

The City of Cannelton will be a community which supports the preservation and protection of historic resources. Historic resources are vital assets which support economic development, community revitalization, education and civic pride while contributing to the character of the community. It is critical to create a strategy of preservation for Washington Street to support its unique character and charm. These buildings tell stories of Cannelton's early years and of those who helped establish the city, build its economy and nurture its culture. Understanding financial hurdles exist for many of the property owners, it is beneficial to both the City and the property owners to assist them in overcoming those challenges to build a vibrant and active area. Cannelton is registered as a federal historic district which allows for rural areas to preserve their character through historic preservation programs such as the Main Street Program, a recent designation achieved by the Renew Cannelton on behalf of the city. The overall objective should be to keep properties and places of historic and cultural value in active use, accommodating appropriate improvements to sustain their viability while maintaining the key character-defining features which contribute to their significance as cultural resources.

Recommendations:

- 1. Preserve older and historic structures, landscapes and features in order to provide a sense of identity.
- 2. Increase awareness of neighborhood and block landmarks which create community character and provide links to the past.
- 3. Increase awareness of the social and economic value of historic preservation.



- 4. Re-establish the Cannelton Historic Preservation Commission (See Chapter 1.11 of the municipal code).
- 5. Follow up with the Main Street Program on how they can assist in moving Cannelton forward.
- 6. Identify all property owners on Washington Street. Create a contact list for the city.
- 7. Evaluate buildings and assign priority to focus on in conjunction with property owners (review the Downtown plan from 2013 created by Triad Associates.)
- 8. The City should also identify programs of financial assistance for renovation, including but not limited to local programs, state programs and federal. Work with Indiana Landmarks and Indiana 15 to help identify these available resources. Create a list with websites and contact information to have available to share with property owners.
- 9. Contact a higher education facility's architecture department and ask if they would consider the creation of a master design plan as an exercise for Cannelton. This is a cheap and easy way to capture ideas from a group of excited students. They may also want to contribute "sweat equity" into such a project, helping to transform buildings by cleaning, painting and more.
- 10. Meet collectively or individually with the owners to discuss the challenges they are experiencing in renovating/restoring their property. Include City and Board members from Renew Cannelton in the dialogue.
- 11. Utilize clay pipes throughout the city as design elements – planters, sculpture, mosaics.
- 12. Trail connectivity to Tell City.
- 13. Preserve green space and add trees to the streetscape (see plan from 2013).

Improve Public Space

The quality of a city's public space often forms the strongest impression a visitor takes away with them. A city's public space plays an important role in how its citizens see their city and what it stands for. One of the most important and transformative things a city can do to breathe new life into a downtown district is to improve existing and develop new public space which can be shared by everyone and programmed for a wide variety of public functions. Universal accessibility is one of the principles which should guide the idea of inclusive public spaces. It leverages and optimizes space performance by building safer and cohesive communities, builds local economies, and brings nature into the city. Vibrant public spaces are active, filled with people from all walks of life enjoying the communities they reside in. Building on the current green space and expanding it should be considered for Cannelton to enhance its' attractiveness. The focus should be on connecting the community through spaces of this nature, as well as a potential "connector" to other local communities. When designing or improving your public spaces. Consider the following:



- Keep it simple and adaptable.
- Make it accessible for everyone.
- Highlight the City's character.
- Plan for people, not cars.
- Sidewalks are public space opportunities.
- Engage all of your senses.
- Parks are more important than you think.
- Trust the users to tell you what works.
- Quality materials matter.
- Find ways to engage the community.
- Remember that work on great public spaces is ongoing.

Recommendations:

- 1. Utilize Placemaking strategies to enhance public space.



- 2. Enhance the flood wall with some artistic flair by repurposing Can Clay pipes, mosaics, lighting and other ways to make it more attractive.
- 3. Clean and repair sidewalks starting at the lower end of Washington Street.
- 4. Reinstall awnings/shades on buildings which have had them removed. (Is there an option for a 60/40 split between city and property owner?)
- 5. Consider green space in the Can Clay area.
- 6. Adopt the 2013 plan's public and green space ideas.



Character Matters – Reinforce and Strengthen It

There are two critical goals in maintaining the character and integrity of Washington Street: the preservation of historic materials and the preservation of a building's distinguishing character. Each building on the street is unique with its own identity and distinctive character. Character essentially refers to all those visual aspects and physical features which comprise the appearance of every historic building. Defining elements include the overall shape of the building, its materials, craftsmanship, decorative details, interior spaces, and various aspects of its site and environment. We believe all of the buildings on Washington Street contribute to the character principle, and efforts should be made to recover and rehabilitate these buildings as they lend themselves to the overall character of Cannelton. While privately owned, they are a critical piece of the Cannelton identity and should be treated as community assets. Focus on the following recommendations as evaluations unfold.

Recommendations:

- 1. Develop a renovation policy, not a demolition approach. The city should facilitate how to help maintain these buildings as a first step of action.
- 2. Encourage good stewardship by offering assistance to property owners in helping them mitigate property issues proactively.
- 3. Mitigate penalties for those owners making good faith efforts to repair property. Keep an open and productive dialogue and consistent check points to ensure progress is happening.
- 4. Focus on filling buildings that are ready for tenants on the north end of Washington Street.
- 5. Foster a sense of teamwork and collaboration to make positive things happen in Cannelton. Set aside

past differences and focus on the future – to do less only hurts Cannelton and its ability to rebound.

Work with Design Themes

For Cannelton to maintain and enhance its historic presence, it is imperative to maintain a design theme that is congruent with its character. Cannelton was home to the Cannelton Cotton Mill constructed in 1847 which, at the time, was the largest structure west of the Allegheny Mountains. It was here the manufacturing of fabric for the Union army uniforms happened and later for both world wars. Coupled with the Can Clay site, Cannelton should embrace its industrial history and carry the elements of those structures forward throughout the city.

Recommendations:

- 1. Draw from the river environment and its storied past with ferries as a key form of transportation. By utilizing materials that resonate with the area, it brings forth the historic elements and echoes them throughout the city.
- 2. Use remaining material from the Can Clay area to enhance the city with pots, plants and other decorations as a call out to the company that played such a major role in the city's history.
- 3. Find ways to use or reference the history of building with the native sandstone. Insure that any and all historic stone is either repaired in-situ or salvaged for repurposing in public space projects around the city. Give walls, sidewalks, and other infrastructure built of this stone the same protection and importance as Cannelton's historic buildings.
- 4. Build on and expand green spaces within the city, taking advantage of these spaces for presenting the history and stories of Cannelton for local users and visitors.

- 5. Explore and honor the past. Cannelton can leverage its history to enhance and attract people to stay a while and explore the area bringing a range of economic benefits to the Downtown.
- 6. Use Cannelton's history to create places people will want to visit by first showing that you care for the resources you have. The charm evident in Cannelton's historic downtown combined with a redevelopment strategy that takes advantage of its character and historic themes can create the draw Cannelton is striving for.
- 7. Look to higher education resources to assist with developing a concept, rooted in Cannelton's character and historic themes, that can be implemented as small "bite-size" projects as funds are available or just with volunteers. Encourage them to base the projects on the historical and natural elements that are essential for retaining and strengthening Cannelton's character. This can include efforts such as wayfinding signage, pots, plants, artists pieces and more.
- 8. Decorate windows on building storefronts, creating a "phantom Main Street" draw for people to window shop.



In order to make responsible decisions about the preservation and stewardship of your city's key resources there needs to be a framework for determining and communicating a resource's value and impact on the community. Everyone can see that there are many deteriorated buildings throughout Downtown, but without the proper professional assistance on hand, it's hard to understand just how bad a building's condition is, what needs to be done to fix it, or what would be the potential impact of losing the resource if nothing is done to prevent its collapse or trigger its demolition.

Your physical resources are of tremendous value. But when you find that you need to consider decisions regarding the stewardship or repair of specific

Recommendation:

- Historic Value
- Contextual Value (a corner building would be a higher value than an ordinary mid-block building due to its context)
- Property Value (assessed)
- General Condition
- Probable Repair Costs
- Post Repair Value (increase to assessment)
- Re-use Potential

Planning for the Downtown and planning for the Can Clay site present two distinct challenges. Action on Downtown planning ideas can begin immediately, particularly since there are still many good ideas from the 2013 Downtown plan that have not yet been acted upon. The process for planning and redeveloping the Can Clay property, due to its scale, complexity, and brownfield issues will take time and require diligent and dedicated work with governmental, regulatory, and funding entities to construct a path forward before any significant work can take place on the site.

For our purposes, we have separated the two tracks and will offer recommendations for each, but always

A photograph of a large industrial facility, likely a refinery or chemical plant. In the foreground, there are several large, cylindrical storage tanks with dark, possibly rusted, tops. To the left, there are industrial buildings with light-colored roofs. In the background, more industrial structures and a line of trees are visible under a cloudy sky. The overall scene depicts a complex industrial site.

Downtown Planning



Downtown Planning

General Assessment

Character

Downtown Cannelton has the feel of a quaint small town with a 6-block Main Street (Washington Street) that is easy to walk and bounded by both natural and architectural landmarks with the historic Perry County Courthouse (now the Perry County Museum) and Saint Michaels Church at the upper and the Ohio River and Army Corps of Engineers flood wall at the lower end. In between is a fairly intact late 19th and early 20th century commercial district characterized by Victorian shopfronts with an abundance of wood and cast-iron canopies covering the full width of the sidewalk as you sometimes see in southern river towns.

As you look closely at Cannelton's buildings and streets you start to see that many of its historic buildings and retaining walls were built out of locally quarried sandstone, including the massive Indiana Mill Building, easily the most prominent and important local and national landmark. The sandstone lends an almost Cotswold-like feel to some of the city's oldest buildings and is an important feature to protect and preserve as redevelopment takes place both in the Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.

Public Space

Cannelton has a range of formal and informal public spaces, including the lawn and site around the Perry County Museum (the former Courthouse), the small corner gazebo park midway down Washington Street, and the riverfront area on the "other side" of the flood wall. These are public spaces in and around downtown, but they are currently not very flexible or laid out for a range of uses. The sidewalks along Washington Street create public space through the use of the large overhanging canopies that reach out all the way to the street.



Green Space

The prevalence of green space in and around Downtown is more the result of unprogrammed, unbuilt lots, or industrial areas that have not been developed that feel somewhat park-like although unmanaged. These areas surround the Can Clay and Mill properties. The river front park provides a nice green area with the picnic shelter and boat ramp and provides a greenway trail access along the river following the flood wall. At the lower end of Washington Street a small, well maintained park provides for a nice seating area in a garden-like setting. This park replaced the hotel that once sat on this site, and was put in and is managed by a private owner. The city has developed a small park with its historic Gazebo. This park, with its diagonal walk splitting it in half, is functional but could be improved to provide more flexibility for a range of uses. At the top of the hill, a new park is being created on the museum side-lawn where a new sculpture installation has been placed; it has more of a memorial feel.





The River
Cannelton is an Ohio River City whose history is tied to its location along the river. Unfortunately, today river access is limited due to the flood wall that separates the river park area from the entire downtown. The wall blocks any and all views of the river from downtown to the extent that as a visitor or resident, you’re not aware of the river when you’re in the Downtown or, for that matter, most parts of the city.

Disconnection
As discussed elsewhere in this report, Downtown Cannelton has become disconnected in many ways – disconnection from the river being one of the most visible. As businesses and industry have left, its local economy has become disconnected from the greater regional economy with fewer and fewer opportunities to make market connections with most downtown shops closed up. Communication issues within the community reinforce a lack of agreement on common objectives and goals that could help create focused action to fix Downtown problems and spur on redevelopment.

Blight
What is most apparent as you enter and walk or drive through Downtown is the extent of empty and blighted historic buildings and structures. The presence of the deteriorating Can Clay property reinforces this sense of decay with the Mill building setting large in stark contrast to the other dilapidated properties. The extent of deterioration along the city’s main street leads a visitor to believe the city has no hope and has given up on trying keep house.

Building Strong Connections

Making the Business Case
Cannelton is a city with great bones, a walkable downtown, a rare authenticity and historic character, amazing buildings, a walkable street grid, access to and along the Ohio River, affordable real estate, redevelopment opportunities at Can Clay and other

sites, opportunities, easy access, regional recreation anchors, and a strong sense of community.

Cannelton also faces the challenges of an aging and slowly shrinking city, along with a limited tax base, incomes, jobs, and resources.

Much has been made of what Can Clay can do, and it certainly presents both rich redevelopment and character defining opportunities. However, without better connections – connections from far way, from nearby highways, and connections within the community – the economic promise will not be delivered. These connections will add more value to the downtown and City of Cannelton in general than Can Clay alone can do, but they are also critical to making Can Clay desirable for investors, residents and businesses. The value added proposition is that investments described herein will pay back, many times over, in taxes, jobs, and direct and indirect economic benefits.

Many rural areas in the United States are shrinking, some far faster than Cannelton. Those that create identity, connections, and a sense of place, however, are thriving. Those that cannot are fading away. Cannelton needs to decide which side of this story they want to be on. With the growth of footloose businesses (businesses that can locate anywhere are not tied to specific local resource such as access to raw materials, easy shipping, and major markets), the value of placemaking, connections, and high quality of life continues to grow in importance. Various case specific economic studies have identified the economic value of connections to water, roads, recreation, and within a community.

Bring on the Traffic and Wayfinding
Commercial uses rely on traffic, foot or vehicular, to bring in customers. Cannelton must do more to deliver traffic to future businesses. For a rural community, there is already a substantial regional vehicle traffic, but very little of that reaches downtown Cannelton. Likewise, downtown foot traffic is more limited than might be expected given the amount of housing in, near, and

within walking distance of downtown.

Increasing traffic is obviously an iterative process. More traffic attracts new businesses and new businesses create more traffic. Tell City, with somewhat weaker road connections than Cannelton (being further from the Bob Cummings Bridge), receives about 20% more vehicle traffic than Cannelton. Route 66 by Walmart, a strong anchor which draws traffic in all directions, has about 60% more traffic than Cannelton.

One of the ways to drive traffic is to help visitors and residents alike identify their own identity, their sense of place. After all, why would you want to visit a place, whether it is traveling an hour or five minutes, if you don’t know what is there and why it is special? That can start with three steps, even before businesses reach the critical mass to generate their own traffic demands:

- 1. Identifying what makes Cannelton special to its residents and visitors.
- 2. Building a brand so that the City can convey that

Location	Daily Trips
Route 237- Bob Cummings Lincoln Trail Bridge	7,863
Route 237- northeasterly of Route 66	2,363
Route 66/7th Street	8,179
Route 66- southeasterly of Route 237	3,196
Route 66 at Walmart	13,285
Route 66 at center of Tell City	9,887
Washington Street at 5th St (estimate)	<500

Average Annual Daily Trips (AADT for Two-Way Vehicle Traffic).

easily and quickly. (Think about Apple computers, the City of Louisville, or any major league sports team and their logo and brand may pop into your mind.)

3. Developing a wayfinding program to drive traffic, bringing in the brand when appropriate.



What is the Cannelton Brand?



Wayfinding to Cannelton is also needed, not just to Tell City.



There is enough traffic in the area to support downtown, if there were visible and active connections to downtown. (Source: Indiana Dept. of Transportation, 2020 data and estimates for downtown Cannelton)

Recommendations: Immediate or the Next Year

1. Better INDOT traffic direction signs on Route 237. Although Cannelton has a new attractive gateway sign on the northeasterly side of Route 237/Route 66, the standard INDOT traffic direction signs for traffic coming in either direction on Route 237 directs traffic to Tell City and the Ohio River Bridge but do not even mention downtown Cannelton.
2. Better INDOT traffic direction signs on Route 66/7th Street. INDOT has posted “Business District” signs, but those signs could benefit to add Ohio River Scenic Byway/Riverfront Access.
3. Additional gateway arrival point on 7th street. Whether drawing from the look and feel of the new Route 237/Route 66 installation or the recommendations in “Downtown Revitalization Plan- Historic Cannelton (Triad Associates, 2013).
4. Begin to build the connection from 7th Street to the floodwall along Washington Street.
5. Identify what makes Cannelton special and develop a brand and a logo. Cannelton began this process with the recent historic Cannelton installation at Route 237/Route 66, but that was a one-off installation and not (at least not yet) a comprehensive program.

Regional Recreation Brings People Downtown

There are abundant recreation resources in and near Cannelton; resources that can serve local needs and attract new residents, investment, visitors, and visitor spending. Unfortunately, some of these resources are isolated and not linked together. Without a comprehensive story and strong connections, these resources fail to attract many visitors, and often not even local residents. When the resources are underutilized, they fail to attract new investment, potentially creating a vicious downward spiral.

Short term low cost and longer term more complex improvements can literally put Cannelton on the map. The payback from these investments is new spending and visitation, strengthening downtown Cannelton and the Can Clay redevelopment.

Recreation opportunities that serve current and prospective residents, businesses, and visitors include:

1. **Cannelton Lock and Dam (Army Corps of Engineers, 1966)** is the sixth highest, of only 20 locks on the entire Ohio River, and is a dynamic visitor attraction. The lock is located 2.6 miles from downtown Cannelton.



This beautiful mural is only apparent to those who have already found the river. Downtown can benefit from murals not only to hide the blank concrete wall but also to add a sense of place.

- 2. **Bob Cummings Lincoln Trail Bridge (1966)** is a half mile arch bridge across the Ohio River connecting Cannelton with Hawesville, Kentucky.
- 3. **Mayor Hargis Park and Cannelton Riverwalk** at Washington Street on the river side of the floodwall, with a boat launch, floodwall mural, and a trail along the river extending from Taylor Street to Herzelle Street.
- 4. **Can Clay kilns** within the Can Clay site, with different kilns representing evolving kiln technology.
- 5. **Access behind the floodway and adjacent and on top of the flood control levee** from Greenmeadow Street to the Cannelton Riverwalk.
- 6. **Access along the river to Tell City** from the Cannelton Riverwalk, 1st Street, River Road, South Boundary Way and 9th, with a potential link to Walmart.
- 7. **Tell City Riverwalk Trail** all within Tell City, with a connection at the Tell City port to Boundary Way and 9th.
- 8. **Unidentified Native American sites** along the Ohio River which served as a travel route from the First Peoples in the Americas.

Recommendations: Immediate for the Next Year

- 1. Coordination with Tell City for consensus on building connections.
- 2. Addressing any gaps (e.g., closed road sign, entrance to the Tell City port) to ensure a continuous route from Greenmeadow Street to the Tell City Riverwalk Trail (a/k/a Ohio River Greenway).
- 3. Marking the entire route with wayfinding signs for the river route as part of the Ohio River Greenway brand (<https://greenway.ohiorivertrail.org/index.php/ohio-river-greenway-trail-logo>) to message that this is not just a Cannelton trail but a regional trail.



Can Clay kilns from different eras encapsulate the Can Clay history and can bring the site alive.



The Iron Ore Heritage Trail in Marquette Michigan provides a precedent of how a kiln can attract residents and visitors. The trail combines recreation with the story of a rich iron ore history-- in this case a beehive kiln used for making charcoal.



The Ohio River Greenway from start of the flood control levee at Greenmeadow to the end of the levee at 1st Street is an easy first step.



Being part of the Ohio River Greenway brand will build instant recognition. That does not preclude it from being the Cannelton River Trail section of the Ohio River Greenway.

- 4. Purchase websites that could potentially be used for branding. For example, Cannelton.org has already been purchased, possibly by a speculative investor. Investing a small amount to protect branding is important for long term web presence.
- 5. Create a Cannelton web and social media presence, with Cannelton branding, and add to the Ohio River Byway web site to better message:
 - The Ohio River Greenway through Cannelton
 - The Cannelton Lock and Dam
 - The Bob Cummings Lincoln Trail Bridge
 - Fishing opportunities along the river
- 6. Begin planning for longer term projects, including identifying volunteers, champions, and partners.

Recommendations: Long Term Projects

- 1. Develop the Ohio River Greenway as a protected mixed-use path from the Cannelton Lock to the Tell City Walkway.
- 2. Redevelop the floodwall at Washington Street to provide improved physical and scenic access to the Ohio River.
- 3. Improve the connectivity of Washington Street from 7th Street to the Can Clay site and the floodwall.

Connecting the Ohio River Greenway

While simple marking of the Ohio River Greenway from Greenmeadow Street to Tell City should be done within a year, a long-term physical connection for a shared use path (also known as a bike path) from the Cannelton Lock and Dam to the Tell City Walkway is still critical for a healthy and vibrant Cannelton.

While this trail is far from the current Ohio River Greenway (New Albany, Clarksville, Jeffersonville, Floyd County, and Clark County), this branding sends

the message that someday the trail will extend across all of southern Indiana. Visitors are much more likely to be attracted to a regional trail network than a short local network. Studies of the economic impact of the Erie Canalway Trail (now part of the Empire State Trail) have estimated that the impact is to generate nearly ½ million dollars a mile in user spending, in part because the length of trail is sufficient to bring in outside visitors as a destination.

Where road traffic is very light (e.g., on Greenmeadow Street and along the existing river walk), pavement can be shared with vehicles, with appropriate lane markings and traffic control devices. In the fast vehicle movement area on Route 66, a buffered bicycle lane or cycle track to provide separation from vehicles is critical in undeveloped areas, such as on top of the flood control levee, where simple tread improvements or paving is needed.

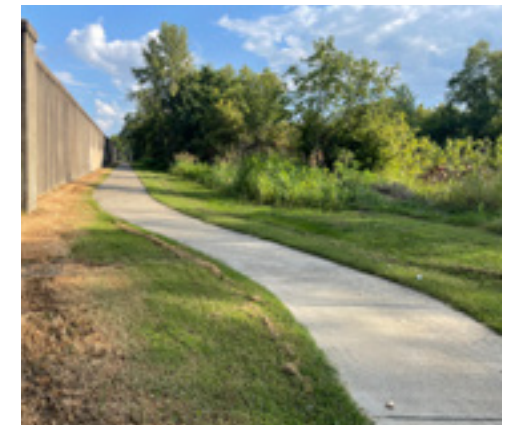
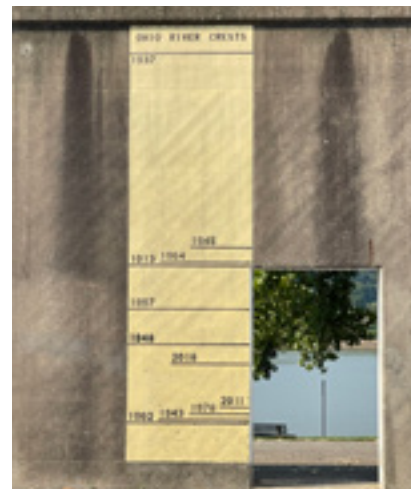
The entire route would provide a variety of experiences and connections to residential, commercial, recreational areas; the Can Clay site; a spur to Walmart, one of the largest regional employers; and Tell City. It would serve recreation uses as well as journey to work, play, shop, and live.

Major parts of this greenway could be completed within a year, while design, right-of-way acquisition or rights of entry, funding, and development for the entire path could have a longer (e.g., ten year) timeline. From southeast to northwest, the Ohio River Greenway sections are:

- Cannelton Lock and Dam to Fuchses Lane—this would require a buffered cycle track adjacent to Route 66. It would be the longest term segment and would require new highway right-of-way. It would also be eligible for surface transportation funding, so although the lead time might be long the project is doable. There would be an alternative floodplain route (closer to the river) that could be more interesting, but would both require more extensive right-of-way and somewhat more complicated



The buildout of the entire greenway is a long-term project, but sharing a vision, attracting volunteer partners and champions, and undertaking the first easy steps should start today.



The trail provides an extremely diverse user experience, with virtually every inch being interesting, and will connect to a larger regional context.

floodplain construction.

- Fuches Lanes and Green Meadows Street- this exists today and requires nothing more than some simple wayfinding signs. For such low volume streets there is no need for any separation between vehicle and non-vehicle visitors.
- Flood control levee (Green Meadows to the floodwall under the Bob Cummings bridge)- this route exists and would be very easy to develop, with users staying on top of the levee for as long as possible and the only complicated part being descending the levee without cutting into it. The route is already used by pedestrians today.
- On the riverside of the floodwall from the Bob Cummings bridge to just southeasterly of Taylor Street- this route is generally passable today and requires only very small investments.
- The existing Cannelton Riverwalk, Taylor Street to Herzelle Street- this project is complete and needs no improvements except wayfinding signs.
- 1st Street at Herzelle Street to River Road- the route requires regrading and single culvert, but otherwise would be very easy to improve. The route transitions from Cannelton to Tell City, so it would require coordination.
- River Road to Boundary Way- this shared route with a low traffic road requires only wayfinding, with a potential spur to Fenn Haven and Walmart.
- Connection to Tell City walkway, through the entrance to the Tell City port.

There are excellent precedents for these kind of improvements, including the existing and currently expanding Ohio River Greenway in the Louisville/ Jeffersonville Metro Area, the Little Turtle Waterway in Logansport Indiana, and projects small and large all over the world.



In the existing Ohio River Greenway, Indiana already has experience with the kind of greenway improvements needed in Cannelton. That greenway continues to grow and is a driving force of identity.

Connecting Washington Street at the Ohio River

While the floodwall at the base of Washington Street provides a small simple pedestrian gateway to the Ohio River, that access is small, undesirable, unavailable to bicycles, and, perhaps most importantly, provides no visual connection to the river. That section of the floodwall should be redeveloped to provide critical physical and scenic access to the Ohio River.

There are several ways to do this. First, that section of the floodwall could be replaced with a flood levee that provides an attractive backdrop to downtown and invites people to cross over the floodwall to reach the river walk and the Ohio River. This is a growing trend in park design, with an appropriately designed park built to the appropriate elevation replacing portions of a floodwall. For example, on a much grander scale, the Louisville Waterfront Park serves this purpose. Although the scale very different, and far easier to address in Cannelton, the principles remain the same. This approach, however, could be impractical given the very limited space between 1st Street and the steep slopes to the Ohio River.

Second, there could be a new 20+ foot wide penetration

of the floodwall at Washington Street will create the currently non-existing connection to the Ohio River Greenway and make downtown Cannelton far more attractive and return it to its authentic roots. Any penetration, of course, will require a floodgate or stoplog structure. The engineering for this approach has been around for many decades, but it is still an expensive process and, if it is not improving flood safety, has fewer available funding sources.

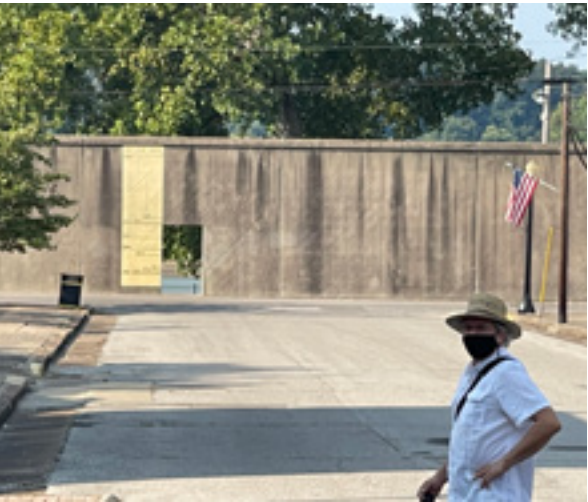
Finally, there is a growing use of incorporating transparent glass into a floodwall, especially the upper few feet that blocks vistas. This approach is in use elsewhere, but would have a more complicated, and expensive, path to Army Corps of Engineers approval.

Any solution will require a careful assessment of the existing floodwall (I or T construction), design, Army Corp of Engineers approval, and construction. This is a complex and expensive, but doable, process with an estimated ten year timeline. The benefits will far outweigh the costs, but probably not the flood benefits required for FEMA or ACOE assistance. That funding would be available only if the project provides flood protection exceeds the current pedestrian penetration.

According to the Army Corps of Engineers database, the current ACOE built levee and floodwall system is 1.62 miles long, protects \$73 million in property, and is owned and operated by the City of Cannelton. The ACOE rates it as having a low risk of overtopping and past seepage issues have been addressed. Except for minor vegetation and sod issues on the earthen levee, the ACOE did not identify any major issues in their April 2021 inspection.

Recommendations: Immediate for the Next Year

1. Paint a mural on the floodwall that terminates the vista looking down Washington St. to the Ohio River. Washington St. should draw people down to the Ohio River, and instead it has an unexciting end. The Cannelton Flood Wall Mural on the river side of the floodwall is a great start, but does not serve to draw people to the river.



The floodwall isolates Cannelton from the Ohio River, one of the City's greatest scenic attributes and the reason why the City exists in the first place.



From Louisville/Jeffersonville to cities all over the world, all of the options have been done before, often in more urban markets and over larger geographic regions, but Cannelton is not unique and can learn from many success stories. Improved access, visual and physical, are transformative.

- 2. Organize volunteers to beautify Washington Street, including cleaning and painting building facades, cleaning debris on the roadway, identifying key viewsheds to protect and enhance, cleaning existing signage, etc.
- 3. Add interpretation from the northwesterly edge of the Cannelton Riverwalk to the fence facing the Can Clay kilns. Long term, some years from now, when the Can Clay site is stabilized, cleaned, and open to the public, such trail and interpretation should extend up to whichever kilns can be preserved.

Connecting Washington Street and the Cannelton Street Grid to Can Clay

One of Cannelton’s strengths is a robust street grid with relatively short block lengths. Such a tight street grid make the City walkable, increases the opportunity for interaction between street users and buildings, opens up development opportunities, enhances the public realm, and creates attractive on-street parking. Cannelton’s National Registry Historic District is not only a collection of historic buildings that tell a rich historical and architectural story. It is also exists at a highly desirable human scale, defined in part by that traditional small block street grid.

Today there is a surplus of parking and no need for future parking lots. As Can Clay, downtown, and other properties in Cannelton get redeveloped, parking demand will drive parking development. Because a small block street grid can accommodate more parking near destinations than superblocks, maintaining the historic street grid can provide sufficient parking and avoid the need to convert development opportunities to unsightly off-street parking lots.

There are a couple of gaps in this network.

First, while there is easy vehicle access from Washington Street to Can Clay, on 1st Street and 4th Street, the gap between 1st and 4th (Cotton Mill and other properties) makes the pedestrian connections weaker and less



Washington Street is the spine of downtown and can tie the city together and add value to downtown, Can Clay, and the City of Cannelton.

desirable. Identify a simple pedestrian path, potentially on an easement in front of the Cotton Mill or on the southwesterly side of the Cotton Mill parking lot.

Washington St. is the spine of downtown and can tie the city together and add value to downtown and Can Clay,

Second, the planned street grid within Can Clay is generally strong, but there are super blocks that should be divided. Until hazardous and solid waste and historic preservation issues are addressed, it is hard to identify the exact route, but conceptually, it is important to divide up these blocks for greatest value, pedestrian friendly

scale, and maximizing on-street parking.



Any final street grid will require determining exactly which buildings can be preserved, but the principle is that a tight street grid makes the site far more walkable, opens up frontage opportunities, and creates attractive on-street parking, minimizing the need for off-street parking.

Show me the Money

Investments in better connections generally have a dramatic return on investment. Each visitor who comes to town, or stays a bit longer, will spend more in the Perry County Museum, on coffee, on pizza and dinner, on convenience commercial, on gas, on karaoke, and on whatever other spending opportunities there are now and in the future. Equally important, visitors and Perry County residents discover opportunities and may start investing in properties, businesses, and homes, building community.

Still, investments require funding up front. While general taxpayer money is probably well spent in these areas,

those resources are always very limited with competing demands.

A partial list of additional resources to be brought to the table to build better connections include the following (this is only a partial list and does not include many smaller grants):

- **Community volunteers**– There is enormous energy from current and potential volunteers in Cannelton. The success of other projects (e.g., library and community volunteers, Heritage Festival) demonstrates this. Volunteers will be especially useful in creating a wayfinding program, developing the Ohio River Greenway, and cleaning

up Washington Street and other areas.

- **Indiana Department of Transportation**– INDOT might help create wayfinding on state highways.
- **Transportation Improvement Program/ Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission- Rural Planning Organization/INDOT**– Major transportation projects are most likely to be funded on the Transportation Improvement Program for federal and state transportation funding. This will be the most likely source of funding for the Ohio River Greenway and potentially, given its link to the Ohio River Greenway, work for a new floodwall entrance to the Greenway.
- **Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund/ Indiana Dept of Natural Resources**– Communities may apply for up to \$250,000, with a local match equal to the federal grant, for recreation improvements, which could potentially include any aspect of the Ohio River Greenway and, to the extent it is linked to recreation access, the greenway floodwall entrance, and a trail to the kiln.
- **Indiana Trails Program**– Communities may apply to up to \$250,000 with a local match of 20%, for trails projects, including all aspects of the Ohio River Greenway and potentially, if it is part of the greenway, work for a new floodwall entrance to the greenway
- **Indiana Arts Commission and National Endowment for the Arts grants**– Non-profits can apply for grants for arts projects, which potentially could include mural on the floodwall or sculptures and the like to connect Washington Street with the Ohio River Greenway.
- **T-Mobile Hometown Grants**– Grants of up to \$50,000 could be used for downtown revitalization, including efforts to better connect Washington Street with the community, the river, and Can Clay.

- **Walmart Community Grant Program**– Small grants of up to \$5,000 for a variety of projects, which could cover any aspect of the projects discussed, with a focus on a link from Walmart to the Ohio River Greenway possibly being a compelling grant application.
- **Hazard Mitigation Grant (HMG) and Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)/Federal Emergency Management Agency**– Large grants for projects that improve resilience and mitigate future hazards. Levee upgrades that increase flood protection are eligible, which could be difficult for a new floodwall penetration but could apply if part of a coordinated effort (e.g., upgrading the current adequate stoplog structures with more robust stoplogs in coordination with a wider opening at Washington Street) and any project reducing flood risks.
- **Rivers Trails Conservation Assistance/National Park Service**– This is a technical assistance program (no cash grant), but it can be very useful for Ohio River Greenway trail planning and for building consensus.
- **Indiana Landmarks**– Grants to non-profits to celebrate heritage and could be especially appropriate for the Can Clay kilns.
- **Heritage Support Grants/Indiana Historical Society**– These grants of up to \$50,000 (15% cash match required) can support historic sites and interpretation, from the Cannelton Historic District, Can Clay kilns, Underground Railroad interpretation, Native American sites on the Ohio River, and other Ohio River heritage sites.
- **Perry County Community Foundation**– Provides small but sometimes transformative grants.

Building on the 2013 Plan - Identify Development Zones or Districts

The Downtown plan from 2013 created by Triad Associates presents a good and thorough analysis of the Downtown along with a full set of recommendations for regulatory and streetscape improvements. There is plenty to work with and build on in this plan for Downtown but to help focus and prioritize your efforts, it may be helpful to think of the Downtown as a group of parts or “districts” that allow you to do smaller scale programming for each area and then manage how these areas connect and reinforce each other as you progress with Downtown’s redevelopment.

Uptown Commercial District:

The Uptown Commercial District is where you can focus more on the development of incremental retail and service businesses. This is starting to happen today with the opening of the new coffee shop at 7th and Washington. A new brewpub or restaurant focused on serving the community could provide a new catalyst for redevelopment in this area.

Mixed-Use Arts and Residential District:

This district encompasses the Can Clay site as well as the lower end of Washington Street where we recommend focusing on new public and visitor-oriented development. The Can Clay property, as we will discuss later in this report, provides a unique opportunity for adding residential development into the fabric of Downtown and connects this new neighborhood with the city’s industrial heritage through the transformation and integration of the industrial Can Clay site and selected buildings into new development and public green space. There are many opportunities for introducing The Arts as a catalyst for redevelopment throughout this district in planning for flood wall projects, transforming industrial areas into green spaces or introducing industrial fragments as sculptural elements in the landscape. The Arts should also be incorporated as the primary



Thinking of Downtown as a set of developable “districts” will allow the use of a series of smaller scale local planning initiatives where the public is an integral part in developing strategies that will directly affect their quality of life and the future of Cannelton. This plan shows three possible “districts” that help differentiate areas that have unique issues and concerns that need to be addressed in their planning.

framework for planning the new First (Front) Street Greenway.

Primary Development Focus Area:
We feel the initial focus of your planning and development energies should be focused on what we are

calling The “T,” at the lower end of Washington Street where it intersects with First Street at the flood wall gate. Planning for new development in this first block of Washington and integrating it into new ideas for turning First Street (historic Front Street) into a new public

greenway will, in the short-term, strengthen connections with the river, and, in the long-term, create connections with the Can Clay site and the Ohio River Greenway.

Recommendation:

Implement a fully developed streetscape plan utilizing state agency grant sources for placemaking, technical design, and implementation funding. This process can be approached incrementally, building towards completing the Washington Street corridor before continuing similar improvements to cross streets and neighboring Downtown areas. The 2013 Downtown plan should be the topic of a new round of public meetings to review the plan and gather input and ideas from the community based on the general framework presented in the plan. Perhaps not all of the ideas meet the favor of the community, but let the community and residents decide what they'd like to see further developed and use this framework for formalizing the streetscape improvements implementation plan.

Create development districts for Downtown that will allow you to create small area plans for each that can be easier to manage and implement than trying to take on the entire Downtown. Each of these areas presents a different set of issues and priorities, but by starting to plan for each zone while integrating ideas for connectivity and public space across and between them, you can develop varying strategies for project implementation that range from small easy to complete, volunteer work to the larger scale, more complicated issues like the Can Clay clean up and redevelopment. This approach easily works as an overlay/addition to the 2013 plan.

Attract Local Services

Utilizing the Main Street Program, focus the business development initiatives on bringing in new businesses that can provide necessary services to local residents. Although the hospital pulled out of Downtown recently, leaving more empty space to fill, there are programs that focus on building Federally funded community clinics that could be an avenue for rebuilding some level of health care downtown. A small pharmacy or drug store can be supported in a fairly small footprint. A brewpub

can provide both a new small manufacturer, the pride in a local product, and a casual pub environment that everyone in Cannelton can enjoy.

Recommendations:

1. Explore Federally funded health care options and bring a consultant to town to help identify a scope, cost, and potential locations for a Federally funded clinic.
2. Develop a small scale seasonal farmers market or farmstand to begin bringing fresh foods into the community and supplement what is provide just outside of town.
3. Look for ways to combine complementary businesses to share the burden of a building's renovation or leasing. ie: locate a coffee shop adjacent to or sharing a shopfront in the building where the clinic is located allowing for the incubation of the coffee shop business for a period of time while they build enough business and capitol to eventually move to their own location.
4. Work through the Main Street organization to target a building to create a pro forma for a small 2-5 barrel brewery and restaurant. Find a way to make the building inexpensive for this start up and partner with a larger brewery in the region to help train and support staff and brewers.



Focus on opportunities for new businesses.

Build Visitor Infrastructure

Cannelton can attract a variety of visitors in a variety of different ways through the use of a good signage and wayfinding system combined with a strong beautification and clean up effort throughout the downtown. As a destination draw, The Indiana Mill Building, a National Historic Landmark , is already a draw. The Can Clay site has the potential to be developed into a regional or national destination with its connection to the Ohio River Greenway and with a development plan focused on recreation, entertainment, or the arts. As we work through this era of COVID anxiety, fewer people are flying across the ocean for vacations and are instead planning for more local and regional trips where they are looking to discover cool small towns and cities – new places to take selfies and share with their friends. Cannelton has the perfect blend of size, character, and special interest sites to attract these visitors with the addition of a bit of friendly infrastructure supporting it.

Recommendations:

1. Develop a masterplan for integrating interpretive signage into the Downtown streetscape fabric as a part of a broader signage and wayfinding plan.
2. Use Heritage Days to put in place banners, benches and other streetscape improvements along Washington Street that can remain after the festival.
3. Make clay pipe available for free to residents so they can use them in landscaping and “greening” projects around the city. Look at ways to utilize the large pipes as planters throughout the city, as planting nodes at gateway locations, as a means to define neighborhoods with new neighborhood signage, or along Washington Street and at new green spaces and empty lots. Make sure no visitor can come to Cannelton without sensing its clay-making past and seeing the actual products of so many of Cannelton’s residents and families. Hold a contest for the best planted drainpipe and give out a prize at the festival.

4. Develop visitor information to help folks know what’s in Cannelton and how to access it. This could include a walking tour brochure and a Historic Cannelton website based on the walking tour, all coordinated with the content that is being developed for the interpretive signage program in Downtown. Work with local students to develop the website using a streamlined interface like Squarespace or Wordpress which can then be managed locally or through a corporate or business partner. Manage a Facebook presence with regular postings to reinforce and promote events and activities when they happen, no matter how small.



Can Clay pipe – use sparingly around town for planters. Cannelton needs to up their game and be a bit bolder with the use of pipe planters and landscaping.

Focus New Development on Washington Street – First Street “T”

Rather than looking at the redevelopment of Washington Street from the top down(hill), why not take a look at focusing your efforts at the bottom (river) end of the street where there is more of an open-ended opportunity for significant new development to intersect with some of the city’s most significant historic buildings and properties. The lower end of the street provides a place to connect to the regional Ohio River Greenway, future development at the Can Clay site, art along the flood wall, and new infill development on the empty lots at the lower end of Washington Street.

Recommendations:

- 1. Develop new public green space at the intersection of Washington and First Street as a centerpiece to new building development on both sides of Washington St..
- 2. New mixed use development with upper story market rate residential and ground floor retail/restaurant opening onto new public green space and tied into the Washington Street sidewalk system.

- 3. Create a new Native Indiana Mill Meadow. Plant a large native meadow on plot between the Mill’s parking lot and 1st Street. This meadow will be self sustaining with paths through it and signage interpreting native flora from this region.
- 4. Work with the Corps of Engineers to install a 24’ wide flood gate/gateway in the flood wall at The “T” on axis with Washington Street – see Paducah example below.

The Flood Wall

Turn what seems to be a liability into an asset. The Federal Government may be the property owner of the wall but just as your Historic District belongs to all Cannelton residents, so does this portion of the flood wall. In folklore and mythic traditions there is often the concept of naming something in order to own it or control it. Take possession of your wall. Name it... claim it...and use it to define your city and a new creative energy going forward. Here are a few things you might try to transform your big blank wall.



Paducah flood wall showing murals and wide gateway.

- **A New Festival Center:** Going forward, use the “T” where Washington and First Streets come together as the center for organizing your festivals. This can take advantage of the development that will be happening there and make the river and the city’s origins and industry a key thematic part of these events. A new planned green civic space along First Street, the “Front Street Green” focused at the intersection, will create the ideal setting for these events supported by the backdrop of a creatively transformed flood wall.
- **The River Gateway:** Working with the Corps of Engineers to make “upgrades” to the wall can give you an opportunity to make a larger (24’ wide) opening at the gateway at the end of Washington Street creating more of a sense of visual connectedness with the River and riverfront park and making the pavilion an integral part of festivals and events in downtown.
- **“Occupy Cannelton” – Silhouettes on the Wall:** First step to claiming your wall is to make it uniquely yours. In addition to the mural projects discussed previously in our recommendations we can see a silhouette project where residents, business owners, neighbors, and family members pair up to draw and paint each others’ silhouettes on the wall. All 1,470 of you would then be part of the wall. Maybe some families want to paint themselves as a family unit. Maybe invite folks who grew up in Cannelton back to town to leave their mark. Over time, new people can add themselves and the wall can become a sort of artistic record of Cannelton’s people.
- **A Green Sculptural Remnant Wall:** In addition to the silhouettes, as pieces of the steel structure are removed from the Can Clay site, some of them can be repurposed as sculptures along the wall using metal, color, and shadows to create interest. You can’t actually mount things to the wall but you can make modifications to the street width of First Street to create planting areas and locations

for sculptures in front of the wall, combining new artworks (painted and built) with areas where you green the wall with plants and native vines. Let the vines do the “attaching” to the wall and let it merge into the landscape. Get families or businesses to sponsor planting areas with a set of easy to follow rules for keeping things looking trim and tidy but fun and creative. Don’t limit yourself to only one side of the wall either. Find opportunities to activate every piece of it. AND USE THOSE CLAY PIPES.

- **A Horizon of Lights:** Find ways to use nighttime lighting to allow the wall to become an evening horizon line, like lights across the river, using LED string lights or working with artists to do installations using colored lights or lighting effects. Portions of the wall can be used for projections or seasonal art installations using light and color changing the mood and feel or the theme each year, season, holiday, or event.

A Last note on Flood Murals

Murals have always been a good way to approach flood walls because they are, typically, large blank walls. But you have other opportunities throughout Downtown to use blank walls as mural locations. Murals are most powerful and transformative when they are part of a managed program to add life and interest to a place. If you want to develop new murals, think of a strategic way to implement them such as commissioning one each year and having a competition with a set of guidelines for recording what happened in town or in the country that past year. Pair up the artist with a local resident to make them all “Cannelton relevant” in some way, even if the expression is totally abstract. You can make history without just painting scenes of clay pipe, coal trains, and riverboats, but those work just as well.



One of the simplest ways to turn the flood wall into an asset is to develop a mural program similar to many other cities along the Ohio River. These murals can be developed over time (but don't take too much time or the first ones will look a bit shabby by the time you get down the road). You can focus on local themes and history or simply integrate art and color into the scheme.



The flood wall is not just present in the downtown area, it is a long linear connector that reaches into the adjacent neighborhoods where it could use a little new life and color while helping to connect these neighborhoods to Downtown — Using the idea of painting a sandstone aqueduct on the wall would help celebrate this local building material while providing a design that can reach along the entire length of the wall and provide areas for individual smaller scale murals and installations.



The Front Street Green can become a new multi-use public space where flood wall murals and art intersect with new planting areas, bike and walking trails, city festivals, and sculpture installations. A place for Cannelton residents and visitors to meet and play!

The Can Clay Site



Brownfield Site Concerns

As defined by the US EPA, a brownfield site is: “A property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.”

Brownfield Investigation Process & Liability Management

Communities often find brownfield sites, and the conditions that contribute to their cycle of decline are central features of communities witnessing job loss, financial distress, property vacancy, and decreasing property values. It is necessary to address the underlying legacy conditions that hold these sites back. Brownfield sites typically require a process of assessment and remediation in order to prepare them for redevelopment and reuse. The approach to assess and remediate the brownfield conditions is highly dependent to the conditions present on each site. However, there is a standard protocol for this process. The initial effort involves “Assessment.”

During a brownfield investigation, a brownfield undergoes “Assessment” to determine the environmental status of the site. This includes a “Phase I Environmental Site Assessment” (Phase I ESA) process that provides an overview of the site’s current and past uses, highlighting any potential “Recognized Environmental Conditions” or “RECs” that require additional investigation to determine their nature and extent. RECs are typically defined as:



“The presence or likely presence of any hazardous substances or petroleum products in, on, or at a property: (1) due to release to the environment; (2) under conditions indicative of a release to the environment; or (3) under conditions that pose a material threat of a future release to the environment de minimis conditions are not recognized environmental conditions.”

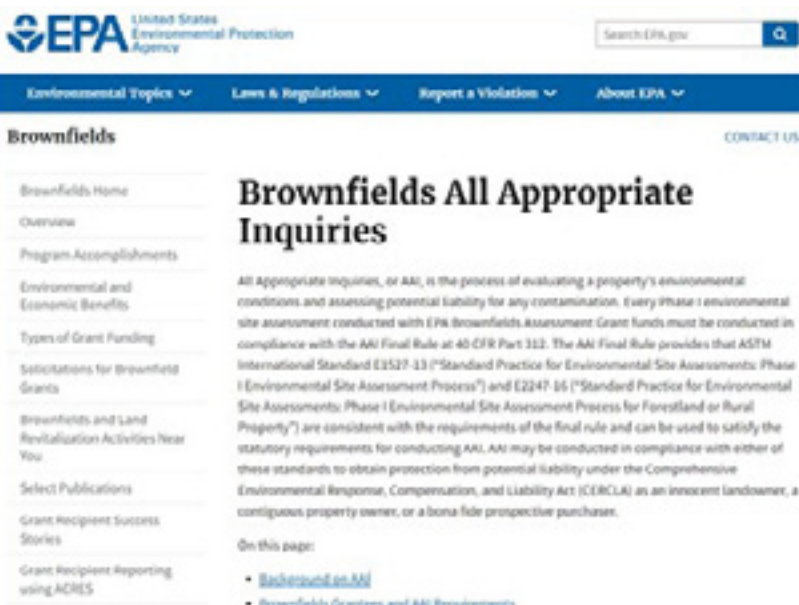
The federal rule to obtain protection from potential liability under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) as an innocent landowner, a contiguous property owner, or a bona fide prospective purchaser went into effect on November 1, 2006.

To conduct a proper (and timely) Phase I ESA, the prospective purchaser must abide by an established process of “All Appropriate Inquiry” (AAI). AAI is a process of evaluating a property’s environmental conditions and assessing potential liability for any contamination. To ensure that liability protections

are in place prior to acquiring a brownfield the AAI should be conducted in compliance with ASTM International Standard E1527-13 (“Standard Practice for Environmental Site Assessments: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Process”).

When “Recognized Environmental Conditions” (RECs) are identified in a Phase I ESA, then a prospective purchaser typically seeks to determine if environmental impacts are present. This additional assessment that includes sampling of soil, groundwater, surface water, air, subsurface vapors, etc. is typically referred to as a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (Phase II ESA). Further delineation of the nature and extent of contamination is often required, and would typically be referred to as a “Further Site Investigation (FSI)” or “Site Characterization.”

The process of utilizing an AAI compliant Phase I ESA to establish bona fide prospective purchaser (BFPP) status as a CERCLA environmental liability defense is



important. This is especially relevant to any discussion of options surrounding the City of Cannelton’s efforts related to the Can-Clay brownfield site.

In this section we will also outline:

1. The process undertaken in Cannelton’s acquisition of the Can-Clay brownfield site,
2. The limitations that its acquisition process has placed on future state and federal assistance for further assessment and cleanup, and
3. A roadmap on how to align future efforts and site ownership to better position the site to take advantage of grant-funded assessment and remediation. This will also provide a potential path to the fastest reuse of parts of the site depending upon the desired outcomes: commercial, residential, or some combination thereof. Note: different parts of the site will likely gain reuse approval and ability before others.

Summary of Recommendations

Step	Recommended Action	Cost	Timeframe
1	Draft RFP, Solicit, and Award a contract for “Environmental Demolition Oversight” by a qualified environmental professional services contractor to oversee and bid out, manage, and oversee all services conducted by demolition contractors and excavators implementing the OCRA \$500,000 grant. Will itemize and carefully map all waste volumes and current site condition; ensure proper documentation of all waste stream volumes and profiles during removal; gain and maintain compliance with IDEM Solid Waste Division, and ensure compliance with all other local, state, and federal regulations.	\$40,000 to \$90,000 (estimate) directly from OCRA grant funds award. Amount varies depending upon days on-site required, # and type of environmental samples required by site conditions to characterize waste streams, and total volumes of waste removed to gain compliance for IDEM Violation). Note: this contractor will more than return the value of their contract to the project in lowered demolition, excavation, and removal costs from conducting a robust bidding process and ensuring the most credits back to the project for scrap sold; saved time (having on-site sampling ready to characterize all waste streams, and not have to mobilize multiple times to respond to conditions uncovered) and should create great savings in the manner of waste disposal while ensuring regulatory compliance, and comprehensive records of the site action.	Immediately – and before any portion of the OCRA grant is deployed.
2	Gain Compliance with IDEM Solid Waste Division (Address Violation).	Utilize OCRA Blight Clearance Grant as outlined above, ensure both gaining and maintaining compliance is #1 task while implementing OCRA grant-funded activities.	Immediately to 1 year upon implementation of OCRA Grant.
3	After debris and site clearing, excavation, and grading use OCRA funds to further characterize and delineate environmental conditions on the western portion of Can Clay Site. Also complete full site ALTA survey if no recent one exists.	\$40,000 (est) OCRA funds depending on the number of soil and groundwater samples required. \$6,000 to \$12,000 for ALTA survey – consider especially if allowable expense under OCRA grant.	1 year: to hopefully identify the initial portion of the site ready for redevelopment.
4	Identify eligible and willing redevelopment partner entity to create LLC holding entity to receive the Can Clay site for \$1. This to occur only after OCRA Grant activity completion, and after the partner entity receives AAI compliant Phase I ESA and Bona Fide Prospective Purchaser Status – confirmed by IFA Brownfields Comfort Letter.	\$3,000 for Phase I ESA (likely approvable costs under OCRA grant) but ensure the timing lies at end of OCRA grant implementation, to ensure transfer to partner entity is within 180 days of Phase I ESA.	1-2 Years.
5	Redevelopment Partner Prepares and applies for EPA Brownfield Multipurpose Grant (\$800,000) and also seeks IFA Brownfields Program help with EPA 128(a) brownfield grant funding.	\$10,000 to \$20,000 EPA Grant application preparation costs via environmental professional. Redevelopment Commission should be able to assist applicant to find these funds.	3 Years.

Specific Site Conditions & Status for the Can-Clay Site

Historical / Physical Character (history excerpted from IDEM Project Status Letter 10.28.2020)

The city of Cannelton has long been influenced by the forces of the Ohio River, and the presence of the industrial Can Clay Site.

At approximately 25.93-acre, Site is comprised of 17 parcels. The exact size of the Site is undetermined. According to the Perry County GIS database, part of the Site includes former roads, to which parcel numbers have not been assigned. An estimate of the Site size including the former roads is 32.7 acres. The Site was utilized for over eight decades for the manufacture of vitrified clay products including pipe, joints, flues, and filter blocks. The Site was originally developed by 1886 with residential dwellings, retail shops, a hotel, a machine shop, a foundry, and cotton mill operations (warehouse and boiler house). By 1898, a railroad depot was added to the western portion of the Site. In 1906, the Cannelton Sewer Pipe Company began operations on the southwest portion of the Site and by 1925 sewer pipe manufacturing operations had expanded through the rest of the Site.

In 1932, a machine shop was constructed in the southeast portion of the Site. Between 1950 and 1970, additional buildings associated with the clay product manufacturer, then operating as Can-Tex, were constructed on-Site and all residential structures were removed. The north half of the Site was primarily used as a lay-down yard for the exterior storage of finished clay parts. The Can Clay Corporation (Can Clay) acquired the Site in 1982 but eventually lost ownership of the property to Perry County around April 2017 due to non-payment of county taxes. The Perry County Redevelopment Commission obtained ownership of the Site in September 2017. Business operations at the Site ended in April 2019, and property ownership was

transferred to the current owner by the sale of November 27, 2019, with title transferring when the deed was recorded 12/10/2019 in favor of the City of Cannelton.

Eleven buildings remain on-site. Most of the remaining buildings are located on the south end of the Site. The buildings are all unoccupied, with the exception of the “stick building”, which is currently used for wood pallet manufacturing. Some of the buildings are in poor condition with dilapidated walls and damaged roofs, and a portion of the tunnel kiln building was demolished in 2020.

In addition to the buildings, there are multiple beehive kilns, a chimney, and a sawdust silo on the Site. The northern half of the Site, formerly used as a lay-down yard, is partially overgrown with vegetation and trees and contains numerous stockpiles of clay products. Piles of solid waste (clay pieces, bricks, pallets, drums, miscellaneous equipment, etc.) are scattered throughout the Site. Multiple containers (55-gallon drums and buckets) are present in many of the Site buildings and contain various substances such as peroxide, isopropanol, hydraulic oil, waste oil, trash, and resin.

Environmental Factors

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) Agency ID # for the Can-Clay Site is: 61662. The Brownfield Program # for the site is: 4170401. Documents found on the IDEM Virtual File Cabinet combined with those provided by Cannelton’s environmental consultant provided an understanding of the site’s known environmental conditions. The site requires additional environmental assessment(s), environmental cleanup, site solid waste clearing, and demolition associated with redevelopment preparations. Specifically, several additional tasks must be completed. Action items should be guided by legal compliance priority, OCRA grant funding requirements, availability of future grant funding, and ultimately gaining reuse and redevelopment approval. We have recommended a staged approach:



Stage 1: Address conditions outlined in the IDEM – Notice of Violation Letter by Solid Waste Division (06/19/2020) & subsequent IDEM – Summary Letter of Compliance Assistance Visit on 10/21/2020 (Letter date 11/10/2020) and gain compliance with state regulations.

These IDEM letters outline a series of solid waste storage, containment, processing, and disposal conditions witnessed at the site that gave rise to the IDEM Violation. These concerns must be addressed as the first objective and completed while the City of Cannelton controls the subject site (before completing steps recommended in Stage 2). Additionally, the following conditions of concern outside the purview of solid waste regulation occurred, and must be addressed as soon as possible:

Areas outside the scope of IDEM Solid Waste Compliance noted during the Solid Waste Compliance inspection preparation process and onsite inspection that are being noted for other program areas/agencies for review include:

- The property was listed in the Underground Storage Tank (UST) database as facility identification number 10265. One 10,000 gallon gasoline UST, one 10,000 gallon diesel UST, one 15,000 gallon diesel UST, and one 500 gallon acetone UST were listed as permanently out of service.
- Several pole and pad-mounted transformers were observed on the property. Stressed vegetation was observed beneath some of the transformers. Stressed vegetation could be indicative of past leakage associated with the transformers.
- Suspected chemicals were observed stored in various containers ranging from one gallon cans to 55-gallon drums on site.
- Multiple drains were observed on exterior slab areas.
- Waste in suspected wetland area(s).

Cannelton leadership advised the SDAT team that a state of Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) awarded Cannelton a [\\$500,000 Blight Clearance Program grant](#) on September 9, 2021 to help the city address the environmental conditions at the site. This grant will provide site clearance, removal, and limited demolition assistance help address conditions that were subject to the violation letter.

The **Blight Clearance Program** encourages communities with blighted properties to focus on long-term community development and revitalization through improving quality of place, generating jobs and spurring economic revitalization. Eligible projects include the removal of deteriorated or abandoned downtown buildings or vacant/unusable industrial sites.

- The **City of Cannelton** is awarded \$500,000 to eliminate hazardous environmental conditions at the former Can-Clay Corporation property. This environmental remediation project includes the removal of hazardous materials including asbestos, drums and containers, brick debris, clay pipe debris, PVC pipe, scrap tires and sawdust to significantly improve a blighted area that is approximately 26 acres in the heart of the city.

In addressing the primary goal of gaining compliance with IDEM’s Solid Waste Division we recommend a specific course of action be taken while deploying the OCRA \$500,000 Blight Clearance Program award. In order to most

efficiently and effectively leverage the OCRA Blight Clearance Program grant, we recommend that the City of Cannelton craft an initial RFP and solicit bids to contract a qualified professional environmental services contractor to complete “Environmental Demolition Oversight” for entire scope of activities found in the OCRA Blight Clearance grant. This initial contract (also paid for with the OCRA grant funds) would engage an environmental consultant 3rd party to oversee, document, and manage the project for the city. This Environmental Demolition Oversight contractor’s scope will include:

- Inventory and map the detailed location nature, and extent of the volumes of solid waste, hazardous substances, and petroleum products currently on site. Note: Prior efforts have recorded general areas of conditions as seen in the graphic on the next page; however, the demolition environmental oversight contractor should expand upon this effort, and map the exact current conditions, volumes of materials, their nature and extent, as well as their exact locations in a more granular detail prior to any further demolition and removal activities.
- Inventory quantities and map locations of recyclable materials that may be harvested during limited demolition activities
- Use the detailed mapped conditions and inventory of substances to create detailed bid specs and manage the process of soliciting the demolition contractor’s bids for implementing the OCRA Blight Clearance grant. This effort will enable demolition contractors to bid with greater confidence & ultimately reap greater value for the City of Cannelton in the form of lower demolition costs, which often more than pay for the costs of the Environmental Demolition Oversight contractor’s work. This effort will also reduce the burden and work placed on City of Cannelton to solicit bids, and maintain oversight of the demolition contractors as well as compliance with OCRA.
- Oversight of the demolition contractor keeping records of all waste profiles, disposal locations, and volumes of wastes removed from the site. This will ensure that all waste streams are fully documented, and potentially hazardous waste streams are properly disposed with records kept for appropriate waste manifests, sampling and proper disposal of any suspected hazardous or waste streams of special concern.
- Ensuring maintenance of compliance for all concerns noted in the June 19, 2020 IDEM Violation Letter, and ensure compliance of any additional hazardous substances or petroleum products encountered during the process.



Stage 2: Take action to gain future federal and state brownfield grant funding eligibility for the Can Clay site.

After thorough research into the process undertaken by Cannelton to acquire the Can Clay site, it appears that due to a few factors, the City of Cannelton did not technically achieve All Appropriate Inquiry in its due diligence actions. The SDAT team exhaustively reviewed the due diligence documents and reconstructed both the timing and content of the process taken. Unfortunately, due to both a stale date within a backup report in the Phase I ESA, as well as a deficiency related to a technical limitation requiring that the document also include a User Questionnaire for any parties relying upon the Phase I ESA but not listed on the document's cover, the City of Cannelton did not gain "bona fide prospective purchaser (BFPP) status" – a precondition to eligibility for both EPA brownfield grant funding as well as state brownfield assessment and cleanup funding assistance. As such, the Indiana Brownfields Program has advised that although they would very much like to provide brownfield funding to the City for the Can Clay site until the site has achieved ownership status that can demonstrate acquisition occurred by an entity with its bona fide prospective purchaser status intact, it cannot provide grant funding assistance.

Due to the significant additional brownfield assessment and environmental cleanup costs anticipated beyond what the "Stage I" OCRA Blight Clearance Grant can cover, we recommend the City of Cannelton plan for and eventually transfer the Can Clay site to a different entity that has achieved BFPP status through conducting All Appropriate Inquiry compliant, and timely Phase I ESA. With limited legal oversight, a separate and distinct entity (without a co-mingled board with City of Cannelton officials) can gain a Comfort Letter from IFA Brownfields Program to ensure that it has met its AAI requirements and has achieved BFPP status prior to recording a deed in its favor.

If the Can Clay site is transferred to another entity that has properly established its BFPP status via AAI compliant due diligence, this new entity holding the deed will be eligible for significant EPA and State IFA brownfields funding assistance. There are many types of organizations that can be eligible to gain access to competitive brownfield assistance on a grant application basis. These potential deed recipient entities may include a specific purpose not-for-profit entity (or subsidiary LLC held by such entity); a special-purpose redevelopment entity like the [Perry County Development Commission](#), [Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission](#), or even to purpose created LLC held by an entity like [Renew Cannelton](#).

Any entity that does step in to assist in cleaning up and preparing the site for redevelopment should consider creating a separate subsidiary LLC to conduct the due diligence (title insurance; lien review; conduct an AAI compliant Phase I ESA to gain BFPP status) and then receive and record the deed; and hold the property during site assessment, environmental cleanup, and predevelopment efforts. Creating and using a separate LLC holding entity may better shield the parent entity (and its board members) from environmental liability from the Can Clay site as well as any potential tail issues that could result from generating and transporting potentially hazardous waste stream disposal during cleanup. Having a separate subsidiary LLC receive and hold the site during redevelopment should also make for a cleaner future sale and transfer and transition to a developer or future site user.

With careful consideration and planning, a separate entity may work with the City of Cannelton to acquire the site for nominal consideration and follow a course of action that will enable eligibility for both EPA Brownfield Assessment and Cleanup Grants, as well as directed EPA grant funding through the IFA Brownfields Program's 128(a) allocation. While such entities will be separate and distinct from the City of Cannelton, they could access funding streams to drive the site's assessment, cleanup and redevelopment preparation that the City of Cannelton is precluded from.

The future site holding entity could work alongside the City of Cannelton to achieve joint objectives of community engagement and redevelopment.

Specifically, some grants are not presently able to be leveraged at the Can Clay site but can be after an AAI compliant acquisition by a new entity holding BFPP status. A few funding tools stand out as likely to help hold the key to turning the Can Clay site around after new ownership include:

- [EPA Brownfield Multipurpose Grant](#): This type of grant was specifically created after extensive comment and recommendations by brownfield practitioners to help deal with sites just like Can Clay. Although this grant requires a \$40,000 cost share, in the form of a contribution of money, labor, material, or services, and must be for eligible and allowable costs, it could avail the future owner to up to \$800,000 in assessment AND cleanup funding in one grant award with a five year performance schedule. Multiple [types of entities are eligible for an EPA Multipurpose Grant](#), including not-for-profit organizations. The key is establishing in an application to the EPA that the eligible entity can achieve the objectives of the grant while properly fulfilling its reporting requirements.
- [EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant](#): An assessment grant may provide \$350,000 to \$500,000 additional environmental investigation funding for the Can Clay site. We recommend that the future applicant entity apply for a \$500,000 Community Wide assessment grant focusing on the Can Clay site as a brownfield catalyst for the city. This would avail the Can Clay site with a larger amount of eligible assessment grant funding, but also allow use of the assessment grant funds on other brownfield sites in the Cannelton area as needed. The Community Wide assessment also allows three years to complete the project.
- [EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant](#): Once the site is cleared, in compliance with IDEM solid waste division, and assessment has defined and characterized the extent of contamination requiring remediation, a brownfield cleanup grant can provide the new ownership entity up to \$650,000 to clean up the Can Clay site and prepare it for the intended reuse – residential, commercial, or some combination. Typically, a 20% cost share is required. However, tribes, nonprofit organizations, and government entities (with populations of 50,000 and fewer) may request EPA to waive the 20 percent cost share requirement based on hardship. EPA will consider hardship waiver requests on a case-by-case basis and will approve requests on a limited basis. Please just keep in mind whatever cost share that the applicant and partners can demonstrate in the Cleanup Grant application will better the chances of winning this competitive EPA grant.
- Asbestos: The Brownfield Cleanup grant can be used to abate the significant amount of regulated asbestos containing materials (RACM) and, potential RACM in areas unable to be accessed, as well as the other asbestos containing materials (ACM) identified in the February 7, 2020 Asbestos Investigation Report by ACT.
- EPA 128(a) funds: The state can assist in providing brownfield cleanup and assessment funds available to IDEM & the IFA Brownfields Program to assist Indiana communities and owners with eligible sites.

Stage 3: Approach the Can Clay site redevelopment in a staggered/phased approach according to community goals informed by environmental site conditions in Focus Areas.

Input from both Cannelton citizens and Mayor Terry noted that infill housing residential reuse may be desired for at least part of the Can Clay site. The north

and western half of the site where no current buildings exist may lend itself well to infill residential reuse after site clearance with the OCRA funds and further site investigation. This is a worthy goal, and the site could lend itself well to residential housing as it was originally platted somewhat west of Madison Street all the way to Herzelle Street.

After additional investigation, and any required remediation necessary, the IFA Brownfields Program could work with the site owner to provide a Site Status Letter encouraging redevelopment. This would help remove the environmental barrier to financing. Developers would then just need to address market barriers to new home construction. At that stage,

the development of this portion of the site, along with parallel attention to historic rehabilitation along Washington Street could prove dual-prong catalysts to drive ongoing cleanup and reuse efforts for the remainder of the site and its more challenging aspects.

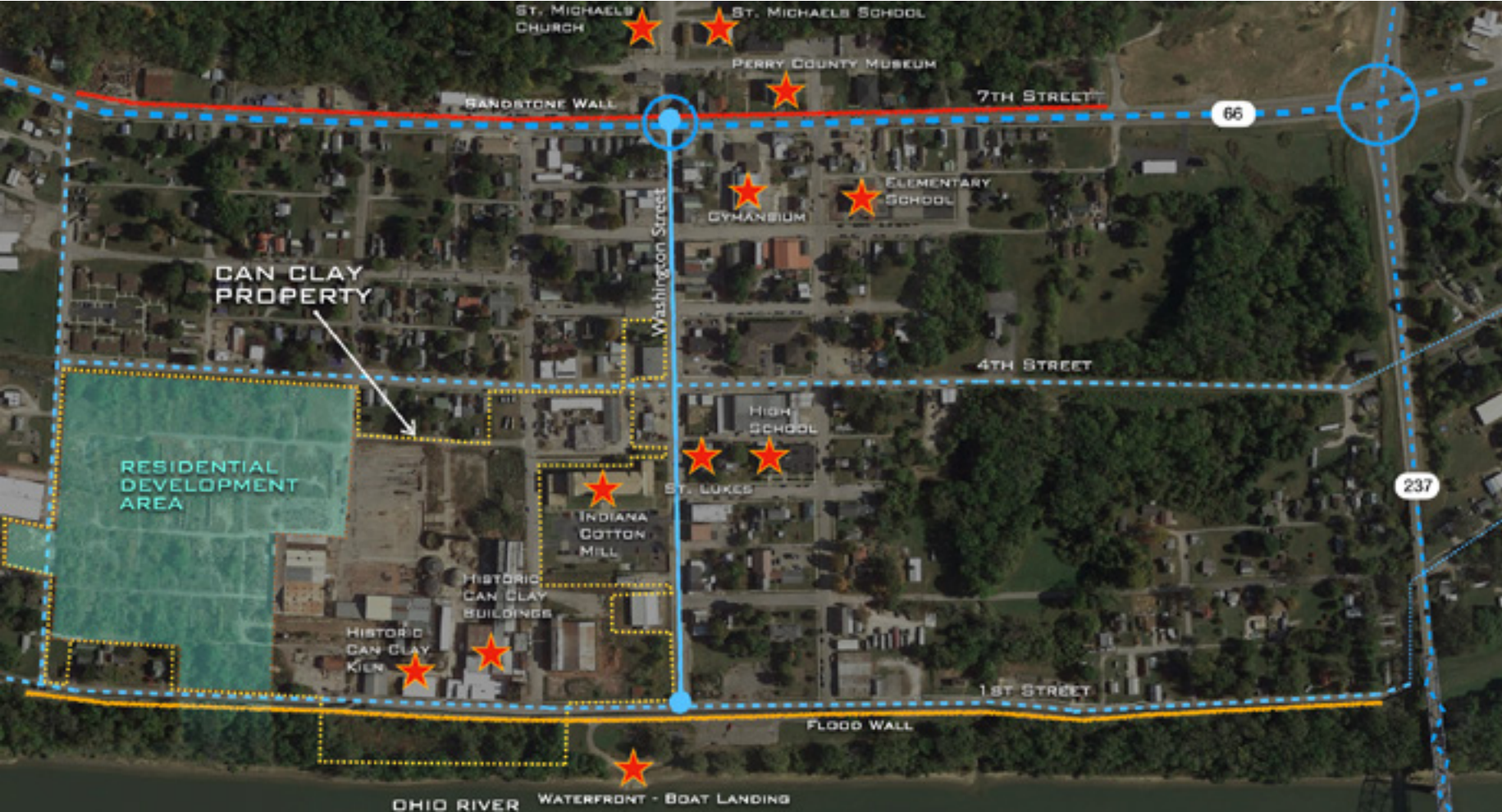
Stage 4: Ensure that additional brownfield sites, and environmental conditions witnessed throughout Cannelton are addressed.

While the greatest share of brownfield attention must be given to the Can Clay catalyst site, other brownfield sites do exist in Cannelton and warrant attention.

Take account of additional brownfield sites in Cannelton by creating a brownfield inventory and keeping it current by reviewing each site on a regular basis.

Properties change ownership, and condition on a regular basis. Identifying, mapping, and keeping track of brownfield sites and property vacancies can prove a great tool in helping raise awareness of investment opportunities and promote redevelopment.

Free tools exist to engage the public citizens in these efforts and remove the burden on municipal actors. EPA researchers have developed the Brownfield Tracker mobile app form to help communities do just this. The Brownfield Tracker app is a part of the Brownfield Area Benefits Estimator (BABE) created to help communities engage the public and begin to take account of, inventory, and map their brownfield sites. Communities are encouraged to keep their brownfield inventory data fresh, but the frequency of updating this data can range from quarterly to every few years depending on frequency of ownership turnover and changes in site condition. SDAT team member Chris Harrell from the University of Louisville’s Center for Environmental Policy and Management created the Brownfield Tracker Field Guide to help guide citizens through how to identify brownfield-related site conditions. This Field Guide may be especially helpful for Cannelton residents to review as



Plan showing the general extents of the Can Clay property and the area that has the potential for future residential development.

they consider other brownfield sites in their community.

Many of the sites below may be currently in operation, and thus not brownfield sites. However, these sites of brownfield interest were witnessed during the SDAT process. If the following properties are or become underutilized, vacant, or dormant they may well be considered brownfields:

- 1st Street, Perry Co. Solid Waste Recycling Center, Cannelton, IN 47520 | Former Standard Oil Bulk Storage Facility / Former Kiel Bros. Oil Company, Inc. Site: Presently owned and operated by the Perry Co. Solid Waste Management District. The site was identified by ACT in Phase II ESA work to exist as a bulk oil storage site in Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (1925-1950) just northwest of the Can Clay site. Property records also indicate the now bankrupt Kiel Bros. Oil Company, Inc. transferred the site to Perry Co. Solid Waste Management District on 2/22/2005. Luckily, groundwater tends to flow towards the Ohio River, thus any potential legacy contamination from this brownfield site does not seem to be affecting the Can Clay site.
- 330 Washington Street, Cannelton, IN 47520 | Former Gas Station Site: Current owner acquired it 01/06/1999. Once owned by the Cannelton Cotton Mill in 1994.
- South 4th & Taylor Street: Former Young's Wrecker Service / Currently Cannelton Auto Repair
- 427 South 7th Street | Manufacturing site – Former Peddler's Mall / and demo site next door.
- IN-66 Former Merchant's Used Cars Site – potential auto maintenance occurred on site with petroleum products, and or solvents used.
- 254 South 4th Street | Perry Co. Towing & Recovery / Perry County Auto Sales & Towing LLC.

Additionally, some environmental concerns that impede redevelopment are not exclusive to brownfield sites, but have been identified during the discussion with residents.

Radon: Cannelton is within Zone 2 on the Indiana – EPA Map of Radon Zones. Often when residential homes are solving for radon concerns they install a radon mitigation system. This can pull vapors from beneath the sub-slab concrete and/or basement. This may also help with undesirable moisture beneath and within a building. <https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2014-08/documents/indiana.pdf>

Mold/ Mildew / Rotting Foundations: The historic homes in Cannelton have seen repeated flooding from the founding of the town until 1945 when the Army Corps of Engineers built the floodwall protecting Cannelton from periodic flooding of the Ohio River. During the SDAT process we discussed predominant conditions of foundation failure, support beam rot, and similar general concerns that threaten and plague the historic homes and businesses along Washington Street and all around the lower lying parts of Cannelton.

Lead Based Paint (LBP): Most of the homes in downtown Cannelton were built before 1978 and are thus likely to have witnessed lead-based paint used in their past. Renovation projects can disturb lead-based paint in homes and buildings built before 1978, thus creating new lead hazards, individual renovators must be trained and certified lead-safe RRP practices, and firms must be certified. Homeowners, renters, and renovators of these properties must all take precautions when living in and repairing these structures.

Often, repair, renovation, and painting does not require the more costly and extensive action of abatement to ensure that the site is safe for habitation and reuse. However, in order to make this determination, property owners must review the distinction between Lead Abatement and RRP (Renovation, Repair, and Painting) outlined in this [LINK](#).

EPA's RRP Rule, as amended in 2016 does not apply to homeowners; homeowners renovating, repairing or painting their own homes, in do-it-yourself projects can easily create dangerous lead dust. Protect your family and home – set up safely, control the dust and clean up completely as outlined at this [LINK](#).

EPA's RRP Rule requires that firms performing renovation, repair and painting projects that disturb lead-based paint in homes, child care facilities and pre-schools built before 1978 be certified by EPA (or an EPA-authorized state), and use certified renovators who are trained by EPA-approved training providers and follow lead-safe work practices. Firms conducting renovation should refer to this [LINK](#) to learn more about the RRP Rule and how to abide by it.

Asbestos: Many of the historic homes and properties in Cannelton are also likely impacted by the presence of asbestos in their building materials. Before conducting renovation or demolition projects on homes built before 1980 please refer to both state of Indiana and local Perry County requirements and guidelines to ensure the health and safety of workers, residents, and users of these properties. This [LINK](#) provides guidance for demolition and renovation of properties from the state of Indiana's Department of Environmental Management (IDEM).

Can Clay Site – Recommendations for Future Development

I. Update Survey of Physical Assets and Structural Assessments

To make responsible decisions about the future development of physical resources on the site, additional information should be gathered to complement and extend the existing survey work that was recently undertaken. This is particularly important when determining if and how to remove material or structures

from the site without jeopardizing the historic or structural integrity of the resource. In addition, materials (what may appear to be scrap or waste) left on site or inside buildings might be down the road in order to interpret and tell the story of Can Clay and its role in the lives of so many Cannelton families.

Recommendations: Contract for more in-depth analysis of the physical resources remaining on the site with a particular emphasis on the structures that were integral in the manufacturing operation and the material artifacts of manufacturing that remain. One such format would be an Historic Structures Report as defined by the National Park Service for use in documenting historic structures and sites. This level of reporting would include exploration of the processes that were undertaken on site through research and interviews with former employees and current experts in the field. This report can provide the appropriate level of documentation for all existing physical features prior to any major site modifications made in advance of redevelopment (ie: the documentation of more recent structures essential to the manufacturing process but not considered primary historic resources.) Visit the NPS website for Historic Structures Report Information: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/43-historic-structure-reports.htm>

2. Zoning the site –Dividing it into Smaller Planning Areas

For the City of Cannelton and its leadership, a 30-acre brownfield site within the city limits poses a challenge due to the extent of varying and unknown conditions on the site as well as its sheer size as it relates to the adjacent Downtown district and neighborhoods. One way to approach such a challenge is to break the problem down into manageable pieces. Something akin to a “zoning” of the site in order to look at different areas, each with a different eye towards the potential development types that may be most appropriate for each zone.



The Can Clay Property can be looked at as its own set of “development zones” building new connections between new residential and green space zones and Washington Street corridor and The “T.” Zoning down the site to smaller areas focused on more specific use types will allow you to plan how connectivity and services will work to integrate this area into the programming for your redeveloping Downtown.

This does not preclude the ability to look at one project that utilizes the entire 30-acre site, but with no developers looking seriously at it now, smaller parcels

would allow you to focus on the more manageable areas of the site, less encumbered by the issues in other areas which may require an unknown amount of brownfield

research, analysis, and possible mitigation prior to understanding just what development options would be possible in those, more challenging areas.

Recommendation:
Utilizing the information from the current engineering and site analysis documents, begin to break the site down into smaller components using an approach similar to the one presented here to find both smaller and cleaner parcels for development within the larger property as well as opportunities to connections and relationships to be developed between zones.

3. Re-connecting to Downtown

Although the Can Clay property is situated adjacent to Downtown and fully within the city, there are big issues and challenges when it comes to connecting it to the fabric of Downtown or the Washington Street Corridor. From First to Fourth Streets, Can Clay is separated from Washington Street by a full block of large scale industrial buildings and mostly untended landscapes. Historically, the commercial downtown and the industrial areas of the city would have been connected by their dependence on the river for transportation. As the river receded in importance, First Street (historic Front Street) became the connector with hotels serving the manufacturing operations located along this corridor and concentrated at The “T” where the lower portion of Washington Street ends at First Street. This feels like the natural place to reconnect to Downtown.

4. Front Street Green

An approach to reconnecting the industrial areas to Downtown and connecting Cannelton to the wider region would be to develop First Street into the “Front Street Green” as a new amenity. Front Street Green would be connected to the Ohio River Greenway while bringing folks to the “other side of the wall” and passing along First Street for a piece where their pathway can intersect with new development at the Can Clay site, art projects along the flood wall, a possible events park, or the lower end of Cannelton’s main street commercial district. This would provide an amenity for new residents of the Can Clay neighborhood to enjoy walking and strolling through this new version of a riverfront park.



Using green space to develop the connective tissue between the downtown, Can Clay property, and the River will create a destination for local residents and visitors alike while reconnecting the city with its commercial and industrial heritage.



Proposed Front Street Green.

5. Possible Future Uses

There are a wide range of compatible future uses for the Can Clay property, that, over time, will create a diverse, mixed-use district alongside, and intersecting with, Cannelton’s Downtown. We have just listed a few here, but so many things are possible when you look at the mix of historic and physical resources, existing buildings, and developable open space that this list is for adding on to over time as the community takes up the imagining of their future as stewards and activists in Cannelton’s renaissance.

Equestrian Center – Trailhead

The large metal clear-span buildings could easily be turned into riding/dressage rinks with space around them for parking and trailers. Surface areas of the site could be developed for equestrian events with minimal ground disturbance or once possibly with a lesser level of clean-up. The center would be a regional destination bringing horse people from the Indiana/Ohio/Kentucky area for multi-day events where they would need places to eat and stay, preferably in Cannelton.



Indoor equestrian center.

Arts Opportunities

There are more arts opportunities than you can count within what will be the post-industrial environment of Can Clay. We have presented many of them already in this report, but they range from:

- Flood wall art and murals.
- Using industrial fragments as sculptures that can be painted, lit, and grown on.
- Concerts in the Kiln – fully restored and acoustically unique!
- A regional wood-fired kiln program with a regional college.
- Sculpture garden of industry.
- Establish the “Cannelton Flood Festival” recognizing the power of the river and its impact.
- Industrial topiary garden – for the abstract minded.
- Clay pipe gardens and landscapes.
- An industrial plein air festival.



Concerts in the Kiln.

- “Occupy Cannelton” – silhouettes on the wall.
- Student clay tile project – section of flood wall grows with clay tiles each year.
- Trompe L’oei on the wall – make it disappear!
- Lighting installations on the wall and the industrial ruins.
- A Can Clay Christmas – a Christmas lights tour of the industrial sculpture garden.

- Arts in the park festivals using Front Street Green and Can Clay green spaces.
- Incorporate maker spaces and artist live/work units as a required part of building redevelopment.
- Cannelton Museum of Industry.
- Dog park using clay pipes in the landscape.

Events Park

The same large clear-span buildings that could provide for equestrian programs could be developed as an events park and anchor for the Can Clay/Downtown area bringing people to Cannelton from just about everywhere. It could be a multi-purpose facility that could hold concerts as well as conferences and trade shows (a good reason for some hotels to be developed on Washington or First Streets). The property would offer plenty of manageable parking and service area in the center of the site, screened from downtown businesses, park/greenway, and residential areas.

A camper area can be established that is managed in conjunction with larger events such as equestrian shows, dog shows, or trade shows where participants and visitors can park and stay. If located properly, and managed well, a small RV park would benefit from being next to the Ohio River Greenway if walking and biking trails are expanded.

Interpretive Trails

Use the new Front Street Green and public park areas to create interpretive trails that connect the Can Clay site with the river, Downtown, the Indiana Cotton Mill, and the Ohio River Greenway to nearby communities and the locks. Use these trails to create an outdoor Cannelton Museum in the Streets where you tell the story of Cannelton in and amongst the redeveloping buildings and throughout public greenways.

Wildflower Meadows

In open areas and between things, as the site is redeveloped, create a plan for using native wildflower



Create opportunities for wildflower meadows.

meadows rather than formalized landscaped. These meadows can create a way to connect green spaces with trails and interpretation while helping to re-naturalize land that has been damaged for decades by manufacturing and chemical use. Meadow plantings can be used in conjunction with rain gardens and other natural water filtering approaches to cleaning the water that collects and flows off of the site and into the river. Cannelton can do its part to clean up our water and re-establish native habitats for wildlife.

Building Redevelopment

Some of the industrial buildings on the Can Clay property are more easily adapted to new uses than others, with the main brick warehouse/manufacturing building and power plant just asking for redevelopment. These buildings can provide space for businesses, apartments, artist studios and maker's spaces that will link the new development of Can Clay with a new and engaging downtown economy creating a new anchor for Downtown just a block from The "T." Even though many of the buildings on the site are not well suited to uses that would invite the public in, sometimes they can be modified or partially disassembled to create pavilion space or open-air artist workshop space.

Industrial buildings can be opened up for greening industries like nurseries propagating native plants or hydroponic growing operations.



Some buildings are readily adaptable for new uses.



A typical hydroponic growing operation.



The reality is that many of the structures on the Can Clay property may of little value when viewed in the context of other possible redevelopment ideas but the recommendations presented in an Historic Structures Report will help establish the level of importance of the structures as they relate to the history of the manufacturing on site, their architectural significance, or cultural/site significance – importance of place. Structures deemed to be of lesser value may be removed after the community has approved a plan for the properties redevelopment and it is shown that they are not supportive of the plan’s goals and objectives.

Examples of Best Practices for Sustainable Environments

As the community works through an incremental process of redevelopment across the property, they can develop a relationship with a regional college or university to use the site for demonstration projects teaching about best practices in environmental stewardship and renewal. What better legacy than to see an industrial landscape remediated but blended and evolved into a new landscape promoting new ideas of stewardship and planetary activism.

Neighborhood Housing

The Western half of the property has suffered the least environmental impact from the manufacturing processes and likely could be cleaned up and developed as new single and multi-family residential for the city helping to bring up the levels of home ownership and bring residents to Downtown. This neighborhood would benefit from having new public parks and the greenways right at their doorstep along with being only a couple of blocks away from downtown services, shopping, and restaurants.



Other buildings are perhaps less readily adaptable or less significant.

Beautification & Placemaking



Beautification

You can start immediately to improve the look and feel of the Downtown while you begin to engage residents and business owners, personally, in the process. Although many of the recommendations presented in this report will require planning, time, and money, you can start to tackle beautification projects, right away, using volunteers and donated supplies. The scale of these projects can vary from just keeping a hedge trimmed or cleaning up debris in a vacant lot to the painting of a wall that helps brighten up a blighted or lackluster property. Most importantly, you can start talking to each other about these quick start initiatives and begin building an ongoing community conversation about the look of Downtown and how **everyone** can pitch in to help.

Your beautification projects will bring people together for hands on work as a community and as neighbors on projects that have immediate results. Everyone will feel the power of transformation through small projects that, over time, help to improve the whole Downtown and set an example for responsible stewardship and action for current and future residents, business owners and all who pass through, shop, eat, or just choose to stroll down Washington Street or along the Greenway.

Often, these quick turn-around projects get organized informally and just “happen.” But there are a few recommendations that may help turn what could be seen as isolated improvements into a larger scale initiative for the Downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Strengthen the community – Use community meetings to let people know what everyone’s thinking. Share ideas, eat ice cream. Decide to do something together.

Develop a strategy or just pick a couple initial projects and get started. Start by keeping it simple and identifying easily achievable goals while you start to think about the bigger picture, prioritizing and planning for the projects that will be the most impactful.

Invite participation – Create a communications tool – something that will allow as many people as possible to keep up with what’s going on and to know how they can volunteer or help with each effort. ie; Facebook, Instagram, newsletters, email blasts, etc. They’re free. Use them all.

Continue using community meetings to identify priority projects and the resources and people power needed. Share information quickly and continue to invite people to participate.

Invite other local stakeholders to the table to help like local artists, community leaders, and civic organizations, and put them to work.

Don’t over organize – Downtown might need its own beautification committee, but don’t over organize these small, quick projects. Let them work as catalysts for building interest, support and visibility throughout the community then when you need to organize for something more challenging, you’ve already got plenty of engaged people to call on.

Schedule projects and make sure everyone has something to do – Everyone is busy so being able to plan around a project day and feel like they can contribute is important to volunteers.

Talk to the neighbors around the project and let them know what’s happening. No one likes to be left in the dark and it’s best to know how the neighbors feel about the work to so that any negative impacts can be mitigated.

And lets not forget to feed people! A bit of food and refreshments just makes everyone happy and gives them a chance to take a break and get to know each other through their shared experience. A little thank you for a lot of hard work helps keep people volunteering for more and feeling like their work is valued.

What is Placemaking

The concept of placemaking is built on honoring and respecting the distinct identity of place. When the values of place are embedded in the design and development philosophy of new projects, they contribute to unique identity, rather than change it. Placemaking takes its inspiration from what exists: context, history, people and culture. It includes architecture and urban design, public art and public space, and people. It is development that leverages the essential qualities of a place to amplify and strengthen them. It is development that not only aspires to achieve performance outcomes economically, environmentally and socially, but more importantly seeks to capture and represent the meaning of place. Placemaking elevates the importance of citizens because they are the place experts of their community. No one understands the experience of place better than the citizens who contribute to it every day – the people who give a community narrative life and meaning.

Cannelton can use placemaking to leverage the power of arts, culture and creativity to serve the community’s interest while driving a broader agenda for change, growth and transformation. By focusing on the City’s existing resources, the community can institute successful placemaking initiatives to build better public realms with clear identities (physical, cultural, and social). Cannelton is fortunate to have a number of community assets, including its Downtown commercial district with its intact historic architecture, the riverfront park along the Ohio River; proximity to the Ohio River Greenway; cool industrial buildings and a legacy of clay, and a wonderful small town charm with the potential to attract visitors and stoke pride in its residents. These assets can be further highlighted and expanded upon through simple design initiatives such as public art, programming/markets, pop-up parks, and gateway activations. These measures can be quick, cost effective improvements that bring immediate life to space and community. Because these activations can be low-cost and have a light touch on existing conditions, they

are opportunities to test ideas and create a path for permanent future development.

What you can do?...Start Tomorrow!
Cannelton should organize a placemaking initiative immediately. A leadership committee can be organized from the Renew Cannelton organization, or downtown business owners and residents, or the creative community. Regardless of how it is led or organized, it should seek to engage the entire community in the effort. Everything you do should reinforce your community identity, your values and your aspirations for the future of Downtown Cannelton. Every action should serve as an articulation of identity and vision. There are dozens of people-friendly interventions that Cannelton can engage in to reinforce its self-expression and promote the animation of its vision for the future.

Engage in “Tactical Urbanism”
Create small-scale interventions that use inexpensive materials and volunteers to build opportunities for public gathering and a stronger, people-friendly public realm. For examples, many communities are organizing chair bombing events, which involve using donated warehouse pallets to build chairs and then program a public area as a people-friendly gathering space. These kinds of creative ideas are easily scalable. In Christchurch, New Zealand, volunteers came together to build the “Pallet Pavilion” as a public gathering and event space following an earthquake event that left many properties vacant and in need of activation. In Houston’s Fifth Ward, local artists gathered lumber from housing demolitions and built the “Fifth Ward Community Jam” amphitheater which quickly became the main civic space in the neighborhood and is programmed for community events throughout the year. Get creative, and harness the talents of residents to create community events and spaces that reflect the character of Cannelton.

Leveraging Public Art for Placemaking
Public art has played an important role in placemaking initiatives across the country. Public art offers an opportunity to engage the community in continuing

self-expression about its collective vision for the future. Participatory art projects can help engage the community by offering an opportunity for the community to put its unique stamp on Downtown culturally as well as the chance to articulate aspirations for the future. For example, one neighborhood in Seattle held a planning process to envision what they would like to see for a vacant block. They had an artist produce a large scale mural of the envisioned uses for the block, and it created so much interest that an investor developed the block accordingly as a result. In the Fremont neighborhood of Seattle, a community planning process reimagined a derelict area under a bridge with a giant Troll. The troll has now become the iconic image for the neighborhood, is the central meeting location for civic life, and draws visitors from around the world. The derelict space has now become a hub and an economic asset.

Transforming your Streets

Placemaking ideas can also extend into strengthening the public realm, particularly streets. For instance, in Portland, Oregon neighbors organized to paint the streets as a traffic calming measure. In Tampa, locals organized street festivals to reclaim the public realm for people and test new ideas regarding street design. Through the Build a Better Block initiative, communities all over the world have engaged in community-driven pop-up street design interventions to reclaim public space and create a more human-friendly neighborhood context. Efforts in this vein can also complement organizing efforts for resident activities like critical mass bike rides or night rides that are often organized to demonstrate demand for bike facilities or experience biking at untraditional times.

Paintings and Murals

One of the quickest and easiest ways to make immediate improvements to properties that look and feel a bit run-down is by painting. Start with the simple painting of walls and entries that face the street or painting fences, railings, or signs at building entries or along the sidewalks. Sometimes a quick touch up is all that is

needed to brighten up a building or freshen up a rusty metal fence but sometimes it takes a little more.

As you drive through Downtown, you notice an abundance of very visible blank building walls sometimes facing the street or at corners and open side lots. Think of these walls as blank canvases ready for decoration and murals. Murals can be extensive pieces of local art or can be simply the addition of decorative pattern or color band on the wall. Formalizing a local mural program throughout Downtown, possibly connected to the flood wall, would begin to activate some of these blank walls while building excitement in the community as they see Downtown begin to transform and lift itself up. Businesses can buy in and offer up their blank walls even working with artists to create murals that showcase aspects of the business's role in Cannelton's history or how they want to be seen as a part of Cannelton's future.

- Formalize a Downtown mural program for blank walls and businesses that would like to participate and encourage local artists to get involved.
- Focus on alleys and side walls for painting or creative installations.
- Freshen up aging signage.
- Paint fences, crosswalks, railings, sign posts, etc.
- Encourage businesses and property owners to consider large, blank painted walls for murals.

Landscaping / Demonstration Gardens

The recent installations of the new gateway sign, memorial garden and gazebo and veterans memorial are a good start but much more can be done to use landscaping, fencing and edge treatments, and demonstration gardens to improve the feel of Downtown streets. These improvements will soften the feel of Downtown and create a more inviting atmosphere to make people want to stay longer and spend more time on foot than in their cars.



One of the primary characteristics of small city Downtowns is its mix of residential, professional, retail, and industrial uses ranging from gas stations and retail stores to single family houses, apartments and professional offices. This mix, along with a scattering of light industrial businesses means that even when some owners are responsibly managing their properties, more attention could be paid to screening some of the necessary but often unsightly areas around properties such as loading and trash collection areas, auto repair lots, and mechanical equipment.

Fences can be used both as an opaque screen or as a framework for creating a green wall. In other locations, hedges and plantings can be used to screen mechanical equipment or unsightly parking areas and even when these areas can't be totally screened out-of-sight, introducing landscaping and planting areas can soften their impact on the streetscape.

Where there are abandoned properties suffering from a lack of maintenance, the city could use a temporary fencing program to help screen unsightly lots from view. Property owners who do not wish to clean up their lots would have to pay for the installation of the fencing, creating an incentive for owners to get responsible and clean up their site before the fencing is installed. A temporary fencing program can be used along with a neighborhood painting/mural program to help liven things up and bring attention to properties that need improvement or a ready investor.

- Get local businesses and organizations involved with planting and landscaping throughout Downtown – use signage for sponsorships.
- Develop a strategy and work with property owners to use Demonstration Gardens to teach about native plants, zeroscaping, and permaculture techniques.
- At vacant or abandoned lots, install pocket gardens in the first 6 feet of ground. Install temporary

fencing to the rear to screen empty lots from the pedestrian sidewalk areas. Screen mechanical equipment and trash areas where possible.

Parklets and Street Installations

Cannelton's wide streets, abundant parking, and tradition of sidewalk porches create a great situation for developing small parklets or temporary park areas built-in the width of your street parking spaces or occupying expanded sidewalk areas. Parklets expand the public sidewalk and allowing for fun and enjoyable gathering, sitting, reading, and eating areas that are fully accessible to pedestrians. They are also used to create visual interest and to get people excited to see activity along the street. Today, many businesses are seeing added value during the Covid-19 pandemic since this is a way for them to add outdoor seating or tables and chairs for restaurants and shops. These constructions are not permanent and can move up and down the street or be adopted by a business owner that sees long term benefits from them. They are often built by the business owners and volunteers and can range from highly designed street furniture pieces to simple installs with astroturf, fencing and simple tables and chairs.

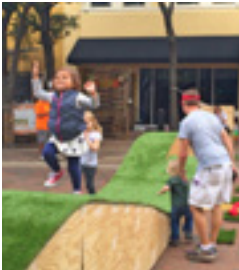
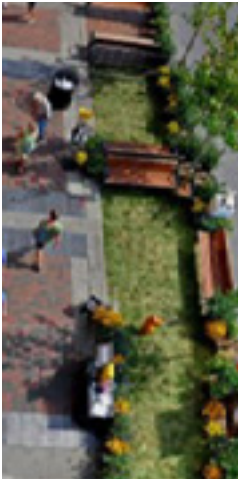
- Develop an approach for working with businesses to build one or two new parklets along Washington Street. Recommended locations would be in front of existing businesses to help folks see that there is life and energy there.
- Look at opportunities to use the first 10' of empty lots to create small pocket parks with seating and landscaping. These areas can also be used during festivals and parades to provide small gathering areas or vendor areas along the street.
- Engage local artists and artisans in the design and fabrication of parklets and other street furniture you want to place around Downtown. People like to feel the casual artsy vibe they create as they encourage folks to sit a spell.

- Integrate artful bike racks in Downtown and plan to study how the Downtown could become more bicycle and walker friendly.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Beautification projects build community and strengthens bonds between neighbors and businesses. In such a mixed use areas with a combination of new and long term players it's important to create strong bonds between businesses and neighborhood residents so they can all work together to maintain a balanced diversity of business and industry focused on the needs of local residents and the City as a whole. To help facilitate neighbor-helping-neighbor projects the City could facilitate partnerships with local businesses to, for instance, create a City Paint Fund – a partnership with local hardware stores, in the neighborhood, to provide paint for beautification projects that are using all volunteer labor. This approach can be used for hardware and home improvement needs, providing food for workers, printing branded T-shirts and hats for project teams, or providing plant for landscaping. These programs not only build social bonds between neighbors and business owners, they help to activate local businesses by calling on them to invest and play an active role in the improvement of their neighborhood.

Choose a location, get permission, tell them when to show up, bring paint, work together, feed them, watch them become friends, and entice them with the promise of the next project.



Making it Happen



Carrots & Sticks

The City has previously focused largely on pursuing initiatives through regulatory and enforcement powers. While these tools are useful and, in some cases, necessary to ensure public safety and address situations of persistent blight, they are not the only tools available in the municipal toolbox. Just as in a business where investments must be made to generate profits, communities need to invest in themselves to support future growth and development. This investment can come in the way of traditional public sector elements such as infrastructure and maintenance, without which private sector cannot function, but it can also include more direct investments to remove barriers facing businesses or property owners in the community.

From a public investment standpoint, there will be numerous opportunities for the City to take the lead in creating infrastructure to support redevelopment. Most obviously, the extension of streets, sewer and water infrastructure to service the Can Clay site will be required as a part of future redevelopment. Similarly, the creation of a public green space on the riverfront site will also represent public infrastructure which supports the district – providing a place for the public to gather and recreate, and a location where programming and events can occur to attract visitors to the district. It is also likely that other infrastructure investment will be required, either as future phases of development or as funding is identified, such as trail expansions/connections, the provision of public wifi in the parks or along Washington Street, and to complete renovation plans for the Community Hall or other similar projects. Cannelton has a unique opportunity to undertake a particularly impactful infrastructure investment by extending a sewer lateral and single standpipe system within each historic block – this will not only significantly reduce the cost of the installation on a per property basis, but it will expand the range of future businesses which can occupy downtown buildings and protect any other public and private investments by minimizing the impact of future fire events.

In the case of Cannelton, one barrier is clearly a lack of capital to address decades of deferred maintenance on downtown properties. While historic buildings were well-built and can be repurposed and reused for generations, they require regular maintenance to remain viable and regular updates to accommodate changing tenant expectations. When this maintenance does not occur over time, it can result in a more costly renovation. **However, the cost of this renovation is still often far less than the cost of demolition, remediation and new construction, and every effort should be made to help property owners address issues created over generations to allow future businesses the best chance of success.** While there are some funding sources available, many require either matching funds and/or public/private support. **By cooperating with Renew Cannelton and/or individual property owners, the City can help investors in the community access these outside funds, bringing dollars into the community.**

Strategies for Funding

Strategies for Funding: TIF
One tool available to finance the infrastructure expansion required to allow for redevelopment of both the infill and renovation portions of the Can Clay redevelopment is Tax Increment Financing. This tool is ideal for this site, as the property is not currently generating any taxable property value for the City. Creating a redevelopment district and a tax increment district would allow the City to bond for the necessary extension of utilities to allow full development of the site. Any future taxable revenues generated by the resulting development would not only repay the City for its investment, but also generate additional funds which could be used to further other initiatives included in this plan, including additional matching funds for rehabilitation projects, development and enhancement of public spaces, or incentives to foster additional development.

Strategies for Funding: OCRA Historic Renovation Grant Program
OCRA has several programs available to support revitalization of downtowns and rural areas. Many of these programs would be relevant to projects identified as part of this plan. These programs include the Historic Renovation Grant Program, which provides matching grants of up to \$100,000 to property owners pursuing quality restoration work on their properties. Because the program requires property owners to follow Secretary of Interior standards for redevelopment, architects with specific knowledge of historic methods should be on board, and property owners should be prepared for a more lengthy process, as the approvals may add an additional 6 months or so to the timeline. More: <https://www.in.gov/ocra/historic-renovation-grant-program/>

Use of this funding source pairs well with the Historic Tax Credit Program available at the national level, as many of the requirements are similar, and in fact the application process can run in parallel. The Historic Tax Credit program provides a 20% tax credit for rehabilitation expenses which follow the secretary of interior (SOI) standards. For properties individually listed or contributing to a historic district, which includes most of the buildings in downtown Cannelton, property owners must submit information on the current state of the property and renovation plans to demonstrate that plans meet the requirements set forth by the National Park Service. Property owners with significant tax liabilities can use these credits to offset future tax liabilities, or they can sell the credits to a project partner with the ability to utilize the credits, often the bank associated with the project. More: <https://www.in.gov/dnr/historic-preservation/help-for-owners/financial-assistance/investment-tax-credit/>

Strategies for Funding: CDBG, CARES and ARPA
OCRA manages the state's allocation of Community Development Block Grants to support rural community infrastructure initiatives. Specific initiatives which are eligible for funding under existing CDBG programs

Carrots & Sticks Case Study

One example of a community that utilized the principle of carrots and sticks effectively is Edgerton, WI (population 5,500). Faced with numerous buildings in need of repair and a revolving loan fund that was not being utilized, the City initiated a two-pronged approach. First, they engaged their contracted building inspector to conduct a visual inspection of the exterior of downtown properties for potential code violations. The list of observations was typed up into a letter to the property owner, and mailed to them along with a brochure on the new and improved loan program, which, for a three-month application period, offered 0% interest and required only a 25% match (reduced from a typical 50% match) for any project completed within a one-year period. As a result of this combined carrot-stick method, the City received 24 applications for the program, almost all of which were completed in the subsequent year. In addition, the process identified four properties where serious concerns existed, and those four owners met individually with the City's Redevelopment Authority (RDA) and Building Inspector to develop a plan of attack. Two owners ultimately sold to other local individuals that came forward, one undertook improvements themselves after being paired with a student architecture team to assist with design and planning and the fourth property was ultimately acquired by the RDA, stabilized and sold to a private business.



include Blight Clearance (recently received by the City for a portion of the Can Clay site), Main Street Revitalization (streetscapes, facades and downtown infrastructure), Quick Impact Place based Grant (public arts), and Public Facilities (ADA, daycares, community centers, youth centers, historic preservation). More: <https://www.in.gov/ocra/cdbg/>

There are various CARES, ARPA and combined programs that have been and will continue to be rolled out in the coming months. Infrastructure, including broadband and wifi, assistance to impacted business categories and improvements to aid public health. One program currently released as available to Counties with significant potential to meet several goals of this plan is the Hoosier Enduring Legacy Program (HELP). This program provides training and technical assistance to develop programs that address community wellness, quality of place and e-connectivity. <https://www.in.gov/ocra/help/>

Strategies for Funding: Opportunity Zone

Cannelton is fortunate to be included among 46 communities in the state that are eligible for Rural Opportunity Zone assistance. Indiana has established several programs over the past several years to offer targeted training and assistance to these communities to identify projects, develop investment plans and relevant market data profiles and attract investors interested in utilizing zone credits to eligible projects. While the opportunity zone credit is currently scheduled to sunset in 2022, with the identification of numerous larger investment opportunities in the community, Cannelton should monitor this program and plan to apply for future assistance rounds offered.

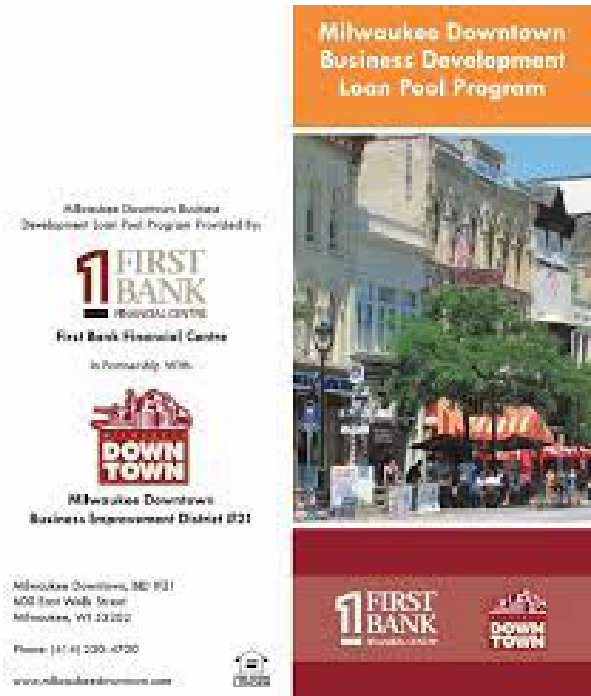
To maximize use of these funding sources, it is recommended that the City, Renew Cannelton and other partners develop a 5-year plan for project development which identifies potential funding sources, as most of these grants will require time to plan and prepare. As with many grant programs, preliminary conversations with funding partners are important and can significantly

increase the likelihood of receiving funds. The Southwest Community Liaison is Lisa Muench (lmuench@ocra.in.gov)

Existing Funding Opportunities

The City of Cannelton currently operates a Revolving Loan Fund through its Economic Development Committee to assist local businesses with growth and expansion. The program provides up to \$30,000 over a 3-10 term to help with a wide variety of cost items that small businesses might face. The City should be commended for the broad scope of the program which maximizes flexibility for businesses. However, the limited pool of available funding means that only a small handful of businesses can benefit from the program at any given time, ultimately resulting in the use for more traditional property and equipment purchases that can be easily reviewed and approved by the City Council. The City should consider applying to the USDA for additional funds to catalyze this loan fund to offer additional traditional funds, and reallocate at least a portion of the existing fund to provide targeted smaller loans for downtown façade or maintenance projects. These loans could be offered at 0% for 5 or 10 years and provide a source of matching funds to access other loans and grants.

While Cannelton does not currently have any local banking establishments, there are likely one or more regional banks which could be induced to create a low interest loan pool to support small business activity. Such funds can satisfy the Community Reinvestment Act requirements and are generally seen as positive for developing future business clients as well. There are multiple examples of these funds, some of which are operated by individual banks (First Bank Financial Centre, for instance, opens a downtown business fund in each branch community), and others that operate as pooled funds among several local banks to reduce risk. Typical loans might provide 1% loans up to \$50,000 with 20-year terms for downtown businesses making physical improvements on their properties. In addition



to introducing a needed additional financing source, these loans have the benefit of being overseen by finance professionals, and do not require businesses to provide confidential financial information to elected bodies, which, especially in small communities, can be a deterrent to local loan fund utilization.

The Kiva loan fund is another option available to fund small business and startup operations. The program offers up to \$15,000 at 0% interest over a three-year term for small business investments. The program operates on a crowd-lending platform, which is different from crowdfunding in that the funds are not taxable to the business, and the loan does not utilize traditional underwriting or financial scoring. Instead, the system relies on social underwriting, where applicant businesses must get 25 or more friends, family or clients to lend them at least \$25 on the platform before it can be placed

in the public funding portal. These 25 close contacts will be repaid at the same rate as other private and public lenders, and, as most entrepreneurs do not want to let down their supporters, the repayment rate on the loans is quite high. An additional perk for communities that promote this platform is that, over time, they will develop a pool of individual lenders within the community that are available to make loans to future businesses on the platform, creating a local culture of entrepreneurial support.

Business Recruitment/Vacant Space Opportunities

Many communities and property owners are concerned with identifying targeted businesses that they feel have the best chance of success or that are needed to achieve the best business mix in a district. While it is tempting to use spending data to focus efforts on recruiting businesses that are perceived to be a good bet, in reality any individual business has just as much chance of being successful as any other. Given adequate startup capital, a prepared and committed owner/manager and a quality product, many businesses can be successful in a given location, while others lacking in any one of these areas may fail. Given the large amount of vacancies on Washington Street, Cannelton should not concern itself in the near term with finding a good business mix, but rather focus on recruiting committed business owners that will operate active businesses. Taken together, these businesses will generate foot traffic in the district that will ultimately create an environment to attract and support additional types of businesses. For those that insist on achieving a quality business mix, a starting rule of thumb might be that one third of businesses should offer something to purchase, one third should offer food or drink, and one third should be open evenings and weekends. It may seem like this points to equal parts retail, restaurant and service, but in reality there are many service businesses that sell products (salons, barbershops, and even some nonprofits have retail areas

or gift shops), and similar types of businesses may be open evenings and weekends. There are many examples of professional service businesses offering evening concerts or active outdoor seating areas, creating vitality and foot traffic similar to a retail business.



A retail shop can offer a place for customers to rest, keeping them in the district (and spending money) longer.

While it is not important to target individual business types specifically at this time, it is helpful to steer businesses to properties that are appropriately sized for their business. Given the affordable nature of properties downtown, it is easy for a new business to take on a property larger than they need, which can ultimately limit their ability to be successful. Purchasing inventory or improving a property that is larger than needed can unnecessarily burden a new business with maintenance, costs and headaches that can overwhelm the new business. The list (adjacent) indicates the average size in square feet for some common business types that can be used as a guide for helping businesses choose the correct location. Where properties may be too large for an individual tenant, they can be subdivided front to back, with the front portion dedicated to retail uses and rear spaces leased for office space or event residential uses.

Another potentially effective strategy is to target businesses, at least initially, do not rely on foot traffic for success. Businesses that currently sell largely or even entirely online, or that create products delivered to the end customer are prime candidates for occupying storefronts. Examples of this type of business might include artisans, makers and crafters (examples from other communities have included saddle and bridle manufacturers, potters, painters, clothing designers, woodworkers, boat builders and leatherworkers just to name a few). These individuals can be identified via online platforms like Etsy, or by visiting local craft fairs or farm markets. Developing connections with this type of entrepreneur and gaining a reputation as a community that supports entrepreneurs in a variety of ways can pay off over the long term, allowing these artisans to grow a local following and evolve from a temporary to permanent storefront tenant through incremental growth. For instance, a vendor at a regular market held at the new riverfront park could eventually offer some product on consignment at a local shop, lease a temporary popup shop for a week or a month during the summer, and ultimately a permanent small

storefront space. This gradual progression allows the business owner to transition from part-time to full-time over a period of time, during which they grow a local customer base and build up inventory without requiring significant debt.

Typical Space Requirements for Common Retail Uses (size in square feet)

- Specialty Apparel/Shoes: 1,000-3,000
- Traditional Clothing: 2,500-7,000 (larger for multiple departments i.e. maternity, mens, kids, etc)
- Beauty: 500-2,000
- Consignment: 1,500-3,000
- Craft/Hobby: 1,000-5,000
- Electronics: 1,200-2,500
- Optometry/Eyewear: 1,500-2,500
- Furniture: 3,500-8,000
- Gift/Variety: 2,000-5,000
- Jewelry: 1,000-1,500
- Sporting Goods (specialty): 1,400-2,000
- Bike Shop: 3,000-5,000
- Pharmacy (full): 10,000-14,000
- Coffee Shop: 700-2,500
- Family Restaurant: 1,200-4,000
- Fast Food: 1,200-3,500
- Full Service Restaurant: 3,000-8,500
- Specialty Food (i.e. ice cream, juice): 700-1,400

Although there are no business types that are more likely to be successful than any other, there may be some goods or services specifically missing or demanded by residents. In these instances, it makes sense to understand the industry and why these businesses may not have chosen to locate in Cannelton in the past. Once potential limitations have been identified, targeted incentives and outreach campaigns can be developed to attract desired categories of businesses. These incentives may be financial but are more likely to represent local support and services which demonstrate the ability and willingness of the community to support the business in question. Some examples of successful targeted recruitment programs are outlined below. While these are two specific business types, the same principle can be applied to almost any industry, as long as the proposal developed is designed to recognize and address the unique circumstances that influence costs and risks associated with new locations.



There are many types of popup shop programs that can be adapted for use by Cannelton depending on the spaces available.

Elroy, WI – After the longstanding pharmacist retired, the downtown pharmacy closed, leaving no local option for residents to fill prescriptions. After exploring telepharmacy options (i.e. Telepharm) which have been successful in other midwestern states, it was determined that state regulations would prevent a tele-operation from opening in downtown. As a result, the community and landlord created an incentive package to recruit a new pharmacist to the community. They put together a package that included a storefront lease and upper floor residential space at a significantly reduced rate (negotiated/paid for between the pharmacy building owner and a nearby nursing home), a relocation bonus of \$2,500 provided by the local bank, and written guarantees to fill prescriptions for a period of at least three years by a local nursing home and 100 local residents, which demonstrated a commitment to success that helped convince a new pharmacy school graduate to take a chance on the community.

Red Wing, MN – Red Wing had seen a steady growth in tourist activity as a result of a collaboration with several other river communities. However, the community's ability to retain and capitalize on these tourists was limited by the fact that they did not have a full-service restaurant in town to allow visitors to stay through lunch or dinner. The lack of an existing restaurant facility and high cost (estimated at \$50,000) to install a commercial kitchen in one of several potential location, coupled with limited willingness by financial institutions to invest in perceived high-risk food businesses deterred anyone that had previously expressed interest. The Main Street organization ultimately came up with a recruitment campaign: The Red Wing Restaurant Challenge. They developed an extensive ad campaign to solicit resumes from interested chefs. They selected the top five candidates, each of whom cooked at a tasting contest at the community center. Residents in attendance voted on their top choice, who would win the prize package which consisted of 6 months free rent, donated labor by a local HVAC firm, donated cabinetry and fixtures from an appliance store, a free website

design and year of free hosting from a local firm, and \$5,000 in cash from a local bank.

Given all that, there are some potential uses either identified by local stakeholders, representing emerging trends in other similar downtowns, or uniquely suited to the local market that might make sense for Cannelton to pursue. These concepts and some potential locations, along with representative images, are outlined below.



Maker Space – There is a community of skilled craftsmen and tradespeople in Cannelton and the surrounding region. Creating a shared space for these individuals to collaborate on projects and share their knowledge with others in the community with similar interests. These spaces can take a variety of forms, but typically offer access to costly equipment (lathes, table saws, commercial sewing machines, laser cutters, etc.) that are typically unaffordable at an individual level, in addition to training or classes offering instruction in various skills. Spaces can be supported by local employers through the donation of equipment, in partnership with technical colleges or other educational institutions, or separately as a membership-based model. One local example is the Maker 13 space Jeffersonville, IN. <https://www.maker13.com/>

Live/work – One opportunity offered by downtown properties that is not available in other types of property is the potential for live/work space. Not only is this attractive from a convenience perspective, it can also allow entrepreneurs to secure both a residence and a commercial space for a single cost. Many SBA or home loans would allow the purchase of a downtown building as either a business or a home under a single affordable mortgage structure. The purchase of the property under an SBA loan for a business would also potentially provide some affordable funds to help with required renovations. This model can work well for retail as well as personal or professional service firms.

Artist-in-residence – Artist-in-residence programs can be useful tools to bring new vision and ideas to small communities. Such programs sponsor an artist for a period of time (i.e. a month, a summer season, etc.) to live and work in a community, sometimes offering classes or demonstrations as part of their visit. The programs, sponsored by foundations, arts organizations and other similar entities, pair artists with communities that can offer room and board in exchange for the provision of public art projects in the community. These programs can be targeted at specific types of artists –

i.e. folk art, pottery, visual arts, etc. and create a unique partnership between the community and an artist. Rural communities are a popular location for these programs, hosting 60% of such residencies in the country. More: <https://artistcommunities.org/residencies>

Brewery – Breweries, in addition to being exceedingly popular for both locals and tourists, can be fairly profitable even at a small scale. A small brewery, purchasing used equipment and producing sufficient product for weekend operations, has fairly limited overhead. Creating quality product and an attractive atmosphere are the key factors for success. Many operations partner with area restaurants or food trucks to accommodate limited dining options, helping other entrepreneurs thrive as well. Identifying a property that can accommodate brewing tanks and an outdoor patio space is a good strategy – the former hardware store at 6th & Washington is one opportunity, transforming the adjacent parking area into a patio space.



Grocery – While a traditional grocer is unlikely to be interested in a location in Cannelton given the lack of vehicular traffic counts, there are several other models that can provide access to fresh food in combination with other products that can help them be sustainable as a business model or even a destination. Some examples of this include:

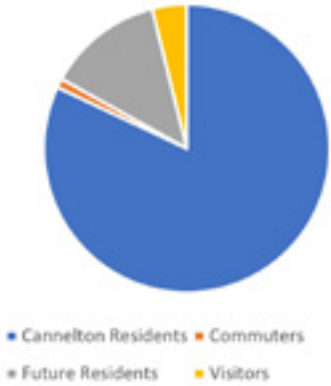
- Food is Fuel, Orfordville, WI (population 1,286): The Food is Fuel grocery converted a closed gas station into an outlet for products from the local farm community. Through contracts with farmers, the shop serves as a central pickup location for several Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs while also offering retail options for milk, eggs, cheese and other goods and has become a regular stop for area commuters.
- Cedar Street Market, Tigerton, WI (population 742): This small community had a decades-vacant former Red Owl grocery store that was purchased by a local family and renovated through much sweat equity. They re-opened the business as a scratch and dent grocery, also offering a bakery featuring product from an adjacent community and fresh produce in season from the surrounding farms. The business offers a grocery option for local elderly populations, but also serves as a destination for the entire region, as their low prices help fill a basic need for the low-income surrounding communities.
- Story Inn, Story, Indiana (population 3 and 4 dogs): Marketing itself as ‘one inconvenient location since 1851’, the Story Inn operates as a bed and breakfast, restaurant and tavern for travelers in the region attracted to the surrounding national forest or travelers on nearby scenic byway. <https://storyinn.com/>

While this list is designed to identify businesses that can be successful in the short term with limited local demand and a lack of regular foot traffic, all these businesses have the potential to draw customers from the broader



region, and even to attract destination visitors to stop in the community. Over time, the addition of residential units in upper floors and on the Can Clay site can further contribute to the potential retail market. The chart below illustrates the immediate sources of potential retail and restaurant spending available to downtown businesses, including visitor traffic already visiting the region which could be attracted to Cannelton. While it is possible for visitor spending to increase in the future, this share of potential dollars will remain small relative to other markets. The larger potential is to attract residents from the surrounding trade area (roughly the four county KY/IN area) which have a spending potential that is more than double these sources combined. Creating an opportunity for regional residents to visit and spend money is critical to the district’s success. It is important to note that while the ‘future residents’ slice of the pie, which reflects downtown population growth resulting from filling upper floors of existing downtown buildings as well as developing the northwestern half of the Can Clay site for residential uses, does not appear large, the share of this spending likely to be allocated to items potentially available downtown would be enough to potentially support an additional 5–6 new businesses in downtown, especially since these new residents would live within walking distance of these businesses.

Local Annual Spending Potential



Maximizing Main Street Designation

Achieving Main Street designation was a significant accomplishment for the Renew Cannelton group. Not only does this designation allow the community to access tools and training from the state Main Street program, it also opens up opportunities for grants and funding through the state as well as at the national level.

As the organization moves forward in implementing the Four Points of Main Street, some next steps that could help engage a greater pool of stakeholders and take full advantage of available resources includes:

Organization: The website and social media pages are up and running, and the organization produces a newsletter. The website includes prominently featured ‘donate now’ options but does not currently offer opportunities for interested persons to get involved and help out. Continue to emphasize that downtown belongs to everyone, and that everyone is welcome to and able to contribute to the betterment of downtown. Cannelton has a fairly high rate of volunteerism at 12% according to BLS data, which is a factor that can be leveraged to support downtown initiatives if residents are invited to contribute. It is also recommended that Renew Cannelton add a youth representative as a voting

- 10 Ways You Can Make a Difference in Downtown Today**
- Pick up one (or two or three) pieces of trash. A clean and well-cared for space means others will take care of it.
 - Pull a few weeds along a sidewalk or parking lot. This helps our district look neat and tidy.
 - Shop at a local business. \$0.63 of every dollar spent at a local business stays in the community.
 - Take some pictures of your favorite things in the district and share them on social media. Tell people what you love about our community.
 - Leave an online review for a local business. Help new customers find our great small businesses.
 - Eat your lunch in a public place – on a bench or a picnic table in downtown. People are social creatures. When they see people gathered, they are more likely to stop or spend time.
 - Pay it Forward. Maybe you buy a cup of coffee for the person behind you in line, help an elderly neighbor load groceries in the car or help mow or shovel for a neighbor or a small business.
 - Send a Thank You note. Maybe to someone that has been a great neighbor, a small business that supported your child’s sports team, a public servant who has gone above and beyond. Think of someone that has made a difference and thank them.
 - Make someone smile. Maybe it’s a positive chalk art saying, a post-it note on a car telling someone how great they parked, rocks painted with inspirational sayings hidden in public spaces – be creative!
 - Make a donation – to the food pantry, animal shelter, hospital or another charity that you support.

member to the board to increase their engagement in the district (and expand the volunteer base). As the organization expands its base of supporters, encouraging individuals to take advantage of workshops and trainings available regionally and state-wide, in addition to potential field trips to other communities with a longer tenure in the program, can help build the knowledge base to maximize the opportunity presented by Main Street. A key goal of the organization should also be to work towards hiring at least a part-time director that can serve as the point person for the organization, managing communications, outreach, fundraising and grant-writing activities.

Design: The initial efforts to purchase Christmas decorations and install the gateway signs are both very visible and tangible signs of progress. Continuing these efforts for visual improvements by adding additional greenery in the way of street trees and/or flower planters, and potentially hosting district cleanup days or even painting days to engage the community in making visible and large-scale improvements in the district are potential next steps to continue this beautification trend. The 2013 downtown plan includes numerous ideas for streetscape elements that would contribute to the aesthetics of the district.

Economic Vitality: To date, Renew Cannelton has focused on acquiring and stabilizing historic properties in the district, an essential first step toward preservation. However, the next steps to restore these buildings are critical to building trust and confidence in the district. Renew Cannelton should work closely with OCRA and Indiana Main Street to provide technical assistance to property owners to develop a budget and plan for restoration, and also help them to access funding to undertake these initiatives. The organization can also help negotiate joint purchase discounts on services like tuckpointing or roof repair that are needed by multiple property owners, or host trainings or work days to help property owners and other interested individuals learn the necessary skills to complete common repairs.

In addition to preserving properties, the organization also has a role to play in creating an environment to welcome new businesses. At present, there are no commercial spaces being actively marketed for sale or lease in the district. Helping to market opportunities for commercial space occupancy or to purchase properties that are relatively stable can help attract new businesses and private investment into the district, increasing the pool of individuals able to invest. If additional funds are needed for modest repairs to make properties eligible for occupancy, the organization may be able to create its own loan fund to help property owners undertake the necessary repairs. Such a small-scale loan fund can be crowd-funded from the locally, or potentially from outreach to local alumni that may want to give back.

Promotions: While large-scale events like Heritage Days give locals and alumni a chance to show off their community pride, hosting smaller and more focused events can be less of a drain on organization resources while still achieving program goals. Examples might include guided architectural photography tours, arts or farm markets, a live music series or other recurring events that can help locals get in the habit of making a visit to downtown part of their weekly schedule. Once completed, the riverfront green space could be a good place to host these events, but in the meantime the former motel site, the Cotton Mill parking lot, or the 5th & Washington green space.

Similarly, projects that provide self-guided projects or experiences are useful as they do not require staffing to carry out, but they do create activity when businesses may not be open. This could include historic walking tours or educational information, such as signs or posters in windows highlighting the history and former occupancy of each building identified using Sanborn Maps <https://libraries.indiana.edu/union-list-sanborn-maps> or the installation of large-scale games or activities in a local plaza or park. Both these projects are things that local students can take a leadership role in completing.



Dollars and Cents of Demolition and Preservation

Cannelton is fortunate to have a largely intact historic district with many buildings listed on the historic register. Over the past several decades, many buildings have become vacant, and most suffer from some level of deferred maintenance. These factors combined have led to an average decrease in assessed property values of roughly 10 percent over the last decade, with the largest decreases in properties that are largely or entirely vacant. In contrast, those buildings that are fully occupied today have enjoyed an increase in assessed value, averaging 27% higher values for fully occupied buildings over similarly sized empty ones.

Not only do vacant buildings diminish in value over time, but they also detract from the overall economic vitality of the area. A joint study between the Iowa and Wisconsin Main Street programs found that the average vacant traditional downtown property (one storefront and two upstairs apartments) reduces economic activity by \$76,000 per year when factors such as resident and worker spending, utility payments, property and income taxes and local business spending are considered. In effect, for Cannelton, transforming a vacant property into a fully occupied property would result in an almost overnight increase in economic activity of \$100,000. In contrast, demolishing an existing structure would remove all improvement value, reducing property values by an additional 72 percent, leaving an average residual land value of \$5,600 per property.

In addition to the impact on property values, the cost of demolishing a downtown property, after assessing and mitigating any asbestos or lead concerns, is significant, as demolition companies must work around adjacent existing structures and insure themselves against damage to neighboring buildings. This leads to costs up to \$50,000 for full demolition and site restoration, when most properties could be stabilized at equivalent

cost, preserving what value remains and leaving open the potential for future value increases from renovated properties.

An additional factor encouraging investment in preservation and restoration of existing properties over demolition is that fact that the value of properties (both as structures and as business locations) in historic districts, is negatively impacted by vacant lots or buildings on adjacent properties. The presence of vacant (and especially poorly maintained) properties reduces foot traffic and creates a perception of blight that reduces property values by an average of 2 percent in national studies, and the resulting decline in foot traffic may make retail uses impossible to sustain in some parts of the district if significant gaps in activity are created.

While some communities do find it necessary to demolish some non-contributing historic structures to accommodate growing demands for apartment development or other uses, Cannelton is fortunate to have a current Washington Street parcel already vacant and available for sale which could easily accommodate any near-term developer interest, in addition to the long-term potential available on the Can Clay site. These sites are more attractive to developers as they offer opportunity to incorporate on-site parking and to stage construction on site without worrying about encroaching on adjacent properties.



Now What?



Stop the Civic Demolition

Without a commitment to a new direction from everyone in Cannelton, our team is concerned that this report will simply provide new fodder for the same divisiveness and stasis that have held back progress to date. You cannot allow this to happen. It is time to build something new together. **If the citizens of Cannelton want to realize different outcomes, it will require dramatically different behavior. As one citizen of Cannelton noted during this process, “a town must also have a community of willing participants behind its long-term survival and a social fabric as well as a desire to save its buildings. This, I feel, is the missing link. Many have given up hope of salvaging the town.” The team believes the citizens of Cannelton are currently participating in their own decline by the nature of their interactions with one another, the pervasive divisiveness and personalization of conflict in town, and the prevailing sense of apathy, distrust, frustration, and disempowerment rampant across the community. Right now, the physical environment in Cannelton is a reflection of your community identity, not a barrier to achieving it. It reflects a town beset by division and inertia and a lack of hope or a vision for the future. For all the talk about the demolition of buildings in town, the most destructive element the team witnessed was the collective civic demolition of community that has been underway. Rebuilding that fabric is a necessary prerequisite to the physical revitalization of downtown. Cannelton needs to recover the soul of its city, and that resides in the people who have defined this community for generations.** Civic health and capacity have a direct relationship with the physical environment – as you work to improve the former, the latter will become more feasible.



“We expect too much of buildings and too little of ourselves” – Jane Jacobs

The current dynamics exhibited in Cannelton are not conducive to success – they are actively prohibitive to moving forward. The team observed signs of systemic disempowerment across the community. Property owners expressed discouragement about their prospects for improving their properties without outside support or assistance to access needed resources. Residents expressed frustration with the deteriorating conditions of many historic properties and blame owners for lack of action to improve them. Some residents posited that their low-income neighbors are holding back Cannelton from development opportunities. Many residents expressed frustration at local government and civic leaders for the state of affairs, particularly toward publicly held properties that are vacant, undeveloped or in decline. **There is a near unanimous civic anxiety about the future, and an expressed impatience over the need for some positive things to start happening now in Cannelton. However, this impatience is not currently matched by a sense of urgency to work together to build a vision for the future, partner on projects that can be accomplished right now, and build momentum for the investments the town will need to ultimately succeed.** As a result, the team observed multiple obstacles present in the current public conversation about downtown:

- There is a preponderance of existing “project ideas” for individual sites in the downtown, and no conversation about the larger whole they would contribute to creating, nor the linkages, relationships and synergies between them to create a cohesive whole. The current collection of disparate and disconnected individual project ideas dilute community effort rather than build capacity or momentum for greater investment in the downtown. Furthermore, there are a lot of dreams without plans, which right now represent no more than empty wishes. A rollercoaster here, a restaurant there, housing, retail, and public space – all distinct, separate conversations promoted by different downtown interests and stakeholders.

- **The community lacks a guiding vision for the future of downtown, and in its focus on individual buildings it has ignored the opportunity provided by improvements to the public realm and the spaces between buildings that are comparatively cost-efficient and high impact and that can set the stage for new investment, preservation of historic buildings, and a downtown that reflects a valued heritage.**
- **There is a critical need to leverage all the existing assets together for the larger revitalization of downtown. You have multiple physical assets to work with, including the riverfront, publicly owned properties, Washington Street as a historic connector, and a stock of historic buildings that could contribute unique character to a newly envisioned downtown.** Importantly, you also have over 1,400 citizens. Working together, you can mobilize incredible volunteer projects and events that change the visual image of downtown and spur investment interest. The city needs to apply all of these assets to your vision.

Getting Started: Move from Division to (Shared) Vision.

You can't revitalize and renew the physical conditions of the downtown without first healing and repairing the civic rifts that exist among your fellow citizens. The team believes that the community can utilize an asset-based approach to community development that leverages people and place, focusing first on what is feasible now and building momentum over time to make more significant investments possible. One citizen defined success in the next five years as “A unified long-term vision to bring impactful improvements that everyone works together to achieve.” **Our team believes that building a shared vision and guiding plan for your downtown will facilitate clarifying roles and relationships between projects, help identify new opportunities for**

vacant parcels, and direct future investment in historic properties.

A New Beginning: A Civic Framework for Cannelton’s Downtown Renaissance

Our team has worked in other communities like Cannelton previously, and we have observed similar dynamics. These challenges are not unique to Cannelton – they are shared by many struggling towns in America – and they are not insurmountable. Dealing with community conflict and rebuilding trust among citizens is critical. For instance, some citizens mentioned that Alexandria, Virginia’s Torpedo Factory art hub was their model for Cannelton’s future industrial waterfront. However, even Alexandria has struggled with conflict. In recent years, the city has been paralyzed by a raging conflict over the future of its waterfront, so city leaders organized a process called “What’s Next Alexandria” to develop specific guidelines for how to involve the public in future decisions and have healthy dialogues. **As a small community, Cannelton could solve some of its issues very quickly if it wanted to. Frankly, these are small challenges if the community decides to come together and work in a new way toward a shared vision.** Successful small communities all exhibit common traits in how they have overcome their challenges to achieve their visions for the future. Many interventions require little or no resources, allowing you to build momentum by mobilizing volunteer and organizing power instead. Many similar towns have utilized a key local main street organization or effort to mobilize volunteer resources to get started. The following is a small sample.

St. Helens, Oregon: Millions in new investment St. Helens used a community process to jump start revitalization efforts on its former industrial waterfront. Through a series of public meetings and workshops, the Sustainable Design Assessment Team gathered public input on the city’s efforts to acquire and redevelop the land south of Old Town where Boise Cascade used to

operate a veneer plant. The team then made a public presentation outlining its recommendations for the St. Helens waterfront, including tourist attractions and amenities, a facade improvement project to create a more modern and cohesive-looking commercial area, and a civic park plaza to anchor the proposed new neighborhood. The week after the SDAT occurred, The Portland Tribune ran a story noting that the city manager described the SDAT experience as “pretty surreal” and “kind of an amazing experience.” “The amount of product, it’s just amazing what they delivered. It produced a lot of information, a lot of big ideas, a lot of reaffirming concepts.” The process won a state award and catalyzed millions in grants from the EPA to implement the first phase of the strategy. As the award announcement declared:

“St. Helens received the Helen and Alan Berg Good Governance award — named for two former Corvallis mayors and LOC presidents — which the LOC said “honors city programs that connect citizens within a community,” at the league’s annual conference in Eugene. John Walsh, St. Helens’ administrator, was on hand to accept the award. The “What’s Your Waterfront?” campaign centered around the May visit of a team of experts from the American Institute of Architects to evaluate the city’s waterfront project. “In reviewing the city’s submission, the awards judges were impressed with the innovative approach, the broad community involvement, and the inclusion of outside resources to assist.”

St. Helens has leveraged the momentum to successfully apply for EPA brownfield remediation funds and other resources that have aided site clean-up. The city also worked on the public realm, improving streets and connections to the sites. The city purchased the industrial land, used outside funds to help prepare it, and has now attracted the interest of developers to begin work on the future of the area. <https://www.sthelensoregon.gov/waterfront>

Newport, Vermont: Millions in New Investment
In 2009, the small city of Newport, Vermont (population 5,000) organized a process to revitalize its downtown. At the time, Newport was suffering from economic decline and high unemployment. As one local citizen observed, “I’ve seen Newport come, and I’ve seen it go.” Patricia Sears, the Executive Director of the Newport Renaissance Corporation, described the town’s dilemma a few years ago: “We were the last city in Vermont to achieve downtown designation from the state. We had some of the highest unemployment in the state. We decided we were done being last. We decided, ‘we are going to be first.’” Newport hosted the first R/UDAT in state history. Hundreds of residents and stakeholders participated in the process. As Mayor Paul Monette said, “it wasn’t the usual political process. Everyone was heard during the R/UDAT.” Newport was able to achieve success through broad partnership and involvement. It also leveraged small actions to build momentum for larger investments. For example, the R/UDAT team included a recommendation to create a community garden downtown. Newport created a community garden with over 32 organizational partners. They took advantage of existing capacity – a downtown parking lot that was donated – and not only created a garden but programmed it to have a transformational impact. Out of the community garden, the “Grow a Neighborhood” program was created, teaching neighborhood residents about agriculture, providing space for family plots, and engaging local restaurants in a farm to table initiative. Six new restaurants opened in the downtown during the first two years of implementation. This activity spurred new investments that included boutique hotels, a waterfront resort and a tasting center featuring regional agriculture. As they described it, the goal behind the Northeast Kingdom Tasting Center was “to create a culinary destination for all the fantastic products in the Northeast Kingdom.” The new restaurants and Tasting Center created enough connectivity to launch an annual food festival in the downtown, which provided further momentum to the effort to revitalize the main street. One of the key partners in spurring

tourist visits to the downtown was Jay Peak, a ski and recreational resort that lies 20 miles west of town. It was an area of mutual interest for Newport and Jay Peak to include the downtown in the visitor experience for tourists and Jay Peak provided not only promotional assistance but a tourist circulator bus to take visitors from the resort to the downtown and back. One of the key recommendations of the community process was to re-invigorate the connection to the lakefront and organize and program more events to spur investment and visitors. Newport organized an international speedskating competition, the Rasputitsa Gravel Road Race for mountain bikers, and the Memphremagog Winter Swimming Festival which includes an international outdoor winter swimming competition. The events have spurred visitors from all over the world and increased investment activity in the town while reinforcing local identity and the value of place. At the conclusion of the public visioning, Kevin Dorn, then the state’s Secretary of Commerce and Community Development, noted, “I don’t think this is one of those things that will sit on a shelf...This is about stimulating thought about what could happen. Above all, you have to be patient. When you see the right things coming together – and you see that in Newport – it’s cause for hope.” The town has achieved incredible progress since 2009 as a major shift took place in civic involvement. As the Mayor stated, “I attribute our success to the successful R/UDAT [community process] in 2009 followed by the great public/private partnerships which have developed.” The sense of change reaches all levels of the community. A citizen described the civic “attitude adjustment” that had occurred: “When you have people working together, things can happen and do happen. That’s the most important change that has occurred – a change in attitude. All of a sudden, nothing is impossible.” A similar change is necessary in Cannelton in order to begin building momentum for positive change.



Port Angeles, Washington

In 2009, Port Angeles brought in a Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) to focus on downtown revitalization and waterfront development. The three-day process created enormous civic energy to pursue a vision for the city's future. Community engagement instantly soared, as residents volunteered their time, equipment, and resources to give the downtown area a face-lift. They repainted 43 buildings downtown within 3 months. The city also moved forward with substantial investment in its waterfront, which inspired new public and private partnerships. Within five years, Port Angeles had over \$100 million in new investment downtown. "Through the SDAT process, our community established a detailed implementation plan for positive change towards a sustainable future," said Nathan A. West, AICP, City Manager of the City of Port Angeles, Washington. "Ten years after working with the SDAT team there continues to be new success stories, which include improved public access to our waterfront and over 60 façade improvements integrated by a large number of area businesses. All the success stories visually illustrate SDAT's direct benefit to our community."

Helper, Utah

The AIA team for Cannelton specifically included Mayor Lenise Peterman from Helper, Utah to share how small towns have success. Helper is only 2,200 citizens, but they have worked together and have literally revitalized their downtown with their own hands. Consider what has happened there in short time. The natural resource economy began to suffer economic decline over the past 20 years, and in 2015 the Carbon Power Plant in Helper was closed. It had been in operation since 1954. The economic impact resulted in de-population and increased poverty, putting a strain on resources and capacity. In September 2017, Helper City hosted an AIA Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) to build a community-driven strategy for its downtown. Over 200 people participated in the process, which produced a 53-page report with recommended implementation

strategies that focused on strengthening the public realm, activating the downtown and enhancing the historic fabric. At the conclusion of the process, one citizen stood up and declared, "You've given us hope." In the first year of implementation efforts, the town of 2,000 mobilized hundreds of volunteers in a grassroots effort to remake the public realm and activate downtown. Citizens were involved directly in a series of hands-on projects that included the redesign of Main Street, pop-up retail stores, redesigned public parks, restoration of the riverfront, and other initiatives. They also enhanced programming downtown with successful arts festivals and related events. The impact has been transformational, stimulating private investment and momentum for positive change. Helper City Mayor Lenise Peterman notes that, "The plan created from the SDAT event is driving continuous improvement in Helper City. By giving voice to the community we have also given it hope in creating a sustainable environment which is respectful of our past, values our environmental assets and maximizes the opportunity for community engagement." Recently, Carbon County leaders hired a consultant to do an assessment of the entire jurisdiction. Regarding Helper, he had this to say: "I have never seen a community like this. You guys are the poster child for how to get things done...We really believe Helper is setting the Gold Standard for Utah." That sentiment is felt locally as well. The Mayor and Steering Committee wrote that "The three-day immersion by the SDAT team has impacted, and continues to impact, our community on a daily basis. People in our community have something they haven't had for some time, hope for a sustainable community. Key tenants of creating that sustainability include replenishing human capital (drawing young families to our city), caring for our environmental assets, and finally recreating an energy-based economy to a destination based one. And we are doing just that – everywhere in Carbon County people say it's happening in Helper" – and it is! Helper is living up to its namesake and living its motto, "The Little Town that Can." As one local report noted, "Within the last 18 months, all but one of the available buildings on Main

Street has been purchased and has undergone some degree of renovation." In 2018, Helper was recognized with a Facilitation Impact Award for its revitalization efforts. As Mayor Lenise Peterman wrote, "The SDAT program was the catalyst for what we have done and is the road map for what we will do to create our best version of a sustainable community. The community, at the final presentation during the SDAT visit, literally cheered. And we are delivering on the vision in lockstep with our citizens. A community with hope is unstoppable – I can't imagine being where we are today without the support, guidance and expertise the SDAT program afforded a small, struggling rural community in Utah."



Make the Cannelton Commitment

Can Clay was a 100-year-old institution that defined downtown Cannelton. The team met residents who gave decades of blood, sweat and tears to the Can Clay plant as employees. It represents a place of great meaning. The Cotton Mill building is a stunning success story – a beautiful historic building that has carried forward in a new use while continuing to contribute an iconic feature to the downtown that reflects the best representation of what tomorrow's city should be. Today's residents are charged with honoring that tradition. **During the process, one citizen commented that "Our historic buildings are our future." Well, that will only be true if the people of Cannelton come together to work on reinvigorating them. Your citizens, neighbors and friends are your most important resource right now. The local survey for this process asked, "What project are you personally willing to volunteer for?" One citizen answered "anything," while another said "None, I prefer to work on my own since my goals are not the same as the goals of the current group." This division of effort must end if you want to achieve success.**

It would be too easy to take the preceding report, have sides form on different ideas within it, argue about what to do, and allow paralysis to take hold. It is a foregone conclusion that nothing significant will happen if that occurs. However, we believe the opportunity before you is too great to pass on. The stakes are too high. **Every resident of Cannelton should step forward with a commitment to the public good and make a new effort to repair the trust and relationships needed to accomplish work together.** Here is the starting point: Hold a public meeting and find one community project that everyone can agree to participate in together to start and implement that project in the weeks to come. **Now is the time. Pick your first project together and begin building momentum for your future downtown. Believe in your community.**

Team Roster



Team Roster

Terry Ammons, Team Leader

Terry is the owner of StudioAmmons and an architectural graduate of Virginia Tech who has worked for over 30 years with a focus on historic preservation, community planning, wayfinding, and museum/exhibit design. He has worked with communities and museums throughout the U.S. and Europe and has been working with the American Institute of Architects’ (AIA) Communities by Design program as a Design Assistance Team (DAT) leader and member since 2006. He recently completed award winning designs for the National Historic Landmark museum restoration and exhibits at the Robert Russa Moton Museum, the national center for the study of civil rights in education in Farmville, VA, and has been recognized for his design work on such projects as the Restoration of Mount Pleasant (Preservation Virginia’s project of the year), Sailor’s Creek Battlefield exhibits, the James River State Park visitor center, Wyoming’s National Museum of Wildlife Art, and the Chrysler Museum of Art in Norfolk, Virginia.

Wayne Feiden, FAICP

Wayne is Director of Planning & Sustainability for the City of Northampton and Lecturer of Practice in planning and sustainability at UMass. His focus includes sustainability, resiliency, regeneration, urban revitalization, open space, alternative transportation, and public health. He led Northampton to earn the nation’s first 5-STAR Community for municipal sustainability as well as “Bicycle-Friendly,” “Pedestrian-Friendly,” “APA Great Streets,” and “National Historic Trust Distinctive Communities” designations.

His research publications include “Conservation Limited Development” (in press), “Building Sustainability and Resiliency into Local Planning Agencies” (APA PAS

Memos), and Local Agency Planning Management and Assessing Sustainability (APA PAS Reports). Wayne’s Bellagio Residency (Italy), State Department Professional Fellowship Exchange (Malaysia), German Marshall Fund fellowship (United Kingdom and Denmark), Fulbright Specialist Fellowships (South Africa and New Zealand), Eisenhower Fellowship (Hungary) all focused on revitalization and sustainability. He has served on 33 multidisciplinary teams to other communities on revitalization and sustainability issues. Wayne is a fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners. His awards include honorary member of Western Mass AIA, professional planner and advocacy planner awards from APA-MA, and American Trails Advocacy Award. Wayne has a BS Natural Resources from the University of Michigan and a Masters in City Planning from the University of Northampton Carolina.

Chris Harrell

Chris Harrell is one of the Team Leaders on the US EPA Brownfields Community Benefits Assessment Project with the University of Louisville’s Center for Environmental Policy and Management (CEPM). Harrell is also the Founder and Principal of Lazarus Group LLC, a firm engaged in crafting redevelopment strategies for distressed properties, corridors, and communities. In 2013 Harrell joined three other concerned citizens to found the Civic Data Alliance, an advocacy and action group of volunteers devoted to freeing public data, and using open data for the public good. From April 2004 until August, 2011 Harrell managed distressed property redevelopment efforts as Brownfield Redevelopment Coordinator for the City of Indianapolis’ Department of Metropolitan Development. Harrell’s educational background includes graduate degrees in both law and public policy. Harrell received his JD and MPA from Indiana University – Bloomington, and his AB from Wabash College. Along with his background in the public sector with the City of Indianapolis, Harrell has also worked for the Slovene Ministry of

Finance in Ljubljana, and the Planning Department for the City of Bloomington, Indiana. Harrell’s previous private sector experience included managing projects at two environmental consulting firms in Louisville, KY. Recent areas of special focus include: historic preservation of distressed properties through market rate redevelopment; linking comprehensive community development efforts and sustainability in urban core communities; creating mobile device based applications for collecting, analyzing and mapping hyper-local data in community-wide efforts; using data to clarify priorities for community economic development initiatives; and driving towards “Safer Soils” protocols for urban infill lots and brownfields for reuse in urban farming efforts.

Lenise Peterman

Lenise Peterman serves as Mayor of Helper City, UT. Lenise graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in psychology and a minor in sociology from the University of Southwestern Louisiana. Her work background is extensively tied to the litigation support industry and she has worked with companies such as General Motors, Ford Company, Dow Chemical Company, Exxon and more. She previously served the community as Helper Arts, Music and Film Festival Co-Director and Helper Revitalization Committee Co-Chair. Her skills include controlled documentation strategies, process definition, organization and creative problem solving. Lenise’s objective for the city is to create a sustainable community via our historic, artistic and recreational assets and to bring the community together to reinvent all we can be.

Errin Welty, CEcd, EDFP

Errin Welty works as a community and downtown development specialist at WEDC. She previously worked as a market analyst at Vierbicher, working with public and private sector clients to create market-based solutions to solve economic and planning issues,

and as Vice President of Client Services for Grubb & Ellis, managing marketing and research for the firm’s Denver office. Errin has significant planning and real estate experience, having been on staff with downtown organizations in both St. Cloud, MN and Denver, CO, and a founding member of Wheat Ridge 2020, an economic development organization focused on revitalizing one of Denver’s original inner-ring suburbs. She recently relocated to Madison, Wisconsin from Denver, Colorado. Specialties: Economic Development Strategy & Implementation, Market Analysis, Real Estate Analysis, Downtown Development, Redevelopment Planning, Corridor Planning, Meeting Facilitation.

Paola Capo

Paola Capo is the Sustainability and Communities by Design Specialist at the AIA.. In her position, she provides architects and communities with the resources they need to create healthier, more sustainable and equitable built environments. She graduated from Georgetown University in 2017 with a degree in Science, Technology, and International Affairs, concentrating on Energy and the Environment—a degree

Inspired by the many places she lived growing up as an Army brat. She recently completed the 6-week [IN]City program at UC Berkeley to expand on her knowledge in urban planning.

Erin Simmons

Erin Simmons is the Senior Director of Design Assistance at the Center for Communities by Design at the AIA in Washington, DC. The Center is a provider of pro bono technical assistance and participatory planning for community revitalization. Through its design assistance programs, the AIA has worked in over 250 communities and has been the recipient of numerous awards including “Organization of the Year” by the International Association for Public

Participation (IAP2) and the “Outstanding Program Award” from the Community Development Society. Erin is a leading practitioner of the design assistance process, providing expertise, facilitation, and support for the Center’s Design Assistance Team programs. In this capacity, she works with AIA components, members, partner organizations and community leaders to provide technical design assistance to communities across the world. Her portfolio includes work in over 100 communities across the United States and internationally. Erin is an Academician of the Academy of Urbanism in London, UK. Prior to joining the AIA, Erin worked as historic preservationist and architectural historian for an environmental and engineering firm, where she practiced preservation planning, created historic district design guidelines and zoning ordinances, and conducted historic resource surveys. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Florida State University and a Master’s degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Georgia.

Joel Mills

Joel Mills is Senior Director of the American Institute of Architects’ Center for Communities by Design. The Center is a leading provider of pro bono technical assistance and democratic design for community success. Its programs have catalyzed billions of dollars in sustainable development across the United States, helping to create some of the most vibrant places in America today. The Center’s design assistance process has been recognized with numerous awards and has been replicated and adapted across the world. Joel’s 27-year career has been focused on strengthening civic capacity, public processes and civic institutions. This work has helped millions of people participate in democratic processes, visioning efforts, and community planning initiatives. He has delivered presentations, training content, workshops and public processes in over a dozen countries across 5 continents. In the United States, Joel has provided consultative services

to hundreds of communities, leading participatory processes on the ground in over 85 communities across 35 states. His work has been featured in over 1,000 media stories. Joel has served on dozens of expert working groups, boards, juries, and panels focused on civic discourse and participation, sustainability, and democracy. He was a founding Board Member of the International Association for Public Participation’s United States Chapter. He has spoken at numerous international conferences concerning democratic urbanism and the role of democracy in urban success, including serving as the Co-Convener of the Remaking Cities Congress in 2013. Joel is an Academician of the Academy of Urbanism in London, UK. He is the author of numerous articles on the relationship between democracy, civic capacity and community.

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