ISSUE 03
MAY 2016

FRANKLIN COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PARTNER

HERITAGE OHIO

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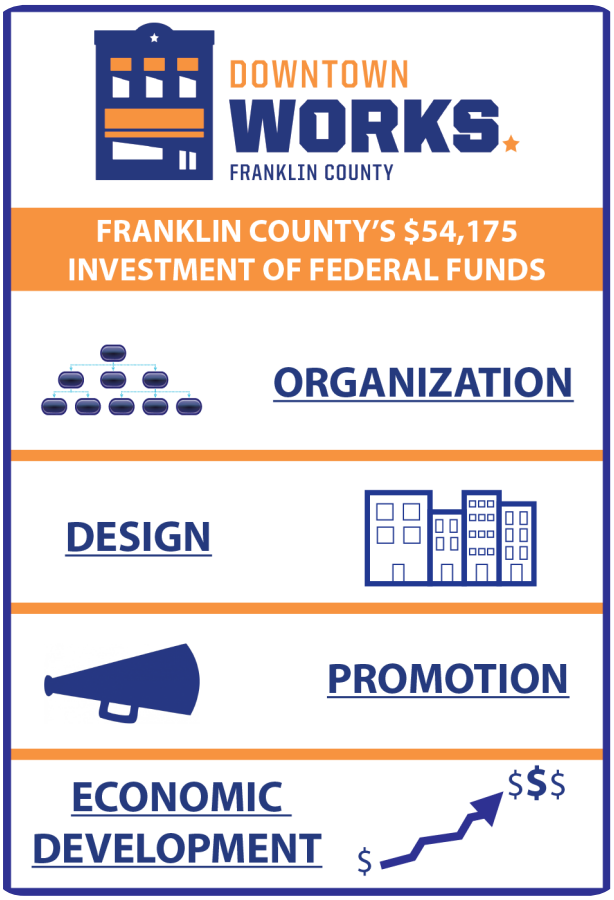
www.heritageohio.org

Downtown Works is a **first-of-its-kind** program in Ohio and only the **second such program in the nation** in which a county has provided assistance to local units of government to improve their central business districts. Primary objectives of the Downtown Works initiative include promoting economic and community development through on-site community meetings, organizational capacity building, and facilitating a county-wide network to promote communications and sharing.

In July 2015, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners voted to authorize a new economic development initiative called Downtown Works. This program is a partnership with Heritage Ohio, which works with municipalities to preserve and revitalize historic downtowns. Downtown Works was funded with $54,175 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars.

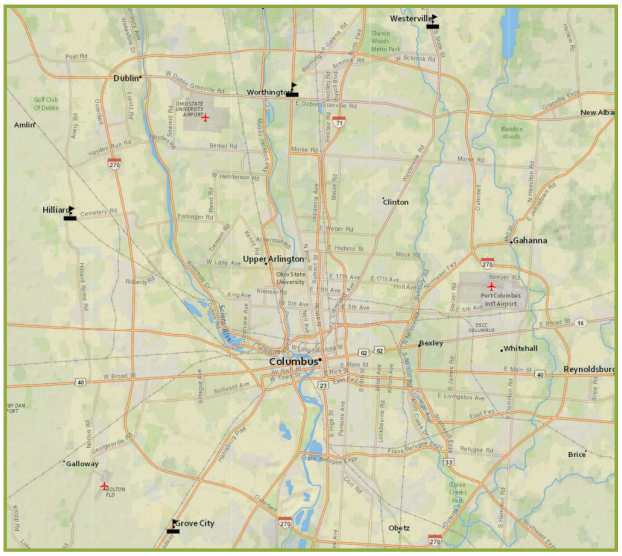
Every municipality - city, village, and township in Franklin County is eligible to participate in the program except for the City of Columbus, which has its own CDBG allocation. Participating municipalities form a group of stakeholders that work with economic development and historic preservation experts at Heritage Ohio on plans to restore buildings, provide appropriate retail and professional space, create a cohesive visual identity unique to the community, provide marketing assistance as well as other enhancements to lure development and entice residents to shop downtown.



Franklin County
Economic Development & Planning Department

Downtown Works Participants

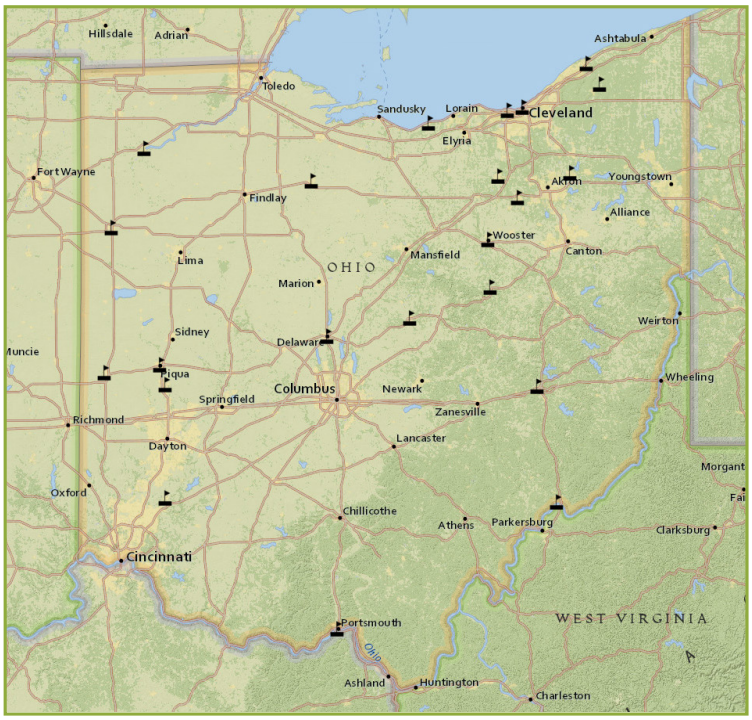
Worthington, Westerville, Hilliard & Grove City are all current particpants in Franklin County's Downtown Works Program.



OHIO MAIN STREET PROGRAM

The Ohio Main Street Program, administered by Heritage Ohio, works with communities across the state to revitalize their historic or traditional commercial areas. Based in historic preservation, the Main Street approach was developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation to save historic commercial architecture and the fabric of American communities' built environment, but has become a powerful economic development tool as well.

The Main Street program is designed to improve all aspects of the downtown or central business district, producing both tangible and intangible benefits. Improving economic management, strengthening public participation, and making downtown a fun place to visit are as critical to Main Street's future as recruiting new businesses, rehabilitating buildings, and expanding parking. Building on downtown's inherent assets – rich architecture, personal service, and traditional values and most of all, a sense of place - the Main Street approach has rekindled entrepreneurship, downtown cooperation, and civic concern.



Main Street Program Participants

Cambridge, Chardon, Cleveland Gateway District, Cleveland Warehouse District, Defiance, Delaware, Greenville, Kent, Lakewood, Lebanon, Marietta, Medina, Millersburg, Mt. Vernon, Painesville, Piqua, Portsmouth, Tiffin, Troy, Van Wert, Vermilion, Wadsworth, Wooster

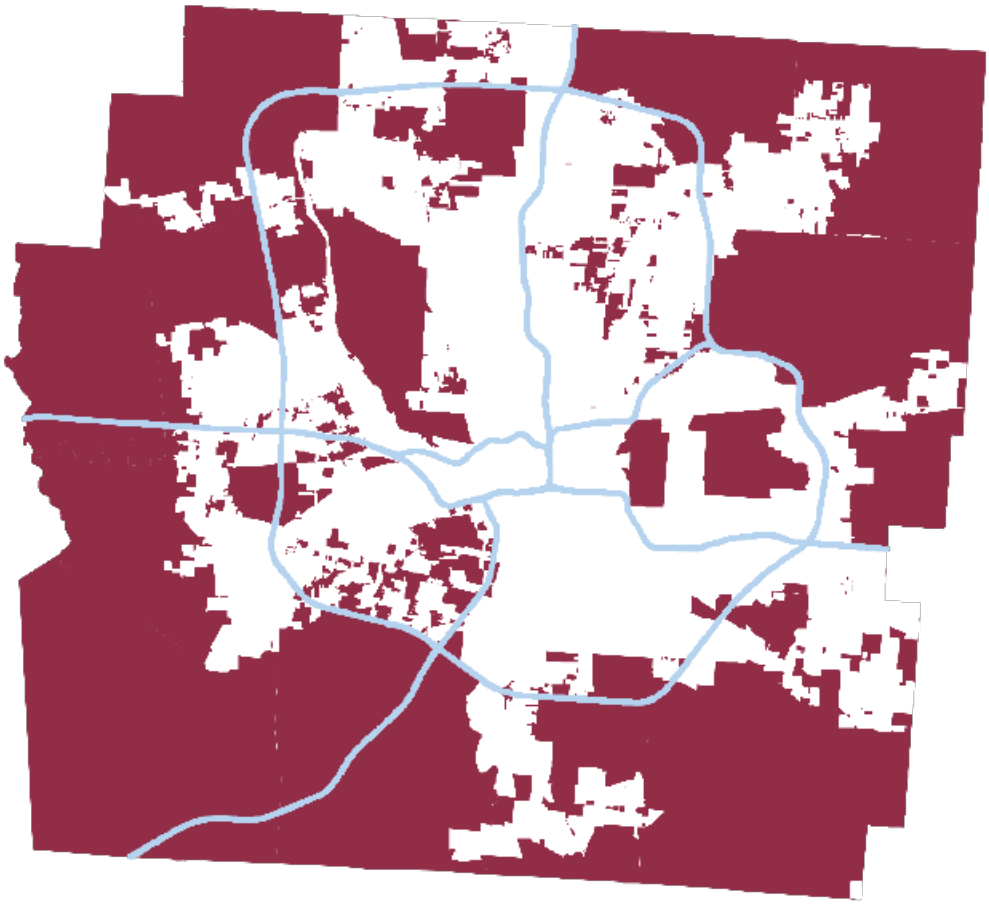
WHERE DOWNTOWN WORKS FITS WITHIN OHIO MAIN STREET

In addition to providing Franklin County communities with technical assistance from Heritage Ohio, Downtown Works subsidizes Franklin County community's commitment to joining the Downtown Affiliate program.

The Downtown Affiliate Program, as a part of the Ohio Main Street Program, works with communities statewide to foster cooperation and collective efforts in revitalizing their historic or commercial areas. More specifically, the Downtown Affiliate Program follows the same basic principles as the parent Main Street Program, but does not require the same commitments that may be more difficult to achieve for newer programs or those with less organizational capacity. As such, the Downtown Affiliate program serves as an excellent opportunity for two main functions:

- For communities that desire to take the first steps towards becoming a Main Street community without having to meet potentially unattainable benchmarks early on;
- For programs that follow the Main Street approach of revitalization but are unable to fully commit to the benchmarks of a Main Street Organization

MUNICIPALITIES **we serve**



Municipalities we serve

OLD WORTHINGTON

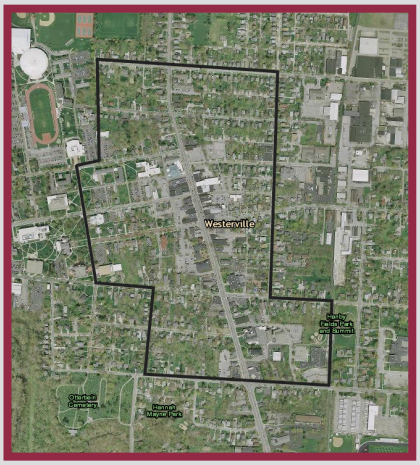
"Heritage Ohio has been a wonderful partner for The Old Worthington Partnership. Their trainings offer relevant information on key topics. Their assistance with our strategic planning has been pivotal, and their staff is always available to help with connections to resources and other Main Street professionals. We would be lost without them!"

-Nina Parini, Executive Director, The Old Worthington Partnership

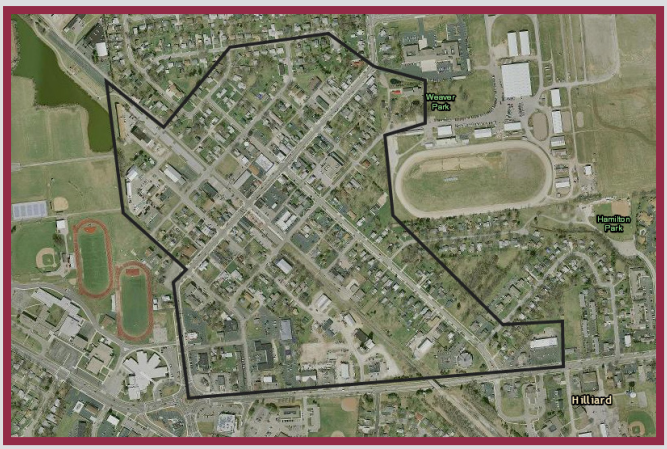
WESTERVILLE

55 Established Partnerships

With a focus on facade improvements, downtown revitilization, economic development, and historic preservation



HILLIARD



117 Established Partnerships

With a focus on infrastructure improvements, downtown revitilization, real estate, and public space

GROVE CITY

Became a member this month!

Franklin County
Economic Development & Planning Department

FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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President

Paula Brooks

Marilyn Brown

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Jordan Frase, Program Coordinator
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