



## CITY OF PINEVILLE, KY

In 2009 Bell County, Kentucky (including the cities of Pineville and Middlesboro) came together to create a community plan reflective of the hopes and dreams of county residents, and established a roadmap for the next 20 years.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The process provided five opportunities to define the vision and goals of the plan.

- What do you do well as a community?
- What are the key challenges facing Bell County?
- What is your vision for Bell County? In other words, how do you want Bell County to be different in twenty years?
- What specific actions need to be taken to begin moving toward this vision for Bell County?
- What is one thing that Bell County can start working on right now to show that this community has started the journey to a better tomorrow?

Focus groups were held to develop a better idea of people's hopes and dreams on specific topics; small business development, downtown revitalization, and tourism.

### ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY INPUT AND CREATING THE PLAN

A planning committee comprised of representatives from diverse backgrounds worked with a facilitator to translate the ideas gathered in these public meetings into a community plan. In July 2009, residents reviewed and revised the draft of the plan to establish action priorities for the coming year.

### PLAN ADOPTION AND REVISIT

In the years following this county-wide planning effort, both cities initiated their own planning efforts, drawing from the community plan but focusing on their respective downtowns. In 2015, Pineville began a community strategic plan outlining a 10-year vision for the city that was adopted and has been nearly fully implemented only 6 years later. Their success was built upon maximizing community involvement, developing a shared vision and removing barriers to running a business and incentivizing building investments.

### COST

The city of Pineville invested approximately \$30K in planning efforts. Main Street partnered with CEDIK at the University of Kentucky to develop a 5-Year plan that launched with seven Visioning Forums meeting the community where they were at; the high school, public housing units, churches, etc. The plan addressed building renovations, downtown utilities, streetscaping, and broad ways to capture the value of existing assets downtown and in the city of Pineville.

### OUTCOMES

In the six years following this planning effort, Pineville's downtown square went from 20% to 100% occupied. Pineville has established itself as a destination for residents and visitors looking diverse businesses and a thriving music scene. The 2015 plan positioned the city to obtain over \$8M in public and private investments to implement the plan.

- \$1M Community Development Block Grant grant
- \$2.5M Kentucky Infrastructure Authority loan
- \$1.5M bonds sold through Kentucky Bond Assoc.
- \$700K Appalachian Regional Commission grant

Pineville would not have attracted other investment without local investment first. "Sometimes I asked, 'why are we spending \$30,000 on plans when we already know what we want to do?' But looking back we could never have done this without them...we would have left so much out along the way. One of the greatest social benefits is that young people have begun coming home to live and work. The 5-year plan was heavily influenced by high school students in the Visioning Forums. Now five years later we are actually seeing these high school kids wrapping up their college experience and looking to come back home. They look around and see that their local leaders listened and are continuing to listen." --Jacob Roan, Executive Director, Main Street Pineville



## PARIS-BOURBON COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

In the spring of 2019 the executive director of the Paris-Bourbon Economic Development Authority (EDA) contacted CEDIK seeking guidance in revising an existing strategic plan.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

*Meet and Greet - A Community Progress Celebration* - The first step was designed to highlight successful goal accomplishments from the existing strategic plan. The EDA hosted a gathering of community and business leaders to prepare and present very short summaries of their work highlighting major accomplishments over the previous five years, current efforts & projects, and three key goals they are working on for the next five years.

#### Outcomes

- Re-established communication between community partners about their shared investments.
- Documented progress and successes aligning with the existing EDA strategic plan.
- Alerted and invited community members and partners to the planning process to set new community and economic development goals.

*Vision Scoping - Convening Partners to Identify Trends and Goals* - The next stage was designed to engage partners in identifying factors that may inform or influence the strategic goal setting. The EDA hosted a second public gathering of community and business leaders with invited speakers sharing relevant local economic data, economic development trends, and updates on the county comprehensive planning process.

#### Outcomes

- Participants identified agricultural, technological, economic, environmental, and social trends driving change, rated the importance of the goals for moving the county forward.
- Participants better understood the planning and economic development environment.
- The session laid the foundation for the next stage in the strategic planning process.

### ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY INPUT AND CREATING THE PLAN

CEDIK facilitated a series of meetings over three months. Representatives of the EDA board met with the CEDIK facilitators to draft and revise the vision, mission, goals, strategies, and action plans for the updated proposal.

### DRAFT PLAN PRESENTATION AND REVISION

A public discussion forum was designed to bring together partners from across the county to seek feedback on each of the six goals and to explore the potential for expanding partnerships in pursuit of those goals. Partners considered how their organizational goals align with the goals for the County, and shared ideas back to the EDA board.

### COST

The Paris-Bourbon EDA invested approximately \$15K in planning efforts.

### EARLY OUTCOMES

CEDIK will be working to help the community get back on track after COVID has sidetracked the early implementation efforts.

### ADDITIONAL CEDIK SUPPORT

In addition to the community planning services, CEDIK was also asked to complete a housing demand study for the county by the EDA. The housing study provides information on current housing characteristics, respondents' intention to move in the coming years, and preferences for housing, location, and amenities, as well as some of the barriers for not living in the county. This report helped inform the comprehensive plan.



## PLANNING THE PLAN - TRI-CITIES IN HARLAN COUNTY, KY

Planning the Plan was an effort initiated by the nonprofit Tri-Cities Heritage Development Corporation in the fall of 2019 to update an existing strategic plan. The organization serves three communities (Cumberland, Benham and Lynch) in Harlan County, Kentucky. The planning effort was funded by the Center for Rural Development.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This effort utilized a series of five public meetings over six months branded as Planning the Plan in local papers and online. Key informants and stakeholders including board members, elected officials, residents, business owners, educators, nonprofits, faith leaders, and more received invitations. Attendees at these meetings informed and participated in the creation of the plan. CEDIK staff utilized a number of facilitation techniques, modified consensus building strategies and small group conversations to update the vision, goals and action steps. The process explored community trends related to technology, local economy, agriculture, environment, and society to highlight the relationships between existing trends and the group's goals.

*Vision* - To arrive at the goals attendees discussed what they valued and what they wanted to preserve for the next generation. Attendees also explored ways to make the area a better place to live, work, raise a family and what that meant to different residents. They imagined what it could be like in 10 years and using prompts, and word clouds developed a new vision.

*Goals* - Goal setting was framed by the questions: if we achieve these goals, and only these goals, will the community become its vision? Are these goals measurable? And, how will we know they have been met?

*Action Steps* - Action steps and tactics were sorted by how the goal would be accomplished as well as through the following three lens; processes aiming to create progress toward other objectives, behavioral changes aiming to create changes and community-level objectives aiming to result in change for many people. The tasks were assigned to various committees established as part of the leadership and implementation strategy of the plan.

### DRAFTING THE PLAN AND ADOPTION

The final set of goals focused on cultivating engaged civic leadership, improving internal and external communications, working towards community growth readiness and expanding housing, health, recreational, entertainment, arts and consumer retail choices. It was unanimously accepted and agreed to by all three cities' mayors soon after its release.

### COST

The Tri-Cities Heritage Development Corporation invested approximately \$7,000 in planning efforts.

### EARLY OUTCOMES

"If you've not done a plan the plan meeting with CEDIK and Shane Barton do it. Do it immediately. It's something that really looks at your long term goals, what you have to deal with currently and how you are able move forward. We did that and of course COVID interrupted our implementation. But we basically took the framework that we had in that plan and started putting it into motion immediately. It was so good and so informative. We've been able to start some road repair, restaurants and other food options, shopping, lodging, entertainment, and basically beautification throughout the area by looking at what we considered low-hanging fruit in our plan. We had to reinvent the good parts we had in our communities. Our focus was our Main Street area, about a five-mile stretch from the highest point in KY and comes all the way into the city limits of Cumberland. It's an exciting time, we've opened 13 businesses just prior to and since COVID. We've had 11 buildings that have changed ownership that are seeing investments and our historic theater is getting attention. We've got an AML grant to fund portal 31, nearly \$500K in investments at the state park and new paving projects being justified by our documented need and strategies." Quote from Paul Browning, Magistrate of District #3 in Harlan County, KY.