



2020  
— 2021

# Annual Report

**Pontiac Funders Collaborative**

The Pontiac Funders Collaborative was launched in 2020 to support a community-driven process to identify city-wide goals in Pontiac. In addition, it provides funding to build capacity for local leaders and organizations to achieve those goals.

We support fair, equitable, just, and inclusive efforts that are driven by the community and supported by lessons learned from other efforts.

We commit to support organizations of any size that are led by or serve those who experience or have experienced historical and institutional barriers. This includes people from underrepresented groups, people from low-income backgrounds, and people who have lacked access to basic resources.

This report provides an overview of the Collaborative's activities from September 2020 to August 2021. You can find our [2020 Annual Report here](#), which includes all grants and activities made prior to September 2020.

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# –Introduction

Members of the Pontiac Funders Collaborative came together in 2018 to discuss a joint approach to funding in Pontiac, Michigan. Working collaboratively, we began to engage with community members to understand where the greatest opportunities for investment were and where a joint funding approach could have the greatest impact. The Collaborative began its grantmaking and a deeper level of engagement in 2020 and will continue through 2022.

We take a community-centered approach to grantmaking that is focused on getting to know organizations and developing relationships with them. This allows us to have a more equitable and flexible application process with fewer requirements of the grantee.

**In our initial three-year collaboration, we seek to:**

- + Support organizations to leverage more public and private funds and partnerships.
- + Provide support that leads to a more connected network of residents, nonprofits and public bodies.
- + Strengthen nonprofit capacity and encourage healthy collaborations.

In 2020, we observed that partnerships only move forward “at the speed of trust” – that as a new body in the community, we needed to move slowly and be responsive to feedback and unplanned opportunities, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. For organizations within the community, many of whom had not worked together before, the same proved true.

In 2021, the speed of trust accelerated, and we are now seeing collaborations blossom. As we have worked alongside community partners to launch a collective impact initiative in Pontiac, we have observed new partnerships forming that leverage each organization's strengths and enhance their abilities to serve the community. Relationships formed through that effort have informed our grantmaking in our six other funding areas, where our support provides training and technical assistance to nonprofits across sectors, has increased organizations' capacity to provide essential services, and has helped bring together partners in support of the city's entrepreneurs.



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# –Grantmaking at a Glance

	2020	2021*
Capacity Building for Nonprofits	\$100,621	\$117,295
Entrepreneuership	\$434,165	\$200,000
Key Institutions	\$440,000	\$386,071
Public Spaces	\$37,000	
Storytelling & Communications		\$25,000
Collective Impact	\$514,985	\$499,046
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$1,526,771</b>	<b>\$1,227,412</b>

**TOTAL TO DATE:** \$2,754,183 awarded to 28 organizations

In addition to the grants above, member organizations within the Collaborative continue to support Pontiac organizations through their own grantmaking activities.

\* year to date

# —Our Values

## **Community**

Members of the Collaborative value the full participation of communities and individuals and embrace the many forms of diversity as we draw from the perspectives and experiences of a broad cross-section of Pontiac community members.

## **Respect**

Members of the Collaborative seek to respect and uplift individuals, communities, and organizations in Pontiac who are working, or have worked in the past to improve the quality of life for the community and change regional perceptions about the city. The Collaborative will seek to invest in existing assets in order to amplify their efforts.

## **Evidence-Based**

Members of the Collaborative believe that philanthropic efforts should support and enhance work that serves Pontiac in ways that are measurable and sustainable. The Collaborative will rely on data to ensure our decision making is evidence-based and results-driven.

## **Collaboration**

Members of the Collaborative value working together to leverage shared resources, achieve common objectives and amplify impact. The Collaborative will seek to exchange knowledge, take collective action, and learn from each other. Efforts increase collaboration amongst ourselves, within the city, and across the region.

# —What We Fund

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Members of the Pontiac Funders Collaborative work within subcommittees on each funding area to engage with community partners and make grant recommendations. In total, 25 representatives of the nine funder organizations participate on seven subcommittees. The seventh funding area, Workforce Development is not included in this report. It will be active in 2022.

# —Capacity Building for Nonprofits

The Capacity Building for Nonprofits grant program provides support for training or services that strengthen internal capacity and encourage collaboration amongst small and mid-sized nonprofits in Pontiac. Grants in this area support organizations across all of the Collaborative’s funding areas and beyond, increasing capacity to serve the varied needs of Pontiac residents.

**Pontiac Funders  
Collaborative Capacity  
Building Subcommittee  
Members:**

—  
Sonia Plata,  
Flagstar

Eric Phamdo,  
Ralph C. Wilson Jr.  
Foundation

Jim Boyle,  
Ralph C. Wilson Jr.  
Foundation

Vadim Avshalumov,  
William Davidson  
Foundation

Suzanne Rossi,  
Advisor

In 2020, the program offered two grant opportunities: one for professional development activities and one for organizational development activities. Eighteen grants were awarded ([See our 2020 Annual Report or website for a listing](#)). The program was supported by The Work Department, who provided application assistance; Michigan Nonprofit Association (MNA), which conducted optional organizational assessments to identify opportunities for improvement and internal strengthening; and Michigan Community Resources (MCR), which provided technical assistance to grantees as they navigated using their grant dollars to work with consultants or seek training. These services were especially important for some grantees who had never managed a grant before or were unsure how best to strengthen their organization.

Support for MNA's organizational assessments was provided via Co.Act Detroit with funding from the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation. The online assessment provides a comprehensive review of an organization and is designed to:

- + Help organizations determine challenges and outcomes
- + Match organizations with supportive technical assistance
- + Collect data that can be used to help develop benchmarks for the grant program's development

Five 2020 grantees participated in the assessment and received coaching to develop a plan based on the results. Of those, the two areas where organizations were the strongest were Human Resources and Strategic Alliances. The two areas with the most need for improvement were Volunteer Management and Civic Engagement and Public Policy.

What is capacity building?

We define capacity building as support through funding or training that develops staff skills and organizational systems.

In helping grantees manage the grant process, get connected to consultants, and navigating contracts, MCR worked with all nine grantees. **The services they provided included:**

- + Budget creation and adaption
- + Fund development understanding and application
- + Legal assistance on disclosure documents
- + Organization growth and strategic planning
- + Referral to tax consultants

“We used our Capacity Building Grant to invest in consulting for our leadership. The grant helped us retain the services of a guide who helped us develop our mission, vision, core values and futurecasting. We believe this professionalization has directly led to our first hire! For an all volunteer organization, this is a huge deal to us.”

**At the end of the 2020 program, MCR, MNA, and The Work Department shared observations and lessons learned.**

- + Going through an organizational assessment is a time intensive process that analyzes all aspects of the organization. It can be daunting for nonprofits to undertake. Although not required by this program, nonprofits are more likely to complete assessments when encouraged by funders.
- + Nonprofits of varying sizes and stages benefited from the assessment, albeit likely in different ways. It was key to have an expert available to help interpret the results and develop a plan to work on areas for improvement.
- + Grantees need more structured technical assistance time to work through their goals and identify next steps.
- + All consultants would benefit from working more closely together to avoid creating barriers for grantees or providing duplicative services.
- + Nonprofits may need additional support throughout the grant process, including before and after applying.

- Emily Cunningham,  
Growing Pontiac

To further assess the grantee experience with this program and understand impacts, a voluntary survey was sent to all grantees. Overall, 10 respondents gave positive feedback on the application, grant award process, and technical assistance services. Repeat comments included mention of a streamlined and easy to understand application process, and excellent technical assistance.

Seven respondents reported that the grants helped them leverage a combined total of \$135,000 from other funding sources.

## 2021

In 2021, the Capacity Building for Nonprofits grant program continued to provide funding and training resources to Pontiac's smaller nonprofits. In addition to making grants for professional development opportunities and organizational development assistance, this year the Collaborative also offered a grant to support collaborations between nonprofits. 2020 grantees were encouraged to apply again to continue their learning and organizational development. Minor modifications were made to the application and program in response to lessons learned in 2020.

“With our grant we were able to hire an outside consultant to assist with some board training and walking them through our strategic plan. This helped our board create a framework for how our organization makes decisions, what kind of skills we are looking for when recruiting new board members and an on-boarding curriculum for when we bring those board members into the organization.”

- Coleman Yoakum,  
Mikah 6 Community

The Work Department provided free application assistance to 13 organizations, nine of whom ultimately applied and six of whom were awarded grants. She also provided post-application assistance to five applicants who did not receive grants. This was an important way to stay connected to the organizations, and to encourage them to apply again next year.

In total, 14 grants were awarded, including to 11 previous grantees.

MNA will continue to offer organizational assessments to grantees.

MCR will continue to provide technical assistance to grantees, however this year they will also be facilitating a series of workshops with grantees, applicants, and any nonprofit in Pontiac. The workshops will feature expert speakers on topics chosen by participants including: Strategic Planning, Board Development, Fund Development, and Community Engagement. The group will also have opportunities to network and share learnings.

## 2021 Grantees

14 grants amounting to \$116,720 were awarded:

### Professional Development

- + Dr. Gary Burnstein Community Health Clinic for board training for sustainability
- + Center for Success Network for racial justice leadership training and development
- + 2 as 1 Forever, Inc for Nonprofit Management Certificate at Oakland University
- + E-Community Outreach for financial strategy training
- + Growing Pontiac for Nonprofit Management Certificate at Oakland University
- + Sheriff PAL Program for training on a customer relationship management system

“The grant has allowed us to complete financial strategy, planning, and document creation for updated financial policies and procedures. It has allowed us to be more focused in fundraising for specific gaps, create a more informed budget for 2021, and align our staff and board time and resources to fulfill fundraising strategies.”

- Andrea Meyer,  
Center for Success  
Network

## Technical Assistance for Organizations

- + Accent Pontiac for website, donor database and graphic design expertise
- + Bound Together for board training in major gifts development, planned giving, and strategic planning
- + The Art Experience for implementing case management software
- + Centro Multicultural La Familia for developing a capital campaign
- + Micah 6 Community for a community needs assessment
- + Friends of Pontiac Parks Association for fundraising capacity
- + Pontiac Community Foundation to develop a foundational investment program

“This grant has allowed for incredible growth in organizational strength, sustainability, and networking relationships. We are experiencing much greater energy on our board, higher visibility in the community, and have been enabled, in direct response to the challenges in 2020, to expand our mission/grow the organization.”

- Michele J Wogaman,  
Bound Together

## Collaboration

- + Center for Success Network for collaboration with E-Community Outreach Services for Connected Parent Engagement program

# E-Commerce Community Outreach Services

Founder and Pontiac native Eisha Branner is driven by her experience as a woman of color raising children in Pontiac amidst personal, financial and systemic equity restraints. She founded E-Community Outreach Services to ease the challenges parents face by connecting them with community resources and providing education and programming for youth and parents alike. The organization connects parents to resources such as workforce training, employment, and food pantries, while also forming partnerships with community organizations to distribute supplies and deliver programming.

The Pontiac Funders Collaborative awarded E-Community Outreach Services a Capacity Building program grant to participate in a twelve-week financial strategy training course with a local consultant. Branner sees this as an opportunity to not only strengthen the financial position of the organization but to ensure they are better situated to partner with other local organizations to serve Pontiac families. The organization is also part of a collaboration with Center for Success Network, which received a Capacity Building Collaboration grant for a joint program, Connected Parent Engagement, which provides workshops and helps parents navigate resources to improve children's literacy proficiency.

"The hope is to increase my level of confidence with financial reporting, my ability to use the numbers to guide understanding of the return on investment, and to make more targeted decisions about growth opportunities. Additionally, I want to learn how to streamline some of the processes to free up time for other important matters, and ensure I can best understand the financial position of the organization so that I can relay that to funders and community members during discussions about partnerships and growth opportunities."

- Eisha Branner,  
E-Community Outreach Services



## –Key Institutions

While the Collaborative supports smaller nonprofits and grassroots organizations through the Capacity Building for Nonprofits program, we recognize that larger key institutions – those that provide essential infrastructural services community wide – also need capacity support. For years, these organizations have stretched their missions to serve Pontiac residents and fill gaps in basic needs. The Collaborative’s Key Institutions funding area supports these organizations to develop and implement their visions, leverage other funding, and build capacity for the long term.

### **Pontiac Funders Collaborative Key Institutions Subcommittee Members:**

–  
Kylee Mitchell,  
Ballmer Group

Katie Brisson,  
Community Foundation for  
Southeast Michigan

Beth Correa,  
Flagstar

Virginia Romano,  
Vera and Joseph Dresner  
Foundation

Vadim Avshalumov,  
William Davidson  
Foundation

Lisa Katz,  
William Davidson  
Foundation

## Grantees

### Fall 2020

- + The School District of the City of Pontiac for training and implementation of the Wit and Wisdom learning curriculum
- + The City of Pontiac for the creation of an office of grants administration
- + Oakland University to the OU/Pontiac Initiative for community engagement
- + Main Street Pontiac to hire staff person(s) to manage daily operations

### 2021

- + The School District of the City of Pontiac for continuation of the Communities in Schools program
- + Main Street Pontiac for continued support for staff capacity
- + Oakland Livingston Human Services Agency for Employment Coaches that provide person-centered, intensive case management and engagement
- + Lighthouse for pre-development costs of a capital/capacity initiative

# Main Street Pontiac

Main Street Pontiac is a nonprofit working to foster a vibrant, safe, and inclusive historic downtown. The organization utilizes strategies of the National Main Street Program and works in close partnership with the City of Pontiac, Main Street Oakland County, and numerous businesses, community partners and residents. From its founding in 2017, the organization was volunteer led, with a dedicated board and volunteers leading successful events and programming. By 2020, they were ready to welcome their first paid staff and increase their capacity to support downtown and community-based businesses and residents. The Pontiac Funders Collaborative made a grant in fall 2020 to support the hiring of a Main Street Manager.

Since then, the organization has served the important role of Social District lead during the pandemic. Pontiac's Social District, "The Circuit" created a zone throughout the downtown that supported businesses during the pandemic by allowing for the outdoor consumption of alcohol. In addition, Main Street Pontiac coordinated successful outdoor arts events, including the annual Canvas Pontiac Art Walk and the Sk8 Art fundraiser which brought the area's vibrant community of skateboarders together for a skateboard painting contest. They have also launched a Pontiac Farmers Market and are actively collaborating with community partners in support of entrepreneurship services for Pontiac businesses. The Collaborative continued our support of the organization in 2021 with two grants: one for ongoing staff support and one for the marketing and promotion of the organization's events and programming.

# —Entrepreneurship

The Pontiac Funders Collaborative supports organizations that provide services to entrepreneurs. Our goal is to help formalize a local entrepreneurial ecosystem by supporting a vibrant business community in Pontiac that includes diverse, long-standing residents as business owners.

**Pontiac Funders  
Collaborative  
Entrepreneurship  
Subcommittee Members:**

—  
Sonia Plata,  
Flagstar

Eric Phamdo,  
Ralph C. Wilson Jr  
Foundation

Lisa Katz,  
William Davidson  
Foundation

As the ongoing effects of the pandemic became more apparent in 2020, the Collaborative's Entrepreneurship committee began to explore how best to support the needs of Pontiac's small businesses. Pontiac has a robust community of entrepreneurs and micro-businesses who were already seeking support for marketing, capital, mentoring, financial systems, and more before the pandemic. With those challenges now more acute than ever, there is a pressing need to bolster the organizations in Pontiac who can help entrepreneurs with those challenges.

In late 2020 and early 2021, the Collaborative worked with consultant Projects + People to convene Pontiac small business stakeholders and advise on a strategy to support Pontiac's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

**The group, which met multiple times over a three month period included:**

- + The City of Pontiac
- + Greater Pontiac Community Coalition
- + Main Street Pontiac
- + Oakland County
- + Oakland University
- + Pontiac Community Foundation
- + Pontiac Funders Collaborative Entrepreneurship Committee
- + Pontiac Funders Collaborative support staff
- + Pontiac Regional Chamber of Commerce
- + T. Ramsey & Associates

Through a review of existing research, interviews, and group meetings, Projects + People identified key opportunities and suggested tactics for Pontiac's entrepreneurial support providers:

- + Increased information sharing and collaboration across partners
- + Shared data sets to define the size and scope of Pontiac's entrepreneurship community
- + Defined roles or services for those serving Pontiac's entrepreneurs
- + Shared success metrics for Pontiac's different entrepreneur types
- + Strengthened capacity to serve entrepreneurs

Above all, Projects + People emphasized the importance of collaboration to help catalyze and sustain investment into the entrepreneurial ecosystem, and to ensure that resources can be coordinated, diversified, and consistently shared to reach businesses at all stages of development.

This information is being used by the Collaborative and stakeholders to inform programming and grantmaking activities.

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# Pontiac Community Foundation

The Pontiac Community Foundation was established in 2018 to fulfill the need in the community for a transformative, collaborative organization with the goal of connecting people and resources to advance the city. Their work spans sectors and focuses on economic development, community development, quality of life, civic engagement, and racial equity.

In 2020, the Collaborative supported the Pontiac Community Foundation's effort to develop a Center for Pontiac Entrepreneurship to provide support services for Pontiac entrepreneurs. In

addition, the grant supported a mini-grant relief program for entrepreneurs impacted by COVID-19.

In 2021, the Collaborative continued its support of the Pontiac Community Foundation and the Center for Pontiac Entrepreneurship to convene entrepreneurial providers in the community in a collaborative process to identify shared goals and opportunities to partner, expand their ongoing technical assistance programs, and develop a suite of informational resources for entrepreneurs and shared data tools for providers.

"Pontiac's entrepreneurial ecosystem has lacked critical investment, leaving resources and funding on the table for many of the community's small business owners. For this reason, Pontiac Community Foundation started the Center for Pontiac Entrepreneurship focused on being a central hub for organizations and entrepreneurs to access resources and support."

- Dustin McClellan,  
Pontiac Community Foundation



Photo credit: Pontiac Community Foundation

## Mini Grant Highlight



Local bakery, April's Famous Bakes received one of the Pontiac Community Foundation's \$2,500 COVID-19 relief mini grants.

"When the pandemic hit my business was starting to catch stride, but a few months of not having people allowed to walk into my retail shop made me realize that I needed to figure out a way to make it easier for me to get to my customers. We upgraded our website and social media to an e-commerce platform and made it easy to buy online, and even upgraded our packaging to have cookies shipped nationwide, but since e-commerce takes time to catch on and that is not an area of expertise -also buying a concessions trailer to turn into a mobile bakery made the most sense to me.

I am grateful to have received the PCF grant. The grant not only helped me allocate funds for the completion of my food trailer, with those funds I was able to hire a local Muralist to do my graphics on the outside and also a plumber. Those funds not only directly impacted me but I was able to in turn give someone else an opportunity."

- April Forbes,  
April's Famous Bakes

Photo credit: Pontiac Community Foundation

# —Public Spaces

Vibrant, welcoming public spaces can help enrich quality of life and become destinations for residents and visitors alike. With its vast network of public parks, infrastructure, community gathering spaces, and a vibrant downtown, Pontiac is rich with public spaces that encourage communities to interact and connect.

**Pontiac Funders  
Collaborative Public  
Spaces Subcommittee  
Members:**

—  
Rosana Hull,  
General Motors

Vadim Avshalumov,  
William Davidson  
Foundation

George Jacobsen,  
William Davidson  
Foundation

JJ Tighe,  
Ralph C. Wilson Jr.  
Foundation

The Pontiac Funders Collaborative aims to invest in collaborative, shovel-ready, public space projects that include effective community engagement. These investments will provide tactical support in service to a bigger strategy or leverage funding through local, state, regional, national, and private investors.

The Pontiac Funders Collaborative is continuing to learn from community and government organizations that invest time and resources to renovate, maintain, and promote the use of public spaces in various ways. Stakeholder conversations have included: City of Pontiac, Oakland County, Friends of Pontiac Parks, Pontiac Community Foundation, Pontiac Collective Impact Partnership, Main Street Pontiac, and others.

## Grantees

- + Friends of the Clinton River Trail: Support for maintenance along the Clinton River Trail through Pontiac. This project was also supported by the City of Pontiac, Sylvan Lake, and the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation, with matching funds provided by Friends of the Clinton River Trail.
- + Three Capacity Building grantees work in Public Spaces: Friends of Pontiac Parks, Growing Pontiac, and the Sheriff PAL Program.

# Friends of Pontiac Parks

The Friends of the Pontiac Parks Association has been a staple in the Pontiac community since 2012, when it first began coordinating signage, park clean ups and events in the city's parks. The volunteer-run organization is essential to the maintenance and long-term development of Pontiac's parks and recreational opportunities. Prior to the pandemic, the organization held in person fundraisers to support the cost of clean-up supplies and relied on volunteers through corporate partnerships. Being unable to meet in person for much of 2020 meant that the organization had difficulty raising much needed funds.

In 2021, the Pontiac Funders Collaborative awarded a grant to the organization as part of the Capacity Building for Nonprofits grant program. The grant will allow them to participate in an organizational assessment with the Michigan Nonprofit Association, and work with Michigan Community Resources to address some of their pressing capacity challenges to ensure they can weather any future programming interruptions. By addressing these challenges, Friends of Pontiac Parks will be better able to create sustainability, bring in new partnerships, and improve Pontiac's park infrastructure for all to enjoy.



# –Communications & Storytelling

The Pontiac Funders Collaborative supports efforts that create accessible and relevant channels of communication about innovation, entrepreneurship, community and growth in Pontiac. Specifically, we support ways for the community to better tell its story and connect residents to information about civic, business, and nonprofit opportunities.

## Pontiac Funders Collaborative Communications & Storytelling Subcommittee Members:

–  
Sherrie Arb,  
Community Foundation for  
Southeast Michigan

Katie Brisson,  
Community Foundation for  
Southeast Michigan

Lori Wingerter,  
General Motors

Julie McMahon,  
Tauber Family Foundation

Lisa Katz,  
William Davidson  
Foundation

George Jacobsen,  
William Davidson  
Foundation

Carly Strachan,  
Ralph C. Wilson Jr.  
Foundation

**The objectives are to:**

- + Broaden local coverage by emphasizing community engagement and the equitable sharing of information about Pontiac.
- + Ensure coverage reflects the perspectives and needs of diverse constituencies.
- + Support the telling of critical stories about Pontiac and its future that have not been told before through varied and innovative communication channels.

In 2020, the Collaborative and members of the Pontiac Collective Impact Partnership (PCIP) selected consultant Early Works to conduct peer city research and engage with the PCIP to design a strategic communications plan. (The PCIP is the formal body that has emerged from the collective impact process that began in early 2020. See the next section for more information.) As the PCIP prepared to begin a community engagement process, members sought a clear strategy for communicating its purpose and explaining how it works in simple and accessible ways. At the same time, they recognized a gap in media and communications outlets in the city. Nonprofits have not had a platform on which to share their stories to a broad audience.

Early Works convened members of the PCIP and the Collaborative, and together they outlined key communications goals and activities for the PCIP, with the priority goal of shifting negative perceptions about the city and highlighting the community members that exemplify the city's ambition, creativity and resilience.

While the plan serves as a guide for the PCIP in its early development, it has also informed the Collaborative's approach to grantmaking, which provides resources to Pontiac organizations to tell their stories and reach broader audiences, also towards the goal of shifting perceptions and highlighting community stories.

**2021 Grantees**

- + Main Street Pontiac: Support for hiring a firm and/or staff support for marketing and promotional activities.

# —Collective Impact

In 2020, the Collaborative convened a group of approximately 40 community stakeholders that grew to become the Collective Impact Leadership Team. Throughout 2020 it met on a bi-weekly basis to develop the framework for a collective impact process in Pontiac.

**Pontiac Funders  
Collaborative Collective  
Impact Subcommittee  
Members:**

—  
Kayla Roney Smith,  
Ballmer Group

Katie Brisson,  
Community Foundation for  
Southeast Michigan

Sonia Plata,  
Flagstar

Katherine Morgan,  
Flagstar

Rosana Hull,  
General Motors

Eric Phamdo,  
Ralph C. Wilson Jr  
Foundation

Sarai Shoup,  
Tauber Family Foundation

Julie McMahon,  
Tauber Family Foundation

Virginia Romano,  
Vera and Joseph Dresner  
Foundation

Lisa Katz,  
William Davidson  
Foundation



In fall 2020, following an intensive co-creation process in which the group identified a mission, values, and preliminary organizing structure, they undertook a transparent and equitable process to identify a backbone organization to house the partnership. Oakland University was selected by a committee of Leadership Team members. In this role, Oakland University serves as the fiscal home for the partnership and provides administrative and HR support. Oakland University was also selected to provide research and data resources and to house the data hub, a key component of collective impact work.

With the backbone identified, the group went on to launch a search for an Executive Director. Dr. Samino Scott was selected, once again by a diverse committee of Leadership Team members. With these two key elements in place, the Pontiac Collective Impact Partnership (PCIP) was born. The Pontiac Funders Collaborative made a series of grants to support the first year of operating expenses for the PCIP and the administrative costs to Oakland University. This foundational support ensures the effort has a strong financial footing to grow from.

What is collective impact?

Collective impact is a framework that helps cross-sector partners collaborate together and with residents. It helps diverse partners, such as residents, nonprofits, businesses, the school district, local government, and funders who all work on different issues, develop and implement a common vision with measurable outcomes for the future.

Over the course of 2021, the PCIP has worked to establish a website and communications plan (with support from Early Works, as mentioned in the previous section), and further define its structure and the roles of its decision making and implementation bodies. The PCIP has also welcomed additional staff members, including a Community Engagement Specialist and an Administrative Assistant.

Recognizing that a successful collective impact process should be initiated with community understanding, buy-in and participation of residents, and solid management of the activities, the PCIP launched an ongoing community engagement process that is paired with quantitative research, and a preliminary analysis of the capacities and interests of the partners at the table. From this, the group has identified Neighborhood Vitality and Education as its core focus areas. At the time of this writing, it is working to further define specific, data-driven outcomes within these areas that the group will work toward collaboratively.

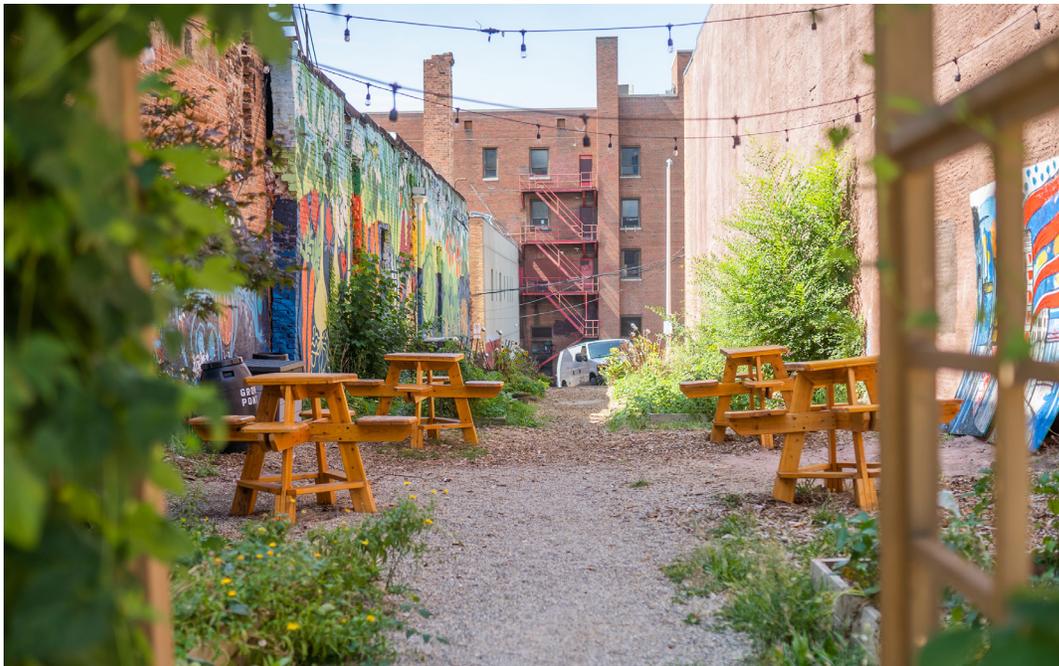
Members of the Pontiac Funders Collaborative continue to serve on the Leadership Team and Executive Council and are actively engaged in the work.

Additional information can be found at [pontiaccollectiveimpact.org](https://pontiaccollectiveimpact.org).

# –Looking Ahead

In 2022 the Collaborative will continue to grant in our seven funding areas and work to foster trust with our grantees and partners by staying closely engaged, listening and incorporating feedback, and being flexible and responsive to needs.

As we plan for the year ahead, we are undertaking an independent evaluation to learn from the ways in which we've worked together and with community, and to understand the impact of our efforts. We will use the results of the evaluation to inform our future activities.



# –Pontiac Funders Collaborative Structure

The Pontiac Funders Collaborative is led by the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan, with guidance from a Funders Advisory Council made up of representatives from each contributing organization. The Collaborative has also established subcommittees comprised in total of approximately 25 funder representatives to develop recommendations for each funding area, including Collective Impact, Key Institutions, Entrepreneurship, Communications and Storytelling, Public Spaces, and Workforce Development.

## Funders Advisory Council

The Funders Advisory Council is made up of one voting member from each organization.

## Co-Chairs

Sonia Plata, Flagstar Bank

Virginia Romano, Vera and Joseph Dresner Foundation

Lavea Brachman, Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation (January 2020 - May 2021)

## Members

Kylee Mitchell, Ballmer Group

Katie Brisson, Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan

Lori Wingerter, General Motors

Eric Phamdo, Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation

Julie Tauber McMahon, Tauber Family Foundation

Lisa Katz, William Davidson Foundation

## Non-Voting Member

New Economy Initiative

## Staff

The current staffing of the Pontiac Funders Collaborative includes the following:

**Freyja Harris**, Project Director at the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan provides strategic leadership and management of the initiative. She helps develop partnerships and projects that support the Pontiac community in co-creating sustainable community strategies, implements the vision of the Collaborative, and oversees day to day activities including consultants. Freyja joined the initiative in May 2020.

**Katie Brisson**, Vice President, Program at the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, provided strategic support of the Collaborative and oversight of the planning process prior to the hiring of a Project Director. She now supports the Project Director with strategic oversight and monitoring of expenses.

## Consultants

The following consultants have provided support to the Collaborative and/or to grantees and community partners directly.

**The Work Department**, a design and strategy firm, provides project management, engagement, implementation, and graphic design support to the Collaborative.

**Strive Together and Greg Landsman** provide strategic consulting to the collective impact initiative

**Michigan Community Resources** provide technical assistance and facilitation to grantees of the Capacity Building for Nonprofits program.

**Michigan Nonprofit Association** provide organizational assessments to grantees of the Capacity Building for Nonprofits program (supported by Co.Act Detroit and the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation).

**EarlyWorks** provided research, facilitation, and communications strategy for the Pontiac Collective Impact Partnership and Pontiac Funders Collaborative communications and storytelling program.

**Projects + People** provided research, facilitation, and strategy for a cohort of entrepreneurial support providers.

**T. Ramsey & Associates** provided technical assistance to 2020 Small Business Relief Fund recipients.

**Valaurian Waller** photographed grantees for this report.

## 2020-2021 Annual Report

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**Pontiac Funders Collaborative**  
**of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan**