



# Henry County

Community Input Session | April 1, 2025





# Welcome!

- Who we are
- Why we're here



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# EAST CENTRAL Indiana REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

## READI Arts Initiative Goals

**Engage residents and communities across boundaries** of creative disciplines, geography and demographics

**Unleash regional creative transformation** through investment in public art and cultural amenities that are accessible to the entire community

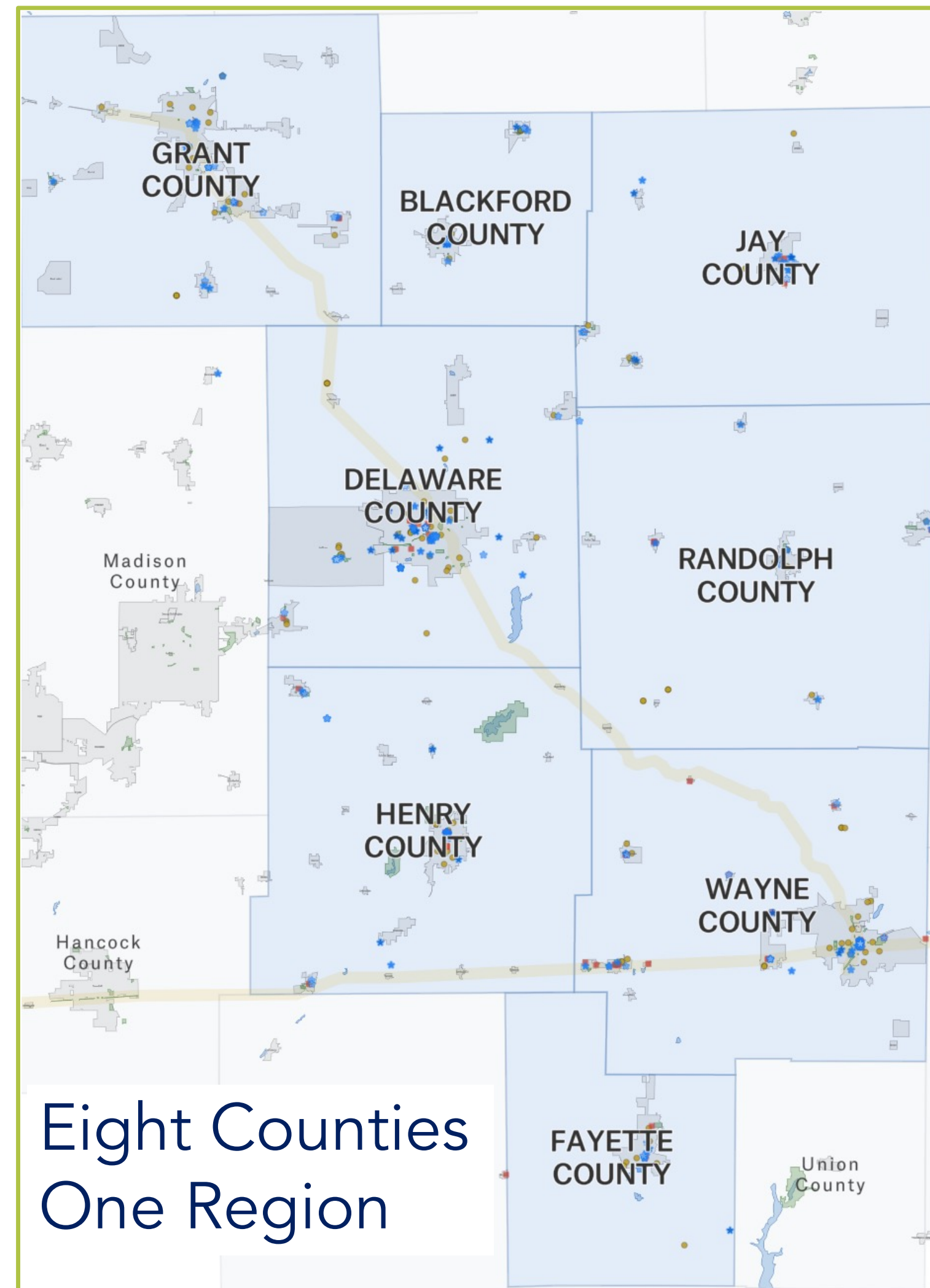
**Elevate READI's quality of place impact** on Indiana's cities and towns.

**Build a critical mass of authentic, yet bold, artistic and cultural assets** with a long-term plan for their maintenance and expansion



Lilly Endowment Inc.  
A private foundation since 1937

**INDIANA  
FOR THE BOLD**  
Economic Development Corp.



# Your Turn

- Name
- Who/What You Represent
- Favorite Arts & Culture...



# Timeline

## Lay of the Land

**Dec:** Project Meetings

**Jan:** Baseline Interviews & Plan Collection

**Feb:** Desk Research for Kickoff

## Gather Input

**Mar:** Crowd Source Inventory

**Mar:** Site Visits

**Apr:** County-Level Visioning

**May:** Follow Up

**Jun:** Region-Level Focus Groups

## Flesh Out & Roll Up to Region

**July - September**

\* Variations for Blackford and Jay

# AGENDA

**WELCOME** Overview & Introductions

**STEP 1** Understand What You Already Have


**INSPIRATION** Cultivating Community through Arts & Culture

**STEP 2** Ideas & Aspirations for Future: **DREAM BIG!**

**STEP 3** Momentum, Opportunities & Next Steps

**THANK YOU** Now go enjoy a beautiful evening!





# Henry County



Highlights &  
Themes

# Arts & Culture Assets, *so far*



## Warning!

**NOTICE:** This IS incomplete.  
Someone (or several ones) will be MISSING.  
Something may even be WRONG.

We appreciate your patience.

**The Management**

59	Arts & Culture
33	Creative Industry / Artists
8	History & Heritage
7	Art in Non-Arts Spaces
6	Former Assets
3	Arts Organizations
3	Informal Groups
27	Events & Traditions
20	Parks & Trails
17	Pieces of Public Art
Plus	Civic & Misc...

# Artists & Events

10 Performing  
6 Writers  
5 Visual/Craft  
4 Photog/Film  
4 Retail/Venue  
3 Ceramicists  
1 Designer

7 Seasonal  
5 Community  
4 Farmers  
2 Arts/Fridays  
Cruise-Ins  
Renaissance  
And more...



Bluegrass at Baker Park, New Castle



Robin McBride Scott, Weaving Demonstration



Farmers & Artisans Market, Knightstown



# Public Art

Iconic  
Historic  
Celebratory  
even cute...



# Anchors & Attractions

AAHC  
Guyer Opera  
Monarch Film  
Carnegie Lib.

History Mus. &  
Societies - 6!

Hickory Bus  
Hoosier Gym  
Hall of Fame

Saddle Club  
Speedway  
Motorsports Pk

Ghost Stories

Lakes, Rivers, Parks,  
& Trails...



Hickory Bus, Knightstown



Art Association of Henry County, New Castle



Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame, New Castle



Middletown Historical Society

DARREL RADFORD

# History & Notables

NC Quakers  
National Road  
Underground RR

Wilbur Wright  
Robert Indiana

Ducky's Mom & DLR

Hoosier Cabinets  
J. French Pianos  
Jacks Donuts

Train Wreck  
F4 Tornado

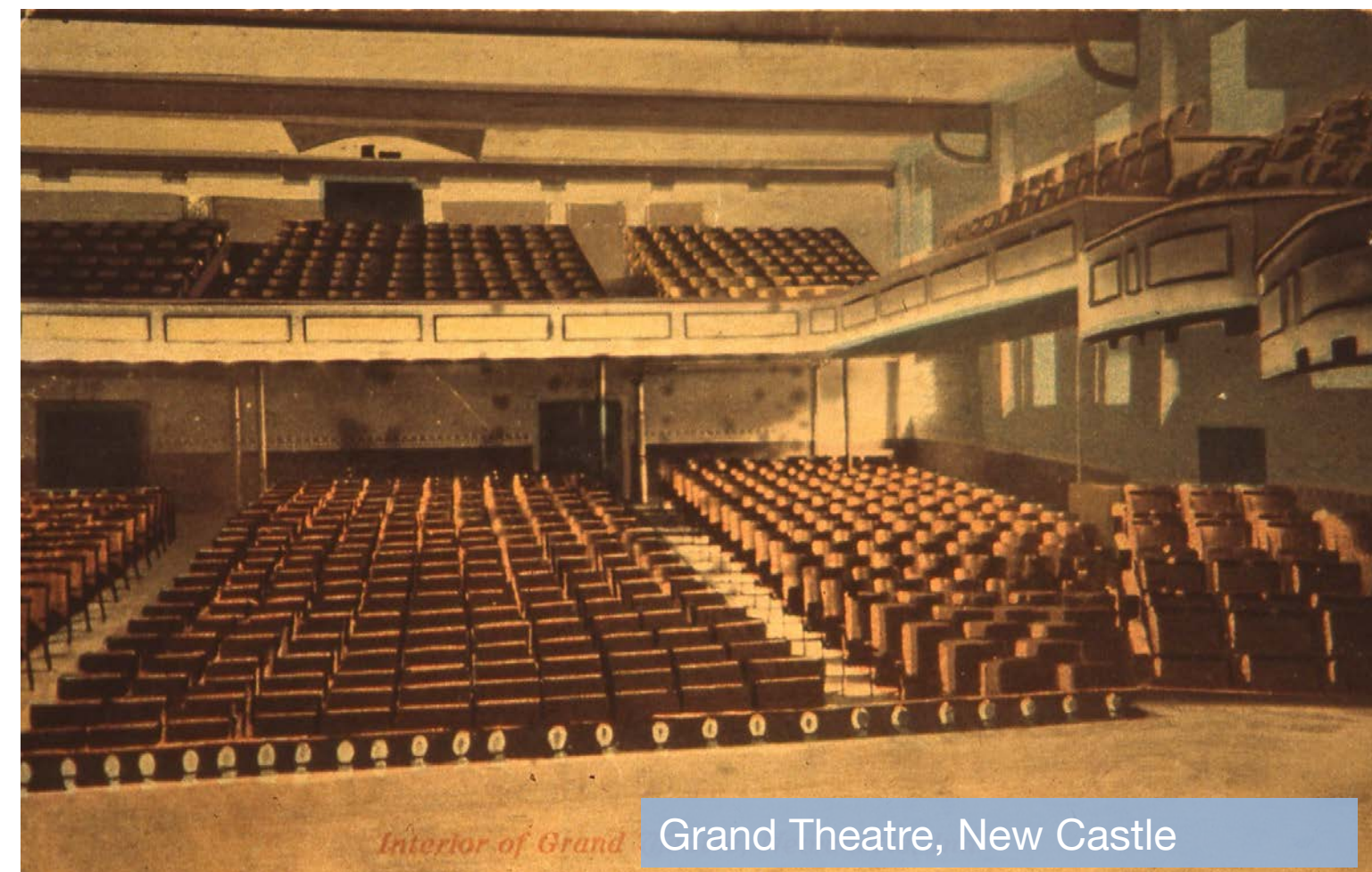
"Raintree County"  
"Hoosiers" Movie

HIDDEN  
HISTORY  
of  
HENRY COUNTY,  
INDIANA

Author Darrel Radford, Mooreland



Hoosier Gym, Knightstown



Grand Theatre, New Castle

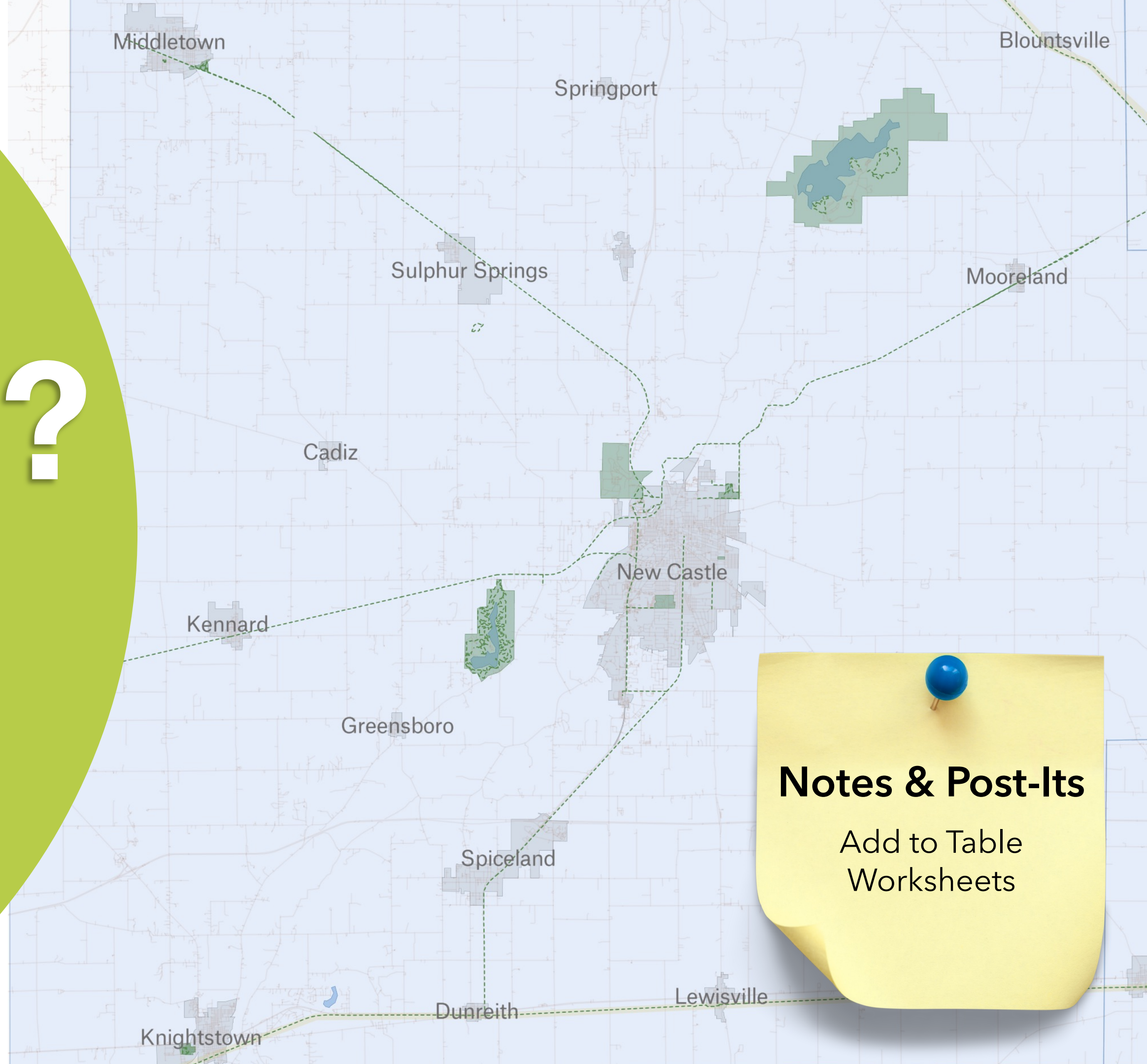
# What is authentic?

What, where, who...

- Are we known for?
- Community gathering?
- Do we value most?

Not Just New Castle

- 15 towns
- 20+ unincorporated communities



**Notes & Post-Its**

Add to Table  
Worksheets



# Cultivating Community

Through  
Arts & Culture

# Why Arts & Culture Matter

CONTRIBUTE TO

ATTRACT/RETAIN

IMPROVE

GENERATE

IMPROVE

CREATIVITY

Quality of Life

Population

Health & Wellbeing

Economic Benefits

Student Outcomes &  
Career Readiness

Sought by Employers





## Celebrate Heritage

Gathering of Great Lakes Nations  
National Center for Great Lakes Native American Culture, Portland



Dunkirk Glass Days, Dunkirk



**Celebrate Community Identity and  
Foster Community Pride**

Putnam County Mural Project



**Revitalize Places through  
Placemaking**

South Madison Community Foundation —  
Pendleton Crosswalks



**Foster Quality of Life & Community Connections**

Front Porch Music Festival, Noblesville



**It doesn't have to cost a lot to be high impact**

Fairy, Gnome & Troll Homes, Noble County



## Involve and Activate Youth

Noble County's Fairy, Gnome and Troll Homes

Peru Visual Arts Festival

# East Central Indiana

A welcoming region, backed by community resources, where all are empowered to be their authentic selves, create a life that matters, and forge a path to success.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISION & INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

### 1. Quality of Life

*Stabilize the region's population and encourage growth through investments that directly benefit the health and well-being of residents, promote tourism, and support vibrant downtowns.*

### 2. Housing & Infrastructure

### 3. Childcare & Support for Families

### 4. Education & Opportunity





# Vision 2035

A Vibrant  
Henry County  
*tra***NS***form***ed**  
through  
Arts & Culture



# Think BIG!

what are other  
words for  
transformative?



transformational, life-changing,  
metamorphic, cathartic,  
reframing, transmuting,  
born-again, developmental



\* Moonshots versus Marvins

2035  
**BIG!**

**Everything decided has been successful**

**Arts & Culture have been transformed:**

- Engaging residents across discipline, geography...
- Amenities are accessible to the entire community
- A critical mass of Authentic, yet Bold, and Sustainable Assets.

**And Have Transformed the County in Return**

- Elevating Quality of Place across cities and towns.

**What has changed?**

In other words, if you were king, queen, benevolent overlord...

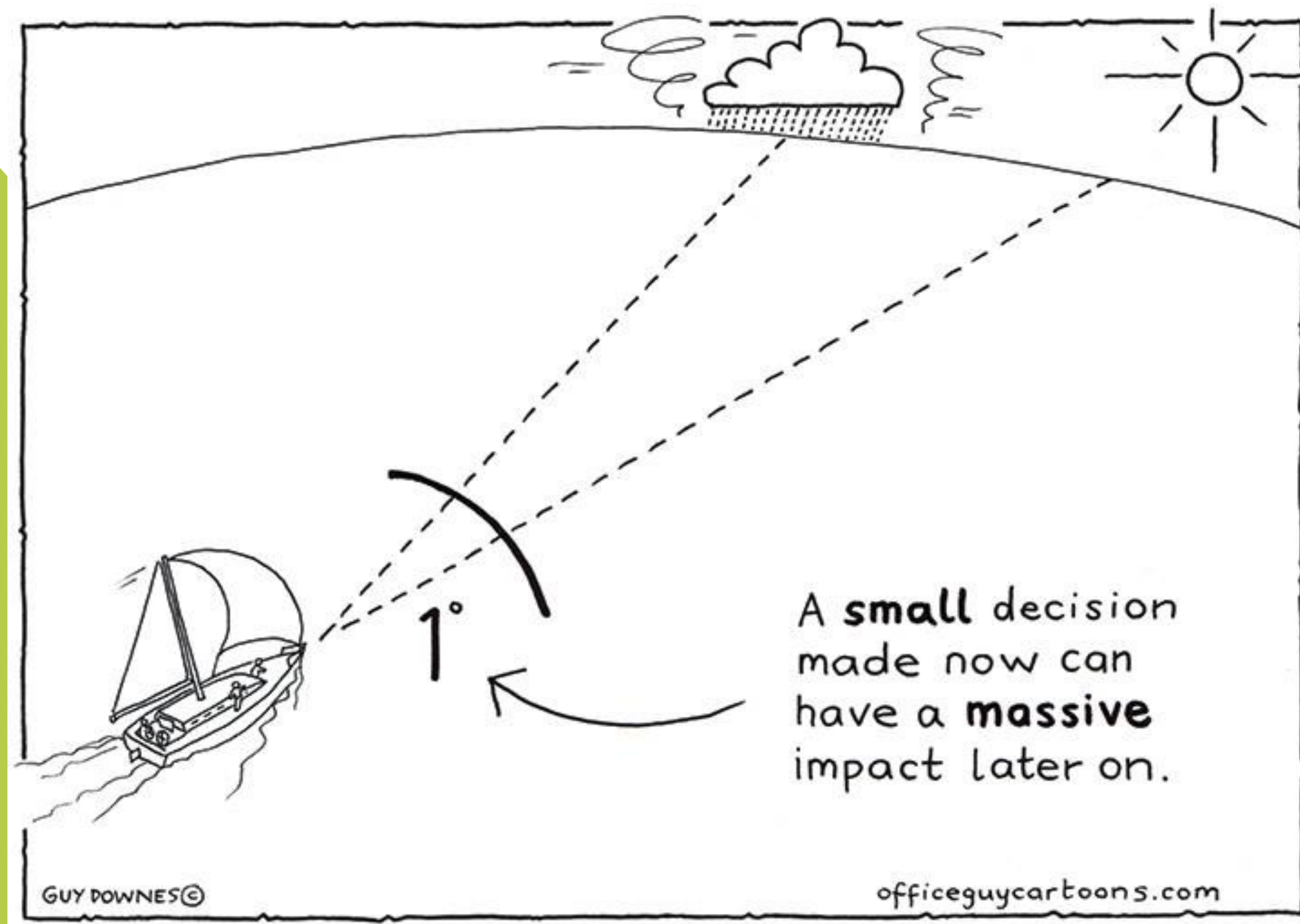


# Momentum & Opportunity

## What Can We Build From?

- Things in the works...
- Energy and interest
- New to support
- Old to reinvigorate
- Partners to help
- Hinders to overcome

# Next Steps: OURS & YOURS



Before we go...  
What is your one small thing?

# Thank You!



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**TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES**  **ART**

*celebrating the power of arts and culture in community*

