



# Auglaize County

Community Input Session  
December 5, 2024

Post Office Mural Detail, Wapakoneta  
Joseph Linarzi, 1937

# Welcome

Who we are and  
why we're here



**Sara A. Peterson**  
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strategy, governance, and effectiveness



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Sharp Visionarts  
community arts development consulting

# Agenda



## **Welcome & Explore!**

We'll answer your questions about the project, who's involved, and what it hopes to do. Then we'll take you on a quick tour of strategies used across the state to awaken everyone's imaginations.

- **Introductions & Overview**
- **Cultivating Community through Arts & Culture**

## **Assets & Opportunities for a Vibrant County**

We'll share your county's cultural assets and opportunities that we see. You might be surprised! Next, you'll work with others in your community to develop a countywide vision for the future.

- **Our County**
- **Beginning to Envision What Could Be**

## **Next Steps**

Tonight is the beginning...

## **Thank You!**

Now go enjoy a beautiful fall evening!

**Tell us why  
YOU are here**

Your name  
&  
who you  
represent

# Cultivating Community

Through  
Arts & Culture



# Why arts & culture matter

- Contributes to **quality of life**
- Improves Hoosiers' **health and wellbeing**
- Generates **economic benefits**
- Improves student learning outcomes**  
and career readiness
- Creativity is a skill **sought-after by employers**



# Celebrating Heritage



Columbus Star Quilters



Oktoberfest, Minster



Walk with Nature Fall Festival, St. Marys



# Civic Pride



Rushville



**ARMSTRONG  
AIR & SPACE MUSEUM**

Armstrong Air & Space Museum

# Revitalizing Places through “placemaking”



## UPCOMING PROGRAMS & EVENTS

### 2025 CABIN FEVER HIKE SERIES

- **Lockkeepers' Hike**  
January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 1pm-3pm  
Lockkeepers' House (22 S. Water Street, New Bremen)  
Bundle up the family for a winter hike along the Miami Erie Canal
- **Valentine's Hike**  
February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025 1pm-3pm  
St. Marys Utilities Building (106 E. Spring Street, St. Marys)  
Bring your valentine to view restored Lock #13
- **Spring Forward Hike**  
March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025 1pm-3pm  
Noble Township Hall (16586 CR 66A, St. Marys)  
See the first signs of spring along the canal
- **April Showers Hike**  
April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025 1pm-3pm  
Noble Township Hall (16586 CR 66A, St. Marys)  
Stay tuned to [www.htparks.org](http://www.htparks.org) for program info





South Madison Community Foundation –  
Pendleton Crosswalks



Putnam County Mural Festival, Greencastle

# Revitalizing Places

through creative businesses and activities



Redkey Blacksmiths, Redkey



Peru Visual Arts Festival

**Quantifiable  
Impact**

**Quality of Life &  
Place**





## Population Retention & Attraction

Quality of Life matters in people's decision to move or stay

## Health & Wellbeing

Art making reduces stress and has shown to bring positive mental health outcomes folks struggling with mental health issues and addiction.

Creative aging programs (sustained group arts engagement) for older adults reduces falls, visits to Dr. office and feelings of isolation.

## Arts & Youth

a substantial increase in arts educational experiences for youth reduces discipline issues, improves writing scores, increases empathy, academic engagement, and college aspirations.

Ongoing access means they're 2x likely to graduate college and 5x less likely to drop out.

### Sources

*Americans for the Arts  
Kisida and Bowen, 2019  
American Art Therapy Association  
Drexel University*



# Auglaize County

Rich in history and community pride

# By the numbers

**95% White** with a slightly growing racially diverse population

**46K Population** ebbs and flows but is relatively stable

**Aging Population:** 42% is age 45+

\$71,669 Median Household **Income just above state average**

**8% Poverty Rate Lower** than state by almost half (2020)

Industry is 39% **Manufacturing** followed by 12% Health Care

**Education Attainment** likeregion; LOWER than state average



Crown Equipment Corporation  
New Bremen

Wapakoneta ▪ St. Marys  
Minster ▪ New Bremen ▪ New Knoxville  
Waynesfield ▪ Cridersville

# History

A historical illustration of a fort with soldiers and Native Americans. The scene shows a wooden fort with a flag on top. In the foreground, a Native American man in traditional dress is kneeling and talking to a soldier in a blue and white uniform. Other soldiers and Native Americans are visible in the background.

## Auglaize County is

The Shawnee & NW Indian War

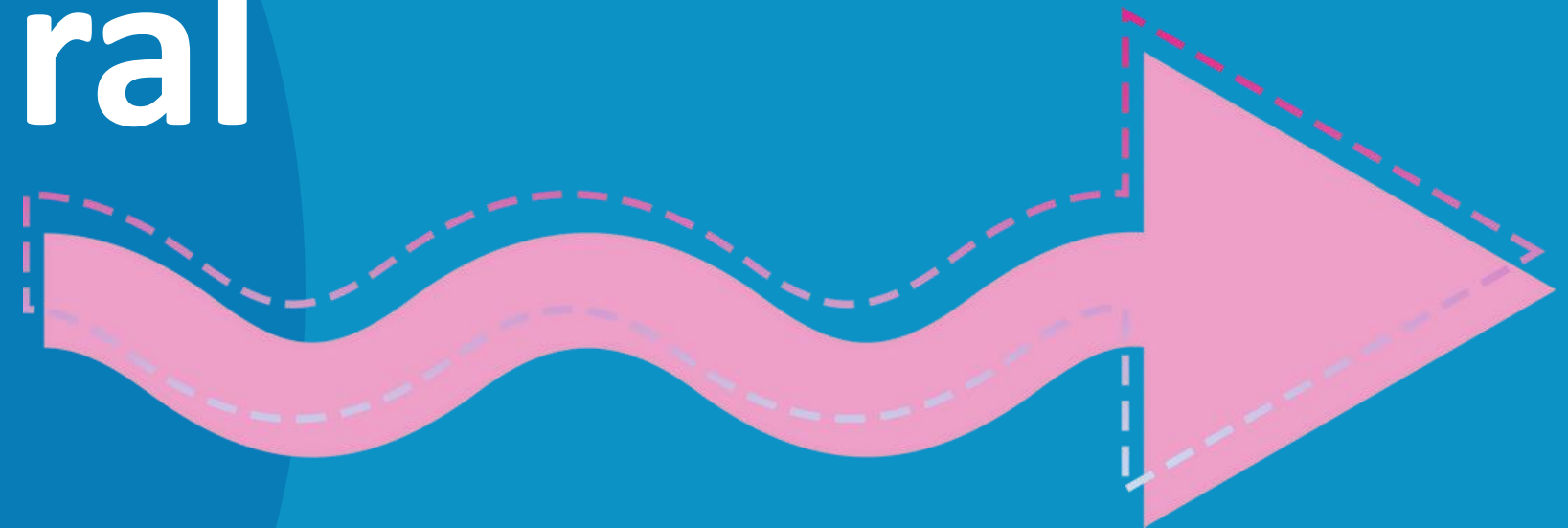
German Immigrants

Bicycles & Astronauts

Agriculture & The Canal

- 1748 French trading post
- 1700<sup>s</sup> Northwest Indian War
- 1823 St. Marys founded
- 1833 Wapakoneta platted
- 1833 New Bremen founded by Germans
- 1841 John J Enneking – Painter (Minster)
- 1845 Miami & Erie Canal completed
- 1848 County organized
- 1858 Dayton & Michigan RR began
- 1913 Shannon Stock Company founded
- 1930 Neil Armstrong (Wapekoneta)
- 1933 Dillinger Gang Robbery (St. Marys)
- 1949 Jenny Cruise (Wapekoneta)  
NYT Best-selling Romance Novelist
- 1972 Armstrong Air & Science Museum

# Arts & Cultural Assets





# WARNING!

## NOTICE

This presentation WILL be incomplete.  
Someone – or several ones – will be MISSING.  
Something may even be WRONG.

The goal is to illustrate opportunity *not* to inventory.  
We appreciate your patience.

The Management

# Public Art

Celebrates Local Artists & History  
Engage Community, Attract Talent

Moulton Mural at **Trinity Lutheran**

New Bremen Sculpture at **Kuenning/Komminsk Park**

New Knoxville Mural at **Auglaize County Neil Armstrong Airport**

St. Marys Murals **Community Improvement Building, Boom Town, Butterfly, Canal Town, Girty's Town, Miami & Erie Trading Company**; and Monuments **Civil War Soldier - Elm Grove Cemetery**

Wapakoneta Murals **Auglaize County, Beauty of Diversity, Tribute to Apollo 11, Wapakoneta and American History**; Statues **"First on the Moon" The Helmet, Downtown Armstrong Statue**; Monuments **Herbst Chair**, and utility box wraps



# Festivals & Fairs



Celebrate History, Engage Community &  
Attract Visitors

Grand Lakes Area Literature Festival  
Minster Octoberfest  
Independence Day Celebration (New Knoxville)  
Miracle on Spring Street  
Puck-i-huddle Fall Craft Show  
Riverside Bluesfest  
St. Marys Summerfest  
Walk With Nature Fall Festival  
Waynestock  
Winter Dreams - A Holiday Tour of Homes  
Auglaize County Fair  
Harvest Fest  
Holiday Open House  
Jingle Hop Sip & Shop  
Taste of Wapakoneta  
Wapakoneta Craft Beer & Wine Festival  
Wapakoneta Summer Moon Festival  
Arts in the Parks in Minster, New Bremen, St Marys, Wapakoneta  
New Bremen Summer Concert Series  
Chamber Connections Mini Business Expo  
Theater Second Saturdays  
Party in the Park Concert Series  
First Fridays in St. Marys & Wapakoneta  
Wapak Farmers Market



A photograph of the Riverside Art Center storefront, featuring a large glass window displaying various art pieces and a sign above the entrance that reads "RIVERSIDE ART CENTER". The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

# Arts & Culture Organizations

The anchors we expect  
when we think about this work  
but are unique to Auglaize

## Arts Nonprofits

Crescent Players  
AC Swing Band  
Lock One Community Arts  
Grand Opera House Live  
SM Area Community Band  
St. Marys Art Center  
Riverside Arts Center  
Wapakoneta Performing Arts Center  
Wapakoneta Theater Guild

## Libraries

Cridersville Public  
FJ Stallo Memorial  
Minster  
New Bremen  
New Knoxville Community  
St. Marys Community  
Auglaize County Public  
Wapakoneta-Central  
Waynesfield

## Museums

Uniopolis Historical  
Bicycle Museum of American  
Armstrong Air & Space

# Community Culture

The ones we don't always think of first when we think about this work

Our partners, community arts providers, and links to larger strategy

## Fraternal

VFW Post 8445

## Civic

Greater Grand Lake Visitor's Bureau  
Wapakoneta Chamber of Commerce

## Funders

New Bremen Foundation  
St. Marys Community Foundation  
Wapakoneta Area Community Foundation

## Helpers

Friends of the Stallo Memorial Library

## Schools

Minster School District  
New Bremen School District  
St. Marys City School District  
Wapakoneta City School District  
Waynesfield-Goshen Schools

# Creative Businesses

Artists, "Creative" owned, and serving

We call these small business  
Creative industry

... all tied to art and culture

... to quality of life and of place

## Art, Craft, Jewelry & More

L Smith Arts  
Art Source Ohio  
CW Jewelry  
Sara Paper LLC

## Clubs/Groups

Art Adventures Club  
Shakespeare Club

## Food & Drink

Gongoozlers  
Gr8t Vines  
Five Vines  
Krave Creamery  
Tea Kettles and Paperbacks  
Flower Bucket, The  
Haehn Florist and Greenhouses

## Florists

## Design

Intricate Designs  
Ranly Ad and Tech Art Studios  
Interior Creations

## Dance

Boyd Dance Studios  
Kristine's Dance Escape  
Dance Center, The  
L&L Dance Company

# Places & Spaces

... to see and engage in art

... to appreciate community and nature

... to draw in visitors



Miami Erie Canal Trail

Bloody Bridge Trail Head

Kuffner Nature Preserve

Heritage Park

Lock 14 Park

Auglaize County Fairgrounds

James F. Dicke Auditorium

New Bremen Crown Pavilion

St. Marys City Schools PAC

Moon City Event Center

Otterbein SeniorLife Community

# Historic Societies & Districts

Cridersville Historical Society

Miami & Erie Canal Corridor Association

New Bremen Historical Association

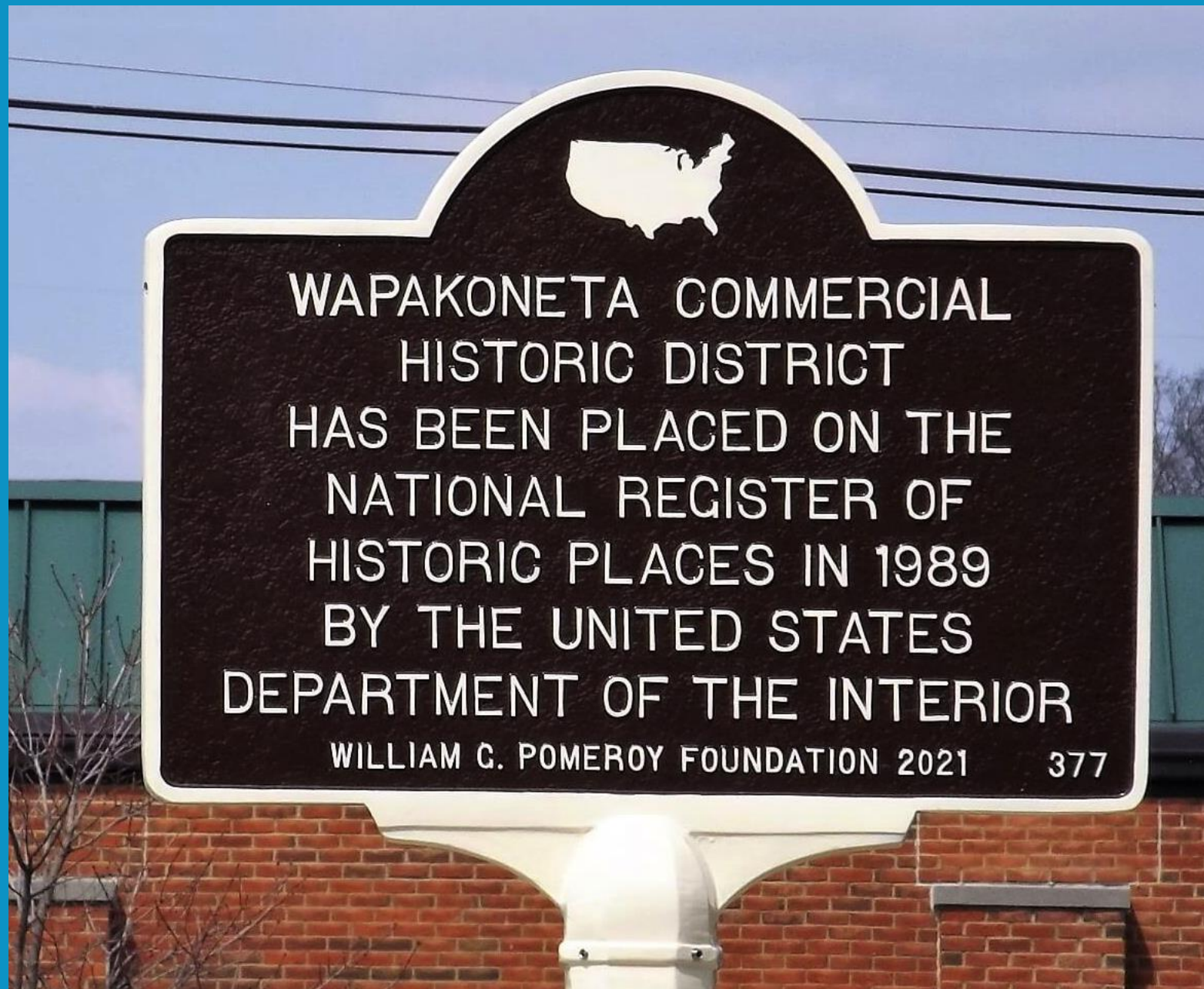
New Knoxville Historical Society

Uniopolis Historical Society

Auglaize County Historical Society

Wapakoneta Commercial Hist. Dist.

Heritage Trails Park District



# ... and sites

## Cemeteries Churches

Elm Grove

Egypt, St. John, Glynnwood, Holy Rosary St.  
Augustine & St. Joseph Catholic Churches  
First Presbyterian of Wapakoneta  
Olive Branch Church

## Schools Houses & Barns

Minster Elementary & Blume High  
Adolph & Julius Boesel, Luellenman, Pape,  
Fledderjohann, Nichols, Williams & RinehArts;  
J.H. Manchester Round Barn

## Civic & Commercial

Auglaize County Courthouse  
Uniopolis Town Hall  
The Fountain Hotel & Reservoir Mill  
1874 Casper Rhine Boots & Shoes  
Wintzer, Charles, Building

## And so much more...

Daniel F. Mooney Museum  
Apollo 11 Mission & First Moon Walk  
Apollo Command Module Mockup  
Catahecassa Blackhoof Memorial  
Fort Amanda Site  
Shannon Stock Company, The  
Temple of Tolerance & Memorial to Ohio War  
Dead





**People**  
With more to  
discover...

Jewelers

Painters

Ceramicists

Musicians

Actors

Fiber artists

Muralists

Designers

Teachers

# Opportunities

what is already embedded  
in plans?



Promote economic growth



Quality of Life



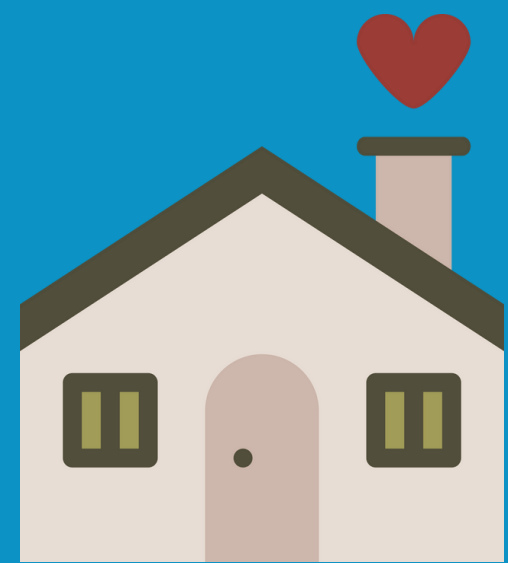
# Finding Our Horizon

dreaming together



# Planning

here to there  
from start to vision



Start



Vision  
Horizon

## Planned Goals

To reach our goals and our horizon

What do we need?

What do we need to do?

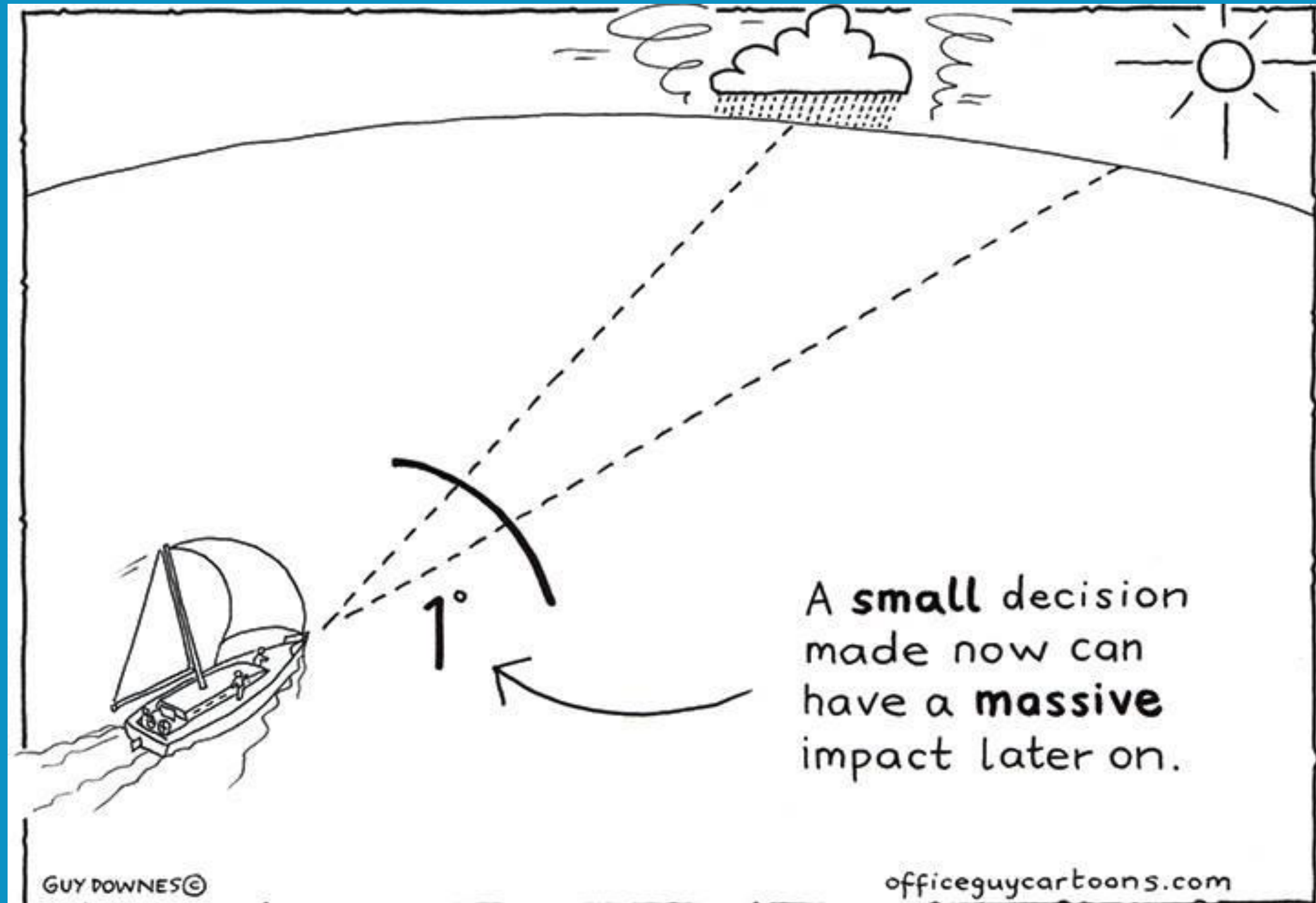
What do we need to change?

# Think Big!

But within nature...



# Oh, how things change...



## 15 years ago (2009)...

Cpt. Sully lands Miracle on the Hudson  
Slumdog Millionaire won Oscar  
Netbooks were a thing  
iPhones started GPS navigation

## 20 years ago (2004)...

Bush defeated Kerry  
Lord of the Rings won Oscar  
Facebook and skype started  
Flip phones, iPods NOT smart

# Discussion Questions

A little  
daydreaming

Lots of ideas lead  
to revelations

Collect ALL the  
ideas...

## **Envisioning 2035**

Describe a vibrant, vital Auglaize County Arts  
Landscape –

*one in which we have all changed, as artists,  
organizations, educators/schools, leaders,  
communities*

# Discussion Questions

A little  
daydreaming

Lots of ideas lead  
to revelations

Collect ALL the  
ideas...

## **Envisioning 2035**

1. Describe a vibrant, vital Auglaize County Arts Landscape
2. When we step back, what themes emerge?
3. What are our priorities (framed as goals and strategies)?

## **Facilitating Change**

- 4a. What partners or influences might HELP progress?
- 4b. What barriers or influences might HURT progress?

# Next Steps

## Tonight is the beginning...

Other Counties in the Project  
Focus Groups  
Surveys  
Finalizing the Plan  
Making it Happen  
Regional Work



# Thank You



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**Thank you to the community leaders supporting this work.**

The Board of Commissioners of Auglaize County

The Board of Commissioners of Blackford County

The Board of Commissioners of Jay County

City of Montpelier

Patrick J. McGowan, Mayor, City of St Marys

John Boggs, Mayor, City of Portland

Travis C. Richards, Executive Director, Jay County Development Corporation

Jeremy W. Gully, Superintendent, Jay School Corporation

Cheri Brown, Director, Purdue Extension Blackford County

The Portland Foundation

St. Marys Community Foundation

Arts Place Corporate Board

