

# Murphy Lot Visioning Project



Summary and Recommendations Report

*Looking Forward to Small Town Revitalization*

March 17, 2021

6:00pm via Zoom



# Welcome!

## Murphy Lot Visioning Project - Summary and Recommendations Report

6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 17, 2021 via Zoom

### Purpose:

The purpose of this Fifth Public Engagement Meeting for the Murphy Lot Visioning Project is to briefly review the project development to date and introduce the **Murphy Lot Project Summary and Recommendations Report- *Looking Forward to Small Town Revitalization***.

### Format:

The format of this meeting will be a presentation/discussion via Zoom. This meeting will have three primary components:

1. **A project overview for review or introduction for the meeting participants.**
2. **A presentation regarding the DRAFT final report for the project.**
3. **An opportunity for additional feedback and questions to be asked by all participants.**

### Input and Feedback:

Your thoughts and ideas, about the project, are valuable. Please reserve your comments and questions for the portion of the meeting designated for that purpose.

**Thank you all for your participation in this project and your valuable input and feedback.**

# Project Background and Description-

## How did we get here?



- ▶ History of the Murphy Lot
  - ▶ The building formerly on the site was demolished in June of 2020.
  - ▶ Part of the funding for the demolition came with the stipulation that the lot must remain a “green space” for 5 years after the close out of the grant contract. That contract is still currently active.
- ▶ Methodology, purpose and goals
  - ▶ Owners of the lot, Blairsville Community Development Authority (BCDA) wanted to develop and implement a public engagement process surrounding the future of the lot.
  - ▶ BCDA reached out to Indiana County Office of Planning & Development (ICOPD) in summer of 2020.
  - ▶ The goal became to, in cooperation with the public, develop short-term and long-term visions for the lot.
  - ▶ Consideration of constraints on lot development were of paramount concern in developing the short term vision.
- ▶ Partners and team
  - ▶ Project Steering Committee- started with 5 or 6 members, currently about 10 regular participants
  - ▶ BCDA
  - ▶ Blairsville Borough
  - ▶ ICOPD
  - ▶ Public

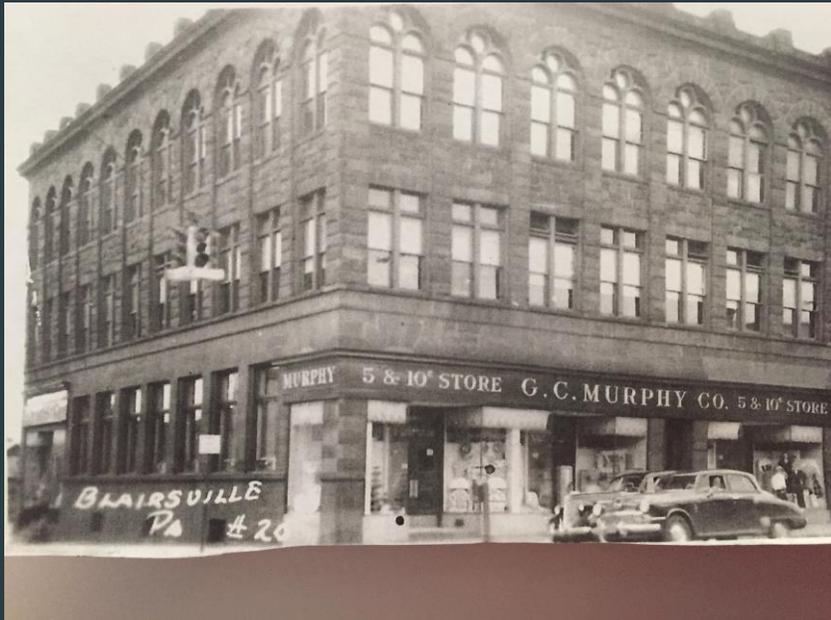
# History of the Murphy Lot



Former  
Bank



The  
Demolition



G.C.  
Murphy  
Co.  
Store



Current site

# Site location- Downtown Blairsville Market and Stewart Streets 80'x160' lot



# Planning Process and Timeline

- ▶ Public participation plan included four public meetings and two project surveys.
  - ▶ Project Steering Committee has met regularly since August 2020.
  - ▶ Project webpage developed at [www.icopd.org](http://www.icopd.org) and Facebook page under the name Blairsville Murphy Lot.
  - ▶ First meeting (Information and Input Survey)- September 30, 2020.
  - ▶ Second meeting (Idea Discussion/Development, Feedback/Prioritization and Second Survey)- November 4, 2020.
  - ▶ Third meeting (Discussion of priorities, Organization of the Plan) December 9, 2020.
  - ▶ Fourth meeting (Presentation, Discussion, Feedback) January 20, 2021.
  - ▶ DRAFT of Summary and Recommendations Report was presented to the public on March 17, 2021.

# What is Placemaking?

- ▶ Placemaking inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community. Strengthening the connection between people and the places they share, placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value. More than just promoting better urban design, placemaking facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution.

## **Placemaking is**

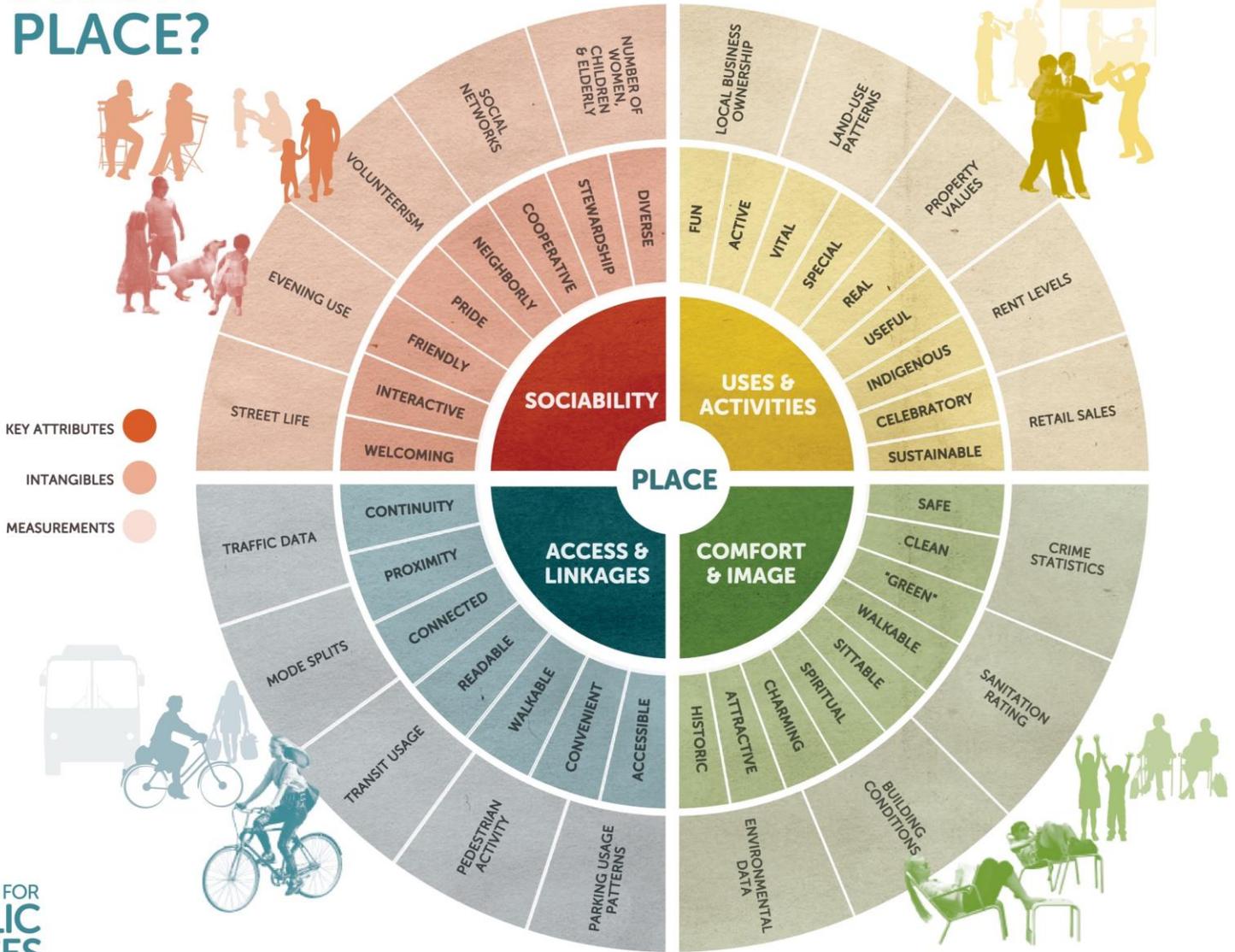
- Community-driven
- Visionary
- Function before form
- Adaptable
- Inclusive
- Focused on creating destinations
- Context-specific
- Dynamic
- Trans-disciplinary
- Transformative
- Flexible
- Collaborative
- Sociable

## **Placemaking is not**

- Top-down
- Reactionary
- Design-driven
- A blanket solution or quick fix
- Exclusionary
- Car-centric
- One-size-fits-all
- Static
- Discipline-driven
- One-dimensional
- Dependent on regulatory controls
- A cost/benefit analysis
- Project-focused

*“What Is Placemaking?” Project for Public Spaces, 2007,  
<https://www.pps.org/article/what-is-placemaking>*

# WHAT MAKES A GREAT PLACE?



# Developing the Vision(s)

- ▶ Two separate but cohesive visions were to be developed through our public engagement process.
- ▶ Short Term
  - ▶ 0-7 years
  - ▶ Why 7 years
    - ▶ Parameters based on Community Development Block Grant - Cooperation Agreement
    - ▶ 5 years after close out of contract (likely 2022)
  - ▶ Greenspace- Open space and recreation activities
- ▶ Long Term
  - ▶ 7 years and beyond
  - ▶ Not restricted to greenspace



# Two Project Surveys

## ▶ First Survey

- ▶ Purpose was to gain initial input and to help guide the project.
- ▶ 47 Respondents
- ▶ Key Findings- Developing a green space into a green place became the basic vision.

## ▶ Second Survey

- ▶ Purpose was to refine the input and feedback developed from the first survey and hone in further on project ideas and details.
- ▶ 30 Respondents
- ▶ Key Findings- A preliminary design was developing based on the second survey and further discussions.

- ▶ The project surveys provided insight into the community on many levels and will prove useful in decision making processes and discussions outside of and beyond this Project. The responses provided a generous amount of information and data for review, analysis, and further consideration.

## Murphy Lot Design Idea



S. Stewart Street

E. Market Street  
Lot size: 80x160 ft.

# Preliminary Design



# Short Term Considerations (1-3 years)

## ▶ Design Elements/Lot Development

- Public art
- Wayfinding and Informational Signage
- Tables
- Benches
- Native Plants
- Chess/checkers
- Small climbing structure/Play equipment

## ▶ Programming/Use

- ▶ 2021 Opportunities- small gatherings with social distancing.
- ▶ COVID considerations regarding gatherings for the time being. We suggest following CDC Guidelines regarding in person events and gatherings.
- ▶ Look for new guidance for gatherings and program accordingly.

# Long Term Considerations (3-10 years)

## ► Design Elements/Lot Development

- Lighting
- Public art
- Wayfinding and Informational Signage
- Stormwater Management
- Tables
- Benches
- Native Plants
- Chess/checkers
- Hopscotch
- Bocce Ball
- Marbles
- Small climbing structure/Play equipment
- Pavilion
- Fountain

## ► Preliminary Costs- Research is currently being done to develop estimates.

# Long Term Considerations continued..

- ▶ A Master Plan for the lot/park should be developed to include Preliminary Engineering and Design.
- ▶ Final Design/Construction Documents are another step to consider in the long term development of the lot.
- ▶ The last step would be Construction.
- ▶ Programming/Use
  - ▶ Community events
  - ▶ Public art projects
  - ▶ Educational programs/outdoor classroom
  - ▶ Social gatherings
  - ▶ Bocce ball, marbles, chess/checkers and hopscotch tournaments
  - ▶ We recommend working with community based organizations and local businesses to partner on programs and events.

# Project Management Considerations

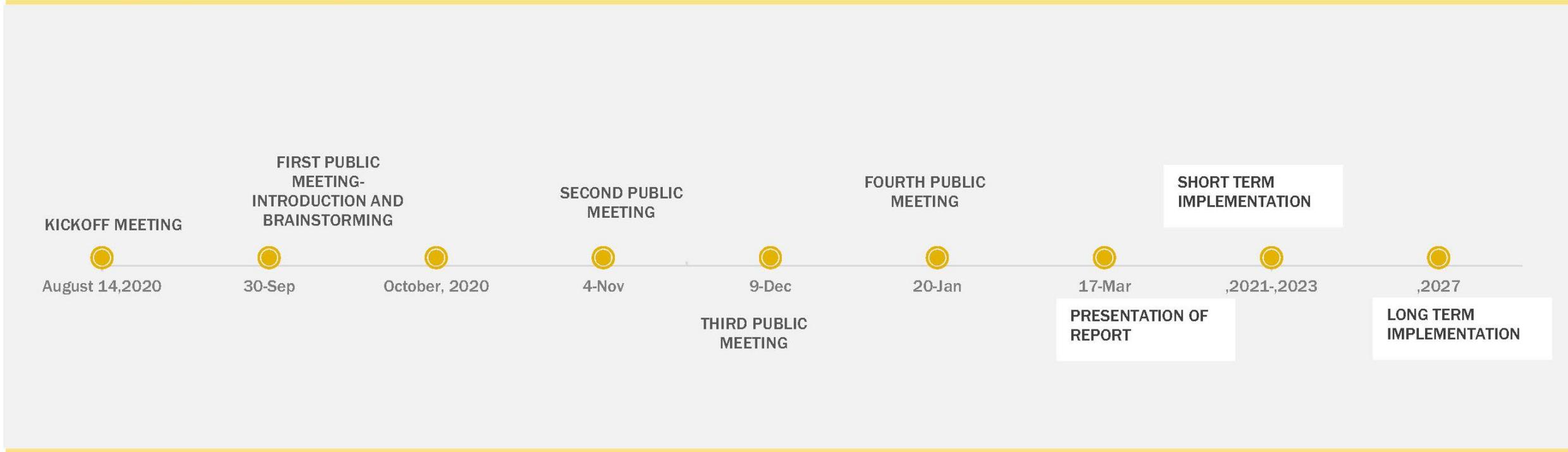
- ▶ The long term vision must be considered throughout the lot development process and in the short term. The long term vision is the ultimate goal being worked towards.
- ▶ The project will need to be stewarded through to completion, and we suggest that the Project Committee evolve and adapt to serve this purpose.
- ▶ 5 Subcommittees are proposed - Overall Design Committee, Landscape Committee, Hardscape/Amenities Committee, Events/Programming Committee, Fundraising Committee.
- ▶ One Chairperson/leader is recommended for each subcommittee.
- ▶ One Project Manager is proposed- Kaitlyn Sagely has volunteered to serve in this role.

# Funding Recommendations

- ▶ Develop a Short Term Vision Budget and a Long Term Vision Budget.
- ▶ Fundraising
  - ▶ Traditional
    - ▶ Multiple level naming rights
  - ▶ In kind contributions
    - ▶ These can be match for grants (professional services)
  - ▶ Crowdsourcing
    - ▶ GoFundMe type of fundraising
    - ▶ Donations (plastic bags for benches)
  - ▶ Foundations and Community Organizations
    - ▶ Local/County- Indiana County Endowment, Rotary
    - ▶ Regional (SWPA)- Heinz Foundation, Mellon Foundation, etc.
    - ▶ Statewide/National
- ▶ Grant Programs
  - ▶ State Programs-
    - ▶ DCNR- <https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Communities/Grants/CommunityParks%20andRecreationGrants/Pages/default.aspx>
    - ▶ DCED- Greenways Trails and Recreation Program
  - ▶ Other Programs- AARP, Kaboom

# Project Timeline

## Murphy Lot Project



### PROJECT DETAILS

# What is next?

- ▶ How to get involved?
  - ▶ Join the Project Committee
  - ▶ Join a Project Subcommittee
  - ▶ Donate (money or in kind contributions)
- ▶ Follow the project at our Facebook (Blairsville Murphy Lot) and project webpage ([www.icopd.org](http://www.icopd.org))

# Comments and Questions?

► Contact Us-

Kaitlyn Sagely, Project Manager

[kaitlynr.sagely@gmail.com](mailto:kaitlynr.sagely@gmail.com)

Molly Sarver, Senior Planner, ICOPD

[msarver@ceo.co.indiana.pa.us](mailto:msarver@ceo.co.indiana.pa.us)

David Janusek, Blairsville Borough Council

[davidgjanusek@gmail.com](mailto:davidgjanusek@gmail.com)

Cell: 412-638-2335

Josh Krug, Deputy Director, Planning, ICOPD

[jkrug@ceo.co.Indiana.pa.us](mailto:jkrug@ceo.co.Indiana.pa.us)

Cell: 561-573-6389