



Press Release

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Six West Virginia Communities Selected to Participate in Community Revitalization Initiative

PITTSBURGH, May 29, 2019 – Six West Virginia communities were officially welcomed as FHLBank Pittsburgh Blueprint Communities® at a ceremony held today in Bridgeport, West Virginia. Blueprint Communities is a place-based revitalization initiative created by FHLBank Pittsburgh and administered in West Virginia by The West Virginia Community Development Hub (The Hub). The initiative provides training and resources to help local leaders create sustainable and thriving communities.

Attending today's ceremony were representatives from each of the newly selected Blueprint Communities, as well as government officials, local dignitaries and community development stakeholders. Speakers included U.S. Sen. Shelley Moore Capito; Stephanie Tyree, Executive Director, The Hub; Lori McKinney, Co-Founder and Director, RiffRaff Arts Collective; Winthrop Watson, President and Chief Executive Officer, FHLBank Pittsburgh; and John Bendel, Senior Director of Community Investment, FHLBank Pittsburgh. Also in attendance were Mara Boggs, State Director for Senator Joe Manchin, and Dan Neff, District Representative for Congressman Alex Mooney.

The six selected communities – Kingwood (Preston County), Lewis County, the Meadow River Valley region (Greenbrier County), the Monticello area of Clarksburg (Harrison County), New Martinsville (Wetzel County) and Parsons (Tucker County) – were chosen based on community need, existing capacity and readiness to participate in the initiative.

"We are excited to welcome these six communities into the Blueprint Communities initiative," said Winthrop Watson. "Our goal is to equip them with the tools necessary to build strong local leadership and the development capacity to achieve their long-term community vision."

Leaders in the chosen communities will engage in a year-long training program facilitated by The Hub. Community teams are comprised of local government and organizational leaders, volunteers and representatives from FHLBank member institutions, including Citizens Bank of Weston, Citizens Bank of West Virginia, MVB Bank, Summit Community Bank (Summit Financial Group), Union Bank and WesBanco. Community teams will create a strategy for comprehensive revitalization that focuses on building community assets, engaging residents, improving local housing and attracting new businesses and jobs.



“Blueprint Communities is an opportunity to build strategies that support visionary projects and initiatives in these participating communities,” said Kaycie Stushek, The Hub’s Blueprint Communities Program Coordinator. “The Hub is excited to engage with the change-makers who will come to the table for this program and continue building a brighter future for their communities. We are eager to support new and existing leadership across West Virginia communities.”

Citing the importance of local engagement and partnership across government, private industry and community organizations, Sen. Capito noted, “The Blueprint Communities initiative has a proven record of success over the past 12 years in West Virginia. It has encouraged collaboration, driven neighborhood renewal and improved community planning efforts. The training and resources it provides local leaders support many different aspects of community revitalization - from housing and jobs to ongoing economic development - and I’m excited to celebrate the six newest Blueprint Communities recognized here today.”

At the ceremony, each community team was called to the stage and given an 18-foot banner reading “Proud to be one of West Virginia’s Blueprint Communities.” The banners will be hung over the main street in each community. The newly selected communities join three other West Virginia areas currently participating in the initiative: Bluefield, Princeton and Richwood. The Blueprint Communities initiative has supported the development of local leadership, collaboration across sectors and holistic planning in 16 communities in West Virginia since 2007.

About FHLBank Pittsburgh

As an intermediary between global capital markets and local lenders, FHLBank Pittsburgh provides readily available liquidity, as well as affordable housing and community development opportunities, to member financial institutions of all sizes in Delaware, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The Bank is part of the Federal Home Loan Bank System, which was established by Congress in 1932 and serves as a reliable source of funds for housing, jobs and growth in all economic cycles. To learn more, visit www.fhlp-pgh.com.

About The West Virginia Community Development Hub

The West Virginia Community Development Hub mobilizes residents from all over the state to spark transformational change and progress in their communities. Hallmarks of the organization’s work are to spur on fresh momentum where little exists; to unite the forces of groups that have not considered – or even resisted – collaboration in the past; and to champion new, and sometimes unexpected, leaders. Over the past year, The Hub has worked directly with 27 counties across the state, and one in five West Virginians have been reached by Hub-related projects. More information about The Hub’s work and impacts over the past year is available at wvhub.org.

“Blueprint Communities” is a registered service mark of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh.

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