



**Citizens' Institute  
on Rural Design**

## Four Rural Communities Chosen to Receive \$45,000 in Design Assistance *Funded through National Endowment for the Arts' Citizens' Institute on Rural Design*

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*Washington, DC*— The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ (CIRD), an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) managed by Project for Public Spaces, is pleased to announce four communities selected to host rural design workshops for the 2018 program year. The workshops will bring together local leaders, nonprofits, community organizations, and citizens with a team of rural planning and creative placemaking professionals to craft solutions to their communities' design challenges.

Recommended by a review panel of rural experts, the four host communities are: Greenville, Mississippi; Las Vegas, New Mexico; Tuttle, North Dakota; and Valentine, Nebraska. CIRD awardees receive a \$10,000 stipend to support the workshop and follow-up planning sessions. Each community also receives in-kind design expertise and technical assistance valued at \$35,000, and additional support through web-based resources on [www.rural-design.org](http://www.rural-design.org) and webinars by the Orton Family Foundation.

“It is exciting to witness the bold visions that these four rural communities have for their future,” said NEA Director of Design and Creative Placemaking Jen Hughes. “Design is an important tool to spark economic revitalization and bring new attention to recreational trails and local amenities. We’re thrilled to support the CIRD workshops and deliver design expertise that will ultimately impact the quality of life for rural residents.”

“This year’s technical assistance focus areas - Main Street Revitalization, Healthy Living by Design, and Multi-Modal Transportation - reflect key overlapping issues facing rural communities across the country and provide a great opportunity for sharing hands on practices and applicable lessons learned across multiple sectors” said Cynthia Nikitin, CIRD Program Director and Senior Vice President of Project for Public Spaces, Inc.

## **2018 CIRD Workshops**

### **Greenville, MS (population 34,400)**

**Host: Rural LISC**

**Workshop Description:**

Greenville, located in the Mississippi Delta, is a rural community of color and a hub for transportation, recreation, arts, culture, shopping, and dining for the region. The workshop will focus on plans to enliven Main Street via the adaptive reuse of vacant commercial storefronts and activation of public spaces that showcase the cultural heritage of the region. Main Street will be transformed into a destination for recreation, play, and public art; attracting people to live and visit the city center. Workshop partners include Main Street Greenville, Greater Greenville Housing, and the Washington County Economic Alliance.

### **Las Vegas, NM (population 13,753)**

**Host: Hermit's Peak Watershed Alliance**

**Workshop Description:**

The Gallinas River Park extends the length of Las Vegas and was at one time a major thoroughfare for pedestrians and bicyclists, as well a place to exercise and a natural draw for tourists. Now degraded and minimally used, the design challenge is to redevelop the park into a safe green space that connects local residents and sparks revitalization of the town. The workshop will focus on recommendations for a section of the trail to reflect the community's unique cultural heritage, highlight natural resources, and drive environmental stewardship. Workshop partners include the City of Las Vegas, MainStreet de Las Vegas, and West Las Vegas School District.

### **Tuttle, ND (population 80)**

**Host: Strengthen ND**

**Workshop Description:**

Tuttle is developing plans for a new multi-use community space and economic engine, the Tuttle Rural Innovation Center. The workshop will develop design plans for the center featuring a small business and art space incubator, a commercial kitchen, event space, and a maker space for local artisans and crafters. The center has the potential to be a model for adaptive reuse, sparking a renaissance along Main Street. This project leverages community momentum in establishing a community-owned and volunteer-operated grocery store. Workshop partners include Tuttle Rural Innovation Center, U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development – North Dakota, North Dakota Local Foods Development Alliance, and Tuttle Betterment Club.

### **Valentine, NE (population 2,803)**

**Host: Valentine Economic Development Board**

**Workshop Description:**

Main Street in the City of Valentine is slated for a major redesign and reconstruction beginning in 2021. The workshop will initiate the transformation of Main Street from a state highway and thruway into a well-designed street that encourages passersby to linger and attracts residents to support local businesses. The Valentine population is currently stable, but is located in a larger region that is experiencing chronic and severe depopulation. Valentine and Cherry County will put forth plans to stimulate long term economic development and the attraction of new residents by integrating design and creative placemaking into the Main Street revitalization. Workshop partners include the City of Valentine, Valentine Chamber of Commerce, University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Architecture and Community Vitality Initiative.

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Since its inception in 1991, CIRD has convened 83 workshops in all regions of the country with results that range from strengthened local economies, enhanced rural character, the leveraging of cultural assets, and the design of recreational trails.

Read more about CIRD's successful [past workshops](#) and explore the [resource-rich website](#) gathered from diverse organizations across the country. It is a place for citizens and practitioners alike to access information and inspiration to improve their own communities.

The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ (CIRD) is a design leadership initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Project for Public Spaces, Inc., and the Orton Family Foundation.

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### **About the National Endowment for the Arts**

Established by Congress in 1965, the NEA is the independent federal agency whose funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capacities. Through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector, the NEA supports arts learning, affirms and celebrates America's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and extends its work to promote equal access to the arts in every community across America. Visit [arts.gov](http://arts.gov) to learn more about NEA.

### **About Project for Public Spaces, Inc.**

Project for Public Spaces (PPS) is a nonprofit planning, design, and educational organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities. Founded in 1975, PPS has completed projects in over 2,500 communities and all 50 US states. PPS has become an internationally recognized center for resources, tools, and inspiration about Placemaking. Visit PPS at [pps.org](http://pps.org).