



2016 REPORT

A YEAR IN REVIEW & LOOK FORWARD

WHAT IS REDESIGN READING?

What do a bike shop, a dirt bike track, a farmers market and night markets, a food policy council, and infrastructure planning in the 18th ward all have in common?

Making Reading a better place in which to live, work and play.

On a Monday this September Reading Bike Hub crew members first gathered to strategize before attending a City Council meeting, many for the first time, to ask for signage around Cherry and Orange streets to make the area safer for people walking, playing and riding bikes...Over the past 2 years, the 18th WONDER steering committee, of which ReDesign has served as the backbone organization, raised state and federal funding for infrastructure improvements in the 18th ward, including the creation of safe corridors that will make the area more walkable and rideable for residents. Cont'd page 2



\$117,800



Monetary value of donated volunteer time

5,000



Volunteer hours donated through ReDesign Reading initiatives in 2016

\$17,000



Dollars spent through Penn St. Market incentive programs

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From cultivating relationships with and supporting the budding community leaders who haven't been invited to the traditional Reading-Revitalization table, to pulling together experienced community leaders in cross-sector collaborations, ReDesign Reading is offering a new perspective and approach to the traditional economic and development efforts.



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WHAT IS REDESIGN READING? CONT'D

On any given Thursday in Penn Square this past summer you might have met two local students, Penn Street Market Community Ambassadors Angel and Christian, experiencing a leadership opportunity in which they supported local vendors, engaged market participants and introduced themselves to the community...Throughout 2016 local food systems stakeholders have collaborated through Regional Reading Food Policy and Action Council, of which ReDesign serves as the backbone organization, to launch and support programs like the Penn Street Market, Summer Meal Program, recognized by the USDA and State Department of Education, the Berks County Food Hub and the Mobile Food Pantry.



We work to engage residents, while providing them support and leadership opportunities, in initiatives that meet community needs and further local economic and community development efforts.

Reading Bike Hub provides affordable bike shop services to a city with a high rate of low-income bike commuters (and education on how to ride safely and take care of their bicycles), and Penn Street Market provides more access to affordable, fresh, local food to a city that contains food deserts (and education around what to do with it). But look past those brick-and-mortar services and you will find engaged citizens who we support to take lead, advocating for themselves and their neighbors and doing the work to make Reading an even better place to live, work and play in.

We believe that whether or not the people of our community feel like they can make a difference is a vital piece of economic and community development and that resident engagement, social equity and ecological integrity are the foundation for Reading's revitalization.

PARTNERS

Corporation for National and Community Service
Barrio Alegria
Alvernia University
Penn State Berks
Reading Bike Hub
10th & Penn Elementary School, Reading School District
Berks County Bicycle Club
Blue Bell Private Wealth Management p/b Cannondale
Excelente Restaurant
Cumru Police Department
Mohnton Police Department
Reading Schwinn Classic Bike Club
Reading Police Department
Reading Public Library
Pop Up Park
Reading Housing Authority
Reading Redevelopment Authority
Reading Public Works
Reading Downtown Improvement District
Grant Funding From:
Greater Reading Young Professionals Community
Engagement Fund of Berks County Community
Foundation
Reading Berks Association of Realtors
Penn Street Market
Berks County Community Foundation
Berks History Center
City of Reading
the Friends of Reading Hospital
I LEAD Charter School
Reading Parking Authority
Reading Downtown Improvement District
Reading Arts Initiative
The Food Trust

BOARD MEMBERS

Charles Broad
Ashley Chambers
Rei Encarnacion
Eddy Espinal
Dan Luckey
Tim Mcleod
Adam Mukerji
Juan Zabala



Penn St. Pop Up Park & Pump Tracks

This project mobilized volunteers to transform a blighted lot into an active community space that included two dirt bicycle tracks ("pump tracks") and a community garden. Local students earned new bicycles through their work and practiced teamwork to create something that promotes a healthy lifestyle. 10th and Penn students took their education outside, helping to build and maintain the community garden. Local transitioning-youth and adults attended City Council and Planning Commission meetings throughout the project proposal, engaging in and learning about the civic-advocacy and democratic process. Volunteers and neighbors strategized and advocated together at City Council meetings for signage to be placed in the blocks around the park and to make their appreciation of the project known.



Reading Bike Hub

Reading Bike Hub mobilizes community volunteers to run a community bike shop and bike advocacy center in downtown Reading that offers bike products & services; trainings and education and social and advocacy opportunities.

We provide affordable bicycles and services to our community; we advocate for implementation of the Complete Streets policy and believe that streets are for everyone; we create leadership opportunities for local youth, young adults and adults; we educate people on bikes how to ride safely and how to take care of their bikes; we educate motorists that bicycles are legal road vehicles; we take back abandoned spaces in our city and transform them into community spaces; we learn and teach others how to mobilize and organize to make our voices heard.

We envision a community in which biking is safe, enjoyable and affordable. We believe that a thriving and diverse bike culture will bring economic, social and environmental benefits to the city of Reading.



Reading Bike Hub is a full-time, year-round bike shop located at 720 Cherry Street. We accept donations of used bicycles and new helmets. Call 610 507 4820.

Roll.Right.RDG. are community slow-roll bike rides that happen on Wednesdays May through September.

The Pop Up Park was Reading's only outdoor bicycle recreational facility and included community gardens.

Stay In Touch

Stay in touch with us by following our social media accounts, visiting our webpage, or receiving our emails.

Read more of our Reading Bike Hub stories:
www.readingbikehub.org.

Read more of our Penn Street Market stories:
www.pennstreetmarket.org

www.redesignreading.org
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505 Penn Street
Reading, PA 19601





Penn Street Market

a project of RRFAC

Penn Street Market supports local food systems, engages healthy community initiatives and fosters economic development in Reading, PA.

We aim to: promote food access in the City of Reading; strengthen food systems by connecting local farmers to consumers, and stimulating our local economy; and to cultivate a thriving seasonal event through free entertainment, education, and community programming to engage all community members.

This year the market expanded to include a wider diversity of vendors, three vibrant night markets, made possible by the Hawley and Myrtle Quier Fund of Berks County Community Foundation, and two off-season markets. In 2016 we offered live entertainment, yoga and Zumba classes, story times for children, cooking demonstrations and more.



Summer Meal Program & Food Hub

projects of RRFAC

The Summer Meal Program was made possible by a collaboration of community stakeholders and provided a free-meal program for youth in the Oakbrook community during the summer season. It was recognized by the USDA and State Department of Education for three reasons:

1. It secured a mobile site, transforming an unused pavilion, owned by Reading Housing Authority, into a program site.
2. It was hosted adjacent to a community health center. Staff of Berks County Community Health Center provided free education and screenings to participants.
3. The Reading School District was able to purchase fresh, local produce for the meals from Berks County farmers through our pilot Food Hub.



Penn St. Market INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

ReDesign Reading serves as an acceptor of SNAP/WIC benefits so that Market shoppers may have increased access to vendors' produce and goods.

Incentive programs Berks Food Bucks and Reading Farm Bucks, sponsored by the Friends of Reading Hospital and The Food Trust, double or even triple shoppers' purchasing power.

SPONSORS

Pop Up Park

Riverfront Credit Union
Garden Club of Reading
Kathy and Dave Kline

Penn Street Market

Title Presenting Sponsor
Berks Country
Body Zone Sports and Wellness
Complex
Bldg 7 Yoga
Berks Fire Water Restoration
Delivery Dudes
Mid Atlantic Farm Credit
Greater Reading Young
Professionals
Freedom Toyota
Penn National Gaming
Foundation
Riverfront Federal Credit Union
Cure Sports LLC/Tees By U
The People Chronicles
Natural Awakenings



18th WONDER Steering Committee

18th Ward Oakbrook Neighborhood Development and Economic Revitalization

18th W.O.N.D.E.R. Project Steering Committee, of which ReDesign has served as the backbone organization, brings together the public and private stakeholders in southwest Reading to identify and coordinate initiatives that improve the local quality of life. Our primary strategy is to develop crosscutting initiatives that address how the built environment impacts issues of economic development, storm water management, accessibility, and health and safety for residential, business, and institutional stakeholders.



Regional Reading Food Policy and Action Council

Regional Reading Food Policy And Action Council, of which ReDesign serves as the backbone organization, brings together stakeholders from all points of our local food systems to collaborate and synergize around increasing food access and security, minimizing waste, and educating our community.

The task force works to ensure that an adequate and nutritious food supply is available to all citizens; strengthen the economic vitality of the local food system; improve the quality of food available to all citizens; educate and encourage citizens to accept and consume nutritious food; minimize food-related activities that degrade the natural environment; and limit wasteful use of scarce resources needed for future food production and distribution.

The collaboration is segmented into five task forces: food procurement, anti-hunger, zero waste/land preservation, education and governance (internal).

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[Being involved with the Reading Bike Hub] helps me a lot mentally, just going in helping out. I feel like I'm giving back. I'm somebody that suffers from anxiety, addiction, depression and being a part of the Hub helps me to feel better. Me helping out is something that I'm proud to tell people about. I'm doing it for myself but I'm also helping my community.

We always say for the kids, but in reality, it's really about the community as a whole.”

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[Penn Street Market] is the best place to get the freshest food and produce.”

"Great people, great vendors, great food, fun times!"

"I love the Penn Street Market! Great variety of vendors. Keep up the great work!"

"I count down the days between seasons.”

"I have enjoyed meeting and getting to everyone. I think the market was and is a wonderful addition to the community.”

A LOOK FORWARD

We're already moving forward into an exciting 2017. Here's a glance at what we're working on:

We're working to continue and expand our current successful projects Penn Street Market and Reading Bike Hub, and look forward to sharing news throughout the upcoming year.

Funding from United Way of Berks County will support us to expand our efforts around resident engagement and leadership development; food access; and other quality of life improvements in 18th ward of Reading, focusing on the Oakbrook Community. We look forward to working with residents and community stakeholders to conduct a community-needs analysis and to provide residents leadership opportunities and support.

The Bountiful Berks Food Hub supports Berks County producers to brand and sell products to local institutions and citizens. This program assists small and medium sized farms and producers to be competitive with larger farms and producers. We look forward to expanding our current partnership with the Reading School District to bring local produce into the school district on a year round basis and to create new partnerships that connect local producers and restaurants.

We're proud to participate in the Greater Reading Trails Partnership, hosted by Berks Nature, and to assist in the hosting of the Greenways and Trails Summit, taking place in Reading September 2017.

GoFundMe Contributors

Greater Reading Economic Partnership
 Jesse Otto
 Sylvia Simpson
 David Endy
 Sean Slade
 Trinity Lutheran Church Reading
 Dave Kline
 Chris Painter
 Pastor Alan Wolkenhauer
 Anish Patel
 Tanya Melendez
 Jodi Gauker
 Maureen Sychertz
 Aaron Gantz
 Carolyn Holleran
 Diana Anthony
 Brad Manderbach
 Heather Adams
 Rex Dulce
 Alice Christensen
 Andy Rosen
 Pier Ignozzi-Shaffer
 Melissa Millisock
 Danielle Nuhfer
 Susie Gushue
 Zachary Kern



ReDesign Reading Community Development Corporation serves as a catalyst to transform livability in Reading, PA.

Utilizing an asset-based approach, we identify underutilized resources and match them with social entrepreneurial energy. We are reinventing economic development by employing strategic innovations in the great neighborhoods of Reading.

We envision a Reading in which poverty is eliminated through the engagement of Reading citizens in initiatives that build community wealth, increase local self-reliance and economic resiliency, and promote social justice.

LOCAL & NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Some Towns Treat Bikes as Trendy, But In Reading, PA, They're Tools

18th WONDER Stakeholders Recognized By Commerce Quarterly

Free Summer Meals Program Expands In Reading School District



OUR TEAM

Staff

Lucine Sihelnik
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AmeriCorps VISTA Members

Alex Roche *
Scarly Acosta
Tasha Santiago
Lisa Weaver **

Reading Bike Hub Volunteer Team

Manager, Mechanic

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Business Manager & Events Coordinator

Stacey Orth

Mechanics

Alex

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Ride Guides

Jesse Otto

Russ Eckert

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Veronica "Bero" Hernandez

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Penn Street Market Team

Volunteer Coordinators

Carolyn Gunster

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