



OAKLAND
BUSINESS
IMPROVEMENT
DISTRICT

2021 ANNUAL REPORT:

A Year of Opportunity for Pennsylvania's Global Center

OUR VISION:

**To set the standard for growth
and innovation.**

OUR MISSION:

**To ensure Oakland's place as
Pennsylvania's global center.**

OUR VALUES:

**Reframe the experience of commercial,
retail, office and residential environments,
while dismantling oppression, embracing
diversity, promoting diverse business
and creating spaces for social, racial and
economic justice.**

2021:

A Time of Opportunity

2020 was a time of immense change. We spent the year focused on staying healthy which resulted in unprecedented disruption to all aspects of our daily life. It was also a year of lightning speed adapting to new norms, working against our human nature as social animals, as we were asked to isolate ourselves from each other, to maintain a social distance and to restrict any in-person contact to our social pods. These lifestyle changes led to learning new ways to inhabit the world outside of our homes, new ways to shop, dine, explore and new ways to inhabit public space. The restrictions put in place to slow the spread of COVID-19 remind us of the vital role public and open spaces played in our lifestyle and in our overall well-being.

Moving forward into 2021, it became clearer than ever that our public spaces are essential to our social life, to our health, and to our community's economic recovery. During that year, the public realm became the spotlight of our service expansion focused on saving our small businesses, on unleashing new creative urban design solutions, and on providing the space for physical and mental health. We were responding to the public's demand for places to safely socialize, dine, play and connect with others outside their homes. But we were not just making new spaces, we were making new places. The pandemic offered us a unique opportunity to repurpose our streets and open spaces to support our shops and restaurants and to rethink how we can make our neighborhoods healthier, resilient, and more sustainable. The placemaking movement has adapted and grown throughout the country and we are excited to have forged the path in Pittsburgh for such creative placemaking, intentionally integrating arts, culture, entertainment and community-engaged design to reinforce Oakland's image as Pennsylvania's global center.

Reinvention did not stop at placemaking - 2021 was also an opportunity to showcase new approaches to retail unveiling Oakland's first pop-up retail shop Argyle Studio - home to over 30+ entrepreneurs - and introducing vendors into nontraditional spaces such as restaurants and hotel lobbies. We also took a new approach to events: with safety in mind, we organized unique outdoor activities and games, we introduced creative interactive public art designed by local and international artists and we started Oakland's first street live music series.

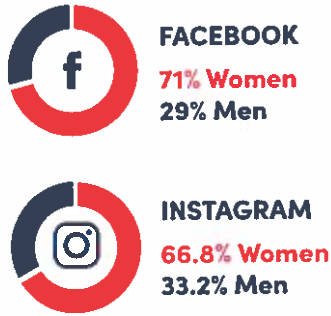
Looking to the year 2022, we are excited at the new opportunities to benefit our community. Guided by our Vision, we will continue to forge new and creative paths that help us set the standard for growth and innovation in Oakland.

Kelly McBroom, *Chairperson*
Georgia Petropoulos, *Chief Executive Officer*

IMPACT DATA:

Program & Business District Marketing Impacts

Online Presence



Audience Reach

- FACEBOOK**
84,498 (Increase of 63.9%)
Resonated the most with ages (in order):
25-34, 35-44, 45-54
- INSTAGRAM**
29,197 (Increase of 46.8%)
Resonated the most with ages (in order):
18-24, 25-34, 35-44
- TWITTER**
26K Impressions
30 # of tweets sent
- EMAILS**
50 OBID member emails
120K emails sent across
90 campaigns

Cleaning Program

26,332lbs of trash collected and removed
1,678 cardboard boxes were picked up, the highest amount ever!
1,605 instances of graffiti, stickers, and flyers removed.
1,907 gum spots removed.
Over 100 hours of pressure washing
123 hospitality assists

Advocacy Work

- Coordinated ongoing monthly meetings for the Oakland For All stakeholders group including over 60 local and regional organizations, advocates, and community members aiming to increase awareness of issues experienced by people with disabilities.
- Worked with our partners to organize the 7th annual Ramp Crawl 2021 in Schenley Plaza.

Streetscape Beautification and Cafe Seating

OBID launched a series of public and open space activation strategies to enhance the look and vibrancy of our business district. We beautified the district by maintaining seasonal sidewalk planters, serviced by local Oakland business, Sestili Nursery.

Additionally, updates were made to the Oakland Avenue closure to increase outdoor seating and activations, including lounge chairs generously lent to OBID from UPMC, additional seasonal sidewalk planters, and seating.

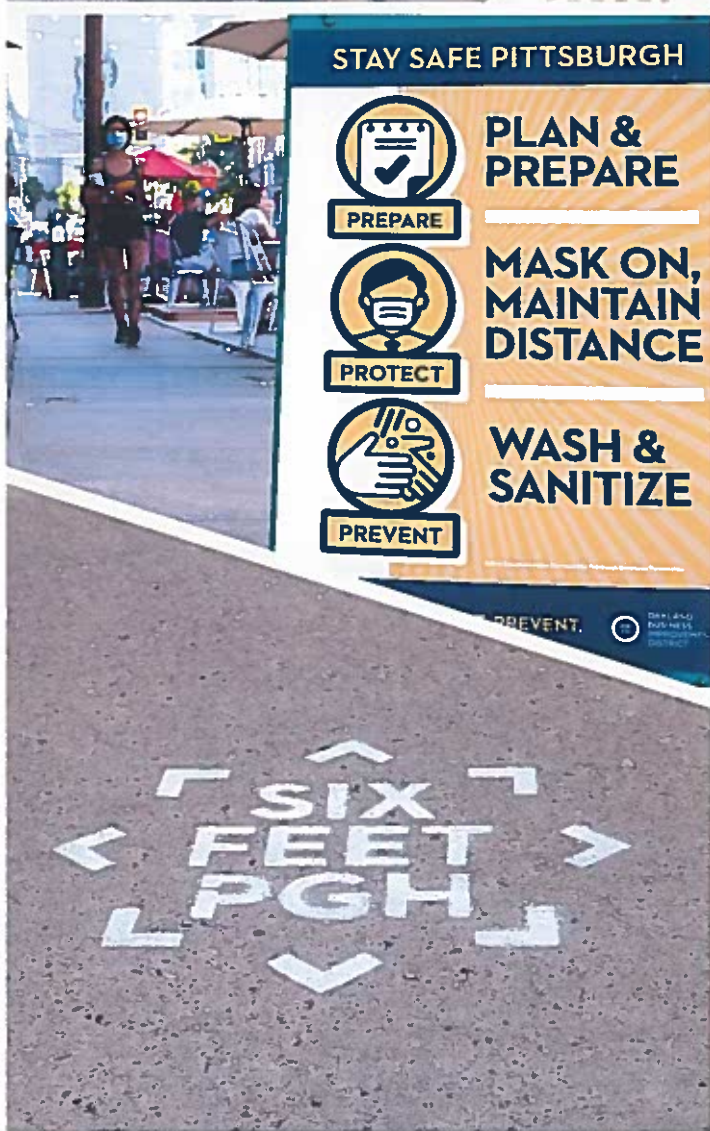




Forbes Digital Plaza

The pandemic offered us a unique opportunity to repurpose our streets and open spaces – rethinking how we can make our neighborhoods healthier, resilient, and more sustainable. With that in mind, OBID decided to focus on how to center PLACE in the design and transformation of the Forbes Digital Plaza. In October 2021 the high-resolution and low-resolution screens were removed from the Plaza. Merritt-Chase was then contracted to redesign the Plaza to include the following elements:

- Permanent stage for performance-based arts and outdoor lectures
- Movable seating options
- Shade structures and/or shade trees
- Public art installations
- Lighting installations
- Stormwater management through plantings and/or permeable pavers.



COVID-19 Marketing Response

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, OBID has pivoted our direct marketing focus on the Shop2Help Oakland Gift Cards That Give More Program. This program, funded in part by a grant from the Richard King Mellon Foundation, allows customers to support their favorite shops, restaurants, and retailers through the purchase of gift cards. By purchasing a \$25 gift card through the program, customers receive \$35 in gift card value. With every \$25 purchase, 25% (\$6.25) is donated on behalf of the business to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. That's the equivalent of 25 meals according to the food bank.

These gift cards do more than provide an opportunity to support local businesses; they also provide some much needed assistance to help our neighbors overcome food insecurity and lead happy, healthy lives.

As of November 15, 2021, 1,369 gift cards were sold. Donations made to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank in the amount of \$8,556.25 That is the equivalent of 34,225 meals donated to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank.

SUCCESS STORY:

The Transformation of the “O”

After closing in April of 2020, Original Hot Dog Shop in Oakland has been transformed into two new restaurants, **Viva Los Tacos** and **Capriotti's Sandwich Shop**.

The Mero Restaurant Group, which operates the local restaurants CHIKN and Stack'd Burgers, renovated the building down to the studs in order to bring the building back to life, while also incorporating elements of the former “O” into the final design.

Replacing a neighborhood staple such as the “O” was going to be a tall order, but two of Mero’s four owners, Maury Mendelovich and Jamie Rodgers, are University of Pittsburgh graduates who spent a lot of time at “the O,” so are intimately familiar with its history and importance to the neighborhood. “We don’t want to disappoint anyone who had fond memories of the place, but we’re hoping to create new memories,” stated Mendelovich.



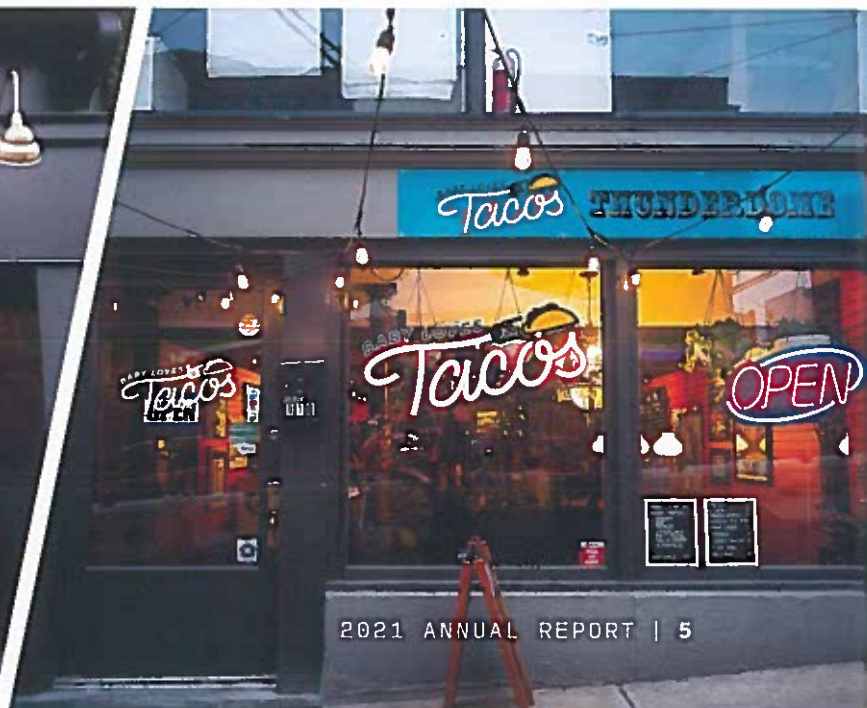
Introducing Oakland's Newest Businesses

2021 was a year of continued entrepreneurial growth and success in Oakland and we congratulate the OBID's newest businesses that call Oakland home.



WILD NINJA

Coming Soon:



New Programs & Projects

The Oakland Business Improvement District strives to be recognized as a vibrant and dynamic business district that sets the national standard for other commercial districts' growth and innovation.

To accomplish our goal of creating a vibrant and dynamic business district the OBID will:

- Build effective partnerships with businesses, institutions and property owners to maintain a clean and safe community.
- Attract, retain and promote quality businesses and retail segments to support our local economy.
- Promote Oakland as a renowned destination point with a business, retail and institutional mix offering unique products, services and events.
- Coordinate events and programs designed to promote Oakland as the preferred place to shop, work, learn and live.

Oakland Streateries

Expanding in response to the pandemic, outdoor streateries have popped up all over the country. Streateries allow restaurants and retailers, looking for space to serve customers while following social distancing regulations, to expand their footprints into spaces previously dedicated to sidewalks, parking spots, or even roadways.

Oakland hosts three streatery expansion zones, one on Meyran Avenue between Fifth and Forbes; one on Oakland Avenue between Fifth and Forbes; and one on Oakland Avenue between Sennott and Forbes. A fourth zone should be coming soon.

Oakland Ave Live

Oakland Ave Live was a free live music concert series held on the closed portion Oakland Avenue every Saturday evening from July 10th through October 23rd, 2021. The initial goal of this music series was to help activate and enliven the space during the quieter summer months when many of the students have left Oakland. It was continued into autumn to provide music and entertainment and celebrate the start of the new academic year.





Lights! Families! Oakland!

Lights! Families! Oakland! is a series featuring immersive light installations and open street, family-friendly play spaces coming to Oakland this fall. Play is essential for the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being of children and youth and it can be an important source of relaxation and stimulation for adults as well. With this in mind, OBID is working to transform our public spaces in Oakland into playspaces, where people of all ages and abilities can play, relax, and unwind. All events and installations are free and open to the public! Come play in Oakland!

Oscillation Installation

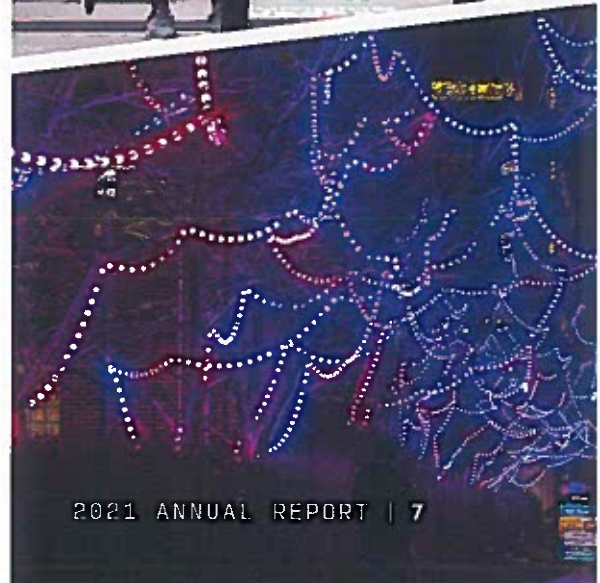
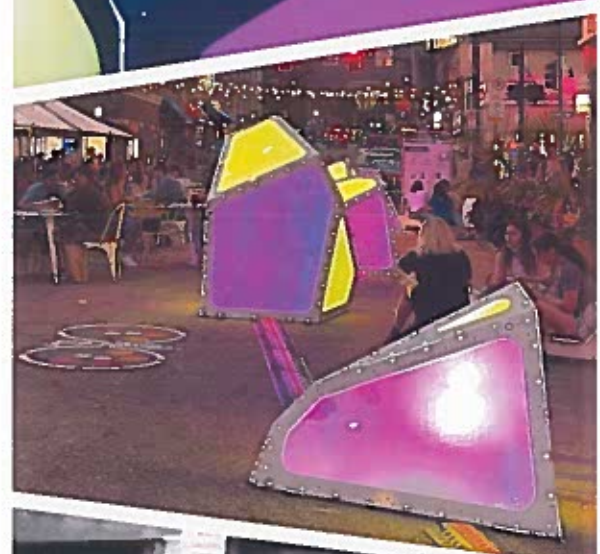
Giant crystals that come alive in response to movement, Oscillation is an interactive installation that uses sight, sound, and movement to spark community activity and social interaction through play. The installation acts somewhat like a theremin, an unusual musical instrument that you can play without touching it. As you walk toward the piece, it plays different sounds and pitches depending on your distance from it. And as you move and dance around it, colors reflect and refract light in different ways based on your angle and position. Oscillation is made up of five parts that are deconstructed from a solid cube using a Voronoi algorithm. The crystal-like forms can be moved around and placed in a variety of formations. The result is a totally immersive experience that breaks down social barriers and fuels joyful conversations between strangers.

Oakland Ave Playspace

This fall, the closed section of Oakland Avenue was transformed into an outdoor playspace. Coupled with the Oscillation installation, playground stencils were added to the street to create a fun, interactive, and engaging experience for visitors of all ages. Play is essential for the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being of children and youth and it can be an important source of relaxation and stimulation for adults as well. With this in mind, OBID is working to transform our public spaces in Oakland into playspaces, where people of all ages and abilities can play, relax, and unwind.

Living Lights Installation

As part of Lights! Families! Oakland!, OBID and UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital, present the "Living Lights" installation along Forbes Avenue from the corner of Craft Ave to Halket Street. It will make use of sound responsive lights and custom curated patterns by local artist ProjectileObjects. The installation will change from month to month, so keep an eye out for the illuminated display from December until March 2022.



Partner Programs

Partnerships are at the heart of successful creative placemaking projects. In order to expand our projects to have broader impacts within the business district, as well as the surrounding areas, we have begun partnering with like minded organizations to create innovative placemaking interventions and activations.



Argyle Studio

Argyle Studio marked its grand opening on Thursday, May 27th in a festive ribbon cutting ceremony. The innovative retail experience on Forbes Avenue hosts an assortment of Pittsburgh's best vendors, makers, and artists. In addition to offering unique merchandise, programming at the studio will include featured vendors, hands-on maker opportunities, music and other activities. Argyle pop-up shop seeks to support emerging and established small businesses as well as local artists and makers. Project partners include Oakland Business Improvement District, UPMC, InnovatePGH, Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County Community Infrastructure & Tourism Fund, the City of Pittsburgh and the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh.



Oakland Open

Building off the successes of the pedestrian conversion of Oakland Ave in 2020, the Oakland Open offered a new way for Pittsburghers to get outside in a safe and fun environment by pioneering the first pop-up mini-golf course. The Oakland Open, a nine-hole mini-golf course that is free and open to the public, is a collaborative program between the Oakland Business Improvement District and the Pittsburgh Innovation District along with key private and public partners. It offers a new way for Pittsburghers to generate support for local restaurants, bars, and businesses in Oakland while getting outside in a safe and fun environment. Installed in March 2021, this was Pittsburgh's first pop-up winter mini-golf course, open snow, rain, or shine! The course is ADA accessible, including ingress and egress of the course, staffing hut, and every putting green. The Oakland Open opened on the one-block section of Oakland Avenue that is temporarily closed to traffic and in October 2021 it was relocated to Schenley Plaza to continue to be enjoyed by the public.

S. Craig Street Sidewalk Sale

The Oakland Business Improvement District, with support from the Urban Redevelopment Authority, worked with local S. Craig Street businesses to host the S. Craig Street Sidewalk Sale on Saturday, Sep 25, 2021. The sidewalk sale featured local businesses along S. Craig Street, along with an artist market featuring goods from Nabakindo All-Natural Skincare, Zim Syed, Lindsey Hill, LaVerne Kemp Studios, Eva Conrad, and King Reld. The event also featured live performances by OrangeG & Matthew Crowe featuring Kate Beck.



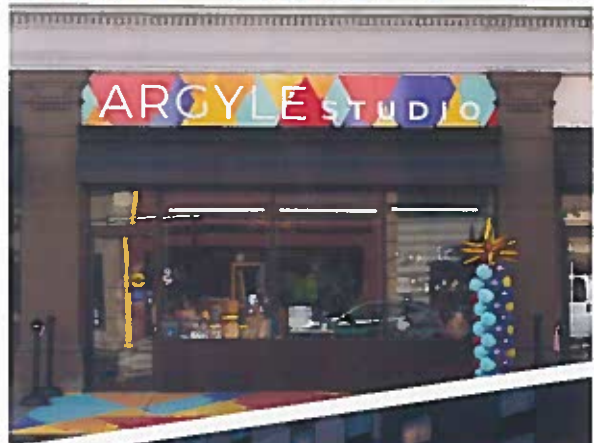
Shop Small Oakland Crawl

The Shop Small Oakland Crawl highlights the wonderful retail businesses, artisans, and makers in Oakland. On Thursday, December 2nd and Friday, December 3rd, 2021, shoppers were invited to shop small businesses in Oakland while enjoying music, food and prizes.

The Shop Small Oakland Crawl featured a Holiday Pop-Up Vendor Market hosting 12 independent artisans and makers at the Hilton Garden Inn Pittsburgh University Place Pop-Up Vendor Market along with drink and food specials and live music.

Argyle Studio hosted a pop-up cider tasting, music, and extended business hours and Maggie & Stella's Cards & Gifts extended their business hours and offered cocktails and appetizers to enhance the holiday shopping experience. Shoppers receive a stamp in their Shop Small Oakland Crawl passport at each of the three participating retailers on Thursday, 12/2 and/or Friday, 12/3. Once shoppers received all three stamps, they turned their passports into any of the retailers to be entered to win one of the available raffle prizes:

- **Argyle Studios** raffled a No-Waste Desk handcrafted by 'Burghwood, valued at \$1,800.
- **Hilton Garden Inn Pittsburgh University Place** raffled a weekend stay in Lake George (Adirondack Mountains in NY) and a weekend stay at White Face Lodge (Lake Placid)
- **Maggie & Stella's Cards & Gifts** raffled a basket of local Pittsburgh wares.



SUCCESS STORY:

Uzima Mayan and Shay

Sheronica and Mayan Marshall established Uzima in 2021 to provide healing to the Oakland community in all areas of people's lives with an emphasis on nutrition and mental health.

Uzima is short for Mti Wa Uzima, which means 'Tree of Life' in Swahili; their goal is that Uzima can become this for the city of Pittsburgh. Their vision is to provide healing to all walks of life and the first step in the healing process is awareness. The store was purposely designed to provide more awareness regarding mental health through funny and thought-provoking comments, images and activities.

Originally owners of Salud Juicery, a wellness bar offering products to help facilitate a strong health journey for Pittsburghers and their neighbors, they debuted Uzima in 2021. Much of the inspiration behind the business change came from employees and customers of Salud Juicery. After noticing the struggles faced by his community, and empathizing with their trials, Marshall decided to do his part in bringing some relief to Pittsburgh; he hopes Uzima will help combat some of the stigma surrounding mental health.



Guests are met with an open and inviting space fit with interactive activities designed to get people talking about the instances that bother them the most. Along the walls inside Uzima are a Depression Cloud, Wall of Fame section, and Rose, Bud, and Thorn Board where patrons can open up about their journey, practice self-reflection, or see familiar faces of celebrities diagnosed with various mental health conditions. Uzima also features Jamie's Jubilee Library, a small library containing insightful and inspirational books on mental health. This little library features some of Jamie's favorite books as they inspired her and others in dealing with their mental health challenges. These books are available to borrow, free of charge.



OBID Financials

Oakland Business Improvement District (Of The City of Pittsburgh) Statements of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Position Year Ended December 31, 2020

Operating Revenues:

Assessment Revenue- Current	\$578,094
Assessment Revenue - Prior year	\$0
Contributions	\$147,500
Grant Income	\$261,001
Grant Income - Innovation Oakland	\$36,867
In-Kind Revenue	\$88,309
Total Operating Revenues	\$1,111,771

Operating Expenses:

Personnel and Operations	\$287,599
Public Space Maintenance	\$239,709
Public Space Improvement	\$86,062
Destination Marketing	\$20,133
Education and Outreach	\$26,712
Grant Expense	\$36,867
Strategic Planning	\$76,792
Outdoor Seating and Safety	\$106,188
Retail Plan and Pop Up	\$46,170
In-Kind expense	\$88,309
Total Operating Expenses	\$1,014,541
Operating Income (Loss)	\$97,230

Nonoperating Revenues (Expenses):

Interest Income	\$354
Depreciation Expense	(\$80,090)
Total Nonoperating Revenues (Expenses)	(\$79,736)

Change in Net Position **\$17,494**

Net Position

Beginning of Year	\$448,193
End of Year	\$465,687

Assets

Current Assets

Cash and cash equivalents	\$598,589
Certificate of deposit	\$11,021
Assessment receivable	\$5,871
Grants Receivable	\$40,770
Total Current Assets	\$656,251

Capital Assets

Office and Plaza equipment	\$566,012
Accumulated depreciation	(\$566,012)
Total Capital Assets	\$0
Total Assets	\$656,251

Liabilities and Net Position

Liabilities

Accounts payable	\$78,854
Unearned Revenue	\$108,378
Other withholding	\$3,332
Total Liabilities	\$190,564

Net Position

Net investment in capital assets	\$0
Unrestricted	\$465,687
Total Net Position	\$465,687
Total Liabilities and Net Position	\$656,251

ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH:

Meet our new Director of Placemaking and Activation, **Cate Irvin**

Cate Irvin is a sociologist, public health specialist, urbanist, and community engagement expert.

She comes to the Oakland Business Improvement District from Chattanooga, TN, where she has spent the last few years working with the Chattanooga Department of Transportation on public engagement and policy development. Building on her public health and urban sociology background, Cate specializes in tying together place-based and health-based initiatives with detailed research to create vibrant, healthy environments with thriving local economies.



Our Partnership with Pittsburgh Innovation District



OBID is proud of the many successful partnerships and collaborations we have forged over the years that have helped our organization and our community grow and thrive.

The pandemic reinforced the importance of partners for our survival and for our success and we are grateful for one such partner, the Pittsburgh Innovation District. Together we share a common mission to support Oakland as a vibrant and dynamic business district that provides the community context for innovators to thrive. Together we collaborate on a variety of projects and initiatives that support a growing culture of innovation attracting new talent and entrepreneurship growing out of our world-renowned universities and hospitals. Collaboration is what we do best, we share space, staff, resources, ideas and expertise to move our community forward. Together we will continue to forge new and innovative programming and amenities that will ensure Oakland's place as Pennsylvania's global center.

Our Team

Georgia Petropoulos
Chief Executive Officer

Cate Irvin
*Director of Placemaking
and Activation*

Julie Grabiak
*Operations Manager,
Block by Block*

Lamont Craven
*Associate Director,
Pittsburgh Innovation District*

Aaron Henderson
*Associate Professor, Artist,
Advisor, and Curator*

Julia Orff
Intern

Our Board

Kelly Mcbroom
*Chairperson
Dollar Bank*

Adrienne Walnoha
*1st Vice-Chairperson
Social Artistry Consulting*

Brandon Smith
*2nd Vice-Chairperson
Fuel and Fuddle*

John P. Krolicki
*Treasurer
UPMC*

Maurry Mendelovich
*Secretary
Stack'd and Chikn Restaurants*

Margaret Bell
UPMC

Jasbir Bhangal
*Property Owner
Prince of India*

Jill Curry
*Hilton Garden Inn Pittsburgh
University Place*

Derek Dauphin
*Pittsburgh Department of City
Planning*

Matthew Feinman
*Law Offices of Matthew S.
Feinman*

Molly Finnell
*Property Owner, LLC
Murland Management*

Henry Horn-Pyatt
*Mayor's Office
City of Pittsburgh*

Janine Johnson
*Hello Bistro/Eat'n Park
Hospitality Group*

Richard Kaplan
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

Robert E. Kelly Jr.
John C.R. Kelly Realty

Bruce A. Kraus
*Council Person District 3,
City of Pittsburgh*

Pete Leventis
Property Owner

Ron Levick
The Strand Building

Jennifer March
Family House, Inc.

Mark Musolino
Avenu

Tyler Perlmutter
Pinecrest LLC Property Owner

Monica Rattigan
University of Pittsburgh

Todd Reidbord
Walnut Capital

Jim Schmitt
UPMC

Matthew Sterne
University of Pittsburgh

Paul A. Supowitz
University of Pittsburgh

Phyllis Wechsler
Property Owner

Dr. S. Rand Werrin
Property Owner

John M. Wilds, Ph.D.
Oakland Rotary of Pittsburgh

Dr. Sibdas Ghosh
Carlow University

Ting Yen
Atarashi & Fuku Tea



OAKLAND
BUSINESS
IMPROVEMENT
DISTRICT

About Us

We are a dedicated team of business district visionaries and advocates who are leading the exciting rise of Oakland - Pittsburgh's largest university and hospital district. Since 1999, the Oakland Business Improvement District has been the public/private partnership that provides enhanced beautification services, marketing events and promotion, public art and streetscape improvements and business development on behalf of over 250 member business and property owners. The OBID is supported, in part, by these member owners including Carlow University, UPMC, Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC and the University of Pittsburgh.

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