pennsylvania
COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

PCA Creative Communities
Letter of Interest Coversheet

Lead Applicant Information

Organization: City of Lebanon

Address: 400 S 8th Street

City: Lebanon **Zip Code:** PA

Municipality: Lebanon City **County:** Lebanon County

Phone: 717-228-4401

Website: www.lebanonpa.org

FEIN: 23-6001905

Contact Name: Janelle Mendoff

Contact Title: Community & Economic Development Administrator

Contact Phone: 717-228-4487

Contact Email: jmendoff@lebanonpa.org

Organization Type: unit of government

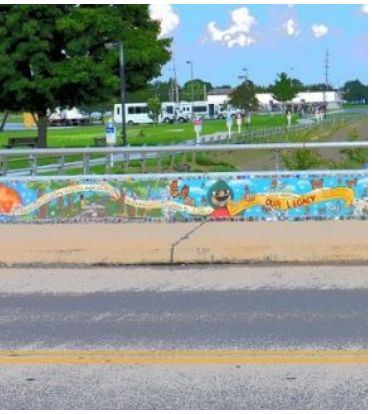
☑ **By checking the box, you are indicating acknowledgment of and intention to comply with the local government resolution requirement, if your community is selected to participate in the Creative Communities Pilot Program. (See full application guidelines for more information on this requirement.)**

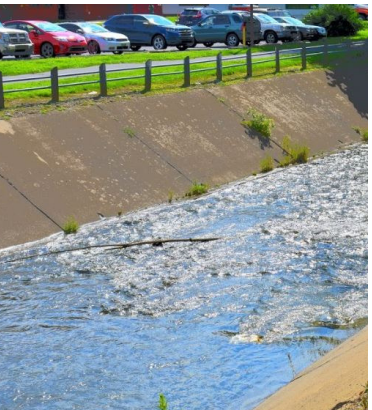
Letter of Interest (LOI) Submission Instructions: LOI deadline, Friday, June 28, 2019. LOIs must be submitted via email to RA-OAcreativepa@pa.gov.

a. Completed coversheet form with acknowledgment of and intention to comply with the local government resolution requirement, if your community is selected to participate in the Creative Communities Pilot Program.

b. Narrative (3 pages max.)
   - Brief community description.
   - Description of any existing cultural plans and/or experience implementing arts-based development strategies.
   - Description of successful community partnerships.
   - Description of community opportunity or challenge the organization would like to address through this program.

c. 3 Letters of Support (local government, planning, convention and visitors bureau (CVB), business improvment district (BID), chamber of commerce, local arts organization, etc.).





PA COUNCIL ON THE ARTS - CREATIVE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

CITY OF LEBANON LETTER OF INTENT

The City of Lebanon, in partnership with the Lebanon Valley Council on the Arts, Downtown Lebanon BID/Main Street, and the Lebanon Valley Conservancy are enthusiastic about the opportunity to be considered to apply for the PA Council on the Arts Creative Communities program. This opportunity would provide needed funds to connect our artisans and makers to the as-built environment that we are proud to say, makes up Lebanon, PA.

About Lebanon City, Opportunities and Challenges:
The City of Lebanon is located in Southeast-Central Pennsylvania and is home to over 25,000 individuals representing a diverse community, including a more than 40% Hispanic population and a growing Arab populace. Lebanon City serves as the county seat and has since the early 1800's. The city is rich in culture, art and history. Formerly a steel town and originator of Lebanon Bologna, Opera Fudge and Shuey's Pretzels; Lebanon City has evolved into a bedroom community.

The City of Lebanon is the economic center for our region, serving our residents with numerous public, private and non-profit entities that have a positive impact on the quality of life. Many of the buildings in the downtown are historic and attractive dating back to the 1800's and some in the 1700's. However, comparable to other downtowns in our Commonwealth, Lebanon's core has changed. For Lebanon it is the loss of steel manufacturing, which supported the local economy, followed by the shifts in retail from downtown areas to shopping malls and retail chains to consumer preference for online shopping. Foot traffic has decreased in the downtown and we have experienced an increase of vacant storefronts.

The percentage of individuals living below poverty is about 25% of the population and the medium household earnings of $37,511 is well below the State's average. One of the concerns identified in our City is affordable art programming for kids and adults. It is well established that engagement with the arts improves economic conditions and academic performance and contributes to increased health and wellness. Participation and exposure to the arts is a catalyst for cultural understanding, leveling the economic gap, and building empathy. Lebanon faces a multitude of economic challenges, resulting in limited resources for art, parks and recreation.

Not wanting to simply wait and react to the economic cards we were dealt, in fall 2014, the City of Lebanon began the process of developing an economic development action agenda called the Grow Lebanon 2020 Plan. The Grow Lebanon 2020 Plan is a product of considerable research and stakeholder engagement. Together these activities resulted in a solid understanding of the challenges, market conditions, opportunities and priorities that shaped the formation of the Grow Lebanon 2020 Plan. It is intended to be a non-partisan vision with action steps designed to engage all of our City's residents. Our City is growing and changing, and the Grow Lebanon Plan offers a vision with action steps required to make it happen. Our projects comply with this plan.

The urban core is the heartbeat of any city. The City of Lebanon has maintained a well-defined central business district and new investments are adding to its vibrancy. To ensure that this trend continues to catalyze additional development, the City of Lebanon established a business improvement district and became PA Main Street designated. We have high-valued assets and opportunities here that we must build upon and promote- our educational pathways, recreational opportunities, artistic abilities, natural resources, urban center and the diversity of our residents to name only a few. We seek to establish the City as an area of "Creative Placemaking" defined by the National Endowment for the Arts as a culture in which "partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities.

Creative Placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired." With this in mind, the City and its partners envision projects that can bring the people of Lebanon together by improving existing areas, renewing shared spaces and introducing artwork to promote a sense of social connection and harmony.

The City has a growing immigrant and diverse ethnic resident base. A culturally diverse population has been credited to contributing to greater economic and social vibrancy. In order to further support and celebrate our diversity, the City in partnership with Juntos de Lebanon, the BID/Main Street, the Lebanon Valley Chamber of Commerce and HACC have hosted a Hispanic Gala each fall. This year, the event has been expanded to include all cultures and changed the name to Multi Culture Fest. We will showcase the different ethnic foods, music, dancing and interactive games for all to enjoy.

Our Vision:
There are a few different projects that connect to makeup this initiative as a whole. We are emphasizing the arts through connectivity, placemaking and branding within our downtown central business district.

Connectivity – We have developed a connective project that focuses on the revitalization, enhancement, and development of our downtown business district with an emphasis on our natural resources, the Quittapahilla Creek and our responsible use of green space, urban parks and naturalized areas.

Artist Alley, which is the first phase of the proposed Liberty Park Trail, is a pedestrian-only alley located in the center of the BID/Main Street area. We plan to transform this area into a gathering place. It will include murals, lighting, greenery, entrance archways, benches and tables. The murals that will cover the buildings along each side of Artist Alley will showcase Lebanon's rich history as well as embody what makes up Lebanon, including the diverse culture, staple architecture and goods produced in Lebanon. We will be transforming this underutilized space in the heart of downtown Lebanon, into a community gathering and events space.

From Artist Alley, the Liberty Park Trail will connect you with wayfinding signage to the Veterans Memorial Walkway which is a 5 acre pedestrian and bike path along the Quittapahilla Creek. In addition, we will be using local artist and community members to create mosaic murals along two bridges that connect you from one side of the Quittapahilla Creek to the Veterans Memorial Walkway. These mosaic murals will be designed by the local artists influenced by the waterway and greenspace surrounding and near the area.

Placemaking – The Lebanon Career and Technology Center (LCTC) has agreed to add projects from this plan to their curriculum. LCTC students will be creating functional art in the form of custom designed park benches to place along the Veterans Memorial Walkway. These students will also be creating two (2) archways for when you enter the Artist Alley.

Additionally, we will be using local artists to create environmental sculptures to be showcased year- round in an underutilized area of the Veterans Memorial Walkway. An environmental sculpture has a special relationship with its surroundings. It's planned for a particular site, and the qualities of that site influence the making of the artwork.

Branding – Lebanon PA Made program was created by the Downtown Lebanon BID/Main Street and the City of Lebanon. This program offers marketing materials to anyone in Lebanon County who produces a good including crafters, artists, cooks, welders, etc. This initiative showcases these goods with a logo indicating "Lebanon, PA Made". In an effort to promote our Lebanon, PA Makers, the Promotions Committee of the Downtown Lebanon Main Street Program hosts an annual event in partnership with the Community of Lebanon Association called 'Makers Fest'. The annual festival is held the first weekend of June in downtown Lebanon and is a day to celebrate Lebanon, PA. This successful event has been held for the past two years and we are excited to continue the Makers Fest moving forward.

Meet our Partners:
The City knows that no effective plan can be implemented on its own. It takes strong collaboration and commitment to make a plan happen. Each partner has a vital role to the success of this project and initiative.

Lebanon Valley Council on the Arts (LVCA) is an arts and cultural center in downtown Lebanon. LVCA encourages artistic excellence, diversity and innovation and empowers the arts by providing services and programming to the community. LVCA has partnered with the City of Lebanon and Downtown BID/ Main Street for the First Friday Art Walks, Mosaic Mural projects, and the Lebanon PA Made program over the past few years. Numerous other partnerships with Making a Difference, Millersville S. Central PaArtners, local churches and the Youth Advocate Program have resulted in a variety of art programming in the Lebanon community.

Lebanon Valley Conservancy's mission is to promote the conservation and preservation of the unique cultural, historical and natural resources of our region, for the benefit of present and future generations. The Conservancy partners with the City on various projects each year, including the Pollinator Garden along the Veteran's Memorial Walkway and riparian buffer plantings. Laurie Crawford, the Executive Director, serves as the vice chair to the Downtown Lebanon BID/Main Street Design Committee and has been a part of several community outreach meetings that brought in revitalization ideas for our downtown.

Downtown Lebanon BID/Main Street is the organization dedicated to ensure vibrancy and economic vitality in Downtown Lebanon through design, promotion and revitalization to attract and retain businesses, residents and visitors to the City of Lebanon. The PA Keystone Communities Main Street designation was awarded in 2018 as a partnership between the City of Lebanon and the Downtown Lebanon BID (Lebanon Foundation). The BID/Main Street created the Lebanon PA Made program as an initiative from the Lebanon City Grow Lebanon 2020 Plan to showcase the artisans and makers that build our community. The BID/Main Street in partnership with the City of Lebanon, Lebanon Valley Council on the Arts and the Community of Lebanon Association started the Annual Makers Fest that is held the first Saturday of June.

Lebanon City has been a driving force behind connecting all partners and collaboration to form our vision. With the help from PCA's Creative Communities Program and our local partners, we can help downtown Lebanon become an even better place to live, work and play. Together we can, **GROW LEBANON!**

Downtown Lebanon BID

June 27, 2019

To Whom it May Concern,

Please accept this letter as my support for the City of Lebanon's Creative Communities LOI as the Downtown Lebanon Business Improvement District Manager and Main Street Manager.

As a designated Main Street our Promotions, Safe Clean & Green and Design Committees have set goals that a line closely with those of the City of Lebanon's proposal. Our vision is to create vibrancy within our downtown for our city residents and visitors. We want to be able to create connectivity and place making within our downtown for revitalization and economic development while also promoting the artisans and makers who live in Lebanon, PA. With the help of funding towards this project, we can further grow downtown Lebanon to become an even better place to live, work and play.

The City of Lebanon works very closely with the BID and we are a partnership for our PA Keystone Communities Main Street Designation. Our organizations work hand in hand to ensure vibrancy and economic vitality in Downtown Lebanon. The BID/Main Street created the Lebanon, PA Made program as an initiative from the Grow Lebanon 2020 Plan to showcase the artisans and makers that build our community. The BID/Main Street in partnership with the City of Lebanon, Lebanon Valley Council on the Arts and the Community of Lebanon Association started the Annual Makers Fest that is held the first Saturday of June.

With the PA Council on the Arts Creative Communities Initiative, the City of Lebanon and their partners, have the opportunity to really make an impact and showcase our diverse and creative community.

We thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,

Amy Kopecky

Downtown Lebanon BID Manager

847 Cumberland Street • Suite 2 • Lebanon, PA 17042 • www.DowntownLebanon.com

THE LEBANON VALLEY CONSERVANCY

June 25, 2019

Pennsylvania Council on the Arts
216 Finance Building
Commonwealth and North Streets
Harrisburg, PA 17120

To Whom it May Concern,

The Board of the Lebanon Valley Conservancy supports the City of Lebanon's interest in the Creative Communities Initiative program. The Conservancy works closely with the BID and the City of Lebanon to support local, community based artists and craftspeople to get involved in the downtown vitality and help create a new urban green space in Liberty Alley Park.

This grant would compliment our greenspace projects downtown and enhance areas for outdoor recreation, improve open spaces and encourage the residents to utilize their town's resources. The Artist Alley and Liberty Trail will be a place where all residents can come, enjoy nature, build community, enjoy outdoor recreation areas and promote Lebanon's unique cultural diversity. The park will be the first in the downtown to bring elements of art, nature and culture.

The City of Lebanon has been a great partner with the Conservancy. As the Vice-Chair of the Design/ Safe Clean and Green Committee for Main Street, I have worked closely with this organization and admire their passion to create events and outdoor recreational space that is inviting for everyone. As a committee we want a space downtown with the true culture and history that reflects our town and a place to blend creativity with environmental responsibility. I hope you will consider the City of Lebanon for an application for the Creative Communities Initiative.

Sincerely,

Exective Director
The Lebanon Valley Conservancy

770 Cumberland St. Suite A Lebanon, PA 17042 717-273-6400

LEBANON VALLEY
COUNCIL ON THE ARTS
770 Cumberland St., Lebanon, PA, 17042 - Tel 717.273.0033
www.lebanonartscouncil.org - lebanonartscouncil@gmail.com

June 27, 2019

Pennsylvania Council on the Arts

216 Finance Building

Commonwealth & North Streets

Harrisburg, PA 17120

To the Review Board:

The purpose of this letter is to express support of the City of Lebanon for the Creative Communities Initiative. The Lebanon Valley Council on the Arts has a long history of using PCA funds through the Project Stream and Millersville South Central PaArtners programs. These funds have been used to reach our city and surrounding area with programs that engage diverse people through art with the goal of building empathy, improving wellness, encouraging dialogue, and educating our youth in efforts to build culture resulting in a better tomorrow for our city.

For 12 years since owning property in Downtown Lebanon, the City worked with the council to rehabilitate a vacant building to create suitable space for an art center based in Lebanon. Following that renovation, adjacent vacant properties rehabilitated, and we were able to sell and purchase a property central to Downtown Lebanon. It is our vision to continue working with the city to improve neglected and underutilized spaces for public enjoyment. This summer, a large tile mosaic mural will be installed at a city playground located within a neighborhood plagued with poverty, language barriers, perceptions of crime based on sporadic incidents, drugs and fragmented families. The community will be engaged in the process of installation overseen by a Community Artist to build new experiences in their neighborhood to beautify their space, support their values, give voice to their contributions to our city—improving the culture through art.

The Creative Communities Initiative will provide the resources and opportunity to coordinate our efforts with other organizations in the city to create a more cohesive and integrated environment that transitions us from surviving to thriving. Please consider our request.

Sincerely,

Sharon Zook, M.A.

President

The official registration and financial information of The Lebanon Valley Council on the Arts, Inc. may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

PENNSYLVANIA'S
Lebanon Valley

June 18, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

Please accept this letter of support from Visit Lebanon Valley regarding the Pa. Council on the Arts grant for the City of Lebanon.

The Lebanon Valley is clearly the "road less traveled" for most visitors, unlike our quite popular neighbors; Hershey and Lancaster. However, we are seeing a vast increase in interest in the Lebanon Valley through requests for information and interest noted through our office. With more revitalization in the Downtown area and further development, Lebanon can draw many first-time visitors and encourage residents to feel pride in their community and share great programs and activities with friends and relatives. Lebanon boasts such a rich history; revolving around the Coleman Family and many fascinating stories just waiting to be told. There are plans to create walking tours through Downtown Lebanon to share historic stories and highlight the impressive architecture. Any improvement to the area , like murals, or revitalization would reflect kindly on our efforts. This program grant will aid in the promotion of, tourism in Lebanon as well as further the education, awareness and appreciation of Lebanon, valued by former generations, current generations and those yet to come.

Visit Lebanon Valley is a non-profit Destination Marketing Organization that spotlights the area's rich culture and heritage by promoting the unique attractions and local businesses to visitors and residents alike. From exploring the expansive outdoors to well preserved historic architecture and artifacts, to antiquing or sipping local brews and wines, Visit Lebanon Valley shares all the appeal that makes this area truly special. Please give the City if Lebanon every possible priority for this appeal.

Sincerely,

Jennifer C. Kuzo

Jennifer C. Kuzo

President, Visit Lebanon Valley

31 South 8th Street • Lebanon, PA 17042 • 717.277.0100 • info@visitlebanonvalley.com

PENNSYLVANIA'S Lebanon Valley

LEBANON COUNTY
CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY
C·E·N·T·E·R

833 METRO DRIVE • LEBANON, PENNSYLVANIA, 17042 • TELEPHONE: (717) 273-8551 • FAX: (717) 273-0534 • www.lcctc.k12.pa.us

June 27, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

The Lebanon County Career and Technology Center is proud to support the City of Lebanon's PA Council on the Arts Creative Communities Initiative.

The Mission of the Lebanon County Career and Technology Center is to provide high school and adult students with the skill, knowledge, and understanding necessary to obtain employment, advance in careers, pursue postsecondary education and enrich their lives. We recognize that training students for tomorrow's careers are built upon the foundations of state-of-the-art equipment, technically competent staff, materials which reflect current trends, unbiased counseling, planned work experience, and leadership activities that promote confidence and self-worth.

The Lebanon County Career and Technology Center encourages community engagement and are proud to have our students work showcased throughout Lebanon. In 2017, welding students fabricated an archway for the South Sixth Street Playground in Lebanon City. We have also participated in several other City initiatives that promote the culture and people of Lebanon. These activities are a wonderful example of how classroom training and hands-on, real-world experience combines for the benefit of the community. The City of Lebanon and the Career and Technology Center would like to continue projects like this as part of their Creative Communities Initiative.

We ask that you give the City of Lebanon true consideration for the PA Council on the Arts Creative Communities Initiative.

Sincerely,

Glenn K. Meck II
Administrative Director
Lebanon County Career & Technology Center

LEBANON VALLEY
Chamber of Commerce

Sarah Merritt
Director of Pennsylvania Creative Communities
216 Finance Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Ms. Merritt:

I am writing in support of the ***City of Lebanon*** application for the Creative Communities Pilot Initiative.

The Lebanon Valley Chamber of Commerce works closely with the City of Lebanon and is in support of all the ongoing efforts to introduce arts and activities in the downtown area. Some of these efforts include the Makers Fest and First Friday Art Walks that include associated downtown activities for residents of all ages, interests, and cultures. Holding events like the Makers Fest highlights the diverse talents of our regions artists and makers.

Additional programming is in the works and will have the support and partnership of the Chamber as we feel strongly that the more we work together to bring arts, creativity, and inclusion to our downtown, the better chance it has for growth and further development.

Sincerely,

Karen Groh

Karen Groh
President/CEO

604 Cumberland Street
Lebanon, PA 17042-5272
P 717.273.3727 • F 717.273.7940
lvchamber.org

Vision Statement
The Lebanon Valley Chamber of Commerce will excel as the premier business leadership organization and catalyst for change, growth and prosperity in the Lebanon Valley

Mission Statement
To be a leader in the advancement of the economic vitality and quality of life in the Lebanon Valley through access, resources, and services to the business community.