

# Toledo Community Foundation

## Overland Initiative – Partners for Places

Toledo, OH

### Challenge

How to transform an 80-acre brownfield site through community revitalization, blight reduction, and creative place-making. The neighborhood has a population of 5,997, of which 77 percent are African-American. Since the closure of the original plant, these neighborhoods have suffered from disinvestment, poor employment and educational opportunities, foreclosures, blight, and crime.

### Innovation

Focused heavily on previously unexplored cross-sector partnerships. The Lucas County Sustainability Director and the Foundation consulted with the Toledo Design Center to assist with implementation of Partners for Places, resulting in a redesign of prominent vacant parcels. The design involves green infrastructure (rain and pollinator gardens) and will integrate trees obtained through the city's U.S. Forest Service award. Through this project, resident leaders have learned how green infrastructure improvements can lay the groundwork for community development and reinvestment.

Through a public-private partnership, Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority is using an investment of \$16.8 million in state, local, and private funds to transform this brownfield into a modern manufacturing facility known as Overland Industrial Park. To leverage these investments, the Foundation initiated the Overland Initiative, a long-term place-based initiative to build resident leadership capacity and revitalize the neighborhood surrounding the new park. Foundation staff members work with residents to make connections to institutions, intermediaries, leadership development opportunities, and funding. The Foundation supported the successful City of Toledo 2013 U.S. EPA Area Wide Planning Grant, which engaged residents in development planning, as well as a successful 2013 U.S. EPA Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities award. In 2014, the Foundation partnered with the Toledo-Lucas County Sustainability Commission to obtain a Partners for Places grant from the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities to pursue resident-directed projects that activate the regional sustainability plan in the neighborhood. A 2015 U.S. Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant was awarded to City of Toledo for urban tree canopy restoration.

### Public Sector Partners

City of Toledo, Lucas County, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Forest Service

