



The 2018 Annual Report:

Our Passion for Culture, Creativity and Commerce



Respecting the Past, Enhancing the Present, Crafting the Future

Oberlin Business Partnership: The 2018 Report

Our Mission: To advance and promote the sustainable growth and prosperity of the Oberlin community.

Board of Directors

Your friends and neighbors on our board of directors make it possible for OBP to fulfill its mission.

Larry Funk, President / Northshore Properties

Rick Flood, VP / Solutions in Sustainability

Kathy Perales, Secretary / Perales Law

Dennis Mavrich, Treasurer / Mavrich & Mavrich Insurance

Leo Braido / Oberlin IGA

William County / Retired Resident

Sylvan Long / WSP USA

Jonathan Rice / Oberlin Resident

Tanya Rosen-Jones / Rosen-Jones Photography

OBP Staff

Janet Haar, Executive Director

Elizabeth Elrod, Administrative Assistant

Bethany Hobbs, Bookkeeper

As the Oberlin Business Partnership (OBP), we work with individual residents, businesses, and community organizations—our partners—to sustain and enhance our vibrant, resilient, and prosperous community, for all who live and learn, play and work, and shop and invest in the City of Oberlin.

In this year's report, we invite you to take a look at the many ways OBP has attended to its mission. Each of our programs is designed to contribute to the prosperity of Oberlin and its residents. Our high-profile events commence in June with Chalk Walk, continue apace through summer, and wrap up in November with the Holiday Promotions Campaign. Our events in Tappan Square attract local residents and visitors alike to celebrate the arts, enjoy a concert, and patronize local retailers and restaurants. It's how local celebrations drive the local economy.

The work of OBP is a team effort, and we're only as strong as our volunteers and key sponsors. We offer a special measure of gratitude to our volunteers—Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!—and an emphatic shout-out to our visionary and champion partners.

VISIONARY PARTNER: Northwest Bank

CHAMPION PARTNERS: Kendal at Oberlin & Mercy Allen Hospital



OBP and the Celebrations of 2018

OBP sponsors many events each year, and we encourage you to check oberlin.org to learn more. Here we highlight three events that brought residents and visitors together to celebrate Oberlin's culture and commerce.

On the last weekend of July, the Ohio Wheelmen rolled into town for their 51st National Meet. On Friday evening, in period garb, the magnificent Wheelmen (and women) and their rolling machines demonstrated the curious designs of "safety" bicycles and the challenging mounting techniques for tall bikes. Members of the crowd were invited to ride select bikes, and riders and viewers also celebrated that evening's community picnic and concert. The meet continued on Saturday with a ride from Oberlin to Kipton along the North Coast Trail.

Ohio Wheelmen roll west on College St. (largest wheel diameter: 60").



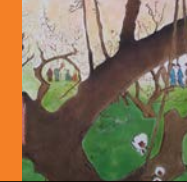
In the first week of August, Oberlin residents and visitors returned en masse to Tappan Square to celebrate the 26th annual Family Fun Fair. Classic cars stood fender to fender along East and West College Streets, where local merchants held sidewalk sales. Peppy the Clown entertained young and old alike. Younger kids took center stage during the big-wheel races, and Summer of '65 took the bandstand for an entertaining set of rock'n'roll classics.

"Drivers, keep to your lanes" (largest wheel diameter: 16").

Think globally, shop locally—especially when the first couple of the North Pole, Disney characters, and dozens of vendors and artisans come together at the annual Holiday Bazaar. The Lodge at the New Russia Township hosted the 2018 event, which drew a record number of vendors and shoppers, as well as pictures of kids with Santa, Ms. Claus, and Elsa of *Frozen*. Auctions, raffles, and door prizes added even more excitement to the don't-miss event of the season.

Santa, Ms. Claus, and a local vendor admire the work of the elves.





The Main Street Model

OBP attends to its mission in accordance with the principles of a revitalization program designed to promote the historic and economic redevelopment of traditional business districts. This program was designed by Main Street America, which serves as “the leading voice for preservation-based economic development and community revitalization across the country” (see mainstreet.org). In 2010, Main Street Oberlin, Inc. merged with the Oberlin Chamber of Commerce to become Main Street Oberlin, Inc., which conducts business under the banner of Oberlin Business Partnership (OBP).

OBP embraces the four-point Main Street approach to economic development through historic preservation.

- **Organization:** Success depends upon cooperation and working consensus. The OPB board and its committees cooperation among the many groups who play key roles in sustaining Oberlin’s economic development.
- **Design:** The reputation of Oberlin’s business district coincides with its physical presentation. OBP plays a central role in the appearance of buildings, window displays, landscaping, and promotional materials in order to convey a message about the big-mindedness of our downtown.
- **Marketing:** Through annual events and print materials such as the Oberlin Community Magazine, OBP highlights the distinctive characteristics of the City for shoppers, investors, business owners, and visitors. OBP encourages residents and visitors alike to celebrate Tappan Square and the business district by using it as a stage for community activities.
- **Business Development:** OBP uses the Good Morning Oberlin! series to promote partnerships between businesses, and also encourages existing businesses to devise ways to deliver more value to their customers than nearby big-box retail stores.



Respecting the Past, Enhancing the Present, Crafting the Future

Respecting Local Aspirations for a More Perfect Union

In May 1893, temperance advocates in Oberlin established the Anti-Saloon League to combat the epidemic of inebriation: men ages 15 and older consumed on average seven gallons of pure alcohol per year. The League pursued heady goals: the closing of all bars, taverns, and saloons and, in 1920, the Anti-Saloon League of America helped pass the 18th Amendment. Despite the 1933 passage of the 21st Amendment (which repealed the 18th Amendment), Oberlin remained a dry town for 50 more years. While the cause of universal temperance has faded from contemporary life, the legacy of the League’s desire for collective betterment lives on.

Still from the film Kansas Saloon Smashers (1901).



Enhancing the Beauty of Oberlin Today

2018 marks the first full year of beautification by the Keep Oberlin Beautiful Ambassadors (KOBAs). KOBAs members spruce up their adopted flower beds in the spring, maintain them through the summer, and prepare them for the dormant season in the fall—for the benefit of residents and visitors alike. Special thanks to Bert LaTran for helping make this program a success.

Heather Adelman and Ann Schartner get a hand from two (or four) young green thumbs.

Crafting the Leaders of Tomorrow

OBP plays a key role in supporting the growth of regional leaders via the annual Leadercast Women event (est. 2017). “The Leadercast event helps regional women recognize their own potential as leaders,” Haar said, “and to mentor budding leaders, too.” In 2018, the Leadercast Women event opened with a conversation with Carmen Twillie Ambar, president of Oberlin College; moderator Tiffany Tarpley, of WKYC; and Marcia Ballinger, president of Lorain County Community College (pictured). In coordination with the Women’s Leadership Network (est. 2018), OBP looks forward to crafting a gender-equitable future for regional leaders.



CoWork Oberlin



OBP knows that small businesses work stronger together. In 2018, OBP helped solve the long-standing problem of limited rental spaces suitable for small business owners. In early fall, OBP teamed up with LaunchHouse, the Highland Heights-based provider of coworking spaces. On November 8, CoWork Oberlin Powered by LaunchHouse (CWO) had its grand opening. The 4500sf space is located at 235 Artino Street, in Oberlin's Industrial Park.

"CoWork Oberlin is designed to be an inclusive, professional, and enriching coworking community which contributes to a thriving economy in Oberlin and Lorain County," said OBP executive director Janet Haar. CWO offers a shared work space, offices, a garden café, two conference rooms (including one equipped for video conferencing), and an event space. Officials from Lorain County Public Health helped design the lactation room—a first for a LaunchHouse site.

Kevin Flanigan, owner of the cowork space and General Plug, is a key advocate for local entrepreneurs and business development in Oberlin. He played a fundamental role in helping OBP create this coworking space. Thank you, Kevin!

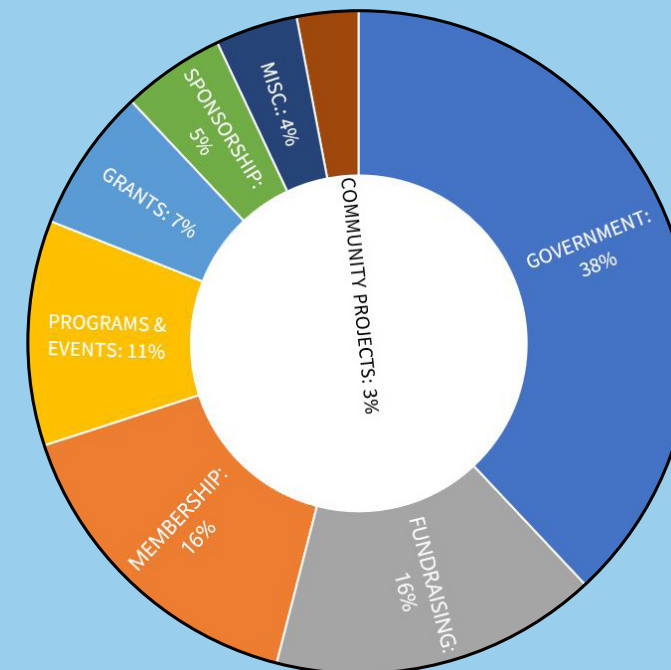


CWO also hosts a variety of workshops on professional development, networking happy hours, and counseling and training by the staff of the Small Business Development Center of Lorain. See www.coworkoberlin.org for more information about the space and the variety of membership options.

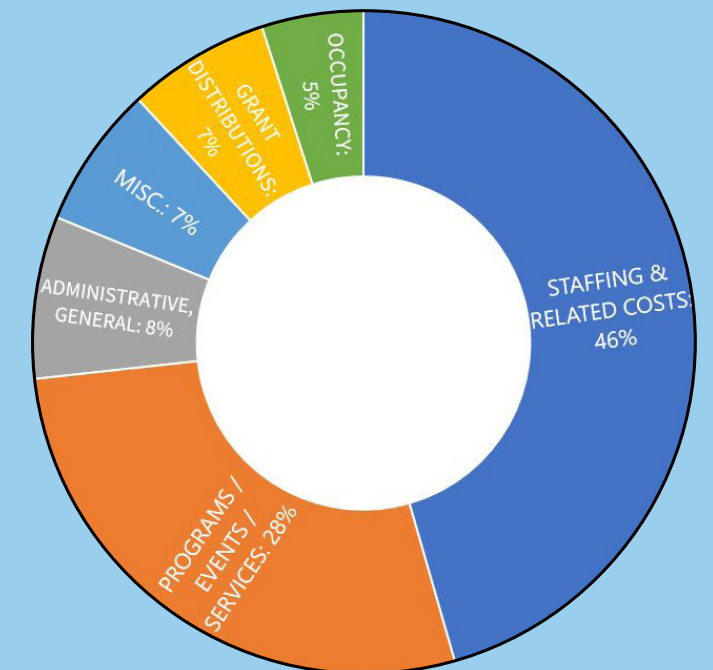
OBP Financials: The Benefits of Membership

The 124 OBP members in 2018 included 76 businesses, 25 nonprofit organizations, and 23 individual and family partners. Members contribute to—and benefit from—OBP's mission to support local growth and prosperity. Each year, OBP events and programs draw thousands of visitors to town to shop, dine and play. With its *Annual Visitors Guide*, the *Community Magazine* and media campaigns, OBP promotes Oberlin to fellow Ohioans and tourists alike. OBP also ensures the City looks the part by administering downtown beautification programs. Take a look at the makeup of the numbers behind the OBP mission.

Revenue, FY 2018



Expenses, FY 2018

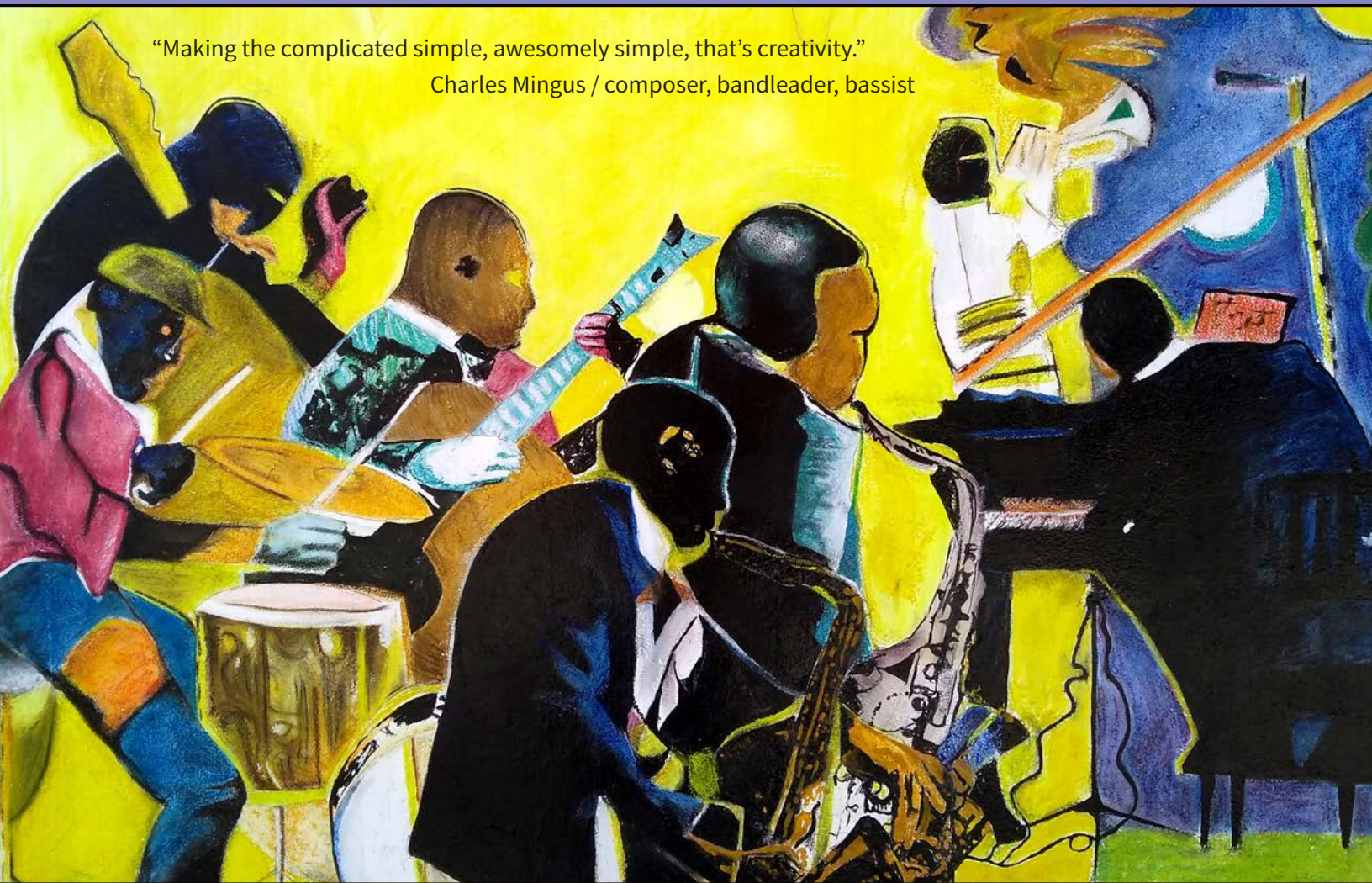




Stronger Together

“Making the complicated simple, awesomely simple, that’s creativity.”

Charles Mingus / composer, bandleader, bassist



Chalk Walk 2018 rendition at the Oberlin Public Library of Outchorus, Romare Bearden, 1979-80, Allen Memorial Art Museum

Like Northwest, OBP is committed to helping local businesses grow and prosper. I’m proud to be a member of OBP.

Mari Pravlik / Divisional AVP, Office Manager, Northwest Bank

OBP strengthens all of us through its welcoming spirit and creative approaches to CommUnity. Our membership is a real value!

Barbara Thomas / CEO, Kendal at Oberlin

OBP keeps me informed of what’s happening, community- and commerce-wise, and it helped me land a handful of clients, too!

Randal Doane / Writer and Editor, Cadence Editorial Services