



GROUND ED ANNUAL REPORT

2018





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Change is the law of life and those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.

– John F. Kennedy

Dear Friends,

Thank you for making 2018 another fantastic year for Grounded Strategies! This year was filled with many positive changes – we have a new name, an updated Strategic Plan, and our most diverse and talented team yet.

We have once again been able to increase the breadth and depth of services delivered directly on the ground. Our ongoing goal is to continue providing new resources and opportunities for residents that enables them to take ownership of the challenges faced in their own communities, and you truly make this possible!

Grounded Strategies is stronger than ever due to our continually expanding network that comes together to donate time, resources, and talent in support of our important mission. This year alone we worked with 53 community partners, logging over 1100 volunteer hours; our Board of Directors has helped us increase our donor base; and our Ambassadors have begun to advocate for the change they want to see.

Thank you for wholeheartedly being a part of the Grounded movement. We are looking forward to much more in 2019!

Sincerely,

Evaine K. Sing

EVAINE K. SING
Executive Director

2019-2023 Strategic Goals

Over the next 5 years, Grounded will become the “go to” organization for residents, non-profits, and municipalities working on vacant and underutilized land issues in Allegheny County.



STAY LONGER

Sustainable change is not instantaneous, but rather gradually picks up momentum over time. Grounded plans to deepen and develop authentic community relationships in every community we serve, committing to at least three years of programming on the ground. This will require more proactive and long-term funding partnerships and committed partners, and will enable us to reach more people, incorporate inter-generational learning, and seed long-term habits and framework for growth.



DO MORE

Communities are complex, requiring an interdisciplinary, collaborative, and comprehensive strategies for change. Grounded will expand our team expertise to increase the positive impact of our investment in communities, expanding and formalizing new services to ensure the gaps are filled. We are also committed to bridging the gap to new partners with relevant skill sets and knowledge to ensure a robust approach is taken.



CHANGE THE SYSTEM

The processes, policies, and programs that govern community need to be accessible and responsive. Grounded will advance policies and investments aimed at reducing the impact of blighted and vacant land in the region. Our focus will be on municipal leadership to examine budgeting, maintenance, and access policies and strategies to increase consistency, accountability and transparency to performance.

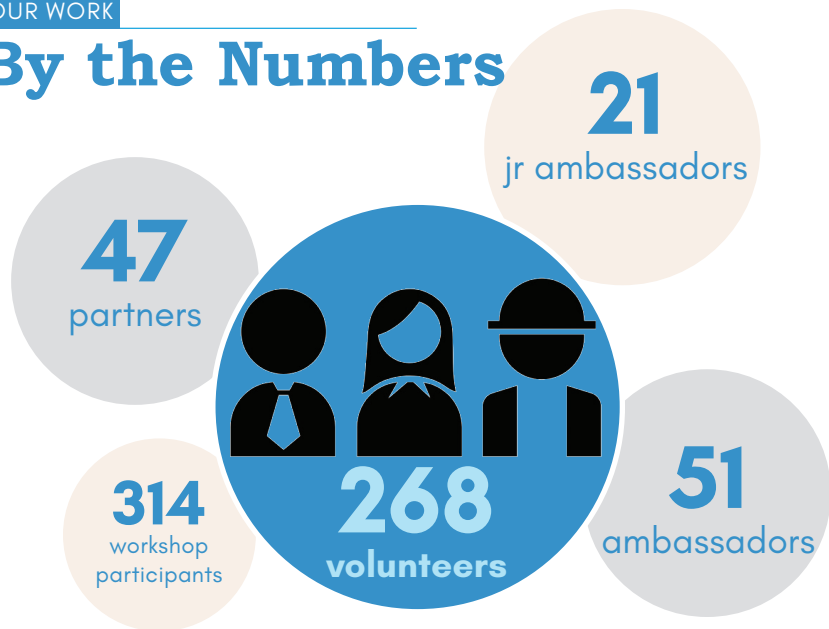


REFLECT THE COMMUNITY

Building trust requires the need to connect to, understand, and resonate with people on the ground. Grounded will continue to prioritize diversity, equity and inclusion in our services, program offerings and execution, and staff and board representation. We will also continue to examine our processes and strategies to ensure they are not inherently set up to be exclusive and will seek support to help remove institutional barriers from our methodology.

OUR WORK

By the Numbers



6

land labs

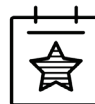


47

toolbox workdays

35

events



community fundraising conference



823

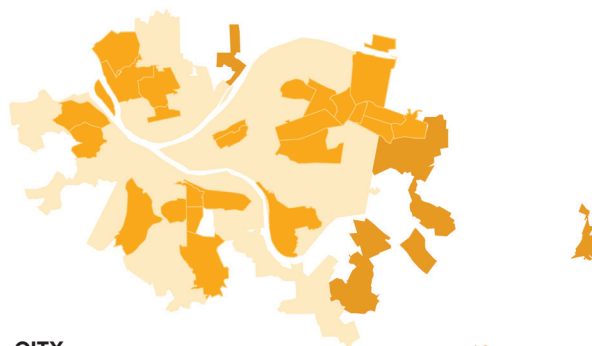
surveys



1150

volunteer hours

WHERE WE WORK



CITY

Middle Hill, Hazelwood, Allentown, Knoxville, Carrick, Larimer, Homewood, East Hills, Lincoln-Lemington, East Liberty, Brighton Heights, Beechview, Bedford Dwellings, Central Northside, St. Clair, Shadyside, Squirrel Hill, East Deustchtown, Sheraden, Beltzhoover, Garfield, Crafton Heights, South Side Slopes, Observatory Hill, Marshal-Shadeland, Perry South.

COUNTY

Braddock, Clairton, McKeesport, Pitcairn, Wilkinsburg

REVENUE*

Foundation	\$793,398
Earned	\$188,790
Government	\$118,981
Corporate	\$13,513
Events	\$31,321
Individuals & Board	\$14,258
Other	\$14,792

\$1,175,053

EXPENSES*

Personnel	\$515,787
Program	\$229,441
Professional Fees	\$52,226
Office & Facilities	\$78,859
Other	\$16,220

\$892,533

* All numbers are unaudited



3

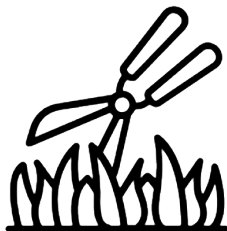
stormwater



6

creative play

15 sites
stewarded



2

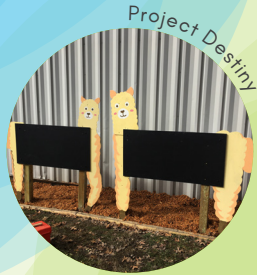
beautification



4

public art

2018 Projects



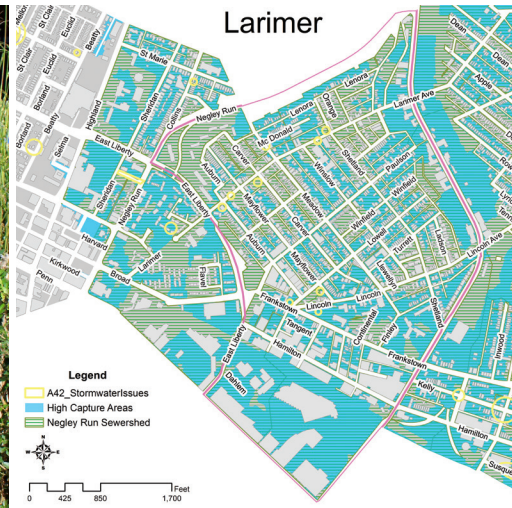
Grounded in Data + Advocacy

Changing the system means needing to understand it in order to know how to navigate it.

Grounded not only collects and analyzes community data, we work to understand local perspectives and the history behind a community. It is critical to not just collect this information - it is only helpful if it is shared, understood and applied. Grounded works with residents to determine how data contributes to action.

From the development of community-driven demonstration projects, to the identification of patterns that need to be disrupted, Grounded supports residents in advocating for equitable land-use policies. We believe land is a vehicle, not a barrier, to building and supporting healthy communities. We are now working with dozens of residents to help frame compelling asks of their local representatives for more resources, support, and technical assistance to address issues most critical to them.

“[Grounded] has made me feel like a bigger part of the community and the solution.”
- Khadijah Bey, Steward



Top Left: Beverly Howell (Grandma Bev) maps community assets in her neighborhood of Homewood.
Top Right: A map of the Larimer neighborhood overlaying stormwater priority areas using data collected by residents along with information from PWSA to identify key investment areas for stormwater infrastructure.
Bottom: Residents and staff share an evening with Rep. Ed Gainey, sharing concerns and ideas about how to improve their communities.



Grounded in Design

Design to Do: everyone should have access to strong design principles and the technical assistance to participate

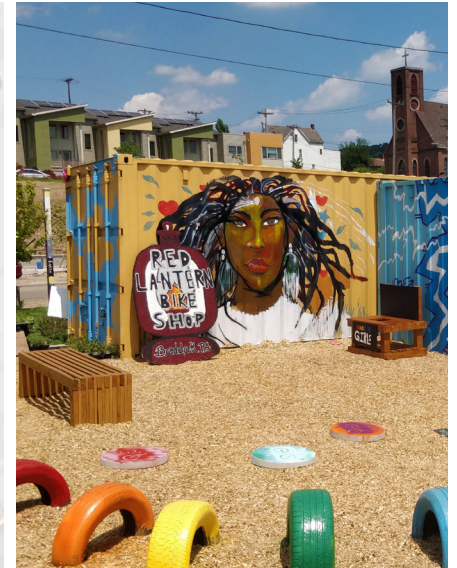
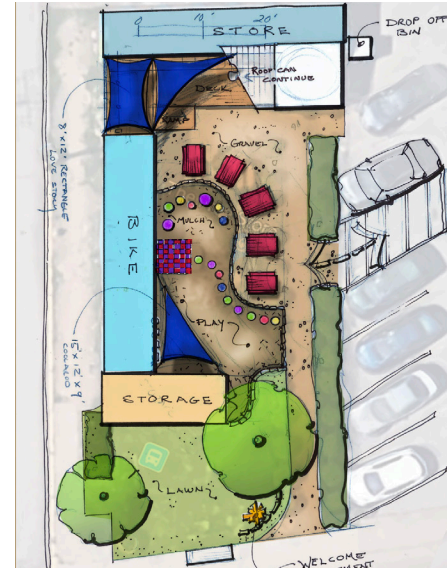
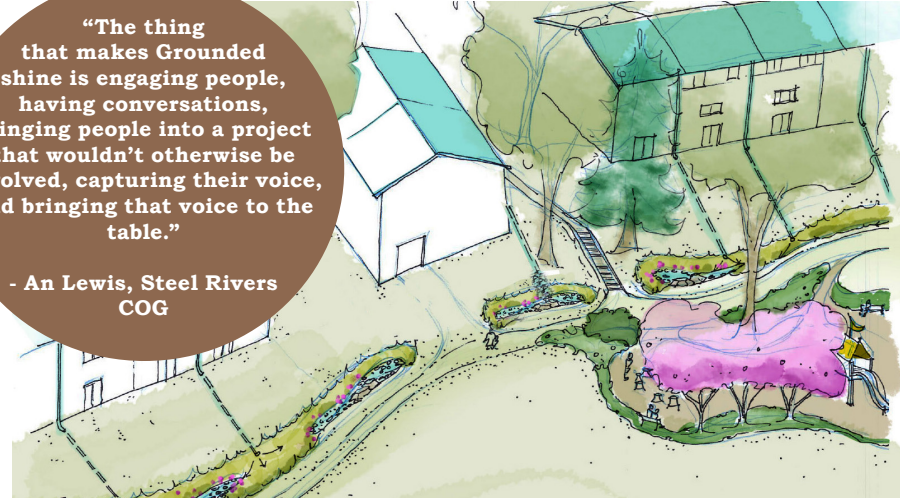
Our team works to de-mystify the technical aspects of design, engineering and construction. By breaking it down to the most basic elements and translating industry terms into everyday language, we enable a higher level of participation and ownership of outcomes. Good design should not be limited to those who can pay for it, but rather every strong community needs a strong foundation based in planning and design efforts. By employing a DIY approach, we are also able to generate tools and outline next steps that will lead to action. We are early entry design support, demonstrating application and using the process to increase awareness of the benefits as well as the path to meaningful participation so every unique voice is heard.



Grounded was contracted by the Friendship Circle to install a design for their rooftop, creating a tranquil setting with flexible pieces to accommodate programming and events.

“The thing that makes Grounded shine is engaging people, having conversations, bringing people into a project that wouldn’t otherwise be involved, capturing their voice, and bringing that voice to the table.”

- An Lewis, Steel Rivers COG



Top: Tiered rain garden design for East Hills Park Hill Drive community ultimately resulted in 2 installations capturing 308,000 gallons of runoff. Bottom Left: Design sketch for Braddock Free Store upgrades Bottom Right: Final implementation of design for Braddock Free Store

Grounded in People

Authentic investments in people will always yield strong returns. Everyone has a voice and deserves to be heard.



Two student Ambassadors from Propel Andrew Street High School's Bee-keeping class. They worked with Grounded on designing and building a more artful community space around their apiary on a vacant lot in Homestead.

Grounded builds relationships with organizations, businesses, community development corporations, and individuals doing amazing work. We believe in their power to make a difference and are inspired everyday by the passion and creativity we come across in each new neighborhood.

Our work is rooted in the engagement of new ideas that build community character and pride with the people who live, work and play in these places at the center. Our goal is to increase the capacity of everyone doing the work through resources, shared learning, and networking. Ambassadors, contractors, stewards, and volunteers becomes partners, friends, and even family with a shared connection to the land and community.



"Grounded inspires each person to find their own power and creativity to change their own community, with their own two hands."

- Gisele Fetterman, Second Lady of PA



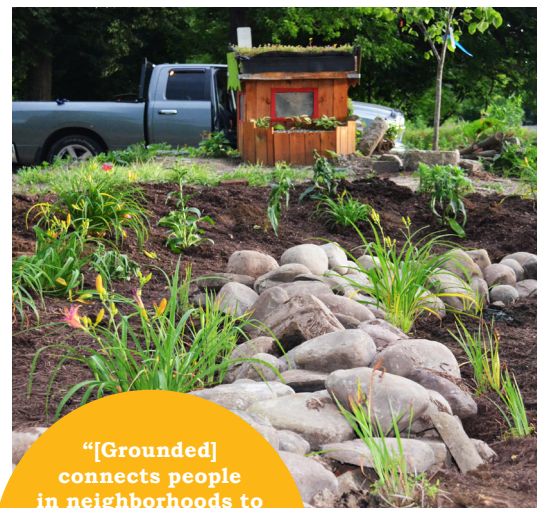
Top, L-R: Board member and former Ambassador, Gordon Hodnett, catches up with Aaron Sukenik from the Hilltop Alliance at the Knoxville Parklet opening; 3rd grade student from Northside Propel working through an on-site scavenger hunt; Jmar Bey and Andre Young are 2 of our favorite community contractors; 3 future community leaders begin their training early by working on our Green Playces Possibilities project in the West End; a group of our Homewood CommunityCare stewards take a much-deserved break after collecting a dozen bags of litter and debris; Clairton Jr Ambassadors join Ambassador Ty Allen at community event.

Grounded in Environment

Grounded works tirelessly toward a triple bottom line of economic prosperity, social benefit and environmental sustainability.

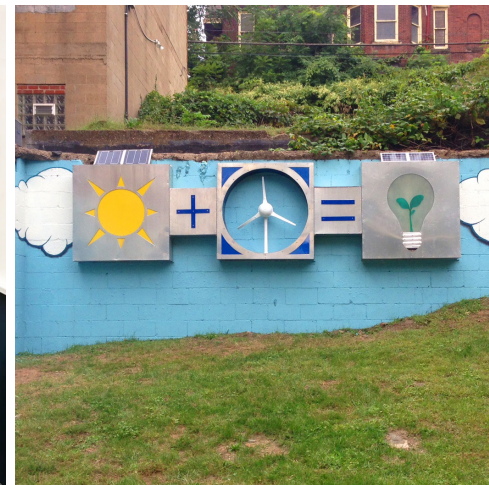
At Grounded Strategies, we're not only focused on vacant land for the sake of the communities in which it exists: we're also aware of the large scale implications of changing land-use patterns. While we consider benefits to community, it's vital to think about the stormwater management benefits granted by subtle earthworks employed on the site, as well as to understand how the vegetation grown on site can intercept and alleviate the vehicular exhaust from a nearby interstate highway.

By offering information about careful environmental stewardship to residents, policymakers, and everyone in-between, we hope to re-knit both the human and ecological communities at their interface: vacant land.



"[Grounded] connects people in neighborhoods to environmental best practices and helps them implement those ideas."

- Henry Pyatt, City of Pittsburgh



Top L-R: Clarissa Wilder shares her passion for participating in vacant lot stewardship. The "Eco-Equation" solar-powered art installation in Braddock 'Fit Park'. Bottom L-R: The "Rosedale Rain Garden" in Homewood, planted by Homewood 'Cluster 9' resident volunteers; Solar flowers, designed by David Edwards, spring to life in Wilksburg; Flowers are planted at Seldom Seen Greenway entrance with Pretty Up Beechview.

Grounded in Play + Creative Learning

Building opportunities for kids across Allegheny County to play + learn in their local environment

At Grounded, we know how vital it is for children of all ages to play and learn outdoors. From improved academic performance, to teamwork and imaginative world-building, kids thrive when they can immerse themselves outdoors.

Our youth engagement efforts respond to this by collaborating with youth programs and schools to build places that encourage kids (and their families!) to play, learn, and celebrate outside. We take pride in our collaborative design process that puts kids in driver's seat for making creative placemaking decisions. Kids creating spaces for kids.



*Top: A young neighbor from Knoxville checks out their new neighborhood rocket ship.
Bottom: Neighbors gather for a cookout at the Clairton corner Corral*



**"I want people to feel good about themselves in our space. Energized. Rejuvenated."
- 5th Grader at Twin Rivers**



Top: An afterschool student from Kingdom Life Fellowship Church celebrates the opening of the Knoxville Green Playce, "Strawberry Spaceship Parklet." Bottom L-R: Manchester Academic Charter School students dream up the design for a new outdoor exploration space; The new Free Store 15104 playspace gets a test run from a tiny visitor.

Grounded in Stewardship

Each vacant lot is a chance to shape our environment to better reflect the way we want to live.



Above L-R: Project Destiny volunteers in California-Kirkbride take care of an outdoor play space; Nate Broadus with CEO Works mows a URA-owned property in Manchester through the LandCare program. Next page, Top: CommunityCare Steward cleans litter from a vacant lot in Homewood. Center: Grounded staff joins Ms Natalie Thomas for a workday to refresh the 'Unified Positive Effect Garden in Beltzhoover. Bottom: Grounded's free mobile landscaping tool library, The PGH Mobile Toolbox, rolls into Homewood for a volunteer day.

In its broadest sense, stewardship is the recognition of our collective responsibility to maintain the quality and abundance of our land, air, water and biodiversity, and to manage this natural capital in a way that conserves all of its values, be they environmental, economic, social or cultural.

As it relates to vacant land in the Pittsburgh region, strong stewardship is needed to sustain investments long-term to prevent the cycle of disinvestment from returning to a community. Grounded supports resident-leaders who are taking an active role in stewarding vacant land. This work may range from community cleanups, site refreshes, ongoing and consistent maintenance and care-taking of the surrounding environment. This work is strongest when done together.



"I want to build something people can look at and be proud to have in their neighborhood."
-Michael Hoehn, Steward



**A
Royal
Evening in
Sherwood
Forest**



**Summer
Carnival**



**Geared
Up and
Grounded**

ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORTERS

FOUNDATION

Anonymous
Benter Foundation
Bill & Melinda Gates
Foundation
Birmingham Foundation
Buhl Foundation
Clif Bar Family
Foundation
Colcom Foundation
Courtney Babcock
Borntraeger
Foundation
Google Tides Foundation
Grable Foundation
Heniz Endowments
Hillman Family
Foundation
McAuley Ministries
McKeesport Hospital
Foundation
PNC Charitable Trust
PNC Foundation
Richard King Mellon
Foundation
The Forbes Funds
The Kerry and Kristin
Diehl Fund Schwab
Charitable
The Opportunity Fund
The Pittsburgh
Foundation

GOVERNMENT

Allegheny County Health
Department
Pennsylvania Department
of Environmental
Protection
Urban Redevelopment
Authority (URA) of
Pittsburgh

CORPORATE

Allegheny Health
Network
Amazon Smile
Babst Calland
BL Restaurant
Operations LLC
BNY Mellon
Corporation's
Community Partnership
Chipotle Mexican Grill
Eat 'n Park Hospitality
Group, Inc
Glassautomatic, Inc
Google
Highmark Foundation
iGive
Instrumentl
Microsoft
Patagonia Pittsburgh
Peoples Natural Gas
Pittsburgh Community
Broadcasting
Corporation
Pittsburgh Zoo &
Aquarium
PNC Bank

Starbucks
The Brew Gentleman
Beer Company
The Hillman Company
U.S. Steel
UPMC
Walnut Capital
Management
Waxwing Cycles LLC
Whole Foods
Wigle Whiskey

COMMUNITY

Baptist Temple Church
Braddock Redux
Center for Community
Progress
East Hills Consensus
Group
East Hills Homeowners
Association
Economic Development
South
The Friendship Circle
GASP (Group Against
Smog and Pollution)
Girl Scout Troop 53662
Hazelwood Initiative
Hazelwood Initiative
HealthyRide PGH
Hill District Consensus
Group
Hilltop Alliance
Hosanna House
Knoxville Community
Council
Landforce

Manchester Academic
Charter School
Manchester Citizens
Corporation
Neighborhood Allies
Operation Better Block
Pittsburgh Classical
Academy Students
Playful Pittsburgh
Collaborative
Project Destiny
Propel Schools
Winchester Thurston
School

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

Allen Biehler
Ariam Ford
Ashley Jones
Autumn Walker
Benjamin Milleville
Betsy Magovern
Brad Palmisiano
Brad Rutledge
Charlie & Sue Goodwin
Chase Tupper
Chelsea Burket
Chitra Gurung
Craig Marcus
Cynthia Romagnolo
Dana & TJ Hussar
David Burritt
David Lassman
David, Josh & Alex
Lehman
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Wendy Paff
Zack Hayes

PROJECT PARTNERS

Abiding Missions
Allegheny County
Conservation District
Allegheny Land Trust
Bike PGH
Borough of Pitcairn
Braddock Youth Project
Brashear Association
Carrick Dairy District
Council
Center of Life
City of Clairton
Cluster Association 8
and 9
Dave Edwards
Department of Public
Works, City of PGH
East Hills Consensus
Group
EECO Center
Fourth Economy
Free Store 15104
Greenspace Alliance
Hilltop Urban Farm
Hazelwood Initiative
Homewood Cluster 9
Residents
Imani Christian
Academy
JADA House
International
Junior Green Corps
Kingdom of Life
Fellowship Church
Landforce
Larimer Consensus

Group
Lincoln-Lemington-
Belmar Consensus
Group
Lutheran Church of the
Redeemer
Negley Run Watershed
Taskforce
New Jerusalem Holiness
Church
Nine Mile Run Watershed
Association
Pittsburgh Major Taylor
Cycling Club
Pittsburgh Parks
Conservancy
Plant Five for Life
Playful Pittsburgh
Collaborative
Pretty Up Beechview
(PUB)
Program for Students
with Exceptionalities
PWSA
Remake Learning
Network
Strategic Solutions
The Bakery Society
Trade Institute of
Pittsburgh
Tree Pittsburgh
Turners Dairy
Twin Rivers Intermediate
School
Wilksburg Youth
Project

**THANK YOU
TO ALL OUR
PARTNERS!**



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*Thanks to those who
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