



Ms. Kate Brunswick CAE, Hon. AIA, Executive Director
AIA OHIO
400 West Wilson Bridge Road, Suite 120
Worthington, OH 43085

Dear Ms. Brunswick,

I initially became aware of Mr. Fiala's significant architectural and community service impact while an architectural intern in the office of Bruce Huston Architects in Willoughby, OH in 1993. His passion for public sector architectural projects was evident then, and his firm's- ThenDesign (TDA) - countless contributions to the built environment within that realm have been noteworthy. With civic and educational projects serving as the foundation of their expansive portfolio, Robert evolved into an expert in collaboration and forming alliances between both public and private entities, serving as a fulcrum between sometimes disparate and competing agendas and perspectives.

Robert's and ThenDesign's planning, design, and construction oversight of publicly funded projects over the past forty (40) years have led Mr. Fiala to embrace the idea of potentially embarking on an enriching political career that would be buttressed by his design ethos—improving communities. The notion of melding his learned architectural skills and expertise with his desire to uplift communities socially and economically has resulted in a successful pairing.

As evidenced by countless architectural, planning, and preservation awards, citations, and acknowledgments coupled with community involvement on many boards, commissions, councils, and bureaus and ultimately culminating in his election as Mayor of the City of Willoughby in 2018~Present Mr. Fiala's commitment to utilizing his talents for the betterment of mankind is unassailable. The culmination of years of public engagement and design has uniquely positioned Robert to serve as a public servant with a distinguished skillset that places a premium on "problem seeking and solving"- which is the bedrock of architectural design.

Mr. Fiala's tireless efforts have not gone unnoticed. The American Institute of Architects, at the national level, has honored him with the title of "Citizen Architect". This prestigious recognition is a testament to his numerous contributions to his community, particularly his political engagement with various government branches.

Our chapter stands firmly behind the nomination of Mr. Robert Fiala for the 2024 Public Service Award.

With regard,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "W. Daniel Bickerstaff, AIA". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "W" and "D".

W. Daniel Bickerstaff, AIA
AIA Cleveland President

Mission Statement:

AIA Cleveland uplifts our members and profession to engage and inspire our community through the power of architecture.

June 24, 2024

Dear Nominating Committee,

Through various roles including architectural firm principal, City of Willoughby Councilperson and Mayor of Willoughby, Robert 'Bob' Fiala has made a significant impact on his community through public service. His work and office in downtown Willoughby have helped stabilize the original downtown core and maintain the character of historic Erie Street. When his firm's office needed more space, the firm was able to acquire an abandoned Jr. High School, adjacent to the downtown core, that had been vacant for years and restore it to an architectural design studio. Portions of the former school property have been sold off to a developer who is developing in-city housing with a mixture of three-story rowhouses and one-story townhouses which are helping to stabilize the downtown by making it a more walkable community providing additional patrons for the local coffeeshops, restaurants, bars, bakeries, and other small businesses. Bob fostered the growth of an Experience Economy in Downtown Willoughby with a focus on arts, entertainment, and culture. This development took years to bring together, requiring patience and perseverance. His office now provides space for community meetings including Leadership Lake County, The Lake County Development Council and the Willoughby Arts Collaborative.

In his role as Mayor of Willoughby, Bob Fiala has expanded his regional outlook and responsibilities by serving on regional committees including Habitat for Humanity, The Lake County Visitors Bureau, multi county stormwater management entities, and interacting with officials from adjacent counties including Geauga, Ashtabula, and Cuyahoga.

I enthusiastically nominate Robert Fiala for this award; he has been engaged in public service as a Citizen Architect contributing meaningfully, beyond personal gain, to the improvement of the community and human condition. Please give careful consideration to his candidacy.

Thank you,



E. Bradford Gellert, A.I.A.

ThenDesign Architecture



4230 River Street, Willoughby, OH 44094 | 440 269 2266
thendesign.com



Bob Fiala has spent most of his professional career as a citizen architect and dedicated public servant driven to improve communities through advocacy and effort. Involved at the local, regional, state, and federal levels of government, Bob has been a tireless advocate for the environment, education, and the arts. The interplay of these contributes to a holistic understanding of our world and supports the social and economic health of our communities. Bob is also actively involved with non-profit and non-governmental organizations to further promote improved quality of life.

PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATIONS:

Registered Architect in Ohio, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS:

Member of AIA, NCARB, and APA

CURRENT POSITIONS:

Mayor and Safety Director, City of Willoughby
Executive Chairman and Founder of ThenDesign Architecture

EDUCATION:

University of Notre Dame, Bachelor of Architecture
University of Southern California, Masters in Urban Design

AIA INVOLVEMENT:

AIA Cleveland President 1993
AIA Cleveland Vice President 1992
AIA Cleveland Secretary 1991
AIA Public Architects Committee
AIA Committee on Architecture for Education



25001 Emery Road #400, Cleveland, OH 44128 | Phone 216.223.3200

LETTER OF NOMINATION

AIA Ohio Public Service Award

Dear Committee Members,

I have known Robert (Bob) Fiala since I graduated from Kent State University in 1981. He was an established architect at my first place of employment, Richard L. Bowen and Associates, and became a go-to mentor and friend. Years later we reconnected at an AutoCAD class at a Lakeland Community College, located in Lake County where we both live. By that time Bob had established his own firm, Then Design in downtown Willoughby, OH and was also serving the city as a Councilman. We reconnected on both a professional and personal level.

As a resident of Lake County, I witnessed Bob's many years of service to the community as a Councilman and in his service to various boards in the area. When the long time Mayor of Willoughby retired in 2018, Bob ran for and won the election to become Mayor, all the while maintaining his connection to and leadership of Then Design which has grown to become one of the largest firms in Ohio, specializing in public school design.

Willoughby always had a historic and popular downtown area and Bob's recent efforts to connect the city to a local park and the Chagrin River will create a walkable community that will be enjoyed by future generations. His administration has also created community opportunities in the downtown area that have made it a gathering place for many residents of Lake County, including an annual Arts Fest which is heavily attended.

As a past recipient of the AIA Ohio Public Service Award, I highly recommend Bob for this award for his many years of dedication to his city, his community and northeast Ohio. He has and continues to make a significant impact on our local Lake County community!

Sincerely

Mike Crislip, AIA

President
Onyx Creative, Inc.

ARCHITECT AS PUBLIC SERVANT

Bob Fiala has spent most of his professional career as a citizen architect in service to both the profession and the public. In these capacities, he has served as both an elected official and board member and volunteer to organizations that provide vital community services. Former board member of Habitat for Humanity, an early board member of the Heart of Willoughby, a 501(c)3 non-profit dedicated to preserving Willoughby's Historic Downtown, and a supporter of the McKinley Community Outreach Center through The Mayor's Charity Golf Classic, where 100% of the profits go towards important Lake County social services, Bob has maintained a steadfast commitment to his community. As the founding Partner of ThenDesign Architecture (tda), He has been applauded for his leadership in the profession and in business. During the pandemic, Bob was honored by the University of Notre Dame as part of the "Be the Light" series that recognized professionals that exemplified leadership and guidance through the pandemic. He was also recognized and "Distinguished Business Leader" in 2015 acknowledged by local, state and federal officials.



UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME
We Are ND

ND Family Doing Good During The Pandemic
Be The Light: Volume 4
by Notre Dame Alumni Association (link.state.ohio.gov/notre-dame-alumni-association/) April 24, 2020




Robert A. Fiala '76 is the mayor and safety director for the city of Willoughby, Ohio, and a founding partner at TDA Architecture.

How is your work impacting the fight against COVID-19?
As mayor and safety director for the city of Willoughby, Ohio, and a member of the Northern Ohio Area Coordinating Agency (NOACA), a regional council of governments, our daily efforts focus on supporting and executing our governor's directives. Our efforts include working to reduce the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Efforts that we have included working with our community in maintaining social distancing. In a city of 19,000 residents northeast of Cleveland with a small historic downtown, our local merchants and restaurants are in a desperate struggle for survival. We coordinate with other communities and our county health director to ensure our first responders and healthcare workers have the tools they need to fight the virus. We are also committed to finding creative ways to help our business survive this crisis. We are working to understand how the pandemic will affect the future of small local enterprises when we return to normalcy. The pandemic also requires us to care for families, friends, neighbors, and communities by ensuring them that we can endure the COVID-19 crisis. Our goal is to instill hope that our recovery will provide new opportunities.

In my architectural practice, which focuses on K-12 educational facilities design, we are developing the tools and techniques being used in virtual teaching/learning as we begin to understand how this may shape the future of education.

How did Notre Dame influence your career path?
The design and technical training in architecture and liberal arts coursework, including philosophy, have helped develop leadership skills that include honesty, integrity, empathy, and accountability, among others. These are essential tools to cope with a worldwide pandemic that has become local. Notre Dame has taught me that in a continually changing world, core values can remain unchanged just as Notre Dame's mission has for almost one century.

In the name and by the Authority of
THE STATE OF OHIO



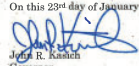
John R. Kasich and Mary Taylor
Governor and Lieutenant Governor of Ohio
do hereby officially recognize

BOB FIALA


AS YOU RECEIVE THE
DISTINGUISHED BUSINESS LEADER AWARD

On behalf of the Willoughby Western Lake County Chamber of Commerce, we are honored to acknowledge you as the recipient of the 2015 Distinguished Business Leader Award. Here in Ohio, we are proud of business leaders who go above and beyond to make a positive difference. We thank you for your dedication to the Willoughby community and surrounding area. Your efforts have made our state a better place to live, work and raise a family. Best of luck in all your future endeavors!


On this 23rd day of January 2015:



John R. Kasich
Governor



Mary Taylor
Lieutenant Governor





PO Box 229
Willoughby, OH 44096
440.975.3870

OUR MEMBERS

- Auburn Township
- Aurora
- Bainbridge Township
- Beachwood
- Bentleyville
- Chagrin Falls Township
- Chagrin Falls Village
- Chardon
- Chardon Township
- Cleveland Metroparks
- Eastlake
- Gates Mills
- Geauga Park District
- Hunting Valley
- Kirtland
- Kirtland Hills
- Lake County
- Lake Metroparks
- Mantua Township
- Mayfield Heights
- Mayfield Village
- Mentor
- Moreland Hills
- Munson Township
- Newbury Township
- Orange Village
- Pepper Pike
- Russell Township
- Solon
- South Russell
- Waite Hill
- Wickliffe
- Willoughby
- Willoughby Hills
- Woodmere

www.crwpp.org

June 25, 2024

AIA Ohio Public Service Award Review Committee
400 W. Wilson Bridge Road Suite 120
Worthington, OH 43085

Re: Letter of Recommendation for Robert A. Fiala for the AIA Ohio Public Service Award

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing to recommend Robert A. Fiala, mayor of Willoughby, Ohio and founding partner of ThenDesign Architecture, for the AIA Ohio Public Service Award.

Mayor Fiala is working with Chagrin River Watershed Partners (CRWP) and others to conserve and protect Willoughby's waterfronts along the Chagrin River and Lake Erie as key community assets. Through his leadership and vision, the City and its partners are connecting people with the river, improving water quality, providing habitat for fish and wildlife, and supporting resilience to flooding and severe storms. CRWP recently partnered with the City to restore 1,400 linear feet of river, protect 7,000 linear feet of streams, and protect and enhance over 78 acres of land along the Chagrin River. Building on this project, Mayor Fiala led the City in acquiring and protecting 105 acres of additional riverfront land where the City will restore floodplains, streams, and wetlands and construct a trail and two pedestrian bridges connecting to city parks across the river. This is an important first step toward creating a regional trail that will connect people to the Chagrin River and Lake Erie. Mayor Fiala has also spearheaded a project to tackle coastal erosion at Osborne Park through a nature-based shoreline that will protect bluffs, homes and infrastructure, enhance habitat, and improve access to Lake Erie. These projects are improving quality of life and making Willoughby more resilient to hazards such as flooding and erosion.

Mayor Fiala is a highly engaged member of Chagrin River Watershed Partners. He served on our Board of Directors for several years and is a valued partner and tireless champion of our work to achieve healthy watersheds supporting vibrant communities. As a founding partner of ThenDesign Architecture (TDA), he developed an operating model focused on identifying and executing a shared vision for publicly funded projects such as schools and civic architecture. Mayor Fiala is intentional about getting input from the community to inform our important work together. For example, he invited arts and conservation stakeholders to inform the design of public amenities for the arts and environmental education in the Chagrin River Corridor. Additionally, Mayor Fiala's experience in the private sector as a professional architect contributes a useful perspective for our work which must consider both the natural landscape and human interaction with the environment.

The AIA Ohio Public Service Award recognizes a member who has made a significant impact in his/her community, as well as to the profession, through public service. Mayor Fiala embodies the role of the citizen architect through his community leadership, collaborative spirit and tireless energy to make our region a great place to live, work and play.

Sincerely,

Heather Elmer
Executive Director
Chagrin River Watershed Partners
(440) 975-3870

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

As a founding board member of the Chagrin Watershed partners, Bob Fiala has been a staunch supporter of the protection of our natural assets. An organization that includes 35 municipalities and county governments, Bob collaborated with CRWP and the Western Reserve Land Conservancy in acquiring 105 acres along the riparian corridor. Working with both federal and state EPA, ODNR, NOAA, and state and federal elected officials, Bob was able to garner funds for the environmental restoration of this site, which is intended to be a showcase for stormwater management and water quality through the creation of wetlands, vernal pools, removal of invasive species and reforestation. The effort was lauded by Dr. Richard Spinrad, Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Administrator, who personally visited the site to observe progress. Once complete and when aggregated with other adjacent protected lands, Willoughby will have acquired and protected over 200 acres of riverfront lands or nearly 60% of the riparian corridor transecting the city.



The Western Reserve Land Conservancy and Willoughby Mayor Robert Fiala are currently working with other local, and regional partners to develop the Chagrin River Corridor and Lakefront Trail Connection. SHANA BOYD





Western Reserve Land Conservancy
land • people • community

June 26, 2024

American Institute of Architects Ohio
400 W. Wilson Bridge Road, Ste. 120
Worthington, OH 43085

RE: Letter of Support for the Public Service Award

Dear AIA Ohio,

Western Reserve Land Conservancy has been working with Mayor Robert Fiala over the last several years to protect and restore critical greenspace along the Chagrin River and is pleased to provide a letter of support for his Public Service Award nomination. Natural resource protection can be a delicate balancing act between community needs, economic growth, and natural resources. Mayor Fiala has proven time and time again that conservation and economic development can not only co-exist but complement one another.

Under the Mayor's leadership, partners have fundraised millions of dollars to protect and restore over 175 acres of riparian land in the region. These efforts have led to doubling the amount of protected habitat along the Chagrin River, increased stormwater management, and improved water quality in the Chagrin River and larger Great Lakes watershed. Mayor Fiala's vision and commitment to protecting our natural world is positioning the City as a destination for prime steelhead trout fishing, increasing its resiliency to climate change, and providing more opportunities for the public to connect with high-quality habitat by adding miles of additional multi-use trails.

The Land Conservancy strongly believes that Mayor Fiala embodies the public servant mindset and is the perfect candidate for the award. His ability to go above and beyond to unite the community and persevere through challenges makes him a tremendous asset to our community and our natural world.

Sincerely,

Alex Czayka
Chief Conservation Officer

3850 Chagrin River Road • Moreland Hills, OH 44022

T 440.528.4150

www.wrlandconservancy.org

F 440.528.4160

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Significant erosion along Willoughby's north coast, beginning about 2018, witnessed the loss of about 40' of shoreline and threatened critical infrastructure. Working to mitigate the erosion and create a more resilient waterfront, Bob worked with coastal engineers and landscape architects to develop a solution that recreates natural habitat and allows public access to Lake Erie. It is hoped that the project will see native bird species inhabit the area to support Eco-tourism. As part of this project the City of Willoughby also assisted the University of Michigan School for Environment and Sustainability assess coastal resilience in the Great Lakes.

LATEST HEADLINES

Willoughby receives \$2 million transformational projects grant for Osborne Park project



News-Herald File

Willoughby recently received a \$2 million state grant that will go toward the city's Osborne Park shoreline stabilization project. (News-Herald file)



EARTH DAY TREE PLANTING

VOLUNTEER PLANTING EVENT AT DANIELS PARK

Celebrate Earth Day this year by planting trees and shrubs at the newly restored streambanks along the Chagrin River at Daniels Park in Willoughby, Ohio.

More info about the project can be found at <https://wrlc.org/daniels-park-stream-restoration-planting/>

LOCATION

- Daniels Park
- 3852 Ambassador Bridge Rd, Willoughby, OH 44094

DATE AND TIME

- Earth Day - April 22, 2023
- 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
- Pre-Event Date: April 24, 2024

REGISTRATION

- Please RSVP using the QR code or reach out to info@wrlc.org

ADDITIONAL INFO

- Walk to the ground 300 ft. S. of Ambassador Bridge Rd.
- Please bring your own gloves and shovels. All the power tools will be provided, but feel free to bring your own as well.
- Lunch will be provided and bring all the City of Willoughby.
- Participation will be tracked by Sunday, April 23rd. If the event is postponed due to weather.

An Assessment of Coastal Resilience in Great Lakes Communities

Basinwide Resources & Local Efforts in Response to a Changing Coastline



The American Institute of Architects, Ohio
400 W. Wilson Bridge Road
Suite 120
Worthington, OH 43085

June 11, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

I am honored to extend my support for the nomination of Robert Fiala as a candidate for the AIA Ohio Public Service Award.

As Chairman and CEO of Third Federal Savings & Loan and Chairman of the Third Federal Foundation, I can attest that Bob's leadership has made a tremendous impact on our organization and the surrounding community. Just as he led ThenDesign Architecture with an explicit charge to improve communities, Bob's leadership at Third Federal has helped us deepen our impact in the communities we serve.

Bob is not only a longtime director of Third Federal Savings & Loan, but was also an inaugural director of the Third Federal Foundation when we established it in 2007 and remains in that leadership role today. He has served as an advisor to Third Federal's philanthropic initiatives, bringing his passion for education and public service to fruition by directing many innovative and impactful grants. In fact, under Bob's leadership, the foundation has given more than \$60 million in grants and has built a reputation as a leading advocate for literacy and wrap-around supports for education in Cleveland.

Several years ago, Bob provided leadership and oversight as the foundation created and launched the Stefanski Service Scholarship program at Cleveland Central Catholic High School. Cleveland Central Catholic is the only high school in the Slavic Village neighborhood of Cleveland where Third Federal Savings & Loan is headquartered. A majority of students come from low-income families and struggle to close the gap to pay for their tuition. The scholarship program provided funds to students and their families to pay for tuition by completing public service projects in their school or home communities. To date, the students and families have completed more than 250,000 hours of community service since the inception of the program and an average of 65% of the total students enrolled participate in the program each year.

Bob's public service is not limited to the Third Federal Foundation. Prior to becoming a director of the bank, he played an important role in Third Federal Savings & Loan's decision to remain in the Slavic Village neighborhood of Cleveland by building a \$50 million corporate center in 1998. During a time when companies were accepting tax incentives to leave Cleveland neighborhoods, Bob was influential in guiding the bank to reject these incentives and create a vision to expand their presence as an anchor of the community. Bob and his firm, ThenDesign Architecture, went on to serve as the lead architects on the project, creating a cascading effect of investment and improvement that has lasted decades.

Thank you for your consideration of Bob as an exemplary candidate for AIA Ohio's Public Service Award.

Sincerely,

Marc A. Stefanski
Marc A. Stefanski
Chairman & CEO

7007 Broadway Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44103

EDUCATION

As a founding member of the Third Federal Foundation Bob Fiala has been an integral part in supporting education and social services in the Cleveland Metropolitan area. The Foundation, funded with \$50million through the bank's IPO, has a primary focus on stabilizing the Slavic Village neighborhood, where the bank is headquartered. Considered "ground zero" during the mortgage crisis, Third Federal was one of the very few mortgage lenders refusing to participate in predatory lending. Using the bank's and the Foundation's resources, TFS stabilized the community and introduced a highly praised P16 program that provides wrap-around family services for students in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. Through this program, the foundation has worked tirelessly to support Cleveland's youth, a city with one of the highest childhood illiteracy rates in the country. The foundation also supports housing equity in Cleveland neighborhoods and has received numerous awards from local non-profit housing authorities for their Community Reinvestment initiatives. Finally, with the Chairman's untimely loss of his wife to cancer, Marc Stefanski initiated Rhonda's Kiss, focused on supporting families of cancer patients through difficult times.

Also significant is Bob's 30-years of experience in K-12 educational facilities design, Bob used this knowledge to forge a relationship with Andrews Osborne Academy, Willoughby-Eastlake Schools, and Lakeland Community College in creating a K through College curriculum in Environmental Sciences that will be taught, in part, on the 200+ acres of environmentally protected lands along the Chagrin River. This is the first such effort in the State of Ohio.

INVESTING IN THE COMMUNITIES - BY THE NUMBERS



idestream public media

Foundation Supports Wraparound Services For Slavic Village Families, Schools

By Danielle Snipes
Published January 21, 2019 at 11:00 AM EST

WYVH 101
The Sound of Ideas



FAMILY STABILITY

Slavic Village P-16 recognizes that there are obstacles to achieving goals. We also recognize that amidst communities, these obstacles may be more difficult to overcome without network of support. In fact, in the 2018-2019 academic year, at least 47 Cleveland Metropolitan School District schools in Slavic Village, 55% of students changed schools each year. This is why we create wraparound services connecting families to resources that allow them to focus on both short and long-term goals. Sometimes this means connecting to an employer. And sometimes it means getting involved in the community so that it becomes a safer place. For that very reason, Slavic Village P-16 is joined with Slavic Village Development, a community development corporation. Without the people, the bricks and mortar stand on nothing.

IN THE NEWS

- 3wkyw media: Doubling down on Cleveland's investment in people: Kurt Karakul and Kathryn Wertheim Hexter (Opinion)
- idestream: Broader neighborhood model increases literacy, graduation rates collaboratively: Kurt Karakul and Kathryn Wertheim Hexter (Opinion)
- 3wkyw media: THE PLAIN DEALER: CEO leads Third Federal for 30 years
- Stefanski cancer fundraiser to hold: Kasha, Mark McGrath, others
- Slavic Village neighborhood leads the way in fixing the basics of urban education, housing and health in one of the country's poorest big cities: Kurt Karakul and Kathryn Wertheim Hexter (Opinion)
- Third Federal Savings, Cleveland Clinic target urban health disparities



June 18, 2024

Dear Members of the AIA Ohio Awards Committee,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for Mayor Bob Fiala's nomination for the AIA Ohio Award for Public Service. Mayor Fiala's unwavering commitment to the community through his exemplary leadership in environmental stewardship, education, and the arts makes him a deserving candidate for this recognition.

Mayor Fiala's efforts in enhancing the environment are evidenced by the Chagrin River Trail project. This initiative not only preserves our natural heritage but also will provide valuable recreational and educational opportunities. Andrews Osborne Academy is particularly excited and grateful to collaborate on this project, which will have a profound impact on the quality of our science education programs. The trail will offer students a unique, hands-on learning environment to study local ecosystems and sustainability practices, fostering a deeper appreciation and understanding of the natural world.

In the realm of education, Mayor Fiala is a visionary and supportive partner. His commitment to collaboration with Andrews Osborne Academy is a testament to his dedication to academic excellence.

Mayor Fiala's support for the arts has significantly enriched Willoughby. Through the Willoughby Arts Collaborative and his advocacy for downtown Willoughby as an arts and cultural district, he has created a community where the arts are abundant. Andrews Osborne Academy values its proximity to downtown Willoughby and the thriving arts community it hosts. The concerts, public art installations, and advocacy for arts education provide our students with cultural experiences and opportunities for creative expression.

In summary, Mayor Bob Fiala's leadership in enhancing the environment, advancing education, and promoting is making a positive and long-lasting impact on our community. Andrews Osborne Academy is proud to support his nomination for the AIA Ohio award for public service, confident that his contributions exemplify the highest standards of public service and community enrichment.

Thank you for considering Mayor Fiala for this honor.

Sincerely,

Gonzalo Garcia-Pedroso - Head of School, Andrews Osborne Academy

COMMUNITY CREATIVITY DIVERSITY GLOBAL AWARENESS LEADERSHIP

38588 Mentor Avenue | Willoughby, OH 44094 | 440-942-3600 | www.andrewsosborne.org

EDUCATION

Through his career as an architect and as a public servant Bob has been an advocate for education, leadership development, and diversity. By 2017, when Bob ceded controlling interest of the firm to his partner, ThenDesign had employees from 7 different countries, a staff with over 50% female professionals, and employed twice the average of minority architects than the industry. TDA was one of the founding firms of Cleveland's ACE Mentor program, through the Cleveland Educational Design Alliance, a collaboration of several local architectural firms. Two of TDA's employees have received awards for their efforts in this program. The firm also has invested significantly in a robust emerging professionals development program. Bob continues this commitment as Mayor, frequently working with the school districts, non-profits, and local leadership development organizations.

ACE Mentor Certificate



In appreciation of
Cleveland Educational Design Alliance
for participation as a mentor firm in the
ACE Mentor Program of Cleveland





June 24, 2024

Dear AIA Public Service Award Panel Members:

I am honored to write this letter of recommendation for Robert A. Fiala, Mayor and Safety Director for the City of Willoughby, in support of his nomination for the AIA Ohio Public Service Award. Bob's exceptional leadership has significantly shaped our community, creating a positive impact on both residents and businesses.

Bob's unique ability to forge connections between creative spaces, art, education, and the environment has transformed Lake County into a vibrant hub. His vision has elevated Willoughby, making it an attractive place to work, live, and conduct business. Through strategic partnerships, Bob has fostered an environment where local business leaders collaborate to enhance opportunities and quality of life for all.

One remarkable achievement is the annual ArtsFest in Downtown Willoughby (DTW). Under Bob's guidance, this event has flourished, drawing local and traveling artists, as well as enthusiastic spectators. The festival celebrates art, culture, and community, reinforcing the holistic understanding of our world. Notably, ArtsFest has grown by an impressive 50% in the past year alone, a testament to Bob's commitment to sustainability and enriching experiences.

Bob's legacy extends beyond Willoughby. His leadership has created a ripple effect, inspiring neighboring cities in Lake County to embrace creativity, critical thinking, and environmental consciousness. As a servant leader with decades of accolades, Bob exemplifies the spirit of the AIA Public Service Awards.

I wholeheartedly endorse Robert A. Fiala for this prestigious honor. His unwavering dedication has made Willoughby a beacon of progress and community spirit.

Sincerely,

Dana Wolfe
Executive Director

Willoughby Western Lake County Chamber of Commerce
28 Public Square • Willoughby, OH 44094
Phone: (440)942-1632 • Fax: (440)942-0586
Email: info@wwlccchamber.com Website: www.wwlccchamber.com

THE ARTS

Recognizing the shift from a Service Economy to an Experience Economy, the City of Willoughby has placed an intense focus on the arts as a tool to enhance well being, cultural awareness, and sense of place. The arts are the glue that binds our city's commitment to the environment and education. Arts districts are a proven economic development driver. In 2022 arts and culture contributed \$1.1 trillion to the U.S. economy. Forging relationships with local educational and arts institutions, Bob has moved the City to becoming a recognized arts center in Lake County and beyond. Shortly after becoming Mayor, Bob created the Willoughby Arts Collaborative, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the arts in the city. Comprised of artists, arts administrators, and community leaders, the collaborative already has an impressive list of events, performances, and installations to their credit. Bob also authored the Willoughby Public Art Code, a Public Art Committee, and developed a funding strategy for public art.





June 11, 2024

AIA Ohio
AIA Ohio Awards Committee
400 W. Wilson Bridge Road, Suite 120
Worthington, OH 43085


Dear Awards Committee,


It is my honor to support Robert (Bob) Fiala for the AIA Ohio Public Service Award as he is absolutely deserving of this recognition for his unselfish, tireless commitment to serving not only his community of Willoughby, but also Lake County as a whole.

Mayor Bob (as he's affectionally known by many in the area) currently serves as Board President of the Lake County Visitors Bureau and has been on our volunteer Board for nearly five years. As the official Destination Marketing Organization for Lake County, our mission is to support all our attractions and communities and grow tourism and economic development for the area. While Bob is the mayor of one of the communities in Lake County, Willoughby, he is the first person in any Board Meeting or personal discussion to talk about promoting the region's most valuable assets, even if those assets are located outside of Willoughby. Whether it's promoting the wineries of the Grand River Valley to the beaches of Mentor or Fairport Harbor, Mayor Bob's awareness of the attractions outside his city's limits enables him to lead our Board, unselfishly, with the big picture in mind. This selfless mindset is the true sign of a leader and someone who understands the greater good rather than focusing on his own self-interests.

Prior to my time as Executive Director for the Visitors Bureau, I was lucky enough to work with Mayor Bob when I was the General Manager of the Lake County Captains, the Cleveland Guardians Single-A team located in Eastlake. The Captains' ballpark is located on Vine Street which connects three communities: Willoughby, Eastlake and Willowick. The mayors of these three towns worked hand-in-hand on a long-term plan and project to beautify the Vine Street Corridor. While Eastlake and Willowick likely stand to benefit more than Willoughby from the long-term effects of this project, Bob's understanding that if those neighboring communities saw improvement and growth then the entire regions' overall success would eventually be greater than the sum of its parts.

I submit this letter with the utmost respect and recommendation for Bob Fiala as he is a remarkable, unselfish person, a great leader and certainly deserving of the AIA Ohio Public Service Award.

Sincerely,

Neil Steh
Executive Director
Lake County Visitors Bureau

105 Main St. B101 • Painesville, Ohio 44077 • 440.975.1234
tourlakecounty.com •  tourlakecountyoh

THE ARTS

Bob also helps raise awareness of the arts through his tireless efforts advocating for his initiatives. Collaborating and sharing ideas with other arts districts throughout the state, Bob has offered and learned best practices. He was also the featured speaker in the "Thriving Cities" broadcast that discussed the connection between the arts and economic development. Bob has delivered similar presentation to area service organizations, business owners, and economic development organizations.



LOCAL NEWS

'Yarn bombing' intended to raise awareness of Willoughby Arts Collaborative's mission



"Yarn bombing" was a recent public art project that was put on by the Willoughby Arts Collaborative (WAC). The project went on without a hitch, according to WAC President Pat Carroll Bonander. (Submitted)





TDA Headquarters

OUTSTANDING DESIGN, GOING ABOVE & BEYOND
TDA Headquarters
 4230 River St., Willoughby

Constructed and designed by architect Franz C. Warner in 1925, Memorial Junior High is located in the heart of the Willoughby Downtown Historic District, and has earned a place on the National Register of Historic Places. After serving as the vocational center for the Willoughby-Eastlake City Schools, the building sat vacant when the training center relocated. Willoughby-based firm ThenDesign Architecture (TDA) concluded that the adaptive reuse of the almost 100-year-old building was a great way to reinvest in their community. The firm solicited comments from longtime residents and encouraged them to share stories to help them feel involved in the process. As a result, the project became a point of pride for many in the community. Exterior renovations of the classical

revival-style building included new roofing systems, window replacement and tuck pointing where needed. Inside, renovations to the space combined the needs of the architecture firm while retaining historic elements of the building, such as classroom doors, lockers and the volume of a two-story gymnasium. (See full story in *Properties*, October 2021 issue, available online at www.propertiesmag.com.)

Properties | July 2022

2022 CELEBRATION OF PRESERVATION
 THE CLEVELAND RESTORATION SOCIETY AND THE CLEVELAND CHAPTER
 OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

PRESENT THE
**OUTSTANDING ABOVE AND BEYOND
 PRESERVATION AWARD**

TO
THENDSIGN ARCHITECTURE

IN RECOGNITION OF OUTSTANDING WORK ON TDA HEADQUARTERS

Kathleen H. Crowther
 KATHLEEN H. CROWTHER
 PRESIDENT
 CLEVELAND RESTORATION SOCIETY

Patty Lanfieri
 PATTY LANFIERI
 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
 AIA CLEVELAND CHAPTER

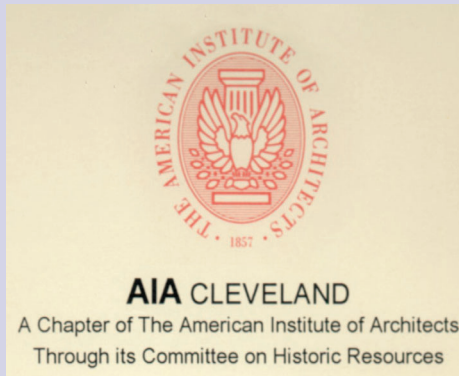


“THERE MAY HAVE BEEN A TIME WHEN PRESERVATION WAS ABOUT SAVING AN OLD BUILDING HERE AND THERE, BUT THOSE DAYS ARE GONE. PRESERVATION IS IN THE BUSINESS OF SAVING COMMITMENTS AND THE VALUES THEY GUARD.”
 — RICHARD MOE, NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ACHIEVEMENTS AND AWARDS

- Mayor City of Willoughby 2018-Present
- Third Federal Foundation Board of Directors 2007-Present
- Lake County Development Council 2018-Present
- Willoughby Arts Collaborative 2018-Present, Founder
- Lake County Visitors Bureau 2020-Present
- Ohio Living Advisory Board 2023-Present
- Chagrin River Watershed Partners Trustee 1996-Present (founding board member)
- Willoughby City Council 1997-2017
- Willoughby Planning Commission 1990-2017
- Willoughby Airport Planning Commission 1988-1990
- Willoughby Sign Review Board 1985-1988
- Habitat for Humanity 2022-2023
- Willoughby Western Lake County Chamber of Commerce 2002-2013 (co-president 2013)
- Heart of Willoughby 1982-1986

- American Planning Association (APA) Great Places Award 2022 (Downtown Willoughby)
- Memorial Junior High School Adaptive Reuse 202 (Cleveland Restoration Society Cleveland AIA Award)
- Willoughby Western Lake County Chamber of Commerce Distinguished Leader/CEO Award 2017
- Goodyear Hall-Ohio Savings Trust Company 2016 (2016 AIA/Cleveland Restoration Society Distinguished Adaptive Use Award, 2016 NAIOP Northern Ohio Mixed-Use Renovation of the Year, 2016 Ohio Preservation Office Merit Award)
- Willoughby Western Lake County Chamber of Commerce Bright Star Award 2013
- Downtown Willoughby Preservation Award (Cleveland AIA)
- Downtown Willoughby Preservation Award (Cleveland Restoration Society)



Citizen Architect

Robert Fiala, AIA



LOCAL NEWS

Mentor Marsh, downtown Willoughby named winners of the 2022 Ohio APA Great Places awards



The Ohio Chapter of the American Planning Association announced winners of the 2022 Ohio APA Great Places awards and two iconic locations in Lake County were recognized.

Downtown Willoughby and the Mentor Marsh were honored by the Ohio APA at the biennial awards program, which honors outstanding physical spaces that planners have made permanent through careful planning and unbridled imagination in Ohio, according to a news release.

APA Ohio presented the awards at the 2022 Cleveland Planning and Zoning Workshop on Oct. 12.

Downtown Willoughby was recognized in the commercial district category.

“We are delighted to have been selected as one of only three award recipients in Ohio for our historic downtown,” said Willoughby Mayor Robert Fiala. “This award from the American Planning Association acknowledges the success of our commitment to maintaining and enhancing our historic core as family and business-friendly.”

In the news release, the Ohio APA stated that Historic Downtown Willoughby is a beautiful, quaint and charming neighborhood and was listed as a Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places in 1995 for its commerce and architectural significance from the 1850s to the 1940s.

By **WILLIAM TILTON** | wilton@news-herald.com
 October 20, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.