

# THE MAIN STREET AMERICA NETWORK

## A MOVEMENT OF COMMUNITY CHANGEMAKERS

Made up of small towns, mid-sized communities, and urban commercial districts, the thousands of organizations, individuals, volunteers, and local leaders that make up Main Street America represent the broad diversity that makes this country so unique. Working together, the Main Street America Network helps to breathe new life into the places people call home.

Thank you to the Main Street Leadership Council for their support and direction:

Laura Krizov, *Michigan Main Street* (Chair)

Ron Campbell, *Main Street Oakland County*  
(Design Representative)

Kitty Dougoud, *Kentucky Main Street*

Breanne Durham, *Washington Main Street*

Stephen Gilman, *Boston Main Streets*

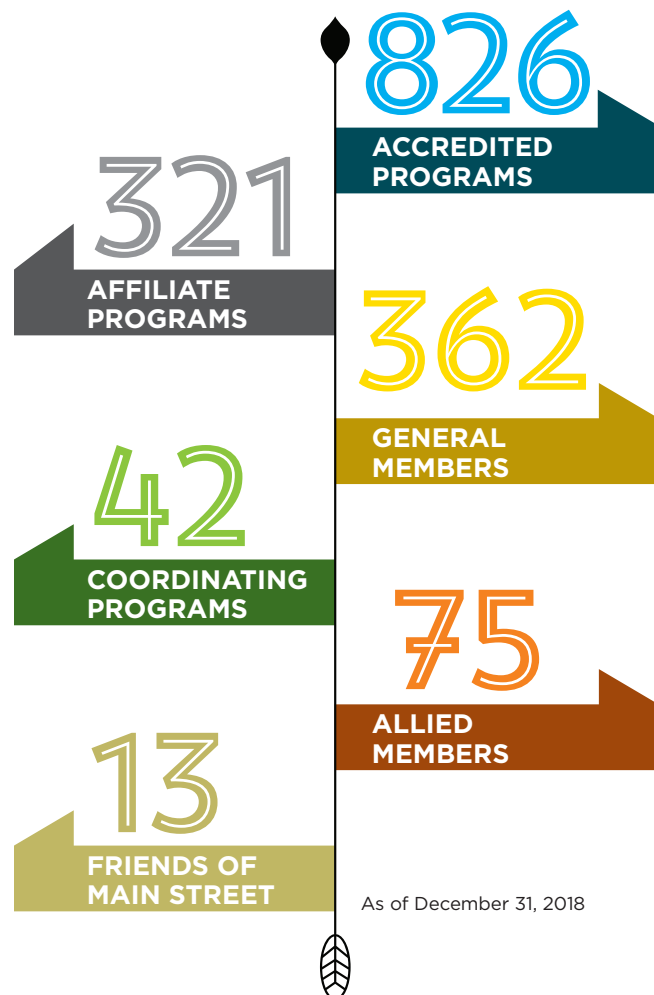
Bill Fontana, *Pennsylvania Downtown Center*

Mary Helmer, *Main Street Alabama*

Gayla Roten, *Missouri Main Street Connection*

Michael Wagler, *Main Street Iowa*

Tash Wisemiller, *Montana Main Street*



IN 2018, .....

WE WELCOMED **189 NEW MEMBERS**

FOR A TOTAL OF **1,639 MEMBERS.**

.....

# THE MAIN STREET AMERICA NETWORK

## MEMBERS ACROSS THE MAP

We asked executive directors of local Main Street America programs across the country to describe Main Street in three words and why they are so passionate about supporting their communities. **Check out their inspiring answers!**



*Community  
Investment  
Heart*

**DEBBI LEHR**  
**MAIN STREET GARDNERVILLE**  
Gardnerville, Nevada

*"Gardnerville is a small jewel of a town that most drive through without noticing what we have. I want them to stop and see people of my community living the American Dream. Not only are people improving their own lives by running businesses, they're improving a community."*

**WELLS MAHKEE JR.**  
**ZUNI PUEBLO MAINSTREET**  
Zuni, New Mexico

*"As the very first Native American Main Street community in the nation, I am passionate about showcasing our unique and unparalleled mix of beauty, fortitude, and vision, utilizing resources provided to us by Main Street and Awidelin Tsitda (Mother Earth) to encourage economic growth and community revitalization."*



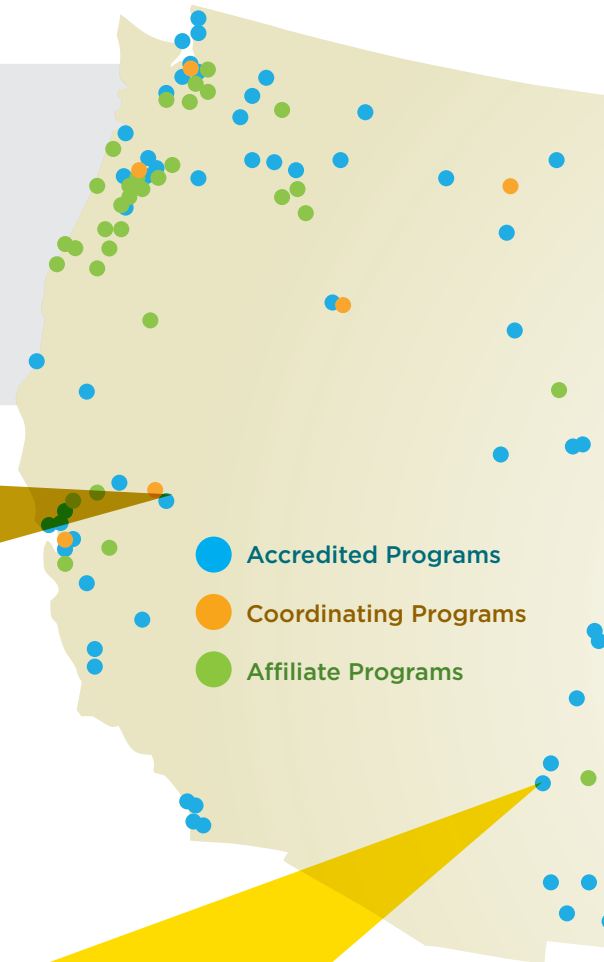
*Engaging  
Progressive  
Evolving*

**BEN WHITE**  
**MAIN STREET CHILLICOTHE**  
Chillicothe, Missouri

*"Chillicothe is an incredible place for innovative ideas where people aren't afraid to roll up their sleeves to get something done that will benefit the community."*



*Sustainable  
Innovative  
Community-Driven*



*"I am passionate about supporting the Hyde and Jackson Squares commercial district community because of its rich history of immigrants and immigrant-led commerce, amazing stories of hard work and personal triumphs, and because our role is so unique in fostering economic success of the business district."*



**GERALD ROBBINS**  
**HYDE JACKSON SQUARE**  
**MAIN STREET**  
Boston, Massachusetts

*Engaging  
Learning  
Doing*

*Dynamic  
Catalytic  
Transformative*

*Community-Centered  
Downtowns*



**ALEX PADRO**  
**SHAW MAIN STREETS, INC.**  
Washington, D.C.

*"Without the Main Street Approach's dual focus on historic preservation and economic revitalization, our historic African American neighborhood would not have been able to maintain our diversity and our heritage while attracting \$3 billion in redevelopment investment." Credit: Andrew Lightman*

**THONDRA LANESE**  
**STUART MAIN STREET**  
Stuart, Florida

*"Throughout my child and young adulthood, the cities I knew were always struggling and often failing, but when I came to Florida in the 1990s I started seeing downtowns—Main Street communities—that were vibrant and thriving, and the people in them thriving too. I couldn't resist being a part of that!"*



# THE POWER OF MAIN STREET

## MAIN STREET = ECONOMIC IMPACT

The cumulative success of the Main Street Approach™ and Main Street America programs on the local level has earned Main Street the reputation as one of the most powerful economic revitalization tools in the nation. The National Main Street Center conducts research to document impact by collecting data on the preservation, revitalization, and economic activities of local Main Street America programs throughout the country.

## CUMULATIVE REINVESTMENT STATISTICS

These estimates are based on statistics gathered from 1980 to December 31, 2017, for all designated Main Street America communities nationwide.

<b>Dollars reinvested*:</b>	<b>\$74.73 billion</b>
<b>Buildings rehabilitated:</b>	<b>276,790</b>
<b>Net gain in jobs:</b>	<b>614,716</b>
<b>Net gain in businesses:</b>	<b>138,303</b>



In 2017, for every dollar invested in a Main Street program, local communities saw **an average reinvestment of \$26.43** in their downtown district.

## 2017 REINVESTMENT STATISTICS

These estimates are based on statistics gathered January 1, 2017, to December 31, 2017, from the 1,147 designated Main Street America communities nationwide.

<b>Dollars reinvested*:</b>	<b>\$4.48 billion</b>
<b>Buildings rehabilitated:</b>	<b>8,737</b>
<b>Net gain in jobs:</b>	<b>30,294</b>
<b>Net gain in businesses:</b>	<b>6,211</b>
<b>Reinvestment ratio**:</b>	<b>26.43:\$1</b>

\* Total reinvestment in physical improvements from public & private sources.

\*\*The Reinvestment Ratio measures the amount of new investment that occurs, on average, for every dollar a participating community spends to support the operation of its Main Street program, based on median annual program costs reported to the National Main Street Center by its coordinating programs. This number is not cumulative and represents investment and organization budgets from January 1, 2017, to December 31, 2017.



# MAIN STREET IN ACTION

## BEYOND THE NUMBERS

The organizations, individuals, volunteers, and local leaders working to advance our common cause of fostering vibrant, thriving communities never cease to inspire. From leading the restoration of entire city blocks to cultivating a new generation of entrepreneurs, these changemakers are transforming communities one step at a time. This compilation of success stories illustrates the range and depth of work across the nationwide Main Street America Network.

**OVERWATER OVERHAUL** With a panoramic view of the Columbia River and Astoria-Megler Bridge, it's easy to understand why the owners of Mo's Chowder decided to locate their eighth restaurant in the Englund Marine building in Astoria, Oregon. Originally built in 1944 by Axel Englund for his maritime supply store, the 12,000-square-foot structure now features the restaurant and gift shop, as well as a chowder production facility. The \$3 million adaptive reuse project has had a huge visual impact on the downtown waterfront and has been an impressive economic driver, creating 30 full-time jobs and 40 part-time opportunities. Not to mention, it served 200,000 tourists and locals during the first year alone! *Main Street America program: Astoria Downtown Historic District Association*



**LIVE/WORK/PLAY** The rehabilitation of the Campbell Building in Shelby, North Carolina, is the quintessential Main Street success story. A local couple fell in love with the building and decided to renovate the top floor to make it their home. They developed a new event venue, Uptown Indigo, on the second floor to generate revenue and rented the ground floor space to a local cabinetry business that was looking to expand their business into a full design showroom called Greenbrook Design. This \$1.8 million project was approved for state and federal historic tax credits and received \$250,000 Community Development Block Grant funds plus a \$7,500 façade grant. In total, 14 full-time jobs and five part-time jobs were created. *Main Street America program: Uptown Shelby Association, Inc.*



**PRESERVATION MASTERPIECE** Originally built by a pioneer rancher in 1890 as a combination hotel and livery stable, The Arvon Block in Great Falls, Montana, had several years of success but fell into a century-long decline after the end of the homestead era. In 2012, the city and downtown organizations, working in partnership with State Historic Preservation Office and the Montana Main Street Program, came together with a proactive, common

Credits:  
Mo's Chowder  
(top), Greenbrook  
Design (middle),  
Joe Lawniczak  
rendering (bottom)



community vision to save the building from the wrecking ball. One year later, the owners embarked on a two-year, \$7.5 million rehabilitation of the 21,000-square-foot building, utilizing the historic tax credit to cover 25 percent of the cost, adding \$2 million to the local tax base, and creating 40 new jobs between the 33-room Hotel Arvon and Celtic Cowboy Irish Pub. The project received Montana's 2017 Outstanding Historic Preservation Rehabilitation Project award. *Main Street America program: Downtown Great Falls Association*



**DOWNTOWN ANCHOR** In 2017, Vantage Health Plan unveiled the beautifully renovated Vantage State Building, a new office location providing space for 400 Vantage employees in Monroe, Louisiana. Originally constructed as the Virginia Hotel in 1924, Vantage undertook the \$18 million restoration of the six-story building with the goal of keeping as many of the original elements as possible, qualifying the project for both state and federal tax credits. This is the sixth historic downtown building that Vantage has restored in downtown Monroe, illustrating their commitment to downtown and serving as an example of the importance of strong private sector partners. *Main Street America program: Downtown Monroe*



**LOCAL HUB** Wanderlust Coffee and Wine Lounge features books, coffee, and wine from around the world, inviting people to travel the world in the palm of their hands. This new concept in downtown Philippi, West Virginia, also offers craft beer, retail gift items, a stage for entertainment, and a conference room. Currently employing 22 people, the City of Philippi Municipal Building Commission invested \$177,000 rehabbing the building and the owner and investors added another \$125,000 in private investment. In true Main Street spirit, five laborers/painters volunteered to get the retail business ready to open and 11 artists volunteered their art for display in this new community gathering spot. *Main Street America program: Philippi Main Street*

Credits: Vantage Health Plan (top), Wanderlust Coffee and Wine Lounge (middle), Uptown Marion (bottom)

**ACTIVATED ALLEYS** In 2014, Marion, Iowa, was awarded a \$350,000 Artplace America grant for a project called ImaginArt in the Alleys. This grant was the catalyst for nearly \$1 million in public/private investment for Uptown Artway, a project to activate the alleys behind Uptown's historic buildings during the construction phase of a streetscape project. Officially opened in May 2017, the project was even more successful than anticipated, with nearly 85 percent of the surrounding buildings purchased, renovated, or new businesses popping up since the project's inception. Building on the momentum of the project, new art continues to be installed and the Uptown Artway has become a lasting community gathering place and economic development driver for the City of Marion. *Main Street America program: Uptown Marion*



**DOWNTOWN TRANSFORMATION** Following a building restoration project that leveraged both private and public dollars and resulted in the rehabilitation of a total of eight storefronts and 15 new apartments, downtown Milan, Michigan, has seen a shift in attitude and movement towards genuine pride in their downtown. The Milan Main Street program helped fill the storefronts by matching property owners with retail entrepreneurs who had been testing the local market by participating in Milan's 3rd Thursday events, a promotional project that consists of live music, food trucks, a beer garden, and pop-up shops. To date, six new businesses have opened or are currently building out their space, creating 13 new jobs in the downtown. *Main Street America program: Milan Main Street*

**VOLUNTEER POWER** Students from Marion Military Institute, Judson College, and The University of Alabama Honors College contributed 2,317 individual volunteer hours since Marion, Alabama, received Main Street designation in June 2017. Projects included creating a downtown pocket park, painting a #OneMarion mural, launching a digital tourism webpage and guide, relandscaping the historic courthouse square, and producing and curating a bicentennial art exhibit. In addition to benefiting the downtown district, this partnership is an invaluable experience for the students—allowing them to experience community development first-hand and providing them with tools they can use well into the future. *Main Street America program: Main Street Marion*

**FAÇADE PARTNERSHIP** In 2016, Decatur Main Street and the City of Decatur, Indiana, partnered together to administer a downtown façade program, committing \$50,000 per year for five years. The matching program provides downtown business owners with the opportunity to invest in their properties and contribute to the revitalization of Decatur's downtown. To date, the city has funded 16 projects for improvements ranging from new windows and painting to tuck-pointing and complete storefront renovation. Competition for the funds continues to grow—in 2018, there were 12 applicants and four projects were awarded. The public/private partnership is proving to be a valuable and impactful way to grow downtown Decatur. *Main Street America program: Decatur Main Street*



Credits: Milan Main Street (top),  
Main Street Marion (middle),  
Decatur Main Street (bottom)



**PURPOSEFUL BREWING** After serving four years as economic development director for the City of Neligh, Greg Ptacek got bitten by the entrepreneurship bug and decided to open up Johnnie Byrd Brewing Company an hour away in Wayne, Nebraska. Located in a former fire hall, Ptacek and his father remodeled the space which includes a tap room, an overflow room, and a beer garden out front. The popular brewery is committed to more than just good beer—they are Nebraska’s first benefit corporation brewery and the fifth overall benefit corporation. They are committed to fair and honest wages, renewable energy sources, and giving back to the community. *Main Street America program: Main Street Wayne*



**HISTORIC ADAPTATION** After becoming empty nesters, Jonathan and Liz Reppe were looking for a new project and certainly found one when they purchased the old armory building in downtown Northfield, Minnesota. The Reppes transformed the century-old building into an event space, bar, and kitchen, and renovated the top level into a condo, where they now reside. They have invested \$750,000 and have poured an incredible amount of sweat equity into the project, including scraping 3,000 square feet of linoleum tile from the concrete floor! The project is of particular interest to Jonathan as his father was called up during the Korean War to report for duty at the Northfield Armory. The couple enjoys hearing stories from those who served and encourage the community to make their own memories in the historic space. *Main Street America program: Northfield Downtown Development Corporation*



**GATEWAY RENOVATION** In June 2017, the Deuces Live Main Street and the City of St. Petersburg, Florida, embarked on a journey to improve the aesthetics and safety of the I-275 Underpass, which serves as a gateway to the Main Street corridor. The project team improved the landscaping, removed fencing, and installed LED lighting on the columns and border. With funding from St. Petersburg’s Art Alliance and Public Arts Commission, they also selected two local artists to paint murals on the embankments. Costing just over \$493,000, funds for the project were provided by St. Petersburg Capital Improvement Project funds, county sales tax funds, and the annual SHINE festival in St. Petersburg. *Main Street America program: Deuces Live Main Street*

Credits:  
Adam Bartles (top),  
Jenni Roney (middle),  
Deuces Live Main Street  
(bottom)



## 2018 GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARD WINNERS

Each year, Main Street America recognizes exceptional communities with the Great American Main Street Award™ (GAMSA). Selected by a national jury of community development professionals and representatives of government agencies involved in economic development and historic preservation, winners exemplify the power of the Main Street Approach and serve as shining models for comprehensive, preservation-based commercial district revitalization. The 2018 awards were made possible through the generous support of U.S. Bank.





## HOWELL MAIN STREET INC.

HOWELL, MICHIGAN

**Main Street America Program:**  
Howell Main Street Inc.

**Coordinating Program:**  
Michigan Main Street

**Organization Founded:** 2005

**Population:** 9,592

**Net New Jobs:** 179\*

**Number of Buildings Rehabilitated:** 158\*

*\*Since Main Street America program began*



**Above:** Cleary's Pub patio packed for the Rock the Block festival. Credit: Richard Lim Photography

**Far Left:** State Street volunteers help with an event in Howell, Mich. Credit: Richard Lim Photography

**Near Left:** Oregon City Brewing Company is a vibrant community gathering spot. Credit: Downtown Oregon City Association

**Bottom Left:** The Rock Springs Coal sign welcomes visitors to the community. Credit: Rock Springs Main Street/Urban Renewal Agency (URA)

**DESPITE A CHALLENGING REGIONAL ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT, HOWELL MAIN STREET INC.,** in conjunction with the Downtown Development Authority, led the transformation of downtown Howell into a cultural destination through community-driven economic development and placemaking efforts. Downtown Howell now has a vacancy rate of just 1.2 percent and is home to a diverse mix of businesses that foster a strong sense of place to attract and keep people downtown.

In years past, downtown Howell was home to mostly professional services that filled a need, but failed to bring the kind of energy and enthusiasm needed to make downtown a place that drew people in and gave them a reason to stay. Through extensive engagement with local partners and the City, and strategic business recruitment, downtown now boasts a diverse mix of businesses featuring unique retail, dining establishments, and service industries.

“Downtown Howell has long been a charming and family-friendly town. However, the community recognized that we needed to grow, change, and get creative in our approach to making Howell a destination for our residents and visitors. The Main Street program was just the change that was needed!” states Howell Main Street C.O.O. and DDA Director, Cathleen Edgerly. “Through years of hard work, strategic planning, collaboration and creative vision, we are proud to have fostered a strong sense of place in our community. Today you’ll find millennials and retirees alike coming to downtown Howell as a place to invest, live, work, and play!”

The impact of the Main Street program, and its focus on deliberate, strategic investment in downtown is especially evident in Howell’s burgeoning arts scene. What began as a couple one-off initiatives to bring outdoor art to the district has become a transformative movement in the community. In the last three years alone, Howell Main Street has overseen the addition of murals in the downtown district, installed six new art-inspired bike racks, and raised over \$30,000 for an alley transformation resulting in a pedestrian plaza and outdoor art gallery.

Taken together, these efforts have transformed Howell from a quaint and charming historic bedroom community into a thriving downtown that draws thousands of students, young families, and retirees to arts and cultural celebrations year-round.





## DOWNTOWN OREGON CITY ASSOCIATION

### OREGON CITY, OREGON

#### Main Street America Program:

Downtown Oregon City Association

#### Coordinating Program:

Oregon Main Street

#### Organization Founded: 2008

#### Population: 36,286

#### Public & Private Investment:

\$41,939,000\*

#### Volunteer Hours Since 2010: 8,057

*\*Since Main Street America program began*



Aerial view of the First City Celebration.  
Credit: Stacy Spahr

## OREGON CITY, KNOWN AS THE FIRST INCORPORATED CITY IN THE AMERICAN WEST AND THE OFFICIAL END OF THE OREGON TRAIL,

has undergone an inspiring revival. The town's evolution—from pioneer's oasis in the 19th century, to industrial center in the 20th century, to the dynamic cultural destination residents and visitors enjoy today—is a testament to a deeply-rooted local entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to continuous growth.

This transformation has occurred in the face of hardships that are an all too familiar story in once-thriving industrial towns, including the closing of one of the town's major employers, a disruptive streetscape project, and the departure of county administrative offices. Over the last decade, under the auspices of the Downtown Oregon City Association (DOCA), the city has seen nearly \$42 million invested in the downtown district's buildings, streetscapes, and infrastructure, in addition to over two-dozen new business openings and hundreds of new jobs.

"Once a district filled with taverns catering to a now-defunct paper mill, Downtown Oregon City is now an emerging and vibrant destination. It is a transformation that began with catalytic investments in the streetscape and facade grant programs which have attracted a diverse group of independent businesses," said Jonathan Stone, Executive Director of the Downtown Oregon City Association.

A city of "firsts," Oregon City is home to an overwhelming majority of first-time owner or family-operated businesses. DOCA helps foster this entrepreneurial spirit by strategically recruiting new potential businesses and providing close support to existing businesses to help them thrive. Visitors and residents enjoy the fruits of this labor at a number of unique local outposts, including diverse restaurants, a brewery, an award-winning bakery, and a fifth-generation family-owned fish shop.

"The future of Downtown Oregon City is remarkable; we've been able to authentically maintain our historic heritage while meeting the needs of our community. Our downtown is unique as it is still growing—we are lucky to have space available for development as well as existing property available for redevelopment. With our growing population in Oregon City, downtown has become the place we gather as a community and create memories," states Stone.

Downtown Oregon City embodies what it means to be a Main Street; they bring the community together and are paving the way for a bright and prosperous future.





## DOWNTOWN ROCK SPRINGS MAIN STREET/URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY

ROCK SPRINGS, WYOMING

### Main Street America Program:

Downtown Rock Springs Main Street/  
Urban Renewal Agency

### Coordinating Program:

Wyoming Main Street

**Organization Founded:** 2006

**Population:** 24,045

**Net New Jobs:** 150\*

### Number of Buildings Rehabilitated:

234\*

*\*Since Main Street America  
program began*



Community members attend the free Brown Bag Concert Series. Credit: Rock Springs Main Street/Urban Renewal Agency (URA)

## FOUNDED IN 1888 BY A DIVERSE GROUP OF IMMIGRANT COAL MINERS, ROCK SPRINGS EXPERIENCED BOOMS AND BUSTS

since its early coal mining days through the present-day oil and gas economy. This up and down cycle negatively impacted the downtown district and it became a place most people avoided. In 2006, the Rock Springs Main Street/Urban Renewal Agency was founded to address the city's tarnished reputation and bring about renewed vibrancy.

Due to the efforts of the Main Street organization and the can-do attitude of the community, today downtown Rock Springs has a vibrant local economy and cultural scene. The Freight Station, a signature structure in the downtown district that had been abandoned for more than 30 years, is now a vibrant community center that bustles with weekly events. It also houses the Visitors Center where travelers can get recommendations and learn about the rich history of downtown. Entertainment is also easy for visitors to find thanks to the newly refurbished 370-seat Broadway Theater and the Community Fine Arts Center. Shopping and restaurant options abound with over 15 bars and restaurants and over 30 unique, locally-owned boutique shops.

"I'm so proud of the work we have done in Downtown Rock Springs to reshape the district back into the vibrant, exciting area it once was, and winning this prestigious award is validation of the work we're doing," says Chad Banks, Manager of the Rock Springs Main Street/URA, which has been working to revitalize Downtown Rock Springs for the last 10 years. "It wouldn't be possible without the support of the city, the URA/Main Street Board and the countless volunteers who give their time and talents to ensure the success of the program."

Since Rock Springs joined the Main Street program, 150 total jobs have been added to the downtown corridor, with 56 new businesses setting up shop in the area over the last decade. Several incentive programs have been implemented to attract new businesses to downtown, such as the Rental Assistance and Façade Improvement Grant programs. Since this program was initiated, 54 grants have been awarded.

The Rock Springs Main Street program has transformed and revitalized the most blighted areas of the URA through public consensus, volunteerism, and preservation of its historic character and cultural heritage, all key elements to their success.

# 2019 GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARD SEMIFINALISTS



Each year, 10 exemplary communities are selected from a nationwide pool of Accredited Main Street America applicants as Great American Main Street Award (GAMSA) semifinalists. Three of these semifinalists will go on to become GAMSA winners—a top honor within the commercial district revitalization field. We look forward to announcing this year’s winners on March 25 at the 2019 Main Street Now Conference in Seattle, Washington.

## ALBERTA MAIN STREET PORTLAND, OREGON

Alberta Main Street, an urban district located in Portland, Oregon, has successfully utilized the Main Street Approach to further their community’s vision of creating an equitable commercial district after decades of disinvestment. In just eight years since they were founded, they have created 679 new jobs in the district, while addressing longstanding, difficult challenges, such as gentrification and displacement. Alberta Main Street is relentless in their commitment to diversity and inclusion, and supporting minority-owned business and property owners.

## BOYNE CITY MAIN STREET BOYNE CITY, MICHIGAN

Boyne City, on the shores of Lake Charlevoix in northern Michigan, is a shining example of the power of the Main Street Approach. The once bustling town had such potential, but starting a program was a “risk” for their community in 2003. Now, 15 years later, the reward is clear. Main Street Boyne City has had a real impact in the revitalization and energy of downtown, with over \$37 million in public/private investment, 111 new jobs created, and nearly 50,000 volunteer hours

logged, which is especially impressive given that they have just over 3,700 residents!

## MAIN STREET CHILLICOTHE CHILLICOTHE, MISSOURI

It should come as no surprise that the place where sliced bread was born continues to make life better for its citizens. A return semifinalist, Main Street Chillicothe, located in north central Missouri, has worked hard to make downtown the place to be. In addition to a thriving restaurant and retail scene, it boasts a healthy living atmosphere with three parks, wide sidewalks for walking and running, and a weekly farmers market. The 86 houses and apartments within the 16-block district are home to over 200 residents—with a waiting list for many others looking to enjoy the vibrant downtown.

## ELLENSBURG DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION ELLENSBURG, WASHINGTON

Located in the very center of Washington state, Ellensburg is equal parts rodeo town, artsy college town, and agricultural hub. The Ellensburg Downtown Association (EDA) prides itself on their ability to bring people together and is tenacious in its commitment to the Main Street Approach, strong partnerships, and the power of

TOGETHER, THE 2019 GAMSA SEMIFINALISTS HAVE GENERATED NEARLY HALF A BILLION DOLLARS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE REINVESTMENT, WHILE CREATING **6,984 NEW JOBS**, OPENING **655 NEW BUSINESSES**, REHABbing **779 BUILDINGS**, AND CLOCKING OVER **273,000 VOLUNTEER HOURS** SINCE THEIR PROGRAMS’ INCEPTIONS.

preservation as an economic driver. Over their 15-year history, EDA has worked tirelessly to reduce their vacancy rate from 15 percent to 3 percent, while generating over \$22 million in public/private investment.

### **EVANSTON URA/MAIN STREET** **EVANSTON, WYOMING**

Evanston Urban Renewal Agency/Main Street started with little more than a vintage Main Street Approach workshop manual and has since transformed downtown into an inviting, welcoming place. Not only do they complete major preservation projects—including a fire-ravaged theatre, a vacant train depot, and an abandoned hotel—they offer incentives for small business owners to do the same to their properties. Evanston also celebrates the many cultures that make up its past, present and future, with Chinese New Year parades, Cinco de Mayo celebrations, and Celtic festivals.

### **KENDALL WHITTIER MAIN STREET** **TULSA, OKLAHOMA**

Tulsa's Kendall Whittier District, once home to the city's first suburban shopping center, is now a model destination district for arts, culture, shopping, and food trucks. By adapting the framework of the Main Street Approach to the needs of a diverse, creative, urban district, Kendall Whittier Main Street has created economic vitality, inclusive opportunity, and community transformation. Since their founding only eight years ago, the Main Street organization has reduced the downtown vacancy rate from 65 percent to 3 percent exclusively through locally-owned businesses.

### **HAMMOND DOWNTOWN** **DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT** **HAMMOND, LOUISIANA**

Hammond, located 45 miles from both Baton Rouge and New Orleans, has the longest-running Main Street America program and the largest district (74 square blocks) of the semifinalists. When the Hammond Downtown Development District was founded in 1984, there was an 80 percent vacancy rate in the district, which they have worked to reduce by over 87 percent.

And they're drawing more than business downtown—Hammond Downtown Development District has set a nationwide standard for mixed-use buildings and boasts a diverse range of residential options.

### **SAN MARCOS MAIN STREET PROGRAM** **SAN MARCOS, TEXAS**

A once thriving downtown, San Marcos was neglected and vacant by the 1980s. San Marcos Main Street Program has helped put downtown back on the map, generating nearly \$100 million in private investment along with an additional \$13+ million invested in the community. Partnerships, placemaking, dedicated resources, and creative ideas spearheaded by the Main Street program have helped transform the town square into a place that local citizens, business owners, and students are proud to call home.

### **WHEELING HERITAGE** **WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA**

Situated in the Appalachian foothills, Wheeling's rebooted Main Street program hit the ground running in 2015. In Wheeling Heritage's first three years, 124 buildings have been rehabbed while generating almost \$50 million in public/private investment. These reinvestment statistics are a result of the changed narrative around downtown—"remember-whens" are now "what's-nexts." Wheeling proves that using the Main Street Approach to address important issues with citizens and local organizations can have impressive results.

### **WAUSAU RIVER DISTRICT** **WAUSAU, WISCONSIN**

Located on the Wisconsin River in north central Wisconsin, Wausau River District is a GAMSA Semifinalist for the third year in a row! Since 2002, they have generated over 1,000 new jobs while becoming a thriving organization known for leading comprehensive downtown revitalization. Through these sustained efforts, downtown Wausau has become the amenity-rich cultural, civic, arts, and shopping center of the region, as well as a premier place to live, work, and play.