

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*

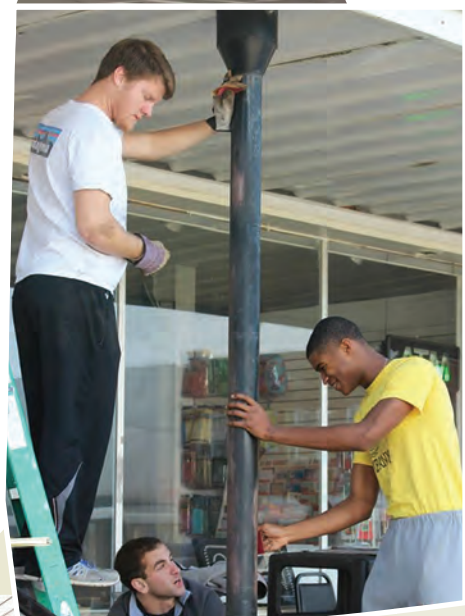
Credits: Vantage Health Plan (top), Wanderlust Coffee and Wine Lounge (middle), Uptown Marion (bottom)

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)