



Main Street Iowa Recognizes Outstanding Achievements

Award Winning Projects and Volunteers Honored

Main Street Iowa hosted the annual Main Street Iowa Awards celebration on Friday, May 1, 2015 at the Community Choice Credit Union Convention Center (Iowa Events Center) in downtown Des Moines. The event to recognize local Main Street projects, activities and volunteers was attended by approximately 520 individuals representing communities across the state. Competitive nominations were submitted for 107 projects and activities within the five categories of design, economic restructuring, organization, promotion and overall program. Twenty-one projects received winner award recognition and nine received honorable mention.

The honors were presented by the Honorable Governor Terry E. Branstad and Debi Durham, director of the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA). In addition to the competitive nominations, 58 individuals, couples or co-chairs representing the 52 Main Street programs were recognized for outstanding dedication and volunteer service. The program directors accompanied volunteers on stage as they received their certificates.

During opening remarks, Governor Branstad explained his history with the Main Street Iowa program. "In my 1985 Condition of the State address to the Iowa Legislature, I proposed finding the funds to create Main Street Iowa. We knew from the very beginning that Main Street was not a quick-fix solution, but rather an incremental approach to fostering positive change. In my travels across the state, I have seen the program at work in small towns, mid-size cities, urban centers and neighborhood commercial districts. It has had far greater impact than we could ever have imagined in 1985."

In its 29-year history, Main Street Iowa has tracked over \$1.4 billion in private investment in the purchase, construction and rehabilitation of property in participating commercial districts, significantly increasing the state's job and business base. In addition, over 2.5 million hours of volunteer time have been logged collectively by local main street organizations.

"Healthy, historic commercial districts are a key deciding factor for industrial and business recruitment. Main Street Iowa brings jobs, investment and new businesses to our downtowns and historic commercial neighborhoods," said Durham. "Taxpayers are certainly getting their money's worth. In FY14, for every dollar the state of Iowa has invested in operating the state Main Street program, the private sector in those communities has invested \$93 into building improvements and acquisitions."

During the event, six communities were recognized for reaching significant benchmarks in 2014 based on private dollar investments made in the purchase and revitalization of properties within their respective commercial districts. Manning was recognized for reaching the \$1 million benchmark in the last year and Colfax was honored for \$2 million in local investment. Chariton and Marion were recognized for achieving the \$5 million level. Mount Pleasant attained \$10 million in local investment since being designated a local Main Street program, and West Des Moines' Historic Valley Junction reached the \$20 million benchmark. The communities of Bloomfield, Greenfield and Le Mars received recognition for their 20 years of participation as designated Main Street communities and Dubuque for 30 years. The communities of Chariton, Jefferson and Lansing were recognized for the successful completion of Main Street's three-year start-up phase in commercial district revitalization.



Charles City, *The Rustic Corner*,
Winner of Business of the Year



Dunlap Solsbury Hill Home & Gifts,
Visual Merchandising



Elkader, *White Water Feature & River Access*,
Public Improvements



Cedar Falls, *Lemonade Day Entrepreneurial Camp*,
Business Assistance Program

continued on page 2

Main Street Awards, continued...

In addition to the 30 competitive award winners and honorable mention recognitions showcased throughout the evening, Mount Pleasant was presented the Signature Project of the Year award for their Union Block Building revitalization project. This special award honors a project that rises above the traditional award categories in impact and significance. This project not only saved a landmark structure on Preservation Iowa's Most Endangered List, but also served as a catalyst for additional business development initiatives downtown.

In 1985, the Iowa Legislature adopted the National Main Street Center's Four Point Approach® to district revitalization by establishing Main Street Iowa within the agency that is now the Iowa Economic Development Authority. Since its inception, the state program and its communities have been considered examples of excellence in the national effort to revitalize historic commercial districts across the country.

For more information about Main Street Iowa and how all Iowa communities can access commercial revitalization assistance through the Iowa Downtown Resource Center, visit iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/mainstreetiowa, e-mail mainstreet@iowa.gov or call 515.725.3058.

A list of the awards presented during the ceremony follows below through page 5.



*Marshalltown, The Tallcorn,
Total Rehabilitation Over 5,000 Square Feet*



*Mount Pleasant, Union Block Revitalization,
Signature Project of the Year*

MILLION DOLLAR BENCHMARKS

Private dollars invested in commercial district rehabilitation & property acquisition.

\$20 Million	West Des Moines
\$10 Million	Mount Pleasant
\$5 Million	Chariton & Marion
\$2 Million	Colfax
\$1 Million	Manning

THREE-YEAR COMPLETIONS

Completion of Main Street Iowa's Start-Up Phase in Commercial District Revitalization

Chariton – Chariton Area Chamber / Main Street
Jefferson – Jefferson Matters: Main Street
Lansing – Main Street Matters

SIGNATURE PROJECT OF THE YEAR AWARD

Special award presented to honor an outstanding award nomination that rises above the traditional award categories in impact, emotion and significance.

Union Block Revitalization – Mount Pleasant

Main Street Awards, continued...

Category	Project Name	Community	Award
DESIGN			
Façade Improvement	Deb's Corner Café	Manning	Winner
	Computer Doctors	Dubuque	Honorable Mention
Interior Rehabilitation	Graham's Style Store	Dubuque	Winner
	Insurance on the Avenue – Zeigler Billiards Hall	Washington	Winner
New Construction	300 State Street	Cedar Falls	Winner
Public Improvement	Art Trail Downtown Sculpture Competition	Woodbine	Winner
	White Water Feature & River Access	Elkader	Honorable Mention
Total Rehabilitation 5,000 Square Feet & Under	Cliff's Place	Manning	Winner
	Albert & Anna Herda House	Cedar Rapids	Honorable Mention
Total Rehabilitation Over 5,000 Square Feet	Hotel Charitone	Chariton	Winner
	The Tallcorn	Marshalltown	Honorable Mention
ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING			
Business Assistance Program	Lemonade Day Entrepreneurial Camp	Cedar Falls	Winner
Business of the Year	The Rustic Corner	Charles City	Winner
	Parlor City Pub & Eatery	Cedar Rapids	Honorable Mention
Business Start-Up Success Story	Darbe & Co. Boutique	Charles City	Winner
	C Fresh Market	Des Moines	Winner
Visual Merchandising	Solsbury Hill Home & Gifts	Dunlap	Winner
ORGANIZATION			
Communication	Communication Strategy	Charles City	Winner
Fundraising	BPCDC Golf Outing	Belle Plaine	Winner
Volunteer Leadership Development	Volunteer Appreciation Event	Cedar Falls	Winner
OVERALL			
Committee of the Year	Downtown Parking Audit	Cedar Falls	Winner
	Downtown Partners – Board of Directors	Burlington	Honorable Mention
Partnerships	FFA Partnership	Charles City	Winner
PROMOTION			
Image Campaign	Love Local! in Historic Valley Junction	West Des Moines	Winner
	Litter Letter Project	Des Moines	Honorable Mention
Retail Promotion Activity	Small Business Saturday	Mount Vernon	Winner
Special Event	Zip Code Day	Mount Vernon	Winner
	Firefly Country Nights	Ames	Honorable Mention
	Social Media Scavenger Hunt	Burlington	Honorable Mention

Main Street Awards, continued...

VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR FOR 2014		
Volunteer(s)	Community	Program
Hugo Kenemer	Ames	Main Street Cultural District
Serena Riesgaard	Avoca	Avoca Main Street
Donna Beemer Walston	Bedford	Bedford Area Chamber
Judy Schlesselman	Belle Plaine	Belle Plaine Community Development Corp.
Barb Cole	Bloomfield	Bloomfield Main Street
Constance Meek	Bonaparte	Bonaparte Main Street
Cyndi Parks	Burlington	Downtown Partners, Inc.
Dawn Wilson	Cedar Falls	Community Main Street
Jill Wilkins	Cedar Rapids	Czech Village-New Bohemia
Carol Novey	Central City	Central City Mainstreet
Lyle Asell	Chariton	Chariton Area Chamber / Main Street
Jim Lundberg	Charles City	Community Revitalization
David Mast	Colfax	Colfax Main Street
Reverend Kerry Carson	Conrad	Conrad Chamber - Main Street
Brandon and Amanda Petersen	Corning	Main Street Corning
Vera Kelly and Rosie Terrell	Davenport	Hilltop Campus Village
Jason Harmer	Des Moines	6th Avenue Corridor
John B. Donovan	Dubuque	Dubuque Main Street
Jerry Baldwin (posthumously)	Dunlap	Dunlap Community Development Corporation
Adam Pollock, Tom Gifford and Gary Siegwarth	Elkader	Main Street Elkader
Angie Sodey	Fort Madison	Fort Madison Main Street
Catherine Howe	Greenfield	Greenfield Chamber / Main Street
Marian McQuaid	Guthrie Center	Main Street Guthrie Center
Monika Kirstein	Hamilton County	Hamilton County S.E.E.D.
Katy Flint	Hampton	Greater Franklin County Chamber of Commerce
Taresa Trueblood	Iowa Falls	Iowa Falls Chamber / Main Street
Marc McGinn	Jefferson	Jefferson Matters: Main Street
Tom Gardner	Keokuk	Main Street Keokuk, Inc.
Curt Snitker	Lansing	Main Street Matters
Angie Erdmann	Le Mars	Le Mars Area Chamber of Commerce
Jean Stadlander	Manning	Main Street Manning
Gae Sharp-Richardson	Marion	Uptown Marion
Pat Williams	Marshalltown	Marshalltown Central Business District
Eric Levenhagen	Mason City	Main Street Mason City
Paul Dennison	Mount Pleasant	Main Street Mount Pleasant
Jennifer Miller	Mount Vernon	Mount Vernon/Lisbon Community Development
Kris Markham	New Hampton	New Horizons Chamber
Rita Reinheimer	Newton	Newton Main Street Partnership
Amy Lundquist	Osceola	Osceola Chamber - Main Street
Jerry Zear	Oskaloosa	Main Street Oskaloosa
Melanie Dalbey	Ottumwa	Main Street Ottumwa
Bruce Perry	Sac City	Chamber-Main Street
Christin Lee & Sheryl Lee	Spencer	Spencer Main Street
Jim Figgins	State Center	State Center Development Association
Cali Arnold	Story City	Story City Greater Chamber Connection
Jean Wehr	Washington	Main Street Washington
Steve Mager	Waterloo	Main Street Waterloo
Todd Coleman	Waverly	Waverly Chamber of Commerce
Mary Jensen	West Branch	Main Street West Branch
Tyrone Belle & Shayrohn Belle	West Des Moines	Historic Valley Junction Foundation
Derek Heins	West Union	Main Street West Union
Marilyn Boustead	Woodbine	Woodbine Main Street, Inc.

Main Street Awards, continued...

YEARS OF SERVICE AWARDS		
Program Director	# Years (as of 12/31/14)	Community
Joyce Glasscock, CMSM	25	Keokuk
Bob Rose, CMSM	22	Spencer
Dan LoBianco, CMSM	16	Dubuque
Diana Thies	13	Iowa Falls
Lisa Oetken, CMSM	9	Mount Pleasant
Fonley Allen	9	Dunlap
Jim Miller, CMSM	8	West Des Moines
Everett Halsted	8	State Center
Roger Thomas	8	Elkader
Darla Ubben	7	Conrad
Steve Frevert	6	Burlington
Stacie Hull	6	Greenfield
Mary Reynolds	6	Le Mars
Scott Tunnicliff	5	Davenport (Hilltop Campus Village)
Deb Sprecker	5	Woodbine
Derek Lumsden	4	Osceola
Joe Jennison	4	Mount Vernon
Sheila Hlas	4	Belle Plaine
Jeff Kurtz	4	Waterloo
Carol Lilly	3	Cedar Falls
Twyla Peacock	3	Bonaparte
Sarah Thompson	3	Hamilton County
Colleen Nelson	3	Manning
Jennifer Pruden	2	Cedar Rapids (Czech Village - New Bohemia)
Jason Speltz	2	New Hampton
Mackenzie Krob	2	West Branch
Kris Patrick	2	Chariton
Sarah Sadrakula	2	Washington
Jenny Etter	2	Marshalltown
Jodee O'Brien	< 2	Mason City
Mark Wicks	< 2	Charles City
Robert Untiedt	< 2	Ottumwa
Emily Pery	< 2	Colfax
Karen Hafner	< 2	Oskaloosa
John Hall	< 2	Story City
Wendi Boswell	< 2	Corning
Anna Hough	<2	Avoca
Andrew Bassman	<2	Newton
Julie Bailey	<2	Guthrie Center
Jillian Mohrfeld	<2	Fort Madison
Newton Grotzinger	<2	Hampton
Travis Toliver	< 2	Waverly
Ashley Zierath	< 2	Marion
Dan Fisher	< 2	Lansing
Stacey Colledge	< 2	Central City
Jennifer Tobin	< 2	West Union
Cindy Hicks	< 2	Ames
Breann Bye	< 2	Des Moines (6th Avenue Corridor)

2015 Iowa Downtown Summit

August 27-28

West Des Moines' Historic Valley Junction

Plan now to attend the 29th annual Iowa Downtown Summit, the premier statewide annual conference for professionals and volunteers involved in historic commercial district revitalization in Iowa.

The Summit is an informative, motivational event featuring innovative, inspiring lessons focusing on downtown revitalization presented by experts in the field. Featured keynote speakers include success coach and best-selling author **Mitch Matthews**; real estate developer and founder of Urban3 **Joe Minicozzi** AICP; developer, author and consultant **Ron Drake**; and entrepreneur **Mike Draper**, founder and owner of RAYGUN.

The Iowa Downtown Summit will include 22 timely and relevant educational sessions that will offer fresh ideas and new approaches and perspectives. The 2015 Summit will also use Valley Junction - West Des Moines' historic downtown - as a living laboratory to demonstrate the successful use of the Main Street Approach® in this Great American Main Street Award winning community. Six mobile tours and a field session will be offered, showing attendees areas within Valley Junction as well as heading downtown Des Moines to check out residential spaces and capture a glimpse of the capitol city's arts and culture. In addition, new Main Street communities will be announced, a film screening of the just released documentary "Urban Century: America's Return to Main Street" held, "Three Minute Success Stories" shared and downtown specialists will be available for one-on-one meetings to answer questions.

An exhibit hall will offer relevant information and resources, prizes, and a number of opportunities to network with people who recognize the importance of downtown revitalization.

Who should attend?

- Downtown Development advocates and professionals
- Economic Development organization executives
- Chamber of Commerce and Main Street program directors and volunteers
- Planning professionals
- Local government officials
- Community leaders & civic organizations
- Real Estate developers and agents (Continuing Education Credits will be available)
- Architects (Continuing Education Credits will be available)
- Citizens interested in their community's quality of life
- Preservation professionals, consultants & enthusiasts
- Historic preservation commission members



The Summit is brought to you by the Iowa Economic Development Authority's Iowa Downtown Resource Center, in partnership with the Historic Valley Junction Foundation and the city of West Des Moines; with thanks to our sponsors IEDA's Community Development Block Grant, Iowa Association of Realtors, Curt and Sharon Heidt, Renew Rural Iowa/Iowa Farm Bureau and the Federal Home Loan Bank.

Register online at iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/DowntownSummit

Learn More

terry.buschkamp@iowa.gov, 515.725.3075



Rocky Mountain Institute's e-Lab Accelerator

Seattle, San Diego, San Francisco, and Bloomfield, Iowa. What do all of these towns have in common? These four communities represented four of the 12 project teams participating in Rocky Mountain Institute's e-Lab Accelerator. E-Lab Accelerator is an invitation-only, four-day working meeting to accelerate high-impact projects from teams innovating at the electricity system's distribution edge. Bloomfield, a Main Street Iowa community, is innovating at the electricity system's distribution edge by seeking to become an energy independent community.

Bloomfield is no stranger to innovation or thinking big. In the last five years, the community has embarked on many large transformational projects from converting to the regional water system, implementation of a façade master plan renovating many downtown storefronts, to the addition of 16 upper-story downtown apartments. The city has completed 50 percent design details for a future thinking downtown with porous paver system streets and sidewalks, district geothermal heating and cooling, LED street lighting, rain gardens, and improved pedestrian accessibility and safety. While many examples of big thinking are a trademark of Bloomfield, the community's latest vision may be one of its most progressive and visionary with a chance to serve as a model for the country and beyond—achieving energy independence. How did this vision evolve?

In the summer of 2014, the Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities completed a study of the feasibility of Bloomfield and its municipal utility becoming independent of the electricity grid. The study found through a combination of select and integrated energy efficiency and energy demand load controls combined with renewable energy installations that Bloomfield could indeed be independent of the electricity grid a few days per year while at the same time saving the city and electricity rate payers money. Armed with a study showing the potential for energy independence, Bloomfield began to seek resources and partners to achieve the vision and potential—enter Rocky Mountain Institute and e-Lab Accelerator.

The Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) is internationally known for its forward-thinking, market-driven collaborative approaches to sustainable design and energy systems with a mission to, “drive the efficient and restorative use of resources.” RMI began the Electricity Innovation Lab (e-Lab) Accelerator in 2014 to, “immerse teams in e-Lab's collaborative approaches and subject-matter expertise that is delivering transformative change across North America, providing teams a structured session to make real progress on their initiatives.”

Six Bloomfield team members were fortunate to attend e-Lab Accelerator in March 2015. Approximately 105 participants representing distributed energy and community engagement expertise faculty, RMI staff and 12 project teams from across the country, gathered for four intensive days at Sundance Resort, Utah to craft a vision, mission and action steps towards energy innovation.

Each day began with optional activities, followed by structured learning opportunities, project team time, and a variety of opportunities to interact with other teams for project feedback.

Numerous faculty-led sessions were offered on topics ranging from civic engagement to financing projects, to social marketing and communication to assist Bloomfield in achieving its objectives for e-Lab Accelerator.

Bloomfield's Objectives for e-Lab Accelerator

- Establish a shared understanding of the current situation and a shared vision for the project
- Expand the understanding of options and approaches to reaching the vision
- Return to Bloomfield with an action plan developed

Early in the process Bloomfield began diving in to modeling the current energy system in Bloomfield using a favorite design tool for kids of all ages—Legos®. Once the current model was developed, they shared the design with another project team to solicit feedback and probing questions to help with modeling the desired future local energy system.

Following review of the current energy delivery system and development of the preferred energy delivery system, came what turned out to be one of the most pivotal and valuable components of the four days—a reason for participating. Attendees were asked to think about the following three questions.

What are Bloomfield's three primary questions?

1. Why is Bloomfield pursuing an energy independent community?
2. How does Bloomfield align, engage and get support of all stakeholders?
3. What are Bloomfield's next steps?

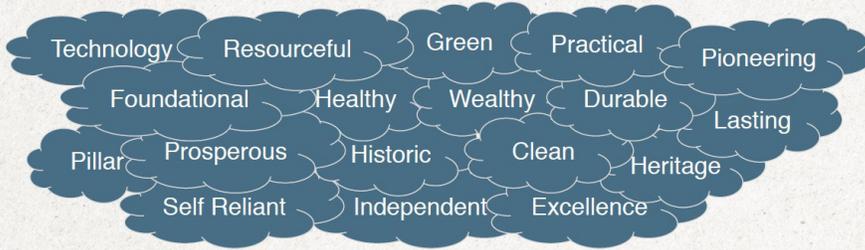
The simple act of asking, “Why is Bloomfield pursuing an energy independent community?” really opened eyes to the idea that energy independence wasn't the end, but a means to making Bloomfield “interesting and attractive again” and spurring numerous desired outcomes.

Outcomes Resulting from Achieving Energy Independence

- Job creation
- Keeping money in the community
- Customer investment in community
- More disposable income
- Revitalized, green infrastructure
- Reputation, branding, pride
- Self reliance
- Maximization and coordination of community assets and investments

Taking a step back and looking at energy independence as a means to a much broader set of valuable outcomes helped Bloomfield to better see the many ways that energy independence can benefit different local stakeholders. This “light bulb moment,” pun intended, really helped the Bloomfield team craft its vision and mission with a little help from RMI's marketing and communications expertise.

SO WHAT IS OUR PROJECT'S VISION?



Vision: Creating a new foundation for prosperity through local energy innovation

Mission: We are on a path to be an Energy Independent Community through Bloomfield's legacy of resourcefulness and excellence to ensure health, prosperity, and resiliency for the next 150 years

Communities as systems were an overriding theme that became stronger throughout the four days and is something Bloomfield attendees are reminded of since returning from e-Lab. Conversations in Utah involved all of the exciting work happening in downtown Bloomfield and around the community including the list of activities/potential activities listed below. Bloomfield realized that these various activities and projects are assets in a community. Often, communities get too busy with everyday activities in their own small sphere of work and influence and forget that their projects are part of and impact a larger community system.

- Downtown façade master plan
- Downtown upper-story housing
- Downtown streetscape
- Downtown district heating and cooling system
- New water lines and connection to rural water
- Decommissioning of current water plant and distribution lines
- Regional trail network
- Possible new city/county jail
- Possible library expansion

The Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) has been a technical and financial assistance partner on many of these projects. How does IEDA work with communities to better integrate and leverage investments in supporting the larger community system and vision? If we are funding a water supply project, how do we promote water conservation at the same time which helps a community towards energy independence? When funding a wastewater project, how do we support alternative methods of wastewater delivery and treatment to reduce energy and water use and energy independence? When funding façade and upper-story investments, how do we leverage those investments to support other efforts in a community such as energy independence? All of the activities above use energy, save energy or maybe even produce energy? How do we use a systems thinking approach in our community work to achieve a multiplier effect that is economically, environmentally, culturally and socially restorative and regenerative for a community?



What is the perfect downtown?

That is a challenge, because all of our expectations are different, but, when I think of downtowns or traditional urban commercial districts that are really popping, I see these 10 characteristics (in no particular order). How many can you check off?

1. **Downtown is an entertainment venue with programmed events** — and not just the annual pumpkin festival — a series of hip events for all ages that establish downtown as the place to visit. Lose that opinion that events/festivals are the fluffy segment of downtown and economic development. They attract people, make money and build reputation.
2. **Well-maintained, historic buildings:** I struggle to think of many successful downtowns that have gone in a different direction. Users of your downtown love unique spaces. They love to look up. The energy created by these cool buildings that have been restored and maintained (and occupied from ground floor on up) gives your downtown a distinct advantage. If your community has not embraced a historic preservation ethic yet, it's time.
3. **A combination of long-time business owners and new entrepreneurs.** This can say a lot about a downtown's health. Not only does it show a downtown business community's ability to sustain itself in the long run, but, this kind of set-up coupled with a cooperative spirit shows itself when customers walk in the door. Veteran business owners (even extremely independent ones) can be motivated by new business owners with enthusiasm, ideas and are technology savvy. Likewise, rookies can benefit greatly from experienced business owners that have made money and are willing to provide a tip or two.
4. **A retail presence.** Mixed-use downtowns are important, but, yes maintaining an interesting retail base that attracts locals and out-of-towners is crucial. Vacancies are not popular, but if your business mix isn't what it should be, they certainly create opportunities.
5. **Anchors.** Successful downtowns almost always have one to five businesses (depending on community size) that can draw people to the downtown all by themselves. It could be a well known retail business, the post office or the only bank in town. A variety of good restaurants is also a characteristic of a vibrant downtown. We love to eat. Why go to the edge of town on the highway to eat?
6. **The walkable downtown:** attractive environment, easily accessible, nearby parks, dog-friendly, promotes physical fitness, good sidewalks with no physical interruptions, trees, color, window displays, benches.....
7. **Following the same theme....**cleanliness and safety in the downtown district are essential. Pull the weeds. Pick up the trash. Take public and private signage seriously. Spruce up windows in empty buildings. Hide the dumpsters. Remove the snow and ice from the streets and walks. Provide ample lighting and safe intersections. Some communities make an effort here. Sadly, some don't.
8. **Night-time economy.** Does your downtown roll up the sidewalks at 7 p.m. or is it an active district with the lights on, eating and drinking establishments, events, stores that are open with live music playing?
9. **Quality housing above downtown storefronts** also brings in an entire market of downtown users at all hours of the day and increases activity substantially — not to mention the advantages that income producing upper floors can do for the downtown buildings in general.
10. **Daytime workers.** Yes, retail is important but the mixed-use downtown also has a large number of workers in the form of government workers, accountants, lawyers, industrial positions, etc. This is yet another market that brings health and revenue during daytime business hours.



*Jim Engle, Director
Iowa Downtown Resource Center*

SAVE THE DATES! NOVEMBER 9-10

The Iowa Nonprofit Summit – an exciting, educational and invaluable conference for Iowa nonprofits and volunteer management professionals – will be held in Ames November 9-10, 2015. Part of continuing efforts to assist organizations in operating efficiently and effectively and to promote the exchange of information and resources among nonprofit and volunteer management professionals, this annual conference features outstanding keynote presentations, dozens of break-out sessions, networking opportunities, and exhibitors demonstrating the latest resources available to help nonprofits and volunteer programs excel.



For the latest news:

- Visit www.regonline.com/npsummit2015
- Join our e-mail list by sending a request to icvs@iowa.gov

Director Spotlight: Darla Ubben — Conrad



Except for the long winters, Darla Ubben, Program Director for Conrad Chamber-Main Street, loves Iowa and always knew she would raise her children in the comforts of a small Iowa town.

Growing up and having lived in Iowa her entire life has likely contributed to these feelings. Darla was born and raised in Aplington, Iowa, before going to Northwestern College in Orange City, where her son currently attends college. After getting married, she lived in Sheldon and then moved to Conrad 16 years ago this summer.

Prior to moving to Conrad, Darla had never heard of the Main Street program. However, she had only lived in Conrad for a couple of weeks before attending her first Main Street event. That day, Darla learned a little more about the program and immediately thought that she would love to get involved with the program and somehow knew she would have the director's job someday. Darla says, "Through my years as a volunteer, and now eight years as being a director, I have grown to love the collaboration of our Conrad residents and businesses alike. I appreciate and respect the friendships and networking with the State staff and Main Street Program directors across the state and country. I love seeing the local growth and vitality that Conrad is a part of; I get excited when I see what 'small town Iowa' can really do when we set our minds to it.

I have always been impressed with Conrad as a community from the first time we drove into town. I now know it is because Conrad has never let our size stop us from doing things right. This can be credited to community leaders as well as the guidance of the Main Street Program."

Darla's most rewarding part of her job is making small town Iowa a place to be proud of and making dreams come true! She loves seeing a business owner start their dream business, which sometimes simply happens because of an off the cuff conversation. Often these success stories come to fruition only after months (or years) of hard work. Darla would also say, "It's fun to help them connect all the dots. I get that same joy after we are at the end of a large project or event. At these times we can say WE DID IT, and we are proud of it!"

The most drastic and impressive change Conrad has seen came three years after Jim Thompson, one of Main Street Iowa's business specialists shared these infamous words, "I think Conrad would be a good candidate for a CDBG Façade Program!" Without question, the 2014 completion of the Downtown Revitalization Project (DTR) has made the most drastic visual impact in Conrad. The DTR completely changed Conrad's downtown landscape. In addition, it renewed an unquestionable commitment to the community that the Chamber-Main Street, the city of Conrad, and the building owners had toward Conrad and its future. Secondly, Darla believes that Conrad's proper uses of TIF funds have made a remarkable impact on Conrad and its many projects.

Darla's vision is "to be the most vibrant small town Conrad could possibly be; to have a full and active downtown with unique, friendly and inviting businesses with the aim of drawing both customers and new residents alike from all over the state and beyond."

Her life outside of the "Main Street world" completely revolves around her church and family. Darla and her husband Eugene will have been married for 24 years this summer. Both enjoy attending all of their children's activities and events. All three children -- Conner (19), Samantha (16) and Madison (13) -- lead very active lives and participate in everything they possibly can, especially sports; therefore, Darla and her family often live out of their van as they run the car-pools, attend events to cheer them on, and coach their off-season sports when possible. They are active in their church and help with the youth group program along with many other church activities.

Darla also shared, "When I do get a chance to be home, I love to work with pictures/scrapbook, do crafty things, watch movies and I enjoy painting for people." She also told us that she HATES heights!! "However, my Main Street "friends" made me ride the second largest Ferris wheel in the world down in Atlanta...still NOT sure if I have forgiven them yet."

To learn more about downtown and the community of Conrad call Darla at 641.366.2108 or email cmspd@heartofiowa.net. The Conrad City and Chamber-Main Street website is www.conrad.govoffice.com

Iowa Tourism Conference

Don't miss this opportunity to connect with 300 professionals at Iowa's premier tourism education and networking event – the Iowa Tourism Conference.

The 2015 event will be held October 21-23 at the Bridge View Center in Ottumwa. Located on the Des Moines River, Ottumwa is home to new attractions like the Market on Main, and institutions like the 88-year-old Canteen Lunch.

In addition to a full schedule of informative educational sessions, there will be time to feast with your friends at a "Dine Around" in Fairfield, and strike a pose at the nearby American Gothic House.

For more information, visit www.traveliowa.com/conference.



**TRANSOM SIGNS
MAIN STREET IOWA TECHNOTES**

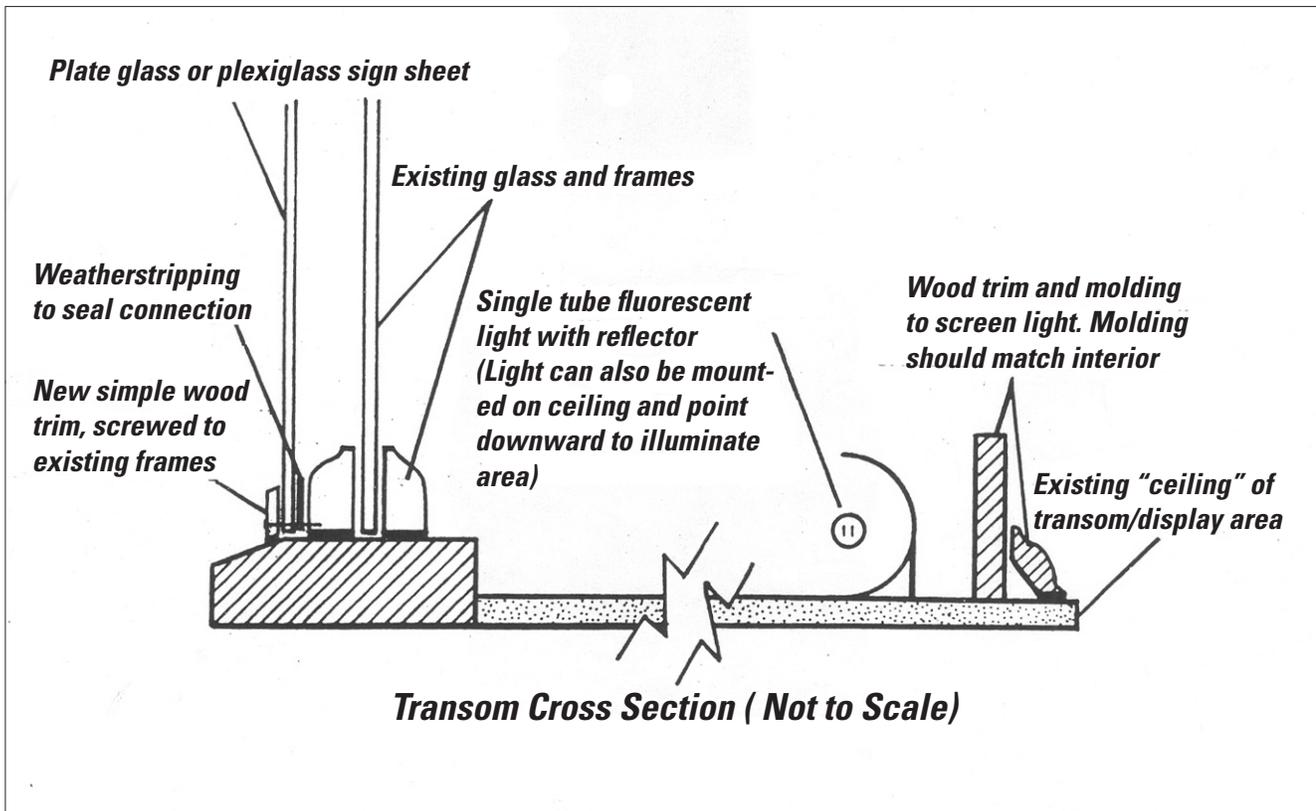


Regardless of the type of transom sign being used, illuminating a transom sign, is highly recommended. A single tube fluorescent light, running the entire length of the transom, can be very effective. A small wood board with trim to match interior decor should be then

used to screen light from interior view.

A sign painted directly onto the transom glass, whether the original glass or new glass, is the recommended type of transom sign. If painting on the existing transom glass is not desirable, a plexiglas

sheet may be installed over the existing glass and anchored to the frames. (Plate glass may also be used.) This technique is similar to that used to protect and insulate stained glass windows in churches. The sign can then be painted on this additional plexiglass or plate glass.



Window Preservation Workshop

Washington, Iowa, has a lot of old windows. Like most communities built in the late-1800's the windows have seen better days. Main Street Washington was founded in 2008 to address the historic character of the downtown. After years of deferred maintenance and an effort to modernize through slip-covers, it was looking pretty sad. Through a successful incentive fund program, over \$6 million has been raised for reinvestment and rehabilitation including projects aimed at windows. "We started seeing more and more requests for grant funding to replace old windows," said executive director Sarah Sadrakula, "we had to keep turning those grants down, or coaxing owners into repair." It was time to address educating the community on the value of historic windows. Members of the Design Committee decided to investigate a hands-on training program dealing with windows. Main Street Washington, in partnership with the city of Washington's Historic Preservation Commission, applied for a Certified Local Governments grant to bring Preservation guru, Bob Yapp from the Belvedere School for Historic Preservation in Hannibal, Missouri, to Washington.



Mr. Yapp is a highly regarded teacher in the preservation field, traveling the country consulting, teaching, and speaking on behalf of historic buildings and building materials. "We were intrigued by his learn-by-doing approach. He allows students to work alongside of him and helps them to really understand the process of how to preserve an old window. Being able to bring his workshop to Washington and utilize one of our buildings was really exciting to us," said Sadrakula.

The workshop is set for Friday, September 25 – Sunday, September 27, 2015, at the Historic Mills Seed Building. Main Street Washington has space for 12 students who will team up to 100 percent restore six windows. Mr. Yapp will also teach a two-hour community seminar on Thursday, September 24 from 7-9 p.m. at the Washington Public Library. Organizers realize that not everyone will be able to attend the full workshop, yet they might be interested and able to attend the shorter seminar Thursday. Seminar attendees will hear about the energy efficiency of historic windows. Washington hopes the workshop and seminar will stir up interest and ideas for more educational programming. Those interested in additional information about Yapp's three-day Window Weatherization and Rehabilitation workshop can visit www.mainstreetwashington.org/bobyapp. Registration is open and space is limited.

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