CELEBRATING A Quarter Century of Change
Dear Iowans:

MAIN STREET IOWA—A Quarter Century of Change. Little did we realize way back in 1985 what a profound impact this program would have on our state. As a result of the hard work of countless local leaders, Iowa’s Main Streets in communities large and small are flourishing.

Main Street Iowa initially worked with communities between 5,000 and 50,000 in population. Soon thereafter, the program was expanded to include Iowa communities of less than 5,000 people. Today, Main Street Iowa is at work in communities of all sizes from historic downtowns to urban neighborhood commercial districts. Iowans have discovered that the Main Street Approach® has been a tremendous catalyst for positive economic change.

The economic impact of this program in our designated Main Street districts is astounding. Since 1986, the private sector has invested over $1 billion! Additionally, 11,086 Iowans are employed in 3,531 new and expanded businesses. We are very proud that for every tax dollar ever invested in operating the state’s Main Street Iowa program, the private sector has invested over $79 in Main Street district buildings.

Main Street Iowa has demonstrated that it is possible to arrest the cycle of economic and physical decline so prevalent in many historic commercial districts. Through partnerships and collaboration these districts can once again be dynamic contributors to their local economies.

As Governor of the State of Iowa, I am proud to have proposed bringing Main Street as an economic development program to our state in 1985. I am even more convinced than ever, as we celebrate “A Quarter Century of Change” that we made the correct decision.

As Iowans, we can take pride in the fact that today, our historic Main Streets are celebrating a renaissance as special places to live, work, shop and play. Through Main Street, we are building for the future of this great state while celebrating our past and honoring the master builders of the very communities we call home.

Sincerely,
Terry E. Branstad
Governor
It’s hard to believe that Main Street Iowa is celebrating its 25th anniversary. Some of us can recall Main Street’s early days back in the ’80’s when our state was experiencing significant population loss and communities were trying to rebound from the devastating effects of the farm crisis. Main Streets were shuttered and seemingly abandoned.

But Iowans are a resilient populace who cherish their sense of place and understand the importance of community. This passion for “place” motivated local leaders in every Main Street Iowa community to take the future of their Main Street districts into their own hands and steer it towards a path of positive economic and physical change. Many changes have occurred in Iowa’s Main Streets over the past quarter century. Natural disasters like floods and fires have profoundly affected many districts. New buildings have been rehabilitated and opened their doors to numerous new businesses improving the physical, economic and social health of their districts.

Main Streets are implementing sustainability practices into their everyday lives. They are becoming environmentally conscious by incorporating energy saving measures into their rehabs and developing greener streetscapes. From rain gardens to geothermal heating and cooling, Iowa’s Main Streets are thinking globally and acting locally.

Main Streets have significantly more resources to tackle opportunities for their districts to become economically, socially and physically more valuable. As a result, Iowa’s Main Streets have significantly more resources to tackle life’s other sure thing…taxes.

Change will occur no matter what we do. Iowa’s Main Street leaders have taken bold steps to drive positive change in their districts. Rather than accept whatever change comes their way, they decided to create an environment for positive change to take hold and blossom. Through these actions, they demonstrated that their Main Street matters. These leaders provided opportunities for their districts to become economically, socially and physically more valuable. As a result, Iowa’s Main Streets are attracting empty nesters, recent retirees and young professionals, each looking for unique spaces to experience during this chapter of their lives.

It has been said that the only sure things in life are taxes and change. Main Street living is attracting empty nesters, recent retirees and young professionals, each looking for unique spaces to experience during this chapter of their lives.

Main Street is once again the place where Iowans connect. Numerous districts are well known today for investing third spaces (lounge and work being the first two spaces) for friends, family and colleagues to meet, to socialize and to reconnect in pleasant environments. Also, many have become Wi-Fi friendly districts allowing visitors to stay connected globally while sitting on a park bench enjoying a cup of their favorite beverage.

New businesses are emerging to fill niches under which their districts can thrive amongst the commercial competition so prevalent today. Gone are the days when these districts could be all things to all people. Today’s successful Main Streets are focused hubs of commercial activity attracting regional users and shoppers seeking exciting and creative destinations to spend their leisure hours, have great dining experiences, be entertained and make unique purchases.

Main Street is once again the place where Iowans connect. These places matter. These leaders provided opportunities for their districts to become economically, socially and physically more valuable. As a result, Iowa’s Main Streets have significantly more resources to tackle life’s other sure things…taxes.

2011 is the opportune time to celebrate and reflect on Main Street Iowa’s Quarter Century of Change. It has been an honor to instigate, collaborate and commiserate with Main Street’s real heroes, our local community leaders these past decades. Because of them, Iowa has been an honor to instigate, collaborate and commiserate with Main Street’s real heroes, our local community leaders these past decades. Because of them, Iowa has been an honor to instigate, collaborate and commiserate with Main Street’s real heroes, our local community leaders these past decades. Because of them, Iowa has been an honor to instigate, collaborate and commiserate with Main Street’s real heroes, our local community leaders these past decades.
Each year, the National Trust for Historic Preservation celebrates the best of preservation by bestowing awards upon individuals, nonprofit organizations, public agencies and corporations whose contributions represent singular success in preserving, rehabilitating, or interpreting America’s architectural and cultural heritage.

Congratulations go to Main Street Iowa, recognized as a “preservation powerhouse” with a 2010 Preservation Award for revitalizing downtowns, rehabbing historic buildings, and creating jobs in Iowa. Since 1986, Main Street Iowa has partnered with 64 cities and towns, rehabbing over 8,000 historic buildings, creating more than 10,000 jobs, and investing nearly one billion in private dollars to revitalize the Hawkeye State.

The National Preservation Honor Award recognizes the efforts of individuals, nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and corporations whose skill and determination have given new meaning to their communities through preservation. These efforts include citizens attempts to save and maintain important landmarks, as well as architects, craftsmen, and developers whose exemplary work restores the richness of the past. We applaud the vision of elected and appointed officials who support preservation projects and legislation in their communities, and educators and journalists who help Americans understand the value of preservation. All demonstrate commitment, leadership and achievement worthy of national recognition.

This is the first time that this significant honor has ever been awarded to a state Main Street® coordinating program.
Four: a Magical Number

BY DARLENE STRACHAN | ASSISTANT STATE COORDINATOR | MAIN STREET IOWA

Since entering the Main Street Iowa program in 1987, Community Main Street in Cedar Falls has experienced a net gain of 142 new business starts, expansions or relocations, over 50,000 volunteer hours recorded and nearly $40 million in private dollars invested into downtown properties.

The Main Street Four Point Approach® is a trademarked program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Main Street Center. It offers a comprehensive and integrated strategy to commercial district revitalization using four key components. These four components are Promotion, Organization, Design and Business Improvement, correspond with the four forces of real estate values in social, political, physical and economic. Balancing these four values is essential for successful downtown revitalization.

Promotion, the social value, encourages a community to focus on downtown as a source of community pride, social activity and economic development potential. To do this a community will work in the areas of assessment and planning, image development, special events, retail activities, tourism and the measurement of promotion success. It is important to market the district’s unique character to shoppers, investors, tourists, new businesses, tourists and residents and host promotional activities that convey the message that the city center is the place to shop, eat, live, learn and be entertained. Events and marketing can reinforce and counteract real and perceived images of downtown. By letting people know the variety, quality and value of goods and services provided downtown and holding activities that help re-establish downtown as the center of community activity we bring life and vitality back to our districts.

Organization, the political value, begins with building consensus and cooperation between the groups that play a role in the downtown getting everyone to work towards the same goal. With coordination by a paid program director, the organization will involve the public sector, private groups and individual citizens to work together more effectively in the designated district. Funding, public relations for the organization, internal communications, volunteer recruitment, volunteer orientation and volunteer retention are key tools. Communication of the program’s goals, volunteer accomplishments and success stories internally to those involved as volunteers, as well as externally to all business people, building owners, investors, residents and visitors is essential for stability and future growth. Organizing efforts to raise money, from annual investment drives to special fundraising projects and activities, will help sustain the organization.

Design, the physical value, utilizes appropriate design and preservation concepts to enhance the visual quality of the downtown buildings, signs, window and store displays, street lights, sidewalks, parking areas, landscaping and other elements that convey a visual message about what the history, commercial, and social district is and what it has to offer. These enhancements happen because programs are involved with downtown planning and building information inventories, public improvements, design assistance, historic preservation, design education and awareness, formation and marketing of incentives and the review and development of city and county ordinances, guidelines and plans. Tools such as design guidelines, incentives, financial and technical assistance have to be offered to make changes happen. Historic preservation is not creating a theme or a false history; it is preserving architectural elements that tell the community’s true story and history.

Business Improvement, or Economic Restructuring, diversifies the downtown economy by identifying potential market niches, finds new uses for vacant or underutilized spaces and improves business practices. In order to fulfill downtown’s economic vitality a community needs to conduct a downtown assessment and work on business retention, business expansion, business recruitment and real estate development. We strengthen and diversify the economic base of downtown by helping existing businesses, expansion of existing businesses, recruitment of new business, conversion of unused property into productive space, creation of incentives for business and property development and offering tools to sharpen business skills. By conducting research to identify current assets and values we can collect and interpret the data and help develop a balanced mix of businesses to increase downtown’s share of the market and become a destination.

Successful revitalization in a community’s historic commercial district is done through comprehensive, incremental, and carefully coordinated work in those four key components, known as the Main Street Four Point Approach®. Planning, working and excelling in all four areas Promotion, Organization, Design and Business Improvement is the foundation needed for outstanding achievement within city centers.
Entrepreneurial Spirit On Main Street

BY JIM THOMPSON | BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT CONSULTANT | MAIN STREET IOWA

Craw Daddy Outdoors LC from Waverly, WAVERLY — Craw Daddy Outdoors LC from Waverly, Iowa was the winner of Main Street Iowa’s Best Business of the Year Category in 2014. Owners, Darrin and Janeen Siefken, are every Main Street district’s entrepreneurs — not only in promoting their own businesses, but also in helping the community. Darrin visits businesses on a regular basis to inform the merchants of upcoming events and committees. Darrin visits businesses on a regular basis to inform the merchants of upcoming events and committees. Darrin visits businesses on a regular basis to inform the merchants of upcoming events and committees.

Craw Daddy Outdoors does a superb job of promoting outdoor recreation for all seasons. The store has month-long kayak floats to view migrating wildlife. Summer is filled with river floats and autumn with backpacking trips and outdoor learning clinics. Craw Daddy Outdoors LC from Waverly, WAVERLY — Craw Daddy Outdoors LC from Waverly, Iowa was the winner of Main Street Iowa’s Best Business of the Year Category in 2014. Owners, Darrin and Janeen Siefken, are every Main Street district’s entrepreneurs — not only in promoting their own businesses, but also in helping the community. Darrin visits businesses on a regular basis to inform the merchants of upcoming events and committees. Darrin visits businesses on a regular basis to inform the merchants of upcoming events and committees. Darrin visits businesses on a regular basis to inform the merchants of upcoming events and committees.

Charles City — Charles City is fortunate to have dynamic business leader Tamie Vetter. She established The Intersection Women’s Space, and opened three separate business ventures under its auspices. She is a truly amazing entrepreneur.

The first business established under this umbrella was The Intersection Women’s Space. It’s a women’s and men’s retail space and the former office space became a classroom.

The Rosics bought a 1908 one-story mixed use brick building that had been a pharmacy and antique store. Renovation changed it into an upscale restaurant, jazz club and gallery — the Galleria de Paco. Paco Rosic’s restaurant, Waterloo’s Galleria de Paco, is an attraction that has become a major tourism draw in downtown Waterloo. Paco wanted to do something absolutely unique and orienting for the new restaurant. So, the family spent their life savings on his quirky dream to re-create a work of art — an industrial, quirky art and operating a business. The customer service is out of this world, as is the pie. You need to experience both!

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Paco Rosic is a Bosnian immigrant who born and raised in Sarajevo. Today, he operates a gallery… the Galleria de Paco. Along with his family, he escaped the darkness of war-torn Bosnia and now lives in Waterloo, Iowa. Recently, the Rosics’ story was featured in U.S. Citizen’s Magazine. Paco wanted to do something absolutely unique and orienting for the new restaurant. So, the family spent their life savings on his quirky dream to re-create a work of art — an industrial, quirky art and operating a business. The customer service is out of this world, as is the pie. You need to experience both!

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Rewind back to retail space and the most successful business ventures under its auspices. This is her amazing entrepreneurial story:

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Main Street Challenge Grants
BY JANE SEATON | STATE COORDINATOR | MAIN STREET IOWA

IOWA’S MAIN STREETS ARE THE VITAL LIFELINES OF OUR COMMUNITIES and investing in them helps preserve our state’s character while giving small businesses a boost. From that first grant, $400,000 was awarded to renovation projects in ten Main Street communities and leveraged more than $4.9 million in private investment. That was just the beginning, the Senator and Iowa’s congressional delegation have continued their support with six additional awards totaling more than $8.9 million dollars. Iowa’s legislature has also approved two separate appropriations in support of this innovative program and in FY 2011 approved $6.5 million for brick and mortar projects in Main Street communities through IJobs.

In addition, every Main Street community has benefited from training and technical assistance from nationally recognized professionals on topics such as property development, historic tax credits, sustainability and green initiatives that are now available to small businesses throughout the state.

Sen. Tom Harkin and colleagues in Iowa and others throughout the nation have worked to get the Main Street Challenge Grant Program into law. Senator Harkin introduced the Main Street Challenge Grant Program into the Small Business Federal Credit Improvement Act of 2008.

Senator Harkin learned of Main Street’s work in revitalizing the nation’s Main Streets and requested a special federal appropriation to assist in the revitalization effort. In 2002, Congress approved a $500,000 fiscal year 2002 Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant to the Department of Economic Development for brick and mortar projects in participating Main Street Iowa cities. This was the first federal grant ever awarded to a statewide Main Street program.

After years of struggle by local communities and the collective community, economic development in the historic commercial districts has given small businesses a boost. Some businesses have been able to renovate and repair leaking roofs. In Bonaparte, population 433, a $40,000 grant gave a former pants factory new life as a beautiful boutique inn with more than $1 million in private investment. Downtown Dubuque has received a beautiful boutique inn with more than $1 million in private investment. Downtown Dubuque has received an award in each round with awards ranging from $25,000 to $100,000. Those awards have generated more than $10 million in local investment. Local leaders have commented that the Challenge Grants have gotten some of these projects moving and have stirred more development in the historic commercial districts.

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Iowa’s landscape is covered with cities and towns of varying size and economics, each with its own story. Some have been developed along navigable rivers or rail lines to insure the transportation of goods and services. As the decades passed and communities evolved, so too did the buildings, some elaborately constructed to serve as libraries, opera houses or banks. Others of more simple construction built for the butcher, the grocer and the town doctor all closely woven together to form the fabric of a community. These buildings comprise our historic city centers, the heart of our communities. Saving these structures preserves the local community’s history and Iowa’s heritage while helping retain and enhance the aesthetic appeal of the downtown.

Far too many buildings have been lost or inappropriately renewed or renovated over the years because a community or property owner lacked the financial resources to redevelop and make them again functional, viable assets to property owners. An opportunity like none other was provided. That was just the beginning, the Senator and Iowa’s congressional delegation have continued their support with six additional awards totaling more than $8.9 million dollars. Iowa’s legislature has also approved two separate appropriations in support of this innovative program and in FY 2011 approved $6.5 million for brick and mortar projects in Main Street communities through IJobs.

Main Street Challenge Grants ranging from $5,000 to $100,000 require a dollar for dollar match through IJobs. In addition, every Main Street community has benefited from training and technical assistance from nationally recognized professionals on topics such as property development, historic tax credits, sustainability and green initiatives that are now available to small businesses throughout the state.

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Main Street Challenge Grants ranging from $5,000 to $100,000 require a dollar for dollar match along two square blocks. Woodbine is similar in size to many other Iowa towns, making it an ideal pilot community for the Green Streets Initiative. The City of Woodbine, Winneshiek and Anamosa, and the IDED teamed together to develop a sustainable master plan, which incorporated energy-efficiency improvements, downtown revitalization, beautification, and stormwater, ” 490 Main Street Woodbine Co-Director Darin Starch.

With help of the city, IDED, and Conergy, an independent and nationally certified building energy rating firm, Woodbine Main Street provided energy audits to all 50 of its downtown businesses. The audits compare the amount of energy a building uses and suggests measures for improving energy efficiency. Smith believes that more businesses will make improvements in 2011.

Smith says they were able to get the business community on board simply by doing it.

Smith admits that at first there was some skepticism about becoming a green pilot community because of doubts on “return on investment.” The skepticism was eventually outweighed by the value of the opportunity to revitalize the community.

Smith says they were able to get the business community on board simply by doing it.
“Nothing ventured, nothing gained. If there was a way to help businesses improve by saving their money (by spending less on energy costs), it’s only made sense to try whatever we can. Because ‘business owners’ want to see a return on that investment, we will closely monitor savings along the way.”

So far, results look promising. One business has already seen savings after installing a gas furnace, improving ductwork, and sealing the foundation. Compared to February last year, the business has seen a utility bill decrease of $2,000, or 30 percent. Overall, the Green Streets Initiative is helping Woodbine create a sustainable community that Smith deems “especially important for a small town in a rural agricultural area like Woodbine.”

For Main Street West Union, the success of the weatherization blitz will be a quick and affordable way to address the needs of many homeowners rather than investing in deep, costly retrofits on just a few homes.

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Woodbine hopes “to use the savings from efficiency improvements dissertation – with other funding (like grants) to perform audits in our residential district,” says Smith. “As a minimum, Woodbine will be able to use thermal imaging to show homeowners where their homes can stand improvement, which is a low-cost solution that pays off over time and includes minor low-cost, low-hustle fixes like sealing doors and windows with caulk and weather stripping. A weatherization blitz will be a quick and affordable way to address the needs of many homeowners rather than investing in deep, costly retrofits on just a few homes.”

West Union

Lake Woodbine, West Union is a rural agricultural community with a popula- tion of only 1,500. Despite these constraints, West Union has six blocks of service and retail businesses. Many of the buildings are historic structures that date back to the late 1800s and early 1900s. The Main Street program began in 2006 and has enjoyed much success ever since. The program is described by the state as “the state thing that never learned to crawl,” says Robyn Bostrom, program director for Main Street West Union and West Union Chamber of Commerce. “We just stood up and started.”

West Union’s approach plan and strategy will make it eligible for state and federal funding. Meanwhile, Main Street West Union was chosen to participate in the pilot program because it is similar to what Iowa towns have successfully learned to offer community programs like a food and fitness initiative, and most of all, business owners are about to start a master planning process. Thus, it’s great value in sustainability planning. West Union began with a community visioning meeting where local, state, and federal representatives determined how sustainability measures could meet the town’s needs.

Energy audits, made possible by the local utility company, were conducted throughout downtown, and more than 70 businesses took advantage of the opportunity to reduce their carbon footprint by replacing old doors, caulking windows to reduce drafts, replacing confis- ters in restaurants with more energy-efficient ones, and making other improvements. A weatherization blitz will be a quick and affordable way to address the needs of many homeowners rather than investing in deep, costly retrofits on just a few homes.”

Downtown West Union before the construction of their new downtown core.

West Union homeowners can stand improvement, which is a low-cost solution that pays off over time and includes minor low-cost, low-hustle fixes like sealing doors and windows with caulk and weather stripping. A weatherization blitz will be a quick and affordable way to address the needs of many homeowners rather than investing in deep, costly retrofits on just a few homes.

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Main Street Iowa communities to a higher standard and to challenge each to do more, work harder and adjust to the changing needs of their local economies. To change requires extending beyond what’s known and exploring the unknown.

Meaningful change cannot and will not occur in a vacuum. Through the years, Main Street Iowa has had the benefit of many great minds, large and small across this state. What is important is that Main Street has understood for years that Main Street leaders are our greatest partners! Without the dedication of many local, state and national partners, Iowa’s Main Street Program has become a recognized leader in the country because of these strong partnerships.

It has taken many years for some in the development community to recognize that new is not always better; that small can be mighty and unique is always in vogue, a lesson that Main Street understands. It is the hard working Main Street communities that have shown leadership in their community, the benefit of collaboration and the ability to finance downtown improvements; the Federal Home Loan Bank-Des Moines who opened its doors to the banking community and who understand that historic preservation can be a valuable economic-development tool.

It was those very partnerships with the Bank and the Iowa Finance Authority that brought our small program to the attention of Senator Tom Harkin. The Senator and his staff advocated for federal funding for brick and mortar projects in our Main Street communities. This partnership has been beneficial for participating Main Street cities since 2012 and is always a topic of conversation when meeting with other state coordinating programs.

The Spirit of Main Street Award for their decades of leading by example in their communities. A group of 5th grade students from Greenfield was introduced the following year to recognize the person, organization or project that has demonstrated the meaning and spirit of ‘Main Street at work’ and significantly impacts their community.

There are no nominations for this award; it is given annually. It is a recognition which comes to life when warranted by the actions or achievements of its recipients.

In 1995, Main Street Iowa lost a dear friend when Kerry Clough-Petersen died during her tenure as Main Street Program Director in Dyersville. In her honor, the Spirit of Main Street Award was established the following year to recognize the person, organization or project that has demonstrated the meaning and spirit of ‘Main Street at work’ and significantly impacts their community.

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As in life, Iowa's Main Street communi-
ties have seen their fair share of good
times and bad. Over the course of the
last 25 years, few Main Street districts
have been spared the wrath of some
type of disaster whether natural in the
form of catastrophic floods or hail storms or
man-made from downtown fires or
structural failures. In every situation, sto-
ries of survival, volunteerism, recovery
and loss are shared once the dust settled
and the skies cleared. It is these stories of
recovery and rebirth that tell the true tale
of the strength, resilience and partner-
ship inherent in Iowa's network of Main
Street districts.

The floods of 1993 proved to be the
beginning of a scary trend of 500 year
floods not 500 years apart. Repeated first
in 1993, the most recent and devastating
flooding was concentrated in residential districts, the cities of West
Muscatine, Valley Junction, Bonaparte,
Burlington, Coffee, Cedar Rapids,
Charles City, Elkader, Winterset and
Waverly all received extensive flooding
in their historic commercial districts.

Communities came together to saw
their places that matter with hundreds of vol-
unteers descending on downtown levees
to fight back as waters began to rise to
the top of the existing levee systems and in Bonaparte where, with help from the
National Guard, the city constructed a
temporary limestone and sandbag levee
around their historic downtown.

The floods of 1993 reached epic levels all
across the Midwest. The entire com-
necial districts of Valley Junction and
Bonaparte were under water for days.
The Turkey River spilled into Elkader
and sections of the business district were
under as much as six feet of water.

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If Main Street has taught us one thing, it is about partnerships: they don’t happen overnight. Every one of Iowa’s 45 active Main Street programs succeeds because the collaborations they forged from the beginning became more fruitful each year. In the same vein, Main Street Iowa (MSI) continues to set the standard for Main Streets around the nation because of its creativity and diligence in building strong partnerships on all levels. At the National Trust Main Street Center, we have looked to Iowa for solid performance, outstanding innovation, and a willing partner to explore new ways of solving downtown’s problems.

From the program’s inception during the dark days of the farm crisis to this triumphant milestone, Main Street Iowa has confidently and expertly built support for revitalization of the state’s downtowns in a way that promotes walkability, sustainability, mixed-use development, and historic preservation.

Reviewing MSI’s accomplishments over its 25 year history — including earning an Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation last year and hosting the 2011 National Main Streets Conference — several extraordinary qualities emerge: strong leadership that inspires excellence at the local level; bold innovation in program areas and the setting of priorities; creative collaboration with local, state, and national partners; strong communication with stakeholders; skillful advocacy; and steadfast discipline to work-planning and execution at the organizational level. Main Street Iowa’s success over its 25 years is borne out by impressive reinvestment statistics: 64 communities, 45 of which are active today; 10,000 jobs, nearly 8,000 buildings rehabilitated; $1 billion dollars in private investment. But perhaps MSI’s greatest achievement is making Iowa’s downtowns “cool” — places where innovation happens, where new business ideas thrive, where all residents come together to plan their future — most importantly, where young people are choosing to invest their futures.

The evidence of Main Street Iowa’s excellence abounds. MSI is truly exemplary in its ability to cultivate and establish strong relationships with its elected officials. Armed with its powerful reinvestment statistics, Main Street Iowa has opened valuable lines of communication with its state and federal leaders. This outreach has helped the program secure numerous federal funding allocations and Congressional support, including seven HUD awards totaling $54 million for 35 Main Street Iowa communities, $5 million in federal earmarks since 2002, and a $4 million appropriation from the Iowa legislature for 2010-11 — a recession year — which is the single-largest appropriation in its history.

Main Street Iowa’s strong capacity makes it one of the National Trust Main Street Center’s most dependable and capable partners in innovation. In 1999, we worked with MSI and the Iowa Housing Finance Authority to launch a low-interest loan program that targeted the creation of upper-floor housing. More recently, we collaborated with Main Street Iowa to pilot the nation’s — and the National Trust’s — first small business loan fund tied to technical assistance and local bank participation in six Iowa Main Street communities. The results will guide the Main Street movement in how best to convince community banks to support small business development and expansion.

When we consider the challenge of building more sustainable communities nationwide, we again turn to Main Street Iowa, which is producing cutting-edge results through the state’s Green Streets Initiative. In the pilot communities of Woodbine and West Union, we hope to learn lessons on the adoption of green technology and practices, including shared geothermal energy systems, stormwater management, and a commercial building energy audit campaign to bolster the environmental sustainability of their downtowns.

We at the National Trust Main Street Center offer our hearty congratulations to Main Street Iowa for its tradition of excellence over the past 25 years and eagerly anticipate the next 25. And with the national spotlight on Iowa in 2011 with the National Main Streets Conference in Des Moines, we are sharing the power of partnerships, which Main Street Iowa has harnessed to bring downtowns into a new era of community sustainability.
DUBUQUE MAIN STREET
Est. 1985
POP: 57,637
Almost a decade after construction concluded, the reopening of Main Street through the former Town Clock Plaza in downtown Dubuque proved to be a huge success; but it did not start out that way. The debate between renovating the existing pedestrian plaza from the days of urban renewal and reopening the street it replaced had split the community and City Council in half. Utilizing information from former National Main Street Director Kennedy Smith and Main Street Iowa, Dubuque Main Street helped make the case for reopening the street and eventually the council voted 4-3 to proceed. Through the concerted efforts of the City of Dubuque, Dubuque Main Street and the design team, led by Durand Architects and IIW Engineers, the reopening of Main Street satisfied the needs and desires of both sides of the discussion and created an attractive, functional and versatile street. Main Street now accommodates pedestrians by calming vehicular traffic; provides a functional and clearly delineated street; and still allows for the festivals that are the life-blood of the community during the summer.

Reconnected Main Street has fostered business growth and expansion all along the corridor.

BURLINGTON DOWNTOWN PARTNERS
Est. 1986
POP: 25,663
The roots of the Schramm Department Store go back nearly 150 years in downtown Burlington. Schramm’s remained a place where ladies still dressed up to go shopping until closing in the mid-1990s. Burlington had lost its final downtown anchor store, and the four-story building dominating a key corner stood mostly empty. Though it was the end of an era, it was the beginning of another. Where others might have seen a white elephant, local developer Bob Brueck saw potential. Speaking to Main Street director Janet McCannon one day, he told her that he was thinking of purchasing the building and converting its four floors into residences. “I want the top floor, east side,” she said, setting the plan in motion. Brueck consulted with the building’s owners, McCannon’s condominium, with its expansive living space and balcony views of the Mississippi, was finished several years later. Since then, more residences have been completed, with first floor and mezzanine spaces filled by a variety of businesses. Rechristened as Schramm’s Corner, this first private large-scale redevelopment in downtown Burlington set the standard for a residential boom that continues today.

MAIN STREET KEOKUK
Est. 1986
POP: 10,750
It all began in the year 2000 — the same year Keokuk was honored with a Great American Main Street Award. A single event helped to determine that Keokuk was going to become a 24/7 community — attractive to the young and mobile — with more places to go and things to do after 5 p.m. The event was the Summer Fun & Fund Raiser. Showcasing two rehabbed and repurposed historic properties, a street party with music, dancing, and food was the hottest ticket in town. Local heritage, milestones or diversity determine the theme for the annual event. Celebrating their people and their native lands of Germany, China, Cuba, France, Mexico, England and this year — Greece. They’ve celebrated their heritage with Reunited, a Great Main Street Party. Ticket sales are capped at 300 and, today, it is a sold out event. Volunteers enjoy planning and working the event which has produced to date over $30,000 in net proceeds to further MSKI’s downtown revitalization efforts.

MAIN STREET COMMUNITIES
The Best of 25 Years
Over the past 25 years, Main Street Iowa communities have been a force for positive change locally and across the State of Iowa. Highlighting the four points of the Main Street Approach®, each community recognizes the outstanding efforts, projects and people that have made a significant and positive impact on their Main Street district since their community’s inception into the Main Street Iowa program.

The impact of some projects featured here may seem larger than others but each has played a role in the positive change in that community. The people, the projects and the milestones reached are all part of the incremental approach that is central to long-term success.

Each Main Street organization determined who or what would be recognized in their Best of 25 Years submission. Their words mirror the pride, passion and gratitude that each has brought to their community’s local revitalization effort.

The Best of 25 Years
MAIN STREET IOWA COMMUNITIES
Chuck Russell, a life-long resident of Oskaloosa, attended Iowa State University, was in the insurance and abstract business “behind the white pillars” (now the Book Vault), and served his beloved community in many organizations. He was the Oskaloosa Citizen of the Year, an avid fan of William Penn University sports and served on the University’s board of directors. His big interest was downtown Oskaloosa and the Main Street program. A few of the projects in which he was instrumental were restoration of city park and the bandstand, restoration of the Chief Mahaska statue, resurfacing of downtown alleys, restoration of the “green building” in the Centennial Block to its original brick, the recent sidewalk project and restoration of the Iowa Building. In his last few years, he combined his historical knowledge and love of Oskaloosa with his extensive photograph collection to produce a weekly history article for the Oskaloosa Herald. He and his wife, Emily, received the Spirit of Main Street Award in 2001 for their dedication to Main Street and the city. His passion for the community has helped preserve and shape Oskaloosa’s history and will live on in the countless number of lives he touched in his 88 years.

Spencer Municipal Utilities’ Storefront Initiative was created to assist commercial property owners in the improvement of their building’s appearance. The program was designed to make a visual impact on the Spencer business community. Facade improvements, window and door replacement, signage, and exterior lighting were eligible for assistance, in the form of 30% of construction costs (with a $3,000 maximum per project) for a three-year time period. Property owners were asked to provide a 10% matching contribution to each project. The maximum benefit available for a $50,000 renovation project amounted to a $15,000 grant and a $35,000 no-interest loan. During the program’s duration, 325 renovation projects have been completed with 55% of those in the Main Street District. This represents just over two million dollars in grants and a similar amount in three-year repayable no-interest loans.

In 1993 after a very rainy spring, Historic Valley Junction was in the midst of their centennial celebration with events planned, street banners hung and the community full of pride and anticipation. That excitement soon turned to concern and then to fear as river levels began to rise and floodwaters poured into Valley Junction. The district is located in what some consider the heart of the area between the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers. The damage was staggering. Every building had water damage, some 7 inches on bricks, some waters under windows, broken windows and doors, warped floors, layers upon layers of mud in the shops up and down the streets of Valley Junction. For Community Development Director Clyde Evans, the flood is still a clear memory. Evans stated, “It took a year for the business community to repair damage, and six to eight years for the residential community.” Over the past 18 years, the area has made a full recovery and has surpassed above and beyond anyone’s highest expectations. The addition of a full-service fitness center, a new center for the arts, high-end galleries, specialized retailers and dedicated entrepreneurs and volunteers. Bravo Valley Junction!

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WAVERLY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
Est. 1989
POP. 5,504

Waverly’s Downtown Task Force, formed in 1998, developed a master plan to springboard downtown economic redevelopment. A renewed theater was identified as the potential cornerstone project. Local, private investors were convinced to acquire and completely renovate the building. State-of-the-art equipment was installed by January 2000. The new Palace Theatre was opened and once again attracted large numbers of movie-goers to downtown. The $1.3 million reinvestment into downtown’s Palace Theatre created the excitement and the confidence that has led Waverly’s downtown to 10 years of strong private/public investment including:

- Major renovation of six century-old buildings, located in the heart of downtown. This public/private project created main level office/retail space as well as upper story housing, saving an entire flood damaged block.
- Five new restaurant establishments, two new bars and a new Fareway grocery store in the Main Street corridor.
- Numerous new specialty shops and several storefront renovations.
- Complete sidewalk project including new city services and street lights, in addition to the renovation of several downtown parking lots.
- A new seven-mile bike trail project from the downtown to the city park.

MAIN STREET CORNING  
Est. 1990
POP. 1,635

Main Street Corning and Adams County Extension partner each year to offer SOLD (Salesmanship Opportunities Learned Directly) to ninth grade students at Corning High School. Through the course curriculum, students create an idea for a business, write a business plan, and do a business presentation. The students get hands-on information regarding best business practices and/or real life startup costs – such as insurance, loan rates, building costs. Local businesses are asked to be willing to answer questions the students may have regarding a business like theirs or tips on insurance or loan information, etc. Some businesses may not be visited at all and some may have several groups stop in. Students also tour the business and agricultural communities to learn more about where they live. Community leaders familiar with the history of Corning direct these tours. The goal is to show the students what the community has to offer to attract new talent and young people to the community.

IOWA FALLS CHAMBER/MAIN STREET  
Est. 1990
POP. 5,235

Suzanne Campbell purchased three downtown Main Street buildings in 2007. She renovated and updated each building with major changes reflecting the historical character of the properties. Three new buildings now house three vibrant businesses, including the wildly popular Book Cellar/Coffee Attic, the Courtyard at 410, an upscale boutique, and the Q2 and Cork. The Q2 on Second Street, is a wine bar, gift store and in the rear of the building, an evening wine bar. The improvements made to these three buildings have been substantial and very attractive. Suzanne has invested over a million dollars to advance her vision of a vibrant downtown and the community is extremely grateful!

BONAPARTE MAIN STREET  
Est. 1990
POP. 453

The Bonaparte Inn is the largest adaptive use project ever to take place in Bonaparte. The project, a dream of owner Jeni Angelone, became a reality in 2008. This large three-story building, full of history in its former life as the Fairfield glove factory and the Meeks pant factory, had been sitting empty for several years when she purchased the property. The unique character of the building’s interior and exterior was retained with special care taken to keep the metal support poles visible on each floor. A $40,000 Main Street Challenge Grant was used to help transform the entire third floor into a grand banquet room with a state of the art chef’s kitchen and bar. The inn now offers a full menu of breakfast, lunch and dinner to the public.

MAIN STREET CORNING  
Est. 1990
POP. 1,635

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In its 20 years of existence, Conrad Chamber-Main Street agitates winning the Capital Community Award from the Federal Home Loan Bank-Den Moines (FHLB-DM) as one of their most rewarding experiences. The Chamber-Main Street organization and the City of Conrad were ecstatic that years of hard work by community residents and volunteers were recognized by FHLB-DM. The Bank’s recognition generated pride throughout the entire community both before and after the award was announced by commissioning a song about Conrad, hiring a photographer to “capture” Conrad and holding a free luncheon for the community, where the award was presented with a check for $15,000! Chamber-Main Street earmarked a portion of the generous gift to façade and community improvement grant programs, in turn, stimulating additional economic growth and stability within the community. The Conrad Chamber-Main Street continues to benefit from strong, supportive community leadership in the business realm, banking industry, school district and community government, all of which selflessly give of their time to make Conrad and the Chamber-Main Street program excel.

When young entrepreneur, Adam Pollock, moved to Elkader, it didn’t take long for him to appreciate the progressiveness of Elkader, and he soon involved himself in the Main Street Elkader program. In 2005, with a Main Street Iowa Challenge award, Adam renovated a vacant manufacturing building located in the heart of the downtown district. His vision for the Staw Center, with attractive and affordable retail spaces, was realized in October of 2010 when all spaces were filled with the following businesses: Mirror Images Salon, owned by Christie Beck; Clefisch and Saunders Law Office, and the largest and most recent, Bridge Street Boutique & Gift, owned by Kathy Josten who relocated her business to the Staw Center in October 2010. The available space provided her the opportunity to significantly increase her product line. Kathy made her decision on what to carry based on Main Street Iowa’s market analysis. This year marks Main Street Elkader’s 20th Anniversary as a Main Street Community. The success Main Street Elkader has achieved is in organizing like-minded people willing to create a positive attitude by promoting the assets of the community and understanding the economic potential.

Hamilton County’s greatest achievement in the last twenty years was becoming the nation’s first countywide Main Street program in 1991 and remaining Iowa’s only such program. The innovation of the program’s early leaders and willingness to think outside of the box has enabled three very small towns to bring vitality back to the city centers. By working together Ellsworth, Jewell and Stratford have faced the challenges of big box retail by creating niche businesses and providing critical services to the residents of the county. The methods learned in utilizing the Main Street Approach® to downtown revitalization have helped the town’s leaders decrease the number of vacant buildings while at the same time making their downtowns an attractive place to live, work and play.

Memorabilia and names of the many outstanding volunteers that have continually stepped forward for fundraising, events, and leadership in behalf of the Main Street Hampton program are too numerous to mention. Just a few of the signature events that have been sponsored by committee and volunteer efforts are Sister-Friend, Car Show, Main Jam, Christmas Raffle, and Santa’s Secret Workshop, as well as those who worked behind the scenes to ensure the program’s success over the past 19 years. Without this fantastic, group’s commitment, dedication and hard work, the program could not exist.
The Garland Hotel has reigned majestically over Main Street in Bedford since 1857. Originally called the Bedford House, the property first opened as an inn in 1823. Noted for its role in the American Civil War, the Hotel provided accommodations to an estimated 150,000 guests. The Hotel was a coach stop and early trade center for merchants, and a former owner who served with General George Patton during WWII. During its 140 years of operation, the Hotel has been used for a variety of purposes, including as a hotel for the community and southwest Iowa. A Master Plan has been developed to return The Garland to its historic grandeur and elegance as a hotel for the community and southwest Iowa. During downtown holiday events when guests are greeted by a doorman dressed in period garb. A Master Plan has been developed to return The Garland to its historic grandeur and elegance as a hotel for the community and southwest Iowa. The Garland is a favorite stop for visitors throughout the year, especially during the hotel’s annual art show, held each June. The hotel’s dining room, renovated and turned into an art gallery, displays the work of local artists. The Garland is also famous for its annual Hogtown Reunion, an event held annually in the last week of June.

Between 1999 and 2000, Bloomfield Main Street participated in two rounds of the Local Housing Assistance Program (LHAP), bringing investment of more than $600,000 in upper story rehabilitation to the Bloomfield Square’s registered historic district. Partnering with IDED, the Iowa Finance Authority, Federal Home Loan Bank, City of Bloomfield, and Area 15 Regional Planning, a total of nine apartment units were constructed or rehabilitated above downtown businesses. LHAP allotted $270,000 toward the project; the rest was matched with local private investment. Property owners contributed above and beyond the required grant match toward rehabilitation, building stabilization and maintenance. These apartment units continue to provide excellent housing opportunities for Bloomfield’s residents.

The city of Dunlap built a new school and library in the city center, but with the construction complete, the community began pursuing options for reusing the athletic facilities. Dunlap Community Development arranged to swap 1 acre of farm ground along Highway 92 for property on the industrial site. Located near the current football and track facilities, the relocated fields would complete the school’s sports complex. Main Street Iowa was instrumental in fashioning the Boyd Valley Youth group into a Community Attractions and Tourism (CAT) grant for $30,000. The Group created a plan to fund the project and provide match for the CAT grant. The mayor facilitated a selling team to be led at the new facility by a group of community volunteers, including a donor’s name engraved on the brick. The project started in the spring of 2005, and was ready for full use in 2006. The completed sports complex includes two soccer fields, a baseball diamond, softball field and a walking path. The project took hundreds of volunteer hours and is a new sliver of hope for Dunlap’s youth.

20 | MAIN STREET IOWA
In 2003, Charles City Community Revitalization created a special event, which continues to be a summertime favorite. “Party in the Park til Dark” features six Friday evening festivals, which provide musical entertainment, food, beverages, and kids’ games in downtown’s Central Park. The parties provide an opportunity to unwind at the end of the workweek, spend casual time with friends, and gather as a family to enjoy games and entertainment. Community Revitalization partnered with the Charles City Pub Crawlers (a group of eight local bar/restaurant owners) to initiate the event. Having the various owners working so well together was one of the aspects that helped Party in the Park succeed. The parties continue to be a positive for Charles City. Each event attracts 1500 – 2000 people to downtown on Friday nights from 5:00 – 9:00 p.m. The only currency accepted at the Friday night parties is the “Chuck Chip.” Chuck Chips, with a cost of one dollar each, are used to purchase food, beverages and activities. An average party produces over $10,000 in gross revenue, benefiting Community Revitalization, and the many vendors (both local businesses and nonprofits) who provide food, beverages and children’s activities each week.
STATE CENTER DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

Est. 2000
PO Box 1, 468
State Center lost its only grocery store in 2003. A local task force soon formed and decided that a new 8,150 square foot building had to be built in the Historic Main Street District. The overall scheme was to have the new building appear as several smaller structures. The local bank offered to donate $100,000 to support the project. USDA and Consumer Energy awarded the project a $400,000 zero interest loan. The city used TIF dollars to fund $480,000 of debt repayment and another $225,000 of property tax abatement along with $77,500 from their electric utility. The grocery store created 15 new jobs for people in the State Center area. The economic impact of having a small supermarket operating in the central business district has been noticeable. The new business, which draws in hundreds of customers every day, acts as an anchor store for the district. Many people can now actually walk to the store, which is located in the middle of the community as opposed to a location out along the highway. It could be safely said that the opening of this store has improved the quality of life for almost everyone in State Center.

MAIN STREET WATERLOO

Est. 1996
PO Box 260
The Black’s Building represents an inspiring example of downtown Waterloo’s renaissance. The story of the Black’s Building began with Irish immigrant James Black, who established a city goods store in 1866. Although the population of Waterloo was only 5,000 at that time, the city grew, and with it, the Black’s Building grew as well. By 1917, Black spent $700,000 to acquire property and construct a ten-story department store at the corner of East 4th and Sycamore Streets. Although Black passed away in 1919, the business remained intact until 1979, when the name changed to Donaldson’s. With the arrival of Crossroads Mall, retail came to a halt in the building by 1981. This historic structure owes its new lease on life to Donna and Vern Nelson, Sr. Like downtown Waterloo as a whole; the Black’s Building has undergone a gradual but dramatic transformation. Now containing offices and residential areas, the building also contains two of the finest hospitality venues in the Cedar Valley – Black’s 501 Steakhouse and the Sky Event Center on the top floor. Both are managed by Darin Beck and the Bar-muda Corporation. The foresight of the Nelson family has provided downtown Waterloo with its crown jewel.

CENTRAL CITY MAINSTREET

Est. 2000
PO Box 160
Since becoming a Main Street Iowa community in 2000, the most significant project was the Main Street Streetscape Project, completed in 2004. This project included all new infrastructure (water, sewer, storm sewer and buried utilities), new concrete street with curb and gutter, and streetscaping with historic lighting and concrete paver accents. The plan included reworking Main Street from Highway 13, on the west edge of town, to the Meadowview Country Club, on the east edge of town. Because of the extensive scope of the plan, work completed during 2004 included the west entrance of the community at State Highway 13 through the historic downtown district to Fifth Street East. The City will complete the project from Fifth Street to the east edge of town in the summer of 2011. The streetscape was a City project, done with the help of the Mainstreet Design and Business Improvement Committees. The City administered the project and utilized tax increment financing to fund the improvements. Design elements were left to the Mainstreet Design Committee. The Business Improvement Committee handled communications between the businesses, the construction supervisor, the city staff, and the city council.

OSCEOLA CHAMBER - MAIN STREET

Est. 1997
PO Box 4108
To boost the events budget, the Organizational Committee of Osceola Chamber- Main Street (OCMS) sold sponsorships for all of their events. This fund increase encouraged the organization’s budget by 33%, taking Osceola Chamber Main Street to a whole new level. A package was created that allowed businesses to choose which sponsorship levels would best fit their needs. It also allowed OCMS to budget for events instead of continually asking for funds after an event is over. Each sponsoring business has their logo present at these events, putting their presence in the public eye, which in turn, draws more customers through their front doors. The Total Resource Campaign has been a win-win for the entire community and has been a major accomplishment for the organization.
MAIN STREET MOUNT PLEASANT
Est. 2002
POP. 8,668
Main Street Mount Pleasant and the City of Mount Pleasant have partnered in offering an Exterior Improvement Grant program to make revitalization affordable and creative. The program offers up to $5,000 in matching funds and design assistance to businesses in Main Street Mount Pleasant’s 27-block district. Main Street and the City of Mount Pleasant have partnered in this project to improve the appearance of individual commercial building facades, signs and awnings, as well as the overall look of the downtown. Over the past eight years Main Street Mount Pleasant and the City of Mount Pleasant have awarded over $80,000 in Exterior Improvement Grants. Seventy downtown buildings have been renovated with $5.5 million private dollars spent. It is amazing how many business/building owners have begun taking pride in their properties. Many are doing renovations without any financial help from Main Street. The City of Mount Pleasant has also seen a huge change in downtown. The program started with the city’s $5,000 annual contribution. They now invest $15,000 per year.

MARSHALLTOWN CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
Est. 2002
POP. 27,552
The City of Marshalltown adopted a Downtown Streetscape Plan in 2002 and finished the first phase of the project in 2003. After the first phase was completed, there were no funds available to proceed with the plan. The MCBD Design Committee undertook phase two and determined new trash receptacles were needed. The committee applied for a grant to purchase and install trash receptacles to raise the funds. The owner of the Central Iowa Machine Shop was asked to help with the design and production of the receptacles, keeping the project local. A downtown merchant suggested offering matching benches that individual or families could purchase and dedicate to loved ones. Marshall County purchased trash receptacles and three trash receptacles to kick off the project. Additionally, an agreement was reached with the City of Marshalltown to replace 20 of the existing receptacles. The Public Works director purchased trash receptacles and bench and placed them at the north end of the Center Street viaduct to add to the renovation of the downtown entrance. In 2009, the local bike club approached the Design Committee and offered to purchase bike racks for Main Street to match the benches and receptacles. These racks were installed in 2010 and were all given in memory of deceased bike club members.

MAIN STREET MASON CITY
Est. 2004
POP. 28,079
Sharon and Gary Lindgren are an integral part of Main Street Mason City (MSMC). In 1997, these long-time downtown retailers organized the Mason City Downtown Association, (the precursor to Main Street Mason City) and provided seed capital for the organization in the early years. They were instrumental in MSMC’s admittance to the Main Street program. Although they are no longer retailers, they continue to support the organization. Sharon serves on MSMC’s Board of Directors. She actively mentors board members and always shares her knowledge. As a banker, Gary coordinated multi-bank support of the City’s façade program. He provides sound advice to the organization and always encourages new businesses to consider a downtown location. Both frequently volunteer at MSMC events, help organize events and can be counted on to stick around through clean up. Their work has made events such as Friday Night Live, the Mason City Market, Valenwine, and Home for the Holidays successful. Recently, they provided capital to purchase office equipment for MSMC. Their passion and support for each other, MSMC and the downtown is always apparent and their enthusiasm, appreciation and encouragement motivate the other board members and downtown businesses.

STORY CITY GREATER CHAMBER CONNECTION
Est. 2000
POP. 3,431
The Story City GCC created its first STORY! Celebrating the Art of Storytelling festival in 2006, when a group of like-minded citizen and business leaders united with some regional storytellers to create a new fall festival. With a name like Story City, it was an easy fit for this little known but uniquely engaging art form. Each year in September, the STORY! Board (part of the Promotions Committee) brings new “tellers” to Story City to share their true life tales, or share historical perspectives. The venue is always fun, heart-wrenching, informational or just fun to hear. Each year this festival grows as new audiences discover this amazing event. The GCC was pleased to spearhead this effort and continue to create new events throughout the year to draw attention. This past February there was a one night STORY! event, bringing back a popular story from last September’s festival. Each year new activities and occasions are added to make this a premier festival and one of a kind event.

STORY CITY MASON CITY
Est. 2004
POP. 28,079
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MAIN STREET OTTUMWA
Est. 2006
POP. 25,023
In January of 2008, Main Street Ottumwa had the opportunity to begin a down-town art event, which became known as WALK ON ART STREET. This one day art fair has become one of the premier summer events in the city of Ottumwa and in the three years since it was conceived, has grown to include over 65 artists from five states and 11 counties. In 2010, there were over 1,000 visitors, $500 in Artist Awards distributed, drawings for money to be spent with vendors, as well as children’s activities partnering with nonprofit groups, visiting featured artists, entertainment, and live media coverage. On the evening prior to the event, Main Street Ottumwa hosts a Patron’s Party, including a live auction of artist work and entertainment along with food and drink. Part of the proceeds from the evening, help purchase a single piece of art from the show, going toward the formation of an Ottumwa Gallery. In addition, the artist whose work is purchased provides the artwork for the following year’s art poster. The event continues to grow and expand becoming a centerpiece for Main Street Ottumwa.

MAIN STREET WEST UNION
Est. 2006
POP. 2,486
Dick Woodard’s name is synonymous with Main Street West Union and all of its accomplishments. Dick was a founding member of the organization and has been deeply involved since the community’s selection in 2006. He has rarely missed a local board or committee meeting and currently serves as President. Dick participates in many state training events and is even known to provide “treats” to Main Street friends across the state! He has taken all that he has learned through the Main Street organization and put it to work in his personal life. He was one of the first people to restore an historic downtown building, his own office, and have it listed on the National Register of Historic Places. He has embraced the Green Pilot Project by installing a rain garden and porous paved parking area behind his building, offering it as a place for local residents to learn about these new building techniques. You will find him at almost every event held in West Union, ready to offer his time and his resources if it means West Union will benefit. The Main Street program would not be where it is today without this wonderful volunteer and champion for the Main Street movement.

MAIN STREET WEST BRANCH
Est. 2006
POP. 2,322
A local business couple purchased an historic building on Main Street to rehabilitate for commercial use. They opened it in January of 2008 and since then, the business has grown and expanded. They have added a screened-in porch and a second floor loft above the business. The business now includes a restaurant and a gift shop. The couple has been active in the community and has hosted several events at the building, including a wine tasting and a concert. They have also collaborated with other businesses and organizations to promote community events. The business has become a gathering place for residents and visitors alike, fostering a sense of community and belonging.

BELLE PLAINE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Est. 2008
POP. 2,534
On November 8, 2010, the Lincoln Cafe in Belle Plaine received its landmark status on the Lincoln Highway. The cafe was opened in 1929 and remained a popular stop for travelers along the highway until 1986. In recent years, the cafe’s exterior had fallen into disrepair, but its interior remained intact. The community was determined to restore the cafe to its former glory. With the help of the Belle Plaine Community Development Corporation and a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the cafe underwent a complete renovation. The cafe now features period-appropriate decor and offers a variety of fried chicken and other classic dishes. The cafe has become a popular destination for travelers on the Lincoln Highway, offering a taste of the past in a modern setting.

MAIN STREET OMMUWA
Est. 2006
POP. 25,023
In January of 2010, Main Street Ottumwa had the opportunity to begin a downtown art event, which became known as WALK ON ART STREET. This one day art fair has become one of the premier summer events in the city of Ottumwa and in the three years since it was conceived, has grown to include over 65 artists from five states and 11 counties. In 2010, there were over 1,000 visitors, $500 in Artist Awards distributed, drawings for money to be spent with vendors, as well as children’s activities partnering with nonprofit groups, visiting featured artists, entertainment, and live media coverage. On the evening prior to the event, Main Street Ottumwa hosts a Patron’s Party, including a live auction of artist work and entertainment along with food and drink. Part of the proceeds from the evening, help purchase a single piece of art from the show, going toward the formation of an Ottumwa Gallery. In addition, the artist whose work is purchased provides the artwork for the following year’s art poster. The event continues to grow and expand becoming a centerpiece for Main Street Ottumwa.
Under the management of volunteer Karla Steffens-Moran, the Mount Vernon-Lisbon Community Development Group’s “Polish It, Plant It, Paint It!” program consists of three different initiatives throughout the year and is designed to promote a cleaner, safer and more aesthetically pleasing Main Street District. Since 2008, this project has made a significant impact in the downtown since the program’s inception in 2008.

Polish It! begins in early spring. Volunteers rake, shovel, bag, and recycle what is left over from the fall and winter weather. Plant It! is typically done in mid-May. This consists of maintaining Main Street flora as well as planting new and having flower baskets. Paint It! is the final step, occurring in late summer. Volunteers sand, stain, and paint the Main Street District to create a position where historic buildings, Siebel’s Department Store & IOOF Lodge), Woodbine’s Façade Master Plan is the community’s stand out project, delivering the most significant impact. It ties together all aspects of the Woodbine Main Street District: to promote historic preservation, champion local businesses, and build community partnerships; always applying sustainable practices. The 2010 Façade Master Plan, funded by CSBG funding and a partnership of business owners, the City of Woodbine, and Main Street, is helping rehabilitate façades, creating new opportunities while maintaining energy efficiency improvements are incorporated into façade renovations (the bricks) and the programs Main Street is implementing (the mortar), provide a synergy supporting existing businesses while creating new opportunities.

Main Street Washington developed the Washington Incentive Fund (WIF) to encourage the remediation of contaminated façades and to complete projects on rehabilitation to historic commercial properties in the downtown district. This project was created to bring downtown Washington into a position where commerce and public spaces combine to create a vibrant and economically viable downtown. Funding for this project has been awarded through two grants from the Ames Foundation in the amount of $50,000 and $35,000. As of 2010, Main Street Washington had also partnered with the five local financial institutions – Community 1st Credit Union, Federation Bank, US Bank, Washington State Bank, and West Chester Savings Bank – to provide a low interest loan component. In 2010, Main Street Washington approved 24 projects, granting 3.6% of the projects and certifying eight projects for low interest loans. Completed total investment to approved WIF projects in 2010 totaled $359,169 with more than $800,000 committed to future WIF projects that have yet to be completed. This project has made a significant impact in the downtown since the program’s inception in 2008.

The past three years as a Main Street community have been action-packed. Even when considering the level of Woodbine’s activities, 2009 & 2010 were challenging times. Grants rehabbing five façades and a historic canopy gas station, the addition of a new health clinic in the District, and the total renovation of one of Woodbine’s historic bank buildings, (Lisbon’s Department Store & IOOF Lodge), Woodbine’s Façade Master Plan is the community’s stand out project, delivering the most significant impact. It ties together all aspects of the Woodbine Main Street District: to promote historic preservation, champion local businesses, and build community partnerships; always applying sustainable practices. The 2010 Façade Master Plan, funded by CSBG funding and a partnership of business owners, the City of Woodbine, and Main Street, is helping rehabilitate façades, creating new opportunities while maintaining energy efficiency improvements are incorporated into façade renovations (the bricks) and the programs Main Street is implementing (the mortar), provide a synergy supporting existing businesses while creating new opportunities.

Woodbine’s Main Street is well on its way to becoming a model of sustainability for small communities committed to preservation and growth due to the Façade Master Plan.

It has been said by many in the community that the Main Street Cultural District (MSCD) never looked as beautiful as it did in the summer of 2010. You couldn’t miss the eye-catching sweet potato vines cascading over the decorative iron-wrapped planters on Main Street. The public art on the street corners was accentuated by the addition of bright flowers and plantings. For the spring of 2010, the Ames Foundation was the catalyst in raising $55,000 to beautify Main Street with a complete overhaul. The project included replanting, between Clark and Duff Avenues, 17 existing street level gardens, 26 large planters, and 13 smaller planters. Soil was removed, replaced, and enriched to benefit the new plantings and provide season long enjoyment with reduced maintenance. Decorative iron-wraps were also added to the large planters along Main Street. The public art on the street corners was accentuated by the addition of bright flowers and plantings. For the spring of 2010, the Ames Foundation was the catalyst in raising $55,000 to beautify Main Street with a complete overhaul. The project included replanting, between Clark and Duff Avenues, 17 existing street level gardens, 26 large planters, and 13 smaller planters. Soil was removed, replaced, and enriched to benefit the new plantings and provide season long enjoyment with reduced maintenance. Decorative iron-wraps were also added to the large planters along Main Street. The public art on the street corners was accentuated by the addition of bright flowers and plantings. For the spring of 2010, the Ames Foundation was the catalyst in raising $55,000 to beautify Main Street with a complete overhaul. The project included replanting, between Clark and Duff Avenues, 17 existing street level gardens, 26 large planters, and 13 smaller planters. Soil was removed, replaced, and enriched to benefit the new plantings and provide season long enjoyment with reduced maintenance. Decorative iron-wraps were also added to the large planters along Main Street.
Cedar Rapids Czech Village – New Bohemia

Est. 2009
POP. 126,326

The Czech Village – New Bohemia Main Street District was formed to bring environmental development into historic area of Cedar Rapids. The committee’s efforts links many groups that have the shared goal of a revitalized commercial district that is sustainable, safe, and clean. At the core of our mission is the preservation of historic buildings. Community revitalization through the adaptive use of historically meaningful structures is a viable alternative to “tear down and replace.” By retaining the historical community character and adding events material to our landsape, we enhance property owners who improve existing structures. Each improvement helps to achieve the entire district. East Fest was formed as a community-driven effort vanted in the idea that responsible use of structures is key to the revitalization. The committee worked with the organizations involved with the goals of the Czech Village – New Bohemia Main Street District. The theme, “Go Green,” was used for the inaugural East Fest held April 15, 2010 in the New Bohemia Neighborhood of Cedar Rapids. It was seen as the event of family friendly activities on celebration of Earth Day. Events included kid workshops, environmentally friendly products and fun, and craft fairs above and under the event a storm knocked out power in the entire district. Faced with the decision to move the event indoors and out of 6th Avenue, the 6th Avenue Corridor was awarded its first Metro Arts 2010 Jazz in July site. The Promotions Committee worked diligently to promote and create the event. The music of the event’s opening act was provided with the use of solar panels. The event continued with regional bands performing, relief, gospel and traditional folk music, plus food vendors. It resulted in attendance of over 300 people; folks of all ages who came to enjoy Jazz Hall of Famers Sam Salmone and Gary Jackson. The Festival featured five regional bands, providing R & B, Celtic, gospel and traditional folk music, plus food vendors. It resulted in attendance of over 300 people; folks of all ages who came to enjoy Jazz Hall of Famers Sam Salmone and Gary Jackson.
FORT MADISON MAIN STREET

Est. 2009
POP. 11,051

Fort Madison Main Street is a new district, being less than two years old. Over these last two years, Martha Wolf has been one of the driving forces in the district. She was instrumental during the application process and worked tirelessly as a member of the application committee. Martha has served on the board of directors and is also the chair of the Organization Committee. She has had many creative ideas over the past years, including organizing the first annual meeting, complete with pipe cleaner art, which was a big hit with the community. The organization’s first fund-raiser to date, Sensational Chefs, is now in its second year. Sensational Chefs sells out in just a matter of days and continues to leave a warming list.

MAIN STREET MANNING

Est. 2009
POP. 1,500

One of the major challenges for every new program is building partnerships with other established and well-respected organizations in the community. Pam Kusel was instrumental in improving this process in Manning by creating a non-threatening environment and allowing the Manning Chamber of Commerce to take over the role of Main Street Manning’s promotional arm. This new partnership is energized and ready to take on the goals and objectives for the coming year.

MAIN STREET TIMELINE:
Main Street Iowa “A Quarter Century of Change”

1977 National Trust for Historic Preservation launches three-year pilot project in three Midwest communities to help save downtown buildings from demolition

1980 pilot project, now named Main Street®, is expanded to include 30 communities in six states

1984 National Trust Main Street Center holds national teleconference inviting other states to join the Main Street® movement

1985 Governor Terry E. Branstad’s Condition of the State message urges Legislature to provide funding to create Main Street Iowa program.

1985 National Trust expands program to include urban cities over 50,000 population

1986 Main Street Iowa selects first five participating communities

1987 Main Street Iowa holds first ever Iowa Downtown Summit

1988 First Annual Main Street Iowa Awards reception at Terrace Hill attracts 250 celebrants

1989 Iowa Legislature supports expanding program to include communities under 5,000 population

1989 National Main Street Center launches Certification Institute for Main Street Program Directors

1990 Main Street Iowa selects first five participating Rural Main Street communities

1995 Private sector investment surpasses $50 million

1995 Main Street Iowa communities receive first of seven Great American Main Street Awards®

1996 Main Street Iowa celebrates 10th Anniversary Year

2001 Iowa Finance Authority and Main Street Iowa develop Main Street Revitalization Loan Program

2001 Main Street Iowa “Experience the Magic” at 25th Anniversary Celebration

2002 Main Street Iowa receives first of seven federal HUD appropriations for Main Street Challenge Grants

2004 Volunteer hours dedicated to local Main Street Iowa communities surpass one million hours

2005 Private sector investment surpasses $250 million

2006 Main Street Iowa celebrates 20 years of “Changing Places, Changing Faces, Changing Lives”

2008 Iowa Legislature supports expanding program to include urban neighborhoods commercial districts

2009 Main Street Iowa selects first three participating Urban Neighborhood districts

2010 net gain of new jobs in Main Street districts surpasses 10,000

2010 Main Street Iowa first coordinating program to receive the National Trust Honor Award for “creating jobs” through preservation-based economic development

2010 Main Street Development Loan Program created with Preservation Iowa and the National Trust for Historic Preservation

2011 Main Street Iowa selected by Iowa Association of Business & Industry and Iowa Area Development Group as IA Biz Magazine’s Best of 2010 under the category “Community Revolution”

2011 Main Street Iowa celebrates “A Quarter Century of Change”

2011 Iowa hosts National Main Streets Conference during Main Street Iowa’s 25th Anniversary

2011 Private sector investment surpasses $1 billion

2011 Volunteer hours approach two million
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<td>MAIN STREET COMMUNITIES POPULATION DISTRICTS</td>
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<td>BURLINGTON</td>
<td>Downtown Partners, Inc. 102 N. Main Street, Suite 200, Burlington, IA 52601 (563) 559-0030 <a href="mailto:info@burlingtonmainstreet.org">info@burlingtonmainstreet.org</a></td>
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<td>CONCORD</td>
<td>Coral Channel Main Street 125 N. Center Avenue, Coralville, IA 52241 (319) 559-6210 <a href="mailto:concordmainstreet@gmail.com">concordmainstreet@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>ELKADER</td>
<td>Main Street Elkader 107 N. Atlantic Avenue, Elkader, IA 52043 (563) 844-3337 <a href="mailto:mainstreetelkader@gmail.com">mainstreetelkader@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>ELY</td>
<td>Main Street Ely 201 E. Main Street, Ely, IA 52316 (563) 673-2343 <a href="mailto:mainstreetely@gmail.com">mainstreetely@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>KNOX</td>
<td>Main Street Knoxville, Inc. 304 Main Street, Knoxville, IA 52157 (319) 887-6091 <a href="mailto:knoxmainstreet@gmail.com">knoxmainstreet@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>LE MARS</td>
<td>Main Street Le Mars, Community 317 Central Ave. Le Mars, IA 51031 (712) 546-3461 <a href="mailto:mainstreetlemars@gmail.com">mainstreetlemars@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>RUSSELL</td>
<td>Main Street Russell, Community 133 Main Street, Russell, IA 51245 (712) 844-3556 <a href="mailto:mainstreetrussell@gmail.com">mainstreetrussell@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>HAMILTON COUNTY S.E.D.</td>
<td>Hamilton County S.E.D. 2400 Briggs Woods Trail PO Box 478 Webster City, IA 50595 (712) 546-9973 <a href="mailto:mainstreethamiltoncounty@gmail.com">mainstreethamiltoncounty@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>DUBUQUE</td>
<td>Downtown Dubuque 120 W. 5th Street, Dubuque, IA 52001 (563) 585-7272 <a href="mailto:mainstreetdubuque@gmail.com">mainstreetdubuque@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>MARSHALLTON</td>
<td>Main Street Marshalltown, Community 401 S. Main Street, Marshalltown, IA 50158-0159 (515) 314-4243 <a href="mailto:mainstreetmarshalltown@gmail.com">mainstreetmarshalltown@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>HICKMAN FALLS</td>
<td>Intra Falls Main Street 301 W. Center Street, Hickman, IA 52564 (641) 887-3721 <a href="mailto:mainstreethickman@gmail.com">mainstreethickman@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>MainForm Street Council</td>
<td>1086 Main Street, Suite 201, Des Moines, IA 50301 (515) 284-5650 mainstreetdirectory.com</td>
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