

North Carolina Communities Receive National Main Street Accreditation For 2017

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Raleigh, N.C. – The N.C. Department of Commerce’s Main Street & Rural Planning Center announced today that 39 North Carolina communities have achieved accreditation from the National Main Street Center® for meeting the commercial district revitalization performance standards set by the National Main Street Center, ® a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The North Carolina Main Street communities that have earned accreditation for their 2016 performance are Belmont, Boone, Brevard, Cherryville, Clinton, Concord, Eden, Edenton, Elkin, Garner, Goldsboro, Hendersonville, Hickory, Kings Mountain, Lenoir, Lexington, Lumberton, Marion, Monroe, Morganton, North Wilkesboro, Roanoke Rapids, Rocky Mount, **Roxboro**, Rutherfordton, Salisbury, Sanford, Shelby, Smithfield, Spruce Pine, Statesville, Sylva, Tryon, Valdese, Wake Forest, Waxhaw, Waynesville, Williamston, and Wilson.

Each year, the National Main Street Center® and its partners announce the list of accredited Main Street® programs, which have demonstrated best practices in community revitalization through the Main Street Four Point Approach. ®

“Strong, thriving main streets are a key in ensuring strong communities, especially in rural parts of the state,” said Anthony M. Copeland, Secretary of the N.C. Department of Commerce. “We’re proud that our Main Street communities have been recognized on a national level for their achievements. These local programs assist communities in bringing jobs and businesses to their downtowns, which helps overall communities enjoy a healthier, more robust economy.”

North Carolina is one of the original states to administer the National Main Street Program. The North Carolina Main Street & Rural Planning Center evaluates each of the state’s local Main Street organizations annually to identify those programs that meet ten performance standards.

“Those communities meeting the standards understand that downtown economic development requires a comprehensive approach, which is the basis for the National Main Street Program,” said Liz Parham, director of the North Carolina Main Street Center. “We’re proud of the accomplishments of the 39 North Carolina communities that have achieved national accreditation.”

“It is a great honor to recognize this year’s 828 nationally Accredited Main Street America programs for their outstanding work to transform downtown and neighborhood commercial districts,” says Patrice Frey, President & CEO of the National Main Street Center. ® “Main Streets are the heart of our communities, and the work they do to create quality public spaces, catalyze local entrepreneurship, and support downtown housing is more important than ever. Across the county, Main Street America programs truly strengthen the economic, social, and cultural fabric of their entire communities.”

The performance standards set the benchmarks for measuring an individual Main Street community’s application of the Main Street Four Point Approach® to commercial district revitalization. Evaluation criteria determine the communities that are building comprehensive and sustainable revitalization efforts and include standards such as fostering strong public-private partnerships, securing an operating budget, tracking programmatic progress and actively preserving historic buildings. More information is available at National Main Street Accreditation.

Since 1980, The North Carolina Main Street program has generated more than \$2.54 billion in private and public investment. In 2016, North Carolina Main Street downtown districts generated 319 net new businesses, 154 business expansions in existing businesses, 1,555 net new jobs, 393 façade rehabilitations and 328 building renovations. More than 114,336 volunteer hours were recorded.

Main Street America has been helping revitalize older and historic commercial districts for more than 35 years. Today, it is a network of more than 1,000 neighborhoods and communities, rural and urban, who share both a commitment to place and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development. Since 1980, communities participating in the program have leveraged more than \$71.35 billion in new public and private investment, generated 583,869 net new jobs and 131,974 net new businesses, and rehabilitated more than 267,800 buildings. Main Street America is a program of the nonprofit National Main Street Center, ® a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

About the N.C. Main Street & Rural Planning Center

The N.C. Main Street & Rural Planning Center works in regions, counties, cities, towns, downtown districts and in designated North Carolina Main street communities, to inspire placemaking through building asset-based economic development strategies that achieve measurable results such as investment, business growth and jobs.

For more information about the N.C. Main Street & Rural Planning Center, contact Liz Parham, Director at (919) 814-4658.

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