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Oregon Cities Selected for New “Main Street” Program

Governor Kulongoski Announces Oregon Main Street Cities at Event in Oregon City

SALEM, OR— Today Governor Kulongoski announced the selection of eleven communities to participate in the Oregon Main Street program, at an event in Oregon City.

The Main Street™ program is a national program developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which includes over 1,600 cities in 40 states. This proven comprehensive approach emphasizes community organization, design, promotion, and economic restructuring to create healthy downtown commercial districts. This approach advocates a return to community self-reliance, empowerment, and the rebuilding of commercial districts based on traditional assets, unique architecture, personal service, local ownership, and sense of community.

"Small businesses are our economic foundation. With the Main Street program, we join together to retain and grow small businesses throughout Oregon," said Governor Kulongoski. "These partnerships help Oregon move forward and represent investments we should be making in difficult economic times."

The Oregon Main Street program is administered by the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department, and provides three levels of programs that allow communities to participate in ways that best meet their capacity and needs.

The City of Albany, City of Baker City, City of Oregon City and City of Roseburg have been selected to participate in the Performing Main Street program. The City of Carlton, City of La Grande, City of Oakridge, City of Riddle, City of Sandy, City of Toledo, and community of North Northeast Business Association have been selected to participate in the Transforming Downtown program. Thirty-three cities are currently enrolled in the entry-level "Exploring Downtown" program. Eight (8) communities have submitted letters of intent to apply for the "Performing Main Street" and "Transforming Downtown" programs in early 2009.

The Oregon Main Street program was re-established through the efforts of the Main Street Task Force and approved by the State Legislature in 2007. The state program was developed in 2008 and this announcement represents the first annual selection of cities and communities.

The selection process included submitting an application that describes their community, downtown area, historical identity, goals, readiness, support, and funding commitments. Those communities applying for Performing Main Street status also gave presentations to a review committee of agency representatives, the National Trust, and Main Street staff. Acceptance into these programs allows communities to participate in training, community assessments, technical assistance, the Oregon Main Street network, national recognition, and future grant programs.

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