

# OREGON MAIN STREET

## 2020 Annual Report



### Message from the State Coordinator

2020. What comes to mind when you reflect back over the year? I think of how the year was off to a positive start. New communities were being onboarded and there was a lot of energy and excitement in the Network as long laid plans were moving forward. Then, things came to a screaming halt. We had no idea at that point what was coming but we knew we needed to jump in and be responsive. And respond you did. Almost immediately, the City of Albany and the Albany Downtown Association created curbside parking zones and a Drive Up Downtown promotional campaign to support local restaurants and retail businesses. This type of creativity and thinking outside the box became a recurring theme as our main streets navigated through the year.

Our main street programs became an important conduit of information to connect businesses with critical resources including setting up communication groups on-line or virtual. The Klamath Falls Downtown Association board members hit the street to share information and remind business owners they were there, they cared, and they supported them. And, our main street programs provided much needed support in navigating new financial assistance programs and ensuring equal opportunity in applying. Historic Willamette quickly helped a local business connect with an interpreter for assistance in completing an application.

Key partnerships were strengthened. In Lakeview, the Chamber of Commerce and Lakeview Community Partners staff came together to determine what skills they had, who was best positioned to help with different parts of the business community, and what

their plan of action would be. The Downtown Corvallis Association partnered with the City of Corvallis' Economic Development to create outdoor covered dining which the City rented with CARES funding and the City Transportation Department helped secure a permit to allow use of parking spaces indefinitely.

As the pandemic stretched on, reality set in that all programming would need to be switched up, especially funding as events and other traditional activities dried up. The Lebanon Downtown Association created multiple new revenue streams such as a Give \$5/month to aid downtown, Dine Downtown Collaboration Box which sold 60 boxes in 24 hours, a guided, socially-distanced Taste of Downtown, and Lebanon Strong apparel to show pride and support for downtown.

While we mourn the loss of favorite businesses, we know that our main streets will not only survive but thrive in the coming years. In the words of Mary Means, founder of the Main Street movement, "A lot has changed, but what hasn't is the important role our Main Streets play in community building. In isolation, we humans long to be with others, to celebrate, to mark holidays – or just hang out. Forty years ago, a group of preservationists took steps to save downtown's historic buildings. In the process we learned that Main Street lives in America's heart and is vital to our collective sense of well-being." (APA, Planning Winter, 2021)

*Sheri Stuart  
Oregon Main Street*

# Oregon Main Street

## OREGON MAIN STREET



Oregon Main Street (OMS) is part of Oregon Heritage in Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. OMS is designed to assist with the revitalization of traditional downtowns and historic commercial districts, promote economic development, and encourage historic preservation. The program uses an approach that advocates a return to community self-reliance,

local empowerment, and the rebuilding of central business districts based on their assets, unique architecture, personal service, local ownership and entrepreneurship, and sense of community.

OMS coordinates resources and provides technical assistance based on the Main Street Approach™ to communities that are working in historically relevant business district settings and that meet certain threshold criteria. Oregon Main Street provides assistance to all communities whether they are just beginning to explore options for their downtown or seeking national recognition as an accredited Main

Street™ town. Currently, there are 94 communities participating in one of the four levels of Oregon Main Street:

- **Performing Main Street** is the most prestigious of the three levels of the Main Street Track and is for organizations that are successfully using the Main Street Approach™. Communities at this level are recognized by Main Street America™ and are eligible for National Accreditation. Applications are open once per year in January.
- **Transforming Downtown** is for communities who are using the Main Street Approach™ but need technical assistance to take them to the next level. Applications are open once per year in January.
- **Exploring Downtown** is for communities just starting out and who want to use the Main Street Approach™. Emphasis at this level is building a strong organizational base. Exploring Downtown applications are accepted throughout the year.
- **Associate** is for communities who wish to be connected to Oregon Main Street but aren't ready or don't want to use the Main Street Approach™. Communities at this level are invited to attend workshops and conferences sponsored by Oregon Main Street.

## Main Street America™

Main Street America™ is a program of the National Main Street Center. What sets Main Street America™ apart is the powerful network: the unique combination of grassroots dedication to comprehensively improving quality of life at the local level; integral support and expertise provided by Coordinating Programs at the city, county, and state level; and leadership and direction from the NMSC. Main Street America™ is also a special mark of distinction. It is a seal, recognizing that participating programs, organizations, and communities are part of a national movement with a proven track record for celebrating community character, preserving local history, and generating impressive economic returns.

### The Main Street Approach™

The Main Street Approach™ is an asset-based economic development strategy. It is a comprehensive, incremental approach to sustain and enhance historic downtowns and traditional commercial neighborhoods based on the district's unique heritage and attributes. Main Street organizations are locally driven, funded, organized, and run.



# 2020 Oregon Main Street: By the Numbers!



## BUILDING REHAB PROJECTS

2020: **129**  
Cumulative: **1,347**



## NET NEW JOBS

2020: **280**  
Cumulative: **3,961**

## PRIVATE INVESTMENT

2020: **\$15,446,880**  
Cumulative: **\$125,089,702**



## PUBLIC INVESTMENT

2020: **\$23,072,803**  
Cumulative: **\$124,616,454**

## NET NEW BUSINESSES

2020: **23**  
Cumulative: **639**

## BUSINESS EXPANSIONS

2020: **18**  
Cumulative: **163**



## VOLUNTEER HOURS

2020: **13,390**  
Cumulative: **250,348**

## Additional 2020 Highlights

**2020 Total Communities:** 94

### New towns/Tier promotions:

- Performing Main Street - Klamath Falls
- Exploring Downtown Level - Cave Junction, Coburg, Forest Grove, Redmond
- Associate Level - Cornelius, Monmouth

### Oregon Main Street Technical Assistance: 29

- Assessments, goal setting, trainings, workshops, intro to main street. advanced training

### New Services & Tools

- Mornings on Main weekly check-in calls
- Webinars: Social Media, On-line Retail, Messaging Strategies, Funding Mini-Series
- Recovery Action Plan Template
- Main Street 101 Recorded Webinars and new Guides

### New Collaborations

- Economic Vitality Pilot in Stayton and Coos Bay with Rural Development Initiatives
- Washington Main Street Coffee's On-line, Webinars, Publications
- Washington Main Street and Main Street Iowa – RAP template
- Colorado Main Street, Wyoming Main Street, and Washington Main Street Webinars

### Main Street Revitalization Grant Spotlight: Bringing Back to Life the 1903 Bank Building, Cottage Grove



The 1903 Bank Building sits at a key corner in the Downtown Cottage Grove Commercial National Register Historic District. It was in a dilapidated state but had potential. Prior to restoration, the building had seven vacant substandard apartments on the second floor and two of the four commercial spaces were vacant on the first floor. Now the building has six restored apartments on the second floor and the first floor contains a pizza restaurant, an Edward Jones office, the original (relocated) Latina store, a real estate office, and a co-working office. The commercial spaces are 96% occupied; the apartments are 100% occupied. The retention of the Latina store was vital to Cottage Grove's Latinx community. Being able to see this building restored and open to full tenancy during COVID has kept the community's spirits up through a very difficult time.



# 2020 EXCELLENCE IN DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION AWARDS

One of our favorite times of the year is celebrating successes at the annual Excellence in Downtown Revitalization Awards event. Unfortunately, we could not do this in person this year, however, we pivoted with videos of the award winners that you can find [here](#).

## ORGANIZATION

- Outstanding Partnership**  
City of Klamath Falls
- Best Special Project**  
Greater Than Golf, Bandon
- Best Organizational Tool**  
Idea Sharing Tool, Hillsboro
- Volunteer of the Year**  
Sophia Slack, Beaverton
- Board Member of the Year**  
Oscar Hult, Albany
- Executive Director of the Year**  
Kevin Teater, Beaverton

## PROMOTION

- Best Retail Activity**  
Drive Up Downtown, Albany
- Best Image**  
175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Art Print, Oregon City

## DESIGN

- Best Façade Rehabilitation**  
Welcome Hotel, Reedsport
- Best Historic Preservation Project**  
Sidewalk Prism Replacement, Astoria
- Best Placemaking Project**  
BDA CoSign, Beaverton

## ECONOMIC VITALITY

- Business of the Year**  
White Birch Design Co., Hillsboro
- Best New Business**  
Blaylock's Whiskey Bar, Astoria
- Best Upper Floor Rehabilitation**  
B-Still Lofts, Albany
- Best Adaptive Reuse**  
640 2nd Building, Bandon

*Congratulations!*

## Main Street Volunteer Spotlight

Strengthening and enhancing our historic downtowns and traditional commercial centers doesn't just happen. It takes the dedicated effort of diverse community members coming together to make a difference. Our Volunteer of the Year and Board Member of the Year Awardees exemplify the commitment community members give day in and day out on behalf of their towns.

In 2018, high school student **Sophia Slack** joined the Beaverton Downtown Association as the voting Youth Representative on the Board of Directors, later became Secretary. She lead the social media team and quadrupled BDA's Instagram followers. Sophia also joined BDA's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policy planning team. Sophia was a valuable team member, recruiting others with expertise in this area. Sophia started college last fall, but she made the most of her time in Beaverton, was a model team member, and a strong advocate for downtown.



**Oscar Hult** has been involved with the Albany Downtown Association for over 31 years, serving as executive director, on multiple committees and the board, and as board president. He also volunteered at events such as serving as emcee at Mixology Madness. And, he played a big role in the successful EID renewal in 2018. Oscar recently acquired a historic building in downtown and is bringing the building back to its former glory, creating a new space for his flourishing business, The Natty Dresser, and developing new uses for the multi-story iconic structure. As a business owner and community partner, Oscar created events to bring people to downtown Albany to appreciate its unique architecture and retail and dining opportunities. He lives ADA's goal of historic preservation through economic development.

