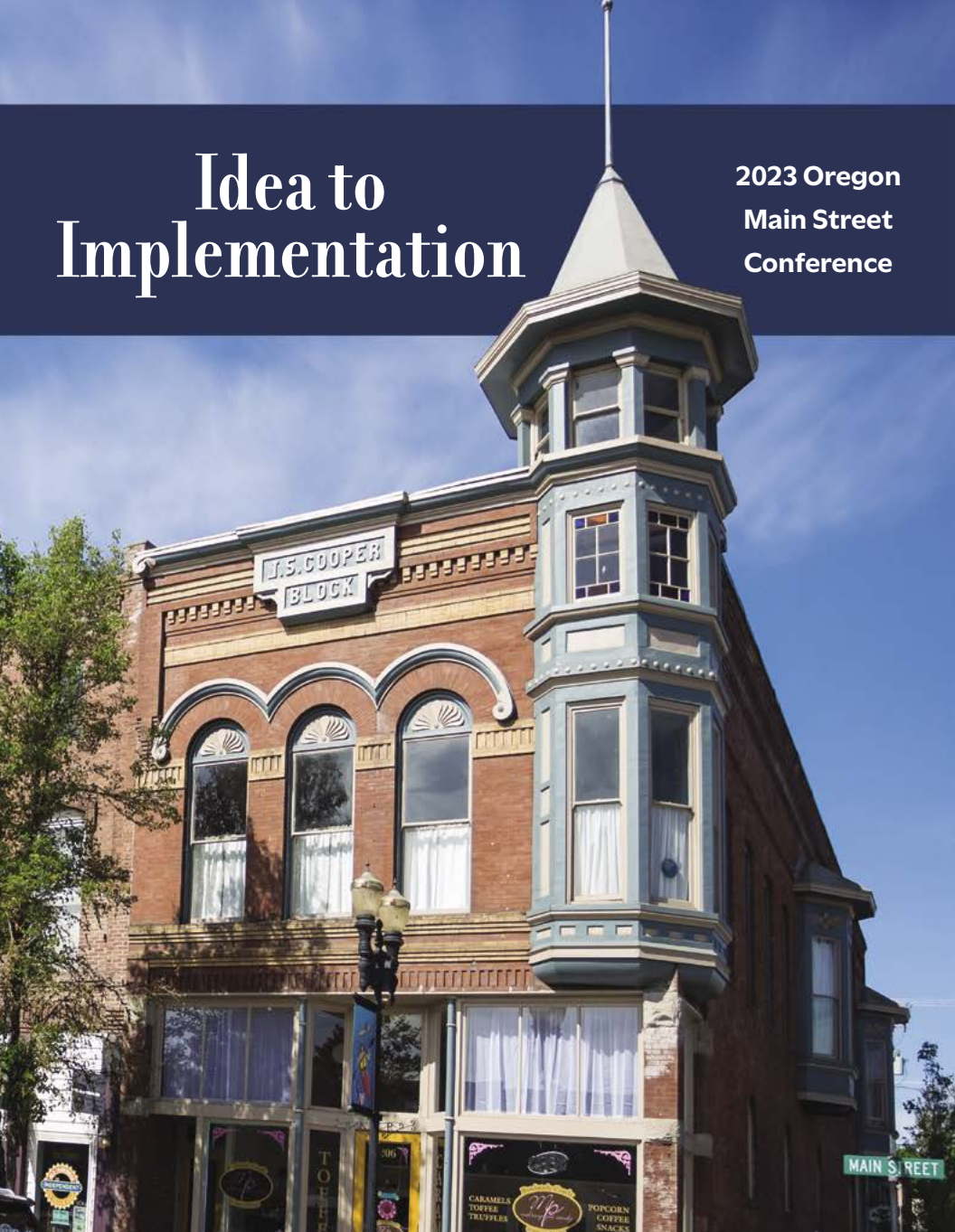


Idea to Implementation

2023 Oregon
Main Street
Conference



October 4th, 5th, and 6th | Independence, Oregon



INDEPENDENCE

Oregon's Story Begins Here

Dear Oregon Main Street attendees,

Welcome to Independence! We're happy you are here and hope you take a moment to wander through our town, enjoy the glorious riverfront, and spend some time (and money) in our wonderful locally-owned businesses.

Thirty years ago, Independence was a very different place. The mills closed, storefronts were vacant, and downtown wasn't the kind of place you let your kids go to. Our community made a choice to take control of our future, to envision a revitalized community, and work collaboratively to achieve that vision. The Independence you see today is a result of that choice, as well as a persistent, sustained, and inclusive effort.

The revitalization of our historic downtown was a key component of our community's vision, and the Independence Downtown Association has been a crucial partner throughout the years. Together we've created a calendar of events that bring thousands of people downtown and an infectious sense of vibrancy. Over the years, we received three OMS grants to restore downtown buildings, organized business support programs, and beautified our downtown with flower baskets and hand-painted banners.

For the last three decades, Independence has been working toward a vision of vitality, energy, and a strong sense of community. It's a journey that will never truly be finished, but we're thrilled to have you in town and show you the progress we've been able to make. I hope you enjoy your conference and remember, Oregon's Story Begins here!

Sincerely,

John McArdle
Mayor

PS: Don't forget to take a ride on our new trolley! It's free and a wonderful way to visit Monmouth without having to drive!



2023 Oregon Main Street Conference

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Schedule at a Glance

Wednesday, October 4th			
9:00 a.m. - Noon	Preconference Main Street 101 Workshop Kathy LaPlante, Main Street America™, Indy Commons, 154 S Main		
1:30 - 3:30 p.m.	Registration Opens at Conference Headquarters - Coho Realty, 144 S Main		
3:00 p.m.	Opening Keynote: Mary Means, The Power of Story in Main Street's Rebirth; Excellence on Main Awards Celebration; Riverview Park Amphitheater, 50 C St		
5:00 p.m.	Opening Reception Hosted by Independence Downtown Association and City of Independence - Upper Park Plaza		
Thursday, October 5			
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Registration at Conference Headquarters - Coho Realty, 144 S Main		
8:00 a.m.	Recharge & Refresh Snacks, Coho Realty, 144 S Main		
Session Locations	Indy Commons	Gilgamesh The River	Independence Elks Lodge
8:30 - 9:15 a.m.	Best Promotion Ideas from Around the Country	Walk, Talk, and Chalk: Creative Strategies for Community Engagement	Simple Strategies to Grow & Sustain Small Businesses on Your Main Street
9:30 - 10:30 a.m.	Small Town Successes	Getting Strategic on Main Street	Bikes Mean Business: How Two-Wheeled Tourism is Fueling Downtowns
10:30 a.m.	Recharge & Refresh Snacks, Coho Realty, 144 S Main		
11:00 a.m. - Noon	Main Idea: Leadership and the Art and Practice of Developing People Steve Patty Ph.D., Dialogues in Action Independence Cinema 8, 450 South 2nd Street		
Noon	Lunch on your own in Downtown Independence		
1:45 - 3:15 p.m.	Getting to What Matters: How to Evaluate and Communicate Your Impact	The Future Is Now: Main Street Development Strategies	Embracing Difference as a Gift
3:15 p.m.	Recharge & Refresh Snacks, Coho Realty, 144 S Main		
3:45 - 5:15 p.m.	Walking Tours: Depart/Return to the Plaza (across from Coho Realty)		
3:45 - 5:15 p.m.	Hanging with Heritage option at Indy Commons		
5:15 - 6:15 p.m.	Social Mixer Hosted by Independence Downtown Association and City of Independence at the Valkyrie Wine Tavern, 301 S Main Street		

Friday, October 6

8:00 - 10:30 a.m.	Registration at Conference Headquarters - Coho Realty, 144 S Main		
8:00 a.m.	Recharge & Refresh Snacks, Coho Realty, 144 S Main		
Session Locations	Indy Commons	Gilgamesh The River	Independence Elks Lodge
8:30 - 9:15 a.m.	Dark Sky Preservation on Your Main Street	Is Your Main Street Ready for EV Charging?	The Heart of Communities: Partnering with Libraries to Revitalize Downtown Spaces
9:30 - 10:15 a.m.	Livable Community Resources	Parking Management Strategies to Increase Downtown Vitality	No Silver Bullet – The Many Elements Necessary for a Vital Downtown
10:15 - 10:45 a.m.	Recharge & Refresh Snacks, Independence Cinema 8		
10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.	Closing Plenary: Oregon Main Street "Open Door" Panel and Pitch Contest, Independence Cinema 8 - 450 South 2nd St.		
12:15 p.m.	Conference Concludes - Thank You & Safe Travels!		

Conference Venues



- Registration and Lounge
- Session
- P Public Parking

LOCATIONS

1. Riverview Park Amphitheater
2. Coho Realty
3. Elks Lodge 1950
4. Gilgamesh: The River
5. Independence Cinema
6. Indy Commons
7. Valkyrie Wine Tavern



INDEPENDENCE
Oregon's Strongest Progress Starts Here



9:00 a.m. – Noon

Indy Commons

PRECONFERENCE WORKSHOP:

MAIN STREET 101

As a comprehensive economic development tool, the Main Street Four-Point Approach™ is the foundation for local communities to enhance and sustain their historic downtowns by leveraging their local assets – from cultural and architectural heritage to local entrepreneurs and community pride. The four points of Main Street work together to build a sustainable and complete community revitalization effort. Spend the morning with a national expert and gain in-depth understanding of the program. You will leave energized and ready to revitalize YOUR Main Street!

Kathy LaPlante, Senior Director of Coordinating Programs, National Main Street Center



Kathy La Plante is a Senior Program Officer and Director of Coordinating Program Services at Main Street America (MSA) with expertise in building organizational capacity and developing promotional programming. She has worked in the Main Street field for nearly 25 years. She joined the MSA staff in May 2007.

She works throughout the U.S. providing training for cities of all sizes using the Main Street Approach to downtown revitalization. Prior to this position, she was hired as the first Director of the New Hampshire Main Street Center, serving in that role for over ten years. Kathy

began her Main Street career in 1989 as the Executive Director of the Chippewa Falls Main Street Program. Seven years later, Chippewa Falls was a recipient of the Great American Main Street Award. Prior to working in downtown revitalization, Kathy spent 12 years in retail management.

1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Coho Realty (Conference Headquarters)

REGISTRATION OPENS

THERE ARE THREE SESSION TYPES:

CRASH COURSE

45-minute, topic-specific courses that provide quick information or skill-building.

CLASSROOM SESSION

Traditional, 60-minute session.

DEEP DIVE

A 1.5-hour session on a topic that requires detailed instruction or discussion.

3:00 p.m.

Riverview Park Amphitheater

OPENING KEYNOTE:

THE POWER OF STORY IN MAIN STREET'S REBIRTH

It's been said that before there was the Main Street Approach™, the accepted story about downtown was "Leave. It's dead." Then, Mary Means came along and proved that it wasn't. Through her inspired leadership and vision, a new narrative was created. The power of story is quite relevant today as our nation seems to become more polarized every day. In this keynote, Mary will talk about what we need Main Street to be as we face unprecedented challenges. Can it become greater than the sum of its parts? And,



can Main Street be a catalyst for resilience? Hear Mary's thoughts on the evolving role Main Streets play.

Mary Means

is best known for leading the team that

created the National Main Street Center. More than 1,600 towns and historic neighborhood corridors in 40+ states have successfully used the Main Street Approach™ to bring people back to their historic cores. Mary was a Loeb Fellow at Harvard Graduate School of Design. Her small but mighty planning firm has helped communities and other public interest organizations with strategic plans that achieve strong public support. Her work has been honored by the American Planning Association with its

2018 Planning Pioneer Award, and by the National Trust for Historic Preservation with the 2020 Crowninshield Award, the highest honor in historic preservation. Learn more at Means' website (<http://marymeans.com/>). Mary is the author of Main Street's Comeback and How It Can Come Back Again, published in 2020.

Following the Keynote Presentation

Independence Riverview Park Amphitheater - 50 C St

EXCELLENCE ON MAIN AWARDS

Join us as we celebrate the people, projects, and activities that represent the great achievements in downtown revitalization efforts throughout Oregon. The basis for the design of this year's award is the J.S. Cooper building.

5:00 p.m.

Upper Park Plaza

OPENING RECEPTION

Opening Reception hosted by the Independence Downtown Association and the City of Independence follows the Awards on the plaza at the top of the park.



Thursday, October 5

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Coho Realty (Conference Headquarters)

REGISTRATION

8:00 a.m.

Coho Realty (Conference Headquarters)

RECHARGE & REFRESH SNACKS

8:30 – 9:15 a.m. | CRASH COURSE

Indy Commons

BEST PROMOTIONS IDEAS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

Promotions should drive people to your downtown – and get them to spend money – and come back again. This session will share some of the best promotional activities from across the country including marketing initiatives (what you do to promote downtown 365 days a year), special events and festivals (the big events that attract people from a wide area) and business promotions (those events that get people through the doors of your businesses and spending money).

SPEAKER: Kathy La Plante, Senior Director of Coordinating Programs, National Main Street Center

8:30 – 9:15 a.m. | CRASH COURSE

Gilgamesh The River

WALK, TALK, AND CHALK: CREATIVE STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Outreach is an essential activity for Main Street organizations to mobilize community, reach businesses, and build partnerships. But how is it done? Come to this interactive session about creative ways to reach your constituents! Learn about real life examples and come up with your own.

SPEAKERS: Cayla Catino, RDI; Kevin Teater, Streetview Planning; Rosa Solano,

Reedsport Main Street; and Maryelizabeth Garcia, Milton-Freewater Chamber Downtown Alliance

8:30 – 9:15 a.m. | CRASH COURSE

Independence Elks Lodge

SIMPLE STRATEGIES TO GROW AND SUSTAIN STRONG SMALL BUSINESSES ON YOUR MAIN STREET

In this session learn how three communities are developing strategies to retain existing businesses and foster opportunities for entrepreneurship growth. Included are tools and tips for creating a small business technical assistance program to provide one on one support to local businesses, building a relationship with entrepreneurs to fill the room at trainings, tailoring one on one outreach, engaging business owners with small niche training and support services that are the right fit for their needs, and a providing mini-grants to support local business' events.

Session sponsored by Energy Trust of Oregon.

SPEAKERS: Suzanne Dufner, City of Monmouth; Timothy Bishop, City of La Grande; and Courtney Williams, City of Independence



9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. | CLASSROOM SESSION
Indy Commons

SMALL TOWN SUCCESSES

“We’re just a small town, what can we do?” Is that refrain a little too common in your community? In many cases, small towns are at the forefront of crafting creative strategies to address issues facing their communities. In this session participants will hear how the three programs in Oregon are using the Main Street Approach™ to build a successful, comprehensive revitalization strategy. Examples will include everything from building improvement projects to volunteer development activities, business development to promotional strategies, as well as info about our unique pilot Rural Regional Main Street effort.

PANELISTS: K’Lynn Lane, Executive Director, Oregon Frontier Chamber of Commerce; Susan Russell, President, Port Orford Main Street; and Rosa Solano, Executive Director, Reedsport Main Street



9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. | CLASSROOM SESSION
Gilgamesh The River

GETTING STRATEGIC ON MAIN STREET

Feeling a little overwhelmed with so many projects and expectations facing your main street organization? Learn how a community-based strategic planning process can help focus your energy. This session will include how three Oregon Main Street communities worked with a consultant as a guide on their strategic planning process to set clearer goals for their organization and a road map on how to achieve those goals using the new workbook developed by Oregon Main Street. The process included a mixture of stakeholder involvement, reviewing market data, and looking at previous, relevant planning studies and reports. Through the strategic planning process, communities were encouraged to identify two to three overarching strategies the program will focus on and to use the Main Street Four Points™ in a more collaborative way to achieve the community’s vision for the downtown or traditional commercial district.

MODERATOR: Mary Bosch, Marketek Inc.

PANELISTS: Joe Bachmeier, President, Pendleton Downtown Association; Hannah Darling, Vice President, Albany Downtown Association; Susan Gutierrez, Albany Downtown Association; and Rebecca Hollenbeck, Executive Director, Historic Willamette Main Street

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Business Oregon invests in Oregon businesses, communities, and people to promote a globally competitive, diverse, and inclusive economy. The agency's infrastructure finance programs assist communities to build infrastructure capacity to address public health, safety, and compliance issues as well as support their ability to attract, retain, and expand businesses.

business
oregon

Thursday, October 5

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. | CLASSROOM SESSION

Independence Elks Lodge

BIKES MEAN BUSINESS: HOW TWO-WHEELED TOURISM IS FUELING DOWNTOWNS

Whether it be bike-in only campgrounds, gravel routes starting from main street, mountain bike parks or fun bike events for the whole family, there's no shortage of great cycling experiences in Oregon. But that doesn't mean there can't be more of a good thing. Economic development agencies, destination management organizations and cities across Oregon are investing in cycling because bikes mean business – especially for downtowns! Join this panel to hear from local, county and state organizations on what creative cycling product they're cooking up and how bikes are boosting their main streets.

MODERATOR: Nastassja Olson, Destination Stewardship Manager, Travel Oregon

PANELISTS: Jeff Knapp, President/CEO, Visit McMinnville; Shawn Irvine, Economic Development Director, City of Independence; and Ramon Martinez, Coordinator, Bike Indy Oregon

10:30 a.m.

Coho Realty (Conference Headquarters)

RECHARGE & REFRESH SNACKS



Oregon Main Street Conference | Idea to Implementation

11:00 a.m. – Noon

Independence Cinema

MAIN IDEA KEYNOTE:

LEADERSHIP AND THE ART AND PRACTICE OF DEVELOPING PEOPLE

Right at the heart of what it means to be a leader is to develop people. Developing people is every leader's greatest privilege, most profound joy, and most sober responsibility. But with all the stresses of leadership, amidst all the interruptions, duties, and the cacophony of demands in leadership, how does a leader find the time and space to develop people? How does a leader get things done while developing people? This is not easy. It doesn't just happen. Developing people often gets buried by the urgent and relegated to the optional. This plenary will show you how to re-center developing people as a core focus in your leadership.



Steve Patty, Ph.D., spent over thirteen years as a professor and administrator in higher education before stepping out of the university context to work with organizations in the nonprofit and public sectors. For the past two decades, he has been developing the capacity of agencies that work with people to design strategy, develop people, and evaluate impact. He has taught thousands of leaders throughout North America and internationally how to design and implement a kind of evaluation that gets below the surface and into the heart of human change and transformation. Steve lives in Portland, Oregon.

Noon

Downtown Independence

LUNCH ON YOUR OWN

1:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. | DEEP DIVE

Indy Commons

GETTING TO WHAT MATTERS: HOW TO EVALUATE AND COMMUNICATE YOUR IMPACT

All of us who work with people need a way both to prove and to improve our impact. We need data to demonstrate what we are doing is making a difference. We also need data to show us how to get better at making a difference. Too often we use anecdotes or satisfaction rates or superficial metrics that miss the deeper, more durable, more meaningful aspects of human and societal progress and development. We need better ways to evaluate what really matters. And we need better ways to communicate the difference we are making to others. This presentation will show us how. Based on the work of over a decade of capacity-building with more than 500 agencies throughout North America, Steve Patty Ph.D. will bring to us innovative thinking and proven techniques to help us prove and improve our impact.

SPEAKER: Steve Patty, Ph.D.

1:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. | DEEP DIVE

Gilgamesh The River

THE FUTURE IS NOW: MAIN STREET DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Many Main Street programs struggle to fill vacant commercial spaces with quality businesses that enhance the region. To generate growth in your district, learn how leading Main Street programs utilize advanced tools like incubation spaces, fabrication labs, entrepreneurial training classes, adult pitch funding activities, investment groups, and alternative finance enhancements. This session will also discuss the development, funding, and outcomes of newer downtown growth strategies.

MODERATOR: Erik Andersson, SEDCOR

PANELISTS: Kate Schwarzler, Indy Commons; Dwight Unti, Tokola Properties; and Charles Weathers, W3RE, LLC



1:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. | DEEP DIVE

Independence Elks Lodge

EMBRACING DIFFERENCE AS A GIFT

In the summer of 2021, Newberg, Oregon made national news when the community clashed over the local school board's decision to ban all BLM (Black Lives Matter) and Pride Flags from its buildings. Whipped up by the national political climate and inflamed by local social media trolling, the noise and fear threatened to sever local business network connections and split civic organizations. But some people, drawn from different political and social connections, took a different approach. They created United as Neighbors. Over these last two years, the group has created a civility pledge and an ongoing, monthly community conversations group in addition to many other activities to build community. In this session you will learn about the history of United as Neighbors and the activities they currently host as well as a chance to practice civil conversations, talking about difficult issues facing your communities with people who have different opinions than yourself. You will also be prompted to think about the resources in your own community for diminishing the fear of difference and amplifying curiosity, considering how your own organization can be a catalyst for turning difference into a gift.

SPEAKERS: Ron Mock is Professor of Emeritus of Politics and Peace Studies, and Director of the Civility Project, George Fox University; and Polly Peterson, former Executive Director of the Newberg Downtown Coalition

3:15 p.m.

Coho Realty (Conference Headquarters)

RECHARGE & REFRESH SNACKS

3:45 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.

Coho Realty (Conference Headquarters)

WALKING TOURS

All Leave from across the street from Coho Realty (look for the sandwich board signs).

Riverfront Revitalization Tour:

Can recreation create economic opportunity? In Independence it has! Take a walk along the Willamette River and see how Independence has leveraged recreational amenities to bring people downtown, creating vibrancy and a customer base for local businesses. We'll talk about the Riverview Park Amphitheater, new City Hall and Event Center, the riverfront trail system, the Independence Landing development, and more!

Downtown Building Rehabilitation Tour:

Independence has been fortunate to receive 3 OMS grants to renovate downtown buildings. One project is complete, one in progress, and one just getting started. We'll tour each building and discuss the project with the owners. Along the way, you'll get a look at other buildings that have been improved using a City facade improvement grant program!

MI Trolley & Monmouth Tour:

Did you know Independence and Monmouth have a trolley connecting their downtowns? Hop on our new historic -style rubber wheel trolley to learn how this exciting transit project happened. At the end of the line you'll take a short walking tour of downtown Monmouth and hear about the work they're doing - including an OMS grant-funded building rehabilitation!

Thursday, October 5

Mini Ghost Walk:

Experience an Independence tradition and get a preview of the full event that will be happening Friday and Saturday after the OMS conference! You'll stroll through downtown Independence with your Ghost Host, learning about the historic - and haunted - stories associated with the buildings. You'll even get to go into the Masonic Lodge, which is not normally open to the public. Along the way, you'll hear how this 20+ year old event came to be and learn how it evolved a companion event (history and mystery) in Monmouth!

Urban Renewal Tour:

Many of the projects that helped revitalize downtown Independence were supported by funding from the City's Urban Renewal District. On this tour, you'll visit many of the projects, including the movie theater, City Hall, Independence Landing, downtown streetscape, and more, learning how the district made them possible, and how they worked individually and collectively to revitalize downtown Independence.

3:45 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.

Indy Commons

HANGING WITH HERITAGE

Have a question for Heritage Staff? Need to brainstorm an idea? Help with an issue your organization is facing? Heritage Staff will be available for a 15-minute focused conversation during this time block. Pre-registration was available, but walk-in times may be open. Check-in at registration to see if there are spaces available.

5:15 p.m. – 6:15 p.m.

Valkyrie Wine Tavern

SOCIAL MIXER

Join fellow conference goers for light refreshments and beverages at the Social Mixer hosted by the Independence Downtown Association and the City of Independence. The venue is the Valkyrie Wine Tavern, a rugged wine tavern and bottle shop with a large local and international selection in Oregon wine country.





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Friday, October 6

8:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Coho Realty (Conference Headquarters)

REGISTRATION

8:00 a.m.

Coho Realty (Conference Headquarters)

RECHARGE & REFRESH SNACKS

8:30 - 9:15 a.m. | CRASH COURSE

Indy Commons

DARK SKY PRESERVATION ON YOUR MAIN STREET

The inappropriate or excessive use of artificial light — known as light pollution — can have serious environmental consequences for humans, wildlife, and our climate. Unlike other forms of pollution, light pollution is a problem with solutions that are easy to implement with immediate and lasting results. In this session, learn about how this impacts downtowns and some of the principles for responsible outdoor lighting that can be encouraged in your community.

PRESENTER: Dr. Bill Kowalik, Chair, DarkSky Oregon

8:30 - 9:15 a.m. | CRASH COURSE

Gilgamesh The River

IS YOUR MAIN STREET READY FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING?

As sales of electric vehicles (EV) continue to rise and auto manufacturers add dozens of new models, is your Main Street EV friendly? EV owners seek out communities with available charging stations and use a variety of mobile apps to find them. If you don't think this is a big deal—think again! This session explores how communities in Oregon are working on charging their main streets, lessons learned, and available incentives from PGE and Pacific Power to help you take action and plan ahead for this accelerating trend.

MODERATOR: Kate Hawley, Pacific Power

PANELISTS: Alison Robertson, Lincoln City; and Eva DeCesaro, Portland General Electric



8:30 - 9:15 a.m. | CRASH COURSE

Independence Elks Lodge

THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY: PARTNERING WITH LIBRARIES TO REVITALIZE DOWNTOWN SPACES

When you want to know more about what's going on in any given community, a good place to start is the local library. While known for their books and resources, libraries are also increasingly involved in the health and well-being of their local communities. Staff from the State Library of Oregon will talk about the expanding role of libraries as community centers and suggest ways to successfully partner with them to create programs, win grants, and bring about positive impact.

PRESENTERS: Arlene Weible and Tamara Ottum, State Library of Oregon

9:30 - 10:15 a.m. | CRASH COURSE

Indy Commons

LIVABLE COMMUNITY RESOURCES

AARP's series of toolkits on everything from housing and transportation to community engagement are resources that can help cities and towns of any size. Attendees at this session will see examples of the resources in action, gain tips on how to apply for Community Challenge Grants, and get answers to questions about what it means to join the Network of Age-Friendly Communities. A list of resources and copies of materials will be made available to session participants.

SPEAKER: Carmel Snyder, AARP

9:30 - 10:15 a.m. | CRASH COURSE

Gilgamesh The River

PARKING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES TO INCREASE DOWNTOWN VITALITY

Cities are covered in parking spaces -- imposing significant costs to business, the public, and the environment. Managing parking smartly can boost economic performance, cut housing costs, and improve traffic flow. This session looks at how downtowns are managing existing parking while building walkable, beautiful places. Discover why parking management is directly linked to the success of your downtown. Learn how to review existing parking challenges, and how maximize the value of your parking, including on-street and off-street.

SPEAKER: Laura Buhl AICP, Department of Land Conservation and Development; Evan Manvel, Department of Land Conservation and Development



Friday, October 6

9:30 - 10:15 a.m. | CRASH COURSE

Independence Elks Lodge

NO SILVER BULLET – THE MANY ELEMENTS NECESSARY FOR A VITAL DOWNTOWN

Over the last two decades Sherwood, Independence, and Hood River have seen a transformation of their downtowns. This session will explore some of the common elements including ongoing, focused effort, the wise use of available space, and the importance of great design.

Session sponsored by Deca Architecture.

SPEAKERS: Fred Evander, City Planner, City of Independence; Erika Palmer, Planning Manager, City of Sherwood; Dustin Nilsen, Planning Director, City of Hood River

10:15 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

Independence Cinema 8

RECHARGE & REFRESH SNACKS

10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Independence Cinema

CLOSING PLENARY:

OPEN DOOR PANEL & PITCH CONTEST

Our Oregon Main Street Network organizations work to create inclusive and welcoming downtowns that make all feel that they belong. We will conclude the 2023 Main Street Conference with the Oregon Main Street “Open Door” Panel discussion facilitated by Helena Kesch, OPRD’s ADA Coordinator and Tribal Relations Coordinator. In this thought-provoking panel, hear different perspectives about barriers you may have in your downtown and ideas to be more welcoming to all. This will be followed by the Open Door Pitch Contest. Come hear about projects or ideas that selected communities have on their work plans that meet their goals to make their organization or downtown more welcoming to all. You can help us select the organizations who will walk away with one of two available grants to make their dream idea a reality. We are grateful to our expert panelists for sharing their insights.

Co-Sponsored by AARP Oregon.



12:15 p.m.

CONFERENCE CONCLUDES

Thank you and safe travels!





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Development Construction Management

Oregon Main Street Conference Speakers

Erik Andersson leads SEDCOR, an economic development group in Oregon's Mid-Willamette Valley. Formerly in the utility sector, he managed initiatives for energy efficiency and historic preservation. He aided Gov. Ted Kulongoski's Economic Revitalization Team. With roots in New York, Erik began his west coast journey in 1994 as an executive director. Currently on boards like Elsinore Theatre and Willamette Workforce Partnership and formerly on boards with Rural Development Initiatives (RDI) and the Energy Trust of Oregon, he holds an MBA from McGill University and a bachelor's from Cornell University.

Joe Bachmeier joined the Pendleton Downtown Association board in 2018 as the membership director after moving to Pendleton from Portland in 2017. He did not have prior experience working with Main Street's or non-profits but was new in town and hoped to join the community and help make a difference. He became Vice President in Spring of 2022 then President in July of 2022. His day job is owner/operator of Bachmeier Property Management LLC whose primary focus is managing other people's residential properties and small interior remodel projects.

Timothy Bishop is the Economic Development Director for the City of La Grande where he also serves on the Board and chairs the Economic Vitality committee for the local Main Street Program. After nearly 2 decades as a Main Street program manager, he spent 10 years as the Tourism Development Director for Baker County, before becoming La Grande's Economic Development Director in 2021. In addition to being a Certified Main Street Manager, he is also a certified NXLevel Entrepreneur Instructor.

Mary Bosch, Principal with Marketek, has over 30 years of experience in community and economic revitalization across Oregon and well beyond. Her passion is working with downtowns and neighborhoods to harness their market opportunities and connect to businesses and entrepreneurs who will succeed. She enjoys helping Main Street organizations get 'unstuck', tackle their biggest challenges and direct their energy to action and results. Mary is a community activist for historic preservation and sustainable development, and enjoys mentoring women entrepreneurs, hiking and gardening year-round.



Laura Buhl, AICP, manages the State of Oregon's Transportation and Growth Management Program code assistance service, which helps communities throughout the state update their regulations to promote vibrant, livable communities through efficient land use and multi-modal transportation. Previously, Laura was a planner for the City of Detroit (Mich.) Planning Commission and Wasco County (Ore.), and worked for the Mid-Columbia Housing Authority. Laura received a BA in American Studies from Mills College and a Master of Community and Regional Planning from the University of Oregon.

Cayla Catino is an empathetic and strategic leader who cultivates healthy business and economic development ecosystems, moves communities to action, and develops the capacity of rural leaders in her role at Rural Development Initiatives. Cayla has worked with over 16 rural Main Street organizations in Oregon and Washington providing training and technical assistance to enhance economic vitality efforts which include action planning, business engagement, working with data, and community visioning. She is passionate about supporting healthy and resilient communities that foster a sense of belonging for all.

Hannah Darling moved to Albany, Oregon in 2012, and was inspired by local community events and joined the Albany Downtown Association as a volunteer. In 2019 she joined the board and has served as secretary, president, and is currently the vice president. Additionally, she's volunteered with and chaired multiple committees and subcommittees and was recognized as Standout Volunteer of the Year in 2022. Hannah owns her own content marketing agency and is passionate about entrepreneurship, community building, and living a less-distracted life. She balances her professional endeavors with her roles as a mother of two and a travel enthusiast.

Eva Decesaro is a Senior Product Portfolio Specialist on Portland General Electric's Transportation Electrification Team, where she plans strategic development of innovative transportation electrification programs across Oregon. To pave the way for more electric vehicles on the road she focuses on equitable deployment of infrastructure. She also administers PGE's Oregon Clean Fuels Program portfolio, which funds community-driven electric transportation projects.

Suzanne Dufner is the Community & Economic Development Director for the City of Monmouth. She is responsible for overseeing the City's economic development activities, downtown revitalization, historic preservation and building and land use activities. She works closely with community partners to identify and carry out community development initiatives that further the City's values of sustainability, community engagement and creating a more inclusive and equitable community.

Fred Evander is the Planning Manager at the City of Independence. He loves active urban spaces and is passionate about the role that transportation plays in creating a great place. He received his Master of Urban and Regional Planning from Eastern Washington University and has spent the bulk of his career working with smaller rural communities in Washington. He has worked in Independence for just over four years and appreciates the vibrancy of the community life that is present in the city.

Maryelizabeth Garcia is the Executive Director of the Milton-Freewater Chamber Downtown Alliance (MFCDA). She was born and raised in the Walla Walla Valley and graduated from Walla Walla University with a Bachelor of Social Work degree in 2015. Maryelizabeth is a US Navy Veteran where she decommissioned a ship, and commissioned a ship, which means that she's a Plankowner and a Golden Shellback! She is now mom to a wonderful 10-year old and two darling cats.

Kate Hawley, Electric Vehicle Senior Program Manager. Kate has 15 years of experience managing complex development and research programs globally. Kate leads Pacific Power's transportation electrification strategy and implementation supporting customers as they transform into an electric future.

Rebecca Hollenbeck started her position just as the City of West Linn had started a streetscape project on Main Street and a week before COVID restrictions were set in place. HWMS was able to pivot and work collaboratively with a local business/property owner to find an alternative location to continue the market throughout the first year of the pandemic amidst COVID guidelines. Rebecca can speak to connections and partnerships between vendors, businesses both on and off Main Street and the community.

Shawn Irvine is the Economic Development Director for the City of Independence and works to foster an entrepreneurial attitude in all segments of the community: business, civic, and government. He is a connector and creative problem solver who specializes in linking people and businesses with resources to help them succeed. Shawn enjoys digging up new assets and helping people capitalize on new opportunities. No stranger to networking, He seeks to meet new people, learn new things, and then creatively apply that knowledge to improve the community of Independence.

Helena Kesch is Oregon Parks and Recreation Department's ADA Coordinator and Tribal Relations Coordinator. For over 25 years, Helena has worked in various capacities within Oregon state government. She has worked extensively in service to others, ensuring equity and accessibility to all people. Her multicultural and multilingual skills (Russian, Portuguese, Spanish and English) have afforded her the opportunity to connect, assist, and advocate for people throughout her career. She joined Oregon State Parks in 2018 as the ADA Coordinator.

Jeff Knapp is serving his eighth year as Executive Director of Visit McMinnville, an Economic Development organization overseeing the promotion and development of McMinnville as a sustainable and profitable destination. Jeff spent eight years prior leading Direct to Consumer Sales at Sokol Blosser Winery, programming and developing next level hospitality and sales through relationships. He works in leadership on local, regional and state issues involving strategic planning and the Oregon Visitor Economy.

Dr. Bill Kowalik is a founding board member of the non-profit volunteer group, DarkSky Oregon and the current board Chairperson. DarkSky Oregon facilitates the certification of dark sky places in the state, educates about the economic, social and health benefits of starry night skies and runs an Oregon-wide science project to measure light pollution. Bill has three degrees in the earth sciences and 35 years of industry experience in remote sensing, exploration and technology development.

Kathy La Plante is a Senior Program Officer and Director of Coordinating Program Services at Main Street America (MSA) with expertise in building organizational capacity and developing promotional programming. She has worked in the Main Street field for nearly 25 years. She works throughout the U.S. providing training for cities of all sizes using the Main Street Approach to downtown revitalization. Kathy began her Main Street career in 1989 as the Executive Director of the Chippewa Falls Main Street Program and spent 12 years in retail management.

K'Lynn Lane is the passionate Executive Director of the Oregon Frontier Chamber of Commerce. With an impressive tenure of 11 years, K'Lynn has been instrumental in the remarkable transformation of the Chamber into a thriving rural regional hub, supporting 11 frontier rural communities across Gilliam, Sherman, and Wheeler Counties. Under her dynamic leadership, the organization now serves over 450 businesses and small organizations, making a significant impact in the region. Proudly known as the main street organization for 9 rural towns, K'Lynn's dedication to community building and her unwavering support for the places she calls home continue to inspire and uplift the entire community.

Evan Manvel is a Climate Mitigation Planner at Oregon's land use planning agency, the Department of Land Conservation and Development. He co-leads Oregon's Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities program, a broad-reaching effort to improve how cities grow more sustainably. He also works with Oregon's Transportation and Growth Management program, a joint effort of Oregon's transportation and land use agencies. In both roles, Manvel works with communities to promote transportation and housing choices, using communications, policymaking, and planning tools. He has a master's degree in public policy and urban planning from Harvard University.

Mary Means is best known for leading the team that created the National Main Street Center. More than 1,600 towns and historic neighborhood corridors in 40+ states have successfully used the Main Street Approach to bring people back to their historic cores. Mary was a Loeb Fellow at Harvard Graduate School of Design. Her work has been honored by the American Planning Association and by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Learn more at Means' website (<http://marymeans.com/>). Mary is the author of *Main Street's Comeback and How It Can Come Back Again*, published in 2020.

Ron Mock is Professor of Emeritus of Politics and Peace Studies, and Director of the Civility Project, at George Fox University in Newberg, Oregon. He has been a lawyer and a mediator, and has held local non-partisan elected office. He has taught at George Fox for 38 years, and published a book on non-violent responses to terrorism. Ron is currently working on a book on active civility and the stewardship of disagreement.

Dustin Nilsen, AICP, is the Hood River Director of Planning. With 25 years of land use experience at the city, county and federal level, Dustin's professional planning work has focused on Urban Renewal and Brownfields Redevelopment, land use entitlements, economic development, transportation, and growth management. Dustin is the Vice President of the Oregon City Planning Directors Association, an AICP certified professional planner, with a Master's Degree in Urban and Regional Planning, and a Bachelor's degree in Geographical and Sustainability Sciences from the University of Iowa.

Nastassja 'Staj' Olson joined Travel Oregon in 2013 – serving as a specialist for several years, a strategy project manager for half a decade and now as the Destination Stewardship Manager where she leads the agency's development and stewardship of outdoor recreation visitor experiences. By inspiring and facilitating communities' engagement in Travel Oregon programming, such as Destination Ready, Oregon Trails Fund, Oregon Recreation Maps and more, Staj's work helps Oregon remain a competitive, accessible and regenerative travel destination for generations to come. Staj received her Bachelor of Arts from Lewis & Clark College, a Leadership in Sustainability Certification from the University of Oregon and is a graduate member of AmeriCorps.

Tamara Ottum is the Federal Programs & Grants Consultant at the State Library of Oregon. She worked in libraries for over 17 years before coming to the State Library in 2015. She now oversees Oregon's Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Program and administers grants programs for Oregon libraries. Outside of work Tamara can be found playing in the great outdoors with her family.

Erika Palmer is the Planning Manager for the City of Sherwood's Community Development Department. She has worked in Sherwood for six years, updating the city's Comprehensive Plan and the Sherwood West Concept Plan, a 1,200-acre area identified for future growth to support new neighborhoods, parks and open spaces, and employment opportunities. She received her Master of Community and Regional Planning from the University of Oregon and has spent 20+ years in community planning in small communities in the State of Oregon.

Steve Patty, Ph.D., spent over thirteen years as a professor and administrator in higher education before stepping out of the university context to work with organizations in the nonprofit and public sectors. For the past two decades, he has been developing the capacity of agencies that work with people to design strategy, develop people, and evaluate impact. He has taught thousands of leaders throughout North America and internationally how to design and implement a kind of evaluation that gets below the surface and into the heart of human change and transformation. He has also been facilitating leadership development cohorts for public and nonprofit leaders in the U.S., Canada, and Europe. Steve lives in Portland, Oregon.

Polly Peterson served as Executive Director of the Newberg Downtown Coalition, an Oregon Main Street, from 2021 to 2022. During that time, Polly partnered with George Fox University Civility Project director Ron Mock, then-Newberg Mayor Rick Rogers, and others to create United As Neighbors. Before serving as the NDC's director, Polly was a professor of writing and general studies at George Fox University. Currently, she is a student in the Professional Counseling program at Lewis & Clark College.

Alison Robertson is the Economic Development & Urban Renewal Director for the City of Lincoln City. She holds a Master of Urban and Regional Planning from University of California, Irvine. As a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) and with her LEED accreditation Alison provides long-range, community-based planning expertise with an environmental ethic, establishing healthier environments for her community. Alison serves on the Oregon Coast Community College Board of Education.

Susan Russell, a veteran of three careers - high school teacher, community theatre manager, and now a residential contractor, now finds participation in Main Street activities to be the icing on her life's cake. Her job is made simple by Port Orford's hard-working, seven-member board, which devotes hundreds of hours of volunteer time yearly to the betterment their little town.

Kate Schwarzler is passionate about creating livable and sustainable communities for rural areas, which utilizes her business, landscape architecture, planning, and natural resource background. She helps clients work on livability issues such as developing thriving main streets, building an entrepreneurial ecosystem, placemaking, parks and recreation, and natural resource management. Kate started Indy Commons to create a shared workspace that supports local business owners and entrepreneurs with the resources they need to succeed and turn their dreams into thriving businesses.

Carmel Snyder, Director of Outreach and Advocacy for AARP Oregon. Carmel has more than 13 years of experience working on livability issues, and has worked in Texas, Florida and Oregon on policy advocacy. She leads AARP Oregon's efforts on the Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities. She collaborated on national ADU model ordinance in 2021. She graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia, and Commonwealth College in Virginia.

Rosa Solano joined the Reedsport Main Street Program on August 1, 2022 after being a volunteer for six years. She graduated with honors from the University of Phoenix in 2001 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration with emphasis in Project Management, and served in the Peace Corps in 2013 as a Business Advisor & Educator in Nicaragua. Her love of rural communities, economic development, and entrepreneurship came full circle when she found Reedsport.

Kevin Teater was the executive director of the Beaverton Downtown Association for four years before being elected to Beaverton City Council in January 2023. He now runs Streetview Planning, a business he started to support Main Street districts across Oregon with strategic planning, technical assistance, and grant writing.

Dwight D. Unti, CPM, is President and Owner of Tokola Properties, Inc. a real estate development, construction and property management Company focused on multifamily, mixed-use, and hotel development and investment. Dwight has bachelor's degree in political science from University of Washington and is a Certified Property Manager granted by the Institute of Real Estate Management and a licensed Principal Broker in Oregon. Dwight and his team at Tokola Properties have focused on revitalization projects in re-emerging main street districts, and the formation of Public/Private Partnerships as the primary tool to move these projects forward.

Charles Weathers started with a 16-year career in real estate finance, tackled over 60 single family rehabs, and built a handful of small multi-family developments. His historic rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the Gray-Belle Building in Salem garnered a DeMuro Award from Restore Oregon and an Excellence on Main Street award for Outstanding Mixed-Use Project. Now, having participated in multiple adaptive re-use projects, Charles can't look at an old building without envisioning its future. He is a graduate of George Fox University.

Arlene Weible is the Electronic Services Consultant at the State Library of Oregon. She grew up in Oregon and worked in libraries in Arizona, Connecticut, Texas, and Washington State before returning to Salem to work at the State Library for the last 17 years. In that role, she works with Oregon libraries help promote access to online resources and services and is currently working on initiatives to assist libraries with digital equity activities that promote Internet access and digital skills building in local communities. She also recently served as President of the Oregon Library Association. In her free time, Arlene enjoys gardening and uses her summer bounty for an annual salsa making event with her family.

Courtney Williams graduated from Western Oregon University with a degree in Business Management and Entrepreneurship and while she attended college she started working for the City of Independence. She's worked in the Economic Development Department as the Downtown Manager for the past 8 years. Much of her work is focused on creating and managing unique events that draw locals and visitors to downtown but she also creates and leads many of the business support programs the City offers to local business owners. She also is a business owner and she finds joy in helping other business owners succeed in their business and that passion is reflected in her work.



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