**Embargoed until 1pm CST on Friday, October 30**

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**BOYNE CITY MAIN STREET EARNS NATIONAL DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION AWARD**

**CHICAGO (October 2020)** – Boyne City Main Street in Boyne City, Michigan is one of three winners of the 2020 Great American Main Street Award (GAMSA), which recognizes communities for their excellence in comprehensive preservation-based commercial district revitalization. Selected by a national jury of community development professionals and leaders in the fields of economic development and historic preservation, Boyne City is being recognized for turning their previously industrial downtown into a thriving destination to live, work, and play.

“Boyne City’s inspiring transformation serves as a model for downtowns looking to appeal to tourists while investing in the quality of life of year-round residents,” said National Main Street Center President and CEO Patrice Frey. “Boyne City Main Street has demonstrated the power of community engagement, strategic business development, and public and private partnerships to revitalize Main Street.”

Located along Lake Charlevoix and the Boyne River in Northern Michigan, Boyne City has harnessed its picturesque waterfront location to become a hub for year-round outdoor recreation. The Main Street program has both enhanced access to natural resources and improved the sense of place downtown, thanks to a streetscape redevelopment project, developing a boardwalk and marina, adding public art, and implementing a façade grant program. A strong roster of events, from outdoor music to food festivals, along with a dedicated volunteer base, has also brought vitality back to downtown.

The Boyne City Main Street program has been a catalyst for economic development. Since the Main Street program got its start, the downtown has seen 91 net new businesses and has a vacancy rate of just 1 percent, down from 5 percent in 2003. The program supports a diverse mix of year-round small businesses, regularly convenes business owners to find new ways to support them, and has championed data-based recruitment and retention efforts.

Throughout the pandemic, Boyne City Main Street has ramped up their small business support, completing multiple rounds of calls to every downtown business owner to check on their needs. The Main Street program has focused on connecting business owners to funding opportunities, helping them get online, and connecting merchants with resources to safely reopen.

While Boyne City has become a popular tourist destination, the Main Street program has deeply invested in its residents. As its downtown grew, Boyne City Main Street has helped tackle an issue facing developing commercial districts across the country: workforce housing. In partnership with the Boyne Area Chamber of Commerce and the City of Boyne City, several workforce housing initiatives are underway downtown. These multi-use projects will provide income-adjusted housing units, commercial space for shops and restaurants, and market-rate units, which will add substantial revenue to the Main Street budget, provide much-needed housing for the workforce, and add to the vibrancy of downtown.

“The partnerships Boyne City Main Street has been able to build helped get them where they are today,” said Laura Krizov, Manager of Michigan Main Street. “They are so deserving of this award because of the great program they have been able to build. They have worked the Main Street mythology over the last 17 years and the comprehensive approach to revitalizing and managing their downtown is what has brought them to where they are today.”

Boyne City Main Street has developed strong partnerships to move their initiatives forward, raising $16,412,766 in public reinvestment and $29,132,799 in private reinvestment since 2003. When Boyne City needed to move their farmers market inside for the winter, they worked with a range of partners to rehab a pavilion downtown. After seven years of fundraising, Boyne City completed the pavilion, which now hosts the farmers market and other events.

“Although the Great American Main Street Award says ‘Boyne City Main Street’ on the plaque, the award is really for every member of our community,” said Kelsie King-Duff, Executive Director of Boyne City Main Street. “It is for anyone who has shopped at our unique stores, eaten at one of our restaurants, attended an event, and helped make Boyne City what it is today. This is a wonderful way to celebrate what we’ve accomplished so far, and a great reminder that we’re just getting started.”

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**ABOUT THE GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARDS**

Each year, Main Street America, a program of the National Main Street Center, celebrates the country's best examples of comprehensive commercial district revitalization. Winners are selected from a nationwide pool of applicants by a national jury based on successful and innovative uses of the Main Street Approach.™ Criteria for winning include: overall community transformation; strength of community engagement; entrepreneurship development; approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion; commitment to historic preservation; implementation of model partnerships, and demonstrated success of the Main Street Approach.™

**ABOUT THE NATIONAL MAIN STREET CENTER**

The National Main Street Center has been helping revitalize older and historic commercial districts for 40 years. Today, its network of more than 1,600 neighborhoods and communities, rural and urban, share both a commitment to place and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development. The organization is a nonprofit subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. For more information, visit [mainstreet.org](http://www.mainstreet.org).

**ABOUT BOYNE CITY MAIN STREET**

Boyne City Main Street is a grassroots, volunteer-driven program dedicated to the historic preservation and economic development of Boyne City’s downtown. The program follows the national “Main Street Four-Point Approach” to revitalization developed by the National Main Street Center, a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The four points focus on Organization, Promotion, Economic Vitality, and Design. Boyne City Main Street has been recognized by the state as Michigan’s “Premier Main Street.” In both 2011 & 2019, Boyne City Main Street was a semi-finalist for the Great American Main Street Award, placing in the top 10 for main street programs nationally. Learn more at [boynecitymainstreet.com](https://boynecitymainstreet.com/).