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Expert in Downtown Development to visit Williston; Public invited to Free Workshop June 7

Williston ND – The public is invited to a free workshop about energizing downtowns on June 7 in Williston. The City of Williston has hired Roger Brooks, a top-rated speaker, to address downtown development and the benefits of programmed public plazas.

Brooks, who was featured at the Main Street Summit in Bismarck and the North Dakota Travel Industry Conference in Fargo earlier this year, will take a look at Williston with fresh eyes. City leaders are seeking new ideas for two particular sites in Downtown Williston; the former Hedderich's space and the Red Rock Ford site.

Brooks is recognized for bringing central gathering places to downtowns. One of his success stories is the popular [Main Street Square](#) in Rapid City that attracts more than 600,000 visitors a year.

"I can't think of a better economic driver to attract private development and activity to a downtown than a year-round, programmed plaza," he said in a Facebook post on May 25. Check out his [9 Ways a Programmed Plaza can resurrect your Downtown](#).

"Roger Brooks understands the important role quality of life means for economic development. That was evident during his presentation at the Main Street Summit in February 2018. It was a big reason we opted to reach out to him for his input," said Williston Economic Development executive director Shawn Wenko.

During his time in Williston, Brooks will meet with community leaders and stakeholders to discuss potential ideas to energize Downtown Williston.

"This really is an initial step in deciding the best use for the city-owned sites in Downtown Williston," said Wenko. "We may come out of this meeting with a clear

direction that a public plaza is the best use or we may determine the need to explore other development options."

The free public workshop will be held on Thursday, June 7 at the Hampton Inn & Suites. The meeting will begin at 8 a.m. with coffee, pastries and networking followed by the Brooks presentation from 8:30-10:30 a.m. Space is limited so plan to arrive early.

For more information contact Williston Economic Development at 701-577-8110 or email shawnw@ci.williston.nd.us.