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SMALL BUSINESSES ALONG WEST HUNTSVILLE CORRIDOR WILL REAP BENEFITS FROM MAIN STREET DESIGNATION

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – West Huntsville Highway 72 Business Corridor Association joins South Huntsville Business Main, designated in 2018, in the Main Street Alabama program. West Huntsville looks to emulate the success of the program to benefit over 1,200 small businesses along Highway 72 in the post COVID era.

During the on-site presentation, following an intense five-month application process, representatives from West Huntsville stated their goals were to make Highway 72 attractive and safe; cultivate an environment for real estate redevelopment; and celebrate business growth and increased sales.

Councilman John Meredith said at a recent city council meeting, “association with Main Street will provide the group access to issue experts and resources at not only the state level but nationally. Through branding, placemaking, signage and streetscapes, even the smallest West Huntsville businesses will benefit from the group and its affiliation with Main Street Alabama.”

Main Street Alabama will bring in consultants to address other issues and concerns expressed in the application including blight, vacancies, and homelessness.

“The businesses along the West Huntsville corridor deserve to feel a part of something unique,” said Mary Helmer Wirth, Main Street Alabama State Coordinator. “The West Huntsville group demonstrated their dedication to become a successful Main Street district that will bring jobs, dollars, and people back to district.”

Main Street Alabama will begin work immediately in West Huntsville to provide board development, goal setting, work planning, market study with economic development strategies, targeted design assistance, and training related to downtown development.

Main Street Alabama is a private non-profit and state coordinating program of Main Street America. The National Main Street Four Point Approach™ is an over 40 year model that focuses work in four areas: organization, design, promotion and economic vitality with strategies unique to the community and based on market-based outcome. “Setting achievable goals using community input and market data

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is critical to the revitalization of the district, but it's also equally crucial to bring stakeholders to the table to work towards a common goal," said Wirth.

West Huntsville joins Alexander City, Anniston, Athens, Atmore, Birmingham, Calera, Columbiana, Decatur, Dothan, Elba, Enterprise, Eufaula, Florence, Foley, Fort Payne, Gadsden, Headland, Heflin, Historic 4th Avenue Business District in Birmingham, Marion, Monroeville, Montevallo, Jasper, Opelika, Oxford, Scottsboro, South Huntsville and Wetumpka in using Main Street's comprehensive and incremental approach. Each Designated community listed above reports their success by tracking their reinvestment statistics. Main Street Alabama's Designated communities have reported 791 net new businesses, 2,714 net new jobs, \$534,441,328 in private investment, \$89,948,229 in public improvements, and 119,010 volunteer hours in their districts collectively since June of 2014.

Main Street Alabama Application workshops are held in January each year. Communities interested in learning more about the program are encouraged to join the Main Street Alabama Network. More information can be found at www.mainstreetalabama.org.

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