



20 REVITALIZING
YEARS DOWNTOWNS

FY2026 ANNUAL REPORT





A GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT

Downtowns are the hearts of our communities – places where people gather, innovate, create, share, and engage. A Main Street program can serve as a leader, collaborator, and facilitator for all the stakeholders of a community, from business owners to visitors to residents. Main Street programs host your favorite events, help preserve buildings and make streets inviting, and connect small businesses with resources, space, customers, and mentors.

Wyoming Main Street brings these local practitioners together, providing a way for programs to learn from one another, teaching the Main Street approach, and serving as a partner and supporter for Wyoming communities interested in revitalizing their downtowns.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Downtown revitalization doesn't happen in a vacuum – nor does it happen overnight. As a program of the **Wyoming Business Council**, Wyoming Main Street focuses on building the capacity and resilience of local programs and groups. Wyoming Main Street works with all sizes of communities across the state.

The **Main Street Approach** is a grassroots method of economic and community development, focusing on historic preservation, small business, and inclusivity.

The Main Street approach is incremental; it is not designed to produce immediate change. The approach advocates a return to community self-reliance, local empowerment, and the rebuilding of traditional commercial districts.

LEVELS OF DESIGNATION

ACCREDITED status is our top tier of recognition. Main Street America Accredited programs have a proven track record of planning, implementing, and measuring results that align with the Main Street Approach. Accredited programs must meet a set of baseline requirements and demonstrate success in each of the six Accreditation Standards.

AFFILIATE programs have demonstrated a commitment to the Main Street model and are on the pathway to achieving meaningful economic, social, physical, and organizational improvements in their downtown or commercial districts. Affiliate programs have not met the six Accreditation standards but commit to community engagement, strategy development, professional development, and continued learning.

CANDIDATE programs are exploring downtown revitalization, formalizing their organizational structure and preparing to grow into an Affiliate designation.

PARTICIPATING COMMUNITIES

Communities undergo a two-part annual review process to determine their designation status, utilizing Main Street America's Community Evaluation framework.

ACCREDITED	AFFILIATE	CANDIDATE
Gillette	Douglas	Afton
Laramie	Evanston	
Rock Springs	Glenrock	
Sheridan	Torrington	

THE MAIN STREET APPROACH



The Main Street model, established by Main Street America, is comprised of working in four broad areas or pillars.



Organization

Creating a strong foundation for a sustainable revitalization effort, including cultivating partnerships, community involvement, and resources for the district.



Promotion

Positions the downtown or commercial district as the center of the community and hub of economic activity, while creating a positive image that showcases a community's unique characteristics.



Design

Getting the downtown into top physical shape; preserving a place's historic character and creating a safe, inviting environment for shoppers, workers, and visitors.



Economic Vitality

Focuses on capital, incentives, and other economic and financial tools to assist new and existing businesses, catalyze property development, and create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and innovators that drive local economies.



BUILDING CAPACITY AND RESILIENCE

STRENGTHENING LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND ACTION

Wyoming Main Street (WMS) partnered with Main Street America to host workshops and develop updated downtown Transformation Strategies for designated Main Street communities.



Listening sessions and community visits as part of the strategy development workshops



These Transformation Strategies utilize both community data sources and listening to residents, business owners, and other stakeholders to determine what focus a downtown organization should have over the next three to five years. These strategies are unique to each community, honoring their history and identity, while also providing a framework for future downtown revitalization in a focused, resident-led way.

Gillette, Sheridan, Rock Springs, Laramie, and Douglas all developed a new Transformation Strategy as a result of these workshops in 2025 and 2026.

REVITALIZATION ONE BLOCK AT A TIME

In 2024, Downtown Rock Springs partnered with Wyoming Main Street to implement a new pilot program called **Wyoming Blocks**.

While the typical Main Street model covers an entire downtown area, this project focused on a single block of downtown and stressed the process of identifying challenges before any implementation. Despite language barriers that have impeded progress in the past, the group spoke with and developed a revitalization plan that reflected what the residents and business owners wanted most.

Over the last several years, positive change has been visible and constant on this block. Learn more about the individual projects and work done at https://wbc.pub/WY_RS_BlockGrant.



The 700 Block of downtown Rock Springs that was identified for the Wyoming Blocks project



TURNING LOCAL VISION INTO MEASURABLE ACTION

In addition to onsite visits, WMS provides technical assistance, peer learning, and professional development that help local programs turn community priorities into sustained action.

This support builds local leadership, improves resource use, supports businesses, reduces risk, and strengthens communities' ability to measure and communicate results.

Together these services help local leaders, businesses, property owners, volunteers, and public partners create stronger investment, business activity, employment, and community engagement.

These services include:

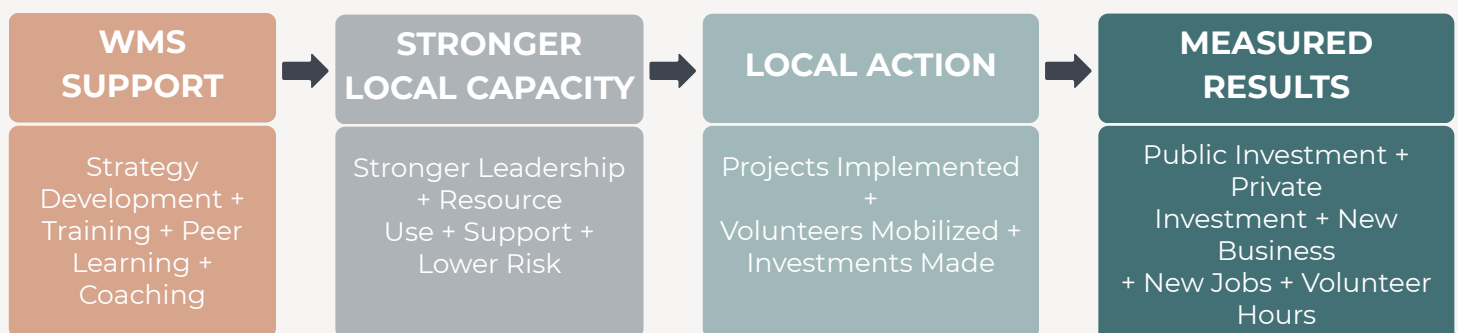
- Monthly Zoom calls that support peer exchange, problem-solving, and leadership development
- Virtual and in-person sessions on topics such as reporting and storytelling, improving data collection, accountability, communication, and demonstrating results to community members
- Annual gathering, conference, and Best Practices Workshop, where practitioners learn from successful programs and adapt proven approaches to their own communities
- One-on-one coaching and mentoring to refine strategies, address challenges, use resources effectively, and move priorities from planning to implementation



Main Street practitioners at the 2026 Best Practices Workshop in Oklahoma



Together these services help local leaders, businesses, property owners, volunteers, and public partners create stronger investment, business activity, employment, and community engagement.





HOW MAIN STREET STRENGTHENS COMMUNITIES



Downtown Gillette

“ For Gillette Main Street, the Main Street model gives us the structure, resources, and expertise to turn the passion of our volunteers, businesses, and community partners into real results for Downtown Gillette.

Being part of Wyoming Main Street means we are not doing this work alone—we have a statewide network that strengthens our capacity, helps us bring new ideas and resources home to Gillette, and allows us to build on the energy of our people to create a stronger downtown and community. ”

– **Jessica Seders**
Executive director, Gillette Main Street



Welcome sign in downtown Gillette

“ Based on what I’ve seen in communities across Wyoming and the nation, a vibrant Main Street program benefits not only the local economy but individual citizens, too. For every generation – from our children to our elderly – a community that displays civic pride, gathers to celebrate, and thinks local first is incredibly valuable and worth pursuing.

The framework provided by Main Street programs gives communities the tools they need to pursue those goals, but the effort has to start locally while drawing on the expertise and resources of the broader program. ”

– **Jen Womack**
*Newcastle business owner
and Main Street Advisory
Board member*



Weston County Courthouse in downtown Newcastle



THE WYOMING MAIN STREET STORY

STATUTORY AUTHORITY & PROGRAM HISTORY

In 2004, the Wyoming Legislature created the Wyoming Main Street program to assist Wyoming communities of various sizes and resource levels with downtown revitalization efforts. The program was created under statute W.S. 11-45-101 through 11-45-105 as a pilot program.

The act created the Wyoming Main Street program, an advisory board, an appropriation, staff positions, and a provision for a building façade revolving loan fund. Duties of the original bill were delegated to the Wyoming Department of Agriculture-Wyoming Rural Development Council.

Then, in 2007, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 126, which removed the word “pilot,” changed the revolving loan fund to include building structure projects, and moved the duties of the program under the Wyoming Business Council. The 2007 changes resulted in the original legislation being amended and renumbered, and the Main Street Program is now addressed in W.S. 9-12-1101 through 9-12-1105.

WYOMING MAIN STREET ADVISORY BOARD

Governor Mark Gordon appoints the seven-person advisory board. There is currently one vacancy.

The **Main Street Advisory Board** helps guide the strategic direction of the program and its services, assists with community visits, and participates in various Main Street events in Wyoming throughout the year. Board members come from all different backgrounds – from volunteers at a local Main Street program to former city officials to business owners, and more.



Carly Ann Carruthers
Cheyenne
Chair



Bonnie Gregory Sheridan
Vice Chair



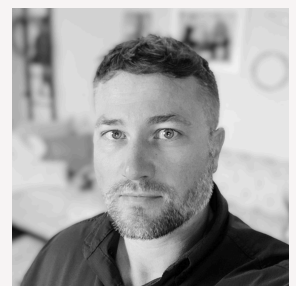
Derek Smith Gillette
Liaison to WBC Board



David Tate
Rock Springs



Jennifer Womack
Newcastle



Kyle Brost
Thermopolis



RESULTS THAT CAN BE MEASURED

Main Street America and Wyoming Main Street require designated Main Street programs to collect and report a series of metrics called **Reinvestment Statistics**. These numbers are self-reported from local Main Street programs and provide an opportunity to measure, track, and communicate the preservation, revitalization, and economic activities of a commercial district over time.

PUBLIC INVESTMENT

Any public funds spent in a downtown district, from the federal, state, county, or city government.

PRIVATE INVESTMENT

Any individual making improvements using private dollars to privately-owned buildings or land within each downtown district.

NET NEW BUSINESSES

Total change in businesses within the Main Street district.

NET NEW JOBS

Sum of changes in employment at businesses within the Main Street district.

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Total number of hours volunteered within the Main Street, including board meetings, events, and other miscellaneous support.

See the full breakdown of these metrics on our website: wyomingmainstreet.org.

32

NEW



BUSINESSES

76

JOBS CREATED

\$3.3M



PRIVATE INVESTMENT



MAIN STREET ACTIVITY IN FY2026

8,832



VOLUNTEER HOURS

VALUED
AT

\$319K

\$6.9M

LOCAL PUBLIC FUNDS INVESTED
IN INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC PROPERTY



*Numbers are self-reported from eight Main Street communities' downtown districts, spanning July 2025 to June 2026.



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**MAIN STREET
AMERICA®**

2026 Coordinating Program



BUSINESS COUNCIL