



Embracing Diversity in a Small Iowa Community

Every day we hear words like diversity, ethnicity and multi-cultural in the media and press. Sometimes they are portrayed as good, sometimes not. The real discussion lies in how we watch it grow, change and bring hope to a small community. These are things that I, Kristina Raisch, have seen happen in my small hometown community of Hampton, Iowa. Rural Iowa may not be the first thing that comes to mind when someone mentions a multicultural community. Most people would think of a large city such as Des Moines, but "New Iowans" are growing, blooming and expanding the concepts and ideas of tomorrow in every community. Their welcomes may not always come easily, but America is a melting pot and our ancestors were not always welcomed with open arms either. They fought for their freedoms and created the wonderful country we live in today with strength and hard work.

These same struggles have begun to show support and growth in Hampton, the county seat of Franklin County. In a community of 4,461 (2010), the numbers have been falling and the community has seen a steady decline since the farm crisis in the 1980s. The difficulty in keeping youth local and recruiting new business to bring in talented professionals has been a struggle. However, Hampton has seen one growing trend since the '80s -- the local Latino population. Migrant workers

found homes to raise their families and open their businesses. Hampton currently has ten downtown businesses owned by people of Latino descent.

With larger companies offering steady jobs in the Franklin County area, growth has increased in this ethnic background. It is estimated by 2018 that one in three Hampton residents will be of Latino descent. These numbers are significant, creating an increase in the number of children enrolling in the school system. More students create more teaching positions, which has a ripple effect to more men, women and families coming to live in the community to start a new life.

Education is one key aspect for both sides in the cultural divide. Many new residents do not speak English and the language barrier is significant. Cultural differences are often misunderstood and taken for granted. The Greater Franklin County Chamber of Commerce / Hampton Main Street are working with local organizations to bridge the gap and better educate the public to better understand the cultural differences.

In April of 2014, National Main Street senior program officer and director of Leadership Development, Norma Ramirez de Miess came to Hampton to provide direction and training for local business leaders. From this event, local leaders and residents decided to continue and expand the education aspects

for the community. The community group ¡Adelante! was formed. ¡Adelante! translates to "Forward". Many local organizations, including Hampton Main Street, North Iowa Area Community College, La Luz Hispana and Iowa State University Extension are involved.

The first action of ¡Adelante! was to organize community advocates to promote proactive community diversity. ¡Adelante! is working with La Luz Hispana, a local outreach program initiated by the Sisters of the Presentation of Dubuque, Iowa, to create a quarterly series of speakers to provide business seminars, lunch and learn public opportunities and open communications by participating with downtown area businesses to understand the needs of the community to develop a plan of action and implementation strategies for this community service project. The first of the "Communications in Diversity" series began October 20.

These groups are spearheading the education by working with and including local leaders, as well as city and county government officials. Through a better understanding of both cultures, common ground can be found to help Hampton move forward. The goal is to create one multi-cultural community for future generations and continue the growth and prosperity in our hometown.



Marshalltown Landmark: Willard's Furs and Fashion- 150th Year in Business

Willard's Furs and Fashions celebrated 150 years in business, the same family and same location, October 27 - November 8, 2014. There were in store displays of pictures and artifacts that relate to early Marshalltown and Willard's. The celebration included drawings for \$150 gift certificates as well as drawings and giveaways for merchandise from all of Willard's partner clothing companies. A champagne evening with hors d'oeuvres was also held.

Hiram Willard founded the business in 1864 at the corner of 1st and Main Street. Willard learned the fur tanning trade when he was a young man living in Maine. He knew if he was going to continue with this profession that he would need to move further west. When he was a young man, he took canal boats by himself through the Erie Canal and when he arrived in Chicago, he walked to Galena, Illinois, and found work at a tannery owned by Jesse Grant. Grant's son, Ulysses, was also in business with his father at that time. Willard and Ulysses were partners for a short period of time until the Civil War broke out.

Willard married Matilda Townshend in 1857. In 1863, he moved his family to Kentucky but then came to Marshalltown and started his business in 1864. Willard was also granted permission by President Grant to operate a profitable Sutlers store in the Black Hills in 1875. He was there for three years at the same time that colonel George Armstrong Custer and the 7th Calvary were stationed there.

Willard lived on the second floor of his building with his wife, two sons and a daughter by the name of Alice. Alice married Charles Hull in 1885, and Charles joined the business shortly thereafter.

The Willard's operated a boarding house on the third floor of their building. The Evangelist Billy Sunday stayed with the Willard's when he visited Marshalltown, and they became close friends.

In 1906, Hiram Willard died tragically when he fell from the top of the outside steps of his living quarters of their business. Charles Hull then took over the business. At that time, Alice and Charles had six boys. Their oldest son, Willard, had been in the consulate service in Peking, China from 1902 to 1911. When Willard Hull returned to the United States in 1911, he joined his father, and they began to manufacture men's and women's fur coats, fur rugs, fur robes and did tanning all over the United States and the world.

Willard Hull had two sons. His oldest son, Joe, joined his father in the business in 1944. Willard's continued the manufacturing of furs until the 1960s. The business is now a women's specialty store and still sells furs, sportswear and accessories.

Joe's youngest son, Jonathan Hull, joined the business in 1982 and is now the fifth generation of the family to continue to operate the business, which is still located at 36 W. Main Street in Marshalltown.



Main Street Iowa Challenge Grants Awarded

On October 15, Iowa Economic Development Authority Director Debi Durham announced the recipients of the latest round of Main Street Iowa Challenge Grants. \$928,000 in Main Street Iowa Challenge Grants were awarded to 13 Main Street communities across the state. Approximately 80 local community representatives attended the “big check” presentation ceremony at the Des Moines Botanical Center emceed by Iowa Downtown Resource Center Director Jim Engle and Main Street Iowa State Coordinator Michael Wagler.

Main Street Iowa received a total of 32 applications requesting a total over \$2.1 million dollars in grant funds. The 32 applications represent one of the most competitive application rounds ever in the history of the Main Street Iowa Challenge grant program. The 32 projects represent a total investment of over \$16 million in total project costs. The 13 awarded projects represent over \$7.6 million dollars in rehabilitation costs.

The grants will benefit a wide variety of local downtown revitalization projects.

Elkader and Manning are finishing up remaining details from their successful Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Downtown Revitalization (DTR) projects. Oskaloosa will be completing interior work to create a downtown business co-working space to stimulate business growth. In Washington, the MSI Challenge Grant will expand the successful “Dodici Nights” upper floor overnight lodging facilities. In Mount Pleasant, the landmark Brazelton Hotel will be converted into lofts and renovated retail space. Iowa Falls received their first ever Main Street Iowa Challenge grant for the main floor renovation of the historic Comly-ShIPLEY Building. Other communities will undertake total building rehabilitations, façade improvements or upper floor renovations. Each project will have a significant impact to their respective downtown district and help stimulate additional investment and revitalization. The projects will be completed within the next 24 months.

“These challenge grants have proven to be catalysts for the revitalization of Iowa’s

historic main streets,” said IEDA Director Debi Durham. “These projects represent the ongoing commitment the people of our state have to the revitalization of our historic downtown districts. Rehabilitated buildings create opportunities for new business in Iowa communities, and new businesses mean new jobs.”

“Each project must provide at least a dollar-for-dollar cash-match,” explained Main Street Iowa State Coordinator Michael Wagler. “Overall, these projects will leverage almost nine times the state’s investment into bricks and mortar rehabilitation. This exhibits the positive ways that the Main Street Challenge grants have stimulated reinvestment in Iowa’s Main Street districts.”

The Challenge Grant program is funded through an appropriation from the Iowa Legislature. Since the first appropriation in 2002, approximately \$5 million in state and federal funds has leveraged over \$34 million in private reinvestment in 97 projects in 42 Main Street Iowa commercial districts across the state.



2014 Main Street Iowa Challenge Grant recipients

Town	Project	Grant Amount	Total Project Cost
Ames	Haila Architecture, 413 Kellogg	\$75,000.00	\$352,000.00
Bloomfield	Priester Building	\$75,000.00	\$378,427.00
Cedar Falls	Imagine The Possibilities, 217 1/2 Main St	\$75,000.00	\$185,115.00
Elkader	Multi Properties Preservation & Development-East Side of Main	\$75,000.00	\$150,358.00
Iowa Falls	Comly-ShIPLEY Building, 506 Washington	\$75,000.00	\$168,300.00
Le Mars	Le Mars Beauty College, 128 Central Ave SE	\$75,000.00	\$150,000.00
Manning	Complementing DTR	\$75,000.00	\$157,492.00
Marshalltown	Kibbey Building, 125-131 East Main	\$75,000.00	\$190,288.00
Mount Pleasant	Brazelton Lofts - Old Brazelton Hotel Rehab	\$75,000.00	\$5,101,189.00
Mount Vernon	Video Village Façade	\$28,000.00	\$56,510.00
Oskaloosa	Iowa Building Coworking/Community Ctr	\$75,000.00	\$195,960.00
Washington	Blair Building - Dodici Upper Floor, 122 South Iowa	\$75,000.00	\$168,148.00
Waterloo	Visual Logic Offices, 402 East 4th	\$75,000.00	\$400,000.00
	TOTALS:	\$928,000.00	\$7,653,787.00

2014 Main Street Iowa Programs Demonstrate Progress

In February 2014, the communities of Newton, Guthrie Center and Avoca were designated as the newest Main Street Iowa communities. During the first year, each community worked to develop their local program, hire dedicated staff, build their core of Main Street volunteers, host local Main Street trainings and develop priorities for future local Main Street efforts.

Newton – Leadership with Newton Main Street has worked diligently to define local effort through consistent public relations strategies and relationship building in the downtown district and community. They continue a methodical approach to building a strong foundation for a strong, sustainable program.

Avoca – Building on an aggressive development ethic, Avoca Main Street is working to re-engage the community in its downtown district. The program hosted a successful series of Main Street Markets downtown that brought hundreds of people downtown for the first time in years and provided a strong sense of visibility for local Main Street efforts.

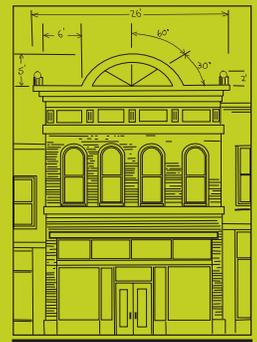
Guthrie Center –Guthrie Center Main Street has already become a leader in local economic development efforts by initiating efforts to bring together local economic development organizations in a coordinated strategy. Downtown’s physical transformation continues through the active implementation of the city’s CDBG funded façade improvements.



Main Street Iowa Plans Spring Application Workshops

Main Street Iowa’s network of 52 designated programs will grow in 2015. Regional application workshops are tentatively being planned for the week of March 23 with applications due by June 30. Communities interested in submitting an application in the upcoming round will need to first attend one of these workshops. Times, locations and final agenda will be announced in January 2015. The repeated workshops will provide an overview of the Main Street Approach® and Main Street Iowa program, the application, competitive designation process and strategies to complete the application. If you are interested in learning more about the Main Street program prior to the application workshops, visit the Main Street Iowa and National Main Street Center’s websites.

MAIN STREET
I O W A



Promotions Make the Holidays “Special” on Iowa Main Streets

Promotion is one of the four points of the National Main Street Center’s Four-Point Approach®. Promotion encourages a community to focus on their historic commercial center as a source of community pride, social activity and economic development potential. Special events and festivals that provide entertainment and increase the number of people who come to downtown are one type of promotion. Although these activities are not specifically sales-oriented, they benefit the merchants by increasing exposure and generating community good will. Many first time visitors “find” downtown because of festivals and special events and become loyal customers. Children who grew up attending festivals downtown bring their families to events in the district to share and build memories with them.

With the holidays fast approaching, this is a great time to take a look at the special events that will be bringing our Iowa Main Street districts alive during this festive season. Downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts are the perfect canvas for winter celebrations, bringing revelers together to enjoy light shows, caroling and special shopping experiences with local merchants. So, take a stroll through our holiday roundup of stories and photos and see how the volunteer “elves” in these communities are preparing for a busy season!

Ames: SNOW MAGIC ON MAIN

Snow Magic offers an entire month of events and promotions that make spending time in downtown Ames during the holidays a great choice. A ceremony to light the Snow Magic tree on November 14 will kick off the season in style, followed by festive open houses in downtown businesses. Other favorite features include:



- Shop Small Saturday - merchants will go all out with discount specials and refreshments to draw customers into their stores;
- Magic Snowflake Adventure - a scavenger hunt for snowflakes hidden in downtown businesses;
- Caroling Day, with special entertainment provided by musicians as shoppers enjoy checking the final gifts off of their lists;
- and sightings of Santa and Cy throughout the season.

Cedar Falls: HOLIDAY HOOPLA

Holiday Hoopla is a fun and memorable holiday experience in downtown Cedar Falls. Main Street will come alive with family fun that kicks off the Friday after Thanksgiving. Live entertainment will be featured on stage, while holiday characters



mingle with the crowd, and beautiful lights dance to the music at Santa’s workshop. Children of all ages will enjoy a lively stage performance by Alvin & the Chipmunks. You can take photos with your favorite characters, and check out the Holiday Hoopla trinkets available for purchase. Following Santa Claus’ “secret arrival”, Mrs. Claus will join him in a magical march down Main Street for the lighting of the Hoopla tree, which triggers the grand finale -- a spectacular show of winter fireworks over the river! The Holiday Hoopla celebration continues into December with many fun activities planned on Thursdays and Saturdays throughout the season in downtown Cedar Falls.

Colfax: COUNTRY CHRISTMAS

For over twenty years, Colfax Country Christmas has been a great way to share holiday cheer. The annual promotion will be held again this year on the first Saturday in December. Special events include a Snow Ball Drop where over 1,000 ping pong balls



are dropped and everyone has a chance to win prizes as well as the Reindeer Crossing, which is a nine-hole miniature golf game. Children’s activities include crafts, letter writing to Santa (who promises to respond within a couple of weeks) and a coloring contest. Visitors can have a picture taken with Santa, or take their own photos for a donation to the local food pantry. Grab a bowl of soup for a free will donation, plus many businesses will host open houses offering holiday specials and yummy treats. Roving carolers will sing as they stroll through downtown, and what holiday event would be complete without a free horse drawn carriage ride around downtown? There will also be a silent auction of wreaths decorated by local businesses and residents.

Ft. Madison: MISTLETOE ON MAIN STREET

Mistletoe on Main Street is a fun, family-friendly activity in the heart of Fort Madison. On the Saturday after Thanksgiving, the holiday spirit will glow as local carolers sing holiday tunes and a horse drawn carriage



travels up and down Main Street. Families can take photos with the North Pole Express train engine, and children can visit Santa and drop off their letters for the big guy. Main Street businesses will open their doors offering an array of holiday activities for passersby, and there will be holiday crafts and pictures with a Christmas Elf. Several businesses will provide open houses, while others will help Mistletoe-goers warm up with hot cocoa.

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Oskaloosa: ALL THAT GLITTERS AND GLOWS

All that Glitters and Glows is the theme for Oskaloosa Main Street's 27th annual Christmas Parade. The lighted parade will proceed through historic downtown Oskaloosa on Thursday, December 4, with special activities also planned for Friday. Thousands of lights adorn the dozens of floats which parade around the city square, and people fill the streets to see the show. Some floats are as large as a city block. Other highlights include Santa and Mrs. Claus and their reindeer, as well as concessions, music and more. The event is an annual holiday tradition that has NEVER been cancelled because of weather.

Washington: S.N.O.W. (Showcasing Nights of Washington)

The Annual S.N.O.W. activities were created to showcase downtown Washington's Christmas spirit, encourage customers to shop locally and create awareness of what downtown has to offer. The event has grown into a series of holiday traditions, including special events for shoppers: Shop & Stroll - a "girl's night out" event the Friday before Thanksgiving and merchants staying open late to offer deals and demonstrations; and Small Business Saturday, with exclusive deals for special shoppers. The season officially begins with a lighting ceremony on Black Friday. This family-friendly event includes free food, caroling and a visit by a special guest to light the square. It concludes with a lighted parade and the opening of Santa's House. The following morning is Breakfast with Santa with stories, crafts, cookie decorating, list making activities and the opportunity for photos.

West Des Moines: JINGLE IN THE JUNCTION

Historic Valley Junction will hold its annual Jingle in the Junction events on three Thursdays: November 20, December 4 and December 11. In honor of the 75th Anniversary of "The Wizard of Oz," the theme is "There's no place like Valley Junction!" Special activities include a Ruby Slipper Scavenger Hunt and Window Display Contest. The Jingle in the Junction celebrations will include FREE horse-drawn trolley rides down streets lined with over 150,000 twinkling lights. There will be live reindeer, ice carvings by Bill Gordish, balloon art by Professor Von Air and kids' activities. The event wouldn't be complete without Santa and Mrs. Claus! The celebrities will visit the district for each "Jingle". Most of the merchants will be open until 9:00 p.m. the evenings of the events, and many will host activities and specials.

West Branch: A CHRISTMAS PAST

This free family event, which takes place the first weekend in December, is like taking a step back in time to enjoy the spirit of a hometown Christmas. Luminaries will light the way from the Hoover trace into the downtown district. Boy Scouts will cook homemade donuts on an open fire and event-goers can make a stop to warm up or roast marshmallows on old-fashioned fireplaces. An ice sculptor will create a frosty frozen display, and Santa and Mrs. Claus will help light the magnificent holiday tree adorned in colored bulbs as tubas and their players perform holiday tunes. Horse-drawn carriages will roll down Main Street, and the famous Gibson's Trains will be rolling inside the fire station as firefighters roast hot dogs outside. Folks can visit the Art Market for unique holiday gifts and bid on one of 30, two-foot Christmas trees decorated and donated by local businesses.



IDRC Director Jim Engle



Take A Hike...

You live in a community of 5,000 or maybe 500 or maybe 50,000. Downtown isn't what it used to be. The ultimate problem isn't hard to identify. Perhaps your downtown doesn't provide something for your community to use and be proud. Or, it is no longer a vibrant commercial center that can support business. But, what created that problem? Are there solutions? Interested people want to make a difference but don't know what to do.

Communities are quick to apply for a grant; or, hire a planning consultant; or, build a war memorial in the park; or, develop a business incubator; or, call legislators; or, tear down a building to create more parking (please don't do that); or, steal a promotional idea from a community next door.

That is premature. Before you do all that, consider something so important, but so easy, that maybe you have not even thought about it. Get a dozen of your enthusiastic leaders that represent the downtown business community, the city council and community residents. Arm them with a tablet of paper and a pen and have them walk together through the downtown area. Walk the sidewalks, the alleys and the public spaces. Look at the buildings and all of the other amenities. Look up and look down. Consider the vacancies and the existing business strengths. Look for what is great and what needs help. Be critical. Ask yourself questions like:

- Is downtown easy to find?
- Is downtown clean?
- What makes this place special?
- Do I feel safe?
- Is there really a parking problem?
- What would enhance this corner?
- What are we missing?

Then, get together and share your findings. Make a list. Somebody may notice an ugly public sign, a weed problem, a building ready to fall down or a potential business opportunity. Finalize that list of ten to fifteen items and take photos to illustrate the list. And, then, go to work on strategies to do positive things in your downtown. Some of these items will be low-hanging fruit, but some will be big challenges that will take time.

Recently, the Iowa Downtown Resource staff and I have been doing this kind of visit in Iowa communities. Local participants almost always admit that they have walked or driven the downtown so many times that they don't even notice the broken window, or the weeds or even the vacant space. It takes an outsider or an open mind from a local group like I am suggesting. This kind of simple exercise is critical to understand your needs and get people excited about getting involved to fix issues that hold downtown success back. Keep me posted on your downtown success stories.

Program Director Spotlight: Everett Halsted



Can you imagine shopping in an empty downtown? Working in very dilapidated buildings? Finding yourself in the midst of poor city services and nobody living in your downtown apartments? Well, this is how State Center was described in 2000, and this is the city that Everett Halsted has proudly worked in since 2006. Everett is the State Center Development Association Program Director who deals with development issues and accomplishments of all kinds, including those involving the local Main Street program.

The good news - in 2014, all storefronts are occupied, every apartment is rented and the street, sidewalks and utilities have all been upgraded. The addition of historic lamp posts, park benches, trash receptacles and stop signs has also made a drastic change from 2000. Today, State Center, population 1,468, is widely known as the Rose Capital of Iowa. Details and further information can be found at www.statecenteriowa.org.

Everett grew up in Iowa and considers State Center his hometown. He and his wife, Mary Jane, have been married for 43 years, have two successful children and five grandchildren. Everett retired in 2001 from the United Parcel Service after a 30-year career.

He says, "I enjoy every aspect of my small family farm, from planting to harvest. It is very peaceful and rewarding, and the time is always there if I want it to be. But it seems more difficult to find time for other activities that I enjoy like golfing and traveling with my wife."

Finding time for hobbies and travel might be extra difficult because of Everett's passion for planning and working in the restoration of State Center's historic buildings. Not only do these structures help the community's economics, but after some successes, Everett says, "most folks are on the band wagon. Main Street has been a tremendous help to my community. Our downtown was in ruins with very little hope for improvement before Main Street Iowa turned on our light."

Everett's vision is for State Center to be "a community that can continue to provide the services and spirit that it takes to be a quality small town that anybody would be proud to live in or be from."

To find out more about downtown State Center, contact Everett Halsted at 641.483.3002 or scda@partnercom.net.

Conference Supports Regional Networking

Nearly 150 Main Street leaders from across the Midwest converged in La Crosse, Wisconsin, on October 22 and 23 to share successes, challenges, and downtown revitalization strategies. The Upper Mississippi Main Street Conference is held every two years in an effort to strengthen the regional Main Street network. The conference is supported through the efforts of Main Street Iowa, Wisconsin Main Street, Illinois Main Street, and Main Street Minnesota. This year's discussions covered topics from sustainability to utilizing technology on Main Street to incorporating local food systems into downtown revitalization strategies. Opening keynote, Cynthia Nikitin, Senior Vice President at the Partners for Public Spaces, confirmed Main Street as an original placemaking pioneer demonstrating success through the years. As our movements have matured, Nikitin provided insights into ways to enhance the intersection of placemaking and economic development on Main Street. Stories of success were shared at the conference from eight Main Street programs in Iowa: Burlington, Cedar Rapids' Czech Village-New Bohemia, Davenport's Hilltop Camps Village, Dubuque, Hampton, Mount Pleasant, Mount Vernon, and West Union.



staff listing

Main Street Iowa and Downtown Resource Center

Terry Poe Buschkamp	515.725.3075	terry.buschkamp@iowa.gov	Promotion Specialist
Jim Engle	515.725.3058	james.Engle@iowa.gov	Director, Iowa Downtown Resource Center
Debi Flanders	515.725.3055	debi.flanders@iowa.gov	Organization Specialist
Susan Matthews	515.725.3059	susan.matthews@iowa.gov	Office Specialist
Tim Reinders	515.725.3077	tim.reinders@iowa.gov	Design Specialist
Katelyn Rutledge	515.725.3056	katelyn.rutledge@iowa.gov	Design Specialist
Darlene Strachan	515.725.3057	darlene.strachan@iowa.gov	Assistant State Coordinator
Jim Thompson	515.725.3061	jim.thompson2@iowa.gov	Business Specialist
Michael Wagler	515.725.3051	michael.wagler@iowa.gov	State Coordinator
Shelby Eckardt	515.725.3172	shelby.eckardt@iowa.gov	Graphic Design Intern

Iowa Economic Development Authority
200 East Grand Avenue | Des Moines, Iowa 50309
iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/IDRC/mainstreetiowa
mainstreet@iowa.gov | downtown@iowa.gov | Fax: 515.725.3010



Main Street Messenger

Main Street Iowa has gone "GREEN!" We will use more and more electronic communication, slowly phasing out most printed materials. Our first step was to move to an electronic distribution of the Main Street Messenger.

Visit iowaeconomicdevelopment.com and register to receive electronic updates from any of the teams at the Iowa Economic Development Authority.