

Main Street Moore Haven receives national accreditation

The efforts of Main Street Moore Haven over the past year has earned it recognition for commercial district revitalization by meeting standards for performance set by the National Trust Main Street Center. Main Street Moore Haven joins 650 other Main Street revitalization programs nationally recognized as 2007 Accredited National Main Street Programs.

“The national accreditation means the local Main Street program is meeting our national standards of performance for what a Main Street program should be doing,” said Doug Loescher, director of the National Trust Main Street Center, “The organizations we name each year as National Main Street Programs are those that have demonstrated the skills and comprehensive perspective needed to succeed in Main Street revitalization.” Established in 1980, the National Trust Main Street Center helps communities of all sizes revitalize their traditional historic commercial districts. The Main Street Center leads the preservation-based community revitalization movement and has proven that historic preservation and community-driven economic development effects lasting change. Currently active in more than 1,150 downtowns and neighborhood business districts, Main Street programs have generated more than \$41.6 billion in new investment since 1980. Participating communities have created 349,148 net new jobs, 77,799 net new businesses, and rehabilitated more than 186,820 buildings, leveraging an average of \$25.76 in new investment for every dollar spent on Main Street initiatives.

The annual accreditation process evaluates commercial district revitalization programs based on criteria ranging from having an active board of directors and paid professional manager to tracking economic progress and preserving historic Main Street buildings. “Rebuilding a district’s economic health and maintaining that success requires broad-based community involvement, active support from both the public and private sectors, and sound management,” said Loescher. “Having a solid organization at the foundation of that revitalization effort is so important to long term success.”

The organization’s performance was evaluated by Florida Main Street, which is the coordinating organization for Main Street programs in Florida.

“It was kind of ironic that the same week that we found out we weren’t funded for the \$1 million HOPE VI Main Street grant that we received notification that we are a nationally accredited Main Street and received the certification letter from the IRS certifying that Main Street Moore Haven is a bonafide 501 c 3, making memberships and other donations to Main Street Moore Haven, Inc. tax deductible,” Main Street Moore Haven part time program manager Tracy Whirls said.