



COLORADO MAIN★STREET

FROM VACANT TO VIBRANT:

LAMAR'S SHORE ARTS CENTER PARK AND VICTOR'S PINNACLE PARK PLAZA

By Angie Cue, Lamar Main Street Manager and Becky Frank, Victor Main Street Manager

NEW TOOLS FOR ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS AND TELLING YOUR STORY

By the Main Street Team

LAMAR AND WELLINGTON ADVANCE IN THE MAIN STREET PROGRAM

By the Main Street Team

SPOTLIGHT: STEPHANIE IN MEEKER

By Stephanie Kobald, Meeker Main Street Manager, and the Main Street Team



FROM VACANT TO VIBRANT: LAMAR'S SHORE ARTS CENTER PARK

BY ANGIE CUE, LAMAR MAIN STREET MANAGER

The rural Colorado Main Street community of Lamar recently transformed a vacant lot in the heart of downtown into what is now called the Shore Arts Center Park. Formerly an opera house, the space is now a multi-use urban park with a stage, planters, and artwork that enhance the downtown atmosphere by attracting performing arts and events.

An intensive community process led by the Lamar Parks & Recreation Department to develop the city's Parks, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan identified the park as a key priority. One of the Plan's goals was to understand both the current and envisioned future relationship between the community and downtown, and define barriers to renewing that relationship. Several needs were revealed that the Shore Arts Center park now fills.



A flexible venue. At community meetings, residents expressed their interest in a non-traditional downtown park with ample seating and a stage for performing arts where locals and visitors alike could participate in a variety of activities and enjoy the outdoors. There are very few gathering places of this kind within the core downtown, and the Shore Arts Center Park was a compelling opportunity to create a venue for art, music, and celebrations in the heart of our community.

Downtown revitalization. Lamar is both a Colorado Main Street and a Main Street America community. The Lamar Partnership, Inc. was established to focus on revitalization and beautification efforts in the downtown district. Store owners were interested in a place where customers could linger, sit, relax, and remain downtown to increase retail sales.

Conversion of a vacant lot. The vacant lot where the park is now located is positioned in the core of downtown, and had historically been an eyesore. The City of Lamar collaborated with the Arkansas Valley Wind & Percussion Ensemble, who owns the vacant lot and the adjoining Shore Arts Center. Because the Center already hosts performing arts activities and is in the process of creating a performing arts museum, the adjoining outdoor park is a natural fit.

A view into the Shore Arts Center Park from Main Street. Public art, attractive landscaping, creative paving, and a themed mural add to the space's aesthetic appeal.

FROM VACANT TO VIBRANT: VICTOR'S PINNACLE PARK PLAZA

BY BECKY FRANK, VICTOR MAIN STREET MANAGER

Over the past six years, The City of Victor, the DREAM Commission (Victor's Main Street Board) and the Cripple Creek & Victor Gold Mining Company have teamed up to create Pinnacle Park Plaza, a functional and very beautiful public space.

The team started with an almost empty lot located in the heart of downtown Victor that was once the site of the town's gas station. The City tapped into the University of Colorado's Technical Assistance Program to help create a vision for the plaza. With the assistance of Mike Wallace (former City Councilmember and Design Committee Chair), the community participated in developing a preliminary concept design. The design captivated the town and generated a good deal of interest in the project, and over the next couple of years the City and DREAM were able to make improvements to the space that made it usable.

The City first installed road base, which activated the space as a parking area for downtown. Several community events began to be held there including the Victor Christmas Bonfire and Sink Hole De Mayo. DREAM utilized several years' worth of Main Street mini grants to build fencing around the area, repair the historic rock retaining wall, and construct a staircase which utilized the timbers from a historic mining operation and created access to another part of downtown. With the help of CDOT, the City designed, purchased, and installed a bus shelter.



Once home to a gas station, Victor's Pinnacle Park Plaza now features a concession stand, stage, public restrooms, and parking.

The space had great potential, and the community was behind it, so Victor decided to take it to the next stages. Using consultant funds through the Main Street program and a City match, construction documents were produced. The City was awarded an Energy and Mineral Impact Grant, matched by the Cripple Creek & Victor Gold Mining Company, to take the project to completion. Throughout the fall and winter of 2016-17, the contractors caught any break in the weather that would allow them to work. Finally, in July, Pinnacle Park Plaza was completed and now provides a stage and concession stand, as well as year-round public restrooms and parking. The completion of this project was made possible through partnerships, a strong vision, and good old Victor tenacity. The space is now being used for a variety of events downtown.

NEW RESOURCES FOR ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS AND TELLING YOUR STORY

BY THE MAIN STREET TEAM

The Colorado Main Street team is excited to announce two new toolkits to help communities across the state and in the program take their downtown revitalization efforts to the next level: Volunteer Engagement and Key Messages and Communications. Over the past year, we've been hard at work developing these resources intended to help overcome two of the challenging obstacles faced by cities and towns in their Main Street efforts.

Volunteers are often the “doers” downtown - they plant flowers, pour drinks at events, serve on boards and committees, paint façades - the list goes on. As such a critical resource, it's important to engage volunteers at every level of their experience, but this takes time - a scarce commodity. The Volunteer Engagement Toolkit aims to make volunteer engagement efficient, effective, and enjoyable. Each of the ten modules contains a short video overview as well as template forms, spreadsheets, position descriptions, and more. To learn more, watch [this informative webinar](#) introducing the toolkit and its elements. You can access the full toolkit [at this link](#).

We frequently hear from our Main Street leaders that it can be tough to “tell their story.” They know the importance of downtown revitalization, and the value and impact of their work in the community. However, that can be difficult to package into a concise, compelling, and meaningful story to tell others. With help from a team of communications experts, we're delivering a suite of tools including brochures, checklists, rack cards and more to help communities already in the program tell their Main Street story, and those interested in the program understand the many ways it can help bolster their efforts. The Colorado Main Street team is working now on a strategy to roll this toolkit out - stay tuned!

HOW TO TELL YOUR STORY

DEFINE IT

Craft your story using the indicators you already track:

- New businesses and local jobs created
- Community events and attendees
- Public and private financial investment
- Number of volunteers and their time contribution

CREATE IT

- Create infographics to make your data more engaging and interesting
- Develop an Annual Report to show comprehensive impact
- Take photos of events, improvements, and people enjoying your downtown
- Collect testimonials from stakeholders, businesses, and residents about their experiences

SHARE IT

- Present your story at City Council meetings, to service organizations, and other community groups
- Connect with your local media to pitch a story about the benefits of downtown revitalization
- Host luncheon events with local businesses and stakeholders
- Use social media to share progress and updates



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A guide for telling your story from our brand-new Key Messages and Communications Toolkit

The Colorado Main Street staff would like to recognize and congratulate the City of Lamar and the Town of Wellington for moving up in the program tiers. Lamar is now a Graduate community and Wellington is now a Designated community. Our compliments and congratulations to the Main Street leaders, volunteers, and municipal leadership for their commitment to downtown revitalization and historic preservation.

Lamar joined the program in 2009 and has since successfully tackled daunting downtown revitalization challenges. Main Street Manager Angie Cue has inspired the city with her vision, leadership and relentless energy. In July, after three years in the making, they opened their Shore Arts Center Park on Main Street to a fantastic outpouring of community support.

Wellington joined the program in 2015. Under the leadership of Wendy DuBord and Dave Michaelson, the town has since been put on the map as a welcoming destination, especially during their wildly successful Summer Concert Series. Wellington's momentum will be carried forward by Annie Lindgren, the program's new Executive Director.

Congratulations Lamar and Wellington!



Governor Hickenlooper and his staff met with Main Street leaders in Wellington during a Spring 2017 bill signing tour. The group is pictured here in front of Old Colorado Brewing Company, located in a historic, restored granary downtown.



Lamar leaders and residents came out in full force during a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Shore Arts Center Park, just one of Lamar's recent main street successes. The Valley Jazz Band provided entertainment to commemorate the occasion.

SPOTLIGHT: STEPHANIE IN MEEKER

BY STEPHANIE KOBALD, MEEKER MAIN STREET MANAGER, AND THE MAIN STREET TEAM

We're trying something new: a Spotlight series, which features different Main Street leaders and their inspiring stories in each edition. First up is Stephanie Kobald, Meeker's Main Street Manager.

Q: What's the best way someone has described you?

A: "One of the kindest people I know." I was surprised and it made me realize that being recognized as kind is both humbling and an honor.

Q: How did you get involved with the Main Street movement?

A: I am the Chamber of Commerce director and when Main Street was being considered, the Chamber was a logical choice to manage the program. I was excited to bring it to Meeker, and to be the Manager.

Q: What have you learned from your previous experiences that you bring to this role?

A: Listening is crucial. Recognize that everything is accomplished by "we" not "I." Look at both sides of a project - what can go wrong and what can go right. If something hasn't worked before, try it another day another way. Every problem has a solution if you look at it differently.

Q: What - and who - inspires you?

A: Who: my family - each of them guide and teach me in their own way. What: out of the box thinking - as if nothing is impossible.

Q: Tell us about one of your proudest accomplishments.

A: My sister and I, with the Meeker Arts & Cultural Council, started Meekerpalooza, an all-day arts and music festival where the whole community gets together. We just finished year five and it is growing!

Q: What's a hidden talent of yours?

A: I am a "word wizard" - If you need a cool name for something, I can come up with it!

Q: When are you the most fulfilled professionally?

A: When professional work is balanced with personal life. Working with a team that brings individual ideas and talents together. Pondering the "what-ifs." Crossing things off my to-do list!

Q: What are you most looking forward to about Meeker's Main Street efforts?

A: Seeing ideas that have been talked about come to life.



Stephanie Kobald, Meeker's Main Street Manager



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