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# COLORADO MAIN★STREET

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By the Main Street Team

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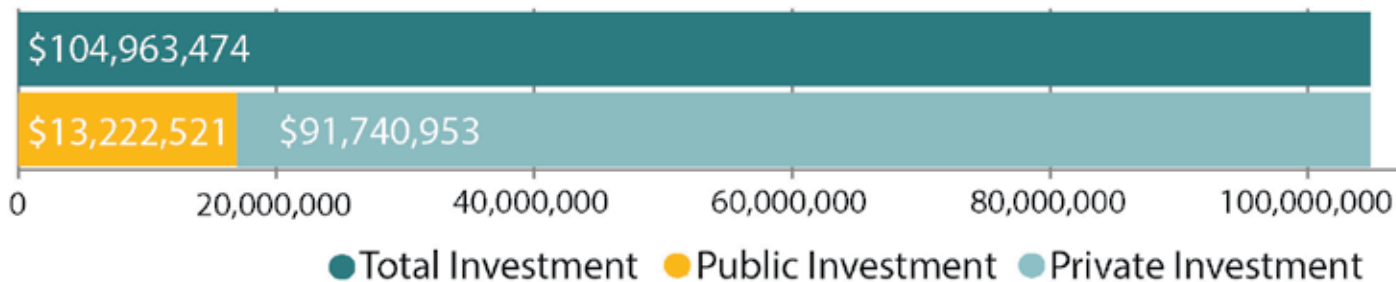
By the Main Street Team



**2018 YEAR IN REVIEW**

BY THE MAIN STREET TEAM

2018 was another banner year for Colorado Main Street communities. We are proud to share the accomplishments of our 20 reporting communities.



**65**  
NEW BUSINESSES

FACADE  
IMPROVEMENTS  
& BUILDING  
REHABILITATIONS

**217**

**228**  
FULL TIME JOBS

**142**  
PART TIME JOBS

**317**  
MAIN STREET  
SPONSORED  
EVENTS

**210.5K**  
SPONSORED  
EVENT  
ATTENDANCE

**19.9K**  
INDIVIDUAL  
VOLUNTEER  
HOURS

**\$517.5K**  
VALUE OF ALL  
VOLUNTEER  
HOURS

## 2018 YEAR IN REVIEW

CONTINUED

The Colorado Main Street team has continued its efforts to strengthen and grow the program to meet community needs. Invested directly in communities to help them grow their capacity and implement priority projects:

- More than \$54,000 in scholarships.
- Nearly \$90,000 in mini-grants, matched with \$130,00-plus in local dollars.
- More than \$336,000 in consultant services.

Maintained growth and development to support more Colorado communities in their downtown revitalization efforts:

- Windsor and Woodland Park advanced in the tiers to Designated Status.
- Eight communities joined as Affiliates.

Provided support, consultation, presentations, technical assistance, and site visits to more than 60 communities, reaching 1,400-plus participants. The team also presented the Main Street approach at various conferences and workshops.

Developed new webinar resources to meet our communities' needs:

- Appropriate Infill for Historic Main Street Districts.
- Downtown Streets.
- Golden Nuggets from the Pickaxe Project.

To access these webinars and more, visit [www.colorado.gov/dola/main-street/resources](http://www.colorado.gov/dola/main-street/resources).



Our Colorado Main Street local program managers!

## PICKAXE PROJECT PART 2: SWINGING THE PICKAXE (LESSONS LEARNED)

BY MATT ASHBY, AYERS ASSOCIATES

### ELEMENTS OF THE PICKAXE APPROACH



The Pickaxe Project was designed to provide Main Street communities with a series of tools to deploy consistent messaging in telling their unique stories. While those within the Main Street program understand how it works, many members of the community have a hard time grasping its impact and relevance. Main Street helps advance the community's vision through community-driven, grass roots efforts. With volunteers and support, enthusiasm and momentum build, and reinvestment surges.

Last year's road trip of strategic messaging workshops in 19 Colorado Main Street Communities provided a wealth of information on how the Pickaxe tools can be used to demonstrate the value and impact of the program to community stakeholders. It also uncovered new ideas on how the tools can be used to improve visibility, communications, and branding for future community reinvestment.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL WAYFINDING

One of the most effective uses of the Pickaxe Toolkit is to help define the organization. For many Main Streets, the organization is embedded within another nonprofit, government entity, or Chamber of Commerce. Creating a distinctive organization brand identity can help the program explain what it is, what it does, and where it lives. For example, in Meeker, the program adopted a logo similar to the Chamber's logo that can be used to separately define the Main Street program to help the community connect the dots between distinct programs.



The Main Street program in Lyons encompasses a larger footprint than just the Main Street corridor, creating a desire for a broader organizational name. Lyons VIBE takes inspiration from all four points of the Main Street approach (design, organization, promotions, and economic vitality). Each point is represented in a different color, and each letter in VIBE represents one of the four points with a local twist: Volunteers, Investment, Beautification, Events.



While the Pickaxe workshops were only intended to provide brainstorming on logos and visual collateral, sometimes great ideas were generated and stuck. When the workshop provided only an evolutionary step toward enhanced communication and messaging, the Pickaxe Toolkit included original files in Adobe Illustrator for fine-tuning. Indeed, the concept of a toolkit is to provide means for local implementation and tailoring over time, rather than delivering one-time assistance.

#### COMMUNICATION IS A STRATEGY

The challenge in delivering the tools offered by the Pickaxe Project is a traditional one facing community development organizations – not enough time. Yet some communities have taken steps to prioritize their communications strategies.

Lake City DIRT (the local Main Street program) has taken the model presented by the MainChangers and has run with it. "Our strategy is to publish a MainChanger story every month to help promote the great things that are happening in Lake City," says Kristy Borchers, Lake City DIRT executive director. These stories share the great things about DIRT to neighbors as well as visitors. To help save time and effort, the Pickaxe team recommended planning in advance, so that stories and writers are assigned in January, with deadlines in the first quarter of the year.

## PICKAXE PROJECT PART 2: SWINGING THE PICKAXE (LESSONS LEARNED)

CONTINUED

Wellington Main Streets Executive Director Annie Lindgren has established a standing column with the *North Forty News*, a hyper-local publication. Working with a third-party news outlet, with regular and exacting deadlines, keeps communication front and center. The first article focused on the ‘Front Porch Lifestyle,’ which is a Pickaxe tagline that captures the essence of downtown Wellington, highlighting its comfortable, laid-back atmosphere.



The key element to success in both these examples is to find an implementation strategy that can succeed over time. Main Streets must find opportunities to communicate their story and keep the messaging consistent.

### BRANDING TRANSFORMATIONAL STRATEGIES

The goal of National Main Street’s Transformation Strategies is for communities to identify their economic reason for being and pursue activities relative to promotion, design, and economic vitality that support their local strategy. While the effort is aimed at injecting synergy into Main Street activities, the strategies often benefit from a bit of marketing.

In Wellington, with its “Front Porch Lifestyle,” imagery of a rocking chair naturally emerged. Now the community is exploring a rocking chair decorating contest and placement of yard games to welcome locals and visitors – not to replace the organizational logo, but to supplement communication about this key Main Street initiative.

Montrose’s program benefited from the integration of an icon for its “12x12” Transformation Strategy encouraging year-round downtown activity beyond the traditional hours of 8 a.m.-5 p.m. While extended hours is a typical Main Street initiative, branding can help establish it as a recognizable effort for businesses and volunteers.



Communication helps people better understand the value of Main Street and its impact. Using icons for Transformation Strategies and key initiatives can be a powerful way of generating excitement, interest, and support for projects.

### ORGANIZATION VERSUS DESTINATION

“The Backyard” is the focus in Woodland Park. With the backdrop of Pikes Peak, the town offers a diversion for Front Range dwellers. While the Pickaxe team suggested minor adjustments to the current Main Street logo, a destination logo for Woodland Park was recommended. The organizational logo stills serves to identify the people and structure working to make Main Street better (think letterhead and polo lapel); however, a destination brand helps embody the values of a place (think keepsake memento for visitors).



Figurative branding can have a literal translation. A U.S. highway serves as Main Street in Woodland Park and the traffic can overwhelm “the backyard’s” peaceful nature. So Main Street has focused on alley spaces to create literal backyards for patios and relaxed social interaction, delivering on the brand and reinforcing the message through direct experience.

### KEY TAKE ALWAYS AND LESSONS LEARNED

1. Effective communication does not happen by accident, but through purposeful and coordinated action. Planning communication in advance leaves less to chance as other priorities take precedence.
2. If an initiative is important, give it a name and recognition.
3. Deliver on the brand. Continuously refining the message helps to ensure a consistent unified image.

The process of innovation never stops because the horizon of new ideas always shifts into the distance.

Colorado Main Street will continue to work with our communities to assist with communicating the value of the Main Street program, from both the local and state perspective. New businesses are being added, private investment is soaring, and an unprecedented number of volunteers are joining the movement. These are the stories that breathe life into Main Street and give us all a reason to take pride in calling ourselves MainChangers.

**ELIZABETH AND MONTROSE ADVANCE IN THE MAIN STREET PROGRAM**

BY THE MAIN STREET TEAM

The Colorado Main Street staff would like to recognize and congratulate the Town of Elizabeth and the City of Montrose for moving up in the program tiers. Both are now Designated communities. Our compliments and congratulations to the Main Street leaders, volunteers, and municipal leadership for their commitment to downtown revitalization and historic preservation.

In Elizabeth, you still do business with a handshake and a smile. However, this quaint little town just 40 miles southeast of Denver is growing, and expects to continue to grow significantly over the next two decades. One of the fundamental principles for the residents of Elizabeth is to keep the charm, history, heritage, and characteristics of their downtown. The Colorado Main Street Program provides a framework for accepting this challenge.

Montrose is moving forward. The Montrose Main Street program, referred to as DART, is building a successful future by reinvesting in public infrastructure - expanding the transportation network and upgrading existing roadways - as well as promoting unique outdoor recreational assets. The Colorado Main Street Program is providing resources to promote the advantages of living in Montrose and helping the city compete nationally for opportunity zone funding.

Congratulations, Elizabeth and Montrose!



The Town of Elizabeth.



The City of Montrose.

**ADVISORY BOARD NEWS**

**SPOTLIGHT: TRACI STOFFEL, MAIN STREET SPECIALIST**



**Advisory Board News**

The Colorado Main Street program has an 11-member Advisory Board whose role is four-fold: advocate for the Colorado Main Street program; advise on Candidate applications, tier advancement, and awards; attend meetings to provide program guidance; and assist in service delivery.

We have two new board members: Tim Stroh and Melody Christensen.

Tim Stroh (former Colorado Main Street architect) is the director of the State Historical Fund at History Colorado, and joins the board representing that organization.

Melody Christensen is representing Main Street communities as the director of Brush's program.

With the arrival of new board members, we need to thank our outgoing representatives: Tara Marshall, Mark Rodman, and Diedra Silbert. We appreciate the expertise that they gave to the program!

**Spotlight: Traci Stoffel, Main Street Specialist**

We are pleased to welcome Traci Stoffel, the new Colorado Main Street Specialist, to the team!

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

A: I first learned about Main Street when working for the statewide historic preservation organization, Colorado Preservation Inc., where I gained a basic understanding of the program, its value, and its historic preservation ethic from its members, conference, and magazine.

When I went to work for the Colorado Municipal League (CML), I would seek the expertise of both statewide program staff and local directors for articles and information. While at CML, I also got to serve as the municipal representative on the Colorado Main Street Advisory Board.

Q: What have you learned from your previous experience (professional and personal) that you bring to this role?

A: From my work at both Colorado Preservation Inc. and the Colorado Municipal League, I bring a healthy respect for the Main Street Program, a belief in the power of community vision, and knowledge of the benefits of historic preservation. I also bring a love of Colorado's downtowns, history, and small businesses.

Q: What are you most looking forward to about being the new Main Street Specialist?

A: I look forward to working with all of the people of our Main Street communities in helping them achieve their dreams for their downtowns.





# COLORADO MAIN★STREET

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**COLORADO**  
Department of Local Affairs



 **HISTORY** *Colorado*

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