

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VILLAGE OF LAKE ORION DDA ANNOUNCED AS 2027 GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARD SEMIFINALIST

**One of Eight Organizations Recognized for Exemplary
Downtown Revitalization Efforts Nationally**

Lake Orion, MI (9/29/26) – Main Street America has announced the Village of Lake Orion DDA as a 2027 Great American Main Street Award (GAMSA) semifinalist. This prestigious award is the nation's top award recognizing communities for their excellence in comprehensive preservation-based commercial district revitalization.

A jury of professionals and leaders in the fields of community and economic development and historic preservation convened to review a nationwide pool of applicants. After thoughtful deliberation, the jury unanimously selected eight semifinalists that demonstrate exemplary use of the Main Street Approach™ to lead community-based transformation strategies in their downtowns.

The 2027 Great American Main Street Award semifinalists are:

[Center City of Amarillo, Inc.](#) – Amarillo, Texas

[Astoria Downtown Historic District Association](#) – Astoria, Oregon

[Downtown Excelsior Partnership, Inc.](#) – Excelsior Springs, Missouri

[Connect Downtown Johnson City](#) – Johnson City, Tennessee

[Village of Lake Orion DDA](#) – Lake Orion, Oakland County, Michigan

[Montpelier Alive](#) – Montpelier, Vermont

[Mainstreet Oceanside](#) – Oceanside, California

[Sapulpa Main Street](#) – Sapulpa, Oklahoma

“The 2027 Great American Main Street Award Semifinalists are proud examples of the deep and lasting impact that Main Street programs can have on communities,” said Main Street America President and CEO Erin Barnes. **“From reimagining after decline to rebuilding after natural disasters, these communities demonstrate the power of resilience, vision, and meaningful community engagement.”**

Collectively, the 2027 GAMSA semifinalists have generated over \$2.1 billion in local reinvestment, helped open 1,271 net new businesses, facilitated the creation of 7,607 net new jobs, catalyzed the rehabilitation of 2,411 historic buildings, and leveraged 252,493 volunteer hours.

Competing for the Great American Main Street Award is a significant achievement in the Main Street Movement, and receiving the award is an esteemed honor. Since its establishment in 1995, only 118 of over 2000 Main Street programs have been acknowledged as GAMSA-winning communities. Many Main Street programs set multi-year plans to work towards developing a strong application based on outcomes that make meaningful impacts in their local communities.

The selection criteria is stringent — measuring the strength of the Main Street program in spurring community transformation, commitment to historic preservation, innovative programming, implementation of cross-sector partnerships, community outreach and stakeholder engagement, and commitment to building a community for all. The very best have built programs striving for this rarified air of recognition.

“Twenty-five years ago, Lake Orion made a commitment to Main Street. Through fires, economic downturns, political challenges and changing times, we never stopped believing that investing in downtown meant investing in our community. Today, the results speak for themselves, together we built a community that believes in this downtown, takes ownership of it and refuses to stop imagining what it can become. To now be recognized as one of only eight Great American Main Street Award semifinalists in the nation is extraordinary validation of what Lake Orion has accomplished together. This recognition belongs to every volunteer, business owner, property owner, partner, resident and leader who chose to believe in this place. Twenty-five years later, Lake Orion is once again a destination—and we’re not done yet.”

— Matthew Gibb, Executive Director, Village of Lake Orion DDA

The 2027 Great American Main Street Award ceremony will be held at the opening plenary of the 2027 Main Street Now Conference in Detroit, Michigan, on May 3, 2027, where three semifinalists will be recognized as recipients of the coveted honor.

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ABOUT THE VILLAGE OF LAKE ORION DDA - MAIN STREET

For twenty-five years, Lake Orion DDA/Main Street has helped transform Downtown Lake Orion from a district with a vacancy rate nearing 32% into a thriving destination with approximately 2% vacancy bolstered by more than \$48 million in new investment. Its impact can be seen throughout the community—in thriving businesses, restored historic buildings, and the streetscapes, parks, bridges, docks, parking, trails, wayfinding and public spaces that have made downtown a place where people want to invest, visit, live and belong.

That transformation has been backed by extraordinary and sustained investment. Since 2006, the DDA has invested more than \$6.5 million in Village infrastructure and community assets and secured or distributed more than \$1.3 million in grants supporting businesses, preservation and district growth. Over the life of the DDA, it has contributed more than \$9.36 million toward Village operations, supporting police, public works, administration and other municipal services. More than 20 historic commercial buildings have benefited from preservation-based investment, while the Main Street program has supported entrepreneurs, strengthened partnerships, created community traditions and mobilized generations of volunteers around the future of downtown.

Lake Orion DDA - Main Street has become part of the civic and economic infrastructure of this community—turning public investment into private confidence, community ideas into action and downtown revitalization into shared community ownership.

ABOUT THE GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARDS

The Great American Main Street Award program recognizes communities exemplifying the use of the Main Street Approach™ to revitalize commercial districts. Winners are selected from a nationwide pool

of applicants by a jury of Main Street professionals and leaders in the fields of community and economic development and historic preservation. Since the award's inception in 1995, over 110 Main Street programs have been honored as GAMSA communities. For more information, visit mainstreet.org.

ABOUT MAIN STREET AMERICA

Main Street America leads a movement committed to strengthening communities through preservation-based economic development in older and historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts. For more than 40 years, Main Street America has provided a practical, adaptable, and impactful framework for community-driven, comprehensive revitalization through the Main Street Approach™. Our network of more than 1,600 neighborhoods and communities, rural and urban, share both a commitment to place and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development. For more information, visit mainstreet.org.

MEDIA

1. Lake-Orion-Childrens-Park-Community.jpg

Caption: *Community members gather in Children's Park in the heart of Downtown Lake Orion. The park is one of the public spaces strengthened through DDA investment and reflects the Main Street program's focus on creating a downtown where people gather, connect and belong.*



2. Downtown-Lake-Orion-Historic-District.jpg

Caption: *Downtown Lake Orion's historic commercial district comes to life during a community event. Historic buildings, brick streets, local businesses and community traditions reflect the preservation-based revitalization that has helped transform downtown over the past twenty-five years.*



3. Downtown-Lake-Orion-Public-Art.jpg

Caption: *Public art, local makers and community activity come together in Downtown Lake Orion, reflecting the creativity, local identity and sense of place at the heart of the Lake Orion Main Street program.*

