



NEWS RELEASE

TODAY'S DATE: April 29, 2016

RELEASE DATE: May 2, 2016

CONTACT: Thondra Lanese, Executive Director
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America's Main Streets Contest Names Stuart Main Street Quarterfinalist

Support Stuart Downtown Revitalization by Voting Today

STUART, FL – May 2, 2016 – The national small business movement, *Independent We Stand*, today announced that *Stuart Main Street* is one of 25 quarterfinalists in the 2016 *America's Main Streets* contest. As the lifeblood of our cities and towns, Main Street programs like *Stuart Main Street* play a vital role in the long-term success of their communities, help to build economic vitality, community spirit, and a sense of place. *Stuart Main Street* was chosen by online voters from 253 nominees nationwide. Semifinalist voting begins May 2 at MainStreetContest.com and runs through May 29. The winner of the 2016 "America's Main Streets" contest, and a \$25,000 grand prize, will be announced June 3.

"Wherever you are on the southern Treasure Coast, if you say you are "going downtown," you mean you are going to Stuart!" said Thondra Lanese, Executive Director of *Stuart Main Street*.

"We are very proud of the mix of independent businesses, culture and entertainment, and recreational opportunities we have here. Downtown Stuart is the center for community life for residents, business, and visitors."

At the heart of the revitalization of Downtown Stuart is *Stuart Main Street*. Since 1987 the nonprofit group has been "*Embracing the Future While Preserving the Past*." The group works



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to maintain Downtown Stuart's distinctive appearance, strengthen and retain businesses, and market the district. *Stuart Main Street* was behind the seating platforms that allow downtown diners to enjoy meals outdoors. It enabled the extension of the Riverwalk boardwalk. And the group brings Downtown Stuart alive with festivals like *Dancin' in the Street*, art shows, and the FREE weekly *Rock'n Riverwalk* waterfront concerts. They also promote **Shop Local|Shop Smart**, a campaign to teach consumers the community benefits of supporting independent shops, restaurants and services.

"The goal of this inaugural *Independent We Stand 'America's Main Streets'* contest is to promote the importance and strong economic benefits of Main Streets and the small businesses that help them thrive," says *Independent We Stand* co-founder Bill Brunelle. "We are so pleased to see how passionate people are about their Main Streets. It's evident by the broad range of nominations we saw representing 44 states in the first round. Now, it's time to rally and vote again for these terrific quarterfinalists."

Contest prizes include a commemorative plaque and \$25,000 cash grand prize; gift certificates for STIHL, Tire Pros, Do it Best Corp., and PPG Pittsburgh Paints; a small business social media "Neighborhood" on Alignable.com; and public relations and social media recognition.

The quarterfinalists in alphabetical order are:



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- [Ames Main Street Cultural District](#), Ames, Iowa
- [Cedar Lee Business District](#), Cleveland Heights, Ohio
- [Corning's Gaffer District](#), Corning, N.Y.
- [Dover-Foxcroft Downtown](#), Dover-Foxcroft, Maine
- [Downtown Brookings](#), Brookings, S.D.
- [Downtown Development Authority of the City of Tifton](#), Tifton, Ga.
- [Downtown Laurel, MS](#), Laurel, Miss.
- [Downtown Lynden](#), Lynden, Wash.
- [Doylestown, PA](#), Doylestown, Pa.
- [Gateway to the Great North Woods](#), Millinocket, Maine
- [Grapevine Historic Main Street](#), Grapevine, Texas
- [Historic Downtown Franklin TN](#), Franklin, Tenn.
- [Jacksonville Main Street](#), Jacksonville, Ill.
- [Main Street Greenville](#), Greenville, Ohio
- [Main Street Libertyville](#), Libertyville, Ill.
- [Main Street Madison Indiana](#), Madison, Ind.
- [McKinney Main Street](#), McKinney, Texas
- [Moultrie Main Street](#), Moultrie, Ga.
- [Sterling Main Street](#), Sterling, Ill.
- [Stuart Main Street](#), Stuart, Fla.
- [Third Street](#), Beaver, Pa.
- [Venice Main Street](#), Venice, Fla.
- [Water Street](#), Gardiner, Maine
- [Wellsboro Main Street Pennsylvania](#), Wellsboro, Pa.
- [Woodstock, Georgia](#), Woodstock, Ga.

About *Stuart Main Street*

Stuart Main Street is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization founded in 1987 to protect and promote



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Historic Downtown Stuart through historic preservation, downtown improvements, economic opportunity, and community events. The group is part of the *Florida Main Street* program and is nationally accredited by *Main Street America*. *Stuart Main Street* meets the second Tuesday of every month at 4:30 p.m. in the City Hall Chambers at 121 SW Flagler Avenue, Stuart. For more information, visit stuartmainstreet.org or call 772-286-2848.

About *Florida Main Street*

Florida Main Street is a program administered by the Division of Historical Resources under the Florida Department of State, which currently oversees 45 communities throughout the state. By implementing the National Main Street Center's Four-Point Approach®, *Florida Main Street* encourages economic development within the context of historic preservation through the revitalization of Florida's downtowns – the community's heart and soul. Since the program's inception in 1985, the *Florida Main Street* programs have cumulatively created 24,604 jobs, 7,337 new businesses and produced \$2.5 billion in reinvestment.

About *Main Street America*

Main Street America™ has been helping revitalize older and historic commercial districts for more than 35 years. It is the leading voice for preservation-based economic development and community revitalization across the country. Made up of small towns, mid-sized communities,



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and urban commercial districts, *Main Street America* represents the broad diversity that makes this country so unique. Working together, the programs that make up the *Main Street America* network help breathe new life into the places people call home.

About *Independent We Stand*

Independent We Stand is a movement of independent business owners across the country dedicated to informing their communities about the importance of "Buying Local" and how these efforts bolster their local economy. This movement supports all local and national causes committed to boosting local economic development projects. The *Independent We Stand* movement is co-sponsored by STIHL Inc. and FCA US LLC. www.IndependentWeStand.org

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You may also use the promotional video and b-roll at these links both online or in broadcasts.

America's Main Streets promotional video: <https://vimeo.com/163033139>

America's Main Streets b-roll: <https://vimeo.com/163033097/b05f9eb810>