



Watch party planned for Small Business Revolution announcement

February 23 2018 12:54 PM

ALTON - Anticipation is building as Alton prepares to find out if the river city will be the featured community on Small Business Revolution's Main Street series and the recipient of a \$500,000 downtown makeover. A Watch Party is planned at Old Bakery Beer, 400 Landmarks Blvd., Alton, starting at **2 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 27**. The announcement is planned for **2:30 p.m.** via Facebook.

The City of Alton and Argosy Casino Alton will operate passenger shuttles to ferry people to the Watch Party. The shuttles will pick up passengers at the city parking lot on the corner of Henry Street and Landmarks Boulevard. The shuttle service will begin at 1 p.m. and end at 4 p.m.

"We want as many people as possible at the Watch Party on Tuesday. We encourage people to be in place by 2 p.m.," Brett Stawar, President and CEO of the Alton Regional Convention and Visitors Bureau said. "Win or lose, this is a chance to celebrate the way Alton has come together to work towards a common cause. The party can help the city, small business owners and residents move forward with that momentum."

Alton Mayor Brant Walker is expected to speak just prior to the 2:30 p.m. Small Business Revolution announcement.

Alton is one of five finalists in the Small Business Revolution – Main Street project with the chance to win a \$500,000 downtown revitalization grant and be featured on the third season of the Main Street TV series which airs on Hulu and YouTube. Other communities in the running include Bastrop, TX, Amesbury, MA, Siloam Springs, AK, and Martinez, CA.

Alton was among thousands of communities across the United States nominated for the project which is now in its third year. Alton made the cut in December when the Top 20 communities were named and again in January when the Top 10 towns were announced.

The five finalists were announced on Feb. 13 and were subject to a national vote to determine the winner. Voting ended on Feb. 20.

City leaders, small business owners and residents pulled out all the stops to encourage people to vote for Alton. A local reporter dressed up as the Piasa Bird and “kidnapped” Alton Mayor Brant Walker in an effort to bring highlight the need for votes. More than 100 business owners and residents braved a rainstorm to form a human chain during the voting phase to highlight the camaraderie in the community as well as the need for votes.

Representatives of Small Business Revolution – Main Street visited Alton Jan. 18 – 19, interviewing small business owners, touring the downtown district and speaking to city officials about the community. The Alton community hosted a reception for the Small Business Revolution – Main Street team at Old Bakery Beer Company during the visit.

Deluxe Corporation created the Small Business Revolution in 2015 to shine a spotlight on the small businesses across the country. Previous winners include Wabash, IN and Bristol Borough, PA.

“Win or lose, we are excited to work together and celebrate our great community,” Stawar said.