



# **Alton Main Street invites the community to engage in the momentum of downtown development**

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(10 March 2015) By cultivating commerce, culture, and community, Alton Main Street makes a huge impact that stimulates our local economy and improves the quality of life well beyond the downtown district. The organization's 2015 partnership drive is now underway to gather support from citizens and business owners who would like to help make the Downtown Alton experience even more beautiful and compelling.

"When you give to Alton Main Street, you are supporting public art and pocket parks, free festivals and cultural experiences, locally-owned businesses and funky old buildings - all of the things that give Alton its charm and distinct personality," said Executive Director, Sara McGibany, "Your support is needed so that we can preserve and improve Alton's historic downtown to the best of our ability."



By connecting with the Main Street program, residents and business owners can play a major role in elevating the entire region, and each financial contribution helps enhance our community in a variety of ways. Alton Main Street coordinates unique events to encourage locals and tourists alike to recreate in Alton; making memories with family and friends, while supporting our hometown businesses. Main Street projects such as the Alton Farmers' & Artisans' Market, Mississippi Earthtones Festival and Tree Lighting Ceremony add to the fabric of our community. The organization depends on financial resources and volunteer manpower from citizens and businesses in order to provide these free civic events. Be sure to visit the "Events" page of [www.DowntownAlton.com](http://www.DowntownAlton.com) for dates and details of the entire 2015 event series.

Alton Main Street beautifies the area through public art, streetscape garden planting and maintenance, holiday decorations, and litter clean-ups. "When citizens infuse energy into creating social activity and improving how an area looks, new investors and developers take note," said Debby Edelman, Vice President of the AMS Board of Directors.

The organization encourages economic growth by creating networking opportunities for existing local businesses, while also being a resource for many entrepreneurs who are

looking to open a new one. “Alton Main Street has been there to support our business every step of the way. The organization provided a great start for us as a vendor at community events, assisted us with finding the perfect space as we graduated to a brick & mortar location, and continues to help us attract new customers who appreciate the charm of a locally-owned bakery over a chain restaurant,” said Alexandra & Lou Mattea of LuciAnna’s Pastries, “This type of personalized support is invaluable to a fledgling entrepreneur, and gave us confidence that we could achieve our dream of owning our own business.”

City leaders become better acquainted to business and property owners at Main Street functions, and the program fosters collaboration between many community groups that have similar goals. This makes the most of the limited resources in our area, and builds a strong network to support projects far beyond the downtown district.

“Our thriving historic district is what sets Alton apart from other communities,” explains Sara McGibany, Executive Director, “Main Street is a grassroots effort of regular citizens who are working to retain Alton’s unique character. Preserving our historic architecture and supporting locally-owned businesses creates an attractive, authentic experience for us all. The more supporters that we can gather through our partnership drive, the faster the incredible growth that is underway will take effect.”

Downtown Alton’s momentum is attracting many new businesses, which is instilling a sense of pride in our past while shaping a compelling future. Alton Main Street maintains an informational facebook page and website to help community members and business owners stay connected and learn about the latest developments. Visit [www.DowntownAlton.com](http://www.DowntownAlton.com) for details on events, shopping and dining options, business incentives, available real estate and more.

Community members can make a difference as partners of Alton Main Street. Now is the time for businesses to become partners by sending annual dues of \$100. Families may contribute by donating \$50, and individuals can make an impact by pledging a gift of \$25. Checks can be mailed to Alton Main Street at 200 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street – Suite 100 Alton, IL 62002. Donations can also be made via PayPal at [www.DowntownAlton.com](http://www.DowntownAlton.com). Event sponsorships are also available for businesses who would like extra exposure and community involvement. To join the excitement of the team and enlist in a meaningful volunteer experience, please contact 463-1016 or [sara@altonmainstreet.org](mailto:sara@altonmainstreet.org)