



State of Illinois Announces Partnership to Strengthen Illinois Main Street Program

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SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) and the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA) today announced a new partnership, reinforcing the agencies' long-standing relationship, in support of the Illinois Main Street Program.

Under this new partnership, the Office of Regional Outreach at DCEO will serve as Illinois' state coordinating program and work with Illinois' 51 local Main Street communities. DCEO staff will continue to provide organization, promotion, and economic restructuring services to the local Main Street program, while IHPA will provide design training and support services to the Illinois Main Street communities. Through the efforts of DCEO and IHPA, each Illinois Main Street community can draw upon the significant expertise of both agencies.

Embracing her role as the ambassador for the program, Lt. Governor Sheila Simon stated, "I look forward to representing the Illinois Main Street program as I travel the state, promoting economic development in support of local communities."

Illinois Main Street is a historic preservation-based economic development program that applies the comprehensive Main Street Four Point Approach® to the revitalization of Illinois' downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts. Developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Main Street approach provides the framework for local Main Street efforts in each of Main Street's Four Points: Organization, Design, Promotion, and Economic Restructuring.

Nationally, Main Street communities and their local programs have created nearly 915,000 jobs and represent public and private reinvestment of over \$48 billion.

House Bill 3414, currently pending in the General Assembly, creates the Illinois Main Street Act. This Act formalizes the existing Illinois Main Street program within DCEO and reinforces the statewide Main Street effort. The bill recently passed in the House and awaits Senate approval.

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