

For Immediate Release

MAIN STREET AMERICA ANNOUNCES 2022 GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARD SEMIFINALISTS

CHICAGO (March 2022) – Downtown Florence is one of eight communities selected as a semifinalist for the 2022 Great American Main Street Award (GAMSA) from Main Street America. Selected by a national jury of Main Street professionals and leaders in the fields of community and economic development and historic preservation, GAMSA semifinalists exemplify the power of the Main Street Approach™ to transform downtowns and neighborhood business districts.

“The Great American Main Street Award is the highest honor within the field of commercial district management,” said Patrice Frey, President and CEO of Main Street America. “These eight semifinalists are shining examples of the kind of transformation that is possible when using the Main Street Approach. These programs have brought renewed vibrancy to their communities and sparked impressive preservation-based revitalization.”

Together, the eight GAMSA semifinalists have brought in over \$139 million in public investment and more than half a billion dollars in private investment, generated 3,277 jobs, opened 844 new businesses, rehabbed 2,186 buildings, and logged 260,773 volunteer hours since their programs’ inceptions.

“Florence is charting a new course for our state’s Main Street Network,” said South Carolina’s Main Street Coordinator Jenny Boulware. “As the first Accredited Main Street community in South Carolina to achieve Great American Main Street Award semi-finalist designation, Florence’s remarkable 10-year downtown transformation is now celebrated on a national platform. With one of the most cooperative leadership teams in the state, this recognition reinforces Florence’s intentional and thoughtful downtown development accomplishments.”

“To be among the eight communities nationwide selected as GAMSA semi-finalists is a tremendous honor, one that demonstrates the power of place in our community and our commitment to the Main Street Approach for preservation-based economic development downtown. This designation is for all of us to share and we are grateful to all of our community supporters, stakeholders, and residents who have contributed to this ongoing work,” said Downtown Development Manager, Hannah Davis.

GAMSA semifinalists were selected from a nationwide pool of accredited Main Street America applicants based on their successful and innovative uses of the Main Street Approach™. Criteria for winning include: 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 diversity, equity, and inclusion. More than 100 communities have been recognized as winners since the award’s inception in 1995.

GAMSA winners will be announced on May 16, 2022 at the Main Street Now Conference in Richmond, VA.

###

About Main Street America

Main Street America has been helping revitalize older and historic commercial districts for 40 years. Today it is a network of more than 1,600 neighborhoods and communities, rural and urban, who share both a commitment to place and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development. Main Street America is a program of the nonprofit National Main Street Center, Inc., a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. For more information, visit mainstreet.org.

About Main Street South Carolina

Since 1983 Main Street South Carolina has been helping revitalize South Carolina's historic downtowns. Its local Main Street network of more than 25 communities share both a commitment to place and to building stronger communities through asset-based economic development. Main Street SC is a technical assistance program of the Municipal Association of South Carolina. Since 1980, communities participating in the program – nationwide – have leveraged more than \$85 billion in new public and private investment, generated more than 672,000 new jobs and 150,000 new businesses, and rehabilitated more than 295,000 buildings.

About Downtown Florence

Downtown Florence's Main Street Program was established in 2002 by the Florence Downtown Development Corp., a quasi-public 501c3 non-profit organization formed in partnership with the City of Florence to compliment ongoing downtown revitalization efforts. To date, Downtown Florence has seen over \$250M of public and private investment, hundreds of new jobs created, and thousands of volunteer hours served. The Downtown Florence Main Street program is made up of the Downtown Florence Historic District, which is home to 76 small business owners and two corporate headquarters. Downtown Florence earned National Main Street Accreditation in 2008 and again in 2021.

Contact: **Hannah L. Davis**, *Development Manager*
hdavis@cityofflorence.com