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New Mexico MainStreet Announces Newest Design Initiative Recipients

Santa Fe - New Mexico MainStreet (NMMS), a program of the New Mexico Economic Department, today announced the latest round of Design Initiative recipients. This year saw the largest and most competitive pool of applicants to date.

"The growing interest from communities in the MainStreet program demonstrates just how valuable this program is to New Mexico," said Economic Development Department Secretary Jon Barela. "These participants are making a commitment to improve their communities by partnering with New Mexico MainStreet and the rewards will mean better infrastructure with great economic potential."

New Mexico MainStreet is a community economic development organization that is part of a national network utilizing the Four-Point Approach® to rehabilitate historic business districts. One of the Four Points is Design, which NMMS has grown into several programs under the heading of Design Initiatives: Interiors, Placemaking, and Façade Squad. NMMS affiliate communities may apply competitively to receive design technical assistance with financial supports from the New Mexico Resiliency Alliance in partnership with McCune Charitable Foundation. The local program must demonstrate ability to raise sufficient matching funds, materials and volunteers for the Design Initiative Project. The latest applications were reviewed in September and the following communities selected for their strong applications and demonstrated need.

Façade Squad:

- Downtown Albuquerque MainStreet Initiative will address the Central Features Gallery, 109 5th Street NW, Albuquerque. The gallery will support artists and designers while promoting social progress and environmental stewardship by donating 10% of proceeds to conservation and community causes. Grant funds will be used to enhance the building's storefront.
- Carlsbad MainStreet will focus its project on the Beauty College of Eddy County, 100 West Mermod Ave, Carlsbad. Work will include façade and pedestrian enhancements using local materials. Mainstreet board members and beauty college instructors and students will all participate as volunteers.

Placemaking:

- Columbus Frontier Community wishes to enhance The Spirt of Columbus Park, a central village open space. Improvements will include seating, lighting, and other landscape elements such as a seating wall to differentiate the parking area from park. When possible, the park gazebo will be rebuilt to accommodate events.
- Deming MainStreet will engage in improvements to a downtown pocket park. Electrical and irrigation improvements, a Mimbres-motif ceramic pot fountain, benches, landscaping, and a mural will all be part of the design.

Additionally, earlier this year Wagon Mound received a grant focusing on rehabilitation and façade improvements for the Veteran's Affair gallery, Wigwam Building and the Ford Building on Railroad Avenue. Twenty community members aided in painting, plastering, carpentry, window repair and providing meals. Work was completed September 2014.

The next round of Design Initiative grants will be released at the New Mexico MainStreet Winter Networking Meeting in Santa Fe, February 2015. For more information about New Mexico MainStreet visit <http://gonm.biz/Mainstreet.aspx>.

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