

SUSANA MARTINEZ  
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JON BARELA  
CABINET SECRETARY  
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Contact: Angela Heisel  
(505) 629-5148

[Angela.Heisel@state.nm.us](mailto:Angela.Heisel@state.nm.us)

## **New Mexico MainStreet Director Rich Williams Elected to Executive Council of National Main Street Directors**

**Santa Fe, NM** - Today, New Mexico MainStreet announced that Director Rich Williams has been elected to a three-year term of the Executive Council of National Main Street Directors of state, urban and countywide programs. The Council works to explore policy, develop national marketing and branding strategies, and support the National Main Street Center, Inc. (NMSC). Williams will provide advice and guidance for the overall Main Street movement at the national level, provide insights into traditional commercial district revitalization, and opportunities for NMSC staff to develop and implement programs.

"We at the National Main Street Center congratulate Rich Williams on his election to the National Main Street Coordinators Executive Council. This group serves an important role in the National Main Street movement and we know that Rich's perspective and expertise will serve us all well," said Patrice Frey, CEO and President of the National Main Street Center, Inc.

Williams will represent New Mexico's achievements at the national level, and assist in re-shaping the national Main Street movement through its "Refresh" program. Two candidates were elected for a three-year term. There are eight board members. Williams is the first member elected from the Southwest region and New Mexico.

There are eight Executive Council members from around the country. Voting members for Executive Council service include a more than 100-member peer group of Directors of state coordinating programs. Two positions were open this year to the Council.

"As Chair of the Executive Council of the National Main Street Coordinators, I am pleased to welcome Rich to the team," said Beppie LeGrand, Chair of the Main Street Coordinators Executive Committee. "His expertise and experience will be valuable as we continue to grow our network and fulfill our mission."

Williams began his work in downtown revitalization in 1979, while seeking assistance from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in restoring his 1920s Ice Cream Soda Fountain. He went on to serve at the local level as a President and later as an Executive Director of a MainStreet nonprofit. He sat on the Steering Committee that created New Jersey's statewide program in 1986. In the mid-1990s, he served as a Program Associate in MainStreet Economic Development and Organization in New Mexico. He became director of New Mexico MainStreet in 2003.

Under Williams' direction, the state program, which just celebrated its 30th Anniversary, has grown from serving nine communities in 2003 to more than 50 programs, projects and initiatives throughout New Mexico. The programs are all economic performance-based, private/public partnerships, driven by community volunteers and supported through local staff.

"I remain dedicated to rural, and community economic development. MainStreet for me remains one of the few successful pathways resulting in real, positive impact through asset-based, community-driven economic development," said Williams. "I look forward to highlighting New Mexico's innovative and unique approaches to the National Main Street movement and to bringing back creative economy initiatives to our state."

New Mexico MainStreet serves as an umbrella organization housing the state's Arts & Cultural District Program, the Frontier Communities Initiative, the Historic Theaters Initiative, and the Cultural & Heritage Corridors Initiative. The first Native American MainStreet program in the country was developed three years ago at Zuni Pueblo. Each program works at conservation, preservation and appropriate adaptive reuse of the cultural and historic assets in New Mexico communities.

"Rich's leadership and vision with a top-notch staff and consultants continues to propel New Mexico's national reputation for its work in innovative community economic development," stated Economic Development Cabinet Secretary Jon Barela. "The successful work of New Mexico's MainStreet program has been confirmed through Rich's election to the National Main Street Executive Council, and ensures that New Mexico's accomplishments will gain a new national audience of economic developers."

For more information about New Mexico MainStreet, visit [www.goNM.biz](http://www.goNM.biz) and visit the MainStreet section, or telephone 505-827-0168.

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