



Legislation Text

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DATE: February 22, 2018

TO: Members of the Economic Development Authority

FROM: Nate Carlson, Economic Development Coordinator
Chris Heineman, Community Planning & Development Director

EDA Support for Northfield Downtown Development Corporation Application to Main Street Program

SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED:

The EDA is asked to execute a letter of support for the NDDC application to the Main Street Program

BACKGROUND:

The NDDC is in the process of applying to Minnesota Main Street to become a Designated Main Street Affiliate organization. Minnesota Main Street is a coordinating Main Street America program under the auspices of the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota (PAM). Main Street America is a national program dedicated to downtown revitalization and economic strengthening under the umbrella of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. There are currently 1,600 Main Street America affiliate communities across the country, eight of which are in Minnesota. The Main Street America program is now in its 35th year of operation.

The Main Street Approach uses The Four Points to accomplish the goals of downtown revitalization and economic strengthening: Economic Vitality; Design; Promotion; Organization. Each Designated Main Street Affiliate organization conducts its work through committees and partner organizations assigned to one of The Four Points.

Successful outcomes in Main Street America cities require sustained and inclusive community engagement. The NDDC is seeking EDA and City Council support for the application and continuing support for the Main Street Approach after the NDDC attains the Designated Main Street Affiliate status.

According to the application, the NDDC wants to demonstrate that the Northfield community (downtown building owners, downtown business owners, non-profit organizations, civic leaders and commission volunteers, private citizens) has a history of commitment to the health and vitality of the downtown district and that we are going to continue this collaborative tradition into the future. The NDDC is requesting that the Economic Development Authority provide a letter of support which speaks to the particular role that it has played in the past and will continue to play in assisting with future projects and initiatives. A draft letter is attached for reference.

The NDDC plans to work collaboratively with the Northfield Chamber of Commerce & Tourism and the CVB to implement and operate the Minnesota Main Street program. The organizations are now sharing one office at 19 Bridge Square, which will improve collaborative efforts. As part of this collaborative approach, the Chamber of Commerce will be paying half of the Minnesota Main Street membership fee.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends a motion to approve the EDA letter for support of the NDDC's application to the Minnesota Main Street program for Northfield to become a Designated Main Street Affiliate organization.