

Pat L. McCrory
Governor



John E. Skvarla, III
Secretary of Commerce

North Carolina
Office of the Secretary of
Commerce

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Contact: David Rhoades
Phone: 919 715-6556

N.C. Main Street Center Creates Jobs Through Vibrant Downtowns

2014-15 Program Created 662 Jobs, 291 Businesses and \$131.5 M in Investments

Raleigh, N.C. – North Carolina Commerce Secretary John E. Skvarla, III announced today performance metrics for the 2014-2015 N.C. Main Street Center program year. The statistics measure economic benchmarks in the 54 designated Main Street and 45 designated Small Town Main Street communities that are active in the two programs, which focus on revitalizing downtowns across the state.

The Main Street communities reported:

- \$120.3 million in downtown public and private investment
- 358 new full-time and part-time jobs
- 228 new businesses
- 82 business expansions
- 215 building renovations
- 282 façade improvements
- 124 local public improvement projects
- 74,188 volunteer hours

Since the inception of the program in 1980, North Carolina Main Street communities have exceeded more than \$2.25 billion in downtown public and private investment, created more than 18,000 full-time and part-time jobs and opened more than 4,600 businesses.

“The North Carolina Main Street Center offers communities across our state valuable knowledge and resources to fuel economic growth,” said Secretary Skvarla. “These program outcomes demonstrate once again the value of keeping our downtown areas healthy and vital.”

The Main Street program is an asset based economic development program that celebrated its

35th anniversary earlier this year. The N.C. Main Street Center assists selected communities across the state in restoring economic vitality to historic downtowns. Main Street staff provides technical assistance, guidance and training to participating communities.

“We know when activity occurs in a downtown district, it has an impact on the community as a whole,” said Liz Parham, director of the N.C. Main Street Center. “Industrial development is more likely to occur in communities where there is a healthy downtown district. And recently we have seen an increase in recreational development, such as greenways, blueways and waterfront development occurring in and near downtowns as a direct result of vibrant downtown districts,” she said. Parham also noted that residential redevelopment in traditional, historic neighborhoods and mixed use development in downtowns occurs when goods and services are offered in a downtown district.

Small Town Main Street Program

In addition, the N.C. Small Town Main Street has been successful in revitalizing the state’s smallest communities. The 2014-2015 Small Town Main Street program reported:

- \$11.2 million in downtown public and private investment
- 304 new full-time and part-time jobs
- 63 new businesses
- 34 business expansions
- 67 building renovations
- 62 facade improvements
- 53 local public improvement projects
- 48,584 volunteer hours

The Small Town Main Street Program is credited with \$117.4 million in downtown public and private investment since its inception in 2003, more than 1,600 jobs and a net gain of nearly 600 new businesses.

For more information on the N.C. Main Street Center and its programs, go to <http://www.nccommerce.com/rd/main-street>.