



EMPOWERING
Community Revitalization

July 13, 2020
PRESS RELEASE

**Main Street Willow Springs Wins Activation Storefront Grant
from Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.**

Contact: Gayla Roten, State Director, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.,
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Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc. (MMSC) selected two winning applications for the Activation Storefront Grant, recognizing projects planned out by communities to enhance their districts.

Missouri Main Street Connection is a non-profit designed to help communities preserve their historic commercial districts through economic revitalization. Missouri Main Street Connection has empowered downtown revitalization in Missouri communities since 2006, resulting in \$954 million of private and public investments, the creation of 902 net new businesses, and 4,043 net new jobs in Main Street communities.

The Activation Storefront Grant is a \$2,500 grant awarded to Main Street Willow Springs, MO for storefront activation plus \$1,000 in architecture fees of storefront design. This grant will enhance a vacant storefront and transform that storefront into a vibrant opening for a new business that is needed in their community. MMSC hosted a workshop to help potential recipients dive into market driven data to determine what type of business that each community could support. Utilizing this information, Main Street Willow Springs will spend the next 18 months activating and engaging the space with the resources to fill the vacancy with a new business and create new jobs in a vibrant setting in their community.

Main Street Willow Springs has a plan for their project and it is to activate a recently vacated building located in their downtown. Their vision for the space is a retail business focused on women's clothing or a sportsman/outfitter shop. With this vision, they are hoping to start a trend with business owners to improve and market their empty buildings to take an active role in filling their downtown vacancies.

Through collaborative efforts of Main Street Willow Springs' board members, volunteers, business owners, and others, the organization plans to utilize this vacant storefront to house a mockup of what the interior could look like if it was occupied with a women's clothing store and then shift to a mockup of a

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sportsman/outfitter store. This rotating pop-up display with realtor contact information will impact not only their district, but their community by drawing interest and emphasizing the need and potential to new entrepreneurs to the area.

Gayla Roten, State Director, commented that “Main Street Willow Springs’ use of the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) data from the workshop and their 18-month timeline and activities plan were key factors in the decision to choose Main Street Willow Springs.”

ESRI data is a collection of demographic, psychographic, and socioeconomic data, with over 15,000 data variables reflecting where communities have strength and where there are areas economically to be improved.

Main Street Willow Springs’ vision for the space and rotating business displays emphasizing the time of year for retail and their research submitted in their application impressed MMSC ultimately leading to their selection for the grant.

For more information on this project and its progress contact Christy Graves at 417-252-3013 or gravesc2017@gmail.com