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Downtown Joplin Alliance Awarded Outstanding Development Project, Accredited & Associate Tier Award.

Missouri Main Street Connection Inc. (MMSC) presented downtown revitalization awards recognizing revitalization excellence during Missouri's Premier Downtown Revitalization Conference in Kansas City on August 5, 2022. The event was hosted at the Kansas City Marriott Downtown.

Missouri Main Street Connection is the leading statewide nonprofit organization devoted to preservation-based economic development. Through the Main Street America™ movement and our partners, we empower community revitalization by celebrating, supporting, and sustaining Missouri historic commercial districts in both rural and urban settings.

MMSC is proud to announce that we have been celebrating one billion dollars in public and private investment in Missouri Main Street districts. This milestone was reached at the end of 2021. In addition, Missouri Main Street communities have created 5,069 net new jobs and 1,068 net new businesses from 2006-2021.

The ceremony Friday night honored communities, individuals, businesses, and organizations from across the state that have completed exemplary work in downtown revitalization. Competitive nominations were submitted for projects, activities, and individuals in 16 different categories that covered aspects of design, economic vitality, organization, promotion, and other efforts in downtown revitalization.

Outstanding Development Project, Accredited and Associate Tier Awarded to Downtown Joplin Alliance.

The Willard Hotel was built in 1901 and has served for 115 years as commercial space on the ground floor with a hotel and apartments upstairs when Jeremy and Lori Haun purchased the building in 2016. At the time of the purchase, the upper floor was a series of individual rooms sharing a hall bath, much in the way it would have been in 1901.

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Finishes were worn and equipment was failing. The first floor hadn't been occupied for decades.

When the Willard came up for sale, the Hauns wanted to invest in the future of downtown. They had driven past this building for years and knew that during the 1970s and through the next 50 years, downtown had lost half of its historic properties...some by neglect and some due to fires.

Clean up started on the building in 2019 with construction starting in 2020, just as a pandemic was taking over the world. Regardless, progress continued and now the building houses three commercial spaces, all rented, and six modern apartments on the upper floor, all also rented. The storefronts are no longer boarded up and now boast large, open glass fronts welcoming customers once again. The second floor has a skylight creating a bright and airy hallway for new apartments sporting granite countertops, oak floors, and stainless-steel appliances.

This renovation has spilled over into the adjacent building, the Muir, that will be completed in the fall of 2022.

For more information on this award contact Downtown Joplin Alliance's Executive Director Lori Haun at 417-529-3888 or lori@downtownjoplin.com.