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Washington's Shoe Factory Lofts Awarded the Outstanding Economic Impact Project, Accredited and 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 Economic Impact Project, Accredited and Associate Tier Awarded to Downtown Washington, Inc.

Once the main industry in the city of Washington, the International Shoe Factory's production peaked during World War II when military shoes and boots were made by more than 1,000 employees. The red brick building is tied to the early history of Washington with the first

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building in the complex being built in the early 1900s. Unfortunately, the shoe factory wound down operations between 1959 and 1961 and had been used as storage space until Ed Schmelz, owner of ELS Properties, purchased the building and began rehabilitation in 2020. The building now hosts 85 apartments with both one and two-bedrooms ranging from 610 square feet to over 1,000 square feet. The \$9 million renovation created much needed housing for young professionals.

The amenities include a large lobby with a complimentary coffee bar, laundry facilities, game room, dog park, dog washing station, meeting room, and picnic tables with outdoor grills. The finishes in the apartments reflect the historic building with exposed beams and high ceilings but also includes high end finishes with quartz countertops, subway tile, and stainless-steel appliances. The owner's vision was to take a landmark in the community and turn it into housing that is desired by a younger demographic, hopefully preventing them from leaving the community because of lack of appropriate housing.

For more information on this award contact Downtown Washington, Inc.'s Executive Director Tyler King at 636-239-1743 or tyler@downtownwashmo.org.