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October 15, 2019

PRESS RELEASE

Smithville Receives Downtown Revitalization Grant from Missouri Main Street

Contact: Gayla Roten, State Director, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.
PO Box 1066, Branson, MO 65615; phone: 417-334-3014.

The City of Smithville has been selected in a competitive application process to participate in a cost-sharing Community Empowerment Grant that provides training, mentoring, and technical services to revitalization programs in Missouri's historic commercial districts. The grant is provided by Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc. (MMSC)

MMSC staff will visit with Smithville's downtown community leaders to evaluate existing and future needs of the downtown, and then schedule a series of customized training and mentoring sessions equipping them to concentrate on their local revitalization goals. MMSC State Director Gayla Roten noted, "The Community Empowerment Grant will help Smithville maximize on the recent improvements made in the downtown to create a sustainable organization that preserves the culture of the community while revitalizing the economy of downtown."

The goal of the grant is the development of a sustainable, volunteer-based organization that will carry out an economic development program based on the preservation of historic assets in the downtown, using the Main Street Four-Point Approach® to Revitalization.

With support from MMSC, the Smithville revitalization group anticipates:

- Capitalizing on the community's proximity to Smithville Lake and the annual visitors it draws to the area.
- Building on the recent streetscape and infrastructure improvements in downtown Smithville to further revitalize the district.
- Fostering growth in the businesses of the district - both the current businesses as well as new businesses that open in the downtown.

During the next two years, MMSC will provide Smithville with training and mentoring to establish a revitalization organization that will engage the entire community as a participant and beneficiary. The group also will attend regional revitalization workshops and conferences conducted by MMSC.

The Community Empowerment Grant is a 40/60 match, requiring the community to contribute 40% of the cash value of the services. The total value of the grant in training and mentoring services is \$24,000. Smithville also is now designated as an Affiliate in the Missouri Main Street Tier Structure which ranks progress on standards established by the *National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Center*.