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January 17, 2020

PRESS RELEASE

Downtown Marceline wins Activation Storefront Grant from Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc.

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.

Contact: Gayla Roten, State Director, Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc., PO Box 1066, Branson, MO 65616; phone: 417-334-3014.

Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc. (MMSC) selected two winning applications for the Activation of Storefront Grant on January 10, 2020, 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 and 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 two communities for storefront activation plus \$1,000 in architecture fees of storefront design. The goal for the recipient community is to transform an empty storefront and showcase an idea for a new business needed in the community. A workshop was held to dive into market driven data to determine what type of business that each community could support. Applications for the grant were submitted, with MMSC selecting two winning communities. The communities 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 communities.

Downtown Marceline wins Activation Storefront Grant.

Downtown Marceline's plan for their project is to activate the long-vacant south storefront of the historic Zurcher Building located in their downtown. After a financial gift made to Downtown Marceline in July 2019, they were able to purchase the Zurcher Building. The Zurcher Building has a long history of serving Marceline as the Knights of Pythius Lodge, Zurcher's Jewelry Store,

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official time keeper of the Santa Fe Railroad, and the inspiration for Walt Disney's Coke Corner located in Main Street USA at Disneyland and Disney World attractions.

Through collaborative efforts with three community groups that include Downtown Marceline, the Marceline Rotary Club, and Marceline High School Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) Club, they plan to energize the south half of the Zurcher Building. This project will utilize concepts from a young entrepreneur competition as part of FBLA American Enterprise Day to conceive of possible uses for the space.

Gayla Roten, State Director, commented that "Downtown Marceline has a vast amount of community engagement but, more importantly, there are partnerships with local groups for this project. It's amazing to see the engagement of the young entrepreneurs from FBLA and additional opportunities for economic development working together on this project."

MMSC ultimately decided on Downtown Marceline for their 18-month timeline and activities submitted in their application, their use of the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) data from the workshop, their vision for the space, and the community engagement and partnerships from local organizations and entrepreneurial school groups.

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.

For more information on this project and its progress contact Toni Sportsman at 660-734-8028 or toni.sportsman@downtownmarceline.org