

Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation: Jefferson to host Wisconsin Main Street Day celebration on July 24

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State officials will join local leaders in six communities to highlight the role that downtown business districts play in Wisconsin's economy

The Jefferson Chamber of Commerce will take part in a statewide celebration of downtown business districts in the third annual Wisconsin Main Street Day event on Wednesday, July 24.

Jefferson is one of six communities selected to take part in local Main Street Day celebrations that will feature state and local officials and community leaders. The day highlights downtowns' importance in their communities' overall economy and celebrates the many successes of Wisconsin's commercial business districts.

The Foremost Buildings Inc. building, a historically significant former industrial property located at 138 W. Candise St., has stood vacant since 2012. In June, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) announced that the City of Jefferson is receiving a \$250,000 Community Development Investment Grant to

help fund a \$10 million redevelopment project of the mixed-use Riverside Lofts. The new construction will include a new apartment building and artist incubator studio. Jefferson's ceremony will take place at 8 a.m. and will feature, Jefferson Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Jen Pinnow, Gorman Companies Wisconsin Market President Tedd Matkom and Mayor Dale Oppermann.

The public is invited to join the Wisconsin Main Street Day celebration. Participants, attendees and the media are invited to use the hashtag #WIMainSt when mentioning the event on social media.

Lt. Governor Barnes, WEDC Deputy Secretary Tricia R. Braun and other officials will each visit the communities to celebrate the success of the Wisconsin Main Street and Connect Communities Programs, which provide technical support and training for organizations dedicated to downtown or commercial corridor revitalization. Many of the events also will include announcements about local business openings and other new initiatives by the downtown groups.

"WEDC leadership looks forward to visiting Jefferson on Wisconsin Main Street Day to celebrate all the great efforts here to enhance the downtown business district," said Braun. "We look forward to not only highlighting the recent successes but also learning more about upcoming initiatives planned for downtown that help make Jefferson a great place to live, work and play."

The Wisconsin Main Street Program, overseen by WEDC and launched in 1987, provides support and training for organizations dedicated to downtown revitalization efforts. Since the program's creation, Wisconsin Main Street communities have created more than 2,700 net new businesses and more than 14,000 net new jobs, spurring more than \$1.9 billion in public and private investment in downtowns.

Created in 2013, WEDC's Wisconsin Connect Communities Program is designed to provide training and networking opportunities for communities or organizations working on revitalization efforts. In the last six years, participating communities have created more than 300 net new businesses and nearly 1,700 net new jobs, spurring more than \$1.2 billion in public and private investment in downtowns.

Jefferson joined Connect Communities in 2016 and rejoined this year after a one-

year hiatus when the local organization lost its director.