

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AND RURAL AFFAIRS

MAIN STREET

Main Street Monthly

A monthly publication from the Office of Community and Rural Affairs



Tell us how you are celebrating Downtown Development Week

We are counting down to this inaugural week! And as a part of our celebration, we want to help promote **all** of your planned events. Whether these events are planned especially for DDW or not, we know its a special time for all Hoosiers to visit their downtowns. It's not too late to plan an event if one is not planned already.

The possibilities are endless! You don't have to plan anything big or expensive to celebrate your downtown. Transform regular activities such as a farmers market into a downtown themed event. Indiana loves celebrating and showcasing all of the great things that make us Hoosiers!

[Click this link](#) and complete the form for each planned event. If you know of other organizations holding events during that time, please pass the link to them, as well.

OCRA wants to celebrate along with you by promoting your events! We will compile all the events into an interactive map and promote them through social media. The map will be located on our [DDW website](#).

We will have the map available once we start populating it with your events!

The Taste of Michigan City event gathered more than 8,000 residents

Important Dates

Broadband Readiness Planning Grant Pilot - online submissions **due 4 PM on September 4**

Grant Administrator Certification 301 - Sept. 5-7

Grant Administrator Certification 101 - Sept. 12

Main Street Community Exchange - Friday, Sept. 28, in New Albany (Floyd county)

We are planning a Broadband Summit for **October 18**. Look for more information to be released soon!

[View our full calendar.](#)

Register for the upcoming community exchange

Join us in Historic New Albany on Friday, Sept. 28 for the Main Street Community Exchange. Topics of discussion include promotions and marketing. A few speaker include some local entrepreneurs, the Indiana Small Business Development Center and also updates from various Indiana Main Street organizations. Breakfast, lunch and snack are included in the \$30 fee.

- [Click here to register.](#)



New Broadband Director and planning grant



At the beginning of August, the Michigan City Mainstreet Association hosted the 9th annual Taste of Michigan City in the Uptown Arts District.

Festival goers had the opportunity to indulge in cuisine from dozens of local food vendors. The beer garden featured craft beer and wine from local breweries and wineries. Entertainment included more than fifteen different musical acts covering an array of genres.

The Taste of Michigan City first began in 2010 as a way to give exposure to local restaurants over the course of one weekend in one central location. It was also an opportunity to bring people into the Uptown Arts District. The Michigan City Mainstreet Association has worked diligently to expand the event over the years. This year's festival gathered more than **8,000 people**.

Congratulations the Michigan City Mainstreet Association on a successful event!



Character Counts: How to create a sense of place in your community

From Strong Towns

If there's one thing I've learned on my journey it's that sameness inspires no one. Different attracts, excites, and engages us. This is true of residents and tourists alike. No one wants to live in a place that's just like every other place, and there's no reason for anyone else to visit it, either.

This truth should be driving your development. No one comes to a town for a wonderful mall or a highway lined with big box stores. Don't get me wrong; residents may use these things and find them valuable—but we also need fun, lively, walkable, livable downtowns. We need quaint shops. We need locally owned restaurants. We need cool architecture. We need character.

The less you look like everyone else and the more you look like yourself, the better off you'll be. In fact, creating a distinctive sense of place is your competitive advantage. When a community's leaders keep their focus on creating a unique place that people want to be, the local economy tends to thrive. Businesses want to move in. Young people don't have to leave to find jobs. The best talent flocks to such communities.

[Click here to continued reading.](#)

Have you checked out the new Microlearning Center?

OCRA is excited to launch a series of micro-learning videos designed as a resource to assist communities with capacity building, developing partnerships, and strengthening

On Aug. 16, Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch announced Scott Rudd will serve as the state's new Director of Broadband Opportunities.

Rudd most recently served as the town manager and economic development director for the town of Nashville, Ind. There he oversaw seven town commissions, three task forces, directed four departments and served as the town's public information officer over the course of the last four years.

As a part of the task set forth for the director of broadband opportunities, Rudd will be working with OCRA on their Broadband Readiness Plan in the Community Development Block Grant Planning Grants program.

The planning grants will be awarded to five communities as a pilot program, and interested communities must complete a survey, by Tuesday, Sept. 4, to be considered for the planning grant. The communities will then form a plan that will work on the current broadband conditions, creating a long term vision based on their needs and identifying solutions for achieving that vision.

Visit in.gov/ocra/2371.htm for more information.

7 Ways To Bring Your Main Street On Screen

from the Main Street Blog

The value of a marketing campaign for your Main Street is difficult to overstate: pictures, videos, and stories that shine a little light on the wonders of your town can encourage tourists (and even locals!) to step out and contribute to your community. A well-run campaign can even be a gift that keeps on giving, encouraging people to capture their own experiences and share their time with friends and family who might, in turn, do the same. You don't need to be a big-name district to make a video that goes viral; you just need to know what you're doing.

But like the old saying goes, if it were easy, everyone would do it! Managing your limited time and budget and designing a campaign that showcases the year-round magic of your district — or perhaps highlighting a few main events — can be hard for a busy office with limited time and seemingly unlimited demands on it.

[Click here to continue reading.](#)



leadership. This series was included as a part of OCRA's Strategic Plan for Rural Indiana, released this past May.

"Our micro-learning videos will help inform and educate our rural constituents on best practices being used and other relevant topics," said Jodi Golden, Executive Director of OCRA.

These twenty-five minute videos will cover a variety of topics, including board development, succession planning, trail funding, health, volunteer engagement and asset mapping. These presentations are designed to further conversations, provide resources and enhance collaboration within the state. Each are led by a content expert at a partner agency, organization or not for profit.

Released on the second Wednesday of every month, a new video will be launched and ready to view. The first video is titled "AmeriCorps – Getting Things Done in Hoosier Communities" and is presented by [Prosperity Indiana](#). Prosperity Indiana supports a network of organizations that build vital communities and resilient families.

For more information, visit www.in.gov/ocra/2918.htm

Join or renew your membership

Be a part of a national network of Main Streets. Visit mainstreet.org or call 312-619-5611 to join Main Street America.



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