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OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AND RURAL AFFAIRS

MAIN STREET

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Main Street Monthly

A monthly publication from the Office of Community and Rural Affairs



Crouch, OCRA unveil rural strategic plan, focus on broadband availability

On May 23, the OCRA unveiled their rural strategy on how to better support and elevate Indiana’s rural communities at a public announcement in Greensburg, Ind.

The public announcement touched on the strategic priorities, which provides the agency’s tactical direction over the next few years. Each priority, which is outlined below, includes several key initiatives that frame how the agency will work to accomplish these initiatives:

- Provide opportunities and programs focused on people and place-based investments;
- Expand as a trusted resource for rural Indiana;
- Build capacity of rural leadership;
- Support economic growth and preservation in the downtown and commercial districts; and

Important Dates

Quick Impact Placebased (QulP) Grant Applications Due – Friday, June 1

CDBG Round 1 Site Visits / Follow Up – Monday, June 4 to Friday, June 22

[View our full calendar.](#)



Mark your calendars!

The next Main Street exchange is scheduled for **July 13** in the Town of Hope. The theme for this event is **Historic Preservation**. More information will be released on the agenda and how to register soon. We hope to see you all there!

Placemaking workshops are scheduled!

OCRA is sponsoring two-day workshops titled “Placemaking

- Facilitate strategies to address rural broadband access.

OCRA is excited about a new placemaking grant opportunity for Main Street communities that is currently being planned. We will release more information later on this year.

[Click here](#) to view the entire strategy.



Two Indiana Main Streets are finalists for America's Main Street Contest

Main Streets are really the heartbeat of America's cities and towns. They play an important part in the long-term success of communities and really help build a sense of place. When Main Streets are strong, so are the communities that surround them.

[Logansport Main Street](#) and [Jeffersonville Main Street](#) are quarterfinalists in the America's Main Street contest! Vote daily until **May 27** to help one of them win \$25,000.

The goal of the America's Main Streets contest is to help promote the importance and strong economic benefits of these Main Streets and the small businesses that help them thrive. Please help us by nominating and telling us about a deserving Main Street. The winning Main Street will receive \$25,000 in cash and related prizes to help revitalize that Main Street. The winner is scheduled to be announced on June 4.

Four simple things your town can do to make life easier for developers

by [Rachel Quednau](#) from *Strong Towns*

[Small-scale developers](#) are the entrepreneurial spirits quietly working to make towns stronger across America. They're young people like my colleague Kea, who [just bought a four-family apartment](#) near her home in St. Louis and is fixing it up for affordable, high-quality housing. They're seasoned developers like Monte Anderson who, rather than taking the easy path of luxury real estate, [chose to stay in their struggling neighborhoods](#) and fill empty storefronts and apartments with new businesses and families.

for Main Streets" in six communities across Indiana. These workshops help communities learn how to create and transform a public space into a place where people want to live, work, eat and play. From Minneapolis, Minnesota, The Musicant Group will show communities a systematic and holistic approach combining artful design, readily available materials and simple construction methods to create inexpensive alterations to a public space. These communities will have a temporary public placemaking installation created and built by workshop participants.

Main Street organizations and community leaders are welcome to register. The 2018 workshop dates are:

July 23 & 24: Lafayette

July 26 & 27: Bloomington

Sept 10 & 11: Angola

Sept 13 & 14: Plymouth

Oct 8 & 9: Bargersville

Oct 11 & 12: Marion/Gas City

Links to register for these workshops will be available soon. There is no cost to attend but a limited number of seats are available.



Downtown Development Week info coming soon

From October 8 – 14, the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) want to join all Indiana towns and cities to celebrate their downtowns during the inaugural Downtown Development Week. Tomorrow, OCRA will release more information about this week and details of a contest to bring the Lt. Governor to your community during the week. Be sure to stay tuned!

Check back [to our website](#) tomorrow to read more in the week.

Taking a structure to the next increment of development is how we create lasting wealth that will support a town for generations to come.

Unfortunately though, while converting a single family home into a modest duplex or renovating a vacant storefront for a new shop should be some of the most basic, simple processes for anyone to undertake, our cities make these sorts of developments very challenging. Rules about everything from how many parking spaces a property needs to how big a bedroom must be end up crowding out so much potential development in our communities. Even the very processes by which a developer gets approval for a project or learns what's required for that project in the first place can be prohibitive for a small time developer without a team of lawyers and a bottomless bank account.

[Click here](#) to continue reading.



City honors veterans with banner program

The City of Batesville proudly honors the brave men and women who have served in the United States Armed Forces through its Military Recognition Banner Program.

This project will showcase at least 55 banners which will be displayed from Memorial Day to Veterans Day for consecutive years on light poles around downtown Batesville. This military recognition program will also include a walking guide with biographical information and the opportunity for families to receive their banner as a keepsake at the conclusion of the program.

[CLICK HERE FOR BANNER APPLICATION.](#)

“This is our way of thanking the veterans and active duty servicemen and women in a more personalized fashion for the sacrifices they've made,” said Mayor Mike Bettice. “They were willing to leave our comfortable and safe community to go into harms way and make the world a better place, we can never thank them enough.”

Community members are welcome to submit a service member, living or deceased, who lives in the Batesville area. An application is attached to this news release and is available at the Memorial Building or online at www.batesvilleindiana.us.

Pictures in uniform are preferred in a high-quality, high-resolution digital format. If you do not have a digital copy, please bring the picture to the Memorial Building along with the application and the designer will be able to digitize the photo and return it to you in an appropriate time frame.

Submission process: Submissions will be chosen on a first-come, first-serve basis and be verified by a committee that represents organizations such as the VFW and the American Legion. If the service member is living, he or she must approve their participation in the program.

INDOT accepting Local Trax matching grant applications

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) reminds Indiana cities, towns, and counties that the agency is accepting applications for the Local Trax matching grant program through Aug. 31, 2018.

Local Trax provides at least \$125 million in state matching funds for communities interested in pursuing high-priority railroad grade separations, crossing closures, and other safety enhancements at railroad intersections with local roads.

INDOT began accepting project proposals from local agencies on May 1, 2018. The application window will remain open until Aug. 31 and INDOT expects to announce awards in late summer. Local Trax requires local governments to provide only 20 percent of funding for land acquisition and construction with the state providing the other 80 percent.

[Visit this website](#) to learn more about Local Trax and how to apply.

The goal of Local Trax is to encourage partnership between the state, local governments, private businesses, and railroads to increase safety, improve mobility, and enhance the quality of life for Hoosiers.

Want to be featured?

Has your Main Street Community recently finished a project, held an exciting event, or you are just proud of your organization? Tell us about it!

Email [Mary Shaw](mailto:Mary.Shaw@batesvilleindiana.us) to submit stories and photos for the chance to be featured as the community spotlight in next month's newsletter. Previous issues of the newsletter [can be found here](#).

Those seeking more information may contact Community Development Director [Steven Harmeyer](#) at (812) 933-6116.



On the safe side: providing safe sidewalks on your Main Street

As summer is upon us, it's important for Main Streets to ensure that they're providing safe, walkable spaces for pedestrians. Sidewalk cafes help to increase a street's walkability, as they provide an opportunity for visitors to linger and enjoy a space. Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) suggests four strategies for keeping these areas safe:

- 1. Reduce traffic speed near sidewalk cafes.** According to CNU, cars in these areas should be moving no faster than people are walking. The absolute maximum speed that should be permitted is 35-40 mph.
- 2. Use bollards as barriers** between traffic and sidewalk cafe diners. They will increase both actual safety, and cafe goers' perception of safety.
- 3. Implement sturdy, decorative planters** as a second line of defense. They'll add an additional layer of safety while beautifying the space.
- 4. Take advantage of on-street parking**, especially on streets with faster-moving traffic. A row of parked cars between a sidewalk cafe and the street can further amplify safety.

For more tips on keeping sidewalk gathering areas safe, [click here](#).



Join or renew your membership with the National Main Street Center by visiting mainstreet.org or calling 312-610-5611.



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