**PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release                                             Contact:       Dan Howe**

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**DOWNTOWN FRANKLIN ASSOCIATION**

**Receives 2019 National Main Street Accreditation**

*Franklin, VA April 26, 2019 –* *The Downtown Franklin Association* has been designated as an accredited Main Street America™ program for meeting rigorous performance standards set by the National Main Street Center. Each year, the National Main Street Center and its partners announce the list of accredited Main Street America programs to recognize their exemplary commitment to preservation-based economic development and community revitalization through the Main Street Approach™

“We are proud to acknowledge this year’s 840 nationally accredited Main Street America programs that have worked tirelessly to strengthen their communities. said Patrice Frey, President & CEO of the National Main Street Center. “These programs deserve recognition for generating impressive economic returns, preserving community character, and celebrating local history. Main Street America Accredited communities are part of a powerful movement of changemakers, and their dedication to improving quality of life in the places they call home is inspiring.

In 2018 alone, Main Street America programs generated $4.93 billion in local reinvestment, helped open 5,310 net new businesses, generated 25,301 net new jobs, catalyzed the rehabilitation of 8,146historic buildings, and clocked 2.2 million volunteer hours.

The Downtown Franklin Association’s performance is annually evaluated by Virginia Main Street, Department of Housing and Community Development, which works in partnership with the National Main Street Center to identify the local programs that meet ten national performance standards. Evaluation criteria determines the communities that are building comprehensive and sustainable revitalization efforts and include standards such as fostering strong public-private partnerships, documenting programmatic progress, and actively preserving historic buildings.

In 2018, The Downtown Franklin Association had a total of 2,527 volunteer hours from citizens, DFA Board members and staff. They provided a co-op advertising program which assisted downtown businesses in advertising. They also provided a façade/security grant program that assisted downtown Franklin businesses. The Downtown Franklin Association brought forth the First StartUp Downtown Franklin Program in 2017 and the program is now in it’s third round with great support from organizations and surrounding communities. Fundraising events were also put on and had total attendance of over 5,585 people.

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**ABOUT DOWNTOWN FRANKLIN ASSOCIATION**

The Downtown Franklin Association (DFA) is the volunteer-driven organization that oversees the Main Street Program for Franklin. We are a 501 (c) (3) corporation that exists to grow, nurture, and support the vitality of historic downtown, the heart of Franklin. Our vision is to make downtown Franklin the place of choice to live, work, play and grow by pursuing economic partnerships and advocating local business growth, while enhancing the quality of life for our community and visitors.

The Downtown Franklin Association is about giving back to our downtown community and it’s working!

**ABOUT MAIN STREET AMERICA**

[Main Street America](https://www.mainstreet.org) has been helping revitalize older and historic commercial districts for more than 35 years. Today, it is a network of more than 1,600 neighborhoods and communities, rural and urban, who share both a commitment to place and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development. Since 1980, communities participating in the program have leveraged more than $79.12 billion in new public and private investment, generated640,017 net new jobs and 143,613 net new businesses, and rehabilitated more than 284,936 buildings. Main Street America is a program of the nonprofit National Main Street Center, a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.