



EMBARGOED UNTIL MONDAY, APRIL 7, 11AM CST

CONTACT: Brenda Ferri
Executive Director
Raton MainStreet
bferri@ratonmainstreet.org

**RATON MAINSTREET EARNS 2025 GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARD
FOR EXCELLENCE IN DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION
A Success Story in Resiliency and Historic Preservation**

RATON, NM (April 7, 2025) – Main Street America announced today that **Raton MainStreet** in Raton, New Mexico, has received the prestigious **Great American Main Street Award (GAMSA)**, which recognizes communities for their excellence in comprehensive preservation-based commercial district revitalization. The 2025 GAMSA honors, sponsored by The Hartford, were presented at the opening plenary for the Main Street Now Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Selected by a national jury of industry professionals and local leaders in the fields of economic development and historic preservation, Raton MainStreet is recognized for its exemplary implementation of public improvement projects and historic preservation.

“Raton MainStreet’s remarkable revitalization efforts showcase the power of preservation-based economic development,” said Erin Barnes, President and CEO at Main Street America. “With decisive leadership and a community-focused commitment to historic preservation, they have not only honored Raton’s storied past but also built the foundation for a vibrant and resilient community for generations to come.”

For over 100 years, Raton was a major railroad, mining and ranching hub. But when the last coal mines in the area closed in the early 2000s, Raton suffered a significant loss in jobs and population. Disinvestment in public and private property soon followed, leading to a deterioration of Raton’s historic downtown district.

To address these challenges, Raton MainStreet worked closely with New Mexico MainStreet and the City of Raton to implement major public improvements, including a \$2.2 million upgrade of infrastructure and streetscapes, revitalizing three blocks in the downtown district.

Employing the Main Street Approach™, Raton MainStreet also worked closely with the City of Raton and other state agencies to support preservation-based economic development efforts, resulting in the restoration and rehabilitation of several historic sites, including the El Raton Theatre (ca. 1930), Yucca Hotel (ca. 1929), and Shuler Theater (ca. 1913).

Since 2021, Raton MainStreet has provided over \$25,000 in grants to 29 local businesses, 19 of which were women-owned, to help businesses with much needed repairs and updates.

These extraordinary efforts have resulted in a renewed and economically resilient community that supports growth and opportunity, while still honoring the main street's historical and cultural heritage.

"We are deeply honored to be recognized as a 2025 GAMSA winner," said Brenda Ferri, Executive Director at Raton MainStreet. "This award is a validation of the dedication of our board members, volunteers, business and property owners, and local and state partners who together have worked tirelessly to revitalize downtown Raton. Through collaboration and the Main Street Approach, we've been able to successfully transform Raton into a thriving community, while honoring our rich history."

Raton MainStreet is the second Main Street in New Mexico to be awarded the prestigious Great American Main Street Award. Silver City MainStreet was a recipient in 2011.

###

ABOUT THE GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARDS

The Great American Main Street Award program recognizes communities exemplifying the use of the Main Street Approach™ to revitalize commercial districts. Winners are selected from a nationwide pool of applicants by a jury of Main Street professionals and leaders in the fields of community and economic development and historic preservation. Since the award's inception in 1995, over 110 Main Street programs have been honored as GAMSA communities. For more information, visit mainstreet.org.

ABOUT MAIN STREET AMERICA

Main Street America leads a movement committed to strengthening communities through preservation-based economic development in older and historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts. For more than 40 years, Main Street America has provided a practical, adaptable, and impactful framework for community-driven, comprehensive revitalization through the Main Street Approach™. Our network of more than 1,200 neighborhoods and communities, rural and urban, share both a commitment to place and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development. For more information, visit mainstreet.org.

ABOUT RATON MAINSTREET

Raton MainStreet is made up of committed members of the community dedicated to improving the quality of life in Raton by revitalizing the downtown area, fostering business prosperity, and offering new economic opportunities. Raton MainStreet seeks to have a community where all generations can have a sense of pride in Raton and all cultures feel respect for their heritage. For more information, visit ratonmainstreet.org.