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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**TWO COMMUNITIES RECEIVE 2026 MAIN STREET ALABAMA DESIGNATION**

**BIRMINGHAM, Ala.** - Main Street Alabama continues to expand its statewide reach by selecting two communities for Designation. The new communities are Dothan and Selma and will begin receiving technical services this month.

"Main Street Alabama designation requires thoughtful preparation, strong local collaboration, and long-term commitment," said Mary Helmer Wirth, President and State Coordinator of Main Street Alabama. "We're proud to work alongside communities as they build sustainable revitalization programs focused on economic development, historic preservation, and ongoing community engagement."

In Dothan (pop. 71,072), the proposed Main Street district encompasses the city's historic downtown core centered around Main Street, Foster Street, Troy Street, and adjacent corridors. The district includes historic commercial buildings, civic facilities, cultural venues, restaurants, offices, and public gathering spaces. Recent public and private investment downtown includes the renovation of the Dothan Opera House, development of Porter Park and Events Plaza, construction of the Wiregrass Innovation Center, and a new downtown City Hall campus currently under development. Dothan's application identified priorities including increased business recruitment and retention, redevelopment of vacant and underutilized buildings, expansion of downtown housing opportunities, preservation of historic structures, and improvements to walkability, connectivity, and downtown programming.

Selma (pop. 17,971) joins the program with a downtown district centered on Water Avenue and Old Town Historic Districts, which together contain some of the state's most significant historic resources. Selma's downtown includes historic commercial buildings, museums, churches, hotels, arts spaces, and civic institutions connected to the city's role in Alabama history and the Civil Rights Movement. The community's priorities focus on adaptive reuse of historic structures, expansion of loft housing, streetscape and pedestrian improvements, business development, tourism promotion, and increased use of downtown parks and riverfront assets. Recent public and private investment projects include infrastructure improvements, restoration work along Water Avenue, redevelopment planning efforts following the January 2023 tornado, and continued rehabilitation of historic buildings including the St. James Hotel and multiple Water Avenue properties.

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Main Street Alabama will begin work immediately in these communities to provide board development, goal setting, work planning, market study with economic development strategies, targeted design assistance, and training related to district development.

Main Street Alabama is a private non-profit and state coordinating program of Main Street America. The National Main Street Four Point Approach™ is a nearly 50 -year model that focuses work in four areas: organization, design, promotion, and economic vitality with strategies unique to the community and based on market-based outcome. “Community input and market data help shape achievable goals, but the real strength of revitalization comes from bringing people to the table and working together toward a common vision,” said Wirth.

Dothan and Selma join Alexander City, Anniston, Athens, Atmore, Birmingham’s 4th Avenue Business District, Birmingham’s Woodlawn District, Calera, Centreville, Columbiana, Decatur, Demopolis, Elba, Enterprise, Eufaula, Florence, Foley, Fort Payne, Gadsden, Heflin, Jasper, LaFayette, Leeds, Madison, Marion, Monroeville, Montevallo, Montgomery, Opelika, Oxford, Russellville, Scottsboro, South Huntsville, Talladega and Wetumpka in using Main Street’s comprehensive and incremental revitalization approach.

Each Designated community listed above reports their success by tracking their reinvestment statistics. Main Street Alabama’s Designated communities have reported 1,539 net new businesses, 4,645 net new jobs, \$1,169,960,165 in private investment, \$247,681,891 in public improvements, and 266,961 volunteer hours in their districts collectively since June of 2014.

Main Street Alabama Application workshops are held in January each year. Communities interested in learning more about the program are encouraged to join the Main Street Alabama Network. Communities must be in the Main Street Alabama Network program for a minimum of one year before being eligible to apply for designation. More information can be found at [www.mainstreetalabama.org](http://www.mainstreetalabama.org).

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