



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mary Helmer Wirth, President & State Coordinator

(205) 910-8819

mary@mainstreetalabama.org

MAIN STREET ALABAMA APPOINTS SIX NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Birmingham, Ala. (Feb. 26, 2026) —Main Street Alabama, Alabama’s downtown revitalization organization, recently announced the appointment of five new members to its Board of Directors, as well as its 2026 Main Street director liaison.

Candace Johnson, CTP, TMP, who serves as director of tourism and community engagement with the University of Alabama Office for Business Engagement Services is one of six new members. She brings a wealth of experience in strategic planning, training, and fostering community and business partnerships.

Alabama Farmers Federation Executive Director Paul Pinyan also joins the board and brings extensive experience in leadership and advocacy throughout the state.

Dr. Joel Billingsly, an associate professor at the University of South Alabama, centers his teaching philosophies on creating a community of learners. His focus on instructional design and technology will undoubtedly enhance the board's capabilities, as well.

Another strategic fit for the Main Street board is Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association Vice President of Operations Angie Pierce, who brings over 25 years in the tourism industry.

Overseeing city services in the City of Gadsden is Director Tena King, who is not only a successful small business owner but has served in many leadership positions with several impactful organizations across the region.

Finally, DeAnna Hand, who currently serves as the executive director of Lafayette Main Street, will take the liaison place on the board, which is annually filled by a local director in one of Main Street Alabama’s 34 designated communities.

“We look forward to another productive year of work in Alabama’s Main Street communities, adding to a wonderful roster of capable and connected individuals committed to revitalizing the state’s charming and authentic downtown communities,” said Mary Helmer Wirth, Main Street Alabama President & State Coordinator.

Main Street Alabama is a non-profit organization which stresses public-private partnerships, broad community engagement, and strategies that create jobs, spark new investment, attract visitors, and spur growth in core commercial districts. Main Street builds on the authentic history, culture, and attributes of specific places, to bring sustainable change.