



Commonwealth of Virginia

Office of Governor Terry McAuliffe

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: March 28, 2016

Office of the Governor

Contact: Brian Coy

Email: brian.coy@governor.virginia.gov

Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development

Contact: Amanda Pearson

Phone: (804) 840-0129

Email: amanda.pearson@dhcd.virginia.gov

Governor McAuliffe Announces Designation of Four New Virginia Main Street Communities

*~ Program offers assistance to communities for downtown revitalization
and business development ~*

RICHMOND – Governor Terry McAuliffe today announced the designation of four communities in the Virginia Main Street (VMS) program, administered by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The newly-designated communities include the town of Wytheville, the cities of Danville and Lexington and Gloucester Courthouse in Gloucester County. The communities were selected based on their Main Street organization's preparedness to identify, plan and implement programs and services for the defined downtown district, the target area of responsibility.

"We welcome these new communities into the Virginia Main Street program," **said Governor McAuliffe**. "By leveraging our downtown assets and spurring public and private investments in these communities, we are sparking entrepreneurship and job creation in the heart of the Commonwealth and making strides in our efforts to build a new Virginia economy."

In Virginia, the Main Street Approach creates environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable downtown ecosystems. The approach focuses on Economic revitalization in the context of a historic downtown district, provides assessment services, technical assistance, training, access to grants and other initiatives and provides coordination with other DHCD programs to promote the revitalization of historic downtown districts throughout Virginia.

“Congratulations to these communities for their commitment to keeping downtowns vital and robust commercial districts,” said **Secretary of Commerce and Trade Maurice Jones**. “Historic downtowns have served as the soul of Virginia communities for generations and it’s important they remain assets for future generations.”

New VMS communities receive intensive direct services from DHCD staff and key consultants, including market analysis, marketplace development, capacity building, design assistance, organization development, economic restructuring strategies and façade renderings for redevelopment projects. These services are valued at approximately \$120,000 per community.

Since 1985, DHCD has been providing assistance to localities engaged in downtown commercial district revitalization through the VMS program using the National Main Street Center’s® successful Main Street Approach®. Main Street® is a comprehensive, incremental approach to downtown revitalization built around a community’s unique heritage, culture and historic built attributes. With the new designations, there are 29 Designated Virginia Main Street Communities.

In 2015, \$18.8 million was invested in VMS Districts through rehabilitations, façade improvement projects, and critical upgrades to make downtown aesthetically inviting, socially exciting, and economically thriving. Local governments invested more than \$19 million in public projects that improved their downtown districts. New business openings, business expansions, and relocations in Virginia’s 25 designated Main Street communities realized a net gain of 800 jobs.

Since 2010, private investment in Virginia Main Street Districts has topped \$167 million.

###

AB|asifbhavnagri

Office of Governor Terence R. McAuliffe

Press Special Assistant

804.971.8513

asif.bhavnagri@governor.virginia.gov

