COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
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Virginia Main Street accepting applications in 2007

Richmond, VA – Virginia Main Street, a program managed by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), has announced that it will be accepting competitive applications in 2007 for up to three designated Virginia Main Street (VMS) communities.

A Designated Virginia Main Street Community receives an array of intensive assistance to advance local revitalization efforts, including customized design assistance, access to state and national revitalization specialists, and training on key downtown issues, as well as ongoing marketing and promotion assistance.

VMS will hold two application workshops in January 2007 to help communities prepare for an April 20, 2007 submission deadline. Additional details about the application workshops will be available in December 2006. Communities interested in applying should contact VMS to discuss possible district boundaries, the local program's organizational structure and other specific questions related to eligibility as outlined in the Virginia Main Street Program Guidelines.

"Bringing businesses, jobs, and people back to our historic downtowns is essential to their successful revitalization," said DHCD Director Bill Shelton. "With more than $300 million in private reinvestment occurring in Main Street communities since 1985, this program is making a positive impact on the economic vitality of participating communities."

Communities interested in advancing their knowledge of downtown revitalization best practices, or who are considering applying for designation in the future, are encouraged to become a DHCD Commercial District Affiliate to benefit from trainings, networking, and access to a variety of resources about successful downtown revitalization strategies. The next VMS Training will take place in Berryville Sept. 20 and 21, 2006 and will focus on Economic Restructuring and Organization.

VMS uses the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street model to help communities revitalize their downtowns, focusing on their unique heritage and attributes. The program helps communities develop strategies that create economic growth and pride in their downtown areas.

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Communities selected for designation will be announced in the summer of 2007. Currently there are 20 designated Main Street communities in Virginia, along with 53 DHCD Commercial District Affiliate communities. In 2005, more than 2,000 downtown professionals, business and property owners, local government officials and other downtown stakeholders benefited from on-site Main Street services.

For more information about the Virginia Main Street Program, call (804) 371-7030 or visit: www.dhcd.virginia.gov/mainstreet.

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