Main Street Idea Pitch!
ANNOUNCEMENT

Do you have an idea for a new Main Street revitalization project idea you would like to start? Are you positive it's something that will be a slam-dunk success? Then you won't want to miss Virginia Main Street's first annual *Main Street Idea Pitch!* competition.

Event Info

Main Street Idea Pitch! is a downtown revitalization idea competition during Virginia Main Street's Downtown Intersections multi-day training, July 16-18, 2018. *The Main Street Idea Pitch!* competition will begin the morning Wednesday, July 18, and culminate with the winner announcement during the Virginia Main Street Merit Awards Luncheon.

The *Main Street Idea Pitch!* competition is geared towards stimulating the Virginia Main Street network of communities and professionals to craft imaginative Main Street project ideas. Projects should:

1. Connect to the community's vision to create vibrant, people-centered places to live, work, and invest.
2. Support the four key areas Main Street programs have been using as a guiding framework for over 35 years: Economic Vitality, effective Promotion, quality Design, and sustainable Organization.
3. Focus on highly visible changes, measuring progress, and results that demonstrate the revitalization effort is under way and succeeding.

Potential project ideas can include, but are not limited to:

- Non-profit organizational development
- Market studies and strategy development
- Downtown organization website development
- Design and place-making projects
- Destination development
- Entrepreneur support programs
- Buy local and extended store hours programs

Prizes

- $5,000 minimum prize to be distributed at judges' discretion
- All unfunded finalists receive Virginia Main Street staff technical assistance to help make the project competitive for either a Virginia Main Street Downtown Investment Grant or a DHCD Commercial District Affiliate grant for FY20 rounds, as applicable.
- All finalists receive FREE registration to Virginia Main Street's Downtown Intersections multi-day training event.

How Do I Enter?

Complete entry requirements are listed further down the page. Those interested in participating in the pitch completion must meet four (4) basic requirements:

1. Virginia Main Street Designated Community or DHCD Commercial District Affiliates are eligible. From all of the applicants submitted, the judges will select five (5) finalists, who will then move on to present their downtown revitalization project idea during the live *Main Street Idea Pitch!* the morning of July 18, 2018.
2. Must be active in the Virginia Main Street network as of the date of the date the application is submitted. Active is defined as within the last year a community representative contacted a Virginia Main Street representative for technical assistance <u>or</u> attended a Virginia Main Street training, such as the Regional Rev Ups, Webinars, or Downtown Intersections.
3. Must complete the online application process as outlined on the following page.
4. This is an individual pitch, not a group presentation. Presenters may represent a Designated or Affiliate community, but only one person can pitch.

Event Schedule

Wednesday, July 18, 2018

9:00 AM	Pitch Competition
1:00 PM	Winner Announced at Merit Awards Luncheon

Guidelines, Entry Requirements and Competition Process

1. To enter the competition, complete and submit the online entry form to mainstreet@dhcd.virginia.gov, found on the last two pages of this announcement.
2. The deadline for entries is 5 PM, **April 30, 2018**.
3. The pitch committee will review all submissions and select five (5) finalists, who will move on to the live presentation round. The semi-finalists will be announced on Friday, May 30, 2018.
4. Finalists will present their complete downtown revitalization project idea pitch, not to exceed 5 minutes, on Wednesday, July 18 at Virginia Main Street's Downtown Intersections.

5. Specific presentation times will be set the week prior. Details for the pitch presentation are show below.
6. Reminder: This is an individual pitch, not a group presentation. Presenters may represent a Main Street organization or community, but only one person can pitch.
7. The final presentations will be judged by a panel of outside experts. The prize will be awarded to one (1) finalist. The decisions of the judging panel are final.
8. For any questions regarding the *Main Street Idea Pitch!*, please email: mainstreet@dhcd.virginia.gov.

Making a Main Street Idea Pitch

Pitching an idea for a new Main Street revitalization project means telling the story of your proposal to a variety of potential audiences – donors, potential partners, volunteers and others. The "perfect pitch" is a concise, well-rehearsed presentation that motivates, persuades, and compels your audience to support your community vision. Communicate "why" – the purpose, cause or belief. It's the very reason your organization exists. In a real world pitch to a potential donor, your goal in a brief presentation is to generate sufficient interest to move on to the next step in getting funding for your idea. Think of it as your American Idol initial audition. Your goal is to get that golden ticket to the next round in Hollywood.

Like learning a song for the first time, preparing your pitch is all about practice and repeated rehearsal. And like a song, your 5 minutes of "lyrics" should paint a compelling story, engaging your audience through a concise look at your proposed new project. For Main Street organization launching a new project, perfecting your presentation style and substance is an essential skill for Main Street success.

Emphasis should be on the following key areas:

- Introduce yourself and the name of your organization and community.
- Explain specifically what problem or need your organization will solve or satisfy.
- Provide an overview of the services your organization will offer.
- State clearly whom your potential audience or customers are and how you proposed to reach them.
- Note how much money you will need to launch your project, and how do you intend to raise it.
- At the end of your presentation, be prepared to answer questions from the judges.
- You may use slides, props or other audio-visual aids, but you are not required to do so. At a minimum, each presenter must have one (1) title slide with the name of the organization, idea, and name of the presenter. The presenter may not include more than ten (10) slides.
- A laptop, audio connection, slide advance, and microphone will be provided. Keep in mind that custom fonts may not display accurately. Finalists will be asked to submit their presentations one (1) week prior to the event.

Judging and Award

1. The judging panel for the initial application review and elevator pitches will consist of DHCD staff. Judges for the final presentations include a panel of community development experts.
2. Judges will score each presentation based on your presentation of the key elements noted above, according to the following criteria:
    - Was each of the key elements clearly presented?
    - Did the presentation conform to the five (5) minute time limitation?
    - Was the presenter well-rehearsed and presented his/her pitch without using notes?
    - Did the presenter clearly demonstrate the need for the proposed project or services?
    - Does the presenter have the knowledge and expertise to start and complete the proposed project?
    - Is the proposed project feasible?
    - Did the presenter communicate what success looks like?
3. The prize will be awarded to one (1) pitch, as determined by the judges. Details regarding specific prizes will be posted once all have been confirmed.
4. Winners will be announced the same day at the Virginia Main Street Merit Awards Luncheon. The decision of the judges is final.

What's your idea?!

Do you have a Main Street project idea to pitch?

Main Street Idea Pitch! Presenter Application

Presenter Information

Full Name: _____
Last *First* *M.I.*

Title _____
Organization _____

Address: _____
Street Address *Suite #*

_____
City *State* *ZIP Code*

Cell Phone: _____ **Alternate Phone:** _____

Email _____ **Alternate Email** _____

Main Street Project Idea Information

Project Name: _____

Provide a description of the proposed project and its relationship to the community or organization's vision, mission and goals:

Describe the outcomes and intended impact of the proposed project on the commercial district:

Provide a project budget narrative that explains all project related line items for expenditures and all project related line items for funding sources:

Comments: