

**WE ARE REQUESTING SUPPORT FOR \$25 MILLION FOR THE MAIN STREET MATTERS 2024-25 LINE ITEM BEFORE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS.**

- We believe that \$25 million could provide sustainable operational assistance and necessary implementation and program support to meet program demands for at least 40 Main Street and Elm Street programs during their five years of designation under a newly named program “Main Street Matters” - the funding source for the Main Street and Elm Street programs. According to both the Main Street Act and the Elm Street Act these programs shall be providing operational funding, but in 2011 all the operational funds were removed and only project grants remain.
- Recommendations have been made as to how the Main Street and Elm Street programs could be improved and be most relevant to our communities, our downtown central business districts, and our neighborhoods, in a post-COVID world.
- Our hope and intent would be to bring back operational funding or management dollars to designated programs so that the communities with the greatest need, where Main Street and Elm Street programs could be the most beneficial and impactful have access to the funding and technical assistance to garner the most success.
- We hope that Main Street Matters would also increase specific project funding, such as façade programs and planning grants, and would include pre-construction grants, and incentives for our older underutilized building stock, particularly the upper floors, to be brought up to code, fire suppressed, and accessible to all Pennsylvanians.
- In 2009, these programs had \$56 million available, or roughly \$5.00 for each person in the Commonwealth. In recent years, before supplemental appropriations, the Keystone Communities Program, the previous program to Main Street Matters has about \$6.4 million, or roughly \$.54 for each person in the Commonwealth – a decrease of almost 90%.
- This grossly underfunded program is also the Commonwealth’s primary quality of life program bringing economic vitality, a sense of place, and community pride back to our communities, at a time when this is as important as it has ever been.
- Even during the most recent year of 2023, the current Main Street and Elm Street programs have been able to deliver the following impact: **739 FT Jobs (net) & 786 PT Jobs (net); 73 New Businesses (net); 142 building rehabilitation projects; 70 public improvement projects; 6 new construction projects and over \$54.45 million public investment, matched with over \$34.99 million in private investment, and 28,480 volunteer service hours, valued at a total rate of over \$891,000, for a conservative total investment of over \$90 million last year, all while being the boots on the ground responsive resource our communities have come to rely on.**
- Current funding levels are keeping the communities most in need of support from participating due to the requirement that local programs fund the local manager 100% on their own. Many of those local managers are spending 50% of their time or more just raising funds to support the program rather than doing the important work of community revitalization. Increasing this funding would help to build additional capacity in our communities. Pennsylvania is not investing sufficient funds in enhancing the quality of life in its communities, especially small towns, and rural communities, to make them competitive in a 21<sup>st</sup>-century knowledge-based economy.

We appreciate your attention to this matter.

Please feel free to call at any time with any questions or clarifications – 717-413-4630.

Thank you,

Julie Fitzpatrick

Executive Director, Pennsylvania Downtown Center

# MAIN STREET AND ELM STREET MATTER

Over a five-year designation period, the average community could see:\*



**19 NEW BUSINESS AND  
165 NEW EMPLOYEES (NET)**



**20 BUILDINGS REHABBED  
WITH TOTAL INVESTMENT OF  
\$5.2 MILLION**



**\$1.3 MILLION  
IN PUBLIC SPACE  
IMPROVEMENTS**



\*These reinvestment statistics are based off of programs that have reported.