



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Marshalltown Central Business District is vying for \$25K Cash Prize in National Contest
Recognizing America's Main Streets**

Vote now to advance the Marshalltown Main Street Program to the next round

Marshalltown, Iowa. – On February 25, [Independent We Stand](#), a national small business movement, kicked-off its fourth annual [America's Main Streets](#) contest to help consumers, small business owners and Main Street organizations reward a deserving Main Street with \$25,000 in cash and sponsor-related prizes. Marshalltown Central Business District (MCBD) in Marshalltown is among this year's nominees.

“Our Independent We Stand America's Main Streets contest shines a light on the pride business owners and communities take in their Main Streets,” says Independent We Stand co-founder Bill Brunelle. “We know small businesses on these Main Streets help them thrive and have a measurable economic impact. This contest is a chance to share those stories with people from coast-to-coast.”

On July 19th of 2018 a SF 3 Tornado devastated Marshalltown's Central Business District (MCBD). The impact of that storm has been transformational for the Historic district and surrounding area. The community is incredibly blessed that no one lost their lives during this devastation and only relatively minor injuries were reported. Although the Tornado went through the downtown in less than 5 minutes, the destruction spanned 88 blocks with over 95% of the buildings in the Downtown District having substantial damage; particularly to roofs, HVAC units blown off of the buildings, as well as businesses display windows and upper story housing windows also severely damaged. Along with the destruction of store fronts and extensive roof damage, the interiors of many buildings were also extensively damaged.

Many businesses like McGregor's Furniture Store lost over 3/4 of their inventory as others lost 100% of inventory of clothing, materials, and food. The other significant issue to the destruction was the incredible amount of rain sustained during the Tornado and rain again two weeks later, as building owners were busy trying to attach tarps and temporary plywood to their buildings. It appears that Marshalltown will lose 15-20 buildings which have been totally destroyed by the storm. The preservation of this important historic district in the heart of the City is essential in restoring the unique character of the community, and serves as an anchor for surrounding reinvestment and revitalization. With several large restoration projects as catalysts, surrounding redevelopment and reinvestment is already underway. Only 5% of businesses have been



closed permanently. All others are in the process of restoration but open for business, while still others are open in temporary locations while their buildings are being repaired.

The community of Marshalltown is beginning to see the rare opportunities and "silver linings" that have occurred since the storm. In-fill projects, renewed interest by developers, restoration of buildings that had not occurred prior to the storm and many other opportunities have arisen because of the devastation. As one building owner stated, "I had always intended to fix up the 2nd floor but now there couldn't be a better time to fix it up and make apartments. We need the housing, maybe I can be of some help to those who lost their homes."

Mayor Joel Greer stated, "In Marshalltown, there is a renewed sense of pride, of ownership, and collaboration that has not been present for many years. Not only will we survive but give this community 3-5 years and it will be better than it has been in a very long time!" That epitomizes the attitude of the community and the new logo appearing all over the downtown says it all... Marshalltown Strong!

The grant opportunity through *Independent We Stand* would allow MCB D to further support the downtown in their renovation projects with improvements to their shops, storefronts, businesses and buildings.

The first round of voting in the contest began as soon as Marshalltown Central Business District was nominated and runs through April 21. All nominations and voting take place on MainStreetContest.com.

Important dates:

- **February 25 to April 21:** "America's Main Streets" nominations and quarterfinalist voting
- **March 4-8:** "Great American Red, White & Q" road trip
- **April 29 to May 26:** "America's Main Streets" semifinalist voting
- **June 3:** "America's Main Streets" winner announced
- **July 4:** "Main Streets Make Us Better" event; "America's Main Streets" winner announces plans for \$25,000 grand prize

Additional contest prizes include:

- STIHL Equipment Certificate for \$1,000 worth of STIHL equipment good at any STIHL dealer in the U.S.
- Do it Best Corp. \$500 shopping spree
- Free One Day Downtown Assessment from Flip This Town
- Nationwide Marketing Group \$500 shopping spree
- PPG Paints \$500 shopping spree
- Public relations and social media recognition
- A special plaque for the winner to proudly display



AMERICA'S
MAIN STREETS

For more information on **Marshalltown Central Business District**, visit:
www.marshalltownmainstreet.org or contact Jenny Etter at
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Presenting Sponsor:

[STIHL Inc.](#), America's [number-one selling brand](#) of gasoline-powered handheld outdoor power equipment, is the founding sponsor of Independent We Stand and the presenting sponsor of America's Main Streets contest. The company follows a unique distribution strategy in the handheld outdoor power equipment industry, choosing never to sell products at big box stores, but instead remaining loyal to its 9,000+ authorized local STIHL dealers nationwide.

Supporting Sponsors:

- [Do it Best Corp.](#)
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About Independent We Stand

[Independent We Stand](#) is a nationwide movement of independent small business owners whose mission is to inspire other small business owners to better understand and celebrate their locally-owned status while educating consumers about the importance and strong economic benefits of supporting them. The Independent We Stand movement is sponsored by [STIHL Inc.](#) [STIHL products](#) are sold through more than 9,000 [authorized local STIHL dealers](#) from coast to coast – not big box stores. Associate sponsors include [Nationwide Marketing Group](#), [PPG](#) and [Do it Best Corp.](#)

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