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## Monday, April 12

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### Expo Hall: 11:00 - 11:30 AM EDT

### Opening Plenary: 12:00 - 12:50 PM EDT\*

The 2021 Main Street Now Virtual Conference kicks-off with the high-energy Opening Plenary, featuring keynote remarks by entrepreneur and philanthropist Howard Schultz, former ceo and chairman emeritus of Starbucks Coffee Company. The past year has been an extremely challenging and pivotal one for small businesses, Main Street programs, and all those engaged in community revitalization efforts; we have all learned about leading through crisis. With his vast experience in the challenges of starting and growing a retail business, Mr. Schultz will share his unique perspective on what small businesses and communities need now to grow in recovery and how to cultivate courageous leadership during turbulent times. Patrice Frey, President and CEO of Main Street America, will also welcome attendees from across the country – and the world – to this year’s event and begin to unpack the past year’s impacts on Main Street. And be sure to tune in for some fun cameos from familiar Main Street faces!

*Generously sponsored by The Hartford.*

Speakers: Howard Schultz, former ceo and chairman emeritus of Starbucks Coffee Company; Patrice Frey, President and CEO of Main Street America

Format: Special session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

*\*This session will be available to Small Business Day registrants*

### Session Block 1: 1:15 - 2:00 PM EDT

#### **Listening Session: A National Impact Agenda for Change in Historic Preservation**

1:15-2:15pm EDT

What practices or policies need to change in order to achieve historic preservation success in your commercial district? What actions should the preservation movement collectively be taking to encourage healthy, livable communities on a national scale? The National Trust for Historic Preservation is launching a National Impact Agenda and your input is needed. If you think there's more that the preservation movement could and should be doing, join your peers and representatives from the National Trust for Historic Preservation to share the barriers you're experiencing on your Main Street and offer suggestions for collaborative actions for the preservation movement.

Speakers: Renee Kuhlman, Senior Director of Outreach & Support, National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP); Leslie Canaan, Senior Field Officer, NTHP; Robert Nieweg, VP for Preservation Services & Outreach, NTHP; Amy Webb, Senior Field Director, NTHP; Di Goa, Senior Director of Research & Development, NTHP; Jim Lindberg, Senior Policy Director, NTHP; Lindsey Wallace, Director of Strategic Projects & Design Services, Main Street America

Format: Workshop. *This is an engagement-based workshop. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.*

### **Great American Main Street Award Profile: Kendall Whittier**

1:15 - 1:45pm EDT

For 2020 Great American Main Street Award (GAMSA) winner Kendall Whittier Main Street in Tulsa, OK, 2020 will be remembered as a time of both celebrating receiving GAMSA and shifting their programming in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In this session, join us to hear from Kendall Whittier's Jessica Jackson Seay, who will highlight the program's outstanding success that led to a GAMSA win and how the community has navigated their pandemic response over the past year, including creating a rent relief program and launching other promotions to ensure they didn't lose downtown businesses.

Speaker: Jessica Jackson Seay, Executive Director, Kendall Whittier Main Street

Format: Tactical Solution Session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

### **Fundraising in Uncertain Times**

1:15-2:00pm EDT

So many of you have worked so hard this past year to hold on to your downtown shops and restaurants with great results. As more people are vaccinated in your area, you might feel pressure to begin to schedule special events and fundraising events primarily to stabilize your organization's cash flow. How do you manage your budget when so much is still uncertain? This session will focus on reviewing your revenue sources with an eye towards revenue diversification. We will talk about which revenue sources are likely to be stable in the coming months. We will show how uncertain cash flow can often be mitigated by quarterly budget reviews and adjustments. Finally, we will wrap up by explaining how new partnerships may help you think more creatively as you approach events and sponsorship opportunities for 2021.

Speaker: Donna Ann Harris, Heritage Consulting

Format: Education Session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

### **Simple & Actionable Steps for More Effective Marketing for Businesses and Communities with Marketing 3-4-5™\***

1:15-2:00pm EDT

This Marketing 3-4-5™ Quick Course will provide a foundation that anyone can use to become more effective at marketing without becoming an expert. We'll review a content marketing approach that can be done by anyone using simple 10-15 minute activities — no creativity required! If you're interested in implementing or growing e-commerce we'll have some tips for you there, too. We'll explore free ways to cross-promote and distribute your content, as well as examples from both businesses and Main Street programs. The session will wrap up with key website considerations and examples of effective websites that you can quickly copy.

Speaker: Brian Ostrovsky, CEO, Locable

Format: Education Session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

*\*This session will be available to Small Business Day registrants*

## **Dr. Downtown (1 of 2)**

1:15 - 2:15pm EDT

Do you need help with a Main Street issue or have a question that's been on your mind? If so, we have just the prescription for you. Main Street professionals from not only our Coordinating Program network, but also the Main Street America staff will be available to answer your questions—no appointment needed. Stop by and get your question about design, economic vitality, organization, or promotion answered.

Format: Workshop. *This is an engagement-based workshop. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.*

## **Destination Downtowns\***

1:15-2:00 pm EDT

Description TBA

Speaker: Jon Schallert, President, The Schallert Group, Inc.

Format: Education Session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

\*This session will be available to Small Business Day registrants

## **Expo Hall: 2:00 - 3:30 PM EDT**

## **Session Block 2: 2:30 - 3:30 PM EDT**

### **Combatting Commercial Gentrification**

2:30 - 3:30pm EDT

A low vacancy rate and strong rental market are, for many commercial corridors, signs of success. However, these factors are also tied to rising rents, demographic shifts, and hyper-competition for retail space, resulting in the loss of essential small businesses along with neighborhood identity and affordability. The outsized impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on communities of color has accelerated these forces, adding to the urgency of response required to combat commercial gentrification. In this panel discussion, hear about different approaches for creating tools, resources and programming to work with local businesses and property owners to stem the tide of displacement.

Speakers: Manuel Ochoa, Founder and Principal, Ochoa Urban Collaborative; Alex Padro, Executive Director, Shaw Main Streets

Format: Education Session with Q&A. *This session will be a mix of pre-recorded content and live Q&A at the end.*

*Generously sponsored by PNC.*

## Lessons Learned in Livability

2:30 - 3:30pm EDT

The population of older adults choosing to age-in-place in communities across the nation is growing, and Main Street programs and cities have recognized the need to create downtown environments that are accessible, age-friendly and full of opportunities for residents of at any stage of life. In this session, hear from recent recipients of the AARP Challenge Grant, which funds projects and plans to enhance livability, and how you can apply. In addition, learn about incremental zoning where small changes can make a big difference in the age-friendliness – and economic vitality – of your Main Street.

Speakers: Danielle Arigoni, Director, Livable Communities, AARP; Kim Lane, Executive Director, Pigtown, Baltimore, MD; Natalie Beurlot, Executive Director, Main Street Enid, OK

Format: Education Session with Q&A. *This session will be a mix of pre-recorded content and live Q&A at the end.*

*Generously sponsored by AARP Livable Communities.*

## The Role of Place in Supporting Small Businesses\*

2:30 - 3:30pm EDT

A Main Street revitalization program is an essential for establishing the physical and promotional environment that supports the launch and growth of small businesses. In this session, hear from Main Street small business owners on how they selected their locations, their important decision drivers, and how through COVID-19, place variables continue to be an important component for scaling these businesses. In addition, Main Street America will present new research findings on place variables that offer insight into priority areas as part of entrepreneurial ecosystem building at the local level.

Speakers: Amber Lambke, Founder & CEO, Maine Grains, Inc; Ryanne Hodson, Founder & Owner, Broad Porch Coffee, Co.; Bernetta Powell, Owner, Westend Fresh Seafood Market in Charlotte's UrbanMain Beatties Ford / LaSalle Road corridor

Format: Workshop. *This is an engagement-based workshop. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.*

*\*This session will be available to Small Business Day registrants*

## Using Existing and Newly Emerging Data to Understand COVID-19's Impact and Prepare for Your Main Street's Post-Pandemic Future

2:30 - 3:30pm EDT

The COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped activity on Main Streets in dramatic ways. It has made community-level data gathering more complicated but, in many ways, even more important. Main Street programs are tasked with consistently and clearly communicating their value, and clear and compelling data is essential to this task. New sources of data that capture cell phone activity, credit card transactions, and the presence and movement of pedestrians and cyclists are also becoming increasingly available. In this conversation, hear from Main Street programs who successfully gather and utilize localized data to make the case for Main Street. In addition, representatives from Main Street America and Jon Stover and Associates will highlight their new tools and research and lead a discussion about data in a post-pandemic world and its implications for your Main Street.

Speakers: Mike Powe, Director of Research, Main Street America; Jon Stover, Managing Partner, Jon Stover & Associates; Jessica Reynolds, Director, Office of Downtown Development, Georgia Main Street; Liz Hannum, Executive Director, Downtown Oregon City, OR; Josh Adams, Executive Director, Owosso Main Street, MI; Anwar Salem, Executive Director, H Street Main Street

Format: Education Session with Q&A. *This session will be a mix of pre-recorded content and live Q&A at the end.*

## **Main Street Director Roundtable**

2:30-3:30pm EDT

The role of Main Street Directors is crucial in building strong revitalization programs with active community engagement. Day-to-day, Main Street Directors lead, manage, and execute to implement the Main Street Approach™ through strategy. How can program directors use our multifaceted roles to chart the effects of the pandemic on our programs' growth? Join Main Street Directors from across the country in a facilitated discussion about our multifaceted roles and how we can emerge from this moment with stronger programming and a more effective leadership base.

Speaker: Norma Ramírez de Miess, Senior Program Officer and Director of Leadership Development, Main Street America

Format: *Format: Workshop. This is an engagement-based workshop. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.*

## **Expo Hall: 3:30 - 4:00 PM EDT**

### **Main Street Forward Awards Ceremony: 4:00 - 5:00 PM EDT**

Join us for the Main Street Forward Awards ceremony honoring resilience and innovation across the network. The events of the past year represent what could have been an existential crisis for America's Main Streets. But, in the midst of generation-defining events and pressures, Main Street programs have demonstrated tenacity and creativity. Main Street America Board Chair Ed McMahon and Board Member Darryl Young will present the winners of the inaugural Main Street Forward Awards. Tune in to celebrate and get inspired by your peers.

Format: Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.

### **UrbanMain Reception: 5:30 - 6:30 PM EDT**

#### **UrbanMain Happy Hour: This is Our 2020 Story**

UrbanMain communities have continued to show their value supporting local businesses despite being in the midst of a global pandemic, civil unrest, and a deeply divided political climate. Join us for a fun-filled hour to hear and share your urban Main Street stories of 2020 and celebrate each other's accomplishments with a toast. The program will feature presentations from UrbanMain managers across the country, and there will be time to hear from all attendees! For the toast, recipe cards of signature alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverages from across the country will be shared with session attendees a week prior to the session. So come with your drink in hand! Stay tuned for details on how to register.

Format: *This is an engagement-based reception. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.*

Speakers: *Veatrice Farrell, Executive Director, Deuces Live, Inc; Nadya Henriquez Lowy, ISW North Ave. Corridor Manager; Puerto Rican Cultural Center*

## Tuesday, April 13 - Small Business Day

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### Small Business Roundtable: 9:00 - 9:30 AM EDT

#### Coffee & Conversations: Digital Footprints - What Brick & Mortar Stores Need to Know About Being Online\*

9:00 - 9:30am EDT

Join us for a small business networking session! One of the key lessons learned from 2020 is that having an online presence should be a priority for retailers to keep inventory moving- even if their objective is to move inventory from their physical stores. This discussion will offer strategies for physical merchants to sell online - including ways that do not involve having a traditional ecommerce store - while also providing best practices to simply being online. From email marketing to online review sites to community digital offerings and more, expect to gain COVID-approved updates on how to best position your brick-and-mortar store digitally. Join Retail Minded's Nicole Leinbach Reyhle as she offers direction on ways to expand your selling avenues, increase your customer connectivity and strengthen your overall business awareness. Come with questions, as you'll have the chance to chime in live during this virtual, round-table discussion!

Speakers: Nicole Leinbach Reyhle, Founder and Publisher, Retail Minded

Format: *This is an engagement-based workshop. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.*

\*This session will be available to Small Business Day registrants

### Wellness Activities: 10:30 - 11:00 AM EDT

#### Morning Wellness Session featuring LiveWell Camas

10:30 - 11:00am EDT

Get your day started with some feel good yoga from a Main Street small business! This all-levels class has an emphasis on alignment, proper breath work, moving with control, and the inner workings of each pose. We move with intention to create greater strength and integrity throughout our practice. Modifications are given throughout class so that students have many different places to land and ways to approach each posture. This class is structured to be approachable for every level of student.

#### Morning Wellness Session featuring Terra Running Company

10:30 - 11:00am EDT

Warm up at your desk and get moving with stretches and some easy movements to get the blood flowing! Join Brittany Katz with Main Street small business Terra Running Company as she leads you through some basics that everyone will enjoy. She will also give you informative tips on how best to shop your favorite running/exercise store to get the best advice and fit for your personal workout, as well as learn how running stores all over the country have successfully activated their community.

## Morning Session Block: 10:30 - 11:00 AM EDT

### **Integrating Brick & Mortar and eCommerce\***

10:30 - 11:00am EDT

Session Description: TBA

Speaker: Martin Guerrero, Small Business and Community Advocacy, Square

*Generously sponsored by Square.*

*\*This session will be available to Small Business Day registrants*

## Expo Hall: 11:00 - 11:30 AM EDT

## General Session: 12:00 - 12:50 PM EDT

### **Main Idea General Session: Big Plans for Small Business**

12:00 - 12:50pm EDT

In the wake of COVID-19, small businesses are experiencing far-ranging economic and social implications. While the future is uncertain for the small businesses that anchor our communities, this moment can also be a catalyst for new approaches to supporting entrepreneurs in commercial districts. As we look toward recovery, local governments, small businesses, and place management organizations must work together in new ways to spur regrowth. In this conversation, hear from leaders in the planning, policy and Main Street worlds about the creative ways that we can focus on district-level solutions to sustain businesses.

Speakers: Bruce Katz, Director of the Nowak Metro Finance Lab at Drexel University; Kennedy Smith, Principal, Community Land Use + Economics Group; Maurice Cox, Commissioner, Department of Planning and Development, City of Chicago; Jess Zimbabwe, Executive Director, Environmental Works

Format: Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.

*Generously sponsored by American Express.*

*\*This session will be available to Small Business Day registrants*

## Session Block 1: 1:15 - 2:00 PM EDT

### **Boundaries for Greater Personal Development and Care**

1:15 - 2:30pm EDT

“Empathy without boundaries is self-destruction” (Silvy Khoucasian) and a direct, accelerated road to burnout. If we don’t set boundaries for ourselves, our work, and our responsibilities, others will set those boundaries for us. In this workshop, we will reflect on the areas of our lives where we are feeling depleted and experiencing burnout, and build practices that prioritize our well-being, allow us to recharge, and help us to communicate more effectively.

Speakers: Alex Oh, Oh Lay; Nikolay Borisov, Oh Lay

Format: Workshop. *This is an engagement-based workshop. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.*

### **Calculating the Cost of Empty Storefronts**

1:15 - 2:00pm EDT

Filing a vacant storefront in a Main Street district is a sign of success: a business has a home, a property owner has a tenant, and the district has a node of activity. But the effects of occupancy – or vacancy – extend beyond the pro forma. The ripple effect of vacancy impacts local government, service providers, other businesses, and the holistic health of the local economy. In this session, PlaceEconomics' Donovan Rypkema will lead you through calculations you can apply in your own community to make the case for the core work of a Main Street program in creating a thriving district.

Speaker: Donovan Rypkema, Principal, PlaceEconomics

Format: Education Session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

### **Civic Leaders in Support of Main Street**

1:15 - 2:00pm EDT

The Main Street/Civic Leader relationship is one of mutual benefit. Main Street programs thrive with the support of civic leaders and in turn, thriving Main Street programs can lessen the burden of government and create significant return on investment. At the local level, close ties to elected leadership and municipal officials create conditions for collaborative, community-wide downtown revitalization. At the county and state level, support from legislators and executives strengthen networks and create opportunities for resource development. In this session, hear from elected officials about the value of the Main Street program, their efforts to share the impact of the movement, and how support for Main Street is essential to pandemic recovery.

Speakers: TBA

Format: Education Session with Q&A. *This session will be a mix of pre-recorded content and live Q&A at the end.*

### **Trends and New Norms: How COVID-19 is Impacting Consumerism and the Economy\***

1:15 - 2:00pm EDT

The immediate and long-term impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and associated shifts in consumer demand and preferences will require business owners to rethink how they operate their businesses. For small businesses in a commercial corridor, these trends are tied to the location, assets, and specific pandemic effects in the local business ecosystem. In this session, learn about the macro trends facing small business owners and the ways in which consumer choice will affect your downtown business.

Speakers: Matthew Wagner, Ph.D. Main Street America

Format: Education Session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

*Generously sponsored by GoDaddy.*

*\*This session will be available to Small Business Day registrants*

## **Small Business Marketing: 3 Ways to Increase Customer Engagement for Physical Storefronts**

1:15-2:00pm EDT

Let's face it – retail isn't what it used to be. Times have changed as a direct result of COVID-19, and consumers and shopping have changed, as well. What has not changed, however, is the desire for customers to engage with small businesses and communities. This session will explore realistic ways for merchants to capture customer attention, keep customer attention and ultimately gain customer dollars specifically in physical stores. With a core focus on COVID-approved best practices and customer-centric experiences, this is a session you won't want to miss that will offer actionable, realistic insight you can begin applying to your store right away!

Speakers: Leinbach Reyhle, Founder and Publisher, Retail Minded

Format: Education Session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

*\*This session will be available to Small Business Day registrants*

## **Expo Hall: 2:00 - 2:30 PM EDT**

## **Session Block 2: 2:30 - 3:30 PM EDT**

### **Shifting Your Business Model: 5 Marketing Strategies to Reach Customers Despite the Challenges of COVID-19\***

2:30 - 3:30pm EDT

Customer expectations, preferences, and shopping experiences have shifted tremendously due to COVID-19. This session will highlight five marketing strategies that benefit customers and retailers alike—ultimately aiming to help retailers increase both profit and visibility. Expect to gain some no-cost and low-cost strategies to help your retail business survive the challenges of COVID-19 in 2021 and beyond. Plus, be introduced to resources that can help you achieve these goals. Led by Retail Minded's Founder, Nicole Leinbach Reyhle, this session will include experts from companies across the industry.

Speakers: Nicole Leinbach Reyhle, Founder and Publisher, Retail Minded; Crystal Vilkaitis, Founder, Crystal Media; Cathy Donovan Wagner, Founder and President, RETAILMavens

Format: Education Session with Q&A. *This session will be a mix of pre-recorded content and live Q&A at the end.*

*\*This session will be available to Small Business Day registrants*

### **Small-Scale Development Tools**

2:30 - 3:30pm EDT

Main Street and neighborhood commercial corridor-scale projects often require bottom-up solutions to activating and facilitating revitalization. When it comes to the physical fabric of your district, concentrating on small-scale real estate development can open opportunities for community involvement, create needed upper floor housing and commercial space, and maintain ownership of assets within the community. In this session, learn about key strategies for encouraging small-scale development in and around your commercial district and hear examples of how one city is bringing stakeholders together with national experts to collaborate on small-scale development programming.

Speakers: Willow Weatherall, Director, Women's Entrepreneurship Initiative at Saint Mary's College; Consuella Hopkins; Jim Kumon, Executive Director, Incremental Development Alliance

Format: Education Session with Q&A. *This session will be a mix of pre-recorded content and live Q&A at the end.*

## **Board Member Roundtable**

2:30 - 3:30pm EDT

A conference favorite - for board members only - this roundtable discussion will explore what diversity means in your own community, the benefits of equity and inclusion for your organization and community, and how Main Street communities can and should respond to the larger national context involving justice, equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives. This facilitated session is perfect for new and seasoned board members from communities large and small, urban and rural, and everything in-between.

Speakers: Kathy La Plante, Main Street America; Steven Hoffman, Southeast Missouri State University

Format: *Workshop. This is an engagement-based workshop. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.*

*Generously sponsored by The 1772 Foundation.*

## **Small Business Advocacy\***

2:30 -3:30pm EDT

Throughout the pandemic, small business advocacy has been front and center with federal, state and local programs creating new ways to support entrepreneurs survive. To thrive in a commercial district, entrepreneurs and small businesses need continuous support in reducing regulatory barriers and developing a business-supportive climate. In this session, join the National Federation of Independent Businesses to learn about the current moment in small business advocacy and tools and resources that you can use to help support your small business advocacy.

Speakers: Holly Wade, National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB)

Format: *Education Session with Q&A. This session will be a mix of pre-recorded content and live Q&A at the end.*

*\*This session will be available to Small Business Day registrants*

## **Power of Place: Transformative Placemaking, Community Resilience, and the COVID-19 Recovery**

2:30 - 3:30pm EDT

Through in-depth, on-the-ground research in three Main Street America communities, the Brookings Bass Center for Transformative Placemaking and the National Main Street Center focused on the role that place governance organizations, like Main Street programs, play in revitalizing rural downtowns and promoting equitable rural economic and community development. In this session, hear from the three Main Street communities profiled in the study and the research team on their findings and recommendations for prioritizing investment in hyperlocal support systems in pandemic recovery.

Speakers: Mike Powe, Director of Research, Main Street America; Hanna Love Senior Research Analyst, Metropolitan Policy Program, Brookings; Trey Sherwood, Executive Director, Downtown Laramie, WY; Casey Woods, Executive Director, Emporia Main Street, KS; Alex Weld, Executive Director, Wheeling Main Street, WV

Format: *Education Session with Q&A. This session will be a mix of pre-recorded content and live Q&A at the end.*

*Generously sponsored by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation*

## **Packaging the Value of Your Revitalization Program**

2:30 - 3:30pm EDT

With the long-term economic impacts of COVID-19 comes the need to solidify our Main Street's position of value through messaging and communication tools to a broad audience of stakeholders. In this session, learn how to create a strong package of communications pieces to show the impact of your Main Street program. Join us to discuss the impact of key messages specifically designed for your stakeholders and the essential tips and tools for making the case of your Main Street's incredible value.

Speakers: Speakers TBA

Format: Education Session with Q&A. *This session will be a mix of pre-recorded content and live Q&A at the end.*

## **Session Block 3: 3:45 - 4:15 PM EDT**

### **Great American Main Street Award Profile: Boyne City**

3:45 - 4:15pm EDT

For 2020 Great American Main Street Award (GAMSA) winner Boyne City Main Street, 2020 will be remembered as a time of both celebrating receiving GAMSA and shifting their programming in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In this session, hear from Boyne City's Kelsie King-Duff, who will highlight the program's outstanding success that led to a GAMSA win and how the community has navigated their pandemic response over the past year.

Speakers: Kelsie King-Duff, Executive Director, Boyne City Main Street, MI

Format: Education Session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

### **Grow with eBay\***

3:45 - 4:15pm EDT

This presentation will cover some of the unique features, tools, and opportunities eBay offers Main Street small businesses looking to get and/or grow online.

Speakers: Rebecca Michals, Director, Seller Community and Engagement, eBay; Bryan Bellows, Growth Advisor - North America, eBay; Rocky Schiano, Owner & eBay Seller, Street Sounds NYC

Format: Education Session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

*Generously sponsored by eBay.*

*\*This session will be available to Small Business Day registrants*

## Session Block 4: 4:30 - 5:00 PM EDT

### Online Reputation Management for Small Businesses: Success in 2021\*

4:30 - 5pm EDT

Last year was filled with unexpected challenges for everyone, but especially you as business owners. Yelp has been working to create and launch new tools and features that help you communicate the most important information to your current and potential customers. Join Yelp's Small Business Expert Emily Washcovick to learn about how to effectively manage your online reputation and the free resources that are new to Yelp. Listen as Emily dives into:

- COVID resources and the most important information in the eyes of your customer
- Yelp's free tools and information on our newest features (e.g. verified license and services offered)
- Advice for how to respond to online reviews and leverage them in your marketing strategy

COVID-19 or not, marketing and customer communication are key to your success. Yelp has created tools for you to succeed in this area—learn all about optimizing your listing and taking control of your online reputation.

Speaker: Emily Washcovick, Senior Field Marketing Manager and Small Business Expert, Yelp

*Generously sponsored by Yelp.*

*\*This session will be available to Small Business Day registrants*

## Special Session: 4:30 - 5:15 PM EDT

### Main Street: How a City's Heart Connects Us All

*Special book discussion with Dr. Mindy Fullilove*

Our districts are the heart of our communities, providing the beat that carries our work forward. In a year of compounding crises, including racial injustice, climate change, and COVID-19, keeping that heart beating is more important than ever. But many communities have faced challenges - such as disasters, disinvestment, and displacement - before and emerged through community-centered power. To understand this power, renowned author, psychiatrist, and social activist Dr. Mindy Fullilove endeavored on an 11-year study of Main Streets in 178 cities and 14 countries. Join this discussion with the author to delve into the ways in which Main Streets are integral places for identifying and understanding the key issues facing society and how innovative problem-solving on Main Street can help us create meaningful change.

Speaker: Dr. Mindy Fullilove, Professor of Urban Policy and Health, The New School, and author of *Main Street: How a City's Heart Connects Us All*. Moderated by Jess Zimbabwe, Executive Director, Environmental Works

Format: Special session with Q&A. *This session will be a mix of pre-recorded content and live Q&A at the end.*

*Generously sponsored by The 1772 Foundation.*

## Small Business Happy Hour: 5:15 - 5:45 PM EDT

### Happy Hour & Chit Chat: Action Steps to Gaining Visibility & Sales in an Increasingly Challenged Marketplace\*

5:15 - 5:45pm

Want to gain more attention for your store? Looking to increase profit for your business? Join Retail Minded's Nicole Leinbach Reyhle as she unveils five ways to do this despite the increasingly competitive retail landscape. While some action steps may be outside your comfort zone, all can help you stay relevant in a challenging marketplace. Come curious. Leave informed. This virtual, round-table discussion is specifically designed to support Main Street communities and their unique offerings, challenges, small businesses and more. Plus, you'll get the chance to share your questions or comments live during this virtual, round-table discussion!

Speaker: Nicole Leinbach Reyhle, Founder and Publisher, Retail Minded

Format: *This is an engagement-based workshop. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.*

*\*This session will be available to Small Business Day registrants*

## Reception: 5:30 - 6:30 PM EDT

Don't miss this fun and fast-paced hour to unwind with your fellow Main Street Now registrants. Learn about the 2022 Conference location, dates, and surprises from the host city! Hear from local musicians, businesses, and even a mixologist. Try your skills at Main Street trivia and pit your knowledge against the experts.

Format *This is an engagement-based workshop. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.*

## Wednesday, April 14

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### Expo Hall: 11:00 - 11:30 AM EDT

### General Session: 12:00 - 12:50 PM EDT

**Main Idea: Rebuilding to Healing - A Framework for the Future of Main Street**

12-12:50pm EDT

The events of the past year - from COVID-19 to the national reckoning around racial justice to cascading climate crises - have resulted in enormous disruption in our daily lives, as well as our local economies. As we look to recovery, we are confronted with a series of critical decisions about what the future will look like for our Main Street districts. Join us for this Main Idea General Session on the ways Main Street programs, place governance organizations, and local leaders can drive a more equitable recovery, support entrepreneurs, and use their positions to leverage recovery into a moment of healing and move toward shared prosperity.

Featured Speakers: Amy Liu, Vice President and Director, Metropolitan Policy Program, Brookings Institution; Fay Horwitt, President and CEO, Forward Cities

Format: Special Session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

*Generously sponsored by U.S. Bank.*

### Session Block 1: 1:00 - 1:45 PM EDT

**Equity and Public Space**

1:00 - 1:45pm EDT

From curb cuts to benches, small design decisions can have a huge impact on the accessibility and equity conveyed by public spaces. Main Street programs - when thinking through physical improvements, whether permanent or temporary, to their downtowns - need to consider how design choices create conditions that inhibit or prohibit full utilization and participation from the community. In this session, learn about historical and current ways that neighborhood design has impacted communities and ideas to break down barriers.

Speakers: Chandra Christmas-Rouse, Program Officer, Enterprise Community Partners; Keisha Pollack Porter, Ph.D., Vice Dean for Faculty, Johns Hopkins School of Public Health; additional speakers TBA

Format: Education Session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

*Generously sponsored by The 1772 Foundation.*

## **Tools for Ecosystem Building, Built for Main Street**

1:00-1:30pm EDT

This session will unveil and unpack a suite of new tools for developing place-focused entrepreneurial ecosystems created through a joint venture between the Kauffman Foundation, Main Street America, and local Main Street programs. These self-guided resources walk you through assessment and implementation with a particular focus on understanding the Main Street programs' role in developing formal and informal partnerships at the local and regional level. Participants are encouraged to review and return to these materials with your organization and stakeholders as you further develop and refine your ecosystem.

Speaker: Matthew Wagner, Ph.D., Vice President of Revitalization Programs, Main Street America

Format: Tactical Solution Session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

*Generously sponsored by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation*

## **Main Street Board Essentials for Excellence**

1:00 - 1:45pm EDT

Perhaps over the past year, with its pivots and regrouping, your Main Street program's board of directors has veered off track, losing sight of the bylaws. Or, perhaps you utilized time created by cancelled events to focus on redeveloping organizational structure. In any circumstance, a solid foundation in the best practices for Main Street board of directors is the key to putting plans into action for recovery. Join this session with National Main Street Center's Kathy LaPlante for a thorough overview of the roles and responsibilities of a Main Street board to help guide your organization and strengthen your organizational culture for years to come.

Format: Education Session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

Speaker: Kathy La Plante, Senior Program Officer and Director of Coordinating Program Services, Main Street America

## **Building a Diverse Board of Directors**

1:00 - 2:00pm EDT

To operate effectively and best serve the community, a Main Street program's board of directors ought to reflect the demographics of its constituents and seek to include underrepresented groups. A diverse board has far-reaching benefits. Engaging individuals with a variety of backgrounds promotes greater creativity and innovation. Additionally, having a wide range of voices and perspectives on your board will give you a clearer understanding of community needs. (And don't forget that diverse boards also are more likely to attract diverse donors, and grantmakers are increasingly focused on diversity!) If your organization is seeking to increase board diversity but needs to open a dialogue around benefits, barriers, and outreach strategies, join this discussion-based workshop for an open and honest conversation with your peers.

Speaker: Michelle DePass, Consultant

Format: Workshop. *This is an engagement-based workshop. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.*

*Generously sponsored by The 1772 Foundation.*

## **Does Your Downtown Brand Experience Still Measure Up?\***

1:15-2:00pm EDT

Join us for a lively presentation to learn how to define and celebrate a community-wide brand post-COVID-19. This session will guide you through developing your 'sticky factor' or polishing your existing one. You'll walk away with a practical, tangible, and strategic plan that addresses the messaging, programming, and decorative elements for your downtown and individual businesses. Start small, grow big. This session will appeal to Main Street and commercial district managers and small businesses alike!

Speaker: Lyn Falk, Retailworks, Inc.

Format: Education Session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

\*This session will be available to Small Business Day registrants

## **Session Block 2: 2:00 - 3:00 PM EDT**

### **Building Vibrant Neighborhoods through Entrepreneurship**

2:00 - 3:00pm EDT

Fostering neighborhood entrepreneurship requires a strategy focused on dismantling barriers, expanding economic opportunities, and realigning resources to build community wealth among residents with aspirations of becoming business owners, especially in low-income and communities of color. This session will focus on highlighting the best practices from programs designed to support neighborhood entrepreneurship ecosystems builders, elevating the journey of neighborhood-based entrepreneurs of color, and showing the steps that different partners and stockholders can take to build vibrant neighborhoods through entrepreneurship.

Speakers: Bernard Johnson, Director of Programs, Interise; Danielle Douglas, Founder, The Council for Black Business Enterprises additional speakers TBA

Format: Education Session with Q&A. *This session will be a mix of pre-recorded content and live Q&A at the end.*

*Generously sponsored by The 1772 Foundation.*

### **Rural Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Development**

2:00 - 3:00pm EDT

Fostering entrepreneurship in the smallest of communities creates opportunities for wealth creation, job creation, and occupied downtown storefronts. Rural communities face a specific set of issues for fostering entrepreneurship, including geographic isolation, capital access, and community culture. In this session, learn strategies to work with local assets to bring entrepreneurship to the forefront of community economic development plans in rural Main Street communities.

Speakers: Frances Jo Hamilton, Director of Revitalization, Heritage Ohio; Anne Ball, Program Director, Maine Downtown Center; M. Rose "Shoshanna" Anthony, Arcata Main Street, CA; Liz Lewis, Economic Development & Tourism Coordinator, Page County (VA) Economic Development and Tourism

Format: Education Session with Q&A. *This session will be a mix of pre-recorded content and live Q&A at the end.*

## **Supporting Local Restaurants in Their Recovery**

2:00 - 3:00pm EDT

Join us for this live, interactive session to learn about the innovative ways Main Street programs are supporting their local restaurants and eateries in recovery and beyond. You'll hear from the winners of the recent American Express Shop Small 'Order In, Help Out' Innovation Challenge about their standout campaigns to promote local restaurants, share ideas with your Main Street peers in small breakout rooms, and discuss challenges and opportunities in a Q&A. You'll leave this session with the inspiration and insights to implement engaging and impactful restaurant promotions to help your local eateries navigate through the pandemic. This session is generously sponsored by American Express, proud champion of the Shop Small and Small Business Saturday programs.

Speakers: TBA

*Format: Workshop. This is an engagement-based workshop. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.*

*Generously sponsored by American Express.*

## **Great American Main Street Award Profile: Tupelo**

2:00 - 2:30pm EDT

For 2020 Great American Main Street Award (GAMSA) winner Downtown Tupelo Main Street Association, 2020 will be remembered as a time of both celebrating receiving GAMSA and shifting their programming in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In this session, hear from Tupelo's Debbie Brangenberg, who will highlight the program's outstanding success that led to a GAMSA win and how the community has navigated their pandemic response over the past year.

Speakers: Debbie Brangenberg, Executive Director, Downtown Tupelo Main Street Association

*Format: Tactical Solution Session Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

## **Courageous Conversations**

2:15 - 3:45pm EDT

Leading community-wide efforts requires courage and confidence when it comes to grappling with tough topics, differing opinions, and a diverse set of stakeholders. Particularly considering the disparities in COVID-19 impact and the need to center equity in recovery efforts, critical yet productive dialogue is an essential skill for Main Street programs to lead planning efforts that impact the whole community. These types of challenging conversations call for courage, and courage begins with self. Maya Angelou offers, "courage is the most important of all virtues. Because without courage, you cannot practice any other virtue consistently." In this workshop, we will explore what courage means for you and how courage is a building block for deeper, stronger connections with our self, others, and our communities.

Speakers: Alex Oh, Oh Lay; Nikolay Borisov, Oh Lay

*Format: Workshop. This is an engagement-based workshop. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.*

*Generously sponsored by The 1772 Foundation.*

## **Expo Hall: 3:00 - 3:30 PM EDT**

## Session Block 3: 3:30 - 4:30 PM EDT

### Reviving the U.S. Economy, One Microbusiness at a Time

3:30 - 4:00pm EDT

Barely a fifth of the way into the 21st century, the U.S. economy has already been dealt three massive economic shocks: the dot-com crash of 2001, the Great Recession of 2008, and now COVID-19. To successfully see our way through these shocks, we must look to one of our greatest economic strengths: microbusinesses. To date, they have been largely invisible and uncaptured. However, a study of 20 million of these microbusinesses, or ventures, has been recently released by GoDaddy, and it provides insights that are a must-know for anyone focused on how we stabilize the economy, especially at the local level. In this session, the GoDaddy team will share these findings and share the process of creating innovative programs and partnerships as we look toward making our economy stronger by empowering the little shops that are having a lot of impact.

Speakers: Stacy Cline, Sr Director, Corporate Social Responsibility, GoDaddy; Jeremy Hartman, VP, Venture Forward, GoDaddy; Alex Rosen, Director, Venture Forward, GoDaddy

Format: Tactical Solution Session *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

*Generously sponsored by GoDaddy.*

### Moving Forward: Essential Tips for Rebuilding Your Business Mix

3:30 - 4:30pm EDT

While the long-term impacts from Covid-19 are still unfolding, it clear that many downtown organizations will need to refocus on attracting new tenants and diversifying their tenant mix. As businesses reevaluate their business models and space needs, and marketing budgets are slashed, it will be more important than ever to have a go-to list of tools and techniques that can improve your existing program. During this session, we will discuss how downtowns can attract new businesses, fill vacant space, and rebuild momentum lost during the pandemic.

Speakers: Hilary Greenberg, President, Greenberg Development Services; Jim Thompson, Business Specialist, Main Street Iowa

Format: Education Session with Q&A. *This session will be a mix of pre-recorded content and live Q&A at the end.*

### Using Social Media for Good

3:30 - 4:30pm EDT

How can you move your organization and community to the brighter side of being online? This session will focus on tools and techniques for handling negative comments and reviews, managing your message, and helping everyone use social media platforms for the good that is possible. Through real life anecdotes from communities across the U.S., Wolven will share how you can overcome even the worst that happens online and set the stage for success. You will learn to harness the good of online platforms to share your story, gain social proof, add economic impact, and create real connection. You'll also learn to let go and manage the not so good that we've all seen and maybe experienced.

Speakers: Jackie Wolven, Executive Director, Main Street Eureka Springs, AR and Founder of Do Good Work

Format: Education Session with Q&A. *This session will be a mix of pre-recorded content and live Q&A at the end.*

## **Building Inclusive Entrepreneurship**

3:30 - 4:30pm EDT

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on small businesses of color, with estimates indicating that nearly half of black-owned small businesses have closed since the start of the crisis. How can we clearly and collaboratively think about how to help businesses of color that are still hanging on be more successful and help new businesses emerge? In this workshop session, hear from Main Street programs and communities who have taken steps to provide specific support to BIPOC businesses, and dive into a conversation on the types of resources and tools needed to successfully do this work in your community.

Speakers: Felicia Brown, Sr. Advisor Programs / Financial Resilience, AARP; Mileyka Burgos-Flores, Executive Director, Allapattah Collaborative CDC; Carolyn "C.J." Johnson, Executive Director, East Oakland Black Cultural Zone; Ndidi Okwelogu, Economic Development Manager, East Oakland Black Cultural Zone; Carolina Buitrago, Columbia Heights & Mount Pleasant Main Street Director, District Bridges; Tina Kapoor, Economic Development Manager, Fremont Main Street, CA

Format: Workshop. *This is an engagement-based workshop. We encourage you to have your cameras on and be ready to participate with your fellow attendees.*

*Generously sponsored by AARP Livable Communities.*

## **Closing Plenary: 5:00 - 6:00 PM EDT**

We will conclude the 2021 Main Street Now Conference with a celebration of leadership on Main Street. The past year has tested us all, personally and professionally. Drawing from her insights as a psychotherapist and award-winning entrepreneur, our keynote, Bea Arthur, will leave us with a parting dose of motivation and insight into empathetic leadership and managing the balance between taking care of the 'self' and devoting that 'self' to a mission-driven profession you love. Continuing this theme, we will also hear from Mary Means, the founder of the Main Street program (affectionately known as the "Mother of Main Street") for reflections on Main Street leadership and the presentation of the second annual Mary Means Leadership Award. You'll also hear leadership insights from your peers receiving the Main Street America Revitalization Professional credential. And don't miss the announcement of the 2022 conference locale!

Speakers: TBA

Format: Special Session. *Participants will be muted but are encouraged to use the chat function to interact throughout the session.*

## Thursday, April 15 - Bonus Day

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### Special Workshop: 11:30 AM - 4:30 PM EDT

#### **Disaster Preparedness Roadmap: Building Main Street Resilience**

Audience: Local community leaders

Cost: Included in the Main Street Now Conference registration

Calling all local community leaders! Hear from national experts in the planning, real estate, and disaster preparedness sectors in this one-day workshop held on Thursday, April 15th in conjunction with Main Street America's 2021 Main Street Now Conference.

A hands-on workshop, local leaders will gain the tools to better prepare their community for the next disaster and build more resiliently so communities can recover more quickly. Sign up today for the next workshop where leaders will learn about how scenario planning can move your community from the sidelines to action; hear from experts on elevation and other techniques that will protect your downtown historic district; and gain communication skills to better advocate for disaster preparedness and resilience in your community.

Be inspired and roll up your sleeves and learn how your downtown can overcome disaster and come back from disaster better and stronger.

This session will include a one-hour break for lunch.

*This workshop is part of the Main Street Community Disaster Preparedness and Resilience program, which is supported by the Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund administered by the National Park Service.*