

## MCPHERSON MAIN STREET

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McPherson Main Street Inc. is a non-profit, membership-driven organization dedicated to re-energizing Downtown McPherson. The downtown area consists of 13 core blocks of activity where a variety of gifts, luxury items and necessities in a mixture of retail, service and professional businesses can be found. Add to that the unique restaurants, entertainment options and community events, and picture perfect image of McPherson's downtown emerges.

The organization receives its funding through membership investment, city support, sponsorships of specific events and grants. Members represent businesses from all over the community who realize that having a prosperous, attractive downtown district presents a positive first-impression for visitors and potential residents. Local employers recognize that having amenities and a variety of activities are key to attracting potential employees to our community. The goal of McPherson Main Street is to raise awareness of the products and services of our members by creating promotions and events geared to increase traffic in the Downtown area. McPherson Main Street also offer assistance for business expansion and start-ups, including one-on-one meetings and access to 0-percent loans. They are involved in the overall dynamic, function and look of the downtown area and have served on multiple task forces to address parking, upper story living, signage and zoning regulations that affect members. McPherson Main Street is currently working with city officials to re-design, upgrade and fund the Downtown Plaza so that it can be utilized more frequently with shade areas, seating, green space and a public speaker system. The organization does all of this with one full-time employee, a 12-member board of directors, multiple committees and a huge volunteer pool.

Ann Engel, the executive director and only employee, is in her eighth year, and feels that this job is an expression of her belief in the power and importance of the small independently owned business in the overall success of the community and county.

"The work ethic and basic operations of these businesses are the foundation of every successful endeavor that any large corporation has or will ever attain," Engel said. "I grew up in a family owned business and learned at a very young age that hard work, honesty and integrity are the foundation for success. I thoroughly enjoy helping these hard-working, dedicated business owners in every way possible, and feel very fortunate to know them."

Keep up with McPherson Main Street events on Facebook at McPherson Main Street or at <http://www.mcpersonmainst.org>. Contact McPherson Main Street via email at [mainst@mcpersonks.org](mailto:mainst@mcpersonks.org), call 620-241-7430 or stop in at 306 N. Main St. and say hello any time.



# Hometown PROUD

McPherson Main Street Inc. is a multifaceted organization that promotes and fuels Downtown McPherson. The non-profit consists of 13 blocks, where a variety of gifts, luxury items and necessities are available with retail, service and professional businesses, unique restaurants, entertainment and events.

"We try to focus on the whole picture: what Main Street looks like and how can we help the people located there," said Ann Engel, the executive director and only employee at the volunteer-based organization. "We're just a part of the puzzle that makes McPherson a better place."

McPherson Main Street strives to encourage its 143 members both on and off Main Street in their endeavors while growing new businesses and commerce for the community, which creates a striking first impression for visitors and potential residents. The organization receives its funding through membership investment, city support, sponsorships of specific events and grants.

"The people of McPherson have seen that we're good stewards with the money so they're very generous with their money to help us," Engel said. "We've done multiple projects to sponsor growth but we also work on issues in the area as they come up, like deciding

how many lanes to have downtown or getting parking permits for Main Street residents."

The organization was formed in October 1988 with the plan to improve and develop the downtown area. It joined with the Kansas Department of Commerce State Main Street program in August 1997 and was officially affiliated with the national and state organizations. When budget cuts dissolved the Kansas Main Street program in 2012, McPherson Main Street continued to function independently and represent the needs of the community.

"A smaller community has to work together to prevent sprawl. Ours is concentrated more with locally owned businesses that don't have a ton of resources, so Main Street was a way for local businesses to band together and have some impact," Engel said. "We try to represent those people and get them involved with volunteers that can help them out when they only have one employee."

As Main Street is the front door to McPherson, the organization seeks to bring in and expand businesses in an attractive location so visiting individuals and industries can easily find some perks of the area and feel called to stay and discover more.

### MAIN STREET FUNDING PROGRAMS:

#### Incentives Without Walls (IWW) funds:

Since its inception in 1997, the Incentive Without Walls program has loaned money to 24 projects and has provided grants to five projects. The IWW Grant program ended in 2008, but the zero percent loans have continued. The loans are made to encourage reinvestment in the community by the business owner, so for every \$1 that McPherson Main Street loans, they require a minimum of \$3 of personal investment in the project. The IWW loans have resulted in over \$25 million in reinvestment in the Downtown area.

#### Local Design Grant

Main Street offers an annual grant to members for signage, painting, lighting or other things that can be done to the frontage of their business. This year, Main

Street split the available \$2,000 between three applicant members: Hopp's Sound & Electric, Sounds Great and Twice Told Tales.

### MAIN STREET EVENTS:

First Thursday  
Farmers Market  
All Schools Day Pre-Parade sale  
Kids Summer Movie Series  
Shop the Night Away  
Burnin' Down Main  
Touch-A-Truck  
Trick or Treat Main Street  
Mini-Main

Main Street also plans and partners with:  
Chamber on the KAKE TV ads  
Snowball Drop  
Candy Cane Cash  
Cookies With Santa  
Holiday Movies at the Opera House  
Holiday Open House Weekend  
Home for the Holiday Promotion