Support local businesses to keep them alive.
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Preservation Alliance of Minnesota d.b.a. Rethos is a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to preserving, protecting, and promoting Minnesota’s historic resources.

**COVER IMAGES** | A collection of photos from this issue. These images are credited throughout the magazine.

* Images taken before the COVID-19 pandemic are notated.
Rethos staff have been working with the Litchfield Downtown Council (a Network Main Street program) to complete a Downtown Assessment since late January 2020. Located in west-central Minnesota, Litchfield is a small rural community with a population of approximately 6,600. Due to upcoming road construction that will interrupt traffic through the heart of their downtown district, the Litchfield Downtown Council wanted to get insight from their community on what they see and value in their downtown.

Staff connected with community members through engagement events and online surveys. On June 2nd, Rethos Rural Programs Coordinator Emily Kurash Casey presented the final report to the Litchfield Downtown Council.

View the full report at rethos.org/ruralprograms/downtownassessments

ARTISTS ON MAIN STREET

Due to the pandemic, the newest cohort of communities, Cloquet, Cook, Mahnomen and Two Harbors, will wait to roll out their Artists on Main Street programs in 2021. However, the 2019 cohort communities of Northfield, Olivia, Wabasha, and Willmar are moving forward to begin their second year of the program. All are working within flexible timelines and safe distancing guidelines. Rethos and Springboard for the Arts look forward to connecting with all the Artists on Main Street cohort communities virtually throughout the year to connect as a network, share ideas and provide educational opportunities.

THE LAST WORD | Doug Gasek

Doug Gasek, our Executive Director for the past eight years, has executed a 2-year plan and moved he and his family to his hometown to live the Rethos mission. Todd Wright, Associate Director/Director of Advancement, is the Acting Executive Director while the Board searches for our next Executive Director. We miss Doug already. He has been a transformational leader, a passionate advocate, and great friend.

More will be featured in our next issue.

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History is not the PAST.
It is the PRESENT.
We carry our history with us. We are our history.
If we pretend otherwise, we are literally criminals.

James Baldwin
African American Novelist, Poet, and Activist.

WE STAND IN PROTEST.

As a nonprofit that exists to lift the ethos of our communities through history, building reuse, education, and public policies, we recognize that the results of our work have not equally benefited individuals who are Black, Indigenous or People of Color (BIPOC). We acknowledge that the field of historic preservation is entrenched in systems and practices that are inherently racist, ones that have consistently prioritized the preservation of some places at the expense of others, particularly Black heritage sites. Change within our field will not be easy, but we believe it is essential if we are to atone for past inequities and create spaces where the voices of those who have had their stories ignored or erased can be heard.

Read the full statement at rethos.org/post/georgefloyd

Mapping Prejudice

Mapping Prejudice is a team of geographers, historians, digital humanists, and activists working to illustrate the history of racial discrimination in Hennepin County. They are mapping racially restrictive covenants to show that large swathes of our residential communities were protected for white households, contributing to our current racial wealth gap.

Join the effort at mappingprejudice.org

Toward Anti-Racist Preservation

Erin Hanafin Berg
Policy Director

I started coursework for my Master’s degree in Historic Preservation in the fall of 1994. Over the decades since, I have been a part of a movement and a field that has started to recognize its limitations in telling an inclusive story of American communities. While preservation organizations at the local, state, and national levels have been increasing funding and programs for researching, documenting, and preserving sites associated with underrepresented communities, the events of the summer – specifically the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer and the civic unrest that has followed – shined a bright light on a number of racist systems and practices in our communities. Preservation can’t hide from this spotlight, and it shouldn’t.

As I seek to unlearn my own biases and to apply a racial justice lens to the preservation movement as a whole, two experiences stand out as bookends. In 2008, I had been newly hired as the Field Representative for the then-Preservation Alliance of Minnesota in partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and attended the National Preservation Conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma. I will admit Tulsa was not high on my list of places to visit, and there was some speculation among attendees that the conference location was selected as a political favor to some corporate sponsor, but I was excited for this opportunity for professional development and network building. I remember attending the opening reception at the Philbrook Museum of Art, a lecture about Tulsa’s historic architecture and Route 66 narrated by the actor who played a minor character in the movie Cars, and a visit to the Art Deco Will Rogers High School. Although we had an overview bus tour that included the Greenwood area north of downtown that was once known...
In the wake of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor’s murders by police officers, amidst a pandemic that was already wreaking havoc in Black communities across the U.S., there is much to process as a white man who experiences incredible privilege. Even more so when you consider Rethos’s Real Estate program in comparison with the extreme racial disparities that exist in Minnesota. While we investigate how historic preservation shaped these disparities, we are grappling with how our practices and personal biases enforce them.

I wrote a version of this article shortly after the Minneapolis uprisings where I argue for more accessible building reuse incentives. However, I want to create room to acknowledge my own personal bias and recognize that historic preservation isn’t perfect nor offers the most viable solution (as I feel I presented in my original article). Real estate development has a fraught history with poor and nonwhite communities. Developers often have conflicting interests with the community, benefit from a century of racist real estate practices, and wield financial and political power to cause gentrification and displacement. Historic preservation is party to these crises and not accept the status quo. I find it very hard to understand and reckon with our complicity in systems that don’t benefit everyone. This doesn’t mean the benefits of historic preservation are devalued or meaningless, but this idea should never be accepted as the highest and best we can do to support our society.

It is clear to me that the field of Historic Preservation has tried to change. As it is with us as individuals, the preservation movement’s process of learning, growing, and becoming more inclusive is messy and uncomfortable, more likely to stumble and be awkward in our good intentions as we are to truly transform.

We also need to commit sustained personal and organizational effort, and to share our abundance of resources with the communities who have been left out of this work. Those of us who have dominated the discussion and the process for decades need to step back and learn from Black, Indigenous, and People of Color who have lived experience and who have not benefited equally from the vitality that preservation can help bring about. My sincere hope is that existing and new partners will join with Rethos in becoming anti-racist preservationists and that, through prodding, supporting, and holding each other accountable, we will help create a system of preservation that is centered around people’s authentic lived experiences and where all communities thrive.

Ethan Boote
REAL ESTATE MANAGER

There may not be a silver lining, however, we all share a responsibility to address these crises and not accept the status quo.
able to be rolled into additional funding programs created by local community partners.) From these applications, 58 businesses were awarded funds.

We’re already seeing businesses complete projects with these funds, allowing them to remain functional or be ready to open once state guidelines deem it safe to do so. Broken Paddle Guiding Company in Wabasha, MN, recognized early on that the significant decrease in tourist traffic would impact their spring and summer. With their storefront located in the heart of Wabasha’s downtown, Michael Anderson, Guide and Owner of Broken Paddle, takes great pride in making the Mississippi River and its backwaters accessible to paddlers, and wanted to find a way to make that happen despite the stay-at-home order. His answer? Live streaming and recording paddling trips for folks to view at home.

“We wanted to give access to the outdoors for everyone who is stuck at home, unable or weary of travelling, and who are just missing the sights and sounds of nature,” stated Anderson.

“Livestreaming video straight from the backwaters of the Mississippi River is our way, however small, of being able to offer something to help people take their minds off all the craziness and uneasiness right now. With the support and full encouragement from the Rethos Support Fund we are able to make that happen, it has allowed all of us river guides and nature enthusiasts at Broken Paddle to take our minds off the news and focus on what we do best, bring the river to people.”

Bringing their business to people where they are is a theme among the Business Support Fund recipients. Pam Kubat with Corporate Recognition in downtown Owatonna, knew that they wanted to help people who now have safety as their number one concern. “I chose to apply for the Small Business Support Fund because I felt that after everyone has been thinking constantly about the virus, PPE and how to safely go back to work, we needed to give them something welcoming and useful that expresses our interest and concern for their well-being but reminds that we are in this together to help them/their business move forward.” Corporate Recognition focuses on

Main Street is known for its ability to get things done.

Main Street staff and volunteers are regularly looked to for guidance on how to make things happen in their downtowns with limited resources, limited time, limited space—and to be successful despite these limitations.

With the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic hitting Minnesota Main Street districts at a time when activity and programming normally thrives, local Main Street Programs immediately began rethinking what their districts would need to survive.

Within days of the Stay-At-Home Order, Rethos and Designated Main Street Programs came up with a plan to shift all their focus to the small businesses that make up the heart and soul of a downtown. Rethos Main Streets was able to shift funds from the annual technical assistance available to designated Rethos Main Streets programs to directly support the businesses that needed it the most. The Rethos Business Support Fund allows Designated Main Street programs to provide financial support to businesses who are shifting their business models in light of COVID-19. Businesses in designated downtown districts applied for funding to address updates that would keep their business moving forward during the pandemic. The applications showed a wide range of needs: physical updates to allow for new cleaning and spacing guidelines, online ordering and website upgrades, implementing curbside pickup, and even the creation of safety material disbursement in their local communities.

Within 9 days, 112 businesses from 9 Designated Main Street districts applied for funds. (There are still applications open in two communities, which were
In the wake of the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic, we are thinking of our Main Street communities. We have gathered this list of resources from our program partners for all to use and explore as we navigate this uncertain time. Topics are focused on small business relief and support, unemployment options and alternatives, and general information from various Minnesota government departments.

If you have information that could be added to this list, please share at info@rethos.org.

**MAIN STREET AMERICA**
Comprehensive list of resources from the National Main Street Program
https://www.mainstreet.org/howwecanhelp/resourcemcenter/covid19resources

**MINNESOTA SPECIFIC RESOURCES**
- MN Dept. of Health
  https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/materials/index.html
- Alternatives to Layoffs
  https://uimn.org/employers/alternative-layoff/
- Minnesota Unemployment Insurance

**SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**
Resources for small businesses
https://www.sba.gov/offices/district/mn/minneapolis/resources/minnesota-resource-guide

**SPRINGBOARD FOR THE ARTS**
Coronavirus/COVID-19 Resources for Artists
https://springboardforthearts.org/coronavirus/

**IRS**
Tax Relief Info
https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus

**USBG FOUNDATION**
Bartender Emergency Assistance
https://www.usbgfoundation.org/beap

**RESTAURANT WORKERS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**
Relief for Restaurants and Workers
https://secure.restaurantworkerscf.org/wp/client/restaurantworkerscf/donation.jsp?forwarded-FromSecureDomain=1&campaign=2&test=true

**RURAL PROGRAMS**
- *RIGHT* Artist John Salgado Moldonado with student drummer as part of the Artist on Main program in Willmar.

Helping businesses brand themselves through printed and promotional products and awards, with a focus on employee recognition for service, sales, safety, and wellness. With the help of the Business Support Fund they are now offering branded work-at-home kits for local businesses to instill the feeling of still working as a team.

In addition, Corporate Recognition wanted the chance to create packages for their clients that will help them return back to work safely with PPE and “welcome back” kits tailored to their businesses.

While the Business Support Fund now ensures many businesses’ abilities to focus inward on the creation of media and safety supplies, other businesses were able to tackle projects that upgraded their space with new distancing measures in mind, and in turn give back to their local Main Street Program. Carlson’s Sport Center in Red Wing used their Business Support Funds to update their display area for customers. Since they print shirts for many local groups and events that aren’t happening right now, they shifted their focus to Red Wing Downtown Main Street. “To generate business and support for Red Wing Downtown Main Street, we ran a t-shirt campaign (featuring Downtown Red Wing) in support of local businesses,” shared Jim Schammel of Carlson’s. “We are donating a portion of the proceeds from the campaign to the Downtown Main Street Fund. Thank you to Rethos and Red Wing Downtown Main Street for helping out small businesses like ours!”

Collaborations like this are a perfect glimpse at the value of a Main Street District, and the forward momentum of small funds making big differences in the community.

Stories of positive outcomes from the Business Support Fund continue to roll in almost daily. Rethos is proud to be able to work directly with our Main Street Districts to impact change where it really matters, not only during COVID-19, but every single day. As the effects of the pandemic continue to impact downtown districts and businesses, Rethos Main Streets will continue to provide resources and support, helping to preserve the ethos of our Main Streets throughout the state.
A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY for MAIN STREET SMALL BUSINESSES

A PERSONAL TAKE ON THE FUTURE OF SMALL BUSINESS.

Before the pandemic, my trips back home to Granite Falls, Minnesota, always involved a visit to Bluenoise Gopher Public House (Bluenose), a community-driven taproom that serves craft beer, wine, and panini sandwiches to the public. It is a cooperative organization led by its member-owners, and I serve as a Board member. Like many Main Street businesses, Bluenoise had only been open for a little over a year before the pandemic closed it down in mid-March, during our busiest time of the year. To say it was painful and overwhelming during the week we had to close and furlough our employees is an understatement. But knowing it was for the safety of our community and that all of Minnesota’s businesses were going through the same ordeal provided some comfort.

Uncertainty. It is the word that is still front of mind for many Main Street businesses a few months into the pandemic. At Bluenoise, we started 2020 with a positive outlook, solid budget, great events lined up, and an abundance of opportunities for growth. Today, we are blindly navigating a way forward with a lot of uncertainty and figuring out how to stay afloat for the rest of the year, especially the winter months. The hard decisions many businesses have already made is just the start, and more difficult decisions will need to be made throughout the end of this year and next. Main Street businesses must think through required safety guidelines, employee and customer safety, liability issues, and whether increases in e-commerce and delivery will be short-term or long-term shifts.

Another question a business may be asking is how will this pandemic redefine its role within community? Main Street businesses have always been the first to give back by donating to a cause, sponsoring an event or volunteering their time and many continue to do so despite today’s uncertainty. Some have stepped up to help fellow businesses by selling and promoting their gift cards, others have pivoted to produce products in response to the pandemic like masks and hand sanitizer. There are stories of businesses giving back to their community by providing free graduation cakes, COVID care packages and free meals to those in need. So how can you give back to your favorite small businesses during this time of uncertainty?

• Send them a supportive message
• Share and help promote them via social media
• Send them a supportive message
• Support or get involved with local organizations that provide a support system for your community’s small businesses, like your local Main Street or downtown organization or Chamber of Commerce

Bluenoise along with many small Main Street businesses will continue to move forward, get creative and respond to our ever-changing environment. We are dependent on the support of our community. Like many communities across the state, ours is strong and resilient. Because of our confidence in community, Bluenoise is going to take a leap of faith and step into the rest of this year and next along with our business neighbors, hoping we all make it through to the other end even stronger than when we first opened our doors.

Main Streets have seen the incredible outcomes of what happens when neighbors work together to make their downtown a place they want to be. As the Covid-19 Pandemic continues to alter our hopes and plans, it’s easy to think about the things I miss. I miss watching springtime bloom in our Main Street Districts. I miss meeting the people in downtowns across the state working to make their places vibrant and engaging. I miss listening to the sounds of summer outdoor concerts and visiting the great restaurants and breweries in our Main Street communities. Listing all the things we’ve lost out on is easy. However, I’m amazed and inspired at another list—the list of ways people have come together, found alternatives, kept each other safe, tried new methods, and continued to move forward despite incredible hardships.

The actions of Main Street folks around the state have me reflecting on a piece written by Mary Welcome titled “We are Out in the Fields.” “We all have the ability to act as both lighthouse and lightening rod for the places we care about.” Our Main Street directors and volunteers are doing just that—providing a beacon of hope through collaboration, resource gathering, and community building, and quickly finding their place as a leader in forward movement. Main Streeters are do-ers. They are the connecters who know who to call and when. They are the movers and shakers who find paths forward when there seems to be a roadblock. They’re the creative thinkers who are willing to try new projects in small doses to bring about big change. They’re the lifeblood of the community.

They’re also realists. Main Street Directors are hearing first-hand about how the clock is ticking on the survival of downtown businesses. “Like the Main Street Approach, recovery planning and implementation must be comprehensive and strategic,” writes Matthew Wagner, in a recent publication from the National Main Street Center. While there are certainly obstacles that Main Streets have never faced before, Main Street programs know anything is possible. They’re used to working incrementally. They’re used to collaborating, putting the focus on the needs of the community, and they’re used to creating thoughtful plans based on data. Main Street programs know the hard numbers of their downtown communities, and they’re going to be able to actively monitor and respond to the changes brought about by the pandemic.

That’s why Main Streets matter. By having a hyper-local focus, the chance for survival increases. Main Streets have the incredible outcomes of what happens when neighbors work together to make their downtown a place they want to be. Continuing to support Main Streets, continuing to support the heart of a community, is the way towns, businesses, and communities will survive the toll COVID-19 is going to take. Main Street has been a leader in local survival for 40 years. We’ve had a lot of practice at patience and resourcefulness, and we’re ready to continue reimagining our places for safety and preservation of our communities and downtown districts.

Emily Kurash Casey
RURAL PROGRAMS COORDINATOR

*Full article can be found on Mary Welcome’s website: https://bangbangboomerang.com/we-are-out-in-the-fields
**From Matthew Wagner, Ph. D., Vice President of Revitalization Programs at the National Main Street Center in “Main Street: Recovery and Revitalization Depend on Understanding Human Psyche.”

Places Reimagined
NEW DIRECTIONS to MAIN STREET

With Rethos Main Streets: Minnesota recognizing its ten year anniversary, 2020 was set to be a time of celebration across the state. With the coronavirus pandemic bringing the world to a standstill, communities are looking to their leaders for solutions.

Throughout Minnesota, businesses and leaders in Main Street communities have been implementing innovative approaches to serve residents while Main Street Directors help navigate the storm during these unprecedented times. Local Main Street leaders provide support and resources that help businesses not only in times of normalcy, but during times of crisis as well. Local businesses are essential to a town’s ethos, a bedrock of community spirit. In many ways this reciprocal relationship guides the vision for the resiliency, beauty, and potential in our downtowns. To honor their efforts, we will be highlighting projects in a few Main Street communities while paying tribute to the Directors working tirelessly for the places they love.

ALBERT LEA

Holly Karsjens

A pay-it-forward style gift card challenge has raised over $3,200 for local businesses and those in need. Main Street Director Holly Karsjens sees the project as a circle of support within the community, helping businesses generate revenue and new customers while also serving those in need. Though she has been on the Main Street steering committee for some time, Holly took an active leadership role in mid-March. As of May 1, Karsjens officially took over as the Albert Lea Main Street Executive Director. Apart from working with other local agencies to broadly disseminate information, Main Street is helping local retailers digest the influx of information and opportunities, while also preparing a t-shirt campaign that will bring additional support to downtown businesses and unity to Albert Lea. While taking up a new position during uncertain times, Holly emphasizes that the community is in this together. By providing education and support, she feels that remaining connected right now, through health or business, is crucial to moving forward.
WABASHA

Mary Flicek

David Wogen, owner of River Rider Cycle, has been providing outdoor mobility and leisure for the residents of Wabasha. Through the pandemic his company has continued selling and working on bicycles while encouraging Wabasha residents to utilize the hobby as a form of exploration and fitness that can be done while maintaining social distancing. Over Kelly’s five years as Main Street Director she has utilized her position to maximize connection and communication in both the historic district and community broadly. She sees their most impactful initiative as a micro-grants program that allows aspiring entrepreneurs to get a foothold on their dreams while assisting established businesses to grow and thrive. During the pandemic, Kelly’s focus on connection has been on full display, organizing and promoting information about local restaurants, highlighting businesses with modified services, and connecting personally with businesses to help them navigate the plethora of resources available.

"During the pandemic, Kelly’s focus on connection has been on full display.

RURAL PROGRAMS

FARIBAULT

Kelly Nygaard

Two initiatives have shown the power of local organizations to share resources for the betterment of the community. When schools switched to remote learning the Faribault Diversity Coalition (FDC) recognized that many students don’t have access to the Internet. To alleviate this inequity FDC board members voted unanimously to cover the cost of 50 T-Mobile Hotspots for a year, a total donation of $12,000. This effort ensures that students can access schoolwork and learn on various online platforms that are essential in the 21st century.

Responding to an urgent need, the distiller 10,000 Drops began producing hand sanitizer in collaboration with three local organizations: Allina Health Clinic (supplied peroxide for ingredients), Ace Hardware (donated buckets to house the sanitizer), and the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism (assisted with distribution and marketing). So far, over 100 gallons of sanitizer have been distributed to first responders, health professionals, and assisted care facilities.

With Faribault Main Street situated within the local Chamber, Director Kelly Nygaard was able to bring Main Street expertise to the project. Kelly sees these sorts of collaborative projects as the mark of a strong community, one that works together to connect resources while putting people over profit. These innovative initiatives are what she sees as the cornerstones to surviving the short term impacts while setting up for long term community growth.

Over Kelly’s five years as Main Street Director she has utilized her position to maximize connection and communication in both the historic district and support funds for Main Street businesses, as well as coming up with additional funds. This action is true to the connectedness and resource sharing that Main Street is all about, reinforcing the idea that the individual elements in Wabasha have to work together to better the whole.

"During the pandemic, Kelly’s focus on connection has been on full display.

RURAL PROGRAMS
During the pandemic, a local bar and grill has taken a surprising turn and become Willmar’s go-to bakery. Spurs Bar and Grill has always dreamed of baking cakes but never had the time with their usual business operations. When Main Street Director Sarah Swedburg asked the bar and restaurant how they suddenly got all of these cakes the owners remarked slyly, “We’re baking them.”

Sarah Swedburg
During the pandemic, a local bar and grill has taken a surprising turn and become Willmar’s go-to bakery. Spurs Bar and Grill has always dreamed of baking cakes but never had the time with their usual business operations. When Main Street Director Sarah Swedburg asked the bar and restaurant how they suddenly got all of these cakes the owners remarked slyly, “We’re baking them.”

Greg Siems
On the same day that the original stay at home went into effect, the Northfield Chamber of Commerce launched an online gift card store to help local businesses while also running a discount chamber bucks promotion. Since then, over $11,000 in gift cards and a similar amount in chamber bucks have been sold, keeping the money local in the community.

According to Main Street Director Greg Siems, at least ¾ of the participating businesses are in the downtown district. After being in his position for just over a year, Greg has been utilizing Main Street strengths to provide resources and innovative partnerships for downtown Northfield. During the pandemic, he has been helping local businesses navigate resources as well as providing an open ear for listening to concerns. Most notably, Greg has helped raise an additional $2,500 to supplement Rethos’ initial business support funds, ensuring further downtown investment and the implementation of long sought-after projects or upgrades.

Main Street Day at the Capitol
On March 10th, Rethos hosted Main Street Day at the Capitol, a day where staff and Main Street community leaders gathered to speak directly with our legislators about increasing funding to their communities.

THRESHOLD by KRISTOPHER SWANSON
“Threshold” is the new sculpture welcoming visitors to the Riverwalk in downtown Northfield (at 219 Water Street, on the west side of the Cannon River). It is the work of Kristopher Swanson, a Northfield native and St. Olaf College graduate installed on the Riverwalk in downtown Northfield.

This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council (SEMAC) thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts & cultural heritage fund.

The sculpture was purchased by the Northfield Downtown Development Corporation (NDDC) thanks to SEMAC funding and installed by the City of Northfield in summer 2020.

Image courtesy of Greg Siems.
On a beautiful, sunny morning in mid-September, Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps, Rethos: Places Reimagined and the Morrison County Historical Society, the Central Minnesota Education Coordinator for Rethos, partnered to host a special by-invitation-only event in one of Central Minnesota’s pre-eminent public landscapes, Riverside Park in St. Cloud. The event showcased the park and its significance and featured the work of Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps on one of its New Deal-era structures, a staircase with erosion-control wall and drainage flume built in 1933. Northern Bedrock is an AmericaCorps program that seeks to foster and encourage the preservation trades, training new leaders in the field while at the same time helping to preserve and maintain the nation’s assets and infrastructure.

Located along the eastern banks of the Mississippi River, Riverside Park was established in 1910 to take advantage of scenic views of the river. Inspired by Frederick Law Olmsted’s Central Park in New York City, the urban landscape-style park experienced a major period of development during the New Deal era of the 1930’s and early 40’s. Many of its characteristic features were built during this time in the National Park Service Rustic style.

Among those in attendance at the event were state and local representatives for the area – Senator Jerry Relph, District 14; Representative Dan Wolgamott, District 14A; St. Cloud City Councilmember Steve Laraway, 2nd Ward; and St. Cloud City Councilmember At-large, Carol Lewis. Also in attendance were representatives of several highly regarded state and national organizations – The Nature Conservancy, Preservation Action, Great River Greening, Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the St. Cloud Convention & Visitors Bureau.

The event included a presentation on the history of the park and the WPA by local historian, Bill Morgan, and an introduction to Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps by Jill Baum, its executive director. Ray Stenglein and the Northern Bedrock hitch crew then described the project individually to small groups of event attendees.

We lucked out with the weather and, with everyone following pandemic protocols, the event was enjoyed by all.
The time to shop local is **NOW**.

Without support, nearly **7.5 million Main Street businesses** in the US will be at risk of closing permanently over the coming 5 months.

As we brace for winter, contributing to our local economies is more important than ever. Shopping local means purchasing necessities and gifts from independent sellers and owner-run businesses in your community.

**Buy Local.** Challenge yourself to buy all your holiday gifts locally. Get takeout from your favorite local restaurant once a week. Visit your local hardware store for your DIY home project needs.

**Be Flexible.** Businesses are making tough choices and operating in extreme conditions.

**Be Generous.** Make a habit of supporting our small businesses **NOW** to help them survive.