

# 2021 American Rescue Plan: City of Stevenson

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Stevenson Downtown Association



A MAIN STREET ORGANIZATION

## Our Mission

To promote and revitalize Downtown Stevenson and enrich our local heritage.

## Our Vision

By embracing the Main Street Approach, we envision a historically preserved, economically vibrant downtown where locals and visitors alike come together for community, culture and connection to the Columbia River.

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Washington State  
**MAIN STREET**  
PROGRAM

## A Washington Main Street Community

Stevenson is **one of 66 towns** in the Washington State Main Street Program, which has been helping communities revitalize the economy, appearance, and image of their downtown commercial districts throughout the state since 1984.

Under the WA Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation, the program is managed by the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation.

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## A National Main Street Affiliate

As a Main Street America Affiliate™, the Stevenson Downtown Association is part of a national network of more than 1,200 neighborhoods and communities who share both a commitment to creating high-quality places and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development.

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A MAIN STREET ORGANIZATION

# Programs Overview

## Our Pandemic Response

In the wake of COVID-19, the Stevenson Downtown Association jumped into action to support our community by redirecting existing and new resources to provide grants and promotions directly to downtown businesses, as well as marketing Downtown Stevenson to visitors in order to [#supportlocalsafely](#).

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# SDA Programs Overview

## Bricks & Clicks Grant Program

- \$1,000 grant for exterior improvements (bricks) or e-commerce upgrades (clicks)
- **19 grants awarded** to date
- **\$18,315 directly invested** in downtown businesses & properties since Oct 2020
- An additional 7 approved grant projects in the queue











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# SDA Programs Overview

## #StevensonStrong Promotion

- 13 initial participating merchants
- \$21,009 reimbursed to participating businesses to date
- Items provided at no cost to businesses:
  - 2 sizes of takeout boxes, along with #stevensonstrong enclosure stickers
  - 2 sizes of #stevensonstrong kraft bags
  - Marketing materials and support
  - “Thank you for supporting local” window cling



# #StevensonStrong

## Support local!

Use promo code #stevensonstrong for  
\$5 off \$25+ / \$10 off \$50+

Valid on purchases of \$25+ at participating retailers and restaurants.  
Valid only on takeout orders at restaurants. Max discount per visit is \$10.

*We got this!*

PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS & RETAILERS



The #stevensonstrong program is administered by the Stevenson Downtown Association, a local non-profit Main Street organization, with financial support from the Skamania EDC (via WA State Dept of Commerce), City of Stevenson, Stevenson Business Association, Skamania County Chamber of Commerce, and Main Street Tax Incentive Program (locally-allocated state B&O taxes).



stevensonmainstreet.org



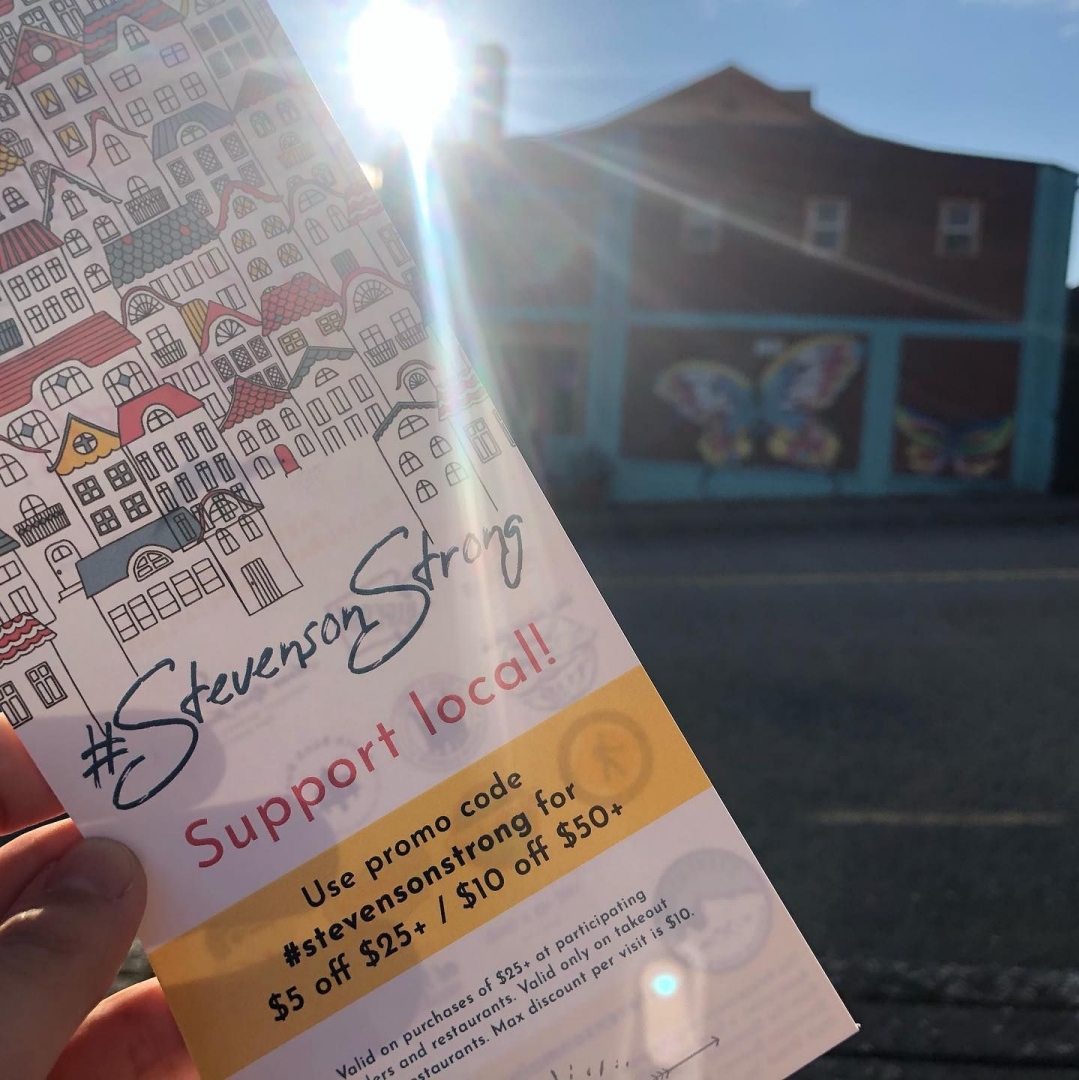
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#stevensonstrong

THANK YOU  
FOR SHOPPING LOCAL

Special



# Why Invest ARP Funds in Downtown?

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**“Downtown is important because it’s the heart and soul of any community. If you don’t have a healthy downtown, you simply don’t have a healthy town.”**

*-Ed McMahon*

Chair, Board of Directors

National Main Street Center

# Why Invest ARP Funds in Downtown?

## 1) Stevenson Downtown Association is a key player with turnkey programs

Our role in economic recovery and revitalizing Downtown Stevenson businesses is crucial.

As shared, we have programs in place to move recovery funds quickly to support downtown.

As we/they say across Washington: local Main Street orgs were built for this!



# Why Invest ARP Funds in Downtown?

## 2) Main Street Affiliation & Impact

Cities & counties throughout Washington direct funds to their local Main Street organizations, like the Stevenson Downtown Association.

Main Street Communities helped generate **\$550.3 million in sales for businesses** in Washington Main Street districts (2011-2019).





# Why Invest ARP Funds in Downtown?

## 3) Our Four Point Approach: Economic Vitality

The Main Street Approach™ is a time-tested comprehensive revitalization strategy built around four points: Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion & Outreach.

Our Economic Vitality committee focuses on economic and financial tools to assist new and existing businesses and creates a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and innovators.

This committee is primed to support recovery efforts. As we said, Main Street is built for this!



# ARP Interim Final Rule

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From Main Street America, with Downtown lens

# ARP – INTERIM FINAL RULE

## **SPECIFIED ELIGIBLE USES FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY:**

- Expenses to improve efficiency of economic relief programs – including consumer outreach
- Direct assistance to small business and non-profits
  - Loans/grants to mitigate financial hardship
  - Loans/grants for COVID-19 mitigation/prevention
- Technical assistance, counseling or other services to assist businesses.
- Rehiring of government staff.
- Aid to impacted industries: travel, tourism and hospitality specifically called out in legislation; Interim Final Rule also specifies **business districts** as an eligible use.

# ARP – INTERIM FINAL RULE

## FRAMEWORK FOR ELIGIBILITY

### (IF NOT SPECIFIED USE):

- What is the harmful impact you're seeking to address?
- What's the causal connection, that is, how did COVID create the issue you are addressing?
- What was the disproportionate impact? Why is this needed?
- How will your use of funds solve this issue?

*“States, local, and Tribal governments have broad latitude to choose whether and how to use the Fiscal Recovery Funds to respond to and address the negative economic impact.”*

# ARP – INTERIM FINAL RULE

## **OTHER TAKEAWAYS FOR MAIN STREET:**

- Funds can be used to offer hiring incentives for frontline and essential workers.
- While funds are broadly very flexible, infrastructure uses are more narrowly specified: water, sewer, broadband. General infrastructure, like roads, is not included.
- These funds cannot be used as a match to federal grant funds.
- Funds must be obligated by 12.31.24; used by 12.31.26

# ARP Proposed Options

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Stevenson Downtown Association: Existing programs & projects

# Bricks & Clicks Grant Program



STEVENSON  
DOWNTOWN  
ASSOCIATION

— 2020 — 004487

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For BRICKS & CLICKS GRANT

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# Bricks & Clicks Grant Program

**\$5,000 - \$20,000**

## Provides more grants to businesses!

- Directly funds \$1,000 grants
    - Available to any downtown business or building owner
    - Bricks = facade / outdoor improvements
    - Clicks = online/ POS upgrades
    - Demand for this program continues as businesses open up
  - Previously funded by:
    - WA State Main Street Tax Credit Incentive Program contributions
    - CARES Act thru EDC / DOC
    - Redirecting SDA budget due to COVID
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# #StevensonStrong Promotion



# #StevensonStrong Promotion

**\$5,000 - \$25,000**

## Reboots this program for fall & winter!

- Provides branded take-out boxes for restaurants
    - 2020 participating restaurants said that receiving takeout boxes was the most helpful aspect of #StevensonStrong
  - Reimburses participating businesses for the \$5 / \$10 off customer discount
    - Prevents a financial hit for merchants
  - Previously funded by:
    - CARES Act thru City of Stevenson
    - Skamania EDC
    - WA State Main Street Tax Credit Incentive Program contributions
    - Redirecting SDA budget due to COVID
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# Stevenson Sreatery



# Stevenson Streatery:

**\$5,000 - 20,000**

## An improved Stevenson Streatery!

- The Stevenson Streatery utilizes the expanded sidewalk area at the base of the Courthouse lawn
    - Features 6 picnic tables, 8 bistro tables, lighting, and pallet wall in a temporary yet attractive design
    - Currently planned to close on Labor Day
  - Commitment for improvements provides:
    - Added games, activities or heaters
    - Possibly extending beyond Labor Day
    - Possibly creating a year-round, semi-permanent, partially covered community space (until plaza construction)
  - Previously funded by:
    - EDC
    - In-kind donations
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# ARP Proposed Options

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Stevenson Downtown Association: New Ideas

# Provide start-up costs for an entrepreneurial ecosystem: **\$3,000-\$7,500**

## **“Entrepreneurship hub” or “innovation work center” in partnership with Chamber**

3 initial workstations, including furniture, technology, signage:  
x \$1,000-2,500 = \$3,000-\$7,500

In partnership with the Chamber of Commerce (and possibly SBDC and EDC), we are in the infancy stage of planning an innovation work center or entrepreneurship hub at the Chamber office (where our office is also located). This would be the first step in creating a plan to foster an entrepreneurial ecosystem in Downtown Stevenson for all of Skamania County.

***Relevant ARP Ruling: “Technical assistance, counseling or other services to assist businesses.”***



# Fund new possible grant programs: **\$15,000-\$80,000**

## 1) Main Street Tourism & Hospitality Grant

30 downtown tourism & hospitality businesses  
x \$500 grant = \$15,000 or x \$1,000 grant = \$30,000

One-time, direct aid grant to downtown businesses in this sector.

**Relevant ARP Ruling: “Aid to impacted industries: travel, tourism and hospitality”**

## 2) Hiring Incentives Grant for Food Service

21 downtown food service businesses  
x \$500 grant = \$10,500 or x \$1,000 grant = \$21,000

Incentivized program for restaurants & other food-service businesses to aid with hiring shortage. Simple application outlining plan for new hire incentives; reimbursable grant.

**Relevant ARP Ruling: “Aid to impacted industries: travel, tourism and hospitality”**



# Fund new possible grant programs: **\$15,000-\$80,000**

## **3) Blade Sign Micro Grants**

Offer up to 20 grants to downtown businesses to purchase blade signs  
x \$500 grant = \$10,000

Program for downtown businesses to improve signage per the 'best practice' of installing blade signs to increase sales. Simple application; reimbursable grant.

*Relevant ARP Ruling: "Business districts as eligible use"*

## **4) Facade Grant**

Provide 2 large facade grants each year to facilitate business expansion and district revitalization.

x \$10,000 grant = \$20,000

In-depth application, including budget, plans, permitting and case for revitalizing the commercial district and preserving the building's character.

*Relevant ARP Ruling: "Business districts as eligible use"*





# Help SDA Fundraising Budget Gap: **\$29,000**

## Main Street Tax Incentive Program (MSTCIP) Shortfall

Due to COVID-19, 2020 MSTCIP fundraising was **down 54%** in 2020 from 2019 contributions.

This is the largest fundraiser each year for Main Street organizations, like the downtown association.

Local businesses could not commit to their previous contributions due to COVID-19.

SDA received a \$6,000 Nonprofit Community Grant to help fill gap, but it still leaves a \$29,500 shortfall.

***Relevant ARP Ruling: “Direct assistance to non-profits for financial hardship”***

## MSTCIP Contributions

2019	2020	2021
\$77,500	\$35,500	42,500 (pledged)
	54% decrease	



# THANK YOU

for your leadership  
and consideration!

*Together, we are...*

*#StevensonStrong*

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