



BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON GAMSA

The National Trust Main Street Center's annual GAMSA winners are recognized for their exceptional accomplishments in revitalizing the nation's historic and traditional Main Street commercial districts by using the proven Main Street Four-Point Approach®. Downtown Ferndale's once-destitute downtown has been remarkably transformed, carefully cultivated by nearly a decade of the Ferndale Downtown Development Authority's adherence to game changing goals and objectives. Its synergistic mix of retail, restaurants and services reflects a significant change in vacancy rates from 30% years ago to 6% today. Its visionary plan to narrow its main corridor of Nine Mile Road produced a vibrant streetscape with safe places for outdoor cafes, flowering baskets and greenery, pedestrian alleys, bicycle racks and, ultimately, an eclectic mix of people. As the first neighbor to the north of Detroit, and the most southern community in Oakland County, Downtown Ferndale bridges attitudes and geography with an urban energy, a wide embrace of cultural diversity and a determination that change is good.

GAMSA winners demonstrate exemplary achievement in the process of strengthening their downtowns and commercial districts based on the following selection criteria:

- Active involvement of the public and private sectors;
- Broad-based community support for the revitalization effort;
- Quality of achievements over time;
- Innovative solutions to significant problems;
- Commitment to historic preservation;
- Evolving track record of successful commercial district revitalization;
- Comprehensive revitalization effort: activity in all four points of the Main Street Four-Point Approach® to commercial district revitalization;
- Economic impact of the revitalization program; and
- Successful small business development.

The winners were selected by a national jury composed of former award winners, community development professionals, governmental agency representatives who are active in community economic development and historic preservation.

The Main Street Four-Point Approach® is a proven methodology for historic preservation-based economic development that was developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation 30 years ago and is used in more than 2,000 communities throughout the U.S.

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