

March 3, 2025

To: Sen. Chip Curry, Representative Traci Gere, and Representative Tiffany Roberts.

My name is Amanda McDaniel and I am the Director of Main Street Bath, happily in my sixth year of this unique role. Main Street Bath is the first accredited Main Street program in the State of Maine, established in 2001. We are looking forward to celebrating our 25th Anniversary in 2026.

This program is an active member promoting the holistic and successful model of the Four Point Approach from the National Main Street America program. Created out of the National Historic Trust, the work of Main Street is to preserve and promote historic downtowns that would otherwise be suffering from a lack of coordinated programming. We hang our hat on creating cohesive collaborative communication between municipal, non profit, business and residential narratives. We are not a membership model, so we can actively serve all within our downtown footprint. We create events that draw in tourism, resources that support small business, and actively maintain a culture of welcome and belonging for our downtown community.

There was a time in which Bath, and many other downtowns that have become accredited or affiliate Main Street Programs, was in a troubled time, without advocacy, without planning, without partnership to move forward. These historic downtowns have properties that are crumbling, with outdated systems and could very easily be bulldozed to be turned into cheaper, less attractive strip malls. Our work aims to provide as much assistance, resiliency, ideas, and vibrancy to prevent us from losing the character, feeling and atmosphere our historic downtowns offer.

We would not be able to act as a Main Street, or be connected to the National Main Street America programming without having a state level agency to assist, guide, connect and convene us. This state level advocacy is the Maine Downtown Center. All of the 841+ accredited Main Street Programs across the nation all have a State Coordinating Program above them. This is the only way we can successfully operate.

The economic and tourism impact of the loss of Main Street Programs to our downtowns would be extreme. The municipalities and chambers do not have the bandwidth for the depth of on-the-street programming we provide. You can say goodbye to Bath Heritage Days, Old Fashioned Christmas in Bath, all the Free Summer Concert Series and the only tourism that Bath offers, with [www.visitbath.com](http://www.visitbath.com), the Bath Regional Information Center and the 25,000 annual copies of Map of Bath. This is only a small pie slice of the year round work plan we have in operation.

Please support LD 629, so that Maine Development Foundation's Maine Downtown Center can exist, so in turn, we can exist. Our partnership is essential, required, and a true sense of advocacy for what keeps Maine feeling the way it should be.

Best,  
Amanda McDaniel  
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