

destination Monroe-West Monroe 2023 downtown

September 13 - 15, 2023

Monroe - West Monroe, Louisiana



The 2023 edition of the Destination Downtown conference will be hosted by the beautiful Twin Cities of the Ark-La-Miss, Monroe and West Monroe, Louisiana. Attracting more than 200 professionals in preservation-based commercial district revitalization, the conference is presented by three great partnering organizations - Louisiana Main Street, Mississippi Main Street Association, and Main Street Arkansas.

Destination Downtown is the South's premier downtown revitalization conference. It is the perfect learning opportunity for both new and experienced Main Street executive directors, board member, volunteers, elected officials, architects, planners, economic development professionals, consultants and others interested in building sustainable historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts.



Agenda

September

13

10:00

Registration Opens

10:30 – 1:30

Main Street 101

2:00 – 5:00

Tours

5:30

Opening Reception

14

8:00

Registration Opens

9:00 – 10:15

Opening Plenary

10:30 – 11:45

Breakout Sessions

1:45 – 3:00

Breakout Sessions

3:15 – 4:30

Breakout Sessions

6:00

Louisiana Thursday Night

15

8:00

Registration Opens

8:30 – 9:45

Breakout Sessions

10:00 – 11:15

Breakout Sessions

11:30 – 12:30

Closing Plenary



Tours and Sessions

Main Street 101

This overview of the Main Street Four-Point Approach will serve as a great introduction to Main Street! New directors, board members, and anyone else who is interested in learning more about Main Street is invited to participate. A box lunch is included.

Tours

Public Art Walk - Downtown Monroe

Downtown Monroe is home to over 20 outdoor murals, 5 gallery spaces, and numerous outdoor sculpture pieces. You will tour these locations and learn about the different pieces, some of which are the first public art commissioned by the City of Monroe.

Historic Walking Tour - Downtown West Monroe

The Downtown West Monroe walking tour will highlight areas of historic and cultural significance. You will tour rehabilitated historic buildings, view public art, and learn about the evolution of this district that once boasted only antique shops.

Brownfields and Breweries Tour - Monroe and West Monroe

Working together as a coalition, the City of Monroe, the City of West Monroe, and Ouachita Parish received a \$479,000 EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant and the City of Monroe received a \$872,000 Brownfield Cleanup Grant for the Ouachita Candy Company site. Focusing on riverfront development, this bus tour will cover both sides of the Ouachita River to learn about the unique challenges and plans for some of the brownfields. The tour will also make stops at breweries on both sides of the river for a beverage of choice. Space is limited for this bus tour!



Tours and Sessions

Keynote Address



Jason Roberts
Founding Director, Better Blocks

Jason Roberts is a Restaurateur, Urban Designer and former US Congressional nominee. In 2010, he organized a series of "Better Block" projects, taking blighted blocks with vacant properties in Dallas, TX and converting them into temporary walkable districts with pop-up businesses, bike lanes, cafe seating, and landscaping. The project has become an open-sourced international movement occurring everywhere from Melbourne, Australia to Tehran, Iran.

Mini TED Talks

Local Main Street directors from across Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi will share fresh ideas on successful projects, activities, and events in their Main Street districts. Each of these sessions will feature lightning-round presentations from three local directors. You will be intrigued to follow up with them to learn more!

Breakout Sessions

Vacant Storefronts, aka Windows of Opportunity

Lyn Falk, Retailworks, Inc.

Essential Tools for Building Economic Vitality

Hilary Greenberg, Greenberg Development Services

Property Activation Process

Ben Levenger, Downtown Redevelopment Services

How Planning Leads to Results

Derek Lumsden, Jones County, Iowa, Economic Development

Transforming Your Hysterical Commission into a Historic Commission

Lee Melancon, Donaldsonville Downtown Development District and Brian Davis, Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation



Tours and Sessions

Breakout Sessions (continued)

Amplify Your Main Street Events with Power-Packed Tips on Marketing 3-4-5

Brian Ostrovsky, Locable

Get More Heritage/Cultural Visitors into Your Downtown

Sheila Scarborough, Tourism Currents

Creating Videos the Simple Way

Scott Sewell, Kansas Main Street

Real Change in Ruston

Community Leaders, Ruston, Louisiana

Elected Officials Panel

Elected Officials from Louisiana

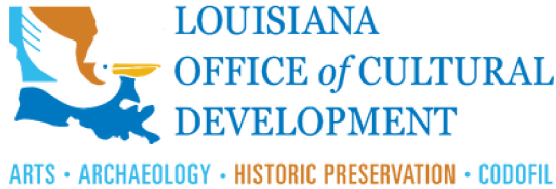
Networking

There will be many opportunities throughout the conference to network with other Main Streeters! Networking breaks are scheduled between each breakout session timeslot. You will also have a chance to learn from and visit with old friends and make new friends at the opening reception in downtown Monroe and Louisiana Thursday Night in Alley Park in downtown West Monroe.

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