



## Ridgway Creative Main Street Group Meeting #2 Report Tuesday, May 18, 2021 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

**Attendance:** Alison Etheridge, Amanda Gabrielson, Arielle Bielak, Brenda Ratcliff, Clifford Pastor, Guthrie Castle, David Nunn (filling in for Hilary), Jill McCord, Joan Chismire, Vanessa Backer, Michi Countryman; Diedra Silbert, Town Community Initiatives Facilitator, Sheryl Trent, COMS Consultant (notes)

**Not in attendance:** Greg Everhart, Sue Husch, Hilary Lewkowitz, Kevin Grambley, Tammee Tuttle

### **Purpose of the meeting**

The purpose of this second meeting of the Ridgway Creative Main Street Group was to share information about the background, budget, and structure of Ridgway Creative Main Street), learn more about the Master Plan for the Town and the Work Plan for Main Street, and share ideas and thoughts.

### **How can Ridgway Creative Main Street help support the downtown to bounce forward from this pandemic?**

The meeting started with this brainstorming question, with ideas captured on the whiteboard. This long list of possible ideas will be discussed at the next meeting to gain a better understanding of how RCMS can have the biggest impact on the local business economy.

List from whiteboard below:

Staffing help  
Parking education (people leave parking spaces for visitors, not just locals)  
Transportation - employee focused from Montrose to RW and back  
Events  
Get business people together - network  
Increase community support for businesses  
S2C Space to Create - support. Affordable housing (30 units)

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Collectively promote downtown activities via public calendar and area media sources (plan summers)  
Prepare for changes to parking patterns downtown  
Supporting events that get people out and about - visiting businesses, buying, eating, drinking, etc. First Fridays/Music Fest, get the word out  
Attract foot traffic - bring people into town from 550 (don't pass by) Signage from either direction  
Ridgway reopening event, street party (monthly): close down street, food, alcohol  
Get the word out to campground hosts - fun to come into RW  
Follow through: create culture of accountability  
Attract attention creatively  
Listen and respond to evolving needs of downtown businesses  
Handout with a photo - story behind the owners of the different businesses in town  
Why RW  
Celebrate with a monthly statement from a business (with a personalized photo) - small town, and people in it  
Plan and run events to stimulate local economy  
Ensure people have info and access to vaccines so we don't have to shut down gain  
Showcase local businesses and business owners (monthly spotlight like Chamber)  
Open houses with an incentivized scavenger hunt (hunt for tourists, punch card)  
RW as a place to come and stay, not just drive past  
Promote affordable housing for staff (help staffing issues for businesses, help grow workforce and more people in general)  
Think outside initiative (road frontage, sidewalks) host more outdoor events - dining, music, car shows, art shows, retail.....see it visually happening.

### **Review of Meeting #1**

A quick high-level review of Meeting #1 was conducted by Sheryl and Diedra, with those main agenda topics including:

- Review of the Colorado Main Street Program
- Review of the Colorado Creative Industries program
- Overview of the Ridgway Main Street Program and the merge with the Creative District work to form this group: Ridgway Creative Main Street
- Focus and purpose of this group
- The Vision for the Downtown
- Achievements over the Years

### **Structure and Finances**

The team had a robust conversation about the budget for the group, specific plans and projects in place, and the structure of the group.

Below is the 2021 budget for RCMS (the 2020 heading is not accurate; this is for 2021):

<b>2020 Budgeted Items for Creative Main Street</b>		
<i>Specific Projects</i>		<b>Source:</b>
Heritage Energy Pilot Project + facilitation	0	COMS tech assist
Space to Create event	5,000	grant from T. Schultz
Heritage Park Improvements	89,000	30,000 COMS mini-grants + Town
CCI grant (for Heritage Park?)	2,000	grant
Creative Main Street projects (see below)	<b>18,150</b>	Town General Fund
Parking Study Implementation	1,000	Town General Fund
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>		<b>115150</b>
All other related costs, such as personnel costs and overhead, are covered by Town.		
<b>Creative MS Budget TOTAL</b>		<b>115150</b>
<i>Creative Main Street Project Categories include:</i>		
Events	3500	S2C event not included
Outreach and Creative Corridor	4350	
Training opportunities	4300	COMS scholarship grant=2200
Graphic Design and Website	2000	
Main Street/Econ Dev projects	4000	
<i>Subtotal</i>		<b>18150</b>

The two Transformation Strategies in place for the group are

Continue to develop an inviting and thriving downtown community and retail environment

Develop models, virtually and on the ground, that inspire desired downtown housing and economic vitality.

**Overview of Current Plans**

There are two main plans that directly interact with the work of the RCMS. They include the Master Plan for the Town and the Work Plan for the group, both linked to the overall Town budget and specifically to the Creative Main Street budget. The plans and budgets are linked and integrate with each other,

aligning the priorities and resources for the Town in the bigger picture – both long term and short term.

The Town Master Plan and the Town Budget can be found online at <https://townofridgway.colorado.gov/resources/plans-documents-and-studies>. The Visitor Center-Heritage Park Strategic Master Plan (Heritage Park Improvements) can be found at the same link under Town Studies, Reports and Supplemental Plans.

## **Agreements**

The RCMS reached agreements as follows:

1. That bylaws would be helpful
  - a. Diedra will have bylaws ready for discussion at a future meeting
2. That a leadership structure would be important
  - a. Diedra has some job descriptions
  - b. Leadership will be selected at Meeting #3
3. That standing committees were not necessary at this time, the RCMS group prefers to determine committees later as more becomes clear to members about the group's work.
4. Diedra will add the Ridgway Area Chamber of Commerce to the relationships chart.
5. Brenda, Joan, Michi, and David agreed to act as a First Fridays planning subcommittee which Brenda has already been heading with help from Joan—first event is June 4!

## **Next Meeting**

The next meeting for the Ridgway Creative Main Street Group will be held on **Tuesday, June 8th via Zoom** (link to follow in a separate email). A number of members preferred to still meet by Zoom, instead of in person. The general topics of conversation will include:

Leadership  
The Role of the RCMS Group  
Mission Statement  
Possibilities for Projects  
Next Steps for This Group  
Open Discussion