

RESOLUTION NO. 96-138

OF THE CITY OF EL PASO DE ROBLES
TO SUPPORT AN APPLICATION BY PASO ROBLES MAIN STREET
FOR THE GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARD,
RECOGNIZING THE EFFORTS AND SUCCESSES IN REVITALIZING
DOWNTOWN PASO ROBLES

WHEREAS, Downtown Paso Robles is the historic core of the Paso Robles Community;
and

WHEREAS, the economic health and vibrancy of Downtown Paso Robles is crucial to the overall well-being of the City of El Paso de Robles; and

WHEREAS, the Paso Robles Main Street Program has played a critical role in supporting on-going efforts to revitalize Downtown Paso Robles, contributing to the City's quality of life and to the welfare of current and future generations; and

WHEREAS, through the efforts of Main Street and other community organizations, both the public and private sectors of Paso Robles are in full support of the revitalization effort; examples of this mutual support include (1) local banks funding a recent visit by Kent Burns, a downtown revitalization consultant, who met with both Main Street organizers and local merchants, providing them with constructive advice on how to improve their competitive position; (2) local media providing opportunities for cooperative advertising with downtown merchants; (3) developers of regional shopping facilities outside of the downtown area agreeing to contribute over \$100,000 in funding for Main Street's Downtown revitalization efforts; and

WHEREAS, the extent of broad based community support for the Main Street's effort is demonstrated and documented by over 11,472 hours of volunteer time being committed to the revitalization process alone in 1995, including such diverse community participation as (1) inmates from the Paso Robles Youth Authority assisting with holiday lighting and decorations, refurbishing public benches, and constructing a physical model of the downtown area for use in revitalization presentations; (2) a local bank representative and a manufacturer working as Main Street volunteers to assist the City in formulating and administering a program to provide technical assistance grants to owners of Unreinforced Masonry Buildings, providing them with plans and cost estimates for seismic retrofit of their structures to improve their safety in case of an earthquake; (3) Main Street fund raising efforts by downtown merchants and volunteers, through sales of items in downtown stores and weekly barbecues at the Friday Night Market on the Square (one of two Farmers' Markets held each week in the downtown area); and

WHEREAS, these revitalization efforts have resulted in tangible improvements to the long-term viability of the downtown area, including but not limited to (1) refurbishment of the downtown City Park, where public events including the annual Wine Festival, Kustom Car Show, Antique Fair, and other visitor-oriented activities bring an estimated 75,000 persons into the downtown area on an annual basis; (2) construction of a new Library / City Hall in the downtown, providing a 2500 square foot conference facility where the California State Main Street Network recently held a state-wide meeting; (3) Facade improvements to 55 structures in the downtown, as part of a program marketed by the Main Street organization which resulted in 12 matching grants of financial support by the City's Redevelopment Agency;

WHEREAS, the Main Street revitalization efforts have been comprehensive, with a balance of physical improvements (e.g. refurbishment of the downtown bandstand through the use of volunteer labor; assisting in the design of signage to direct visitors to the downtown area; preservation of historic downtown structures), business development (assisting merchants in dealing with competition from regional retailers, actively soliciting targeted new businesses to fill in vacancies and market niches in the downtown; formulating and developing a sign ordinance that was adopted by the City); marketing (through installation of decorative banners that change with seasonal events; organizing and carrying out the Vine Street Christmas Showcase, which is now an annual event that brings thousands of visitors into the downtown area, and effectively advertising special events through use of signage and a changeable banner at the entrance to the City; and through organizational development (use of "block captains" to convey information and seek input from merchants and property owners; conducting monthly networking coffees at different business locations to make everyone aware of each other's products and to communicate project and program status information from various City departments; active efforts by Main Street volunteer subcommittees on Design, Promotions, and Economic Restructuring); and

WHEREAS, efforts by Main Street have focused on preserving and enhancing the use of historic and traditional commercial buildings in the downtown; achievements have included the successful facade improvement program, the Community Development Block Grant funded seismic retro-fit program, and assisting the refurbishment of a three-story former bank building to provide seismic safety improvements, handicapped access, and fire sprinklers (bringing a State Department of Corrections regional accounting office with a staff of 50 persons into the downtown area), while at the same time preserving the historic character of the structure; and

WHEREAS, substantial economic benefits have resulted from downtown revitalization efforts, demonstrated by business expansions and new investments in the area (but a few examples: the historic Paso Robles Inn was recently purchased and is undergoing a \$600,000 refurbishment with plans to construct 40 additional rooms and a 5,000 square foot conference facility; new, up-scale restaurants have been established; three more restaurant projects are now "on the drawing board"; and through the combined efforts of Main Street and the City, plans for a Multi-Plex Movie Theater, consisting of six screens and 4,000 to 8,000 square feet of commercial space in the first two phases, are being processed through the City); combined efforts of the Main Street program, the Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce / Visitors and Conference Bureau, and the City are responsible for bringing over 75,000 annual visitors to special events in the

downtown area, helping to create the economic basis for continuing revitalization of Downtown Paso Robles; and

WHEREAS, among the innovative and creative approaches to revitalization utilized by Paso Robles Main Street have been their ability to create a partnership with the Paso Robles Youth Authority, providing a means for inmates to participate in efforts to preserve and enhance the downtown area and, at the same time, to develop skills and a sense of citizenship that cannot be achieved behind prison walls; enlisting bankers and manufacturers in the efforts to preserve historically significant unreinforced masonry buildings through seismic safety improvements demonstrates the creative ability of Main Street to draw upon resources throughout the community; Downtown Design Guidelines and a comprehensive Sign Ordinance were formulated by Main Street through use of their Design Committee, and through their efforts and support were adopted by the Paso Robles City Council; Main Street supported the City's efforts to adopt a Neo-Traditional Design Ordinance that won the Central Coast, California Chapter, American Planning Association's "Outstanding Planning Implementation Award"; and

WHEREAS, the City of El Paso de Robles and the Paso Robles Redevelopment Agency have wholeheartedly supported the downtown revitalization process and Paso Robles Main Street; that support has taken the form of seeking the active participation of Main Street in numerous projects and programs, including but not limited to the joint-venture to solicit and select a qualified developer for a Multi-Plex Theater in the downtown area; the successful efforts to re-establish Amtrak Passenger Rail Service to the downtown area and design a new Multi-Modal Transportation Center for Paso Robles; in the formulation and marketing of the Facade Improvement Program that provided over \$100,000 in Redevelopment loan/grant funds for downtown improvements; in providing approximately \$60,000 per year since 1988 in funding for the Main Street Program; in investing \$800,000 in the refurbishment of City Park (the setting of many visitor-oriented events that benefit downtown revitalization efforts); downtown signage; \$1.2 Million invested in Spring Street reconstruction and street improvements to enhance the attractiveness of downtown; and installation of new water and sewer trunk lines to service the downtown; and

WHEREAS, the City of El Paso de Robles believes that downtown revitalization efforts represent a community-wide commitment to preserving and enhancing the vitality of the historic core of the City, reflecting an effective working relationship between the Paso Robles Main Street Program, the City, community organizations and individuals who have contributed many thousands of hours of volunteer time to support the downtown revitalization efforts, and that this partnership between public and private sectors provides an excellent example of successful downtown revitalization.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of El Paso de Robles as follows:

The City Council hereby fully supports the entry application by Paso Robles Main Street Program into the Great American Main Street Awards competition.

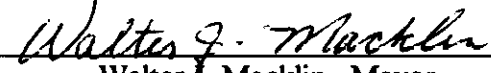
PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of El Paso de Robles this 16th day of October 1996, by the following vote:

AYES: Heggarty, Iversen, Martin, Macklin

NOES: None

ABSENT: Picanco

Dated: 16 October 1996


Walter J. Macklin, Mayor

ATTEST:


Richard J. Ramirez, City Manager / City Clerk

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