



2025 Champion Submissions

The NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center is proud to annually recognize the efforts of dedicated individuals who have contributed to the success of the local programs across our state. A non-competitive award, the NC Main Street Champion designation honors those who have made extraordinary contributions to their downtown. The NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center will individually recognize Champions with a video presentation and commemorative certificates celebrating this special honor during the Annual NC Main Street Conference.

Entry Deadline: October 13, 2025 | 5pm

Awards Ceremony: March 12, 2026 | 2026 NC Main Street Conference | New Bern

Who is Eligible to Nominate a Champion?

- Designated NC Main Street communities are eligible to nominate a Champion.
- DAC and Small-Town Main Street communities may nominate once they move up to NC Main Street AND have ONE FULL YEAR as a Designated Main Street Community.

Why Nominate?

- Designating an NC Main Street Champion is an excellent way to show your organization's appreciation for the efforts of a deserving person (or persons) who has/have gone the extra mile in working to make your downtown successful. A secondary benefit of designating a Champion is the opportunity to generate goodwill and positive PR for your downtown program.

What Makes Someone Eligible for This High Honor?

- NC Main Street Champions MUST BE PEOPLE who have made a SIGNIFICANT impact in your downtown or your downtown program, ideally over the last year, and who went above and beyond their volunteer or job responsibilities.
- Once an NC Main Street Champion, always an NC Main Street Champion! If your program has previously honored someone as an NC Main Street Champion, that individual continues to be a Champion for your community and may not be re-designated by your program. However, someone who received the designation from another community and has made significant contributions to your downtown revitalization efforts may also be named Champion by your program.

Champion designation may fall under the following categories:

An individual - *John Smith*

A couple - *Jane and Lucy Smith*

Owner(s) of a downtown business - *John Smith (& Sally Jones)*

Owner(s) of a property - *John Smith (& Sally Jones)*

Champion nominations ARE NOT:

A municipal entity - *Town of Smallville*

A business - *Nil's Cafe*

Staff of a business - *Nil's Café and Staff*

Departmental staff - *Public Works Staff, Town of Smallville*



A civic organization board of directors -Board of Directors Ayden Arts Council

Instructions

- Text may not exceed 200 words.
- Text must be in a [storytelling style](#) – no bullet points.
- Text should include only information directly related to the Champion's contributions to downtown. Information on family, civic involvements, or religious affiliation is not relevant to this designation.
- Text should provide enough detail to give a real sense of your Champion and his/her/their contributions to downtown.
- Have someone proofread your submission for content, grammar, and spelling before submitting online.

The NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center reserves the right to edit the text for length and content.

Champion Photo

- Photos should be engaging. Tips can be found [here](#).
- Consider using a local photographer for your Champion's headshot. Remember that these photos will be on our NC Main Street Conference website. Make it your best shot.
- The Photo MUST be 1024 x 768 pixels with a file size of at least 1MB or higher (Keep in mind this image will be projected onto a HUGE screen. If you don't send in a high-resolution file, it will not show up on the screen)
- Be taken in good lighting. If photographed outside, ensure the photographer's back is to the sun.
- Be cognizant of the background you use for the photo.
- Be of ONLY the Champion(s). We cannot accept images that include any person(s) other than the Champion(s). Do not crop a photo so only the champion(s) are showing.
- Be free of borders, labeling, or date stamps.
- Not altered with Photoshop
- Save Your Photo in the following format:
 - Garner John Doe
 - Edenton Jane Doe
 - Lenoir Jill Doe

You will need to notify your champion so you can tell their story!

- In January, you will receive your champion's letter via email.
- Remember, the Champion is not a Champion until AFTER the Ceremony, so you cannot publicly announce the honor until after the ceremony.
- Your champion can tell their family/friends so they can attend the ceremony to see them designated as an NC Main Street Champion.