



For Immediate Release

St. Petersburg Hosts Largest Florida Main Street Annual Conference *Statewide Program Celebrates 30th Anniversary with 'Arts and Culture on Main Street' Theme*

St. Petersburg, FL. (July 24, 2015) – The annual conference of the Florida Main Street program comes to St. Petersburg August 16-19, and will commemorate the program's 30th anniversary with the largest conference in its history. Organized and co-hosted by St. Petersburg's three state and nationally accredited Main Street programs – Deuces Live, the EDGE District, and the Grand Central District – this conference showcases the City's history, art and culture with 6 different City tours, and an expansive array of presentations covering 30 topics by more than 40 speakers, including Mayor Rick Kriseman and other St. Petersburg community leaders, author Peter Kageyama, and place economics expert Donovan Rypkema.

Main Street programs are dedicated to revitalization of downtown districts through historical preservation. Among other areas of focus of this year's conference, one of the highlights will be a release of data collected from recent studies on the economic impact of Florida Main Street programs. The conference theme, 'Arts and Culture on Main Street,' will emphasize how art and culture are integrated into the four fundamental components of the Main Street Approach – Promotions, Design, Economic Redevelopment, and Organization. The theme will be incorporated into the educational sessions and tours, and the social events, including an August 16 reception held at the St. Petersburg Museum of History, and an August 17 reception held at Duncan McClelland's Glass Gallery. Both will feature local craft beer and food from the three St. Petersburg Main Street Districts. Conference sessions will take place at the historic Vinoy Renaissance Hotel, and a special awards dinner on August 18 will take place at the Vinoy Golf Club. At the dinner, Secretary of State Ken Detzner will recognize outstanding Main Street programs and supporters.

This year's Conference will be attended by leaders from over 40 Main Street communities statewide, as well as city planners, architects, engineers, attorneys, students, and those interested in topics such as historic preservation, local business, fundraising and economic development.

Said St. Petersburg Mayor Rick Kriseman, "The City of St. Petersburg welcomes the 2015 Florida Main Street Annual Conference and looks forward to showcasing our beautiful Sunshine City to all of the conference attendees. We are especially pleased to highlight our strong economic development and community growth since last hosting this conference in 2003. Much of that growth in our historic districts was encouraged and fostered through the efforts of our Main Street Programs – Deuces Live, the EDGE District, and the Grand Central District. St. Petersburg has been greatly enhanced by their revitalization, historic preservation, and community-building efforts, and we are proud of their shared success in bringing the Florida Main Street Annual Conference here."

Registration, sponsorship, exhibitor, and volunteer opportunities for the Conference are all available at www.stpetefms.com.

About Florida Main Street: Started in 1985, Florida Main Street is a technical assistance program administered by the Bureau of Historic Preservation, Division of Historical Resources, Florida Department of State, for traditional historic commercial corridors. Main Street, with its emphasis on preservation, is an effective strategy in achieving these goals in Florida's historic retail districts.