

identity. After all, you won't find the heart and soul of Iowa at Wal-Mart or Home Depot out in the strip malls. No, the heart and soul of Iowa is in our family farms, and on Main Street in small communities all across my State. That is why we need to be as generous as possible—and creative as possible—in keeping our downtowns not just alive but thriving.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I'm involved in funding many hundreds of programs every year. But the Main Street Iowa program—providing challenge grants to revitalize downtown buildings across my State—is in a class by itself. It's smart. It's effective. And it touches communities and people in very concrete ways.

For example, the citizens of Sigourney, IA, have been working hard to improve the image and opportunities offered by their downtown. Forty thousand dollars was awarded to the Sigourney Main Street-Chamber in the form of a Main Street Challenge Grant. The money was used to renovate the building that now houses the Copper Lantern, a restaurant, and Van's Lofts. Each property is on a prominent corner in Sigourney's downtown. Van's Lofts will provide high quality residential living with four new rental units, and the Copper Lantern now offers another dining option.

The beauty of the Main Street Iowa program is that the ideas and initiatives come from our small towns and rural communities. I have been pleased to secure \$1.5 million in funding since 2002 for Main Street Iowa Challenge Grants. The Main Street programs of the Iowa Department of Economic Development help provide technical assistance, but, as we have seen in Sigourney, success itself comes from local leadership, local teamwork, and home-grown ideas and solutions.

This project is a shining example of new construction and a catalyst for future projects. When people see one of the anchors of Main Street being renovated or expanded, this can change the whole psychology of a town or community. It offers hope. It serves as a catalyst for a far-reaching ripple effect of positive changes. Both of these projects are cornerstones of community development, and serve as an inspiration to other property owners in the area.

I congratulate the citizens of Sigourney for putting together a winning proposal to secure a Main Street Challenge Grant. Their efforts to revitalize their historic downtown are setting a terrific example for other small towns across America, and for that, I salute them.●

JEWELL, IOWA, DOWNTOWN REINVIGORATION

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, one of the greatest challenges we face not just in Iowa but all across America—is preserving the character and vitality of

our small towns. This is about economics, but it is also about our culture and identity. After all, you won't find the heart and soul of Iowa at Wal-Mart or Home Depot out in the strip malls. No, the heart and soul of Iowa is in our family farms and on Main Street in small communities all across my State. That is why we need to be as generous as possible and creative as possible in keeping our downtowns not just alive but thriving.

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For example, the town of Jewell, IA is taking great strides to renovate and reinvigorate their downtown area. With the assistance of a Main Street Challenge grant, Jewell is taking great strides to restore the vitality and beauty of their Main Street. One such project is at 632 Main Street, a building that has housed a bank, a millinery, a newspaper office, and a senior citizen center. Although the building has been vacant for a number of years, the Jewell Area Development Enterprise plans to return the building to its former grandeur thanks in part to a Main Street HUD Challenge Grant. The hopes and dreams of the original builders will once again be seen in Jewell's future through the renovated building that will hold prosperous businesses on the main floor and an apartment on the upper story. The city received \$40,000 through the Main Street Challenge program, and citizens have called that grant a catalyst for the renovation of 632 Main.

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their historic downtown are setting a terrific example for other small towns across America, and for that, I salute them.●

GREENFIELD, IOWA, REVITALIZATION

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For example, the citizens of Greenfield, IA, have been working hard to improve their downtown and their cultural opportunities. Main Street Greenfield was awarded a \$30,000 Main Street Challenge Grant for the E.E. Warren Opera House Association to install an elevator. The \$150,000 project was completed in July of this year. Other investments in the building have included weather proofing, outside façade improvements, and interior rehabilitation including theater restoration, installation of restrooms, mechanical and electrical systems, remodeling, and decorating. The Opera House, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, offers both historic and sentimental value to the Greenfield community. The physical size of the building and its architectural significance enhance the aesthetics of their public square. The Opera House itself serves as a social center for the arts, and as a site for community dances, theater performances, and meetings providing education in rural—folk—cultural, and fine arts. It also serves to draw business to Greenfield by increasing activity on the town square.

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