

For Immediate Release

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City Center Mankato Announces Phase II of INFUSE: Artists on Main Street

Mankato, Minn. (April 12, 2019) – The City Center Partnership is excited to commence phase II of INFUSE: Artists on Main Street Mankato, a partnership between the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota and Springboard for the Arts with support from the Bush Foundation. This initiative explores the intersection of arts and culture, downtown revitalization, and historic preservation in eleven Minnesota Main Street communities, beginning with three communities in its pilot year: Winona, Faribault and Mankato. The pilot years success resulted in continued investment by the Bush Foundation to include eleven communities over a three-year period. Four communities were selected to join the program in 2019 including Northfield, Olivia, Wabasha, and Willmar.

Each community receives support on planning and implementing creative placemaking projects through training, one-on-one technical assistance, and cohort support to integrate arts-based problem solving. INFUSE: Artists on Main Street Mankato has received a \$10,000 grant to employ artist-led solutions to a local challenge identified by the community. The City Center Partnership has matched the grant to provide a total of \$20,000 in project support. Training and resources will be provided in partnership with Springboard for the Arts to artists who live, work and have a personal investment in the community to make positive physical, economic and social impacts.

The focus of the second phase of INFUSE in City Center Mankato is activation of open spaces - specifically Washington Park located on 4th Street between Mulberry and Washington Street. Washington Park is a hidden gem within the City Center, with one of the largest green spaces and one of the most diverse neighborhoods in our downtown community.

Phase II INFUSE projects will have three major impacts:

1. Greater awareness of this City Center asset
2. Create a sense of welcome and inclusion
3. Introduce the idea of infrastructure improvements to make the space easier to use in the future.

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Minnesota Main Street is an economic development program of the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota (PAM) that uses a historic preservation based strategy to revitalize downtown districts in Greater Minnesota communities. The program works with communities long-term and provides training and resources, including a Main Street Project Fund, to help community members revitalize their downtown.

This year INFUSE will fund large (up to \$10,000) and small (up to \$1,000) projects. Projects can be temporary or permanent, performances, events, visual arts or something completely new and different. To submit a proposal, artists must attend the *Artists on Main Street Workshop*, Tuesday, April 23, 5:30-9:00 p.m., held in the DeSmat Meeting Room at Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church - 105 N 5th St, Mankato, MN 56001. This workshop is free, but pre-registration is required. For more information and to register visit citycentermankato.com.

About City Center Partnership

City Center Partnership, a downtown development organization, is a business unit of Greater Mankato Growth, Inc. (GMG) which includes the chamber of commerce and economic development organization, Greater Mankato Growth, the local convention and visitor's bureau, Visit Mankato and GreenSeam, which utilizes agriculture to build on the region's extensive agribusiness assets to develop ag economy.

About Preservation Alliance of Minnesota (PAM)

Preservation Alliance of Minnesota is the only statewide, private non-profit organization advocating for the preservation of Minnesota's historic resources. PAM was established in 1981 by citizens concerned about the loss of irreplaceable segments of our state's heritage, structures, neighborhoods, and community fabric. Its mission is to lead and inspire people to connect with historic places, promoting community vitality. **Minnesota Main Street**, a program of PAM, helps cities maximize both their people and built assets for economic vitality. Minnesota Main Street is a Main Street America™ Coordinating Program and provides local Main Street communities with the training, tools, information and networking they need to reinvigorate their downtown districts. Our Minnesota Main Street Communities have broad community support, paid staff, and meet nationally defined standards. More:

<http://www.mnpreservation.org/>

About Springboard for the Arts

Springboard for the Arts is an economic and community development organization for artists and by artists. Our work is about building stronger communities, neighborhoods, and economies, and we believe that artists are an important leverage point in that work. Springboard for the Arts' mission is to cultivate vibrant communities by connecting artists with the skills, information, and services they need to make a living and a life. Our work is about creating communities and artists that have a reciprocal relationship, where artists are key contributors to community issues and are visible and valued for the impact they create. We do this work by creating simple, practical solutions and systems to support artists. Those programs support our goal to help create a local culture movement. Springboard for the Arts' offices are based in Fergus Falls, and Lowertown Saint Paul, MN. More:

<http://springboardforthearts.org/>

About Bush Foundation

At the Bush Foundation we invest in great ideas and the people who power them. We encourage individuals and organizations to think bigger and think differently about what is possible in communities across Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and the 23 Native nations that share the same geographic area. The Foundation was established in 1953 by 3M executive Archibald Bush and his wife, Edyth. Inspired by the Bushes' desire to build their community and encourage innovation, the Foundation has invested nearly one billion dollars in grants to thousands of organizations and individuals. More: <https://www.bushfoundation.org/>

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