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**Washington Town Winner of Inaugural “America’s Main Streets” Contest**

*Downtown Lynden Rises from the Ashes and Rallies Public Support to Win \$25K*

**VIRGINIA BEACH, Va.** – After an incredible display of support for Main Streets from coast to coast, [Independent We Stand](#) is pleased to recognize Downtown Lynden in Lynden, Wash., as the \$25,000 winner of the “America’s Main Streets” contest. As a top ten finalist, Downtown Lynden, population 12,902, stood out among its fellow Main Streets with the most votes, after more than 280,000 total votes were cast by the public nationwide during the “[America’s Main Streets](#)” contest.

Downtown Lynden exemplifies the spirit and tenacity of small businesses to nurture community growth and empower one another in both good and tragic times.

In June 2008, a fire destroyed Downtown Lynden’s largest anchor building, a historic three-story building housing nearly a dozen independent businesses. In the years since, a growing and active Lynden Downtown Business Association began rebuilding with the help of local investors and volunteer support from the community. Their mission, to help the downtown core make an economic comeback. Some of their needs and goals include: creating a brand for the community, implementing wayfinding signage, creating a historical walking tour and upgrading their downtown beautification program.

“Coming back from ruins after a devastating fire right as the great recession took hold in 2008 is just the type of community engagement and support Independent We Stand recognizes and promotes across the country,” said Bill Brunelle, co-founder of Independent We Stand. “We can’t wait to see the improvements they’re able to make with this prize and how those improvements will benefit independent businesses in Lynden.”

Already well-known as the world’s largest producer of raspberries, Lynden is also known for its Dutch heritage. The downtown area also features a prominent windmill housing a hotel and is brightened by more than 150 hanging flower baskets plus flower beds on every street corner. It’s this charm Lyndenites would like to share with others.

“Winning this contest is huge,” said Ken Stap independent business owner and president of the Lynden Downtown Business Association. “This award will play a major role in helping re-establish Lynden’s downtown as the heart and soul of our community, for residents and visitors alike.”



Next up for Downtown Lynden, a Fourth of July “Main Streets Make Us Better” press conference to reveal more detailed plans for the \$25,000 grand prize.

As part of its ongoing mission to promote small businesses, Independent We Stand created the “America’s Main Streets” contest to promote the important role Main Streets play in building economic success for their communities.

The 2016 semifinalists in alphabetical order are:

- [Cedar Lee Business District Ohio](#), Cleveland Heights, Ohio
- [Downtown Brookings](#), Brookings, S.D.
- [Downtown Lynden](#), Lynden, Wash.
- [Gateway to the Great North Woods](#), Millinocket, Maine
- [Main Street Greenville](#), Greenville, Ohio
- [Main Street Madison Indiana](#), Madison, Ind.
- [McKinney Main Street](#), McKinney, Texas
- [Venice Main Street](#), Venice, Fla.
- [Wellsboro Main Street Pennsylvania](#), Wellsboro, Pa.
- [Woodstock, Georgia](#), Woodstock, Ga.

For a look at a full list of contest prizes, click [here](#).

#### **Co-presenting Sponsors:**

[STIHL Inc.](#), America’s [number-one selling brand](#) of gasoline-powered handheld outdoor power equipment, is the founding sponsor of Independent We Stand and a co-presenting sponsor of America’s Main Streets contest. The company follows a unique distribution strategy in the handheld power equipment industry, choosing never to sell products at big box stores, but instead remaining loyal to its 9,000+ independent servicing dealers nationwide.

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Learn more about our many supporting sponsors [here](#).

#### **About Independent We Stand**

Independent We Stand is a movement of independent business owners across the country dedicated to informing their communities about the importance of “Buying Local” and how these efforts bolster their local economy. This movement supports all local and national causes committed to boosting local economic development projects. The Independent We Stand movement is co-sponsored by [STIHL Inc.](#) and [FCA US LLC](#). [www.IndependentWeStand.org](http://www.IndependentWeStand.org)

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