

Kansas Main Street Program Slashed

(KAIR)--Shock is the word being used to describe the decision to end the Kansas Main Street Program.

Kansas Main Street, utilized in local communities including Holton, Seneca, Highland and Marysville, is a downtown revitalization program which began in 1985. The self help effort, allowing small communities to grow, was assisted through state funding.

On Thursday, the Kansas Department of Commerce sent a letter addressed to Economic Development, Education and Workforce Stakeholders stating that the program will no longer continue.

The letter, signed by Secretary of Commerce Pat George, states that discontinuing Main Street is part of a broader restructuring of the Department of Commerce, which will include combining the Trade Division with the Business and Community Development Division.

The reason for the move, according to the letter, is to allow the Department to better integrate Department of Commerce programs that help companies promote their products and services with the Department's business recruitment and community development efforts.

Specifically addressing the Main Street Program, George says it's believed the goals of the program, which he calls a valued part of the Department's economic development offerings, can be achieved using other resources available through the Department's remaining Business and Community Development programs.

The decision also means the cancellation of the 2012 Main Street conference planned for next month in Emporia.

Many Signals Communications