

## Westbrook Designated as a National Main Street Community



Walk down Bridge Street in Westbrook and you will be tempted by aromas of gastropubs, one-of-a-kind local works by Maine artisans at boutique shops, and nearby parks where the kids can let pent-up energy out. It is a far cry from a decade ago when Westbrook was dismissed as a shabby mill town.

It is the culmination of years of efforts by a group of dedicated individuals, business owners, and civic leaders to revitalize and strengthen Westbrook's downtown district and economy. As a result Westbrook has been designated as a National Main Street community. They are the tenth Maine city or town which MDF has helped achieve this prestigious recognition through its Maine Downtown Center program.

"Westbrook is on the cusp of something very powerful and wonderful because of this program," says Deb Shangraw, local business owner and President of Discover Downtown Westbrook. "The national Main Street America program is an inspiration and will allow us to bring back our downtown for Westbrook current and future residents. I see the program as an integral force in maintaining our history and saving our towns, one Main Street at a time. This is a very exciting time!"

Over the last several years, MDF has worked with the Westbrook coalition to pursue a four-prong approach laid out by the National [Main Street Program](#) to ensure the city has a thriving and diverse local economy, is rich in character, and features inviting public spaces that make residents and visitors feel that they belong. "We are excited to have Westbrook as Maine's newest National Main Street. The community, local businesses, municipality and local residents have all worked hard over the last two years to make this national designation a reality," says Anne Ball, Program Director, Maine Downtown Center.

Most telling of all the success the designation points to is the pride Westbrook residents feel in claiming the city as their home and place of business. "The image of a community is fundamentally important to its economic well-being. If all places look alike, there's no reason to go anywhere," says Ed McMahon, chair of the National Main Street Center.

Here's a little taste: [https://archive.org/details/Song\\_of\\_Westbrook\\_Edit](https://archive.org/details/Song_of_Westbrook_Edit).