



Bringing Back Main Street Roundtable

Tuesday, July 28 | 10 a.m.–12:10 p.m. | Online

AGENDA

9:45 a.m.	Networking
9:59 a.m.	Housekeeping Andrea Tantillo, H-GAC
10:00 a.m.	Welcome and Introductions Ellary Makuch, Manager of Community Resilience, Houston-Galveston Area Council
10:05 a.m.	Smart Growth Strategies for Zoning and Housing Jeri Mintzer, Assistant Vice President for Economic Development, Smart Growth America
10:35 a.m.	Texas Context and the Fiscal Case for Infill Kevin Shepherd, PE, Founder/CEO, Verdunity
11:05 a.m.	How to Create a Local Ecosystem of Developers Who Will Invest in Downtown Monte Anderson, President, Options Real Estate Investments Inc.
11:35 a.m.	Case Study: The City of Fate Justin Weiss, MPA, ICMA-CM, East Texas A&M University and City of Fate <i>(pre-recorded with Yvonne Lane, City of Fate Economic Development Specialist, available for questions)</i>
11:50 a.m.	Case Study: The City of Denison Donna Dow, CMSM, Director of Main Street, City of Denison
12:05 p.m.	Wrap up, thanks, future meetings

More information is available at: h-gac.com/bringing-back-main-street

Please take a moment to [complete an after-event evaluation](#) to help us plan future events.

This event is approved for 2 CM from the American Planning Association.





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PRESENTER BIOS



Jeri Mintzer,
Assistant Vice President for Economic Development, Smart Growth America

Jeri Mintzer is an Assistant Vice President at Smart Growth America who brings over a decade of experience working with localities on zoning, planning, housing, and economic development. Jeri previously managed the Governors' Institute on Community Design, working with over 20 state agencies and governors' cabinets to deliver workshops on smart growth principles, transportation reform, economic development, and more



Kevin Shepherd, PE, Founder/CEO,
Verdunity

Kevin Shepherd, P.E., Founder and CEO of Verdunity, is a licensed engineer with over 30 years of experience in civil engineering, planning, site development and municipal finance. He spent 17 years at global A/E firm HDR as a leader of the Dallas office's municipal services program and later as National Director of the Community Planning + Urban Design market sector. In 2011, he founded Verdunity to focus on helping communities quantify, communicate, and close their resource gaps and get back on the path to lasting, inclusive prosperity. Known for his willingness to challenge the status quo, Kevin enjoys educating others on fiscal and environmental impacts of various development patterns and thrives in environments where multiple perspectives must be brought together.



Monte Anderson, President,
Options Real Estate Investments Inc

Monte Anderson is President of Options Real Estate Investments, Inc. and a founding partner of Neighborhood Evolution (NEVO). For more than 30 years, he has transformed downtowns, commercial corridors, historic buildings, and aging shopping centers into thriving places that create local wealth and opportunity. A nationally recognized developer, speaker, and educator, Monte has been involved with the incremental development and Strong Towns movement since its earliest years and was honored to serve as one of the first keynote speakers for Strong Towns. His work has been featured in The New York Times for his innovative "Roommate House" model addressing housing affordability and has been referenced in multiple books by Strong Towns founder Chuck Marohn. Monte's award-winning projects include the Belmont Hotel, Texas Theatre, Tyler Station, Main Station Duncanville, DeSoto Market Place, Beckley Settlement, MidTowne Midlothian, and the ongoing redevelopment of Wheatland Plaza in Duncanville, Texas. Through his "Town Maker" philosophy, Monte teaches that the strongest communities are built by empowering local entrepreneurs, small developers, and community leaders to create wealth, opportunity, and lasting places one project at a time.



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**Justin Weiss, MPA, ICMA-CM,
East Texas A&M University and City of Fate**

With over a decade of experience in public administration, Justin Weiss is now a full-time faculty member at East Texas A&M University, where he teaches in the [Public Administration/City Planning program](#). He is dedicated to equipping the next generation of public administrators and city planners with the tools needed to drive positive change in their communities. Before entering academia, Justin served as the assistant city manager and economic development manager for the city of Fate, leading initiatives that fostered economic growth and community development in alignment with the city's vision. He played a key role in business recruitment, retention, and expansion, working closely with stakeholders such as landowners, investors, and civic groups to develop and execute comprehensive economic strategies.



**Donna Dow, CMSM,
Director of Main Street, City of Denison**

With almost 30 years of Main Street management experience, Donna Dow, a Certified Main Street Manager, has served as Denison's Main Street Director since October 2010. She has spoken at seven National Main Street conferences and statewide Preservation Conferences in three states. She has coordinated the public input process for streetscape master plans and overseen business relations for six construction phases. Denison has a thriving loft scene with over 100 residents, and a healthy Airbnb environment. The City is also Texas' newest Great American Main Street Award winner, Denison was also named Best Texas Downtown under 50,000 by Texas Downtown.