



# Reisterstown Improvement Association, Inc.

## **2025 ANNUAL REPORT**

### **MISSION OF RIA** **Improving on Tradition**

- Reisterstown Main Street is dedicated to fostering community growth and economic development in Reisterstown MD.
- Our mission revolves around revitalizing our historic Main Street, supporting local businesses, and creating vibrant public spaces for residents and visitors to enjoy.
- Through strategic partnerships and grassroots initiatives, we aim to preserve our cultural heritage while embracing innovation and progress.
- This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

### **RIA ORGANIZATIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS – 2025**

- 1) As a part of the Main Street Maryland program, strengthened State and County support. Reisterstown Main Street was named as an “accredited program” by both the Maryland and National Main Street Programs.
- 2) Awarded various State/County/Private Grants in excess of \$200,000 to fund projects of the 5 Reisterstown Main Street committees that focus on the needs of Reisterstown Main Street stakeholders.
- 3) Retained existing and expanded membership and leadership.
- 4) Increased diversity, especially to bring in younger members.
- 5) Continued restoration of the Franklin Woodlands Trail; worked with Baltimore County Recreation & Parks to add the new Woodley Avenue Park on the county website as a project now open for public input.
- 6) Improved existing activities by engaging more volunteers and increasing promotion of activities.
- 7) Increased partnership with other groups, i.e., churches, non-profits, scouts & fraternal organizations.
- 8) Continued to involve/focus on business development and individual businesses in the area through personal relationships.
- 9) Opened Welcome Center and RIA offices at 234 Main Street which will provide more space and opportunity to hold meetings, curated one room to create a museum and display donations from long time generational residents and spaces for workshops; opened the Museum for the public for 3 days of the week.
- 10) Worked with Baltimore County Council to approve Reisterstown Streetscape Design Guidelines for addition in the Comprehensive Manual of Development Policies (CMDP) and Reisterstown Design Streetscape Action Plan as part of the Master Plan 2030.
- 11) Continued efforts to retain identified Historic properties to maintain the designation of an Federal **Historic District**.
- 12) Revamped the Website ([www.reisterstown.com](http://www.reisterstown.com)) to reflect the work of all committees and events held.
- 13) Opened The Studios at 234 art collective with 2026 plans for three artists each quarter and workshops for the public to enjoy.



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## **RIA ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS FOR 2026**

### **1) Enhance Community Engagement**

- Expand the *Junior Main Street Program* into an independent youth initiative with its own podcast, volunteer projects, and leadership opportunities.
- Continue integrating science into community events through the *MIT Science in Vivo* partnership.
- Increase volunteer participation and community storytelling efforts.

### **2) Improve Physical Appearance of Main Street**

- Continue the *Façade Improvement Program* with a focus on historic preservation and new business support
- Expand public art and build out the historic and art walking trails
- Advance sidewalk and accessibility improvements in partnership with Baltimore County and SHA

### **3) Support Economic Growth and Business Development**

- Launch *Studios at 234*, co-working and creative space within the Welcome Center.
- Apply for funding to complete a feasibility study for a larger makerspace.
- Continue business recruitment and data collection to measure investment, occupancy, and growth.
- Support and promote existing businesses through events like *Music on Main*, *Shopping with Neighbors*, *Small Business Saturday*, and the *Reisterstown Farmers Market*.

### **4) Strengthen Organizational Capacity**

- Secure operational funding to ensure long-term sustainability of the Main Street Manager role.
- Pursue acquisition of 234 Main Street as the permanent home of RIA.
- Expand board representation to include more community businesses and corporate partners.
- Increase professional development opportunities for staff and board.

### **5) Promote Sustainability and Environmental Initiatives**

- Advance Woodley Avenue Park development in partnership with Baltimore County Recreation and Parks.
- Continue green initiatives including Clean, Safe & Green, Franklin Woodland Trails workdays, and community beautification events.
- Encourage sustainable business practices and energy-efficient upgrades.



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## RIA COMMITTEES

### **(COMMITTEES AS SET UP UNDER MARYLAND MAIN STREET MODEL)**

**A governing board of directors and standing committees make up the fundamental organizational structure of our primarily volunteer-driven revitalization efforts. This structure not only divides the workload and helps delineate responsibilities, but also builds consensus and cooperation among various stakeholders.**

### **COMMITTEE ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2025**

#### **RIA Clean, Safe & Green Committee –**

##### **CLEAN:**

- continued monthly volunteer clean-up events along Main Street
- replaced and maintained existing streetscape furniture

##### **SAFE:**

- maintained strong partnership with the local police precinct
- provided setup, cleanup & safety during Farmers Markets and our 10 summer Music on Main Street concerts including adding private security officers in addition to the police presence
- continued strategizing with State Highway Administration, Baltimore County Department of Planning, and Baltimore County Department of Public Works to enhance traffic calming, walkability, and bike-friendly changes to Main Street
- decorated Main Street for the holidays.

##### **GREEN:**

- **Franklin Woodland Trails (FWT) Committee** continued revitalizing the original trail built in the 1970s and developing a new trail head to reclaim this environmental treasure for our community.
- Maintained landscape of the new gardens with trimming and mulch.

**RIA Design Committee** continued work along Main Street using the newly approved Design Guidelines to work with property owners

- added brick pads under the Heritage Trail Markers to complete the Historic Walk project
- awarded Façade Improvement Grants to property owners
- worked with Baltimore County DPW project to replace the sidewalks and brick border in the 200 and 300 block of Main Street
- added Northern Gateway Sign at Butler Road intersection
- worked with Baltimore County Planning Department to complete and submit Sustainable Community Application which has to be renewed every 5 years
- Continued setting up the Art Trail and added a website displaying all the work done on Main Street

**RIA Economic Vitality Committee** continued work with property owners and business owners

- awarded “**Facade Improvement Program Grants**” to complete the state “Community Legacy Grant 2023” awarded to RIA
- held regular meetings at the new Welcome Center location with engaged volunteers to plan and accomplish projects
- held monthly **Community Business Meetings** with guest speakers highlighting businesses and services provided to the community improving communications, activities and information about the Reisterstown Main Street area
- as part of expanded communications focus, Reisterstown Business Boost emails are sent to support the district’s businesses



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- launched a “Betcha Didn’t Know” blog that was shared on our website and You Tube platform highlighting local businesses and a Main Street Podcast
- focused on inventory of vacant properties by meeting with interested businesses, developers, and government agency reps encouraging adaptive uses of existing buildings; worked on the BOOMS Tracker Tool which was paused awaiting the resolution of tech issues from the tool’s host
- based on successful programs elsewhere in the state, RIA has started down the path of research and planning a Maker’s Space. The program is focused on establishing a solid launch pad for crafts people to establish the work, brand, and client base for an eventual move to a retail space
- launched the Junior Main Street program working with Franklin High School students and Podcast sessions
- launched the Studios at 234 which will host 3 artists each quarter allowing them to create and share their talents

**RIA Organization Committee** continued the work in the Main Street Maryland program to improve and enhance our town making it exciting for people to visit:

- Set up information booths 40+ times at events and in the Welcome Center for events
- assisted with fundraising events within our committee and other committees
- secured funding from Baltimore County in their annual budget which we plan to use to fund our Main Street Manager’s salary and operating expenses
- continued to use Microsoft Office 365 including Teams account
- partnered with other organizations and attended conferences to assist work on Vision and Mission goals for Reisterstown
- completed the process in Baltimore County to have Design Guidelines approved and included in the county code and Streetscape Strategy Plan approved and included in Master Plan 2030
- updated new visual banners on the website to promote RIA events and fundraising efforts
- prepared Power Point displays including our **Main Street Sponsors** for the website, a slide show to display at the Music on Main Street concerts, and a slide show to run in the Welcome Center while open as well as yard signs to use next to outdoor Information booths
- maintained contact & email list adding them to the website site to receive the weekly email
- worked with treasurer and **Finance Committee** to review financial statements showing revenue and expenses
- worked with the finance committee to prepare new calendar year budget and to manage the fiscal responsibilities of the organization
- worked with various RIA committees to be sure they had all supplies and volunteers needed to hold successful events
- maintained contact with elected officials from the Baltimore County and State
- worked with **Grant Chair** who searched and applied for grants to help fund activities to reach the vision of the organization for Reisterstown Main Street
- facilitated volunteers in the Museum at the Welcome Center Thursday through Saturday to inform visitors regarding the historic value of our town
- assisted the Main Street Manager with maintaining website data & financial information and increasing our brand and identity building



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**RIA Promotion Committee** worked to highlight all that Main Street offers

- planned and held single day holiday events throughout the year
- online **publicity** on Facebook & Instagram, website and weekly emails was expanded by posting events on Baltimore County Tourism, Baltimore Sun, Eventbrite, City Spark, Next Door, and a variety of other calendars on a regular basis
- **Farmers' Market** had a successful 2025 season each Sunday from June through September and was able to see an average of over 275 people at each Sunday events
- **Music on Main Street** 10 Friday night concerts averaged between 500 to 1,000 attendees.

## **2025 events included:**

Eggstravaganza – Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup> \*

Bloomin' ArtFest – Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup>

Beer & Wine Festival – Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup>

Farmers' Market- Sundays from June 9<sup>th</sup> through Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>

Music on Main Street Concerts from June 20<sup>th</sup> through August 29<sup>th</sup> (10 concerts)

BOOtacular – Saturday, October 25<sup>th</sup> \*

Small Business Saturday – Saturday, November 29<sup>th</sup> \*

Holidays on Main Street – Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup> \*

\*Overseen by Promotions Committee. Other events have their own committees.

## **RIA COMMITTEE GOALS FOR 2026**

### **Clean, Safe & Green**

- 1) Continue with **ongoing clean-up** projects
- 2) Holiday Decorating of Main Street including hanging and removing wreaths, inventory, storage and purchase of new wreaths, bows, and supplies
- 3) Partnership with local police re safety issues
- 4) Clean-up and safety during promotional events
- 5) Work on projects for the **Franklin Woodland Trails**
- 6) Responsible for upkeep of benches, trash receptacles, planters and repair of lamp post banners
- 7) Work with BCPD to monitor speeding on Main Street and proper stopping at crosswalks.

### **Design**

- 1) Create an inventory of available Main Street properties either for Rent or For Sale
- 2) Work with property owners to apply for Façade Improvement Grants and complete their projects

### **Economic Vitality**

- 1) Continue work to fill vacant businesses and properties; track developments and property purchases to help protect historic character of Main Street
- 2) The Annual Fund Raiser will continue with review of what worked and tweaks for the next event
- 3) Support the Main Street Manager in accomplishing the goals for the year
- 4) Continue the Advocacy campaigns that promote the district and familiarize everyone with benefits of Main Street including the monthly **Community Business Meetings**, focusing on improving economic values and ideas to fill vacancies and bring unique shops to town
- 5) Help drive tourism and shopping by using our access to a studio to produce and deliver our podcasts including those of our **Junior Main Street Program** participants
- 6) Collaborate with State Highway Administration, Baltimore County Department of Planning, and Baltimore County Department of Public Works to implement traffic calming, walkability, and bike-friendly changes to Main Street; support the **Heritage Walking Trail** by maintaining the trail and developing additional displays





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- 7) Continue to advocate for the **Woodley Avenue Park** greenspace collaborating with the Baltimore County Recreation & Parks as they hold public hearings and gather community comments
- 8) Collaborate with other RIA committees to explore historic events and landmarks, develop Oral Histories and maybe Ghost Tours
- 9) Continue to advocate and encourage Main Street shops and services to have regular hours when open.
- 10) Continue to fill **The Studios at 234** with different cohorts of 3 artists each quarter
- 11) Rebrand Reisterstown for the 21st century using our Reisterstown website and social media

## **Organization**

- 1) Take advantage of the Main Street Maryland designation benefits; Main Street America membership; and Sustainability Community status with grant applications to fund projects of all committees
- 2) **Fundraising** to support all the programs of Reisterstown Main Street
- 3) Work with Treasurer and **Finance Committee** to be sure all aspects of budget; financial statements; and information needed is current and accurate
- 4) Work with State and County departments and County Council to advance the goals of Main Street improvements
- 5) Support **Grant Chair** to secure more resources and focus on identifying grants which advance RIA and Main Street projects
- 6) Support **Main Street Manager** work to provide training for staff from her work with Maryland Main Street Program and National Main Street conferences and how it will benefit Reisterstown Main Street
- 7) Partner with schools, churches, non-profits, organization and our membership to include everyone and encourage them to assist us to achieve our goals
- 8) Setup **Information Booths** at all events to promote our work for Reisterstown Main Street, encourage and track all Volunteers who support the work of our committees
- 9) Support **Annual Town Hall Meeting** to share the work of each committee, gather and analyze feedback from the community members who attend

## **Promotion**

- 1) Focus on **website** updates and increased publicity through social media
- 2) Oversee events on Main Street with businesses in spring and fall with the goal of increasing shopping and support of our Main Street businesses
- 3) Promote the **history of Reisterstown** and educate the community about historic Preservation and open Curated Welcome Center
- 4) Continue with **Historic Walking Tours** of the Historic Reisterstown area, develop Historic Guided Tours
- 5) Work together with businesses to create new ideas and events such as sidewalk sales and special promotions to attract Main Street visitors and celebrate national events, such as Women's History Month, Earth Day, Women Owned Business, etc.
- 6) Increase growth of Farmers Market
- 7) Continue with Music on Main Street concerts during the summer
- 8) Work with Main Street restaurants for a fundraiser day/evening
- 9) Promote and hold outside events for the community such as Movie Nights, Magic/Comedy night and Yoga in the Park
- 10) Form a History Club for Reisterstown Residents to gather and share stories and photos
- 11) Highlight local business offerings with a press release



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## **MAIN STREET MANAGER ACCOMPLISHMENTS – 2025**

### **OVERSEES COMMITTEES, WORKS WITH MAIN STREET BUSINESSES, PROPERTY OWNERS, ORGANIZATIONS, COMMUNITY GROUPS, COUNTY, STATE AND UTILITY COMPANIES:**

- Gathered donations for the Welcome Center and purchased necessary equipment for the meeting space and decorated the space
- Attended monthly committee meetings of the Promotions, Design, Economic Vitality Façade Improvement Program, Organization, Fundraising and Grant Committees
- Participated in Baltimore County Webex calls, Chamber of Commerce Zoom calls and Webinars
- Attended Main Street Maryland state quarterly meetings, submitted reports through DHCD portal
- Collaborated with NW Chamber of Commerce for events on Main Street
- Maintain working relationships with state and county officials attending local meetings, state and national annual conferences representing Reisterstown's work. Invited to speak at the MIT 2025 conference about how we incorporate STEM into community events.
- Successfully launched the first "ROARstertown" event, managed grant, created curriculum, signage and handout information, project outlines, participated in MIT monthly quad meetings
- Developed and launched youth engagement initiatives including Junior Main Street programming, student-led media project for students to gain real-world experience in marketing, storytelling, and community engagement- "Frank-ly Speaking" a podcast streaming and maintained across several platforms.
- Updated and rebranded the webpage.
- Worked with Promotion, Marketing, Clean, Safe & Green and Organization chairs to decorate Main Street for the fall, hang wreaths on lamp posts along Main Street, organize Small Business Saturday and Holidays on Main Street events
- Assisted Clean, Safe & Green with monthly clean ups
- Supported long-range capital planning efforts including the Welcome Center, Streetscape improvements, and public-space enhancements
- Worked with county to complete & submit to the State our Sustainable Community Application
- Worked with councilman Julian Jones to get a resolution approved for Design Guidelines and Streetscape Action Plan to be added to Master Plan 2030
- Established and managed Studios at 234, overseeing artists, quarterly workshops, and creative programming that activates the Welcome Center and Main Street.

### **PUBLICITY AND COMMUNICATION:**

- Maintained email list and contact information for Main Street businesses
- Promoted all RIA events and encouraged local businesses to create their own events, which RIA also promotes
- Wrote Weekly Mailers to our growing list of subscribers
- Update and posts to social media
- Create handouts, maps, flyers
- Attended conferences, meetings, local events and presentations on behalf of RIA
- Annually toured Main Street with public officials to point out areas in need of attention, to include signage, streetscape and fixtures. Worked with the County to assist us in maintaining a safe and attractive Main Street community



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## **ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS:**

- Purchased equipment for committees, office and streetscape materials
- Ordered stationery, business cards, office and organization materials
- Placed orders for street fixtures and coordinated delivery and placement
- Secured furniture and other furnishings for the new Welcome Center and Office spaces.
- Build out of Studios at 234

## **MEMBERSHIP AND VOLUNTEERS:**

- Collected annual membership dues
- Maintained contact information of membership
- Recognized Volunteers with formal activity
- Update all memberships info on webpage

## **MAIN STREET MANAGER GOALS FOR 2026**

- 1) Continue to work with State Coordinator of the Main Street Maryland program and submit required reports
- 2) Manage the Welcome Center
  - Curate the Welcome Center to be an historic gallery with rotating exhibits
  - Assume responsibility for the Welcome Center equipment, inventory supplies & donations, prepare promotional materials for distribution marketing Main Street to Visitors, change window displays and signage
  - Create a volunteer base to work in the Welcome Center and increase to 3-5 days during the week
- 3) Work with Committee Chairs to hold regular committee meetings, establish a yearly budget, set goals, expand events and activities consistently and retain & increase a volunteer base assisting each committee and provide input of year's activities and future goals for Annual Report
- 4) Work with Grants Committee to obtain and manage grants for all committees that will help improve Main Street and draw residents and visitors to Historic Reisterstown and its businesses
- 5) Support bond requests, capital grants, and infrastructure funding opportunities
- 6) Work with Organization committee to assemble a list of all volunteers and honor them at an Appreciation Party
- 7) Work with Economic Vitality committee to meet with property owners encouraging them to fill vacancies and beautify their facades
- 8) Expand Junior Main Street program and youth leadership opportunities
- 9) Continue to produce the Frank-ly Speaking, student led podcast.
- 10) Continue to build partnerships with local schools and youth organizations
- 11) Visit Main Street Businesses regularly so we get their feedback/suggestions and help with their needs; encourage them to have consistent hours as well as participate in Main Street events and become RIA members and business owners. Work on image rebranding
- 12) Expand public art initiatives and walking art/heritage trails
- 13) Integrate arts and culture more deeply into economic vitality and tourism efforts
- 14) Provide continuity, knowledge, and daily leadership essential to the success of the Main Street program
- 15) Work with Promotions Committee on new ways to promote Main Street program through social media and webpage. Work on new ways to engage community members.
- 16) Organize ribbon cuttings and celebrate new business openings, anniversaries & expansions
- 17) Work with Membership Chair to increase business, individuals, and non-profit members and maintain an email contact list for members for ease of communication





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- 18) Maintain cordial and working relationships with our elected officials, Baltimore County Government Representatives and Departments and the SHA to work together to resolve Main Street issues; serve as liaison between Reisterstown Main Street and other agencies
- 19) Continue to work with County on the design phase of Woodley Ave. Park.
- 20) Monitor Main Street, observing sidewalks, broken lights, banners, fixtures (trash receptacles, benches, planters) and report to the proper authorities for repair
- 21) Finalize a 3-5 year Strategic Plan
- 22) Manage and oversee Studios at 234, a creative incubator program that supports artists, public workshops, and community engagement while strengthening Main Street's cultural and economic vitality.