

For immediate release

For more information  
Will Rothschild, Communications Manager  
office (864) 596-2491  
wrothschild@cityofspartanburg.org

# Main Street Challenge '14 attracts 31 applicants

## Next step: whittle contenders for \$12,000 in lease assistance for downtown space to 12-15 semifinalists

SPARTANBURG, S.C. (Feb. 14, 2014) — Thirty-one business ideas have been entered in the City of Spartanburg's Main Street Challenge, a contest that matches three entrepreneurs with empty downtown storefront space. The three winning ideas will receive \$12,000 in rental assistance from the City, along with thousands of dollars of in-kind support such as printing, accounting and legal assistance from local sponsors.

Last year, The Local Hiker, Haute Mama, and Motte & Sons Bootleggers won the inaugural Main Street Challenge. The Local Hiker, an outdoors outfitter, opened at 173 E. Main St. in October. Haute Mama, a chic maternity boutique, opened at 154 E. Main St. in November. Motte & Sons, a micro-distillery, is currently upfitting its East Daniel Morgan Avenue location across from the Marriott Hotel & Conference Center.

A selection committee will now work to whittle the list of entrants to about a dozen semifinalists, who will be notified by Feb. 21. The semifinalists will then be required to submit a formal business plan and other supporting information that will help sell their concept. The selection committee will then narrow the field to about six finalists, who will be notified on or around May 2. The finalists will make a formal presentation to the selection committee, then be invited to make a final pitch to the public at The Main Event in late May. The winners will be announced at The Main Event.

In addition, the City ultimately will work with several other entrants to help them open their business in Downtown Spartanburg. The Growler Haus, which opened at 113 N. Church St. in August, fell into this category during last year's Main Street Challenge.

The 31 entrants include eight restaurant concepts, five other concepts that feature a specific type of food or drink (such as an ice cream/candy shop, chocolatier, tea house, etc.), nine retail concepts, seven professional, business or healthcare services enterprises, and two entertainment concepts.

"The diversity of business concepts is extremely impressive," said City of Spartanburg Economic Development Director Patty Bock. "We have a very good mix of new entrepreneurs and experienced business owners. After looking at all 31 applications, I am confident that the 2014 version of the Main Street Challenge is going to produce not only three very strong winning businesses, but ultimately result in several other entrants eventually opening in Downtown Spartanburg."

###