

For immediate release

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

Selection committee narrows MSC field to 15 semifinalists

SPARTANBURG, S.C. (Feb. 25, 2014) — An initial applicant pool of 34 has been narrowed to 15 semifinalists in the Main Street Challenge, the City of Spartanburg's economic development contest that will place three winning business ideas in empty downtown storefronts.

Of the 15 semifinalists, 10 are restaurant or food/drink concepts, including two farm-to-table restaurant concepts, an empanadas/Puerto Rican restaurant, a quick-serve pasta concept, two juice bars, a chocolatier, an ice cream/sweets shop, a candy shop, and a tea house. Other entrants making the semifinal cut include a family dental practice, a specialty running shoe and apparel store, a specialty pet grooming and accessories concept, a custom gifts and awards business, and a "makerspace." Four of the semifinalists are existing businesses seeking either to relocate or expand their operations to Downtown Spartanburg.

"The quality of submissions this year is really striking," said City of Spartanburg Economic Development Director Patty Bock. "We initially planned to narrow the field to 12 semifinalists, but the field of initial applicants was so strong that the selection committee decided to expand that number."

The semifinalists will now be required to submit a formal business plan and other information to support their application by April 18. The selection committee will then narrow the field to at least six finalists, who will make a presentation to the selection committee in early May, followed by a final pitch to the public at The Main Event on May 22, when the winners will be announced.

"The process of trimming the list of semifinalists down to a final group will be very difficult, for both the entrants and the selection committee," Bock said. "The selection committee has high expectations for the business plans they will receive from the semifinalists. At the same time, I fully expect to see several of the Main Street Challenge applicants who do not advance to eventually open up their doors in Downtown Spartanburg."

###