



May 13, 2025

Honorable Brian Hawkins, Chair
Board of County Commissioners
Hernando County Government
20 N Main Street
Brooksville, FL 34604

RE: 2025-2026 Allocation Funding Request

Dear Chair Hawkins,

On behalf of the Brooksville Main Street (BMS) Board of Directors and myself, I extend our sincere gratitude for the incredibly successful 2024-2025 partnership. It has been a year of remarkable progress and positive transformation within our historic downtown, yielding significant economic and community benefits for Hernando County.

As the **only** dedicated 501(c)(3) non-profit agency focused on the economic development and revitalization of Downtown Brooksville, our mission is deeply rooted in preserving our small-town charm while fostering a strong sense of community and family. We are passionately committed to historic preservation and revitalization, ensuring Brooksville's unique character thrives for generations to come. Through the dedicated efforts of our **Design, Economic Vitality, Organization, and Promotions** committees, we actively cultivate downtown Brooksville as a dynamic "destination," attracting both residents and visitors to experience its diverse offerings.

We are proud to be recognized as an accredited member of *Main Street America and Florida Main Street*, and we deeply value our strong collaborations with key partners including the *Hernando County Government, Florida's Adventure Coast Visitors Bureau, City of Brooksville, Greater Hernando County Chamber of Commerce, Florida Humanities, Florida Wildlife Corridor, Florida Division of Arts & Culture, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation*.

Investing in Brooksville Main Street yields significant benefits for Hernando County Government. Our initiatives generate positive public relations for the county and cultivate a viable downtown core, directly increasing the tax base. This revitalization creates a rippling effect, strengthening the broader county economy and serving as a key draw for both new industry and existing county-wide businesses. A thriving downtown fosters a positive perception of the entire county and bolsters community pride, creating a strong common partnership alongside the City of Brooksville. Our focus on heritage preservation enhances the county's unique appeal and offers an effective alternative to potentially more complex redevelopment districts.

Ultimately, a vibrant downtown improves the overall quality of life for residents, enhances the work environment for county employees, and serves as a valuable asset in attracting industrial recruitment to the entire Hernando County region.

Our **Economic Vitality and Organization** Committees have worked collaboratively, forging re-energized partnerships with local government, property owners, and businesses. These efforts have demonstrably positioned Brooksville as a place ripe for investment and a compelling destination. **In 2024, Brooksville Main Street events and activities generated an impressive \$1,169,791 in economic impact within Hernando County!** This significant boost is amplified by the remarkable dedication of our volunteers, who contributed over **5,094 hours**, valued at over **\$170,615**.

Additionally, downtown Brooksville welcomed over **42,000 visitors**, showcasing its growing appeal as a key attraction within the county.

This increased vibrancy has spurred a remarkable revival of new entrepreneurs in our downtown, including thriving retail stores like *Citrus & Sage Bookstore and Artisan Haven*, both of which originated as pop-up vendors at our community events. We've also celebrated the expansion or relocation of valued businesses such as *Granddaddy Records, Boondoggles, The Hardware Store, and Green Door on Broad*, all now proudly calling downtown Brooksville home, contributing to the county's economic landscape.

Looking ahead, our community anticipates the arrival of even more new businesses, recognizing downtown Brooksville as a burgeoning economic vitality hub. We are particularly excited to be an integral part of the Entertainment District championed by the City of Brooksville's CRA for continued economic development within Hernando County.

Our **Promotions** Committee has planned another dynamic year for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, featuring a diverse array of engaging events that draw visitors from across the county and beyond:

- Brooksville Tangerine Festival (*February*)
- Pedal Play Day (*March*) (*in partnership with Florida's Adventure Coast Visitors Bureau*)
- Volunteer Appreciation Celebration (*April*)
- Beautify Brooksville (*April & September*)
- Friday Night Live (*monthly Sept, Oct, Nov, March, April & May*)
- Downtown Street Markets (*monthly Sept, Oct, Nov, March, April & May*)
- Moonlight Movies (*monthly June, July, August*)
- Halloween Howl and Safety Fun Fest (*October*) (*in partnership with the Hernando County Sheriff's Office*)
- Founders Week Celebration (*October*) (*in partnership with the City of Brooksville*)
- 9/11 Museum Mobile Museum Exhibit (*November*) (*in partnership with Tunnel 2 Towers Foundation*)
- Small Business Saturday (*November*)
- Christmas Events: (*December*)
 - Christmas on Main Tree Lighting
 - Family Sensory Christmas Celebration
- New Year's Eve Tangerine Ball Drop (*December*)

In 2024, our dedicated **Design** Committee successfully completed the Mobile Mural program, commissioning over 20 vibrant mobile murals and one permanent mural for downtown. We partnered with the City of Brooksville to enhance Russell Street Park through a *National Endowment of the Arts* grant, installing permanent mural structures along the popular Good Neighbor Trail.

Our continued partnership with *Florida's Adventure Coast Visitors Bureau* and the *Hernando County Arts Council* saw the Mermaid Tale Trail expand with ten new mermaid statues, bringing the total to 37 captivating statues throughout Hernando County, drawing even more visitors to our region. Our Mermaid Trail Scavenger Hunt also introduced three exciting new locations.

Through a vital grant from the State of Florida, we collaborated with the City of Brooksville to create new Historic Design Guidelines, a step towards National Historic District designation.

On top of that, BMS was honored to receive another Division of Historical Resource Grant for TourBVL, enabling the creation of ten new historic walking tours, further enhancing our downtown's appeal as a destination within the county.

Brooksville Main Street is committed to showcasing the very best of downtown Brooksville, a key asset within Hernando County. Through our strong community collaborations, we are dedicated to fostering a thriving and active business environment, a vibrant recreation centerpiece, and a city we are all proud to call home.

As you finalize the 2025-2026 budget, we respectfully request the continued funding allocation of **\$50,000** to Brooksville Main Street. This crucial investment will directly empower us to build upon our successes and continue delivering impactful events and programs that cultivate an energetic, vibrant, and thriving downtown district, further enticing residents, families, and visitors from across Hernando County and beyond to our vital downtown corridor, driving economic growth and enhancing our community's quality of life.

With renewed enthusiasm and deep appreciation from the entire Brooksville Main Street team, we thank you for your continued partnership and for your thoughtful consideration of this vital request, which will enable us to further our mission of a thriving downtown for the benefit of all of Hernando County.

Warmest Regards,



Dawn Triconi
Executive Director