

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 11, 2020
TO: City Secretary Cindy Karch
FROM: Main Street Manager Doris Newman
SUBJECT: Cancellation of 2020 Main Street Wine Train

Background:

Due to the Cononavirus-19 Pandemic the 17th annual Mineola Main Street Wine Train that was set for April 4 had to be cancelled this year. A large percentage of our ridership included one of the demographics considered high-risk for COVID-19, 65 years old and older. Other risk factors, such as underlying health conditions, are generally unknown to us but we did know of some among our volunteers and riders with those conditions. Additionally, our passengers, each riding from Mineola to Fort Worth being offered samples of several wines, would not have been able to social distance properly. It would have been difficult, if possible at all, to separate a passenger exhibiting symptoms on the trip from the other people.

The Wine Train has become a well-established fundraiser that has been the main source of funds for the Mineola Main Street Program. Over the past 16 years this event has grown to be very successful. In 2017 it profited \$13,020; in 2018, \$14,217 and in 2019, \$17,680. Our program had budgeted for similar profits as last year for this year. Those funds are used to help Main Street District businesses afford new signs, awnings, or anything else that would improve the exterior appearance (and sometimes structural needs) of their buildings in downtown. Main Street also supports our summertime farmers market, purchases and installs Christmas decorations, pays for free horse carriage rides through our downtown National Register District during Christmas-time, among other things.

The cancellation of our organization's largest fundraiser, without the ability to plan to hold it again anytime in the near future, creates a grave circumstance for our Main Street Program's financial future. We know that revitalization and preservation of our downtowns is crucial to the health of a community and many people remember the vacant and deteriorating buildings in our downtown prior to our town joining Texas Main Street over 30 years ago. That program has helped spark the rise of our downtown, again, to a place with full parking spaces, bustling sidewalks, and healthy businesses. Now, more than ever, there is a crucial need to help our business and property owners in maintaining a safe, welcoming and aesthetically-pleasing appearance that will attract visitors, provide jobs, and help our entire town continue to be successful.

