

News

Main Street gets new director

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By **CARRIE HADERLIE**
Boomerang Staff Writer

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Laramie Main Street has a new director who says she hopes to build on the excitement she already sees in Laramie.

"Laramie is already an exciting city, there are already great" businesses, Kim Skidmore, who joined Laramie Main Street this month, said. "We want to improve on the wonderful environment that we already have here. We want to make it even more of a tourist destination, so that we have people coming and spending their money here. We want them to return, enjoy the restaurants, enjoy shopping."

Skidmore grew up in Alexandria, Va., in an old house, she said.

"I think I have come full circle, because I have always lived in old homes. Historic preservation and the integrity of old buildings and architecture really mean a lot to me," Skidmore said.

Skidmore said she found out about Main Street and became interested in starting a program in her hometown.

"I found out about Main Street and was able to start the program in Starke, Fla. That has been a four-year project," Skidmore said. From there, she went to the National Historic Preservation Trust in Washington, D.C., and got certified to be a Main Street manager.

"The opportunity for Laramie, when that came up, I was thrilled to interview. I have family out West, and I am a skier," she said. "Florida just isn't the place for a skier."

One of the biggest projects in the works for Laramie Main Street is work on a downtown community plaza at First and Grand.

"We are very close" to completing plans on the downtown community plaza, Skidmore said. "We have most of our money for the first phase, the groundbreaking phase. We are leaning heavily on the city to help us get that started by August. It's exciting."

Skidmore said she plans to work closely with other business-promoting agencies in the community, such as the Laramie Economic Development Corporation, the Downtown Business Association, the Laramie Area Chamber of Commerce and others.

Main Street across the country and the National Trust Main Street Center

The National Trust Main Street Center is a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. In the 1970s, the National Trust developed its Main Street approach to commercial district revitalization, a methodology that combines historic preservation with economic development with the goal to restore prosperity and vitality to downtowns and neighborhood business districts, according to its Web site <http://www.mainstreet.org/>.

Today, the program advocates a comprehensive approach that rural and urban communities alike can use to revitalize their traditional commercial areas through historic preservation and grassroots-based economic development.



Kim Skidmore is the new Laramie Main Street program executive director. Andy Carpenear/Boomerang photographer