

# NEWS RELEASE

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## North Carolina Main Street Champions Recognized *New Bern's Robert L. Mattocks II Among Those Honored*

**NEW BERN, N.C.** – On Thursday, January 29, Robert L. Mattocks II was honored as a 2008 Main Street Champion at the North Carolina Main Street Annual Awards Dinner in Statesville, N.C. Mattocks was selected for this special recognition by Swiss Bear Downtown Development Corporation in appreciation of his exceptional contributions to the downtown revitalization process. Although unable to be present for the ceremony, he, along with Champions from 35 other communities, received a certificate commemorating his Champion's designation.

Each of the state's active Main Street programs is given the opportunity annually to recognize a local Main Street Champion. The dedication and hard work of countless volunteers is required to make a local Main Street program successful, and the Main Street Champion designation acknowledges the extraordinary efforts of those persons who have played pivotal roles in the revitalization of their downtowns.

"Main Street is a grassroots effort and, in order to be successful, every local program must utilize its community resources—both financial and human," said Parham. "The human resources come in a number of forms: volunteers, Main Street board members, city staff, elected officials and others. There are no greater supporters of Main Street than those people who we honor here tonight, individuals who have taken their dedication to downtown to the next level—our 2008 N.C. Main Street Champions."

"Main Street Champions are the people who take on the early tasks, the pioneers who go where others often fear to tread, who step forward when others are stepping back, who make the tough calls and those risky investments. They embody the term "community leader", and they do this because they love their communities. There would be no Main Street successes without Main Street Champions," she said.

In nominating Mattocks for this honor, Swiss Bear Downtown Development Corporation offered the following:

*Swiss Bear Downtown Development Corporation is pleased to honor Robert L. Mattocks II as New Bern's 2008 Main Street Champion. Bob has served on the Swiss Bear Board of Directors for many years and, for the past seven, he has been a member of the organization's Executive Board. In addition to his commitment to the downtown revitalization effort, he has contributed thousands*

*of hours to public service, serving on numerous boards and foundations in this area as well as at the state and national level.*

*As a member of the N.C. Board of Transportation, Bob played a major role in gaining the necessary support and funding needed to build the Neuse River Bridge, dedicated in November 1999, which was critically needed to enhance development of our downtown and economic growth in Craven County. He helped us compete for enhancement money that assisted with the funding of major streetscape improvements to East Front Street and played a major role in developing the strategy to replace the Alfred A. Cunningham Bridge and undertake major streetscape improvements on Broad Street.*

*A true statesman, Bob has the ability to convince doubters as well as community leaders to endorse, support and help fund, if necessary, major downtown projects. As chairman of the Tryon Palace Commission, he played a major role in acquiring private and public money to construct the N.C. History Education Center in time for New Bern's 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in 2010, which will bring thousands of visitors to our city and the downtown area.*

*Bob Mattocks is a Main Street Champion and a champion for all of eastern North Carolina.*

Main Street is a downtown revitalization program for smaller towns based on economic development within the context of historic preservation. The North Carolina Main Street Program, which provides technical assistance to its communities, is part of the Office of Urban Development in the Department of Commerce's Division of Community Assistance.

In 1980, North Carolina was one of six original states, selected from 38 that applied, to launch the work of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street Center. The North Carolina Main Street Program began working with its five original cities – New Bern, Salisbury, Shelby, Tarboro, and Washington – in September 1980 and has since grown to include 57 communities across the state.

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