For many towns in rural Utah, an historic Main Street district serves as the political, cultural, and business core. These districts, sometimes only one or two blocks long, can become a catalyst for growth but often struggle because of limited resources or professional support.

The Department of Heritage & Arts and its six divisions want to provide assistance wherever possible. We cherish the heritage of our great state and seek to preserve it, while also promoting cultural tourism, economic development, and education.

Driven by those principles, we have created funding opportunities, consulting services, and professional training that can deliver immediate and lasting impacts for Utah’s rural counties, cities, and towns. Additionally, we can provide guidance on leveraging those opportunities within the department to compound that impact.

So, how can we help you?
At the heart of many communities is a Local Arts Agency, which works with local governments and becomes a critical resource for improving quality of life. The Division of Arts & Museums supports these agencies through focused grants, professional development, and peer networking.

Exposure to professional art can also help build an arts-minded community. The Traveling Exhibition Program brings curated exhibitions featuring work from the State Fine Art Collection, Folk Art Collection, and other exhibits by artists from across the state. These can provide a gallery experience in many community spaces, especially libraries and schools, for minimal cost that includes transportation and set-up.

Many small arts agencies or local museums survive because of the tireless work of individuals. To support and develop their efforts, the division offers the three-day Change Leader Institute that provides professional development as well as valuable peer networking and small grants for graduates.

The Certified Local Government program encourages historic preservation activities through matching grants and staff expertise. Grants typically range from $3,000 to $10,000, and can be used for projects including public education, architectural and archaeological surveys, historic building rehabilitation, preservation planning, and professional development. Brick-and-mortar work on Federal Register buildings may also qualify for state and federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits.

The Division of State History can help individuals and organizations apply for these credits. Additionally, the division can provide Architectural Assistance that offers professional advice to local governments undertaking preservation efforts.

Listing properties on the National Register of Historic Places can provide a range of benefits, including nationwide recognition and the ability to use CLG grants for rehabilitation work. The National Register also qualifies properties for Historic Markers that help with preservation efforts by providing an honorific designation.

Throughout rural Utah, the Bookmobiles provide access to books, digital resources, and free wifi in locations that generally don't have a library. Every year, nearly 35,000 patrons use the Bookmobiles and drivers log more than 150,000 miles. The Utah State Library also maintains the Utah Online Library, which offers access to digitized government publications and archived government websites.

Libraries interested in expanding their collections, providing community services, or conducting outreach efforts can qualify for Community Library Enhancement Funds. Examples of supported projects include publicly accessible computers, programs for at-risk teens, technology training for seniors, native language materials for immigrants, or youth reading programs.

Professional training and leadership development is available for librarians through the Continuing Education program. The skills developed in those programs can elevate the community through an improved library experience, which can be complemented by the Consulting Services provided to every library in the state.
Utah continually tops the nation for volunteerism, and this service can have a profound impact on rural communities. To further boost that impact, UServeUtah offers Volunteer Management Training. This training improves recruitment, volunteer motivation, and retention.

When a disaster strikes your town or county, preparation is key. Spontaneous Volunteer Management Training can help local governments prepare for the influx of volunteers that can overwhelm managers following a disaster. When paired with the efficient use of community facilities, such as schools or armories, this can help avoid the "disaster after the disaster."

Throughout rural Utah, AmeriCorps has improved the health, education, and overall well-being of residents. UServeUtah facilitates federal and local grants and provides training and technical assistance for communities wanting to leverage the "Domestic Peace Corps." Other grants available for service projects include the MLK DAY Grant and 9/11 Day Grant.

The increasing diversity in Utah brings opportunities as well as challenges. For rural communities, the Office of Multicultural Affairs can provide guidance in four primary areas of concern: education, health disparities, economic development, and corrections.

By collaborating with local law enforcement, a positive narrative can be developed between police officers and ethnic communities, especially for the youth. The Office of Multicultural Affairs can also engage youth and local government leaders in discussions about gang reductions and eliminating the school-to-prison pipeline.

A key for strengthening communities is developing the leaders of tomorrow. For ethnic youth, a powerful beginning can be the Multicultural Youth Leadership Summit. Held every fall, the MLYS brings together hundreds of middle-school students for a day-long seminar. The event has also inspired other organizations to host their own local events, for which the Office of Multicultural Affairs can provide advice and consultation.

Nearly half of Utah's rural counties include tribal lands as well as significant Native American populations. Finding collaborative solutions to the challenges of early education, graduation rates, and economic development is a priority for local and state leaders, and the Division of Indian Affairs plays a key role in building those partnerships.

Started in 2005, the Governor's Native American Summit has now become the premier gathering for tribal members, state officials, businesspeople, and local leaders. This annual summit, usually held in early August, has helped create a positive dialogue for everyone working with Native American communities.

The Division of Indian Affairs can also provide guidance and advice on working with Native American tribal governments and developing positive and respectful professional relationships. This can prove especially valuable for municipal and county officials trying to build sustainable local economies and communities.
Certified Local Government ($3,000 - $10,000)
This program supports historic preservation by providing 50/50 matching grants and by offering staff expertise. We provide a grant to each CLG every other year to continue on-going projects and programs. States receive annual appropriations from the Federal Historic Preservation Fund. States are required to give at least 10 percent of their funding to CLGs as sub grants.

Rehabilitation Tax Credits
These incentives assist with the rehabilitation of National Register-listed buildings. These programs can save building owners 20 percent of the cost of rehabilitating their buildings. There is a state income tax credit for residential buildings and a federal income tax credit for "income-producing" buildings.

Arts Project Grant ($2,000 max)
These grants support the development of public arts-based projects such as festivals, murals, and concerts.

Local Arts Agency Grant ($15,000 max)
If a city has established a local arts agency/council, this grant would provide general operating support for that agency. Many arts councils we fund in the state are connected to their cities.

OnStage in Utah Funding ($2,000 max)
Funding is available to Utah Presenters (including municipalities) to support a public performance as well as a separate community engagement activity of an in-state or out-of-state performing artist.

Community Library Enhancement Funds
All Utah public libraries that fulfill the requirements for State Library Certification are eligible for an annual Community Library Enhancement Fund (CLEF) payment.

UPLIFT
Through the Utah Public Library Institute for Training (UPLIFT), the Utah State Library offers a variety of training opportunities for Utah library staff and trustees. Training includes basic training for non-MLS library staff, advanced training for the full library community, and customized training for library trustees, through special institutes on vital library issues, regional mini-workshops, state-wide teleconferences, grants to individuals and grants to library organizations.

MLK Day Grant
The goal of these grants is to increase the number of people who serve in meaningful roles as volunteers dedicated to addressing important needs in communities across Utah. MLK Day Grants are awarded annually to nonprofits, community organizations, and public agencies to plan service projects on the third Monday of every year.

9/11 Day Grant ($1,000 max)
Grants are awarded to nonprofit organizations to assist in the creation of large-scale service projects around the September 11th National Day of Service. These projects are aimed at building awareness of volunteer opportunities in Utah and recruiting and retaining long-term volunteers.