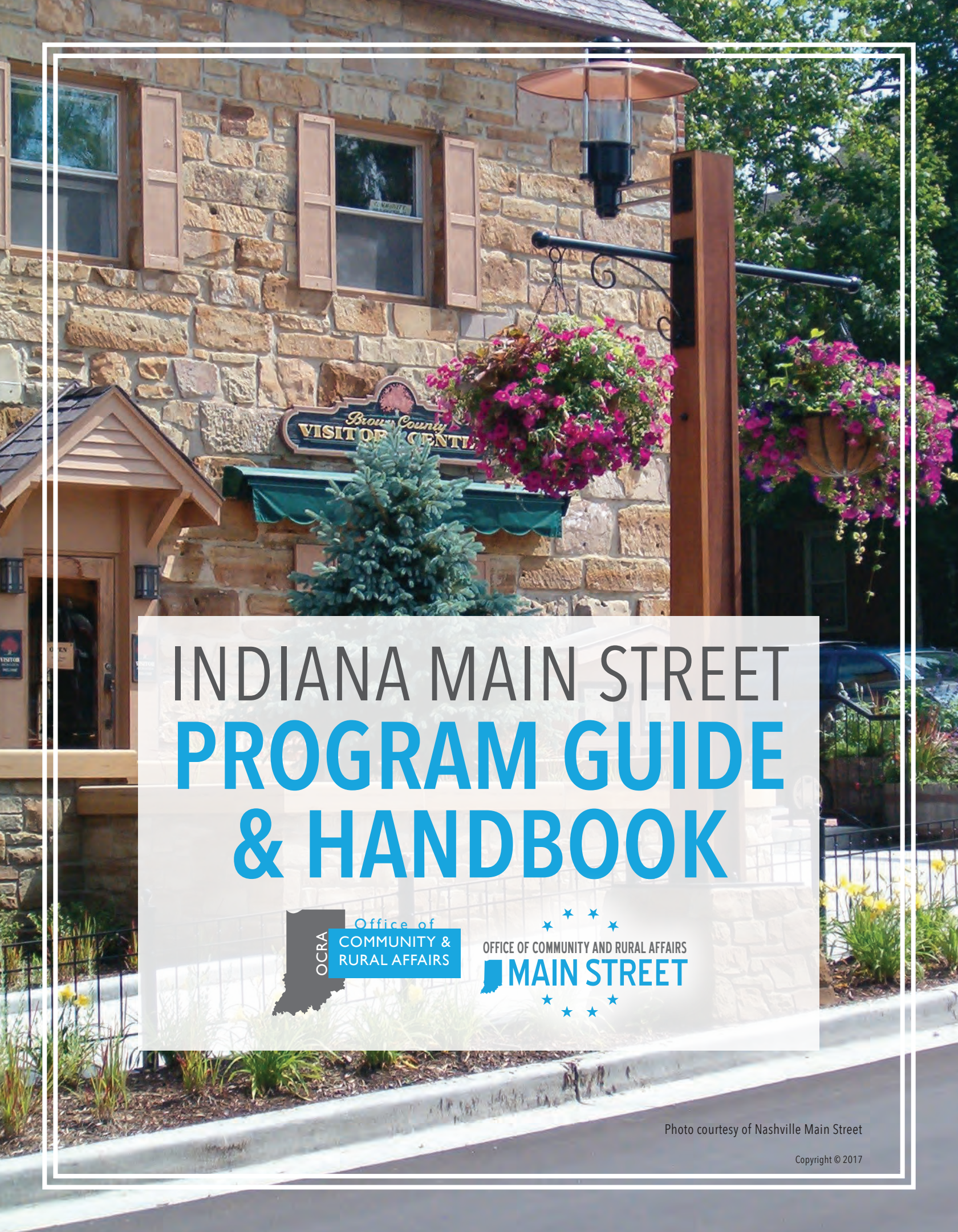


INDIANA MAIN STREET
PROGRAM GUIDE & HANDBOOK

OCRA
Office of
COMMUNITY & RURAL AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AND RURAL AFFAIRS
MAIN STREET

Photo courtesy of Nashville Main Street

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THE MAIN STREET APPROACH

Over the past 35 years, the National Main Street Center has led the development of a national network of over 2,000 historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts – what we refer to as Main Streets - all united by these communities' tireless dedication to create vibrant, people-centered places to live, work, and play. The people who make up the Main Street network are passionate advocates, dedicated volunteers, influential stakeholders, and community organizers who work every day to turn the tide in their communities - catalyzing reinvestment, creating jobs, and fostering pride of place. Main Street-style transformation is a combination of art and science: communities first need to learn about the local economy, its primary drivers, and its regional context (the science), but they also need to convey that special sense of place through storytelling, preserving the older and historic structures that set it apart, broad and inclusive civic engagement and marketing (the art). To support this powerful network, the National Main Street Center has a revitalization framework – the Main Street Approach - that helps communities leverage both the art and science of downtown revitalization to create a better quality of life for all.

The Main Street Approach is most effective in places where community residents have a strong emotional, social, and civic connection and are motivated to get involved and make a difference. This approach works where existing assets – such as older and historic buildings and local independent businesses – can be leveraged. It encourages communities to take steps to enact long term change, while also implementing short term, inexpensive and placed-based activities that attract people to the commercial core and create a sense of enthusiasm and momentum about their community. Throughout the country, both small-city downtowns and urban neighborhoods are renewing their community centers with Main Street methodology.

Ultimately, the result of these community-driven efforts are places with strong social cohesion and economic opportunity; they are places that support and sustain innovation and opportunity; places where people of diverse perspectives and backgrounds come together to shape the future.

THE REFRESHED MAIN STREET APPROACH

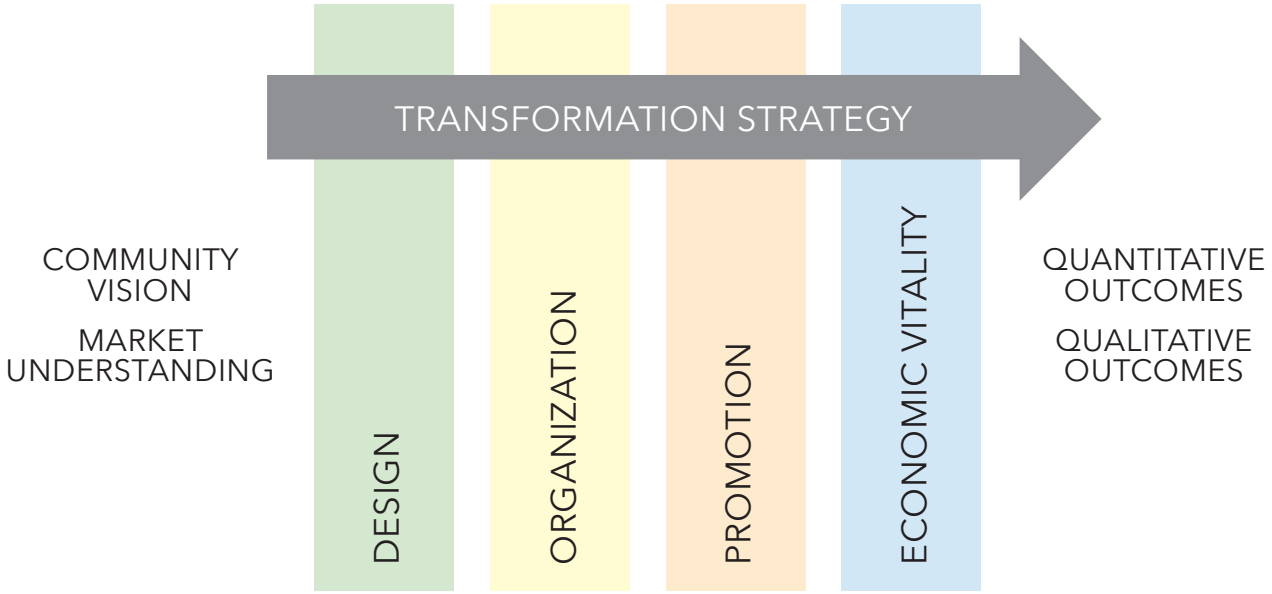
It's helpful to think of the Main Street Approach consisting of three tightly integrated components: community visioning and marketing understanding (the inputs), transformation strategies (implemented using the Four Points), and implementation and measurement (the outcomes).

1. IDENTIFY THE COMMUNITY VISION FOR SUCCESS

The Main Street Approach begins with creating a vision for success on Main Street that is rooted in a solid understanding of the market realities of the district, and is informed by broad community engagement. Main Street promotes a community-driven process that brings diverse stakeholders from all sectors together, inviting them to be proactive participants in the revitalization process. This essential step provides a foundation for outlining the community's own identity, expectations and ideals while confirming real and perceived perceptions, needs and opportunities. It also ensures that the vision is a true reflection of the diversity of the community.

2. CREATE COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION STRATEGIES

A vision of success alone is not enough. Communities must work together to identify key strategies, known as Community Transformation Strategies that will provide a clear sense of priorities and direction for the revitalization efforts. Typically communities will find one to three Community Transformation Strategies are needed to help reach a community vision. These strategies will focus on both long and short-term actions that will move a community closer to achieving its goals.



Some "ready-to-use" strategies – called Catalyst Strategies – fall into two broad categories: those that are focused on a specific customer segment and those that are focused on an industry, produce, or service segment. Examples include:

- Workers and residents
- Elder friendly and aging-in-place
- Family-friendly
- Agriculture center
- Arts (performing and visual)
- College town
- Convenience goods and services
- Entertainment and nightlife
- Knowledge economy

Work on these strategies should be implemented through the four key areas Main Streets have been using as a guiding framework for more than 35 years: Economic Vitality, Promotion, Design, and Organization, known collectively as the Main Street Four Points.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Revitalizing a downtown or neighborhood commercial district requires focusing on the underlying Economic Vitality of the district. This work is rooted in a commitment to making the most of a community's unique sense of place and existing historic assets, harnessing local economic opportunity and creating a supportive business environment for small business owners and the growing scores of entrepreneurs, innovators, and localists alike. With the nation-wide growing interest in living downtown, supporting downtown housing is also a key element of building Economic Vitality.

DESIGN

A focus on Design supports a community's transformation by enhancing the physical elements of downtown while capitalizing on the unique assets that set the commercial district apart. Main Streets enhance their appeal to residents and visitors alike with attention to public space through the creation of pedestrian friendly streets, inclusion of public art in unexpected areas, visual merchandising, adaptive reuse of older and historic buildings, more efficiently-designed buildings, transit oriented development, and much more.

PROMOTION

Promoting Main Street takes many forms, but the ultimate goal is to position the downtown or commercial district as the center of the community and the hub of economic activity, while creating a positive image that showcases a community's unique characteristics. This can be done through highlighting cultural traditions, celebrating and preserving important architecture and history, encouraging local businesses to market cooperatively, offering coordinated specials and sales, support buy-local initiatives and hosting special events aimed at changing perceptions of the district and communicating to residents, investors, businesses, and property-owners that this place is special.

ORGANIZATION

A strong organizational foundation is key for a sustainable Main Street revitalization effort. This can take many forms, from a standalone non-profit organization, to a special assessment district, to a program housed in a municipality or existing community development entity. Regardless of the organizational type, the focus is on ensuring that all organizational resources (partners, funding, volunteers, etc.) are mobilized to effectively implement the Community Transformative Strategies.

3. IMPACT AND MEASUREMENT

To succeed, Main Street must show visible results that can only come from completing projects – both shorter and longer-term activities that add up to meaningful change. Activities aligned with shorter-term strategies focus on highly visible changes that are a reminder that the revitalization effort is under way and succeeding, helping to secure buy-in from community members and rallying volunteers. Placemaking strategies – those actions which focus on what can be achieved "lighter, quicker, and cheaper" are particularly effective and important in energizing the community and demonstrating short-term progress.

While shorter-term, highly visible activities are critical to Main Street's success, communities must also sustain focus on implementation of longer-term projects and activities that are the building blocks for substantial change over time. Identifying milestones for these longer-term projects can be important in creating a sense of forward momentum and reinforcing to the community the need for sustained focus on revitalization efforts.

Coinciding with implementation is an equally important focus on measuring progress and results. Healthy Main Streets are built on a commitment to measure outcomes. We live in a time where public resources are scarce, and competition for private resources is fierce. Main Streets must be able to demonstrate the wise use of resources, which translates to real change on the ground: new jobs added to a Main Street, new businesses open, buildings redeveloped, and numerous other metrics of success.



Photo courtesy of Albion S.T.A.R. Team

THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The National Main Street Center's experience in helping reinvigorate commercial corridors across the country has shown time and time again that the Main Street Approach is a proven framework for helping communities succeed in their revitalization efforts. Building on the Main Street Approach, the following principles are a set of values that can help staff and volunteers articulate a Main Street program's mission and focus energy. These principles are an easily understandable, common-sense teaching tool and can be tailored depending on community priorities and needs.

- Asset-based: Every Main Street district has assets on which it can begin building its revitalization initiative. Many Main Streets have distinctive historic buildings that create a strong visual identity for the district, for example, and many have at least a handful of successful businesses that can serve as springboards for adding new products, services, businesses and activities to the district. Other assets might include concentrations or district workers or residents, proximity to a major attraction, access to a major highway, the availability of certain types of buildings, the presence of a college or university, or strong entrepreneurial traditions. And, every Main Street district's history is rooted to that of its community, offering a rich narrative for the district's continued evolution.
- Comprehensive: All the factors that affect a downtown's health are tightly inter-related. No single focus — lavish public improvements, name-brand business recruitment, or endless promotional events — can revitalize Main Street. For successful, sustainable, long-term revitalization, a comprehensive approach, including activity in each of Main Street's Four Points, is essential.
- Incremental: Baby steps come before walking. Successful revitalization programs begin with basic, simple activities that demonstrate that "new things are happening" in the commercial district. As public confidence in the Main Street district grows and participants' understanding of the revitalization process becomes more sophisticated, Main Street is able to tackle increasingly complex problems and more ambitious projects. This incremental change leads to much longer-lasting and dramatic positive change in the Main Street area.
- Self-directed: While there are some government and nonprofit resources that can support certain



Photo courtesy of Heart of Sullivan

revitalization activities, no outside entity can – or will – revitalize your community's commercial district. Local leaders must have the will and desire to mobilize local resources and talent. That means convincing residents and business owners of the rewards they'll reap by investing time and money in Main Street — the heart of their community. Only local leadership can produce long-term success by fostering and demonstrating community involvement and commitment to the revitalization effort.

- Partnerships: Both the public and private sectors have a vital interest in the district and must work together to achieve common goals of Main Street's revitalization. Each sector has a role to play and each must understand the other's strengths and limitations in order to forge an effective partnership. Partnerships must also be inclusive, engaging the entire community in envisioning the district's future and benefiting from its success.
- Quality: Emphasize quality in every aspect of the revitalization program. This applies to all elements of the process — from storefront designs to promotional campaigns to building rehabilitation to public amenities. Poor quality reinforces negative public images of the district. "High quality" does not mean "high price"; it involves careful planning and execution.
- Changing attitudes: At first, almost no one believes Main Street can really turn around. Changes in attitude and practice are slow but definite — public support for change will build as the Main Street program grows and consistently meets its goals. Change also means engaging in better business practices, altering ways of thinking, and improving the physical appearance of the commercial district. A carefully planned Main Street program will help shift public perceptions and practices to support and sustain the revitalization process.
- Implementation-focused: To succeed, Main Street must show visible results that can only come from completing projects. Frequent, visible changes are a reminder that the revitalization effort is under way and succeeding. Small, achievable projects at the beginning of the program pave the way for larger ones as the revitalization effort matures, and that constant revitalization activity creates confidence in the Main Street program and ever-greater levels of community support and participation.



Photo courtesy of Downtown Bloomington, Inc.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PHILOSOPHY

In this way, a Main Street program can operate as a nonprofit commercial developer. Private, for-profit commercial developers often structure their operations around four development tasks: property development/management, marketing, leasing, and human/financial resource management. Here again, while each Point within the Four-Point Approach® ideally assists with all four development tasks, each Point takes the lead on one of the four tasks.

- Design takes the lead on property development and management;
- Promotion takes the lead on marketing;
- Economic Vitality takes the lead on leasing; and
- Organization takes the lead on human and financial resource management.

A Main Street program is a grassroots, volunteer-driven nonprofit business. Its volunteers are mobilized through teams that reflect the Main Street Four-Point Approach®. For successful asset-based economic development, each team must embrace its development role.

- The design team must take the lead on developing space by leveraging built history and other related local assets;
- The promotion team must take the lead on developing markets by leveraging cultural history and other related local assets;
- The Economic Vitality team must take the lead on developing businesses by leveraging entrepreneurs and other related local assets; and
- The organization team must take the lead on developing partners by leveraging an engaged public and other related local assets.

The focus on entrepreneurs rather than business owners is intentional. Entrepreneurs by definition are never satisfied and forever working on their business (tinkerers). Business owners may be satisfied simply working in their business Monday-Friday from 9-5 or less. To be successful in an ever changing market, historic commercial districts need more entrepreneurs. It takes a concrete and compelling vision of a fully functioning future downtown marketplace to attract the entrepreneurs and investors who will eventually realize that vision. All of Main Street's Four-Points (Design, Promotion, Economic Vitality, and Organization) play an economic development role and serve to increase the economic value of the Main Street district and community.



Photo courtesy of Bedford Revitalization, Inc.

WHY IS DOWNTOWN IMPORTANT?

It is critical for everyone involved in downtown and commercial corridor revitalization to understand the value of downtown. Here are some good reasons why downtown is important:

- Your business district is or can be a prominent employment center. Even in the smallest communities, downtown is often the largest employer.
- As a business center, your downtown plays a major role. It may even represent the largest concentration of businesses in your community. It also serves as an incubator for new businesses - the successes of tomorrow.
- Most of the businesses in your downtown are independently owned. They support a local family who supports the local schools, etc. Independent businesses keep profits in town.
- Downtown is a reflection of how your community sees itself—a critical factor in business retention and recruitment efforts. When industry begins looking at your community as a possible location, they examine many aspects, including the quality of life. Is downtown alive and viable, or does it represent local disinterest and failure?
- Your downtown represents a significant portion of the community's tax base. If this district declines, property will decrease in value and subsequently increase the tax burden on other parts of your community.
- The business district is an indispensable shopping and service center. Though it may no longer hold the place as your community's most dominant shopping center, it still includes unique shopping and service opportunities. Attorneys, physicians, accountants, and insurance offices, as well as financial institutions, are often located downtown.
- The downtown is the historic core of your community. Many of the buildings are historically significant and help highlight your community's history and development.
- Downtown represents a vast amount of public and private investment. Imagine the costs to recreate all the public infrastructure and buildings already existing in your central business district. Think of the waste of past dollars spent if downtown is neglected.
- A business district is often a major tourist draw. When people travel, they want to see unique places. There isn't a downtown like yours in the world!
- Downtown is usually a government center. Most likely it is where your city hall, county courthouse, and post office are located. This "one stop" shopping for government services is a notable feature of downtowns across the country.



Photo courtesy of Downtown Princeton, Inc.

CRITERIA FOR NATIONAL MAIN STREET CENTER DESIGNATION

The National Main Street Center Designation (NMSC) accreditation process evaluates and provides national recognition to established Main Street district revitalization programs based on 10 basic performance criteria.

The following points should act as a roadmap for your program and provide targets for better, more effective performance: Indiana Main Street programs must meet all 10 of these criteria in order to receive and maintain their status as a nationally accredited Main Street program. It takes hard work and commitment by a community to become and maintain its designation as a Main Street community. Along with this designation comes the honor of permission to use the title "Main Street." Communities must be evaluated and meet the criteria above to use this title. Evaluation is done yearly, and will be granted only to Main Street designation level communities that fully participate in the state's network.

1. *Widespread support:* The program enjoys broad-based community support for the Main Street district revitalization process, including strong support from both the public and private sectors. Vision and mission statements: The program provides vision and mission statements that address current local conditions and the Main Street program's organization goals.
2. *Vision and Mission statements:* Has developed vision and mission statements relevant to community conditions and to the local Main Street program's organizational stage.
3. *Comprehensive work plan:* The program follows a comprehensive work plan that outlines measurable program objectives, specific activities for each of the four core Main Street principles, timelines, budgets and personnel responsibilities. The work plan is formally reviewed and updated annually.
4. *Historic preservation:* The program demonstrates a commitment to historic preservation as a key to social and economic revitalization in the community. The program builds public awareness of local historic buildings and implements a plan to effectively preserve and manage these assets, which includes preservation through restoration, renovation and reuse. The program also encourages responsible urban design, development and land-use policies.
5. *Active board of directors and teams:* The program has an active governing board and well-managed teams dedicated to each of the four Main Street principles. Both the board and the teams have regular meetings to address work plans and other important issues within the program.
6. *Budget:* The program maintains an adequate and responsible operating budget specifically dedicated to revitalizing the Main Street district. The budget allows for staff salary and benefits, training and other development-related expenses, as well as the program's primary goals.
7. *Paid, professional staff:* The program employs paid staff, including a full-time, trained program manager to oversee and coordinate all program activities. The program has implemented staff management policies and provides written job descriptions for each position.
8. *Training for staff and volunteers:* The program provides ongoing training for staff and volunteers, and takes advantage of training provided through the Indiana Main Street Program and NMSC.
9. *Reports key statistics:* The program submits timely and thorough reports on its progress as required by the Indiana Main Street Program and NMSC.
10. *Membership:* The program is a current member of the National Main Street Network.

Accredited programs are selected by the local Coordinating Program or by NMSC in regions where there is no Coordinating Program using the above accreditation standards. In exceptional circumstances, and where there's alignment with the relevant Coordinating Program, NMSC may designate Accredited programs in states or regions where there is an existing Coordinating Program.

INDIANA MAIN STREET HISTORY AND REQUIREMENTS

Since 1985, the Indiana Main Street Program (IMS) has been helping communities revitalize the economy, appearance, and image of their downtown commercial districts using the National Main Street Center's successful Main Street Approach. Main Street is a comprehensive, incremental approach to revitalization built around a community's unique heritage and attributes. Using local resources and initiative, the state program helps communities develop and provides support for the implementation of their own strategies to stimulate long-term economic growth and pride in the heart of the communities' downtown or commercial core. In 2005, the IMS Program transitioned to the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs where it is currently managed. IMS provides access to information, help getting focused, and community support and guidance to individuals and organizations interested in downtown revitalization. It also serves as a general clearinghouse for the latest tools and techniques in downtown development. General information, project development assistance information, and other resource materials are also available. The state program is a partner, but true revitalization success is built squarely on local commitment, initiative, and follow-through. The Indiana Main Street program support of its designated local IMS programs has resulted in significant investment and economic growth from the bottom-up in Main Street districts. As of December 2018, Indiana Main Street communities have achieved:

- 4,740 NET new & expanded businesses;
- 29, 632 NET full and part time jobs;
- $3.5 billion in private reinvestment;
- $2.0 billion in public reinvestment;
- 9,367 building rehabilitation projects;
- 9,142 New housing units; and
- 2,485 Public Improvement projects.

HOW TO BECOME AN INDIANA MAIN STREET COMMUNITY

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

In order for applications to be reviewed and considered by the Indiana Main Street, the following eligibility requirements must be met:

- Interested communities must participate in an initial meeting with their OCRA Community Liaison to review IMS program eligibility and participation requirements. The list of our Community Liaisons can be found at: www.in.gov/ocra/2330.htm
- Have an existing organization or commit to establish an organization responsible for the Main Street program. This organization must have broad community support with evidence of a public/private partnership, a board of directors or advisory board, and a committee structure.
- Community must have evidence of historic fabric within the downtown area.
- Willingness to sign and adhere to all conditions set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding with the Indiana Main Street.
- If not already a 501(c)(3), work toward becoming a 501(c)(3).

TIME REQUIREMENTS

A successful Main Street Program requires dedication and hours of hard work. Experience has shown that often new applicants do not realize the amount of time that will be required of volunteers in order to implement a successful program. It is essential that the board members realize what is expected of them; therefore, below is an estimate of the time requirements involved. Many of these meetings are mandatory for the board members to attend as well. Keep these factors in mind as you select your working Board of Directors.

Indiana Main Street Requirements:

- Participation in IMS trainings, conferences, exchanges
- Development of vision, mission, goals and objectives, and annual work plan.
- Development of an annual budget.
- Annual Program assessment reports
- Other meetings as deemed necessary

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

In addition to completing the questionnaire, each application must contain:
Fifteen (15) to twenty five (25) color photos on a digital device (thumb drive or CD) of the designated area buildings and streetscapes. Each image should be labeled with the name of the city and number. The number should key the image to a description sheet giving the building's address, the direction from which the photo was taken (north, south, etc.), and a brief explanation of why this shot was included. **All images and materials become the property of the State of Indiana OCRA, and the INdiana Main Street Program for future use as deemed appropriate by the State.**

The original signed application form and attachments.

- A letter or resolution by the municipal governing body showing support for the Main Street Program.
- Letters and resolutions of support for the Main Street Program from merchants, property owners, organizations, institutions, and citizens indicating their willingness to work with and support the local program.
- Articles of incorporation and/or by-laws of applicant organization or agency (unless applicant is the municipality).
- Copies of agendas, board and committee meeting minutes.
- Copy of organization's work plan.
- Certification of funding for the local program, if provided by the local unit of government.
- For private sector funding or partial private funding, a list of pledges for the year.
- Completed itemized budget for the year. The program budget should address at least the following: allowance for office rent, telephone, utilities, office supplies, promotions, fundraising expenses, car allowance and travel. Budget should also include all income expected for the year.
- A completed business / building inventory list of downtown area
- A description sheet which provides the information indicated for required color photographic images.
- A map (s) of the community showing:
    1. Boundaries of the official Business District; boundaries of the proposed Main Street Program area, and the location of nearby commercial centers, malls, and tourist attractions.



Photo courtesy of Auburn Main Street

2. Boundaries of any local, state, or federally designated historic districts, community development or urban renewal areas, and arts or riverfront districts within the downtown or adjacent areas.
3. Boundaries and descriptions of any zoning districts within the downtown or adjacent areas.

- Any existing plans, studies or surveys which support the need for a revitalization program.
- Any zoning land-use restrictions within the downtown area

IMS BENEFITS

- Training events
- Networking opportunities
- Resource toolbox
- Grant opportunities
- Monthly newsletter
- Technical assistance

INDIANA MAIN STREET APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Contact your region's Community Liaison (CL) from the Office of Community and Rural Affairs for an introduction to Indiana Main Street. The list of Community Liaisons can be found at: www.in.gov/ocra/2330.htm
   a. The Community Liaison will present the community with a basic overview and the background of what it means to be an Indiana Main Street community. CLs will outline the steps to becoming a Main Street community and answer basic questions about the program.
   b. At this meeting, the Community Liaison will provide the community with the Indiana Main Street Application Form.
   c. The Community will then work on completing the electronic application form and required attachments.

2. Community Liaison will maintain contact with the community as they work through the electronic application and attachments.
   a. The Community Liaison will maintain contact with the community in order to assist in completing application. However, it is the responsibility of the community to collect all necessary documentation and data for application.
   b. CLs will make determination if community's Main Street area meets historic fabric eligibility requirements.

3. Once complete, the community will submit application to their Community Liaison.
   a. CL will review electronic application for completeness and then submit, with their recommendations, to Indiana Main Street Program Manager.

4. Indiana Main Street will make the determination to approve the community in about 30 days based on completeness of application and recommendation of Community Liaison.
   a. Working with the community and their Community Liaison, Indiana Main Street Program Manager will set up a time for a press release, official certificate, and any other celebrations.

BENEFITS OF DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT/REVITALIZATION

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS PROPERTY OWNERS

- Increased occupancy rates.
- Rent stability.
- Increased property values.
- Increased stability.
- Reduced vandalism/crime deterrent.
- Assistance with tax credits, grants, loan programs, design, and co-op maintenance.
- Communication medium with other property owners.
- Better image.
- New uses, especially on upper floors.

SERVICE BUSINESS OWNERS

- Image building/improvement.
- Pride.
- New/renewed/repeated exposure.
- Increased variety of services.
- Healthier economy generates new/more business.
- Increased competition means more aggressive business styles.
- Tapping leakage.
- Increased population, new customers.
- Improved image, creates new market.

RETAIL BUSINESS OWNERS

- Increased sales.
- Improved image.
- Increased value of business.
- Coordinated efforts between local businesses and franchises.
- Quality of business life.
- Educational opportunities (seminars and workshops).
- Increased traffic.
- District marketing strategies (promotion and advertising).
- Better business mix.
- New market groups downtown.

LOCAL RESIDENTS/CONSUMERS

- Community pride.
- Have needs/issues addressed.
- Enhanced marketplace (better shopping and the benefits of shopping locally).
- Sense of pride in downtown.
- Social/cultural activities.
- Opportunities to keep kids in town.
- Sense of hometown community.
- Preservation of architecture and heritage.



Photo courtesy of Main Street Pendleton, Inc.



Photo courtesy of Downtown Bloomington, Inc.

- Opportunity to participate/volunteer.
- Better communication (newsletter).
- Political advocate.
- Home values increase.

CITY GOVERNMENT

- Increased tax base.
- More tourism.
- Increased property values.
- Increased number of jobs.
- Better goals and vision.
- Healthy economy.
- Better services available.
- Positive perception of downtown and community.
- Better relations between city hall and private sector.
- Increased volunteer base for city.
- Industrial recruitment.
- Takes political heat, develops consensus for political requests.
- Impetus for public improvements.
- Education resources for city leaders (officials) on planning and economic development.

UTILITY COMPANIES

- Additional business.
- Longer business hours.
- More employees.
- Healthy businesses feel freer to increase utility usage.
- Healthy economy causes community to grow.
- Overcome bad guy image.
- Proof of new products.
- Quality in downtown public improvements.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT

- Increased public relations for county.
- Viable downtown increases tax base.
- Rippling effect.
- Viable downtown is a draw for industry and countywide area businesses.
- Common partnership with city hall.
- County/community pride.
- Heritage preservation.
- Alternative to a redevelopment district.
- Quality of life issues, especially for employees.
- Help with parking issues.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

- Community Reinvestment Act (federal government requirement).
- Potential for loans, deposits, and other services (bank cards, financial services).
- Improved image and goodwill.
- Survival of community critical to bank success and economic stability.
- Central location more cost effective.

PRESERVATIONISTS

- Main Street Approach® reinforces common goal of preservation.
- Increased opportunities for education and advocacy.
- Increased awareness and builds credibility.
- Improved public image.
- Improved economic feasibility of preservation.



Photo courtesy of Bedford Revitalization, Inc.

CHECKLIST FOR STARTING A MAIN STREET PROGRAM ONLY 18 EASY STEPS

☐ 1. Contact the Indiana Main Street Program through your OCRA Community Liaison: www.in.gov/ocra/2330.htm

☐ 2. Put together a core team to talk with fellow downtown business and property owners about the idea of forming a downtown organization. Also, talk with the City, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Commission, and other organizations. Gather input and support.

☐ 3. Hold a town hall style meeting to help educate the public about downtown revitalization. IMS can be the featured presenter as part of the public presentation. Talk with the local media ahead of time and invite them to attend. Then, if you decide to move ahead.

☐ 4. Identify possible board members and supporters. Create an interim board of directors (5-9 people).

☐ 5. Once formed, the interim board should choose a name for the organization. Pick something that is simple, straightforward and businesslike. Save the "catchy" for a tag line or promotional campaign.

☐ 6. Determine your organization's boundaries/primary focus area. Remember it's not an "in or out" issue— it's a "where should we concentrate our efforts for maximum success." Here are the identifiers the IMS Program uses when helping potential Main Street communities decide. The area is:

- A traditional business district and center for socio-economic interaction;
- Characterized by a cohesive core of historic and/or older commercial and mixed-use buildings representing the community's architectural heritage with compatible in-fill development;
- Typically arranged with most of the buildings side-by-side and fronting the sidewalk along a main street with intersecting side streets;
- Compact, easily walkable and pedestrian-oriented.
- Take plenty of photographs documenting your primary focus area.

☐ 7. Draft Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation (OCRA Community Liaison has samples). IMS will be happy to review them. You might also wish to have an attorney review them. Here is a good resource on completing your Articles of Incorporation from the Indiana Attorney's General office: www.in.gov/attorneygeneral/2991.htm

☐ 8. File as an Indiana Nonprofit Corporation (Domestic) with the Secretary of State: https://inbiz.in.gov/BOS/Home/Index. Once its successfully filed, you will receive a Certificate of Incorporation.

☐ 9. Once incorporated, prepare an agenda and hold an "official" first meeting to: a) adopt bylaws, b) elect officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, c) decide on a fiscal year, d) select a bank and discuss financial arrangements, e) authorize preparation and filing of IRS forms, f) identify an address or post office box for mail, and g) other necessary business. Ask the new Secretary to take minutes.

☐ 10. File form SS-4 with the Internal Revenue Service to get a Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN), found at www.irs.gov. At the same time, download a 501(c)3 or (c)6 nonprofit designation application packet. Most downtown organizations focusing on the Main Street Approach® try for a 501(c)(3) designation. Suggestion: seek advice from an attorney prior to attempting to fill out the form.

☐ 11. Check with your municipality to see if you need to file anything locally.

☐ 12. Reserve an internet domain name for your organization and set up social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest etc.).

☐ 13. The board should consult with local insurance agents and purchase appropriate insurance coverage as soon as possible. Minimally, the board should consider general liability, board and officer liability, worker's compensation and special events policies. The National Trust Insurance Services offers insurance for Main Street organizations. (www.nationaltrustinsurance.org/Mainstreet.html)

☐ 14. Once the organizational paperwork has been done, hold a goal-setting session with board members to create a 12-18 month work plan. Determine a mission statement, goals, and objectives. Put together teams based on the Main Street structure. Have each team hold an activity brainstorming session to come up with a list of activities to meet their list of objectives (in the beginning, think quality, tangible and visible impact, low-cost, and doable). Be realistic in what you can accomplish, but also don't think too small.

☐ 15. Create a draft first year budget, then seek out funds from supporters and stakeholders.

☐ 16. Get press releases out to the media for free publicity. Don't forget—letters to the editor are great!

☐ 17. Apply for Indiana Main Street designation through your OCRA Community Liaison.

☐ 18. After IMS designation – hold a celebration!



Photo courtesy of Main Street Pendleton,, Inc.

NONPROFIT FILING REQUIREMENTS

INDIANA

After a non-profit organization is legally created, there are ongoing reporting requirements that must be followed for the following agencies:

- Indiana Secretary of State
- Indiana Department of Revenue
- Internal Revenue Service

Reporting Requirements-Indiana Secretary of State

Nonprofit Corporations (domestic and foreign) are required to file annual reports. The filing fee is $10.00 and the report is due during the month the entity was formed. Failure to pay a business entity report will result in the business being administratively dissolved or revoked. All business entity reports may be filed online at www.in.gov/sos/business/3672.htm. By filing online you will receive a discounted filing fee. There is a $10 fee for filing by mail or $6 for filing online.

An organization must be current in its business entity reports to be eligible for any state or federal grants. Continued failure to file will result in the organization being administratively dissolved – in essence, the organization ceases to legally exist. NOTE: This will be one of the first things a grants administrator checks. Being behind in simple filing requirements creates serious doubts about the capacity and professionalism of the organization.

Reporting Requirements – Indiana Department of Revenue

Indiana non-profit corporations must file Form NP-20 with the Department of Revenue. This form is due each year at the same time as the Federal Form 990. Failure to file the NP-20 causes an organization to lose their state sales tax exemption.



Photo courtesy of Goshen Downtown, Inc.



Photo courtesy of Nashville Main Street

Reporting Requirements – Internal Revenue Service

Any 501(c)3 corporation (other than a house of worship) with income over $50,000 must file Form 990 or 990EZ on an annual basis. For most non-profit organizations, the due date is May 15th. There is no fee for filing. Form 990 is a public document. By law, an organization must provide a copy upon request. 990s are also available for viewing or download at www.guidestar.org at no charge.



Photo courtesy of Bremen Community Cares

Employment Filings and Taxes - Non-profit corporations have the same obligations to their employees as any other employer. Reporting of wages and withholding of income and social security taxes is a continued responsibility.

While 501(c)3 organizations are generally exempt from income tax, their employees are not. Employees of community-based organizations have to pay taxes.

Form 990 information return - Most 501(c)(3) organizations, except churches, must file the appropriate version of Form 990 annually. Repeated failure to file can result in automatic revocation of your organization's tax-exempt status. Exempt organizations must also make their Form 990 information returns available to the public. See IRS Form 990 Resources and Tools for Exempt Organizations.

All nonprofits with annual gross receipts of more than $25,000 must file Form 990 within 5.5 months after the close of each fiscal year. All nonprofits with annual gross receipts of less than $25,000 must file an E-Postcard annually. Forms are available at www.irs.gov/charities/index.html

Employment Related - Nonprofit employers are subject to withholding taxes and a wide array of laws and regulations that are applicable to other employers. Federal and State withholding payments may be made monthly or quarterly depending upon the size of your payroll: www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=99194,00.html.

OPERATING DOCUMENTS FOR NONPROFITS



Photo courtesy of Uptown Project, Francesville, IN

A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION MUST OPERATE AS A BUSINESS AND MUST ABIDE BY ALL FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL LAWS

Articles of Incorporation: The primary rules governing the management of a nonprofit corporation and are filed with the Secretary of State and the Internal Revenue Service when filing for tax-exempt status.

Bylaws: The ruling documents for the organization's board of directors. They define how the board will conduct its business. Bylaws set forth the basic structure and the abilities of the board.

Basic Components of Bylaws should include:

- Name and Offices of the Organization;
- Purpose;
- Membership;
- Board of Directors, Teams and Officers;
- Staff;
- Meetings;
- Voting;
- Conflict of Interest;
- Fiscal Policies;
- General Provisions;
- Amendments.

Language should allow for the continuity and sustainability of the organization.

- Structure term limits that allow rotation of no more than 1/3 of the board each year;
- Compose board holistically to include those with a vested interest in downtown;
- Provide a system that transitions leaders into officers.

Federal Employer Identification Number: The identification number that is assigned by the IRS to identify a business entity. This number will be required for all communication with the Federal Government.

- Apply for a Federal Employer Identification Number by completing Form SS-4 http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=97860,00.html.

Tax Exemption Status: The ruling or determination letter that recognizes your organization as tax exempt by the IRS.

- Are you a tax-exempt nonprofit organization?
- Do you know your tax-exempt status? 501(c) 3? 501(c) 4? 501(c) 6?
- Do you know the allowable activities for your nonprofit status?
- To apply for tax-exempt status, organization must complete an application and attach organizational

documents: articles of incorporation, bylaws, board of directors roster.

- For more information www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p557.pdf.



Photo courtesy of Jeffersonville Main Street

Insurance: An organization needs to have several types of insurance in order to safeguard the overall health/existence of the organization. The National Main Street Center has printed several articles on this critical topic in their "Main Street News" including "Are You Covered? Protecting Your Directors and Officers"-May 2006, "Insurance 101: Looking Ahead"-November 2005, "Cover Me"-August 2003 and "Insurance 101: Coverage for Main Street Organizations"-March/April 2013.

- Workers Compensation Insurance: Medical care compensation for employees who are injured in the course of employment. For more information on Worker's Compensation Insurance, contact the IN Workers Compensation Board at www.in.gov/wcb
- General Liability Insurance: Defends third property damage and bodily injury claims arising out of the day to day operations and premises of the organization.
- Some insurance companies will include coverage for special events by endorsement. Depending on the type of event, you may have to purchase separate special event liability insurance.
    - ◊ Umbrella Liability: This provides coverage for the organization over and above general liability limits, auto liability limits, workers compensation policies and special events liability policies. The National Main Street Center recommends this for every Main Street organization.
- Directors (or Board) & Officers (D & O) Insurance: Directors' & Officers' liability insurance only covers non-bodily injury claims. Insurance that provides coverage against wrongful acts which might include actual or alleged errors, omissions, misleading statements, and neglect or breach of duty on the part of the board of directors and other insured persons and entities. It serves to protect the personal assets of the board members. Sometimes, people may decline to serve on your board if the organization does not have this insurance.
- Make sure your policy includes employment practices liability (EPL) coverage.
- Volunteer Accident Coverage: Covers accidental death and dismemberment benefits, as well as medical expenses incurred by a volunteer who is injured during the course of volunteering.
    - ◊ Volunteer Waiver: While you should have volunteers sign a waiver, it does not preclude the need for volunteer accident coverage. It may help protect you if a volunteer does file a lawsuit.
- Special Event Liability Insurance: Defends against third party property damage and bodily injury claims arising out of events sponsored or hosted by your organization.

- ◊ Even though you have this insurance, do all you can to reduce your liability exposure. Have contracts with your vendors and/or contractors and make sure they are insured as well. Consider security and safety risks that may occur at your events. Follow all state-mandated protocols for rides/activities at your event.

- Automobile Liability: Protects the organization when employees or volunteers are making trips on behalf of the organization if a collision is caused by an employee of the organization.
- Property or Renters Insurance: This insurance covers the organization's property including business contents, building and business income against loss by fire, theft and other perils. If you own exhibit booths, festival decorations, etc., it could include coverage enhancements for those situations.

D-U-N-S Number: The DUNS number is a unique nine-character number that identifies your organization. It is a tool of the federal government to track how federal money is distributed. Many grants require a D-U-N-S number.

- www.dnb.com/US/duns_update.

Back-up copies of your organization's operating documents: You should have both a hard copy and electronic back-up) of all of your important organizational documents. House one of the back-ups in a safe, OFF-SITE location in the event of a theft or manmade/natural disaster.

- Regularly do an electronic back-up of other important documents (downtown property inventory list, volunteer contacts, vendor contacts, festival forms etc.) which are housed on the organization's computer(s) in the event of any technology mishap, fire, theft etc. Again, keep in a safe, off-site location.



Photo courtesy of Greater Downtown Jasper Business Association

CORE MAIN STREET PROGRAM COMPETENCIES

To assist designated and selected Indiana Main Street communities in the incremental and comprehensive development of an active downtown revitalization program, the following list of core competencies has been developed. While individual projects and activities are unique to the community, there are some general tasks and types of projects that have been found to be vital to the progressive growth of a Main Street program and organization. These competencies are meant to be a base level of activity, and communities should strive to undertake more challenging projects as they build capacity. The core competencies are listed in the following pages and are categorized according to the Main Street Four-Point Approach®. In order to build a strong foundation for the program, a very active Organization Team is required to work on the numerous projects listed under this category. Although there are many important organizational tasks, it is necessary to remember that the Main Street Approach® is comprehensive, and activities in the areas of Promotion, Design and Economic Vitality, as well as Organization, are essential for an action-oriented program that achieves successful, ongoing revitalization of the central business district. Core competencies often build upon each other and are often related to competencies in other categories. While each community should complete the core competencies in their own time frame, ideally within a three to five year window, it is recommended that they be completed in the general sequence in which they are listed. The below activities are grouped by basic, intermediate, and advanced categories. In general, projects grouped in the basic category should be completed before the organization moves onto intermediate activities. Intermediate activities should be completed before tackling advanced projects. This progression will serve to build a strong foundation upon which the organization can build a long-term, successful program.

ORGANIZATION

This element of the Main Street Approach® focuses on building collaboration among a broad range of public and private sector groups, organizations, and constituencies, enhancing your district's civic value. The Organization Team plays a key role in keeping the board, teams, and staff functioning by attracting people and money to the Main Street program. To succeed, this team must take responsibility for managing these financial and logistical aspects of the nonprofit organization:

- Raising money—for projects and administration, from donations and sponsorships;
- Overseeing volunteer activities—by recruiting and supervising people and rewarding good work;
- Promoting the program—to downtown interests and the public;
- Managing finances—by developing good accounting procedures.



Photo courtesy of Wander Our Winamac

ORGANIZATION CORE COMPETENCIES

Basic

- Develop an organizational structure, Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws;
- Formulate accounting systems (it is also suggested that all programs have an annual audit by a CPA); Bookkeeping system;

- Payroll/employee number;
- Registrations: state, county, city Bank/charge accounts;
- Hire an executive director (if applicable);
- Hold annual work planning sessions;
- Set up Main Street office including:
    - ◊ Permanent Location;
    - ◊ Equipment;
    - ◊ Furnishings.
- Develop a clear, shared mission and write it as a mission statement;
- Develop a written work plan.
    - ◊ Achieve Board approval;
    - ◊ Send to IMS.

Intermediate

- Develop an organization logo (letterhead, etc.).
- Decide on tax-exempt status and make application to IRS Develop an annual budget.
- Achieve Board approval.
- Initiate an annual, signed agreement with local government.
- Create and regularly update job descriptions for both staff and volunteers.
- Compile and send board of directors list and contact information to IMS.

Advanced

- Form teams and hold regular meetings.
- Develop and regularly publish a newsletter.
- Build a volunteer database.
- Develop a long-term fundraising plan including:
    - ◊ Developing various methods for communicating with donors throughout the year;
    - ◊ Producing an informational brochure about the organization;
    - ◊ Sustainable and diverse income base;
    - ◊ List of private contributors;
    - ◊ At least one annual fundraising event.
- Create a mailing list for the organization including:
    - ◊ Downtown business owners;
    - ◊ Downtown property owners;
    - ◊ Local interest groups;
    - ◊ Officials;
    - ◊ Supporters.

PROMOTION

This element of the Main Street Approach® deals with marketing the district's assets to residents, visitors, investors and others through special events, retail promotion, and activities that improve the way the district is perceived, enhancing its social value. The Promotion Team has the job of promoting downtown as the center of commerce, culture, and community life for residents and visitors alike. To be effective this team must move beyond cookie cutter downtown promotion ideas. Specifically: Understanding the changing market—identifying both potential shoppers and the competition; Identifying downtown assets—including people, buildings, heritage, and institutions; Defining Main Street's market niche—its unique position in the marketplace; Creating new image—campaigns, retail promotions, and special events to bring people back downtown.

PROMOTION CORE COMPETENCIES

Basic

- Develop, approve, and publish a balanced annual calendar of promotional events that includes a mix of special events, retail, and image events.
- Evaluate promotional events—including information on number of attendees and impact in reaching program goals.
- Develop a media resource list.
- Conduct outreach/media relations activities including:
  - ◊ Press releases;
  - ◊ Print media columns;
  - ◊ Press liaison;
  - ◊ Feature articles;
  - ◊ Radio/TV talk shows.
- Create a downtown business directory.
- Initiate and complete at least one special event.
- Initiate and complete at least one retail event.

Intermediate/Advanced

- Conduct downtown image development activities including:
  - ◊ Conduct image advertising (Examples: newspaper, radio, TV, direct mail ads);
  - ◊ Develop collateral materials (Examples: entrance signs, banners, shopping bags, buttons);
  - ◊ Develop media relations



(Examples: media kits, press releases, press receptions for major projects, TV, radio and newspaper interviews);

- ◊ Develop image-building events (Examples: downtown progress awards ceremonies, ribbon-cutting for new projects, "before and after" renovation displays).

- Identify downtown's assets.
- Compile information about the marketplace.
- Analyze data.
- Match assets with market niches.
- Write a positioning statement.

DESIGN

This element of the Main Street Approach® involves improving the physical environment by renovating buildings, constructing compatible new buildings, improving signs and merchandise displays, creating attractive and usable public spaces, and ensuring that planning and zoning regulations support Main Street revitalization, all in service of enhancing place value. The Design Team plays a key role in shaping the physical image of Main Street as a place attractive to shoppers, investors, business owners, and visitors. To succeed, this team must persuade business owners, building owners, and civic leaders to adopt a specific approach for physical improvements to buildings, businesses and public improvements. Specifically:

- Educating others about good design—enhancing the image of each business as well as that of the district.
- Providing good design advice—encouraging quality improvements to private properties and public spaces.
- Planning Main Street's development—guiding future growth and shaping regulations.
- Motivating others to make changes—creating incentives and targeting key projects.

DESIGN CORE COMPETENCIES

Basic

- Develop and market improvement incentives and assistance including:
  - ◊ Design guidelines – develop a design guidelines publication,
  - ◊ Design Assistance
- Evaluate existing physical assets: buildings, streets, public signs, parking lots and open spaces.
- Inventory conditions of physical environment.
- Façade improvements.
- Explore a formalized design review process with custom design guidelines.
- Develop district identification signs.
- Create a detailed and visually appealing map of downtown.
- Develop, collect, and market improvement incentives and assistance including:
  - ◊ Real estate tax abatement;
  - ◊ Loan programs;
  - ◊ Grant programs;
  - ◊ Design assistance.
- Photograph downtown extensively, including before, during and after photos of rehabilitation work

and promotional events; use professional photographers when possible.

- Streetscape improvements.
- Mid-size rehabilitation projects.

Advanced

- Conduct a traffic study.
- Conduct a parking study (if appropriate).
- Continue façade improvements.
- Large rehabilitation projects.
- New development.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

This element of the Main Street Approach® concentrates on strengthening the district's existing economic base while finding ways to expand its economy and introduce compatible new uses, enhancing the economic value of the district. The Economic Vitality Team has the job of identifying new market opportunities for the traditional commercial district, finding new uses for historic commercial buildings, and stimulating investment in property. To succeed, this team must develop a thorough understanding of the community's economic condition and opportunities for incremental market growth. Specifically:

- Building entrepreneurial economies.
- Strengthening business—includes strengthening existing businesses and recruiting new ones.
- Infrastructure reuse—finding new economic uses for traditional Main Street buildings.
- Development—financial incentives and capital for business development and retail operations layout.
- Ascertaining progress—monitoring the economic performance of the district.

ECONOMIC VITALITY CORE COMPETENCIES

Basic

- Complete and maintain building inventory for the downtown, including:
  - ◊ Rental rates;
  - ◊ Square footage;
  - ◊ Age of building;
  - ◊ Unique features;
  - ◊ Condition;
  - ◊ Ownership;
  - ◊ Vacancy;
  - ◊ Taxes;
  - ◊ Current photograph.
- Complete and maintain a business inventory for the downtown, including:
  - ◊ Cumulative number of businesses;
  - ◊ Ownership;
  - ◊ Product/service;
  - ◊ Customers;

- ◊ Amount of sales;
- ◊ Sales patterns;
- ◊ Lease conditions;
- ◊ Availability (date/ price).

- Track program impact, including:
  - ◊ Changes in property tax revenue;
  - ◊ Net new jobs;
  - ◊ Net new businesses;
  - ◊ Amount of private investment;
  - ◊ Number of volunteer hours.
- Create a new business owners' orientation kit.



Photo courtesy of Town of Fremont

- Develop a network of entrepreneur development partners to assist new entrepreneurs and existing businesses (microenterprise development organizations, Small Business Development Center (SBDC), SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives), Chamber of Commerce, etc.).

Intermediate

- Develop a downtown development vision and strategy.
  - ◊ Identify target niche markets;
  - ◊ Develop a downtown clustering/leasing plan/strategy.
- Develop and market economic development incentives, including:
  - ◊ Business seminars;
  - ◊ Loan pool programs;
  - ◊ Grant programs;
  - ◊ Complete market analysis, including:
    - Surveys;
    - Sales leakage assessment;
    - Business recruitment plan;
    - Business retention plan;
    - Summary report.
- Develop a small, local business recruitment packet and procedures.
- Develop business retention programs.


Photo courtesy of Heart of Sullivan

Advanced

- Expand organization's role to develop or be a partner in the development of property in downtown (act like a Community Development Corporation).
- Expand organization's role to provide microenterprise development services, including microfinancing, credit building, training for businesses, etc.

MAIN STREET PROGRAM STRUCTURE

While the actual structure of your program may vary from community to community, IMS recommends the following paradigm for starting your organization. Functionally speaking, each team is made up of project specific Task Forces that operate independently of each other, guided by the Team leadership and supported by Staff, if applicable, while working under the strategic direction of the Board of Directors which is responsive to the Organization Stakeholders. Some programs may opt to work only with Task Forces, but note that this requires a higher degree of Staff and Board management.

CANDIDATES TO CONSIDER FOR YOUR MAIN STREET ORGANIZATION

Organization Team

- Downtown merchants
- Residents
- Media representatives
- Volunteer specialists
- Downtown property owners
- Civic group volunteers
- Accountants



Photo courtesy of Downtown Goshen, Inc.

Design Team

- Architects
- Real Estate agents
- Downtown property owners
- City planners
- Historians
- Interior designers and florists
- Graphic esigners and artists
- Architecture students
- Historic preservation professionals

Economic Vitality Team

- Merchants
- Realtors and/or mortgage brokers
- Downtown property owners
- Consumers
- Marketing Professionals and teachers
- Developers
- Stock Brokers
- City economic development staff
- Economic development professionals
- Bankers
- Small business development center (SBDC) representatives
- Historic Preservation Professionals

Promotion Team

- Downtown Merchants and employees
- Civic Groups involved in the arts
- School board members
- Marketing and/or advertising professionals
- Teachers of marketing and design
- Graphic designers and artists
- Staff in advertising or tourism officers

PROGRAM PARTNERS

A successful Main Street organization involves groups throughout the community. Different groups have different interests in the downtown, and, while each may have a particular focus, all groups ultimately share the common goal of a vibrant commercial district. By involving a broad range of constituents in the process, the Main Street organization can help each group realize that this common goal exists and that cooperation is essential for successful revitalization. Furthermore, by identifying each organization's greatest strengths, the Main Street organization can help focus each group's energy in the areas where it will be most effective and have the most to contribute. Groups typically represented and involved in successful local Main Street organizations include:

1. Property Owners

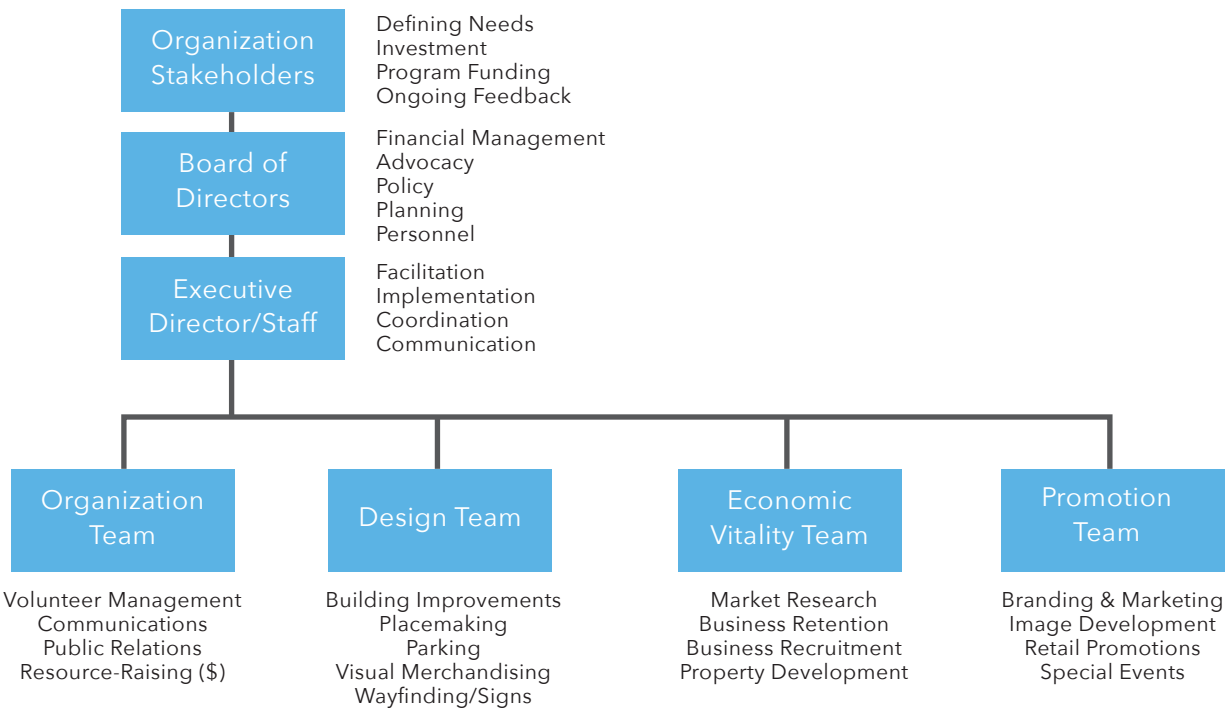
Since they literally own the downtown, property owners have a direct interest in the downtown program's success and often become active participants in the revitalization process. Absentee owners, though, may show little or no interest in the program. Nonetheless, they should be kept informed about revitalization activities and, as the program develops greater competency in directing downtown's economic growth, should continue to be invited to take part in its projects.

2. Retail & Service Sector Business Owners

Retail and service sector activity is an important part of the district's economic base; consequently, business owners have a vested interest in the success of the downtown revitalization program. Retailers are often most interested in and the most valuable contributors to downtown promotional activities though their involvement in other aspects of downtown revitalization are also important. Remember that the best thing a small business owner can do is run a successful business that looks good inside and out, so engage them in ways that support these outcomes.

3. City and County Government

Without the support and involvement of local government, it is doubtful that a downtown revitalization program will achieve long-lasting success. Local government can help provide the financial and information resources, technical skills, and leadership to the revitalization effort. Because local government plays a major role in directing the community's economic growth, it must be an active participant in Vitality, the downtown's economic



base and developing innovative solutions to downtown issues.

4. Consumers

In many ways, consumers stand to benefit the most from a revitalized downtown offering goods and services that meet their needs. Many local consumers who may not belong to an existing community organization will still be interested in participating in the revitalization effort and in helping make the downtown—and the community—a more vibrant place to be.

5. Chambers of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce is an important player in most downtown revitalization programs because of its interest in the community's commercial development. The Chamber can help the downtown program by providing liaison with local and regional economic development agencies, helping businesses expand, recruiting new businesses, and sharing information resources. Remember, though, that the chamber must be concerned with community-wide development. Focusing too much on the downtown can contradict its direct mission.

TEN BENEFITS FOR BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

1. Increase funding
2. People genuinely want to be with your team – you increase your base of support
3. Connect to new partners
4. Attract new volunteers and in-kind support
5. Share your information and telling your story to a wider audience
6. Attract new Board members, keep and motivate your volunteers, secure pro bono and in-kind help
7. Increase recognition and media coverage
8. Solve mutual problems for the benefit of the entire community
9. Build excitement for events and meetings
10. Develop long term opportunities

6. Civic Clubs

By taking part in the revitalization program, civic clubs can help improve the community's quality of life and make the downtown a more engaging place for community activities.

7. Historic Preservation Organizations & Historical Societies

These groups can contribute expertise in local history, preservation technology, design guidelines, historic rehabilitation and related fields to the downtown revitalization program.

8. Schools

Schools can contribute to successful downtown revitalization in several ways. First, by involving young people in the revitalization process, the downtown program can reach a segment of the community that may not be familiar with downtown. Second, they can help students become positive contributors to the community's quality of life. Finally, by giving students opportunities to use their academic skills in a "real world" environment, they can help the downtown revitalization effort implement programs and activities.

9. Regional Planning and Economic Development Organizations

These groups can provide the local downtown program with market data and other technical information about the downtown's market area. They can also help the program identify resources and establish relationships with regional, state and national economic development agencies.

10. Financial Institutions

Local financial institutions benefit from a revitalized downtown in many ways, from making new business loans to being able to attract new industry to the community. Banks and savings and loans can support the revitalization program by helping package loans, taking part in interest buy down and other

financial incentive programs, providing leadership, and seeking innovative ways to stimulate downtown economic development. Many financial institutions also find that participation in the local downtown revitalization program helps satisfy their directives under the Community Reinvestment Act.

11. Media

Downtown revitalization means creating new jobs, generating new investments, and bringing more money into the community—all newsworthy activities. Thus, the media are usually major supporters of a downtown revitalization effort. In addition to publicizing the local program's successes, media can provide information about local market characteristics to help the revitalization effort find better ways to meet consumer needs.

Keep in mind: The Main Street Approach may be able to help you smooth out relationships with other community organizations by wrapping their efforts into your transformation strategies. Rather than trying to undertake all aspects associated with the four points, the Main Street Approach acknowledges that partnerships can span many organizations to affect change in a community. In fact, taking a holistic view of transformational strategies is more likely to succeed if it includes players beyond the Main Street Board.



INDIANA MAIN STREET REINVESTMENT & RETURN ON INVESTMENT STATISTICS TRACKING INSTRUCTIONS

TRACKING STATISTICS — reinvestment, job and business creation, and so on — provides a tangible measurement of your local Main Street program's progress and is crucial to garnering financial and programmatic support for the revitalization effort. Use these statistics for your monthly Board meetings as part of the Executive Director report and for your program's "Main Street Minute" at monthly public meetings with your elected officials. The "Main Street Minute" consists of the 4-4-1:

- Four things your program accomplished the prior month.
- Four things your program has planned to accomplish in the coming month.
- One big thing that the officials and public should know about.

In order to be most meaningful and useful, statistics must be collected on a regular, ongoing basis and are reported to Indiana Main Street at the end of the calendar year. Here are the instructions on how to report some of the key statistics and where to find them. Indiana Main Street will send instructions on how to submit these key statistics at the end of the calendar year.

New Businesses

This is the total number of businesses within your defined Main Street district. List the number of new businesses that have opened in the Main Street district in the last two quarters. This will include new business startups or a business that was previously located outside the city limits of your community and moved to your Main Street program area.

Businesses Expansion and/or Relocation

List the number of businesses that have relocated or expanded within the Main Street district. This can include businesses that were located inside the city limits of your community but outside the Main Street district that moved into the Main Street district.

Business Closures

List the number of businesses that closed in the Main Street district in the last two quarters. This will also include businesses located in your Main Street district that move outside the city limits or to another community.

Jobs Created

This will always be the total number of full-time and part time people employed by each new business (or full-or part time equivalent). If a business has relocated or expanded within the district, new jobs will be created only if additional people are employed after the move expansion.

Jobs Lost

List the number of jobs full and part time lost to business closure, consolidation or downsizing. Please note the number of jobs lost to a business relocating outside the district will always be zero unless the business decreases the number of its employees with the move.

Public Investment

Please indicate the amount of public improvement dollars spent within the district, i.e. individuals or private sources of money spent on building rehabilitations, public improvements, or new construction. Types of public improvement projects are improvements to public buildings, installation and improvement of street lighting, street and sidewalk improvements, parking improvements, public signage, marketing and tourism and landscaping.

Private Investment

Please indicate the amount of private improvement dollars spent within the district, i.e. city, county, state, or federal money spent on building rehabilitations, public improvements, or new construction. A project can be as minimal as the removal of an inappropriate sign, or at the other extreme, an interior or exterior restoration project. Examples of these projects are: a project using tax credits, façade rehabilitation, awnings, private signage, exterior improvements (improvements to the roof, sides, or rear of the building such as tuck pointing, masonry cleaning, roof repair, painting), interior improvements (includes all interior work such as remodeling, carpet, painting, and lighting, but excludes interior displays such as shelving and counter space, signs, or furnishings) and marketing and tourism. These dollar amounts can be obtained from building permits, owner or building manager, contractor, neighbors or best estimate.

Volunteers and Number of Volunteers

Please indicate the total number of volunteers and volunteer hours that have been contributed to the organization. This includes hours spent in both board and team meetings, and also leveraged volunteer hours from other people or entities outside of your Main Street organization that partnered with you to make your mission happen.



Photo courtesy of Michigan City Mainstreet Association



Photo courtesy of Streets of Monticello Association (S.O.M.A.)

DRAFTING ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

To form a Nonprofit Corporation, Articles of Incorporation must be filed. The Articles of Incorporation must include the following: (IC 23-17-3-2)

- the name of the corporation (which must include "Corporation", "Company," "Incorporated," "Limited," or an abbreviation thereof);
- a statement as to whether the corporation will be a public benefit, religious or mutual benefit corporation;
- the name and address of the Registered Agent;
- the name and address of all the incorporators;
- a statement as to whether the corporation will have members;
- a statement regarding the distribution of assets upon dissolution (IC 23-17-22-5); and
- a $30.00 filing fee with the Indiana Secretary of State.

The appropriate Indiana Secretary of State forms to start an Indiana Non Profit can be found: www.in.gov/sos/business/2426.htm

Paperwork
- Form 4162: Articles of Incorporation for a Nonprofit Corporation
- Bylaws
- IRS Form SS-4: Obtain an EIN
- IRS Form 1023: 501(c) Tax Exempt

Application
- IRS Determination Letter
- Form BT-1: Indiana Business Tax Application
- Form NP-20A: Nonprofit Application for Sales

Tax Exemption
- IRS Charitable Registration, if applicable
- Form CG-QA: Indiana Charitable Gaming Qualification Application, if applicable

Cost
- Incorporation: $30
- 501(c): $400 or $850 IRS fee
- Form BT-1: $25 for sales tax license, if required

Time
- Incorporation: ~15 minutes online. ~24 hours in-person. ~5-7 business days by mail.
- 501(c): 2 weeks to 3 months
- Indiana Gaming Qualification: 120 days

If you intend to apply for IRS federal tax exemption as a charitable organization, the articles of incorporation must contain a required purposed clause and a dissolution of assets provision. Valuable information on 501(c)(3) qualifications are on the IRS website www.irs.gov. It includes sample articles of the incorporation. Click the "Charities and Nonprofits" link and then the Life Cycle of a Public Charity.

Non-profit Corporations: Before filing or completing Articles of Incorporation, you should first contact the IRS. The IRS will recognize and provide tax exempt status to a nonprofit corporation only if it meets certain criteria and guidelines. The IRS publishes a booklet which is helpful in this process: "Tax Exempt Status for Your Organization" Publication #557. This publication can be obtained by calling 800-829-3676 or by writing your local IRS Forms Distribution Center: IRS; Cincinnati, OH 45999.

Internal Revenue Service conducts one-day workshops on basic tax compliance issues for small and mid-sized exempt organizations. The workshops will cover the procedures tax-exempt organizations must follow to maintain their tax-exempt status and comply with their tax obligations. The workshops are designed for board members, officers and staff of small and mid-sized tax-exempt organizations and the practitioners who work with them.

Articles of Incorporation

The articles function like a constitution for the nonprofit corporation. Ordinarily, the document is short and simple, and you can prepare it on your own by filling in the form provided by your state. A number of items in the articles, however, are important in order to obtain tax-exempt status from the federal government, such as the statement of purpose and statements indicating that the organization will

not engage in prohibited political and legislative activity and that all of its assets will be dedicated to its exempt purpose under 501(c)(3). These items are discussed below. Consult the IRS website for a list of the Required Provisions for Articles and sample articles of incorporation to help you draft articles that meet the federal requirements for tax-exemption. State requirements for nonprofit articles of incorporation vary, however, so you may need to adapt the IRS sample to meet your state's specific requirements. Below is a list of information commonly required by the states and the IRS:

- **Name of the Nonprofit Organization:**

You must include the name of the nonprofit corporation, which typically must include "Corporation" or "Incorporated" or an abbreviation of one of these words, such as "Inc." or "Corp." Most states will not allow two companies to have the same name, nor will they allow your corporation to adopt a name that is deceptively similar to another company's name.

- **Name and Address of Registered Agent:**

Most states require the name and address (not a P.O. Box) of the nonprofit corporation's registered agent in the state of incorporation. The purpose of the registered agent is to provide a legal address for service of process in the event of a lawsuit. The registered agent is also where the state government sends official documents such as tax notices and annual reports. If your nonprofit corporation incorporates in the same state where you do business, an officer of the nonprofit corporation can usually serve as the registered agent. If your nonprofit corporation incorporates in a state other than where it does business, then you will have to hire a registered agent in the state of incorporation. You can find registered agent service companies online. Shop around and compare rates because there are many registered agent companies available.

- **Legal Address of the Nonprofit Corporation:**

Some states require that you include the address of the nonprofit corporation's principal office (whether or not that address is inside or outside the state of incorporation). This is distinct from the address of the registered agent discussed above, although in some circumstances this address could be the same (e.g., when a corporate officer is serving as the registered agent).

- **Duration of the Nonprofit Corporation:**

Some states ask how long your nonprofit corporation will be in existence. You should answer "perpetual" unless you know that the nonprofit has a definitive termination date.

- **Name of Incorporator(s):**

An incorporator is the person preparing and filing the formation documents with the state. Most states require the name and signature of the incorporator or incorporators to be included in the articles of incorporation. Some states also require that you include the incorporator's address.

- **Name and Address of Director(s):**

Some states require that you list the names and addresses of the initial directors of the nonprofit corporation in the articles. In other states, you are not required to identify them (although you may do so if you want). See State Law: Forming a Nonprofit Corporation for details on the number of directors required by the fifteen largest U.S. states and the District of Columbia. When the initial directors are not named in the articles, the incorporator or incorporators have the authority to manage the affairs of the corporation until directors are elected. In this capacity, they may do whatever is necessary to complete the organization of the nonprofit corporation, including calling an organizational meeting for adopting bylaws and electing directors.

- **Statement of Purpose:**

Here you must state the purpose(s) for which the nonprofit corporation is formed. Although the

articles of incorporation is a corporate formation document, the IRS requires the inclusion of specific language in the Statement of Purpose in order for the nonprofit corporation to qualify for 501(c)(3) tax exemption. The IRS offers the following language:

Said corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Some states also ask for a Statement of Lawful Purpose and a Statement of Specific Purpose.

A sample "Statement of Lawful Purpose":

The purpose of the corporation is to engage in any lawful act or activity for which corporations may be organized under the laws of State.

A sample "Statement of Specific Purpose":

The specific purpose for which this corporation is organized is to publish a blog providing information to the public on deep sea fishing practices off Hawaii.

- Other Items Emphasizing Your Nonprofit Status:

The following items are important for making your nonprofit status clear and obtaining tax-exemption from the IRS. You should include separate statements indicating that the organization is not for-profit:

- No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the Statement of Purpose hereof. The property of this corporation is irrevocably dedicated to [your 501(c)(3) exempt purpose(s)] and no part of the net income or assets of this corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any director, officer, or member thereof, or to the benefit of any private individual.

- will not engage in prohibited political and legislative activity under 501(c)(3): No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, this corporation shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes of this corporation.

- if dissolved, will distribute its assets within the meaning of 501(c)(3): Upon the dissolution of the corporation, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

SAMPLE: BY-LAWS

BY-LAWS

OF

ANYTOWN DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PROGRAM, INC.

ARTICLE I

NAME AND PRINCIPAL OFFICE

The name of the Organization shall be Anytown Downtown Revitalization Program, Inc., (hereinafter referred to as the Organization). The principal offices shall be determined by the Board of Directors of the Organization.

ARTICLE II

PURPOSES

1. Purposes for which the Organization is formed are those set forth in its Articles of Organization, as from time to time amended, namely:
   (a) To encourage, foster and stimulate the preservation of historic downtown Anytown, Any State.
      (i) To acquaint and to inform the public about the unique architectural heritage represented in historic downtown Anytown and about appropriate methods for the rehabilitation of historic buildings;
      (ii) To encourage the improvement and better maintenance of historic downtown Anytown;
      (iii) To promote community pride and civic interest in historic downtown Anytown;
      (iv) To provide education for community leaders and business people about the historic aspects of downtown Anytown, and to encourage the retention and renovation of the structures so as to preserve the historic nature of the downtown area"
      (v) To combat the economic causes of community deterioration by -acquainting and educating local businesses about progressive business practices;
   (b) To receive, administer, and expend funds in connection with any activities related to the above purposes; and
   (c) To do any other act or thing incidental to or connected with the foregoing purposes or in advancement thereof.

   The Organization is not formed for financial gain, and no part of the assets, or income of the Organization shall be distributable to, or shall inure to the benefit of, its directors, officers or members, except to the extent permitted under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (the "CODE") and the Treasury Regulations promulgated thereunder.
2. The purposes of the Organization are promoted through and are governed and qualified by the basic policies set forth in Article III.

ARTICLE III

BASIC POLICIES

The following are basic policies of the Organization:

1. The Organization shall be nonsectarian, nonpartisan and not for profit.
2. The name of the Organization or the names of any members, in their official capacities, shall not be used in connection with any partisan interest or for any purpose not appropriately related to the promotion of the objects of the Organization.

3. The Program Area shall be that geographical area indicated on the attached map. (Exhibit A).

ARTICLE IV

MEMBERSHIP

1. The Board of Directors shall establish annual dues as it deems appropriate. Such establishment of dues shall include method of payment and application procedure.
2. Any business, organization or individual interested in supporting the purposes of the Organization may become a member by the payment of such dues as the Board of Directors may establish. Each member in good standing shall be entitled to one vote. Membership in the Organization shall be available without regard to race, gender, color, creed, political affiliation, or national origin.
3. Any member may resign from membership in the Organization by giving written notice thereof to the Secretary of the Organization. Such resignation shall specify the reason for the resignation and the effective date. Members who resign from membership shall not be entitled to any refund of dues theretofore paid.

ARTICLE V

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

1. An annual meeting of the membership shall be held in each calendar year at such time and place as may be determined by the Board of Directors for the purposes of electing Officers and Directors and transacting such other business as may be properly brought before the meeting.
2. Special meetings for the membership shall be held at any time and place as may be designated in the notice of said meeting, upon call of the President or the Board of Directors either at their own request or upon written petition by at least ten (10) members in good standing.
3. Written notice of every meeting of the membership stating the place, date and hour of the meeting, shall be given either personally or by mail to each member not less than ten (10) nor more than fifty (50) days before the date of the meeting. If mailed, such notice shall be deemed delivered when deposited in the United States mail with postage thereon prepaid, addressed to the members at their addresses as they appear on the Organization record of membership. Attendance of a member at a meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, or manner in which it has been called or convened, except when a member attends a meeting solely for the purpose of stating, at the beginning of the meeting, any such objection to the transactions of any business. Other interested parties shall be given such notice of meetings as the Board of Directors shall deem appropriate.
4. Ten percent (10%) of the members in good standing, present in person or represented by proxy, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at all meetings of the membership, except as otherwise provided be statute, by Articles of Organization or by these By-Laws. If a quorum is not present, the presiding officer or member accepting the responsibility, shall adjourn the meeting and the president or Board of Directors shall then determine the time and location of the next meeting. The general membership shall be notified as in paragraph 3 above.
5. When a quorum is present or represented by proxy at any meeting, the vote of a majority of the members in good standing which are present in person or represented by proxy shall decide any questions brought before such meetings, unless the Articles of Organization or these By-Laws require a different vote, in which case such express provisions shall govern and control the decision.
6. Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the parliamentary procedures of the Organization when not in conflict with these By-Laws. The order of business may be altered or suspended at any meeting by a majority vote of the members in good standing present at the meeting.

ARTICLE VI

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1. The Organization shall be governed by a Board of Directors of fifteen (15) Directors elected by the members eligible to vote. The term of office for each Director shall be three (3) years, except that the terms of office for the members of the first Board of Directors shall be as follows:

   (a) Five shall be elected for one year;

   (b) Five shall be elected for two years;

   (c) Five shall be elected for three years.

Thereafter, five of the Directors shall be elected at each annual meeting of the members. A Board member may serve up to two (2) consecutive terms.

Nominations to the Board shall be made by the Nominations Committee appointed by the Board and shall hold office for the term for which he or she is elected and qualified. Directors in office may be reelected for two (2) consecutive terms, except that the Immediate Past President's term as a member of the Board of Directors shall commence at the normal termination date of his or her term as President and/or shall continue until the next election.

2. Any vacancy occurring in the Board of Directors (other than a vacancy resulting from the normal expiration of a term of office) or the Executive Committee, may be filled by the Board of Directors. A Director elected to fill a vacancy shall be elected for the unexpired term of his or her predecessor in office. Any Director may resign by submitting notice of resignation to the Secretary .Any member of the Board of Directors who is absent from two (2) consecutive regular meetings of the Board, without just cause for such absence may be removed as a member of the board of Directors.
3. The Executive Director (see Policy and Procedures) of the Organization shall be a non-voting member of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee and shall be present at all meetings of the Board of Directors.
4. The board of Directors of the Organization may hold regular and special meetings. Regular meetings shall be held not less than six (6) times each year. Special meetings of the Board may be called by, the President the Executive Committee, or by four or more Directors. Written notice shall be given to each Director either by personal delivery or by mail, phone or electronic mail at least three (3) days before the meeting.
5. At all meetings of the Board, eight (8) of the voting members thereof shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
6. The Executive Committee shall consist of seven (7) persons, including the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Organization, together with three (3) other Directors who shall be elected annually by the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee is empowered to act for the Board of Directors in supervising and controlling the affairs and funds of the Organization between meetings of the board of Directors.
7. Any action required or permitted to be taken, at any meeting of the Board of Directors may be taken without a meeting, if all members of the Board consent thereto in writing, setting forth the action so taken, and the writing or writings are filed with the minutes of the proceedings. Such consent shall have the same force and effect as a unanimous vote of the Board.
8. All new members of the Board of Directors shall participate in an orientation program familiarizing them with the goals and objectives of the Organization and with their responsibilities.

ARTICLE VII

COMMITTEES / TEAMS

1. This Organization shall have at least four (4) standing committees / teams, which shall be entitled Promotion, Design, Economic Vitality, and Membership and Development. These committees shall consist of not less than five (5) members and shall have as chairperson a member of the Board of Directors of the Organization who shall be responsible for directing and coordinating the affairs of the committee. The Membership and Development committee / team shall have three (3) sub-committees: Fund Raising, Nomination and Membership. Each shall have a member of the Board of Directors as Chairperson. The terms of the committees / teams shall be for one year commencing at the time new officers and directors take office.
2. The Board of Directors, by resolution adopted by a majority of Directors in Office, may designate or appoint one or more committees / teams, in addition to the above-named standing committees / teams, each of which shall consist of one or more Directors, and which shall, to the extent provided in said resolution, have and exercise the authority of the Board of Directors in the management of the Organization. Other committees / teams not having and exercising the authority of the Board of Directors in the management of the Organization may be designated and appointed by a meeting at which a quorum is present. The designation and appointment of any such committees and the delegation thereto of authority shall not operate to relieve the Board of Directors, or any individual Director, of any responsibility imposed upon them by law.

ARTICLE VIII

OFFICERS

1. The officers of the Organization shall be elected annually by the membership, except the initial officers who shall be elected by the first full Board of Directors at the organizational meeting of Directors, and shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and such other officers and assistant officers as may be deemed necessary.
2. Officers, except the initial officers, shall be elected at the annual meeting of the membership and shall take office on the first day of the Organization's fiscal year. The person then serving as President shall automatically become Immediate Past President at the time the new President takes office. All officers shall be elected by a majority of the eligible voting members present in person.
3. Except as hereinafter provided, the officers of the Organization shall each have such powers and duties as generally pertains to the respective offices, as well as those that from time to time may be conferred by the membership of the Board of Directors.
   (a) President. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees. He or she shall preside at all meetings of the Organization and of the Board of Directors at which he/she may be present; shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed in these By-Laws or assigned to him/her by the Organization or by the Board of Directors and shall coordinate the work of the officers and committees of the Organization in order that the purposes may be promoted. He/she shall also appoint all chairmen and members of the committees that may be created by the Board of Directors. The President, when presiding at meetings shall only vote in the event of a tie on motions put before the membership or Board of Directors or the Executive Committee.
   (b) Vice President. The Vice President shall act as aid to the President and shall perform the duties of the President in the absence or disability of that officer to act. He/she shall perform such other duties and have such other powers as the Board of Directors may from time to time.
   (c) Secretary. Secretary shall record and maintain in good order Minutes of all meetings and all

records and correspondence of the Organization, and shall mail copies of the minutes of each membership meeting to all members within 15 days from the conclusion of each meeting. The secretary shall also have such other duties as may be assigned by the membership, the Board of Directors, or the Executive Committee.

(d) Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be the custodian of funds of the Organization. He/she shall collect all dues and other funds of the Organization and shall –disburse all moneys of the Organization in accordance with the instructions of the officers, the Executive Committee or the Board of Directors. He/she shall keep full and accurate accounts, shall present financial statements, and shall prepare, sign and file all reports required by law or as directed to be filed by the officers of the Organization, the Executive Committee, or the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall perform all other functions and duties as are customarily performed by a treasurer of a corporation or as may be designated by the Executive Committee or the Board of Directors. The Treasurer's accounts shall be examined annually by an outside auditor, who, once satisfied that the Treasurer's annual report is correct, shall sign a statement to that effect at the end of the report.

(e) Immediate Past President. The Immediate Past President shall serve as a member of the Board of Directors and shall act primarily in an advisory capacity to the President and to the Board of Directors. The Immediate Past President shall not be a voting member of the Board of Directors.

(f) Temporary Officers. In case of the absence or disability of any officer of the Organization and of any person authorized to act in his/her place during such periods of absence or disability, the President may from time to time delegate the powers and duties of such officers to any other officer or any other member.

4. In case a vacancy occurs in the office of President, the Vice-President shall succeed to that office. If any other officer shall become vacant for any reason, the Board of Directors may, by majority of a quorum present at any meeting of the Board of Directors, elect a successor or successors who shall hold office for the unexpired term of the former officeholder.

ARTICLE IX

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director of the Organization shall manage the daily operations of the Organization. The Executive Director shall be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Organization's policies and projects and such other duties as the Board of Directors may require. The Executive Director shall receive for his/her services such compensation as may be determined by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE X

FINANCES

1. Except as the Board of Directors may generally or in particular cases authorize the execution thereof in some other matter, all checks, drafts, and other instruments for the payment of money and all instruments of transfer of securities shall be signed in the name and on behalf of the Organization by the Executive Director and Treasurer, of whoever else may so be designated.
2. All funds of the Organization shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Organization in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as the Board of Directors may select.
3. The Board of Directors may accept on behalf of the Organization any contribution, gift, bequest, or device for the general purposes or for any special purpose of the Organization.
4. Within 15 days, prior to the election of the Board of Directors each year, the Board shall approve a budget for the coming fiscal year. The approved budget may be reviewed and revised periodically as

deemed necessary by the Board. The Board of Directors shall not approve a budget that is greater by ten percent (10%) than the previous year's budget without the approval of the membership of the Organization.

ARTICLE XIII

AMENDMENTS

1. The Board of Directors shall have the power to alter, amend or repeal the By - Laws or adopt new By-Laws by two-thirds vote of the Directors present at any duly called meeting of the board. The proposed changes will also be voted on by the general membership in good standing provided that no such action shall be taken if it would in any way adversely affect the Organization's qualifications under 501 (c)(3) of the CODE, as it may be amended.

_____

President

ATTEST:

_____

Secretary



SAMPLE: BUDGET

Revenue	**Program or Project**	**Grant Request**
Grants	46,000	15,000
City Funds	38,000	0
Community Foundation	0	0
Corporate contributions	17,200	0
Product Sales	0	0
Individuals	14,800	0
Fees for services	18,400	0
Fundraisers, events, sales	14,000	0
Endowment	0	0
Interest income	0	0
Miscellaneous	2,692	0
Total	$151,092	$15,000
In-kind	$28,200	0
Total Revenue	$179,292	$15,000

Expenses	**Program or Project**	**Grant Request**
Staff salaries and wages	77,000	8,000
Fringe benefits	17,500	2,500
Occupancy and utilities	8,400	0
Equipment	6,000	0
Supplies and materials	8,600	2,500
Printing and copying	3,500	0
Telecommunications	2,700	2,000
Travel and meetings	2,200	0
Marketing and advertising	3,600	0
Staff and volunteer training	3,800	0
Contract services	5,500	0
Miscellaneous	1,100	0
Subtotal	$139,900	$15,000
General operating (indirect) - 8%	11,192	0
Total	$151,092	$15,000
In-kind		
Travel (Foundation Scholarship)	11,800	0
City Labor for events (160 hours x $60/hour)	9,600	0
Office supplies (Staples)	6,800	0
Total In-kind	$28,200	$0
Total Expenses	$179,292	$15,000
Revenue over Expenses	$0	$0

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

CITY GOVERNMENT

City government can be a partner in funding basic operating expenses and often also contributes dollars to specific downtown projects. Basically there are two funding pots from which you can solicit money from city government: the general fund and special dedicated funds. Within these funds the city government has a certain amount of money that must be allocated for particular projects. For instance one special dedicated fund is made up of money from gas taxes. This money must be allocated to street projects. City dollars can be applied to downtown management, public improvements, public facilities, technical assistance, and possibly promotions.

MEMBERSHIPS

Fees paid for membership to an organization can be a source of funding for most aspects of downtown revitalization. In order for membership dues to be a strong source of funding for a program, a well-thought out strategy and campaign must be administered. This form of fundraising is ongoing and can only succeed with a good chair to spur the board on. Follow-through is essential to a good membership campaign.

CORPORATE OR BUSINESS DONATIONS

Corporate donations may be distinguished from membership dues primarily by the size of contribution. Many corporations have actively supported commercial revitalization efforts through donations of money, services, and equipment. Most look upon donations to social and economic development causes as investments in the community. Their willingness to give will be directly proportional to their existing or future corporate presence in the community. A corporation will typically evaluate a donation in terms of return on investment (usually in terms of dollars, publicity, human betterment, or economic growth).

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Fundraising events are a good source of revenue for downtown management, promotions, public improvements, and public facilities. They differ from special events in that they occur regularly, they are conceived and run like a business, and they are regarded as a business venture by the sponsoring organization. The purpose of a fundraiser is to make money; therefore it is critical that goals, plans, and a budget are thoroughly detailed, or the fundraiser may end up being much less than profitable.

SPONSORSHIPS

Sponsorships are a good source of funding for special events and promotions. Suppliers of many of the products used in special events as well as media are willing to donate a portion of their product to be listed as a sponsor of the event. Like corporate donations, potential sponsors evaluate such contributions in terms of return on investment. Businesses seldom sponsor anything from a totally philanthropic viewpoint.

FOUNDATION DONATIONS

Foundation donations are grants given by foundations to aid social, educational, charitable, religious, and other activities which serve the common welfare. Foundations are non-governmental, nonprofit organizations which, primarily through investment of their assets, have produced income that is awarded as grants. Foundations generally have restrictions concerning what they will and will not support. In order to qualify for a foundation grant you must be a tax-exempt organization recognized by the IRS. Foundation grants can be used to fund public improvements, public facilities, technical assistance, promotions, and downtown management depending on the purpose, activities, and area of interest of the foundation.

RETAIL FEES
Retail or “in” fees are paid by the primary beneficiaries of a particular promotion or group of promotions. Usually the promotion is thought of, a budget is developed, and then a fee is determined by dividing the total budget by the projected number of participants.

GRANTS
Grants are non-repayable funds disbursed by entities such as governments, foundations, trusts, and corporations, usually to nonprofit organizations or municipalities. Most grants are made to fund a specific project and require some level of compliance and reporting.

PRODUCT SALES
A budget can be subsidized by selling products related to the organization, community, or promotion. Some examples include t-shirts and sweatshirts, posters, specialized game boards, and street bricks for streetscape projects. Product variety is only as limited as the imagination. Before going into special product sales, there must be a well-thought-out plan in place for actually selling the items. Don’t depend on product sales to make ends meet.

VOLUNTEERS
Volunteers are an often overlooked means of funding for many commercial revitalization projects. Volunteers can provide many services, which might otherwise require cash resources well beyond the means of the organization. Volunteers might sell spots in a coordinated advertising campaign; they might provide part time office help or clerical support; volunteers might help solicit donations and memberships; they might help paint a building or sweep a sidewalk; they may prepare a financial statement or submit a tax return; or they could design a logo or print the newsletter. Given correct motivation and correct management, volunteers can do almost anything!

SERVICE FEES
Service fees are a common source of funds for many nonprofit organizations but are not often used in the commercial revitalization field. Service fees might be generated for professional services such as commercial building design assistance, parking management or enforcement, property management, real estate negotiation or packaging, retail promotion packaging, advertising, or business recruitment. Service fees are a dependable and self-perpetuating source of income but can be deceptive. Many nonprofit organizations have started profit-producing services to subsidize their basic mission-driven projects, only later to learn that the services were not actually producing income, but sapping the resources of the organization.

SUBSIDY FROM PROFITABLE BUSINESS
A number of very entrepreneurial nonprofit organizations have started for-profit arms to make money and subsidize their basic programs. Examples related to a commercial revitalization effort might include a real estate development company subsidizing a commercial district management nonprofit, or a nonprofit leasing its real estate to for-profit businesses to generate income to support the nonprofit’s activities. Subsidies from profitable businesses can be another source of ongoing and dependable operating support but should be viewed with similar cautions to income service fees.

SAMPLE: BOARD MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, Month, Date, Year - 5:30pm – 7:00pm
Main Street Organization Office

5:30 pm: Meeting called to order
5:35 pm: Additions or corrections to the agenda

- Approval of previous meeting minutes

5:40 pm: President's report

5:45 pm: Treasurer's report

5:50 pm: Executive director's report

6:10 pm: Team reports (based on Work/Action Plans):

- Organization
- Promotion
- Design
- Economic Vitality

6:30 pm: Old business:

- Action items that require a board vote
- Informational items that require board attention

6:40 pm: New business:

- Action items that require a board vote
- Informational items that require board attention

6:55 pm: Announcements & calendar updates

7:00 pm: Adjourn



Photo courtesy of Uptown Project, Francesville, IN

SAMPLE: BOARD OF DIRECTORS JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Requirements:

Board members should be prepared to make a financial commitment and contribute 4-10 hours a month to the program. Downtown revitalization program boards typically meet monthly for 60-90 minutes. The board may delegate some of its duties to an executive team or other task forces. Board members are usually expected to serve on one or more of these task forces and/or standing teams of the downtown program.

Board Responsibilities:

The board has the final responsibility for the success or failure of the downtown revitalization program. It is responsible for all of the finances of the organization and establishes program policy. The board is responsible for maximizing volunteer involvement in the downtown revitalization effort. Collectively, the board makes decisions about the program's direction and monitors progress on a regular basis. It sets priorities, and makes decisions about the program's political stance. It oversees the work of the executive director, has the primary responsibility for raising money for the program, and supports the work of the teams by volunteering time and expertise in support of their efforts. The board of directors is also responsible for fulfilling the legal and financial requirements in the conduct of its business affairs as a nonprofit organization.

Individual Responsibilities:

- Learn about and promote the purpose and activities of the local downtown revitalization organization and the Main Street Approach® whenever appropriate and possible.
- Attend regular monthly meetings of the board or to notify staff when absence is necessary.
- Actively participate on at least one team.
- Actively participate in specific activities or projects promoted by the board which may include: fundraising, membership recruitment, representation on behalf of the program at meetings and/or events, and attend trainings and workshops.
- Make an annual membership contribution.
- Stay informed about the purpose and activities of the downtown program in order to effectively participate in board decisions and fulfill responsibilities.

PRESIDENT

Time Required: 8-10 hours per month above and beyond that of a regular board member. The president shall be exempt from the requirement of participating on other teams and task groups.
General Description: The president serves as a link between the board of directors and the executive director. He/she assists the executive director in defining priorities and directions based on the published goals of the organization, Resource Team recommendations,

BOARD OF DIRECTORS CATEGORIES

The board should be a decisive, action-oriented group, small enough to easily establish a quorum and large enough to include broad community representation. Ideally, the board should have between 7 and 11 members. An ideal board of directors should not have a majority from any single category of stakeholders. Boards will usually be chosen from the following groups (note that every group does not need to have representation on the board, this list is meant to help you think through potential candidates).

- Downtown retailers.
- Professionals.
- Downtown property owners.
- Service sector.
- Financial institutions.
- Chamber board (not staff).
- Preservation organization or historical society.
- Leaders of neighborhood organizations.
- Community leaders.
- Local civic organizations.
- School district, interested community members.
- City and/or county government (works best in ex-officio capacity).

and board policies. The president acts as a link between the organization and the community, serving to explain the program to the public, helping to involve new people in the program, and rallying support. The president also oversees the organization in a functional way, guiding and facilitating the working relationships within the organization.

Major Job Elements:

- Communication with the board, the community, and the executive director.
- Coordination within the organization so as to facilitate the decision-making process.
- Delegation of responsibility within the organization.
- Monitoring accountability of the organization.
- Supervising the performance of the executive director.

Other Job Elements:

Assists the executive director in determining the board meeting agenda.

- Chairs board meetings.
- Calls special meetings when necessary.

Reports to: The board of directors

Major Time Commitment: Communication with the board, the community, and the executive director

Greatest Expected Impact: Monitoring accountability anticipated

Results: Active participation by the membership, positive image of the organization, cohesiveness within the organization

Basic Skill and Value Requirements:

- Be flexible and open-minded.
- Good leadership, team-building, and management skills.
- Strong verbal and written communication skills, including good listening skills.
- Be sensitive to cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity.
- A strong belief in the mission statement and principles guiding a downtown revitalization program and a willingness to support them.
- A good understanding of the Main Street Approach® and a willingness to be an ambassador of the concept.
- A realistic understanding of the commitment of time and energy it takes to hold an officer's position.

VICE PRESIDENT

Time Required: 4-8 hours per month above and beyond that of a regular board member.
General Description: The vice president's role is that of support for the president. He/she shares the presidential responsibilities as delegated by the president, working in whatever capacities the president and vice president deem to be the most beneficial to the organization. These capacities should be written up in the form of a temporary job description on a year-by-year basis. The vice president performs the duties of the president when the president is unable to do so.

Major Job Elements: Determined each year

Other Job Elements: Determined each year

Reports to: The President

Basic Skill and Value Requirements:

- Good leadership, team-building, and management skills.
- Strong verbal and written communication skills, including good listening skills.
- Be flexible and open-minded.
- Be sensitive to cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity.
- A strong belief in the mission statement and principles guiding a downtown revitalization program and a willingness to support them.
- A good understanding of the Main Street Approach® and a willingness to be an ambassador of the concept.
- A realistic understanding of the commitment of time and energy it takes to hold an officer's position.

SECRETARY

Time Required: 4-8 hours per month above and beyond that of a regular board member.
General Description: The secretary serves as the primary record keeper of the organization. He/she is responsible for transcribing the minutes at each board meeting and preparing an "official" copy for approval by the board of directors.

Major Job Elements:

- Record keeping:
  - ◊ Transcribes minutes at board meetings;
  - ◊ Prepares an "official" copy of the minutes for the executive director within two weeks after a board meeting;
  - ◊ Maintains these documents in a form which is at all times accessible to board members and the executive director, and which is carried to board meetings for use as an historical reference of the organization's discussions and actions.

Other Job Elements: Determined each year

Reports to: The President

Area of Major Time Commitment: Record keeping

Basic Skill and Value Requirements:

- Strong verbal and written communication skills, including good listening skills.
- Be flexible and open-minded.
- Be sensitive to cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity.
- A strong belief in the mission statement and principles guiding a downtown revitalization program and a willingness to support them.
- A good understanding of the Main Street Approach® and a willingness to be an ambassador of the concept.
- A realistic understanding of the commitment of time and energy it takes to hold an officer's position.

TREASURER

Time Required: 4-8 hours per month above and beyond that of a regular board member.
General Description: The treasurer is responsible for fiscally monitoring the organization. This includes keeping all financial records up to date. The treasurer is ultimately responsible for seeing that the bills of the organization are paid in a timely manner.

Major Job Elements:

- The timely payment of any organizational debts incurred, including all taxes due.
- Preparation of a monthly financial report to the board which should be submitted to the executive director for inclusion with the minutes of the meeting for the month following the reporting period.
- This should be submitted within two weeks of the following monthly board meeting.
- Maintain all financial books and records in an auditable format, according to standard accounting practices.

Other Job Elements:

- Maintain a complete set of financial records for the organization.
- Provide financial information on request.

Reports to: The board of directors through the executive team

Area of Major Time Commitment: Preparing monthly financial statements

Area of Greatest Expected Impact: Keeping the board informed of the organization's financial status
Anticipated Results:

- A clear and accurate picture of the organization's financial status.
- Financial decisions can be made in a timely and efficient manner.

Basic Skill and Value Requirements:

- A good understanding of accounting principles and financial management.
- Strong verbal and written communication skills, including good listening skills.
- Be flexible and open-minded.
- Be sensitive to cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity.
- A strong belief in the mission statement and principles guiding a downtown revitalization program and a willingness to support them.
- A good understanding of the Main Street Approach® and willingness to be an ambassador of the concept.
- A realistic understanding of the commitment of time and energy it takes to hold an officer's position.



Photo courtesy of Greater Downtown Jasper Business Association

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEAM MEMBERS

- Commits to at least one year of service.
- Commits to monthly team meetings and to task group meetings if appropriate.
- Works three to five hours per month outside of team meetings.
- Attends training sessions related to team activities.
- Reads selected orientation materials.
- Learns about the Main Street Approach® to downtown revitalization.
- Recruits/orients new members.
- Prepares in advance for meetings.
- Cooperatively drafts an annual work plan.
- Takes responsibility for projects.
- Always presents the organization positively to the public.

Roles of a Team Chair:

- Recruits team members.
- Runs meetings.
- Organizes work plans and keeps the team on track with work plans.
- Forges consensus.
- Is a spokesperson on behalf of the team to the board and vice versa (This doesn't mean the chair has to be a board member. Programs should have board representation at the team level to be a two-way conduit of information).
- Works to coordinate projects with staff.
- Does the paperwork, including minutes, work plans, evaluations and team records.



Photo courtesy of Michigan City Mainstreet Association

MISSION VS. VISION STATEMENTS

MISSION STATEMENT: Who you are and what you're doing

A mission statement is a short description of your organization's purpose stated clearly and simply and communicates the Main Street organization's sense of purpose and overall direction. It should state who your group is (the name and type of agency), what you do and where you do it, and distinguish your organization from others in the community.

Keep the statement flexible so it will stay relevant as your organization evolves. Mission statements should be only a few sentences. A good mission statement is the organization's "elevator speech," a short answer about what your organization does that you can recite during an elevator ride. Post your mission statement to your website and include it in your annual report, newsletters, press releases and other materials. While your mission statement won't list projects or initiatives, it will serve as the starting point for developing an annual work plan and will prevent your organization from taking on work that exceeds your program's purpose. If someone proposes taking the organization in a new direction or tackling a major new project, board members can refer to the mission statement to see if the new project or direction adheres to the mission.

VISION STATEMENT: Where you're going

Visions can vary widely but it is recommended they be no more than three paragraphs long and be written as if the writer were compiling the program's accomplishments 5 years from now. The vision statement is a glimpse into the future to see how the revitalization effort paid off, what the Main Street district is like, and how the Main Street program helped transform the district. The vision, while aspirational, needs to be based on the market reality and potentiality of your district.

The Main Street program can use its vision when selling the community's dream to potential investors, business owners, volunteers, partners, and others. Your statement will codify a dream, and the work going on behind the scenes will be geared toward achieving that vision. The Main Street organization can use the vision statement as a means not only to motivate its staff and volunteers but also to see if its annual projects and initiatives will help you realize this dream. A number of Main Street programs have created vision statements and formally submitted them to their municipalities for review and endorsement as an official statement for downtown or the neighborhood business district. Oftentimes, they are approved at a public ceremony and incorporated into the existing commercial district master plan.

Tips on Vision Statements:

- Concise.
- Easily understood.
- Distinct from other organizations.
- Longer than mission statement (but still brief!)
- Preferred future of the district.
- Specific, sensory language – inspiring!
- Consensus, developed by a broad cross-section of the community.
- Comprehensive (i.e., addressing each of the 4 points).

DEVELOPING WORK & ACTION PLANS

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission statement states the purpose of the organization.

Example: The purpose of the Anytown Main Street is to develop and promote a healthy and prosperous downtown within the context of cultural and historic preservation.

Strategic Goals

The goals are more specific statements of purpose, which can be clearly divided into a team structure. Usually it is best for each team to have only one goal. This goal should reflect the general purpose or mission of the team.

Examples:

- Goal for the board of directors and Organization Team—Provide effective centralized management of the downtown and increase involvement in the program.
- Goal for the Promotion Team—Promote the downtown as the community's social, cultural, and economic center.
- Goal for the Design Team—Encourage visual improvements through good design compatible with historic features.
- Goal for the Economic Vitality Team—Strengthen and broaden the economic base of downtown.

Objectives

Objectives are specific statements of how a goal will be reached. They usually outline the major areas of responsibility for teams. Objectives give structure to the numerous activities undertaken and help explain why a specific activity has been chosen. Objectives are usually issues that have been turned into positive action statements. Objectives might also be measurable. Example: Provide at least two more annual activities for children in downtown.

Activities

Activities are specific projects that have an identified timeframe. When completed, they are usually recognized as tangible accomplishments, such as a downtown holiday parade or building inventory. Each activity has its own Work Plan.

Tasks

Tasks are specific steps required to complete an activity. Tasks make up the structure of the Work Plan.

STEP 1

Create Strategic Implementation Plan OR hold goal setting/work plan session for board of directors.

- Determine what area of concentration each issue fits under (Organization, Promotion, Design, Economic Vitality, etc.). Group them together, and then delete duplicates. Note that the areas of concentration are reflective of the Main Street team structure.
- Determine priorities. Remove the rest of the issues.
- Create objectives. Each objective statement should begin with an action verb.
- Use your mission statement and strategic goals to see if it is still reflective of what the organization is working towards accomplishing and if each issue or response to that issue is aligned with the mission and at least one strategic goal.

STEP 2

The board of directors should come up with a list of potential team members based on the objectives for each team.

STEP 3

Team “activity planning” brainstorming session (takes about 2 hours per team).

- List possible activities under each objective.
- Determine priority activities for each objective.

STEP 4

Team “action planning” session (takes 2 or 3 hour-long meetings to complete).

- Discuss possible timelines for each priority activity (i.e. when should this be started and how long will it take from beginning to end).
- Complete an “action plan” for each priority activity in which planning will need to begin within the next two to three months.
- Fill out a “timeline” sheet. Put all priority activities from the team somewhere on the form. Think about what the workload will mean for those implementing activities—is it realistic? Adjust as needed. The board of directors should approve the finished timeline.
- The Work/Action Plan for each activity will answer the following questions:
  - ◊ What is each task?
  - ◊ Who is responsible to implement the task?
  - ◊ When is the task due?
  - ◊ How much money will the task cost?
  - ◊ How much money will the task generate?
  - ◊ How much volunteer/staff time will the task take?

STEP 5

Refer back to your completed timeline sheet at each team meeting. The team or task force responsible for an upcoming activity should fill out a Work/Action Plan as each activity draws nearer. If the activity has a completion deadline, scheduling from the deadline backwards may prove useful. For repeating activities you may simply adjust the prior Work/Action Plan to reflect new volunteers, dates, etc.



Photo courtesy of Albion S.T.A.R. Team

Team Work Plan - Example

Team: PROMOTION

Team Goal: Promote the neighborhood business district as the social, cultural, and economic center.

Activity: Produce a business directory

Objective of activity: Market a positive image of the neighborhood business district.

Task	Member Responsibility	Due Date	Done	Budget
1. Complete Business Inventory	EV Team	April		See EV
2. Categorize Business Type	Susan	1-May	✔	$0
3. Design Brochure Format	Jeff	1-May	✔	$10
4. Obtain Base Map for Layout	Tom	1-May	✔	$0
5. Budget Estimate	Pam and Treas.	1-May		$0
6. Identify Public Parking Areas	Tom and District	1-May		$0
7. Identify Major Landmarks	Tom and District	1-May		$0
8. Design Mock-up	Jeff and Artist	1-Jun		$150
9. Printing Bids	Pam and Jeff	9-Jun		$0
10. Approve Print Sample	Jeff, Tom, Pam	1-Jul		$0
11. Print Brochure	Printer	12-Jul		$2,100
12. Identify Distribution Sites	Susan	15-Jul		$0
13. Distribute Brochures	Team	21-Jul		$0
14. Distribution Sites Checked and Refilled	Director/Team	Monthly		$0
			TOTAL	$2,260



Photo courtesy of Downtown Bloomington, Inc.



Photo courtesy of Downtown Goshen, Inc.



Photo courtesy of Jeffersonville Main Street

THE MAIN STREET BOARD "WALK-ABOUT"

As a board activity during the annual work plan process, consider beginning with a walk around the Main Street district to take an objective look at where problem areas are or where downtown really 'works.' This is a good exercise to help build or improve upon the Main Street Plan of Work and can also be a good team-building activity for the Board. Invite all committee members to participate, or possibly other stakeholders. For the purposes of the annual board retreat, this exercise is intended to provide a very general overview and guide discussions for the rest of the meeting. However, this exercise can also be done at a more in-depth level as a committee project, with each block of the district covered and more precisely documented. There are also building and business inventory templates that the Indiana Main Street office can provide to specifically document building conditions (design committee), business mix (economic restructuring committee) etc. This work plan development template is intended to heighten general awareness of your downtown's condition, lead to productive retreat discussions and possible project prioritization but it is not intended to be a formal inventory. Use the other templates mentioned for those purposes.

To be successful in this exercise participants will have to be both 'connected' and 'disconnected'... Connect yourself to the Main Street program/board by looking for things that have improved (or become worse) since the last time you did this exercise. Disconnect yourself from the Main Street program by looking at downtown through the eyes of visitors and residents. What would draw them here to spend both time and money? Is the environment pleasant and inviting? Are there accessibility issues? Can they find the places they want to go easily?

If you have a large Main Street district, it may not be possible to cover the entire area during the time allotted for the exercise. In that case, you might consider the inventory or committee projects mentioned above.

You can have people identify themselves on this form; however you might find it best to keep it completely anonymous so the most honest answers will be shared.

BLOCK OR AREA: (Answer the same questions for each block/area to be covered. Use a separate sheet for each block/area) _____

PHYSICAL

SIDEWALKS AND GENERAL ACCESSIBILITY

What is your impression of the general condition of sidewalks & accessibility in this area?

___ Good (people visiting downtown can easily get to businesses, sidewalks are in good shape and it's pleasant to walk around)

___ Fair (some improvements are needed, but generally accessible)

___ Poor (the condition of sidewalks & lack of accessibility is a deterrent to shopping in this area)

Pertaining to sidewalks in this area, comment on the following:

1. More than half are uneven ___ even ___

2. More than half have cracks. Yes ___ No ___

3. The sidewalks are clean. Agree ___ Disagree ___

4. I saw litter on the sidewalks in this area. Yes ___ No ___

5. There was grass growing through the cracks in some places. Yes ___ No ___

6. If I arrive in my car and park in front of any of the businesses in this area, I can easily get to and inside the business or businesses I plan to visit. Agree ___ Disagree ___

Why or why not? _____
_____

7. Someone with accessibility challenges (i.e. wheelchair, elderly etc.) would be able to easily get to and inside the business or businesses they plan to visit. Agree ___ Disagree ___

Why or why not? _____
_____

BUILDINGS

1. Check all that apply that describe the buildings in this area/block:

___ mostly smaller, one or two-story commercial structures

___ a block/area of larger buildings(2 or more stories)

___ in this block/area there is a significant, landmark and/or iconic structure or building

___ some non-commercial buildings here (i.e. residential)

___ most have storefront windows

___ a mix of building types and styles

___ a mix of eras of construction

___ mostly historic (more than 50 years old)

2. The buildings in this area are well maintained. Agree ___ Disagree ___

What makes you agree? _____
_____If you disagree, why? Is it because:

___ broken windows

___ canopies or awnings in disrepair

___ seems to be structural issues (i.e. cracks, sags)

___ weather-related issues are visible (i.e. water damage)

___ bricks missing or damaged

___ major elements gone (i.e. roof,wall)

___ other _____

3. Is there anything you saw in this area/block that could be considered dangerous in terms of public safety?

___ Yes ___ No

4. Would you say that buildings in this area/block have been well rehabilitated? ___ Yes ___ No

OTHER PUBLIC SPACES & BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

1. In this block/area, there are:

___ green spaces

___ benches

___ shade

___ art (i.e. banners, murals)

___ trash cans

___ place(s) to gather

___ good displays in storefronts

2. Are the buildings in this block/area being used for:

___ retail

___ financial

___ office

___ residential

___ other _____

3. More than half of the ground floor spaces are:

___ Occupied

___ Vacant

4. More than half of the upper floor spaces are:

___ Occupied

___ Vacant

___ Not applicable (all one-stories)

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

Overall, I find this block/area, to be inviting & pleasant. Agree ___ Disagree ___

The one thing that stands out in my mind about this block/area is: _____

WHAT IS INDIANA MAIN STREET?

Indiana Main Street encourages community-driven revitalization of downtown areas in Indiana cities and towns. The people who make up the Main Street network are passionate advocates, dedicated volunteers, influential stakeholders, and community organizers who work every day to turn the tide in their communities—catalyzing reinvestment, creating jobs, and fostering pride of place.



(c) *The Main Street Approach: A Guide to Comprehensive Commercial District Transformation,* National Main Street Center

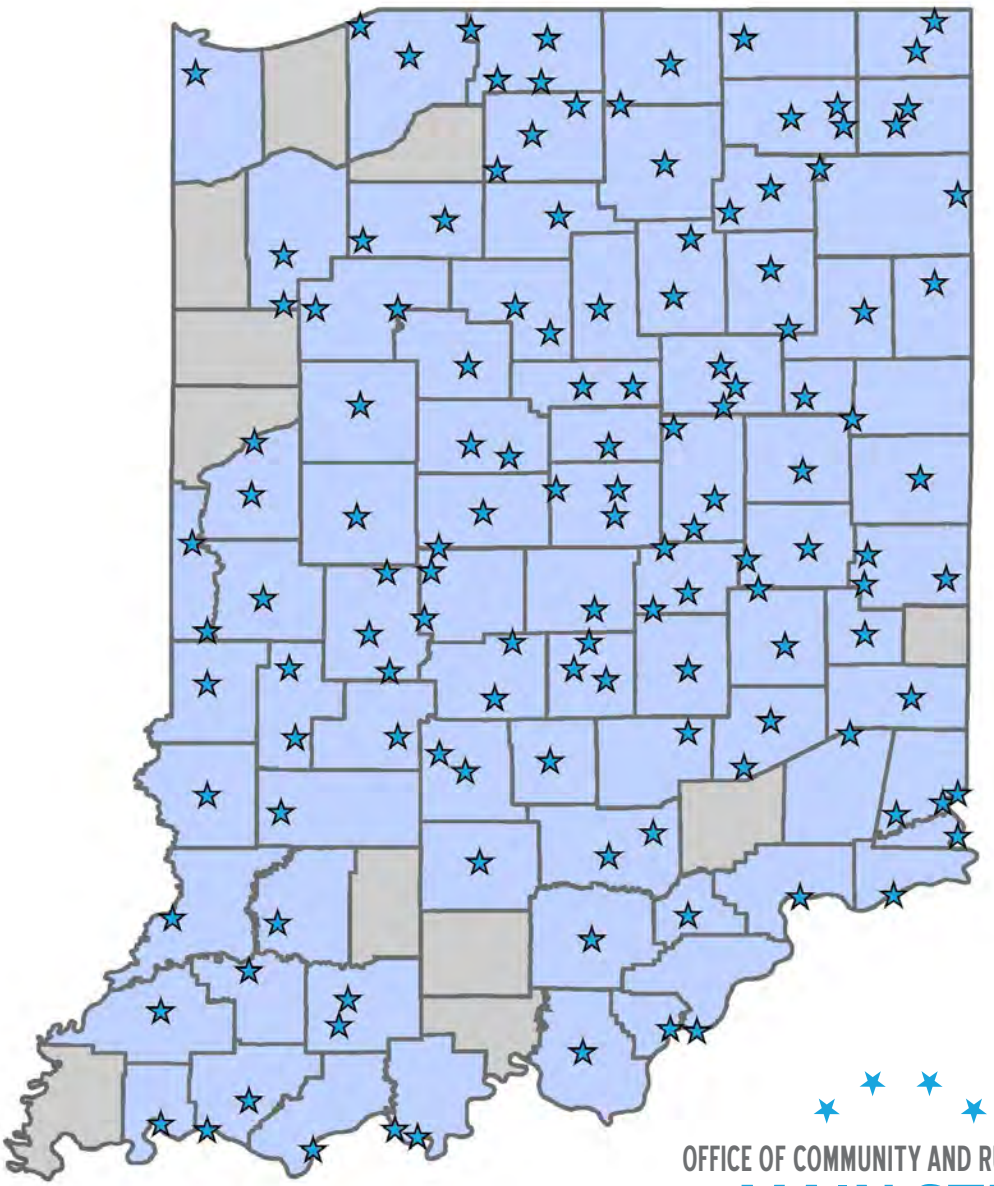
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Office of COMMUNITY & RURAL AFFAIRS

OCRA

INDIANA MAIN STREET

134 communities representing 81 counties



OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AND RURAL AFFAIRS

MAIN STREET

Under the leadership of Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch, who also serves as the Secretary of Rural Development, the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs' (OCRA) mission is to work with local, state, and national partners to provide resources and technical assistance to assist communities in shaping and achieving their vision for community and economic development. For more information, visit www.ocra.in.gov.