



A local thing



NEW DIRECTOR'S HANDBOOK

MAIN STREETS MEAN BUSINESS



OPEN



#alocalthing

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. National Main Street Program

- Introduction
- The Main Street Approach
- The Four Points
- The Guiding Principles
- National Accreditation Standards of Performance

2. Orlando Main Streets Program

- Introduction
- Meet Our Staff
- Designation and Accreditation
- Digital Platforms

3. Organizational Structure

- A City Program
- Nonprofit Organizations
- Director Responsibilities: A Quick Reference

4. Standards and Requirements for Main Street Programs

- Training and Education
- Quarterly Reporting
- Annual Assessment
- Overview of City Requirements

5. Strategic Planning *Annual Work Plans*

- Community Visioning Session
- Board Planning Session
- The Annual Work Plan

6. Program Funding *For Main Street Programs*

7. Resources and Templates



WELCOME TO MAIN STREET



Congratulations on your new position, and welcome to Orlando Main Streets! You are now part of an exclusive group of dedicated and knowledgeable Main Street Directors, who have also decided to take on the challenge of working to revitalize their neighborhood commercial districts. The Main Street Approach is part of a national movement whose primary focus is creating a positive economic impact. Orlando Main Streets, founded in 2008, is overseen by the Business Development Division, within the Economic Development Department of the City of Orlando.

A Main Street director's job can be both rewarding and challenging. Keeping that in mind, we have designed this resource guide to provide you with an introduction to your new responsibilities as both a development professional and a steward of your community. Our office is dedicated to helping you grow as a director while you help your district become a positive catalyst for change. I encourage you to take this opportunity to learn as much as you can about your district and the Main Street Approach.

I wish you the best of luck in your new position, and please know that our staff is always here to assist you.

Sincerely,

Pauline D. Eaton

Pauline D. Eaton, CMSM
Main Street Administrator,
City of Orlando
407.246.3259
Pauline.Eaton@orlando.gov



1

NATIONAL MAIN STREET PROGRAM

Established in 1980 as a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Trust and National Main Street Center Inc. work with a nationwide network of coordinating programs and local communities to encourage preservation-based community revitalization. During its 40-year history, the program has equipped more than 2,000 historic commercial districts with the skills and organizational framework they need for renewal. An exciting new chapter for the organization began in 2013 when the National Main Street Center (NMSC) launched as an independent subsidiary of the National Trust. This transition enabled the National Main Street Center to build on its three-decade record of success with new leadership and new resources that help communities respond to evolving needs and opportunities in the commercial district revitalization field.

In 2015, the center launched a new brand for the network of Main Street communities – Main Street America™ – to reinvigorate our collective look, feel, and strategy and to position them as leaders locally, regionally, and nationally.

As a nonprofit organization, the National Main Street Center provides information, offers technical assistance, holds conferences and workshops, and conducts research and advocacy on critical revitalization issues. The proven Main Street Four-Point Approach® provides a framework for communities to organize themselves for success, improve the design of their neighborhoods, promote their districts, and enhance their economic bases.

The Main Street Approach offers a revitalization framework appropriate for communities of all types – including commercial districts in urban neighborhoods, rural towns, and smaller and

mid-sized cities. Local Main Street programs can be established either as freestanding organizations or as part of an existing entity, such as a community development corporation or economic development organization. The National Main Street Program is managed on a state level. However, Coordinating programs can also be county, regional or citywide programs. In Orlando, this program is overseen by the City of Orlando's Economic Development Department's Business Development Division. Working in conjunction with Orlando Main Streets, local Main Street districts plan and implement projects that create more vibrant and healthy commercial districts.

The National Main Street Center is based in Chicago, Illinois, with an office in Washington, D.C., and field staff located throughout the country. For more information, visit mainstreet.org.



THE MAIN STREET APPROACH

The Main Street Approach is a common-sense, strategy-driven framework that guides community-based revitalization efforts. This model harnesses the social, economic, physical, and cultural assets that set a place apart, with the ultimate goal of realizing tangible outcomes, such as job creation, small business development, private/public investment and building rehabilitations, which benefit the entire community. 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 place-based activities that attract people to the commercial core and create a sense of enthusiasm and momentum about their community. Both small-city downtowns and urban neighborhoods throughout the nation are renewing their community centers with Main Street methodology.

The result of these community-driven efforts are places with increased 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.

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

Identify the Community Vision for Success

The Main Street Approach begins with creating a vision for success in district that is rooted in a solid understanding of the market realities of the district and is informed by broad community engagement. The Main Street Approach 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 clearly identifying needs and opportunities. It also ensures that the vision is a true reflection of the diversity of the community.

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 two 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.

Work on these strategies would align with the four key areas Main Streets have been using as a guiding framework for more than 40 years: economic vitality, design, promotion, and organization, known collectively as the Main Street Four Points.

THE 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 locals alike. With the nationwide 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, 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 nonprofit 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.

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 – actions that 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 implementing 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 the community 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 when public resources are scarce and competition for private resources is fierce. Main Streets must be able to demonstrate a wide 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.

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.

Comprehensive: 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 “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 can tackle increasingly complex problems and more ambitious projects. This incremental change leads to a much longer-lasting and dramatic positive change in the Main Street area.

Self-help: No one else will save your Main Street. 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.

Identifying and capitalizing on existing assets: Business districts must capitalize on the assets that make them unique. Every district has unique qualities like distinctive buildings and human scale that give people a sense of belonging. These local assets must serve as the foundation for all aspects of the revitalization program.



“Main Streets must be able to demonstrate a wide use of resources, which translates to real change on the ground: new jobs added to a Main Street, new businesses opened, buildings redeveloped, and numerous other metrics of 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 educational programs. Shoestring budgets and “cut and paste” efforts reinforce a negative image of the commercial district. Instead, concentrate on quality projects over quantity.

Change: When skeptics turn into believers, attitudes on Main Street will 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: 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 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 participation.

Shoestring budgets and “cut and paste” efforts reinforce a negative image of the commercial district. Instead, concentrate on quality projects over quantity.

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE

The Main Street America™ National Accreditation Standards of Performance were developed by the National Main Street Center and coordinating program partners such as Orlando Main Streets. These standards are used for designating programs as Main Street America accredited members. A qualifying program:

1. Has broad-based community support for a Commercial District revitalization process with active participation from both the public and private sectors

At its best, a local Main Street program represents and involves a coalition of organizations, agencies, businesses, and individuals from the entire community. This includes not only property or businesses in the commercial district or those who have a direct economic tie to it, but all members of the community who are interested in the community's overall economic, cultural and historical health. Involvement by both the public and private sectors is critical as well; neither sector can revitalize the commercial district without the skills and vantage points of the other. Ideally, both sectors will participate in the revitalization process by providing funding, leadership, ideas, and by encouraging collaboration between existing programs to assist in the revitalization process.

By actively involving a broad range of interests and perspectives in the development of your historic district, the Main Street program leverages the community's collective skills and resources to its maximum advantage. The overall goal is for a broad range of constituencies from both sectors to understand and be philosophically committed to the revitalization process, and to leverage the maximum resources possible to achieve the goal of revitalizing the commercial district.

2. Has developed vision and mission statements relevant to community conditions and to the local Main Street program's organizational stage

A mission statement communicates the organization's sense of purpose and overall direction. A vision statement communicates and describes the look and feel of the district when the mission has been accomplished. The mission statement should additionally identify the method to achieve the

community's vision for their downtown. Be mindful that neither is simply a slogan. Both statements should be developed with the participation of the board, committees, program volunteers, and the community.

3. Has annual comprehensive Main Street Work Plan based on the Main Street Approach™

A comprehensive annual work plan provides a detailed blueprint for the organization's activities; reinforces the program's accountability both within the organization and in the broader community; and provides measurable objectives by which the program will track its progress. Tasks, with names of people assigned to complete them, budgets and timelines are important components that add to the strength of this document.

4. Possesses a historic preservation ethic

Historic preservation is central to a Main Street program's purpose. The historic buildings and public spaces of a traditional commercial district enrich civic life and add value on many levels to the community. Developing a historic preservation ethic is an ongoing process of education and discovery for a community and for a local Main Street program. Main Street programs that have embraced a strong historic preservation ethic are successful in saving, rehabilitating, and finding new uses for traditional commercial buildings. A strong focus should be on intensifying the uses of the district's buildings, through both specific building improvement projects and through policy and regulatory changes, which make it easier to develop property within the commercial district.

Many Main Street programs support preservation values, but do not fully understand that preservation is a shared responsibility and ethic, not just an activity or group of activities. Historic preservation involves not only the process of preserving, rehabilitating, restoring, or renovating older commercial buildings, but also the process of adopting long-term preservation-sensitive planning and positive land use policies, and removing barriers to downtown investment.

5. Has an active board of directors, committees and volunteers utilizing the Main Street Approach

Main Street revitalization is an ongoing process of changing a community's attitudes about its traditional commercial district(s). The direct involvement of an active board of directors and active volunteers is vital



to this process. The Main Street director is responsible for facilitating the work of volunteers, not for single-handedly revitalizing the commercial district. In some cases, local Main Street programs were originated by or have merged with other organizations that have a broader agenda (such as local government, a chamber of commerce, or a convention and visitors bureau). A local Main Street program with this structure has a better chance of long-term success if it maintains focus on its particular purpose and if its mission statement, work plan, budget, and governing body remain distinct from that of the larger organization in which it is contained. A full board that meets regularly, as stated in its by-laws, is extremely important in supporting this success.

6. Has an operating budget with income from a variety of sources

To be successful, a local Main Street program must have the financial resources necessary to carry out the annual program of work. The size of a program's budget will change as the program matures (in its early years, it may need less money than in high-growth years). In addition, program budgets are likely to vary according to regional economic differences and community size.

7. Has a paid professional director

Coordinating a successful Main Street program requires a trained, professional staff person whose sole focus is the success of their downtown. Main Street directors come from a broad range of academic and professional backgrounds. The most successful Main Street directors are those who are good communicators, support and motivate volunteers, have good project management skills and keeping revitalization activities moving forward on schedule and on budget.

8. Participates in or provides ongoing training for staff, board, government officials and volunteers

To meet new challenges and ensure a strong organization, Main Street program participants must receive and participate in ongoing training opportunities. Participants, both staff and volunteers, need different skills in different phases of the revitalization process. For that reason, the skills a program's participants learn in the program's catalyst phase are rarely adequate for the growth or management phases. As staff and volunteer turnover occurs, new staff members and new volunteers will need basic Main Street training. Moreover, all program participants should stay current on issues that affect traditional commercial districts and recent revitalization techniques and models. Regular attendance at trainings and networking events is required for Main Street executive staff.

9. Reports key statistics in a timely manner and is in good standing with critical coordinating program mandates

Tracking statistics – reinvestment, job and business creation, etc. – provide a tangible measurement of the local Main Street program's impact and are crucial to securing financial and programmatic support for the revitalization effort. Statistics must be collected on a regular, ongoing basis, and shared as needed.

10. Is a current member of the National Main Street Center

Participation in the National Main Street Network membership program connects local programs to their counterparts throughout the nation, providing them with valuable information and resources. Membership with the National Main Street Center is required for a community to be eligible to receive a designation. Membership status can be checked or obtained via email at mainstreet_membership@savingplaces.org.



2

ORLANDO MAIN STREETS

Established in 2008 by the City of Orlando, Orlando Main Streets is dedicated to empowering each neighborhood business district within the city to maintain, strengthen and revitalize the unique physical, economic, historical and cultural characteristics of its own urban neighborhood district.

Orlando Main Streets selects districts to become officially designated Main Street programs. These districts will receive support and training needed to re-establish their Main Streets as the center of district activity and commerce. Districts selected to participate in Orlando Main Streets will receive technical assistance, including:

- Volunteer and Executive Director training
- Advanced training on specific District issues, such as marketing and promotion, business recruitment, volunteer development, market analysis, design, historic preservation and fundraising
- On-site visits to help each district develop its strengths and plan for success
- Materials such as manuals and training programs
- Linkages to other city, state and national Main Streets

City Coordinating Program

A Coordinating Program is defined as the entity that is given branding rights to the Main Street name, selects designated Main Street

communities or neighborhood commercial districts, provides technical assistance and training, assuring that the program operates within the proven standards of the National Main Street Center and the Main Street Four Point Approach®, and acts as an advocate for the Center and liaison between local Main Street Programs and the Center. Orlando Main Streets provides the following to local Orlando districts:

- Advocate for Main Streets to City Hall/City Departments
- Liaison between Orlando districts and National Main Street Center
- Liaison for Main Streets' businesses
- Communication/Promotion of Districts locally and internationally
- Small Business Façade Program
- Manages Memorandum of Agreement with city
- Liaison for banners, storm drains, murals and utility cabinet art projects
- Create external and internal partnerships
- Trainings
- District Exchange meetings
- Networking opportunities
- Resource Provider
- Annual evaluations for National Main Street accreditation

Orlando Main Streets utilize locally driven programs of work that focus on implementing the nationally recognized Main Street Approach in their commercial districts. The Orlando districts are committed to providing staff and financial resources needed to address the community-based approach of sustainable revitalization. Each district is responsible for developing the framework from which the program will be delivered locally, including the board that will direct the program, the staff that will execute the program, and the partnerships needed to secure the long-term viability of the program.

Training

The benefit of a seasoned Main Street Coordinator that will offer local training and one-on-one assistance to Board members, volunteers and Main Street staff.

A Network of Peers and Professionals

The benefit of being connected to a program that has been established for 40+ years is having access to the expansive network of development professionals. Rarely are there issues that your district will face that others have not already tackled.

Designation and Accreditation

While the National Main Street Center and Orlando Main Streets work closely together to meet the needs of Orlando Main Streets, each of them possesses a unique and individual responsibility that is part of the designation and accreditation process.

Even though the National Main Street Center creates the National Accreditation Standards of Performance, each coordinating program interprets these standards by crafting a framework for communities to operate under.

Orlando Main Streets evaluates districts according to the National Accreditation Standards of Performance. The annual assessment is required for Orlando Main Streets and Main Street America™ national accreditation.

The chart below outlines the roles each of these organizations plays.

Meet the Staff

Pauline Eaton

Main Street Administrator
City of Orlando
407.246.3259
pauline.eaton@orlando.gov

Sherry Gutch

Business Development Division
Manager
407.246.3346
sherry.gutch@orlando.gov

Kim King-Maysonet

Business Development Division
Assistant Manager
407.246.2721

Caylah Hall

Communications Coordinator
407.246.3169
caylah.hall@orlando.gov

Lisa Rain

Economic Development Coordinator
407.246.3123
Lisa.rain@orlando.gov

Martin Hudson

SoDo NID Project Manager
407.246.3242
Martin.hudson@orlando.gov

Katy Magruder

Main Street Planner
407.246.3355
Kathleen.magruder@orlando.gov

NATIONAL MAIN STREET CENTER

owns the rights to the Main Street America™ name and all subsequent designations that fall under the Main Street America™ umbrella.

coordinates national efforts on behalf of their national main street center members.

creates the national accreditation Standards of Performance.

accredits local programs based on the designation recommendations received from the Orlando Main Streets.

monitors and assesses each coordinating program.

ORLANDO MAIN STREETS

is contracted with the National Main Street Center to license and sub-license the Main Street America™ name and all subsequent designations that fall under the Main Street America™ umbrella.

coordinates citywide efforts for all districts officially associated with Orlando Main Streets.

is responsible for interpreting the national accreditation Standards of Performance and creating a framework under which districts can operate.

makes designation recommendations to the National Main Street Center.

assesses each local program's ability to meet the national accreditation Standards of Performance through the completion of Orlando Main Streets' annual assessment document.



DIGITAL PLATFORMS

OrlandoMainStreets.com

The Orlando Main Streets website is a great resource for templates, calendar events, program updates and more information about your fellow districts.

Orlando Main Streets Flickr Site:

[flickr.com/photos/orlandomainstreet/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/orlandomainstreet/)

Please add all photos of meetings and events to this site.

Username: pauline.eaton@cityoforlando.net

Password: UrbanMain10*

Social Media

Through Instagram and Facebook, our office highlights each district's impact by sharing photos and inspirational stories.

twitter.com/orlmainstreets

facebook.com/orlandomainstreets

instagram.com/orlandomainstreets





3

MAIN STREET'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The organizational structure for each of our Orlando Main Streets is under the umbrella of a nonprofit organization. Each nonprofit is run by a local Board of Directors, who employ a full-time Executive Director. The local organizations operate an annual Memorandum of Agreement with the City of Orlando and are overseen by the Orlando Main Street Coordinator.

A CITY PROGRAM

The City of Orlando operates as a Main Street Coordinating Program under a contract with The National Main Street Center. The city pays a fee and must meet NMSC requirements to house the program. The City of Orlando designates and oversees local Main Street districts under this contract authority. The city provides each Orlando Main Street with annual funding that is matched by the districts to be used for operating, programming and project implementation.

Who Does the Main Street Director Report to?

While the Main Street director will be accountable to many people, it is important for the director to know exactly who the direct supervisor is. The Board of Directors has direct responsibility for the Executive Director. However, the Board President should be the one point of contact and communication to the Executive Director.

Main Street Budget

Main Street revitalization is the shared responsibility of both public and private sectors. Neither sector can – or should – support the revitalization initiative single-handedly. Any organization, agency, or individual who might benefit from the district's revitalization should consider investing in your program.

It is important to keep in mind that program funding is different than project funding. The program itself needs ongoing, annual funding to cover the costs for everything from postage to utilities. The program will undertake many projects over the years – everything from festivals to business assistance workshops. Funding for operations is most likely to come from government sources, corporations, and foundations, while funding for projects and programs will most likely come from pledges, memberships, special assessments, and earned income.

Keep in mind that Orlando Main Streets recommends that all local programs have an assorted and diversified funding stream. Having this stream ensures the financial stability of your program, safeguarding that any change in funding from a primary source will not negatively impact the progress of your efforts in the community.

Main Street Committees and Task Forces

Main Street programs are traditionally built on the support of grassroots initiatives. As a catalyst for revitalization, good Main Streets realize that to be an agent of change they must elicit support from the entire community. This support typically comes in the form of volunteers serving on committees or task forces to help plan and execute projects or goals of the Main Street program’s annual work plan. While some Main Street programs still embrace the traditional four-point committee structure, we encourage you as the new director to find a balance that works best for you, your board of directors and your district.

With the advancement of technology, volunteers and committee members no longer have to be in the same room to communicate and share ideas with each other.

Facebook groups can be a great way to interact and facilitate discussion with volunteers who are working together on a specific project. Google Docs, Trello or Asana Boards or Dropbox can be great ways to share relevant files and documents among group members.

It is important to keep in mind that a volunteer’s time is valuable. As a director you should help facilitate the dialogue between committee members and work with the committee chair ahead of time to make sure there is an agenda and goals outlined for every meeting. While some volunteers might be willing to serve on a committee for an indeterminate amount of time, others might prefer to work on task forces that are created to address short-term goals and objectives. Allowing volunteers the flexibility to roll on and off of committees and short-term task forces as desired can help prevent volunteer burnout and encourage new participation from untapped resources in the community.

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Not all nonprofits are created equal. While most people are familiar with the traditional 501(c)3 nonprofit designation, you may not realize that the Internal Revenue Code provides for many tax-exempt designations for nonprofit organizations. The two main designations that are traditionally used for Main Street programs are the 501(c)3 and the 501(c)6. Both entities can be beneficial to the local Main Street program.

The table below outlines key differences between the two designations to help you as a director decide which one might be the better fit for your program’s needs. When in doubt, we always recommend that you consult an attorney with experience in tax exempt designations for any additional questions that may arise.

501(C)3	501(C)6
donations are tax deductible as charitable contributions by donors on their tax returns	donations are not deductible as charitable contributions, though businesses may be able to deduct these expenses as advertising; dues may be deductible as a business expense
organizational requirements	no requirements (or less stringent)
assets must be dedicated to charitable purposes	no requirements to dedicate assets
social activities must be insubstantial	social activity may be anything less than “primary”
legislative activity must be insubstantial or less than 20 percent	there is no limit on legislative activity as long as it furthers the exempt purpose. legislative expenditures may limit the deductibility of dues
absolute prohibition against political activity	political activity permitted but taxed
must serve a public purpose	can serve the business purposes of the members
must take care to generate enough public support to avoid classification as a private foundation	not an issue under the (c)6 designation
eligible for low-cost nonprofit bulk mailing rate	not eligible for lowest bulk mail rate
exempt from federal income tax unless the organization has unrelated business income	exempt from federal income tax unless the organization has unrelated business income

YOU GOT THE JOB, NOW WHAT?

As a new director, you may be both overwhelmed and excited by your new role within the community. However, as you become more familiar with your responsibilities, the responsibilities begin to pile up, so it is important to take advantage of this slow and gradual start by organizing yourself for success in the future.

Tasks to Accomplish within the First Three Months

Catch up on your community

Your first official duty as a new director begins long before you step foot in the Main Street office by familiarizing yourself with your new district. Many of the community's reports can be found online or by requesting them from OMS.

Read your community's Main Street Application

The Orlando Main Street application is available for review. New Directors joining a new or mature Main Street program would glean a lot from the information within that document.

Things like building and business inventory, historic properties, historic districts, donors, volunteers, etc. are all documented in the application and can be a great reference for years into the future. If your community does not have a printed copy of the report on hand, OMS may be able to make a copy for you to have.

Review OMS Director Manual

Shortly after becoming an Orlando Main Street Director, you'll receive a New Director Manual complete with example documents, materials on OMS, and reports

specific to your district. This is intended to be a living document that can be updated as you are provided additional materials on your community.

Tour your district and properties

Even if you are local walking into the director position, a tour of the district and surrounding community is always helpful. Familiarize yourself with the district and its relation to the following items: Schools, industrial parks, recreational parks, lakes or rivers, highways, commercial corridors, malls, Box stores, other traditional districts, airport or other modes of transportation, district lines, municipality lines, etc.

You'll also want to walk your district assessing the buildings and public infrastructure. This should give you a better sense of the resources you have in your district and the opportunities for improvement. While walking the district, bring a pad of paper or better yet a camera to document your findings.

Get to know your Neighbors

You're the fresh new face in town so get out there and show it off. A little face time will go a long way in getting the program back to the top of mind for district stakeholders and begin to nurture those oh-so important relationships and partnerships.

Meet all business and property owners

Business and property owners are your main constituent group. Some public administration theory recommend that you even view them as clients of your organization. Regardless of your school of thought, a solid foundation of strong relationships is necessary for them to utilize the services that your program offers, no less become lifelong volunteers.





Begin to develop that relationship with one on one visits. The conversation should not be focuses on Main Street but on them as business and property owners. What are their struggles, what have been their successes, and what has been their experience in the past, and what do they see for district and their business in the future?

After several visits you'll begin to develop relationships with district stakeholders and become the go to person for their district needs.

Have one-on-one meetings with all major funders, board members, and councilpersons

As the Main Street Director, you act as the face of the district. Many people's relationship with the program is directly related to their relationship with you as the director. It is important in the early weeks of your employment with the local program that you begin to build those necessary relationships to show consistency and stability in the program and the future of the district.

Below is a list of people and organizations that we felt were top on the list. With this said, each community has unique needs and stakeholders, so be sure to take that into consideration when scheduling these introductory meetings.

- Municipality
- Mayor
- Council or Commission
- Planning Board or Commission President
- Economic Development Corporation Director
- City Manager/Village President
- Parks and Recreation Director
- Code Enforcement Officer
- Assessor's Office
- Police/Fire Chief
- Department of Public Works Director
- Partnering Organization
- Chamber President
- Convention & Visitors Bureau Staff
- Library Director
- Local Community Foundation Director
- Historic Organization
- Service Organization
- School Superintendent
- Small Business Technology Development Representative
- Any organization hosting major events in the district
- Business Community
- All business owners
- Major property owners
- Any potential businesses that were being courted by previous MS director
- Existing business networking groups
- Funders
- Major sponsors
- All member businesses or organizations
- All donors

Join local civic groups

In many communities, community leaders are often expected to join local civic organizations. This is a wonderful opportunity for the local Main Street program to demonstrate its partnership with these organizations and provide an outlet for giving updates and access to volunteers.

Many directors find themselves participating in local organizations outside of Main Street. It is important to choose how you volunteer wisely. As the face of the program, giving your time to other organizations by fundraising or soliciting for goods and services can often confuse donors and wear out your welcome for future Main Street related requests.

Attend council meetings and give updates to your Commissioner

City council meetings are a great opportunity to educate yourself and the organization and regular communication with leadership ensures that they know the successes that the organization is bringing to their community. Schedule yourself to provide an update to your City Commissioner/s on at least a quarterly basis. I often found coffee with individual council members when you are first hired is handy too. Developing those relationships can be helpful in the future when important district decisions are being made at the council level.

Compile stakeholder contact lists

Coordinated and timely communication is key and in the digital age, email has become the way to go. As you meet individuals and gather contact information, store it in a way that makes it a tool instead of another business card in the stack. Setting up your contact list with contact groups allows you to easily and quickly disseminate messages to key audiences when the need arises. For example, offering a new discount for member businesses only? Send a quick email to Member Contact Group. Received a report of counterfeit money being circulated in the district? Shoot a message to the District Business Owners Contact Group. Organizing yourself ahead of time will allow you to sort once early and work quickly later on.

Set Yourself Up for Success

Soon you will have emails, documents, contact info, and all other sorts of information coming through the Main Street office. If you organize yourself early, you'll have a handle on it before it grows beyond your control. By setting up files and organizing processes for these things early you'll find yourself being more effective later on.

Become a member of the National Main Street Center

One of the best resources to a Main Street community is the National Main Street Center. Their Members Solution Center offers a listserv, example documents, free webinars and more. Being a member is one of the 10 Accreditation Criteria for Main Street Accreditation, but membership also provides continued education and support from Main Street peers all over the country. As a new director, spending some time reviewing all materials in the Solution Center will give you great background information on what is happening in the industry and what has worked in the past.

Set Quantifiable goals for yourself with the board president

Making good things happen in your district can be a moving target when you're dealing with outside forces like business owners and city staff. Though you may be filling your days with good work in the community, it can sometimes be difficult to translate to a volunteer board that doesn't see you on a daily or even weekly basis. Many directors work with their board president to set up quantifiable goals that coincide with the organizational goals of the program. By being quantifiable, it makes your six month and annual evaluation much less of a guessing game for everyone involved. By developing these goals together, it allows both parties to communicate what is reasonable for the organization and the staff.

Job Shadow with nearby Director

One of the benefits of being part of Orlando Main Streets is the network of directors around the city, as well as Florida Main Street Directors. As a new director, you find a "buddy." This is a director from a nearby district or community similar to your own that has been on the job and learned the ropes. Feel free to reach out to your buddy periodically and take the time to spend a day shadowing them. This is a great opportunity to see how directors manage relationships and communications with the city, partner organizations, businesses, and volunteers.

KEEPING IT ALL TOGETHER

In the early weeks of your position it seems that you have a mountain of materials to sift through, but as the position progresses, the papers seem to flood in. It is good to organize yourself early so that there is a strategy for managing the madness as projects and people draw your attention away from filing.

Office

The Main Street office can quickly become Grand Central Station for people, ideas, paper, and equipment. Setting up an organized office that is both functional and inviting on a shoestring budget can sometimes seem impossible.

Setting priorities

Doing good in the district is a pretty tall order. There never seems to be a shortage of empty buildings, litter, people vying for your time. With all of these pieces of a successful district puzzle pulling your attention, it is important to be able to see the forest for the trees. Having specific priorities set at the beginning of the year will leave you with something to measure activities against. With each phone call, request, or unplanned project that pops up, you can ask yourself, does this get the program closer to its goal? Or does this align with the priorities the president and I have set for me? This can be especially helpful on those extra hectic days in the office where time is scarce.

Managing Time

After you've prioritized what needs to be done, then you can begin accomplishing the laundry list but in a way that allows you to create some work and life balance. Directors have come up with a variety of tricks to manage their time. Some have limited a two or three

night a week rule where that this the maximum number of evenings each week they'll allow for evening meetings. Others find small breaks throughout the day offer the most respite and allow themselves a walk, a cup of coffee outside, or a casual chat with staff when they've accomplished their three to five 'got to get done' items for the day. Whatever it takes to keep you driven and refreshed for another day and another challenge.

Active and Non-Active Files

You Main Street office will quickly become the clearinghouse for paperwork of all kinds. Documents and contracts from old projects and current projects, and projects you hope to one day take on. In an effort to tame the beast try organizing your files between active and non- active files. This could be separated between two filing cabinets.

As a project comes to an end and the final review is done by both the committee and the board, the file can be laid to rest in a non active filing cabinet for the next time you consider the project. These historical documents can be very helpful in updating a walking tour or resurrecting an old event, but doesn't need to be cluttering up your immediate work space until then.

Only touch a document once

This may be one of the unattainable, yet always intended best practices for many directors. Once an attainable filing system has been put in place it is important to use it. Piles of papers not in their place can lead to a director having to do the same task several times over. Though it may require more investment on the front end, it will pay off down the road. If days become too crammed with meetings to be a good steward of your documents, try assigning a task every Friday to file and organize yourself. That way you only have to swallow the bitter pill of filing once a week and it prepares you for an organized start to the following week.

Get a good calendar and an eraser

In your position, you'll be managing a variety of committees and sub committees and adhoc committees galore. Though you won't be producing the projects, you will have an intimate knowledge of the activities by these groups, and a very full calendar. It will be important to find your system for keeping it all straight.

Office, Insurance, Equipment

If you haven't noticed already, you'll be spending a lot of time in the Main Street office so it is important that it is a place that you feel comfortable. Desks, storage, and other equipment should be set up to enable you



to be successful not an impediment. Though they may be larger investments, they are investments that will have long-term return. You'll also want to ensure that your organization is carrying the appropriate insurance coverage. There are a variety of providers that can assist. You are also eligible for discounted insurance rates through your National Main Street Center membership.

BUSINESSES

Successful district business becomes the name of the game so being able to manage the businesses and the people behind the businesses, becomes very important.

Face time becomes a task

You get the most work done when you're in your office uninterrupted, but the perception of you working in the district is you on the streets, which means face time is going to be critical to maintaining visibility for the program, and the positive perception of your impact and value in the district. Depending on the size of your district, meeting with every business on a monthly basis can become burdensome. Pencil this in just like any other task.

Never mail something that you could hand deliver

Similar principle as above, in order to maintain visibility look for opportunities to take yourself outside of your office. Whether it is delivering mail or taking meetings to district businesses or restaurants. The quick trip will help check off a few business visitations from your to-do list and will be a nice break in the day.

Keep notes of conversations in contacts

With all these visits there will be questions and comments and bits of information that will quickly get lost between the business and your office. To keep it all together, travel with a little pad and take notes as you visit each business. This will help you track the items you said you'd follow up on and notes on the business' performance that may be helpful for future support.

This info can be stored in with each contact in the "Notes" section for future retrieval.

Business Intake Binder

As the program continues to establish itself as a resource for existing and potential businesses, you'll likely have walk ins. These are people looking for information on how and where to start a business. Before this information ends up on sticky notes scattered all over your office, organize yourself with a business intake binder. This is a binder of blank

worksheets of typical questions you'd like to ask the person. The worksheets can ensure you don't miss gathering important information and help guide you on the best next steps for the potential business. Once complete, the sheets become a handy tool for follow up on a regular basis.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MAIN STREET DIRECTOR

Your Role in Main Street

With so many activities of the Main Street program it seems that the Director's list of things to do can be never-ending. As director, the role can be a deceiving one and without clear roles and responsibilities within the organization, a director can become quickly burned out.

As a director the first responsibility is administrative. As a functioning professional office there are certain responsibilities that must be maintained. Day to day operations including office management and communications to the board of directors can seem monotonous but is necessary.

The second is public relations. As the director, you are the authorized spokesperson for the program and are charged with speaking out on behalf of the organization. Now it is important to keep in mind that this is only appropriate for topics and positions that have been approved by the board of directors, and not reflective of your personal opinion.

Third, is work plan coordination allowing the projects of the committees to move forward. This would mean assisting committee members in development and including any administrative tasks not necessarily considered by an average volunteer. From there, the director will assist with implementation. This does not mean doing the projects but being a resource to board and committee members, providing them the necessary information and assistance to be successful and then finally, evaluation of the final product as it relates to the board's goals and objectives.

Finally, but definitely not least is volunteer management. This is the cornerstone of the director's responsibility. As the director, you are the key chief motivator for all volunteers within the organization. You'll also be directly responsible for utilizing the volunteer management system developed in partnership with the board and organization committee. This will include volunteer recruitment, training, communication, leadership development and recognition.



Roles and Responsibilities

Nearly all tasks of a director can be easily classified among the three C's; collaboration, communication, and coordination. We will review each one.

Communicate

Though it is the Organization Committee's responsibility to assist with creating the communication tools, it is important that the Director is fulfilling his or her role as being the face of the program. Good written and verbal communication skills that are regularly reinforcing the work of the program will not only create value in the program, but in you as the director.

Communication will be with a variety of individuals but none more important than the district business and property owners. As a Main Street program, these are your clients and should be treated as such. Again, while the Organization Committee continues to communicate with this stakeholder group, the director can be supplementing this communication with regular e-updates and face-to-face time.

Collaborate

Though the Main Street program is equipped to provide a variety of services as it relates to the district, it doesn't necessarily need to when there are opportunities for partnership with organizations already charged with parallel missions.

By assessing partnership and collaborative opportunities, you are reserving scarce resources but also clearly identifying each organization's role in achieving a common goal. As a director, this sort of partnership building will be on you. This can be done through regional partnerships, regular participation in partner organization activities, open communication and clearly shared goals with roles and responsibilities.

Coordinate

Directors choose to coordinate projects or people. The directors who chose to coordinate projects get burnt out and resentful of an ineffective volunteer base. The directors who chose to coordinate people enjoy a support system of volunteers willing to do impactful work. The secret is being a leader or a doer.

As a leader of the organization you will act as a resource to the committees by attending meetings and serving as a liaison to city administration. You'll connect the work of the committees to each other and other partnering organizations by connecting resources and shared opportunities.

No matter how strong the volunteer, everyone needs support to keep on track and keep the projects moving forward. Support can take the form of reminders, updates, and clear actionable items all the way to advice, example documents, and educational materials on the volunteer's area of participation.

No matter what way you support the variety of individuals in your organization, do so with a cool head at all times. Smile when you speak and take a deep breath in when responding to a volunteer.

You do not...

For all directors, what you don't do is nearly as important as what you do to help nurture leaders in your volunteer base. So below is a short primer on what not to do as a director.

Don't create agendas and take minutes. Committees should have the leadership within it to take on these tasks. A volunteer willing to type up minutes as the meeting is occurring is an easy access point to a leadership position. Creating agendas for committee chairs ensures a level of understanding by the chair of the work plans and activities of the committee.

Train each chair to read the work plans and use them to develop each month's agenda. And don't forget, even the best volunteer needs reminders. So take it upon yourself to email the committee chair reminding them of the need for an agenda sent in advance and offer assistance in identifying upcoming activities.

Carry out most of the tasks of the work plan. If you don't have the volunteer base to execute the project, the board should have never approved the project. By committing your time to managing this project, you are neglecting developing volunteers to take on the project in the future, creating a never-ending cycle of disinterest in the program.

Never Report to Individual Board Members. As the director you work for the Board of Directors as a whole but answer to only the board chair. The board chair is elected to take on a variety of responsibilities including holding the director accountable for the performance expectations outlined by the job description and approved by all board members. By taking on individual activities, you may be undermining your board chair and neglecting other performance measures that will determine future compensation.

Never use language like "I" or "my". As the director, you are staff that serves the program, not owns the program. The committee volunteer serve at the pleasure of the board, just as you do. How you reference the volunteers is an extension on the value you place on them and language of ownership is an easy way to quickly alienate many.

Never take sides. It is important to not take sides politically, ever. Whether it is done on behalf of the program or not, people will view it as a direct reflection of the board, the program and the volunteers.

Key Communication

In all instances of communication, regardless of the stakeholder it is important to identify the need and benefit. Often when talking about the vision for Main Street it is explained in a very non-accessible way, using jargon, and exclusivity of "Main Street volunteers." It can be hard to believe in our constant pursuit for volunteers that this sort of language may dissuade people from participating. Because of this, it is important to frame Main Street efforts that allows community members to identify the need, clear opportunities for involvement, and a vision that they can adopt as their own instead of mandated.

Norma Ramirez DeMeis of the National Main Street Center describes this as "Main Street with the community, as opposed to for the community." Communication is only one step in creating this partnership. However, it can be a very important tool in your work as the Main Street director.

Crafting the Message

Now that you have identified the audience and thought about how they receive information, you can then think about what message should be crafted to communicate your point. The National Main Street Center put together a very helpful document outlining the benefits of Main Street broken out by different stakeholder groups.

For Property Owners

- Increased occupancy rates
- Rent stabilization or increase
- Increased property values
- Increased stability
- Reduced vandalism/crime deterrent



- Assistance with tax credits, grants, loan programs, design and cooperative maintenance
- Communication medium with other property owners
- Better image
- New uses on upper floors

For Local Residents and Consumers

- Enhanced marketplace (better shopping and the benefits of shopping locally)
- Sense of place in District
- Social/cultural activities
- Opportunities to keep kids in town
- Sense of hometown community
- Opportunity to participate/volunteer
- Better communication
- Political advocate
- Home values increase

For Retail Business Owners

- Increased sales
- Improved image
- Increased value of business
- Coordinated efforts between local businesses and franchises
- Quality of life
- Educational Opportunities (seminars and workshops)
- Increased traffic
- District marketing strategies (promotion and advertising)
- Better business mix
- New market groups District
- Community pride
- Have needs/issues addressed

For Service Business Owners

- Image building/improvement

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

For Financial Institutions

- Community Reinvestment Act compliance
- Potential growth for loans, deposits, and other services (bank cards, financial services)
- Improved image and good will
- Survival of community, critical to bank success and economic stability
- Central location more cost effective

For Utilities

- Additional businesses
- Longer business hours
- More employees
- Healthy businesses feel freer to increase utility use
- Healthy economy causes community to grow
- Ensure quality in Main Street public
- Improvements

For Municipal 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 District and community
- Better relations between local government and private sector
- Increased volunteer base for city
- Takes political heat, develops consensus for political requests

- Industrial recruitment
- Impetus for public improvements
- Grant solicitation
- Information resource for city leaders

For County Government

- Increased public relations for county
- Viable District increases tax base
- Multiplier effect
- Viable District is a draw for industry
- Develops partnerships with city hall
- Builds pride Heritage preservation
- Alternative to redevelopment district
- Quality of life issues
- Help with parking issue

For Preservationists

- Main Street reinforces the common goals of preservation
- Increases coalition
- Increased awareness and credibility
- Education of public and group
- Improved public image
- Improved economic feasibility of preservation

No matter who you are talking to, there are some things to consider that ensure that your message is making the most impact.

The first is to consider if you are incorporating both tangible and intangible benefits of the program. Main Street often is accused of addressing the “fun” stuff of district

development and historic preservation. This isn’t a fault of Main Street but in our inability to outline both the intangible benefits (quality of life, identify of the community, hub of arts and culture, gathering of the community) with the tangible (increase property value, net new jobs, net new businesses). Lean on your Monthly & Annual Progress Reports to do the heavy lifting and add the information into existing communications.

While some stakeholder groups respond better to quantifiable indicators of success as outlined above, others respond to anecdotal evidence of the impact that Main Street has made a single person in your community. These heartwarming stories aren’t hard to find. A testimonial from a new business owner or longtime volunteer can be a great way to create a connection among their peers.

A well written mission statement can evoke a strong response from its reader. Unfortunately, many mission statements are written in a very utilitarian way that alienates the typical Main Street volunteer with jargon and legalese. The author Simon Sinek says that the great companies in the world start their mission statements with why they do what they do, and then get into what they do, and how they do it. For example, leading with “creating a unique destination” or “vibrant district” may be the why.

Then you can explain what you do using what tools and tactics.

All communication, not matter the audience, should include a call to action. Great communication often engages and inspires but fails to provide the recipient of this information, an opportunity to participate. No matter the form, all communication should at the very least include a link to the website where volunteer and donation opportunities are clearly outlined. Just as a salesman looks to “close the deal,” Main Street Directors should seek to have the same mantra.





4

STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR MAIN STREET PROGRAMS

While Main Street directors are accountable for an immense number of responsibilities and activities on a day-to-day basis, a few important components must be focused on throughout the year. Orlando Main Streets, in conjunction with the National Main Street Center, has identified three areas of concentration that annual accreditation are contingent upon: training and education, quarterly reporting and annual assessment.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Training is essential to your success as a Main Street director. A wide variety of training opportunities are provided by Orlando Main Streets and our partners at Florida Main Street. New directors are required to participate in a New Director Orientation, all District Exchange meetings, Main Street 101 and Board Member training within your first year. Additionally, you are welcome to attend Florida Main Street's Quarterly Meetings and Annual State Conference. We highly recommend that you seek out workshops, webinars and professional development opportunities that provide you with an in-depth learning experience in topics and concepts that may be less familiar. We also highly recommend that all directors attend the National Main Street Conference put on by Main Street America.

Main Street 101

Main Street 101 is given over four different evenings; one for each of the Four Points.

While the workshops are required for all new board members and Main Street directors, this training opportunity is a great educational experience for existing board members, city staff, elected officials and active volunteers as well. Our Main Street 101 courses introduce both you and your board members to the Main Street Approach.

Our staff focuses on the roles of both the director and board members, as well as key components to assist you in building a solid foundation for your program. Please make sure to check your training calendar, or orlandomainstreets.com and the Orlando Main Streets Facebook page for more information.

District Exchange Meetings

District Exchange meetings are short three-hour training/networking opportunities that are traditionally held throughout the year in our districts. These meetings are planned by the directors and may encompass a presentation component, group activities, guest speakers or a roundtable discussion. This training is mandatory.

Board Training and Education

All new board members are required to attend Main Street 101 training within their first 12 months of appointment. A well-educated and informed board makes the job of revitalization much easier. Having board members that are familiar with the Main Street Approach ensures that the director and board are working together and provides the director time to implement the annual work plan. Board members who attend training regularly are exposed to best practices and are better equipped to make decisions that benefit the entire community.

QUARTERLY REPORTING

For districts to gauge their economic impact, it is important that we capture specific data in a timely manner.

At the end of each quarter, Main Street districts have 30 days to submit their information to the City Coordinating Program.



Upon completion of this report, directors will receive an email showing receipt and approving the invoice for quarterly payment of City funds. We strongly recommend that you provide a copy of your program's current quarterly report to your Main Street board of directors.

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

A district that wishes to be eligible for national accreditation from Main Street America, must complete the Orlando Main Street's Annual Standards for Accreditation and submit it to the City Coordinating program.

The Orlando Main Street's Annual Standards for Accreditation document, referred to as the annual assessment, evaluates districts according to the National Accreditation Standards of Performance. These 10 standards, developed by the National Main Street Center (NMSC), in cooperation with Orlando Main Streets coordinating program, provide guidelines on how Main Street revitalization programs should function and serve as an incentive for programs to operate more effectively.

National Accreditation Standards of Performance

1. Broad-based community support
2. Vision and mission statements
3. Comprehensive work plan
4. Historic preservation ethic
5. Active board and committees
6. Adequate operating budget
7. Paid professional staff
8. Program of ongoing training
9. Reporting of key statistics
10. National Main Street Network membership

The purpose of Orlando Main Street's annual year-end assessment is to recognize program accomplishments made during the calendar year, to address and discuss additional revitalization issues, and to eliminate barriers to achieving work plan goals and activities. It is not meant to be a qualitative ranking to compare your district's revitalization and management activities with other programs, and no official "report card" will be issued. Main Street programs vary considerably in scope, staffing and available resources, so direct comparison between districts is not always possible. Instead, this evaluation examines the effectiveness of the local Main Street district within its own context and outlines a level of activity the organization is prepared to undertake in the coming year to accomplish the overall goals and objectives.

The annual assessment is important for many reasons. Locally, the annual assessment can serve as an essential tool for tracking the progress of your current projects and goals. Assessments are also a great way to keep track of your activity for end-of-the-year reports.

The annual assessment is an opportunity for the local Main Street program to tell its story in a way that highlights its qualitative and quantitative impacts.

The annual assessment for each district must be submitted to the City Coordinating Program in January and will always be based on the information collected and implemented during the prior calendar year. Assessment forms should be submitted no later than seven days prior to the assessment meeting, so they can be thoroughly reviewed by staff. Annual assessment reviews are scheduled with the City Coordinator during the month of January. The reviews are done with the Board of Directors only and are two-hour on-site meetings.

After reviewing documents and conducting the on-site evaluation, Orlando Main Streets will make recommendations to the National Main Street Center regarding the appropriate designation for each district. The National Main Street Center will then accredit local programs based on these recommendations as long as they maintain an active membership with the National Main Street Center. The local Main Street program will receive feedback regarding its accomplishments, and staff can use this opportunity to address any areas that may need improvement.

OVERVIEW OF CITY REQUIREMENTS

The city requirements below must be met in order for participating communities to receive a designation from Orlando Main Streets. Districts that wish to use the Main Street America™ name must receive accreditation from the National Main Street Center. To be eligible for national accreditation each program must meet all of the city requirements, listed here, and maintain an active membership with the National Main Street Center. To check on your organization's current membership status email the National Main Street Center staff at mainstreet_membership@savingplaces.org.

Staff

- ☐ Provide OMS with official point of contact
- ☐ Paid professional staff, dedicated office space, phone number and email address for main street director

Training And Education

Must send new directors and board members to

- ☐ Main Street 101 training within the first year
- ☐ Participate in ongoing director training and district exchange meetings

Reporting and Annual Requirements

- ☐ Must sign annual memorandum of agreement
- ☐ Must complete quarterly reports
- ☐ Complete and submit program's annual assessment and schedule evaluation meeting for January
- ☐ Have an annual work plan
- ☐ Programs must meet the national accreditation Standards of Performance as outlined by Orlando Main Streets





5

STRATEGIC PLANNING

At this point we know that main street organizations consist of volunteers, business owners and community stakeholders, all equally invested in seeing the success and revitalization of your neighborhood's commercial district. Your team's success will be determined by two key components: your leadership abilities and your organization's ability to create and follow a comprehensive strategic plan. A main street strategic plan is developed through community visioning, a board planning session and an annual work plan.

Good work plan development is one of the most important building blocks of your organization's foundation and your local Main Street program's success can be unnecessarily compromised if your foundation is not well developed and stable.

Building a solid foundation in the early years of your program will not only help you, as a director, reach your full potential but will also result in a better district as a whole. The challenge that most new directors face is not having enough patience to see this process through in a comprehensive and strategic way. By taking the time to develop a clear and detail-oriented work plan for your Main Street district, you will set yourself up to accomplish substantial revitalization initiatives in a measured and meaningful way.

Once created, this document will help guide you, the board, and your volunteers through a series of projects and tasks that will ultimately lead to the success and the revitalization of your historic district.

COMMUNITY VISIONING SESSION

A community visioning session provides the local Main Street program an opportunity to invite a diverse and varied representation of the public to participate and contribute ideas and recommendations to help craft the work plan. While the size and scope of the community visioning session will vary from district to district, the purpose it plays in work plan development remains the same. The ideas expressed here will serve as a framework for you, your board of directors and your district for years to come.

One of the most important things to keep in mind when planning a community visioning session is that these meetings should be used to gather feedback and information, while serving solely as a listening session. It can at times be both exciting and frustrating for you, as the Main Street director, and the board to hear the good, the bad and the ugly truth about the local perceptions of Main Street. It is important, though, to consider that different people bring different perspectives, and all

opinions are valuable. Keep in mind that not everyone who wants to participate in your community visioning session is able to do so. With that in mind, it can be helpful to provide additional avenues for public input and feedback, such as an online or printed survey.

Set an Agenda

One of the most important factors that will drive participation in your visioning session is your agenda. It will help guide your meeting and ensure engagement, effective communication and efficient time management. It is important to work with the board of directors to select the topics and subjects to be discussed, the role they will play in the presentation and the overall time and flow of the event.

When in doubt, we recommend pre-approving your agenda with Orlando Main Streets staff. Their feedback on the tentative agenda items can help keep the discussion on track with a positive and constructive focus.

Take time to identify any potential issues or topics that might become controversial so that you have adequate time to put safeguards in place to address these concerns.

Once your agenda has been set, prepare handouts, reports or presentations that can assist in effectively communicating your message and agenda during your meeting. All printed publications should be of high quality and visually attractive to draw the attention and interest of the audience.

We recommend that you provide materials for citizen groups with special needs, such as language translation or larger print. Make sure that text and graphics in PowerPoint or other displayed presentations are large enough to be read by everyone in the room.

Don't forget a microphone if your meeting will be in a larger space.

We also recommend that you provide a sign-in sheet. This is a great opportunity to provide attendees a chance to express interest in volunteering for future events.

Name tags for attendees can encourage group dialogue and social networking between participants.

Who Should Be Invited?

When planning your visioning session, it is important to identify your target audience and stakeholders whose input will be valuable to the Main Street program. While deciding what groups and organizations to reach out to about participating, consider which potential partners

and stakeholders the Main Street program is most likely to work with in the upcoming year. Think about whose input is important for creating a vision for your district and make sure that you seek out and include under-represented groups in your community.

Some examples include:

- Local residents
- Chamber of Commerce
- Mayor and City Council
- Downtown business owners
- Downtown property owners
- Civic clubs
- City/County development authorities
- Convention and visitors bureau
- Local churches
- Tourism board
- Planning or zoning board
- Planning commission
- Regional commission staff
- Local merchants and business associations
- Current and potential Main Street volunteers
- Historical/preservation society
- Local financial institutions
- Historic preservation commission
- City staff
- Local media

When Should We Meet?

Meetings should be held at a time that is most convenient to the public, keeping in mind that we want to encourage the greatest number of participants possible. If your community's population is greater than 15,000, you might want to consider holding multiple meetings or smaller focus groups, at different times and on different days, to encourage more participation from the greater community. If you are planning to host your visioning session during the evening hours, it can be valuable to provide childcare options, as well as complimentary food and beverages, to encourage attendance.

Where Should We Meet?

The location of the meeting space is extremely important. The community visioning session should be held in a publicly- accessible location whose facilities meet ADA standards.

When selecting a location, you want to consider a space that is comfortable and large enough to accommodate your projected number of attendees. If you are planning to use technology, make sure to select a space that can accommodate all your needs. Ensure that there is adequate parking or close access to public transportation for all attendees, and make sure to arrive early on the day of the event to confirm that the room has been set up properly to meet your specifications and needs.

Note how seating is arranged in the room. Consider if the room setup is favorable to participation. The seating arrangement will depend on the number of attendees, but if you will be giving a presentation, make sure that the room is set up so that everyone can easily view the presenter's screen.

Meeting Spokesperson

Ideally, the meeting spokesperson should be the Main Street director or a member of the board. It is important for the spokesperson to be a person who is effective at public speaking, presenting information before groups and communicating with the media. A spokesperson should be able to help facilitate dialogue and direct the conversation and feedback from all participants. Keep in mind that as the spokesperson, you should remain unbiased at all times and stay open to all topics of conversation. A good spokesperson never gets defensive and understands that this is an opportunity to listen, not to solve problems.

Technical Experts

When organizing this event, consider inviting representatives from both the city and board of directors so that they may address any potential conflicts, questions or issues that may arise throughout the course of the event. Be patient, and keep in mind that just as citizens don't see city and county lines, they also don't see organizational boundaries. Be aware



that ideas and topics brought up during the meeting may fall into categories that are beyond the scope, reach or responsibility of the Main Street program. Having representation from community organizations and elected officials will allow the spokesperson the opportunity to address any matters beyond the traditional role of the Main Street program.

Advertising and Marketing

Effective advertising of your visioning session will help to ensure good attendance for your meeting. The meeting date(s) should be set and advertised throughout the community (including the business community) at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Directors should work with the local media to publicize the event and encourage media attendance at the meeting. Meeting announcements should be advertised in multiple media outlets including print and radio in order to reach a larger portion of the community. Social media and online resources can be a great and inexpensive way to promote and market your upcoming meeting. A Facebook group or website can be created for easy access to relevant materials and provide a simple process of collecting feedback. Meeting schedules, agendas, minutes and links to other important information should be available on these sites.

BOARD PLANNING SESSION

Now that you have gathered community input, it is time to sit down as a board to discuss the feedback received. This is best done through a board retreat or planning session. During the board retreat the Main Street director and fellow board members will have the opportunity to discuss and plan for the future direction of the Main Street program. In preparation for this retreat the Main Street director should pull together historical documents including master plans, community surveys, historic resource studies and even prior work plans so that patterns, trends or gaps in services can be identified and addressed.

While we recommend that the Main Street director serve as the facilitator for the community visioning session, Orlando Main Streets recommends that you consider bringing in a professional meeting facilitator to help enable dialogue and discussions during your board retreat. Meeting facilitators can often say things that need to be said and ask questions that can lead to deeper probing and reflection. In certain situations directors may feel uncomfortable voicing their opinions for fear of possible retaliation or hurt feelings; a meeting facilitator can help alleviate these concerns.

Setting Goals

During the board planning session, the board and director should identify areas of focus for the next one to two years. When working to develop an annual plan of work, we want to make sure that we approach downtown development and revitalization with a wide-angle lens. Earlier in this handbook, you learned about the Main Street Approach and the role that the four points can have in creating a balanced and harmonious downtown. Now we want to make sure that we are thinking about the big picture by asking ourselves the following questions.

Will what we are doing or proposing...

- Be good for the district?
- Be good for the businesses?
- Complement our program's vision and mission?
- Positively impact the community?
- Be fair to all concerned?
- Negatively impact any of our key partners and stakeholders?

If you can answer yes to the first five of the above, then what you are proposing is most likely on the right track. Keep in mind that Main Street cannot be everything to everyone. While it is important to make sure that we are serving the greater good, it's just as relevant to ensure that we remain effective and focused in our efforts.

SWOT Analysis

One technique that can be used to help focus your organization is a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis. The analysis is a simple but useful framework for analyzing your organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Done correctly it can help you as an organization focus on your strengths, minimize threats and take the greatest possible advantage of opportunities available to you.

To complete your own SWOT analysis internally you should ask yourself these questions, and keep in mind that when carrying out your analysis, you should be both realistic and rigorous with your answers.

Summing it all up: Once all the participants have completed their organizational SWOT analysis, ask them to share their responses. Assign someone to keep track of common themes and comments repeated throughout the process. Once everyone has shared, ask the group to vote on the ideas they believe most reflect your organization. Tally the votes, and then work as a group

to tackle the core issues identified through this process. This consensus will help provide your organization with a compass when trying to decide what direction to move in.

THE ANNUAL WORK PLAN

The program's annual work plan should reflect the organization's major priorities and goals for the next one-to-two years. It should serve as a framework for the goals, projects, programs and tasks that need to be undertaken to accomplish the transformation strategies identified during the board retreat. A well-developed work plan will include measurable goals with necessary objectives identified to accomplish each goal. Each individual task should have ownership either by an individual, a board member or a committee and should lay out the desired time frame for accomplishing each objective.

Understanding how many steps it will take to complete a project can help you as a director identify the resources needed and potential partners necessary to execute your plan. Good work plans have benefits beyond organizing work. They are a useful public relations tool and should be posted on your website and shared with the public to help educate the community regarding your organization's purpose.

The Main Street director should ensure that the organization does not take on activities that do not serve the purpose of supporting the program's overall mission and work plan. With limited time and resources available to complete the program's outlined goals, the work plan must remain focused and timeline oriented. It is easy to get sidetracked by "great ideas" and "can't miss opportunities." As the Main Street director, you will want to make sure that your organization remains open to new ideas while remaining optimistically cautious in

evaluating the time, money and resources that may be diverted away from the existing work plan.

Work plans are a crucial budgeting tool that can help assist the director in managing the budget, sponsorship and fundraising opportunities. It is also important to measure the impact, both quantitative and qualitative, of the projects and programs put in place by the annual work plan. Nothing builds more credibility for a Main Street organization than being able to report back the program's annual work plan accomplishments at the end of the year.

We recommend tracking:

- The sources from which funding was received and the amount.
- The dollar value of all media exposure (even if it was donated in-kind).
- The return on your investment for all projects and events, taking into account staff's time, salary and benefits when measuring your investment as related to your return.
- The number of successful partnerships. (Identify organizations with whom you collaborated and identify for what project the collaboration occurred.)
- Volunteer hours.

Your program's track record in accomplishing work plan goals and objectives can have a direct impact on your organization's success in appealing for continued or increased support from your local government or other community stakeholders. Main Street programs that can demonstrate the visual impact of their projects are more likely to gain future support from businesses, the community and elected officials.





6

PROGRAM FUNDING FOR MAIN STREET DISTRICTS

The way a Main Street program makes itself financially sustainable can vary from district to district. While there are many different avenues to achieve financial independence, we typically see the items listed here used most frequently in local programs.

- Membership
- Hotel-motel tax
- Special event revenue
- Special tax district (BID, NID, CRA)
- Donations and sponsorships
- Grants
- City governments
- County governments
- Chamber
- Convention and visitors bureau

The City of Orlando however, has set aside annual funding for each Main/Market Street District to assist with staffing and programming. These funds are in essence “seed money” to get new programs started and well established. As programs learn the Main Street Approach and grow, so will the portion of their budget that is earned by the district.

To receive city funding, for the first five years, each district must raise matching funds. The funding model is as follows:

MAIN STREETS FUNDING MODEL

	CITY CONTRIBUTION	MINIMUM REQUIRED DESIGNATED MAIN STREET CONTRIBUTION
Year 1	\$50,000	\$10,000
Year 2	\$45,000	\$15,000
Year 3	\$40,000	\$20,000
Year 4	\$35,000	\$25,000
Year 5	\$30,000	\$30,000
Year 6	50% match of funds raised in each quarter with total amount of funds not to exceed \$50,000 annually	\$25,000 annually

MARKET STREETS FUNDING MODEL

	CITY CONTRIBUTION	MINIMUM REQUIRED DESIGNATED MARKET STREET CONTRIBUTION
Year 1	\$50,000	\$7,500
Year 2	\$45,000	\$12,500
Year 3	\$40,000	\$17,500
Year 4	\$35,000	\$22,500
Year 5	\$30,000	\$27,500
Year 6	50% match of funds raised in each quarter with total amount of funds not to exceed \$50,000 annually	\$25,000 annually

Districts that have been in Orlando Main Streets for 6+ years are under a different funding model. This model works as follows: the city funds are appropriated funds for the period commencing October 1 and ending September 30 of each fiscal year, in an amount up to \$50,000.00 to be administered and disbursed to each district solely for the purposes set forth in the memorandum of agreement. Under the terms and conditions of the MOA, the city agrees to match the total amount of funds raised by the district in each quarter. Payments shall be made to the district on a quarterly basis and shall be contingent upon the following:

1. Receipt and approval by the city of a quarterly report as specified in Section II, paragraph 10 of the MOA indicating the total amount of funds raised by the district in that quarter;
2. Receipt and approval by the city of a copy of the district's Profit and Loss Statement run from the district's accounting system for the inclusive dates of that quarter and signed by the district's treasurer, accountant, or other financial representative;
3. Receipt and approval by the city of a copy of the district's bank statement indicating deposits for the city's matching share invoiced during that quarter;
4. Receipt and approval by the city of a quarterly invoice indicating the city's matching share for that quarter;
5. The district's continued utilization of the Main Street Four Point Approach and Guiding Principles with a goal of achieving National Main Street Accreditation annually;
6. The district's compliance with the terms and conditions of the agreement; and
7. The district's continuing faithful and timely performance of all of the provisions of the MOA.

All invoices must be submitted to the city for this fiscal year no later than September 30th. The city's total annual contribution to the district shall not be less than \$25,000 and not more than \$50,000. In addition to cash, competitive grants from other city programs that require submittal of a written application and that are awarded to the district may be calculated in the district's quarterly fundraising amount.

For the first quarter, the city shall make an advanced payment to the district in the amount of \$10,000. For the second quarter, the city shall deduct \$10,000 from its matching share for that quarter. (Ex: If the district raises \$30,000 in the second quarter, then the city's

match of \$30,000 will be reduced to \$20,000). The city shall then match the amount of funds raised by the district for the third and fourth quarters, with the total annual contribution not exceeding \$50,000.

If the district should raise the entire amount of \$50,000 prior to the fourth quarter, the city shall make a final payment to the district for the difference between \$50,000 and the amount the city has already paid under this agreement, including the city's advanced payment of \$10,000 to the district for the first quarter. This final payment by the city shall not absolve the district from its Duties and Responsibilities, and the terms and conditions under the MOA.

City of Orlando Mayor's Matching Grants

Main Streets districts are also eligible for the Mayor's Matching Grants. The Mayor's Matching Grant Program was implemented in 1994 to partner with neighborhood associations, schools and non-profit organizations to fund projects which address neighborhood needs, improve education and build community pride. The Mayor and City Commissioners believe in the power and creativity of its citizens to address challenges, build communities and develop relationships with fellow neighbors, community partners and local businesses through the Mayor's Matching Grant Program.

Grant funds are available bi-annually, with awards ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000. Requests may be made in increments of \$500. To learn more about the Mayor's Matching Grants, please see the city's website for more information: cityoforlando.net/oca/mmg





A local thing

RESOURCES