

FIELD SERVICES OFFERINGS



With decades of combined experience leading and advising commercial district revitalization efforts, the National Main Street Center's Field Services team offers unparalleled support to local, city, and state-wide partners. Whether you are looking for strategic planning support, district assessment services, or economic development strategy implementation – we have the expertise to help make your vision for your community a reality. We offer services through a variety of vehicles, which will be customized based on your needs. Services are typically offered via:

- /// Webinars
- /// One-day, in-community workshops for commercial district leaders
- /// In-community, multi-day technical assessment and plan development to identify gaps and create plans for revitalization



GETTING STARTED

Introduction to Main Street

Communities new to the Main Street Approach to downtown revitalization will benefit from an overall introduction to Main Street and how the methodology has been successfully used in thousands of communities. Gather the community for a Town Hall meeting to learn about the program and begin the community discussion on the importance of downtown to overall economic growth for your town, city, or neighborhood district.

Why Our Main Streets Are Important

This session answers the question, "Why should communities care about a healthy downtown?" It explains the National Main Street program, its Main Street Approach™, and highlights some of the most successful downtown revitalization programs in the country. Depending on time allocated, this session can also present information from the annual Main Street Trends survey, conducted by the National Main Street Center, which shows how downtowns are faring.

Main Street 101

This workshop (or webinar series) explores each of the Main Street Approach's Four Points, committee or task force roles and responsibilities, and typical activities within the framework of the refreshed Main Street Approach involving Transformation Strategies.

Defining Your Transformation Strategies

This two-part service helps commercial districts translate market data and community visioning into transformative, measurable change. Deliverables include a set of district-specific strategies, a targeted work plan, community survey, and an outcome measurement framework that builds on a comprehensive community vision.

New Executive Director Orientation

Gain an understanding of the Main Street program and approach, making the most of your Main Street America membership, staff responsibilities, leadership development, and tips for new staff.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Crowdfunding for Revitalization Activities

Crowdfunding represents a new strategy for program and project funding within Main Street organizations. This engaging workshop will provide resources as well as case study examples.

Developing a Neighborhood Entrepreneurial Pipeline

Neighborhood residents represent a large market for potential new entrepreneurs within a commercial corridor. Through techniques such as pop-up retail, food trucks, farmers markets, and buy-down rental incentives, many Main Street programs have successfully mined their neighborhoods for business creation. This service will share case study examples, and provide via an overall assessment, strategies for developing a pipeline and aligning local resources for entrepreneurship growth.

Developing Entrepreneurial Ecosystems

Get a broader view of entrepreneurial systems' trends and strategies across the county. Supplemental materials include Entrepreneurial Ecosystems and the Role of Commercial Districts, a 15-page resource guide that investigates the crucial value of place in creating these ecosystems and offers a comprehensive framework for developing a place-based strategy for implementation.

Downtown/Corridor Entrepreneurship Centers Feasibility Study

Entrepreneurship centers, unlike business incubators, tend to be temporary work spaces rather than ongoing rental spaces. They attract very early-stage entrepreneurs, consultants, and students seeking a more limited, non-lease space. This service provides an in-depth study designed to examine the feasibility of launching a drop-in entrepreneurship center. The study will examine the necessary resources (personnel and financial), key stakeholders, market demand, niche, site locations, and a work plan for execution.

Follow-up to the Market Analysis for Downtown Businesses

This workshop is designed to share information from a recently completed market analysis and work with businesses to design strategies for featuring new products or services and attracting specific customer groups, while engaging them as players in community transformation.

Fostering a Culturally-Identified Business District

This service helps Main Street organizations better understand the economy of culturally-identified business districts, how to create a welcoming environment for minority and/or immigrant-owned businesses, and tactics for growing and promoting these districts.

Growth Strategies for Your Businesses

This service helps position Main Street programs as the "go-to" for local businesses by facilitating one-on-one assessments of local businesses. Topics include: developing market segmentation strategies, attracting and retaining a loyal local customer base, tapping into new funding streams to support building improvements, and more.

Planning for Transition: Maintaining Small Businesses During Retirement

Longstanding commercial businesses often represent key anchors in communities. Too often, they are lost through the business owner's retirement due to lack of planning, owner options, or a "too late in the game to save" situation. This service provides Main Street programs with situational guidance, resources, and strategies for creating proactive engagement with near-retiring business owners.

Small-Scale Production

This one-day, on-site service walks organizations through an ideation session that leverages the downtown's distinct assets and local/regional pipelines for small-scale producers. Participants will assess and outline a development plan for creating a downtown ecosystem conducive to the recruitment and support of small-scale producers.

Supporting Growth through Community Participation

With increased investment and developer interest in cities, a central concern of many districts is how to maintain current business ownership and provide opportunities for existing neighborhood residents, while fostering the influx of new investment. This service provides communities with successful strategies for assessing market realities and engaging local residents to balance the positive impacts of outside investment with the unique characteristics of local ownership.

Talent Recruitment for Enhancing Downtown's Economy Through its People

Research has demonstrated that key demographic groups, ranging from millennials to retired baby boomers, are seeking authentic communities. Attracting talent as a redevelopment strategy requires a keen understanding of the marketplace and community attributes. This service provides an overall assessment of the market opportunities, identifying key targets, and specific strategies geared toward talent recruitment.

Working with Developers: Strategies to Attract Real Estate Investment

To spur lasting economic growth and be on the cutting edge of community revitalization, Main Street programs must be able to work closely with real estate developers, attract investment, and help close deals.

DESIGN

Design Nuts and Bolts

This survey of Main Street design topics will cover everything from historic preservation 101 to the history of downtown development to design tools, resources, and incentives. You'll learn design, historic preservation, and planning basics, as well as practical, first-step design-focused projects you can implement in your community.

Advanced Preservation Resources

Take a deeper dive into preservation resources with guidance and training on project design compliance with Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, preservation advocacy, preparation of National Register of Historic Places nominations, and more.

Main Street Saves: Energy and Money

Find out about the inherent energy efficiency of small commercial districts and get practical advice on how to help small business owners save money while also saving energy. You'll learn what green tools, programs, and incentives are available for your community, as well as how to help your small businesses save money (and energy).

Navigating Main Streets as Places

While transportation issues are often viewed as heavily regulated processes that only specialists can control, Main Street and community leaders have a crucial role in influencing their district's transportation network. This service will increase your understanding of streets and transportation, placemaking, and equitable community engagement; help you decode and translate the transportation lingo in order to build cross-departmental relationships; help you assess your streets-focused assets and prioritize projects; and develop collaborative implementation strategies.

People-First Design

Explore placemaking, accessibility, equity, and safety, as well as strategies and methods for intentional public engagement in the design process. You'll learn about placemaking basics and the partners and resources available to help you advocate for people-centered design.

Placemaking and the Main Street Approach

As a philosophy and practice, placemaking promotes a comprehensive approach to the planning, design, and management of places. Learn how to integrate placemaking with the Main Street Approach™ as a strategy to bolster place-based economic development, local entrepreneurship support, and quality design.

Trails, Outdoor Recreation, and the Local Economy

Explore how to leverage your local and regional trail systems and outdoor recreation amenities to stimulate and grow your local economy. You'll learn about the Trail Town method; how trail tourism can be integrated into local business planning; how to design your commercial district to be more pedestrian and bike-friendly; how to create a trail corridor loop; and how to develop methodology for tracking the economic impact of trails and outdoor recreation. This service will help you create and implement your own comprehensive, trail-oriented initiatives using the refreshed Main Street Approach.

PROMOTION

Developing an Annual Promotional Calendar

Downtown organizations are great at hosting special events and festivals, but they are often lacking in making retail/business promotions, marketing, and image-building activities a complimentary part of the Promotion Committee work plan. This session is focused on getting a community's Promotion Committee to develop a comprehensive promotional calendar targeted at market opportunities, based on the Transformation Strategies for the district.

Evaluation of Events

Event evaluation is essential within seven days of an activity to measure success and identify changes for the future. This session covers how to capture information during an event, identify the audience, track spending, and send out surveys to measure business satisfaction. This session will help communities understand if their events align with the overall strategy for their district's development.

Evening and Late-Night Shopping: Building Support and Implementation

Downtowns must offer evening shopping to remain competitive and provide goods and services when shoppers are available. Learn how to build cooperation, develop promotion materials, and get merchants to commit for the long haul.

Getting Business Owners More Involved with Promotions

Main Street programs are often frustrated with merchants for non-participation in activities. This session focuses on working with businesses to increase participation in events and volunteering for downtown promotions. You'll learn how to understand businesses' motivations for engagement and provide outlets for their input and participation.

Heritage Tourism

Many downtowns are attractions for heritage travelers. This workshop will help communities identify historic assets and how to promote these to locals and visitors.

Special Events That Sizzle: Getting Creative and Building on Your Unique Assets

Your downtown has been hosting the same special events for years. Attendance is dwindling because the event is no longer exciting. Learn how to turn up the burners and make your events new and exciting again, as well as measure their impact on the district's economy.

Squeezing Operation Funds from Events

When facing cutbacks in annual support from businesses and municipalities, downtown organizations have the opportunity to raise operating funds by analyzing all aspects of their special event income streams—from vendors fees, admissions, activity fees, sponsorships, and related activities. Each special event should break even or earn the organization money. Learn how some organizations raise funds from typically non-fundraising events, like Halloween and Christmas parades.

Successful Business Promotions

Cooperative business promotions are key in promoting commerce in downtowns and neighborhood districts. This session will cover business promotions that “make the cash registers ring” versus the events that encourage people to be outside businesses. Promotions will include retail, service, and professional sectors. Over 50 successful retail/business promotions are presented in this session.

ORGANIZATION

Board Roles and Responsibilities

You’ll learn about all aspects of a downtown revitalization board’s responsibilities, including personnel, oversight, and leadership. This workshop is ideal for new boards, new board members, and can serve as a refresher course for experienced members.

Building a Business Plan for Your Organization/ Program/ Service

The ability to write a business plan is a critical skill for examining new opportunities to launch a program or service for Main Street programs. This service, delivered in a workshop format, provides a step-by-step approach to writing a business plan as a key assessment tool for new programs and services.

Creating Inclusive Communities

Understand and address changing demographics in communities large and small and help commercial revitalization leaders understand their role in supporting inclusion and equity in downtowns and neighborhood districts.

Creative Fundraising Events

Downtown organizations have been relying more on fundraising events over the past several years to support operating budgets due to cut backs in annual pledges. This

workshop is jam packed with successful events that have been held in dozens of Main Street communities across the country, raising from \$1,000 to over \$35,000.

Developing Fundraising Plans

This session covers all aspects of income streams for downtown organizations, laying it out in a simple yet, necessary plan. Planning strategies for municipal support (new and continuing), annual campaigns, sponsorships, special projects income, promotional income, grants, merchandise sales, and fundraising events are provided in this session.

Fixing Your Membership/Partner Campaigns

This workshop focuses on the annual campaign that targets downtown businesses, businesses outside of the downtown area, and residents. You’ll learn to develop the sales pitch and the story needed to show investors and partners how they will benefit from supporting Main Street. Ideas include using technology (websites and social media) to attract supporters, as well as material overviews from other successful programs.

Leadership Retention (Staff and Boards)

The single most valuable resource that a Main Street program has is its people. Retaining executive directors and board leadership is key in maintaining continuity and credibility for the downtown organization. Learn about what executive directors and board leaders need to stay highly engaged.

Public Relations and Building Advocacy

With a well-planned public relations campaign, Main Street organizations can more effectively further advocacy efforts, whether it’s building consensus on public improvement projects or sustaining municipal funding for Main Street. Year-round PR efforts are discussed, with an advocacy development exercise for teams to plan around a hot topic issue. Local examples are used if available.

Social Entrepreneurship: Leadership Strategies for Building Your Program's Revenues

With continued strains on program budgets, revitalization program leaders need to think more strategically about maintaining, diversifying, and increasing revenues to support operations. Social entrepreneurs recognize the importance of mission, but also approach community revitalization with an aim toward the development of innovative products and services designed to solve key community issues, while also delivering on revenue goals.

Succession Planning

Succession planning is the process of identifying and developing new leaders to succeed current leaders. This session will cover succession planning for both executive directors and board of directors. At its best, succession planning is a proactive and systematic investment in building a pipeline of leaders within an organization and identifying strong external candidates, so that when transitions are necessary, leaders at all levels are ready to act.

Volunteers: Why Do We Need Them and Where Do We Find Them?

Discover the latest trends in volunteer development, as well as practical tips to identify the organization's volunteer needs and engage volunteers from throughout the community.

Work Plan Development

To be effective, downtown organizations need work plans to guide the work of the committees and volunteers. Learn to use Transformation Strategies to guide committees or task forces in developing detailed work plans around their economic development strategies. Gain the skills to communicate work plan progress with everyone as projects proceed.

QUESTIONS?

Our Field Services Team is here to help!

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