DESIGN IN COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

Lindsey Wallace, Director of Strategic Projects and Design Services
Main Street America

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National Trust for Historic Preservation

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Lindsey Wallace
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Main Street America
AGENDA

+ Design and COVID-19
+ Design, Place, and Space
+ Design, Promotion, and Community Engagement
+ Preservation + Design Incentives
  – Historic Tax Credit update with special guest Shaw Sprague, Senior Director, Government Relations, National Trust for Historic Preservation
  – Expansion and adjustment
  – Messaging
+ Q&A
COVID-19 – GENERAL IMPACTS

+ E-Commerce rates higher than ever
+ Lasting impact on personal relationship to space → social distancing, gatherings, etc.
+ People getting used to delivery and pickup
+ Lack of certainty on many fronts: individuals, businesses, civic and government institutions operating in the grey
+ Tourism shifts: staycations, trips by car, Airbnb, camping
+ A rush to rural
+ Reopening will look different depending upon location
• **ORGANIZATION** involves creating a strong foundation for a sustainable revitalization effort, including cultivating partnerships, community involvement, and resources for the district.

• **DESIGN** supports a community’s transformation by enhancing the physical and visual elements of downtown while capitalizing on the unique assets that set the commercial district apart.

• **ECONOMIC VITALITY** focuses on capital, incentives, and other economic and financial tools to assist new and existing businesses, catalyze property development, and create a supportive environment for the scores of entrepreneurs and innovators that drive local economies.

• **PROMOTION** positions the downtown or commercial district as the center of the community and hub of economic activity, while creating a positive image that showcases a community’s unique characteristics.
CYCLE OF INVESTMENT

More Reinvestment in Business & Property

Improved Image

More Customers

Higher Profits
Cycle of Investment in COVID-19 Response

1. Physically safe spaces + enhanced infrastructure
2. Improved sense of community and higher profits
3. Improved bottom line for small businesses; local dollars reinvested
4. More customers and visitors + engaged community
DESIGN, PLACE, AND SPACE
**DESIGN-CENTERED VS. PLACE-CENTERED**

- Driven by specific projects
- Discipline-based
- Architect vision over community vision
- “Lone genius”
- All-or-nothing
- Look but don’t touch

+ Place-driven
+ Community-based
+ Community vision over architect vision
+ Prioritizes partnerships
+ Iterative
+ Accessible and inclusive

Adapted from “Is Your City Design-centered Or Place-centered?”, Project for Public Spaces, March 27, 2012.
PLACE: SIGNAGE

+ Curbside pick-up
+ Directional/Parking
+ Personal distancing
SPACE: SIGNAGE

Please practice social distancing
Santa Monica, CA
©REUTERS/Lucy Nicholson

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PLACE AND SPACE: PEOPLE-FIRST STREETS

www.mainstreet.org/navigatingmainstreets
SPACE: OPEN STREETS

openstreetsproject.org/open-streets-toolkit/

Empty streets in Senamiestis, the old town of Vilnius. Lithuania has said cafes and restaurants with outdoor seating can reopen this week. Photograph: Xinhua/Rex/Shutterstock
Coronavirus

Cleveland considers allowing cafe seating in some city streets to help restaurants, bars hurt by coronavirus

Updated May 11, 2020; Posted May 11, 2020

Op-Ed: Here Are Some Cities Getting Open Streets Right


By Transalt | May 1, 2020 | COMMENT HERE
SPACE:
PARKLETS AND PEDLETS

As the world continues to grapple with COVID-19, communities have begun to think about ways to create spaces that will ultimately be safer for public use. Our friends at @BetterBlock are doing just that. Last week, they unveiled a new parklet in Dallas, TX. This parklet offers space for outdoor seating and tables that respect physical distancing regulations, while also keeping a 6-foot sidewalk clearance for pedestrians. This is a #TuesdayTransformation for the books! ☺️

West Allis, WI

Great Falls, MT
SPACE: RETAIL ADJUSTMENTS

Upgrading technology to support e-commerce for small biz

- Fiber
- Cell
- Wireless

Redesigning store interiors

Pop-ups, iterative uses of space
SPACE: BUILDING INVENTORY

DOWNTOWN GRAYLING BUILDING ASSESSMENT

<table>
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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Maintenance notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>501 Norway St</td>
<td>Chipping paint (all sides), missing and broken windows second story Norway side, missing and broken windows, Ottawa side, partial paint in private parking lot side</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>500 Norway St</td>
<td>Damaged bricks and paint chipping/pooling on gas stations side</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>100 Ottawa St</td>
<td>Damage to awning</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>100 Ottawa St</td>
<td>Damage to awning</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>404 Norway St</td>
<td>Damage to awning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>97 E Michigan Ave</td>
<td>Building slated for demolition 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>102 E Michigan Ave</td>
<td>Building slated for demolition 2020</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>104 E Michigan Ave</td>
<td>Building slated for demolition 2020</td>
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<td>106 E Michigan Ave</td>
<td>Building slated for demolition 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>108 E Michigan Ave</td>
<td>Vegetation at rear of building</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>118 E Michigan Ave</td>
<td>Vegetation at rear of building</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>120 E Michigan Ave</td>
<td>Building slated for demolition 2022</td>
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<td>122 E Michigan Ave</td>
<td>Building slated for demolition 2022</td>
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<td>126 E Michigan Ave</td>
<td>Building slated for demolition 2022</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>128 E Michigan Ave</td>
<td>Building slated for demolition 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>404 N James St</td>
<td>Chipping paint, dirty windows, vegetation at rear of building - may be vacant, unable to contact owner, has not been business open since March 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>406 N James St</td>
<td>Vegetation at rear of building</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>200 E Michigan Ave</td>
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<td>232 E Michigan Ave</td>
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<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>234 E Michigan Ave</td>
<td>Vegetation at rear of building</td>
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# PLACE AND SPACE: TRAILS AND PARKS

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<td>Week 1</td>
<td>30-Dec</td>
<td>47934</td>
<td>167679</td>
<td>183546</td>
<td>282.91%</td>
<td>9.46%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>6-Jan</td>
<td>71295</td>
<td>82340</td>
<td>97140</td>
<td>36.25%</td>
<td>7.97%</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>13-Jan</td>
<td>80773</td>
<td>62315</td>
<td>75782</td>
<td>-6.18%</td>
<td>21.61%</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>20-Jan</td>
<td>93714</td>
<td>75801</td>
<td>83809</td>
<td>-10.57%</td>
<td>10.56%</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>27-Jan</td>
<td>70241</td>
<td>75841</td>
<td>94738</td>
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<td>24.92%</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>3-Feb</td>
<td>80028</td>
<td>79780</td>
<td>153555</td>
<td>91.88%</td>
<td>92.47%</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>10-Feb</td>
<td>98826</td>
<td>65732</td>
<td>130351</td>
<td>31.90%</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>17-Feb</td>
<td>100470</td>
<td>69492</td>
<td>149876</td>
<td>49.17%</td>
<td>115.67%</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>24-Feb</td>
<td>118158</td>
<td>85688</td>
<td>141250</td>
<td>19.54%</td>
<td>64.84%</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>2-Mar</td>
<td>123288</td>
<td>84512</td>
<td>167528</td>
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<td>98.23%</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>9-Mar</td>
<td>134372</td>
<td>107995</td>
<td>210182</td>
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<td>94.62%</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>16-Mar</td>
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<td>125440</td>
<td>367795</td>
<td>228.03%</td>
<td>193.20%</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>23-Mar</td>
<td>148658</td>
<td>136330</td>
<td>372783</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>30-Mar</td>
<td>123205</td>
<td>118784</td>
<td>280728</td>
<td>128%</td>
<td>136%</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
<td>06-Apr</td>
<td>161701</td>
<td>132033</td>
<td>419160</td>
<td>159%</td>
<td>217%</td>
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PLACE: POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

+ Transportation/streetscape regulations
+ Flex Zones
+ Parking
+ Liquor licensing
+ Rent forgiveness/deferral
+ Small business rental subsidies/incentives
WHO AND HOW

+ Design Committee
+ New Partnerships and Potential Board Members
  – Emergency Response Officials
  – Public Health Officials + CDC “safe” certifications
  – Departments of Transportation and Public Works
  – Business owners
  – Community colleges
+ Focus messaging on economic impact and recovery
  – Comprehensive approach
+ Funding
  – State recovery funds
  – DoTs
  – Crowdfunding
  – Local funds
  – Private foundations
DESIGN, PROMOTION, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Light Up the Night | Lakewood, OH

© Lakewood Alive

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#HachieHeart Windows
Waxahachie Main Street, TX
Chainsaw artist Scott Lepley, Fremont, carves some hearts and upbeat messages in a tree stump in an unnamed downtown pocket park at the corner of East Maumee and North Martha streets on Monday.

Mike Martuccio.

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PRESERVATION + DESIGN INCENTIVES
FEDERAL HISTORIC TAX CREDITS

- 20% of the qualifying expenses
- Taken over 5 years
- Only available for income-producing properties
- "Substantial" amount must be spent rehabilitating the historic building
- Building needs to be deemed eligible for or is listed in NRHP
- Project adheres to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards
Historic Tax Credit Advocacy in the Stimulus Era

+ **Key Message**: historic rehabilitation incentives stimulate economic activity

+ **Provide Examples**: in past stimulus packages, use of an enhanced HTC yielded positive results

+ **Strategy**: work within existing approaches to help ensure HTC inclusion in subsequent relief packages
HTC Advocacy Resources

Check out the **Advocacy Resource Center** on Preservation Leadership Forum

**Advocacy Resource Center**

At any given moment, preservationists need to serve as advocates for a variety of issues. These resources—from tools to talking points—can equip preservation leaders to make a strong case both on the Hill and at home. The broad range of available resources addresses a variety of national- and local-level issues.

**Summary of the CARES Act and Upcoming Webinar**

On Friday, March 27, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act by voice vote (it passed the Senate on March 25). The National Trust for Historic Preservation team and others have pulled together a summary of the act and its implications for historic preservation. Read the story and then register for the Preservation Leadership Forum webinar on the legislation and future advocacy on April 2. 2020 at 2 p.m. ET.

**The Great American Outdoors Act**

This week, the Senate introduced the Great American Outdoors Act. If enacted, this legislation would be the single largest federal investment in preservation of historic and cultural resources for public lands in our generation, and it would provide the support necessary to ensure America’s historic places are saved for generations to come. This historic legislation combines two important bills: one supporting dedicated funding for deferred maintenance of the National Parks and Forest Service, and the other expanding public access to federal lands.
Updated HTC Maps and Project Lists
Boost the Federal Historic Tax Credit to spur Economic Recovery

The Nation’s Cities, State and Local Governments are working together to revitalize neighborhoods, communities, and supporting traditional economic development and recovery. Unfortunately, Partnership destruction continues, the economic stimulus created by the historic tax credit is disappearing, and state and local tax credits are declining. Without the Federal Historic Tax Credit, State and Local governments are losing critical funding for economic development and neighborhood revitalization. It is a critical tool for making our communities stronger and enhancing the quality of life for all Americans. The Federal Historic Tax Credit is a proven, powerful tool to energize the economy and create jobs.

Our partners at the National Trust for Historic Preservation are urging Congress to:

1. Double the Federal Historic Tax Credit from 20% to 40%.
2. Allow more types of projects to qualify for the credit.
3. Increase the investment tax credit for affordable housing.

These changes will help us build back better, creating more vibrant, equitable communities for all Americans.

Together, we can make a difference. Let’s work together to ensure that our communities thrive.
Staying Up-To-Date

+ The National Trust will continue sharing resources and federal advocacy opportunities as they become available
+ Visit our website at forum.savingplaces.org and our social media channels
+ Engage with our monthly Advocacy Newsletter – subscribe here
+ Additional webinars forthcoming – subscribe here
LOCAL FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

• Loan pools, such as façade improvement loan programs and building improvement loan programs

• Grant programs, such as 50-50 matching grants for façade improvements

• Funders: municipality, CDBG, state, private foundations, local organizations
PRESERVATION REVOLVING FUNDS

- Used to save or rehabilitate historic properties
- Initially funded by capital OR property assets that can then take the form of an acquisition or loan
- Replenished by the sale of properties or repayment of loans
- Funds can become a comprehensive community revitalization tool
- Seed funders: municipality, state, private foundations, local organizations
SMALL BIZ RECOVERY FUNDING NEEDS

General business support
- Staff salary and benefits
- Rent
- Inventory/Materials

Other Design Support
- Streetscape Infrastructure
- Digital Infrastructure
- Trails and Parks
- Safety Measures
- Building Maintenance
EXPANSION AND ADJUSTMENT

Before expanding or adjusting, determine:

1. Are business/building owners in need of a different kind of fund?
2. Does the funding source or framework allow for expansion or temporary adjustment?
3. Can a loan fund become a grant fund?
4. Who are the stakeholders in the fund management?
   a. Funding source
   b. Fund administrators + legal
   c. Project reviewers
5. What are the paperwork, marketing, and outreach requirements if expanding/adjusting is possible?
   a. e.g. loan/grant applications, agreements, guaranties, promissory notes, websites, flyers, etc.
6. How would an adjustment/expansion change the project review process?
If you cannot expand or adjust, consider:

- Lowering or removing match requirements
- Switching part of a loan fund to a grant fund
- Lowering or zeroing out the loan interest rate
- Extend loan deferral payment periods
Design initiatives are key to economic recovery.

If preservation incentive cannot be expanded or adjusted:
  – Building maintenance helps financial bottom line for small biz.
  – Building maintenance prevents future, more significant costs to remedy deferred maintenance.
  – Building maintenance helps with improved appearance and attracts customers.
  – Building maintenance supports community culture and pride.
Design initiatives that help business owners’ bottom line/economic impact
  - Open streets
  - Parklets and pedlets
  - Digital infrastructure
  - Building maintenance
  - Recovery incentives

Design initiatives that keep people safe
  - Signage
  - Interior re-design
  - Sanitation stations

Design initiatives that help build sense of community
  - Virtual events
  - Public + participatory art
Short-term
- Define immediate needs and adaptations, e.g. social distancing signage, etc.
- Talk to partners!
- Determine points of responsibility, i.e. who owns this?
- Iterate!
- Relax regulations
- Engage community
- Building and business inventories

Longer-term
- What should be made permanent?
- Streetscapes
- Partnerships
- Community engagement
DESIGN-FOCUSED RESOURCES

+ Main Street America’s COVID-19 Resource Page
  [Mainstreet.org/covid19resources](http://Mainstreet.org/covid19resources)

+ Coronavirus Response: The Historic Tax Credit as an Economic Recovery Tool

+ Main Street Alabama: Design in the Context of Disaster
  [Mainstreetalabama.org](http://Mainstreetalabama.org)
Q&A

Lindsey Wallace
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