

Steps to Main Street Designation

Nebraska Main Street Network



Before You Apply:

Designated Main Street Community Requirements

- Establish the Main Street Four Point Approach™ methodology as the foundation of the organization
- Active board of directors & working committees
- Ability to pay the annual program fee (\$1,875)
- Can be a stand alone non-profit organization or an “embedded” program (*eg. a combined Chamber of Commerce/Main Street organization, a program w/in an economic development corporation, business improvement district (BID), etc.*); embedded Main Street programs must be acknowledged and recognized within the parent organization
- Employ full-time or part-time paid staff that either has experience in downtown revitalization or is committed to gaining experience

Designated Main Street Community Requirements

(continued)...

- Program has a constant focus on the downtown business district and is not distracted by activities that do not pertain to downtown
- Ability to meet all legal and financial obligations required by the State of Nebraska and the Internal Revenue Service
- Develop and maintain a historic preservation ethic while also supporting entrepreneurs and building owners
- Develop and review an annual plan of work
- Provide an office for the program
- Have a budget with funding for operations, programming, and travel to training
- Maintain records, information and key statistics
- Report required key statistics to the Nebraska Main Street Network and National Main Street Center

Designated Main Street Community Requirements

(continued)...

- Participate in the annual year end evaluation with the Nebraska Main Street Network and work to meet the standards of Main Street America Accreditation
- Actively participate with the Nebraska Main Street Network by attending training, workshops, and conferences and by utilizing the programs, services, and resources available from the Network and the National Main Street Center
- Have strong commitment and support from city government and other community organizations and stakeholders

Getting Started:

Organizational Steps

The Nebraska Main Street Network is available to assist any community that is seeking Main Street designation. Communities are not expected to do this on their own. It is important for the Nebraska Main Street Network to be involved from the very beginning of the process.

- Decide on your organizational structure
 - stand alone non-profit or embedded within another organization?
- Establish an organization or program name
- Establish bylaws and Articles of Incorporation (or revision of existing organization documents to account for the Main Street program)
- Establish legal status in Nebraska (Sec of State) for a stand alone program
- IRS 501c tax status for a stand alone program

Organizational Steps (continued)

- Develop policies and procedures that govern the organization legally, financially, operationally, and for personnel matters
- Secure insurance
- Create a budget for the program
- Establish accounting practices including audits
- Start meeting regularly as an organization
- Start raising funds for the organization

Other Steps

- Create a mission statement
- Establish your Main Street district boundaries and create a map
- Establish board of directors and staffing
- Develop board & staff job descriptions
- Set up office
- Regularly communicate with the downtown stakeholders and the community
- Work with the Nebraska Main Street Network to actively learn more about the Main Street program and work to meet the organizational steps for designation as a Main Street community

After Designation

- Continue working with the Nebraska Main Street Network to build and grow the organization and address challenges that arise
- Visioning, market position, and work plan development—part of the new Main Street Approach™
- Physical assessment of the district
- On-going active participation in training, technical assistance and activities from the Nebraska Main Street Network and the National Main Street Center

Keys to Success:

If you're not working the program, the program will not work for you!

Communities must be active participants in the program to see the physical and economic impact on the downtown while achieving social and organizational vitality and success.

Successful Main Street communities attend trainings and ask for help. They are proud to tell people that they are a Main Street community!

Successful Main Street communities regularly engage state coordinating program staff in everything that happens in their organization and downtown. They don't overlook the knowledge and resources available to them from the program.

Successful Main Street Organizations:

- Have widespread community support from local government and the private sector
- Work hard to maintain Main Street designation for the long-term (it is not a short-term program or band-aid fix, it is a transformational program that has a long-term impact on the community)
- Encourage historic preservation and support entrepreneurs
- Build active boards and working committees; hire and train passionate and dedicated staff
- Build the financial resources needed to carry out the work and support the business district
- Actively participate in Nebraska Main Street Network and National Main Street Center programming

Questions?

Email: director@nebraskamainstreet.org

Phone: 402-499-3703