



Creating a Vibrant Downtown

Why Nebraska Main Street Network?



Our Mission

Main Street programs are more than fixing up buildings or building streetscapes. They're about forming connections between people through social interaction and business development. Human connections play the biggest role in downtown revitalization. When a community puts people first, good design follows.

To achieve successful downtown revitalization, communities need to create people-centered places. Too many communities focus on physical improvements and wonder why their downtowns remain lifeless.

Main Street programs give communities a reason to get excited about their downtowns.

About Us

- National Main Street Center est. 1980 within the National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Comprehensive approach to downtown revitalization within the context of historic preservation
- Nebraska Main Street program est. 1994



Our Structure

- Main Street America (National)
- Nebraska Main Street Network (State)
 - Non-Profit Organization
- Local Member Communities, Businesses, and Individuals



Our Approach

- Main Street Four-Point Approach
 - Design
 - Economic Vitality
 - Promotion
 - Organization





Davis Block Building, Grandpa Snazzy's- Weeping Water, NE

Design

- Improving the physical character and image of downtown.



Street Bump Out Improvements- Fremont, NE

Economic Vitality

- Strengthening businesses, creating jobs and real estate opportunities – improving the overall economic performance of the district.



The Quilted Truck Mural- Falls City, NE

Promotion

- Activities that strengthen the social fabric of downtown and the community.



Beatrice Homestead Days- Beatrice, NE

Organization

- Coordination of people, resources, and activity.

Formula for Success

Why Main Street Communities are more successful than others.

1. Cultivate robust entrepreneurial ecosystems while building a sustainable economic base.
2. Develop strong leadership and build organizational capacity to manage the downtown for the long term.
3. Design quality people-centered places by improving on what is already there.
4. Build social capital and community engagement.
5. Committed to and are active participants in the Main Street program and in getting things done

Cultivate robust entrepreneurial ecosystems while building a sustainable economic base

Supporting innovation & entrepreneurship to increase the economic and social diversity of downtown while also increasing value and revenue

- Business engagement—collaborations, networking, business-to-business
- Real estate development & community-initiated development
- Angel investments and small grants for targeted businesses in specific sectors
- Providing an information resource library
- Education & training opportunities
- Utilizing local talents to provide goods & services to help businesses
- Mentoring and support programming for retention (including business transition)
- Work more closely with community colleges & universities
- Entrepreneurship education in the schools (w/real life applications downtown)
- Showcasing businesses and sharing them with the world

Develop strong leadership and build organizational capacity to manage the downtown for the long-term

Investing in human capital through volunteerism, leadership, building relationships inside & outside the community, supporting each other, financial support for people to build their skills—downtown revitalization is just as much about investing in people and learning downtown revitalization and management skills as it is investing in fixing up buildings and supporting businesses

- Facilitate learning opportunities for the community
- Young professionals groups
- Internships and opportunities for youth to work in businesses or create tools for the community to use
- Establish funds to help community members learn a new skill they can bring back to the community

Design quality people-centered places by improving on what is already there

Building a sense of place through design.

- Changing attitudes by improving the physical condition of downtown
 - public spaces, streets and sidewalk
 - active landscape & streetscape
 - pedestrian safety and amenities
 - attractiveness and comfort
 - buildings and businesses (inside and out)
 - functional and attractive; window displays, signage, interior design, merchandise displays
 - public buildings—setting the example
- Accessibility (ADA)
- Places and opportunities for social interaction—creating a distinctive destination
- Ease of navigation
 - not everyone visiting your town is from there
 - maps, wayfinding, providing physical addresses not just place names

Build social capital and community engagement

Building a sense of pride and community ownership.

- Changing community attitudes and behavior
 - business owners, employees, and community members
 - making it a fun place that is active and welcoming
- Engaged community members with a shared vision for the future
- Communication, communication, communication!
- Opportunities for social interaction/sharing of ideas and solutions
- Networks within the community
- Youth engagement
 - not “free labor” for projects, but real community decision-making projects that they plan, choose and implement

Committed to and are active participants in the Main Street program and in getting things done

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

Why Local Main Streets are Important

- Who will manage change and coordinate all the work that needs to be done?
- Who will help building owners understand the asset they have and how to take care of it?
- Who will curate the events and activities that bring your downtown to life?
- Who will work to retain and recruit the businesses that make your downtown vibrant?
- Who will work to change attitudes about your downtown and consumer behavior in your community?
- Who will make sure visitors and locals have the products, services, and amenities they need downtown?

Need more info?



Contact us through our website!

www.nebraskamainstreet.org