

# Oklahoma Main Street

Program Guide and Handbook



Restore, Restructure, Revitalize, Results

# Welcome



Buffy Hughes  
State Main Street Director

Welcome to the Oklahoma Main Street network! You are now part of a group of dedicated and knowledgeable Main Street directors, volunteers and board members statewide, who have also decided to take on the challenge of working to revitalize their communities' commercial historic districts. The Main Street Approach is part of a national movement whose primary focus is creating a positive economic impact. The Oklahoma Main Street Program, established in 1985, is overseen by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce.

Main Street work 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 – whether as board member, volunteer or paid director. I, along with the rest of the Oklahoma Main Street Center staff, am dedicated to helping your program grow while you help your downtown become a positive catalyst for change. I encourage you to take this opportunity to learn as much as you can about your downtown and the Main Street Approach.

Again, welcome! We look forward to assisting you with the revitalization of your downtown.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Buffy Hughes".

# Contents

## NATIONAL MAIN STREET PROGRAM

History of the Main Street Program.....	4
The Four Point Approach.....	6
Eight Guiding Principles.....	8
Criteria for National Main Street Center Designation.....	10
Why Your Historic Commercial District Matters.....	12
The Facts of Life.....	14
Who Benefits from a Revitalized Historic District.....	15

## OKLAHOMA MAIN STREET CENTER

Main Street Center by the Numbers.....	17
Main Street Services.....	18
Main Street Staff.....	19
Main Street Development Patterns.....	20
Main Street Key to Success.....	23

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Creating a Board of Directors.....	24
Board Officer Job Descriptions.....	26
Board Member Orientation Checklist.....	27
Selecting Board Members.....	28
Composition of the Board.....	29
Board Effectiveness.....	30
Main Street Director Job Description.....	32
Main Street Program Strategies.....	34
Main Street Program Srructure.....	36

## DEVELOPING A PLAN

Developing Mission & Vision Statements.....	38
Developing Action Plans.....	40
Statistics Tracking Instructions.....	44
Nonprofit, Organizational Categories.....	46
Sample Documents.....	47-55





Ponca City Main Street, photo credit: Ponca City Main Street

# History of the National Main Street Program

For years, the traditional commercial districts of the U.S. were declining and seemingly decreasing in value. Shopping habits changed, new competition appeared and investment opportunities were perceived to be more lucrative outside the historic core. The automobile gave customers new choices for shopping, and expanded their shopping range. Many communities tried to revitalize their business districts by applying surface treatments (pedestrian malls and slipcovering the buildings in aluminum) or, worse, by demolishing dilapidated buildings that seemed to have outlived their usefulness. However, these sometimes expensive ideas rarely solved the real problems – the marketplace had changed and more than a facelift was needed to become competitive again.

In town after town, the story repeated itself: Businesses closed or moved to the mall, shoppers dwindled, property values and sales tax revenues dropped. Neglected buildings, boarded-up storefronts and empty, trash-strewn streets gradually reinforced the public's perception that nothing was happening and that nothing was worth saving there. People forgot how important their historic commercial buildings were in reflecting their community's unique heritage.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation launched the Main Street Program in 1977 in three demonstration program towns. The goal was to spur economic development by using Main Street's historic buildings and existing resources as the basis for incremental improvements in the management and marketing of the historic core. Out of these programs, the National Main Street Center was born. The key to the Main Street Approach is to improve the image and value of the historic core through a balanced and comprehensive process that requires incremental improvement in four areas: Organization, Design, Promotion, and Economic Vitality.

The Main Street process is built around the concept of economic development within the context of historic preservation.

Economic development is the process of increasing the real wages of the residents of a community. This can be done by increasing the capacity or productivity of existing firms or by attracting new firms. In either case, the desirability of a community as a place to live will impact the decisions of potential investors. A clean, healthy environment, accessible services and involved citizens, as well as a vital historic core of culture, employment, government, education, shopping, services and housing characterize livable communities.

From the Main Street perspective, programs should use a gauge of result-oriented measurements in areas that include job creation, restoration of commercial buildings and improved public works in the target area, in addition to the transfer of ownership, expansion of inventory, improved business practices, and new businesses locating to the historic commercial district. In other words, communities are striving for confidence in the ability of that area to provide a return on investment. This feeling of confidence is often reflected in intangible changes such as attitude, perceptions of safety and cleanliness in the target area.

Historic preservation itself has a benchmark: The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. These standards spell out what constitutes proper, pristine restoration. Main Street approaches historic preservation from an incremental standpoint and adaptive reuse of the buildings. By realistically appraising the value of commercial buildings and capitalizing on the original quality of construction and workmanship, the buildings of the business district can be put back into productive use.

# The Main Street Four Point® Approach

The Main Street Approach is an economic development strategy developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1980. It incorporates a Four-Point Approach to economic revitalization consisting of Organization, Promotion, Design and Economic Vitality. Training and technical assistance in Oklahoma are coordinated by the Oklahoma Main Street Center at the Oklahoma Department of Commerce.

## Organization

This point of the Main Street Approach focuses on building collaboration among a broad range of public and private sector groups, organizations, and constituencies. The committee plays a key role in keeping the board, committees, and staff functioning by attracting people and money to the Main Street program. To succeed, this committee must take responsibility for managing these financial and logistical aspects of the non-profit organization:

- Raising money for projects and administration from donations and sponsorships.
- Overseeing volunteer activities by recruiting and supervising people and rewarding good work.
- Promoting the program to stakeholders and the public.
- Managing finances by developing good accounting procedures.
- Create a mailing list that includes business and property owners, local interest groups, officials, and supporters.
- Create and regularly update job descriptions for both staff and volunteers.
- Develop a long-term fundraising plan.

## Promotion

This point deals with marketing the district's assets to residents, visitors, investors and others through special events, retail promotion, and activities that improve the way the district is perceived. The committee has the job of promoting downtown as the center of commerce, culture, and community life for residents and visitors alike. To be effective, this committee must move beyond cookie-cutter downtown promotion ideas. Specifically:

- Understanding the changing market by identifying both potential shoppers and the competition.
- Identifying downtown assets, such as people, buildings, heritage and institutions.

- Defining Main Street’s market niche and its unique position in the marketplace.
- Creating new image campaigns, retail promotions, and special events to bring people back downtown.
- Evaluate promotional events including information on attendance and impact of reaching goals.
- Conduct outreach/media relations activities including press releases, print media columns, press liaison, feature articles, radio, and television segments.

## Design

The Design point involves improving the physical environment by renovating buildings, constructing compatible new buildings, improving signs and merchandise displays, creating attractive and usable public spaces, and ensuring that planning and zoning regulations support Main Street revitalization. Design plays a key role in shaping the physical image of Main Street as a place attractive to shoppers, investors, business owners, and visitors. To succeed, this committee must persuade business owners, building owners, and civic leaders to adopt a specific approach for physical improvements to buildings, businesses and public improvements.

- Educating others about good design, and enhancing the image of each business as well as that of the district.
- Providing good design advice, and encouraging quality improvements to private properties and public spaces.
- Planning Main Street’s development by guiding future growth and shaping regulations.
- Motivating others to make changes by creating incentives and targeting key projects.
- Working with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to list the district on the National Register for Historic Places.

- Create a design review process with custom design guidelines.
- Develop district identification and way-finding signage.
- Photograph downtown extensively including before, during, and after photos of rehabilitation work.

## Economic Vitality

This point concentrates on strengthening the district’s existing economic base while finding ways to expand its economy and introduce compatible new uses. The EV committee has the job of identifying new market opportunities for the traditional commercial district, finding new uses for historic commercial buildings, and stimulating investment in property. To succeed, this committee must develop a thorough understanding of the community’s economic condition and opportunities for incremental market growth by:

- Building entrepreneurial economies.
- Strengthening business including strengthening existing businesses and recruiting new ones.
- Infrastructure reuse by finding new economic uses for traditional Main Street buildings.
- Development of financial incentives and capital for business development and retail operations layout.
- Ascertaining progress by monitoring the economic performance of the district.
- Complete and maintain an inventory of buildings and businesses.
- Develop a small, local business recruitment packet and procedures.

# The Eight Guiding Principles

Main Street America's experience in helping communities bring their commercial corridors back to life has shown repeatedly that the Main Street Four-Point Approach® succeeds. That success is guided by the following eight principles, which set the Main Street methodology apart from other redevelopment strategies. For a Main Street program to be successful, it must whole-heartedly embrace the following time-tested Eight Principles.

- **Comprehensive:** Downtown revitalization is a complex process and cannot be accomplished through the completion of a single project. For successful long-term revitalization, a comprehensive approach must be utilized.
- **Incremental:** Small projects and simple activities lead to a more sophisticated

understanding of the revitalization process and help to develop skills so that problems that are more complex can be addressed and projects that are more ambitious can be undertaken.

- **Self-Help:** Local leaders must have the desire and will to make the program successful. Main Street America and the Oklahoma Main Street Center provide direction, ideas and training, but continued and long-term successes depend upon the involvement and commitment of the community.
- **Public/Private Partnership:** Both the public and private sectors have a vital interest in the viable economic health of the historic commercial district. Each sector has a role to play and must understand the other's strength and limitations so that an effective partnership can be forged.





McAlester Main Street Harper and Grey, photo credit: McAlester Main Street

- **Identifying and Capitalizing on Existing Assets:** Business districts must capitalize on the assets that make them unique. Every district has unique qualities (e.g. the distinctive historical buildings and cultural heritage that give people a sense of belonging). These local assets must serve as the foundation for all aspects of the revitalization process.
- **Quality:** Quality must be emphasized in every aspect of the revitalization process. This applies equally to each element of the program from storefront design to promotional campaigns to educational programs.
- **Change:** Changes in attitude and practice are necessary to improve current economic conditions. Public support for change will build as the program grows.
- **Implementation-Oriented:** Activity creates confidence in the program and even greater levels of participation. Frequent visible changes are a reminder that the revitalization effort is underway. Small projects at the beginning of the program pave the way for future successes as the revitalization effort matures.

# Criteria for Main Street America Designation

The Main Street America accreditation process evaluates and provides national recognition to established Main Street district revitalization programs based on 10 basic performance criteria. The following points should act as a roadmap for your program and provide targets for better, more effective performance.

- **Widespread Support:** The program enjoys broad-based community support for the Main Street district revitalization process, including strong support from both the public and private sectors.
- **Vision and Mission Statements:** The program provides vision and mission statements that address current local conditions and the Main Street program's organization goals.
- **Comprehensive Action-Plan:** The program follows a comprehensive action plan that outlines measurable program objectives, specific activities for each of the four core Main Street principles, timelines, budgets, and personnel responsibilities. The action plan is formally reviewed and updated annually.
- **Historic Preservation:** The program demonstrates a commitment to historic preservation as a key to social and economic revitalization in the community. The program builds public awareness of local historic buildings and implements a plan to effectively preserve and manage these assets, which includes preservation through restoration, renovation and reuse. The program also encourages responsible urban design, development and land-use policies.



First Friday Oktoberfest Main Street Enid, photo credit: Oklahoma Tourism

- **Active Board of Directors and Committees/Task Forces:** The program has an active governing board and well-managed committees dedicated to each of the four Main Street points. Both the board and the committees/task forces have regular meetings to address action plans and other important issues within the program.
- **Budget:** The program maintains an adequate and responsible operating budget specifically dedicated to revitalizing the Main Street district. The budget allows for staff salary and benefits, training and other development-related expenses, as well as the program's primary goals.
- **Paid, Professional Staff:** The program employs paid staff, including a full-time, trained program manager to oversee and

coordinate all program activities. The program has implemented staff management policies and provides written job descriptions for each position.

- **Training for Staff and Volunteers:** The program provides ongoing training for staff and volunteers, and takes advantage of training provided through the Oklahoma Main Street Center and Main Street America.
- **Reports Key Statistics:** The program submits timely and thorough reports on its progress as required by the Oklahoma Main Street Center and National Trust Main Street Center.
- **Membership:** The program is a current member of the Main Street America network.

# Why Your Historic Commercial District Matters

Can malls and discount centers take the place of historic districts in the future? The answer is most definitely "No." Though malls and discount centers play important roles in our communities, historic commercial districts are much more than shopping centers. It is critical for everyone involved in historic commercial district revitalization to understand the value of their area. Here are some good reasons why those historic cores are important (though they're not in any particular order):

- With more independent retail business, sales tax increase.
- Historically significant buildings help highlight your community's history and development.
- Independently owned businesses support local families, and they keep profits in town.
- The historic commercial district is a reflection of community image, pride, prosperity and level of investment – a critical factor in business retention and recruitment efforts. When industry begins looking at your community as a possible location, they examine many aspects. Included is interest in the historic core – is it alive and viable.
- Your historic core is often a major tourist draw. When people travel, they want to see unique places. Unique assets could be a building, museum, restaurant, a person, the community, a festival. There isn't one like yours in the world!
- As a business center, your historic district plays a major role. It may even represent the largest concentration of businesses in your community. It can also serve as an incubator for new businesses.



Magnolia Farmers Market, Durant Main Street, photo credit: happytrailsphotography.com

- The historic commercial district is usually a government center. Most likely it is where your city hall, county courthouse, and post office are located. This “one stop” shopping for government services is a notable feature of historic cores across the country.
- A healthy Main Street core protects property values in surrounding residential neighborhoods. If the district declines, property will decrease in value and subsequently increase the tax burden on other parts of your community.
- The historic commercial district represents a vast amount of public and private investment. Imagine the costs to recreate all the public infrastructure and buildings already existing in your central business district. Think of the waste of past dollars spent if the area is neglected.
- Your historic core provides a sense of community and place. As Carol Lifkind, author of *Main Street: The Face of Urban America*, said “...as Main Street, it was uniquely American, a powerful symbol of shared experiences, of common memory, of the challenge, and the struggle of building a civilization...Main Street was always familiar, always recognizable as the heart and soul of the village, town or city.”

# Commercial District Revitalization: The Facts of Life

Here are some hard won but solid advice about revitalizing a commercial district:

- **There is no magic bullet.** No formula, no big fix answers, nor easy solutions. The Main Street Approach cannot save you from hard work, but it can substantially improve your chances for success by giving you an effective and structured framework for your revitalization efforts.
- **There are no handouts.** Most traditional government and foundation grants shun projects that involve commercial enterprises, and the days of urban renewal's big fix projects are gone.
- **Most resources are local.** Whether you need people or money to make projects happen, they are most likely to be found in the community, and YOU must find them.
- **Not everyone will like you.** Not even everyone you must work with. You must forge coalitions and partnerships that have never been formed, and many of the people involved may not be used to working with each other.
- **Everyone has an agenda.** It is probably not just commercial district revitalization. YOU must create the culture – and the priority – for Main Street's renewal.
- **Some change will be needed.** Most historic commercial districts will never again be able to provide the range of goods and services they offered decades ago. To support the rehabilitation and maintenance of commercial areas in today's market, we must aggressively expand Main Street's business mix – and its market area.
- **You can't do it alone.** Main Street is not entirely city hall's responsibility, but independent business owners can't do it alone, and neither can citizen activists. A collaborative effort, combining the unique skills and vantage points of public and private sectors, is essential.
- **Revitalization won't happen overnight.** It is a gradual process that begins with small steps, eventually building capacity to tackle larger, more complicated revitalization projects and problems. "Big fix" solutions to commercial district revitalization almost always fail to bring the kind of lasting, positive change that they promise.
- **The process is never finished.** Traditional commercial districts, like shopping malls or industrial parks, require full-time, professional management.
- **You are just as qualified as anyone else to make it happen.** Thousands of concerned citizens and business owners make a difference in revitalizing their historic commercial districts just by stepping up to help, regardless of experience or background. We can provide the tools to help you help your district.

# Who Benefits from a Revitalized Historic District

By helping various groups see that they share a similar vision, the program can foster the cooperation and support it needs from the community or neighborhood. Furthermore, by identifying each organization's greatest strengths, the Main Street program can help focus that group's energy in the areas where it can contribute best.

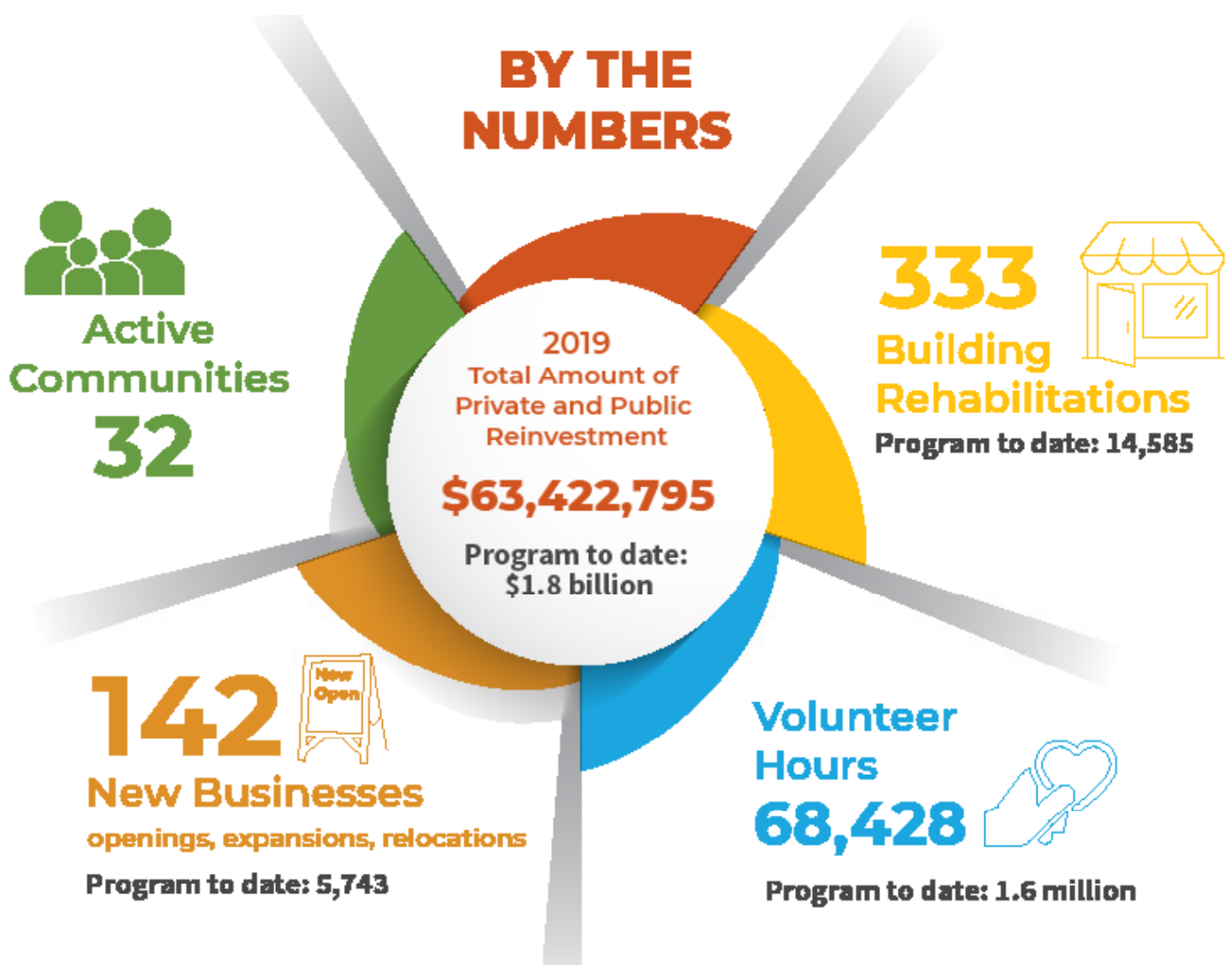
- **Retailers** – have a vested interest in the success of a revitalization program. An improved commercial district offers greater opportunity for business growth and expansion, a broader customer base, and less financial risk for store owners.
- **Property owners** – Because they literally own pieces of the commercial district. Stable or higher rents, increased occupancy rates, improved marketability of property, and higher property values.
- **Financial Institutions** – They benefit in several ways, from making new business loans to being able to attract new industry to the community. Local revitalization programs help satisfy their directives under the Community Reinvestment Act.
- **Professionals and Service Businesses** – They have access to a ready-made customer base from area employees; they have increased exposure to other potential clients as more people begin to shop or live in the district; and they have a pedestrian-friendly location filled with nearby amenities such as government offices, banks, and other institutions.
- **Chamber of Commerce** – Potential new member businesses, healthier overall business climate, potential partnerships on joint projects.
- **Residents** – Local accessibility to goods and services, preservation of community for future generations, more employment opportunities, boosts residential property values.
- **Local Government** – Because local government plays a major role in directing the community's economic growth and other policies, it must be an active participant. Increased sales and property tax base.
- **Community partners** (civic clubs, senior citizens, arts groups, religious institutions) – By taking part in the revitalization effort, service clubs, civic groups, and other organizations can improve the community's quality of life and make the commercial district a more pleasant, vibrant place for their activities and members. They can also supply volunteers who will bring valuable expertise to the revitalization program.
- **Schools** – Involve schools, colleges, and universities. Youth involvement in civic projects, use of commercial district as "classroom" for school projects, potential employment and business opportunities, more places to go and activities for youths.
- **Industry** – Improved quality of life makes recruiting and retaining employees easier.





# Oklahoma Main Street Center

The Oklahoma Main Street Center, a division within the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, was established in 1985 and began with five pilot programs. The Center now offers training and technical assistance to 32 active programs. Through March of 2020, the Oklahoma Main Street Center has seen more than \$1.8 billion in public and private reinvestment downtown and 14,585 building rehabilitations. There has been a net gain in businesses of 5,743 and a net gain in jobs of 19,756. Volunteer hours have only been tracked since 2002 and to date are 1.6 million.



# Oklahoma Main Street Services

The Oklahoma Main Street Center provides training, resources and technical assistance for preservation-based commercial district revitalization. Based on the National Main Street Center's guiding principles and nationally recognized Four-Point Approach®, the program offers a practical strategy scaled for each local program. Main Street promotes public and private partnerships and local leadership, commitment, and synergy while delivering tangible and intangible benefits to both communities and neighborhood districts. Services available by point include, but are not limited to:

## Organization

- Board Training/Retreats
- Program Director Training
- Volunteer Recruitment Training
- Fundraising Training
- Membership Recruitment Training
- Consultant Selection & Procurement Assistance
- Strategic Planning Session
- Vision and Mission Session

## Promotion

- One-on-One Business Marketing Consultations
- Asset Analysis
- Retail/Special Event Planning Assistance and Evaluation
- Overall Program Marketing/Image Consultations, Reviews and Evaluations
- Web/Social Media Development, Assistance, Evaluation and Training

## Design

- Façade Design Assistance
- Design Technical Assistance and Training
- Interior Design Assistance
- Window Display Training
- Merchandising Assistance
- Placemaking Design and Assistance

## Economic Vitality

- Confidential Business Consultations
- Business Inventory Database Creation
- Business Planning Assistance
- Controlling Profit Training
- Survey Assistance
- Customer Loyalty Training
- GIS Census Database (LocateOK) Training
- Market Analysis Assistance
- Retail Analysis Study

# Meet Our Staff

Buffy Hughes  
Main Street Center Director  
Organization Point Person  
405-815-5249  
[Buffy.Hughes@okcommerce.gov](mailto:Buffy.Hughes@okcommerce.gov)

Tamara Price  
Program Coordinator  
Promotion Point Person  
405-815-5146  
[Tamara.Price@okcommerce.gov](mailto:Tamara.Price@okcommerce.gov)

Kelli Yadon  
Program Coordinator  
Marketing Manager  
405-815-5379  
[Kelli.Yadon@okcommerce.gov](mailto:Kelli.Yadon@okcommerce.gov)

Jeremy Zeller  
Economic Development Finance Specialist  
Economic Vitality Point Person  
405-815-5186  
[Jeremy.Zeller@okcommerce.gov](mailto:Jeremy.Zeller@okcommerce.gov)

Office Location:  
Oklahoma Department of Commerce  
900 North Stiles, Oklahoma City, OK 73104  
Phone: 405-815-6552  
Toll Free: 800-879-6552  
[Okcommerce.gov/main-street](http://Okcommerce.gov/main-street)

Follow us:  
[facebook.com/OKMainSt](https://facebook.com/OKMainSt)

# Main Street Development Patterns

Over the last 30+ years certain patterns seem to be consistent throughout Main Street programs in the National Main Street Center's network:

## **The Catalyst Phase:**

This phase of growth, typically for first- and second-year programs, is characterized by organizational development, partnership building, and establishing a credible presence (of the program) in the community. This phase can last from 2 to 4 years and is a critical time for the program to build the foundation for the organization, learn basic skills, develop a strong volunteer base, and achieve some highly visible projects in the community. It is a time of enthusiasm, high hopes, and some skepticism. While the first-year programs focus on the organizational and promotional activities, second-year programs usually shift their emphasis to design projects and the economic vitality committee has finished with the initial data gathering projects.

## **The Growth Phase:**

The transition to this phase takes place when some system for guiding design changes is in place. This is when long-term strategic thinking concerning future development is evident; the program enjoys a good reputation (planning its work and working its plan); and the organization has an understanding of the local economy and market factors affecting the community. The largest economic gains will occur in this phase, not the catalyst phase. This phase can last from 8 to 12 years.

## **The Management Phase:**

This phase is the one with the most tangible

benchmarks. These benchmarks are:

- 70% of the buildings renovated
- Ground floor vacancy rates between 5% and 8% vs. upper floor vacancy rates less than 20%
- Regulatory aspects addressed
- High public awareness

These phases may cycle back and forth over the lifetime of the organization, and it's very important to recognize where your program is at in order to keep the momentum going towards success.

## **Attitudes:**

The attitudes of those involved with Main Street and those affected by it will indicate how well the program is being accepted by the community.

- The attitudes of volunteers are important because their time and skills are essential to the program's success. Finding out whether the volunteers are enthusiastic about their involvement, whether they support the direction of the program and whether they feel their contributions are valued. These observations are best accomplished during the committee meetings.
- Those who feel the effects of the program, such as merchants, property owners and downtown shoppers, should also be surveyed for their attitudes toward the Main Street program. They are Main Street's constituency - the gauge against which the program's credibility is measured. Do they see change occurring for better or worse? Has their image of the downtown changed?



Tahlequah Main Street, Photo Credit: Tahlequah Main Street

Main Street programs do not operate in a vacuum, they will always be influenced by factors beyond their control. By understanding the larger environment, a program gains perspective about the past year's activities and learns ways to improve effectiveness.

### **Political Climate:**

An annual assessment of the political climate should answer the following questions:

- How has the Main Street been most helpful to the city? How has the city assisted Main Street?
- What areas need greater cooperation?
- What is the frequency and quality of communication between the city and Main Street?
- Who are the important people at city hall and what is their relationship with Main Street?
- What priorities has city council set for the coming year?
- What potential changes, including elections, are anticipated in the coming year and how will they effect Main Street?

### **Economic Climate:**

A community's economic climate can also change rapidly and have a variety of effects on the Main Street Program. Fluctuations in an areas base economy will affect jobs, municipal revenues and discretionary income. The point to be made here is that although Main Street may not be able to alter sudden economic changes, it can often adjust program priorities to mitigate their effects.

### **Relationships with Other Organizations:**

Relationships with other key groups need to be reviewed. The chamber of commerce, economic development authorities and councils of government all have interests that include downtown, but are broader in scope. Their activities may complement or compete with Main Street goals; some are single issue oriented or are politically influential, particularly service organizations. Main Street can assess its relationship with each by answering a few key questions:

- What are the common areas of interest between Main Street and the organization?
- In what areas have Main Street and the organization cooperated in the past year?
- How can cooperation be improved?
- Do the organizations share any Board members?
- What is the relationship between the staffs of the organizations?

### **Program Activities:**

Monitoring program activities is as close as Main Street will come to establishing a bottom line! Quantifiable results, such as the number of promotional events and design improvements, will give the program credibility in the eyes of the community and will provide Board members and other volunteers with a yardstick by which to measure their contribution. A more difficult challenge is evaluating the quality of those results, and this can best be evaluated by comparing the program activities to the action plan. How well did the program do what it planned to do?

The issue of whether Main Street should take credit for all downtown activity is that the bottom line here is - results are results. Whether Main Street was directly responsible for every activity is irrelevant. By noting all changes that have occurred and then comparing the Main Street's progress with its action plan, the Board can then determine accountability without analyzing each activity for its particular Main Street connection.

### **Basic Operations:**

How well an organization functions depends on how well it manages its human and financial resources. Regular review of the program's internal management systems is essential to head off problems before they get out of hand. The key operational areas to assess include: structural items; financial management; communication systems; leadership development; committees; and the staff. The local program can review these internal management systems by answering a few key questions.

**Structural Items:** Are articles of incorporation, by-laws and tax status all in place?

**Financial Management:** Are the budget and fund-raising plans complete and up-to-date? Are monthly financial reports available to the board and program manager?

**Communication Systems:** How is communication handled between the staff and the board? Between committees? Between Main Street and its organizational partners?

**Leadership Development:** Is new leadership emerging? Is it encouraged? Does current leadership have the board's confidence? Has a system for succession been established?

**Staff:** Is performance satisfactory? Has a personnel review been conducted? Have commitments to staff concerning benefits and contracts been fulfilled?

Finally, some time should be spent reviewing the way things get done by the board. How people feel about the process will often determine how they feel about the product. Answer these key questions about the functionality of the board:

- Does the board encourage all its members to participate in discussions?
- Is decision-making an open process?
- Is consensus valued?
- Does the board do committee work?
- Does the board make effective decisions about downtown issues?

These factors not only affect the efficiency of the organization, they also affect the morale of volunteers.

# Main Street: Keys to Success

Organization is merely the structure within which a program achieves their goals. Effective organizations are much different from just a bunch of people meeting, and trying to determine how to solve problems that are not properly identified and prioritized. The emphasis from the Main Street point of view is a comprehensive action plan for the organization that starts with a vision of how the organization wants the downtown to change over a period of time and which of the four points those changes fall under.

## A Well-Functioning Main Street:

- **Provides the stability for a long-term program:** The Oklahoma Main Street Center (OMSC) requires a three-year commitment from participating towns and provides the training for start-up and continued success. The goal is a long-term, well-functioning program.
- **Develops a clear sense of mission for the program:** One of the services the OMSC provides is training in the visioning/ action plan process. OMSC staff will lead the organization through the visioning process and assist with action plan creation.
- **Has well defined goals:** Using the action plan process ensures that the goals for the program will be specific and achievable.
- **Establishes dependable funding:** To be accepted into the program the community must demonstrate they have the funding in place for the first year of operation and show evidence of a three-year commitment for funding the program. Because the goal is

to establish a long-term program for those towns who are accepted, the OMSC provides fundraising ideas and training.

- **Maintains widespread support from all segments of the community:** This is an important part of developing an organization that primarily involves communicating what changes have taken place or are in the planning stages in the downtown.
- **Effectively builds working committees** (which are the backbone of the organization).
- **Develops a comprehensive action plan based on all four points of the Main Street methodology.**

## Reasons for Failure:

Main Street America can boast of an 82% success rate nationwide. They have identified some reasons for programs to fail:

- Not working comprehensively on all Four Points.
- Failure to forge partnerships.
- Duplication of activities.
- Failure to hire staff.
- Lack of long-term commitment.
- Not understanding the “forces of value.”

*The “forces of value” (economic, political, social and political) correspond directly to the importance of integrating and blending the Four Points of the Main Street approach (economic vitality, organization, promotion, and design).*

# Organizational Structure: Creating a Board of Directors

The local program's board of directors should be a strong, working board capable of developing and implementing policy to create positive change.

## **Purpose:**

Collectively, the board of directors assumes legal and philosophical responsibility for all Main Street activities. The board of directors is solely responsible for establishing program policy, approving the annual program budget and determining the goals of the program.

## **Board of Governance:**

The board of directors is the legal guardian of the organization and is responsible for the organization's current and future welfare. The board has three primary legal duties known as the "duty of care," "duty of loyalty," and "duty of obedience."

- **Duty of Care:** Take care of the nonprofit by ensuring prudent use of all assets, including facility, people and good will.
- **Duty of Loyalty:** Ensure that the nonprofit's activities and transactions are, first and foremost, advancing its mission. Board members must recognize and disclose conflicts of interest and put aside any personal or professional interest and place the interests of the non-profit ahead of them. Loyalty also means respecting the confidentiality of the organization's affairs by not disclosing them to outside individuals that leads to loss of opportunity for the organization.

- **Duty of Obedience:** Ensure that the nonprofit obeys applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations; follows its own bylaws; and that the nonprofit adheres to its stated corporate purposes/mission.

## **Legal Consequences of Nonprofit Actions:**

When an individual board member or a full board fails to comply with statutes, they can be held legally liable for criminal or civil monetary penalties.

## **Potential Members:**

The board should be a decisive, action-oriented group, small enough to establish a quorum easily and large enough to represent a cross-section of the community. Ideally, the board should have between nine and 15 members that come from the following groups: the commercial district's property owners, retailers, professionals, and other business owners; lenders, city and/or county government officials; business association members; heads of neighborhood organizations, recognized community leaders; local civic organizations, preservation and/or historical societies; or interested citizens.

## **Term Limits:**

It is best to rotate one-third of the members off the board each year to prevent burnout, attract new leadership, and avoid domineering personalities. This requires staggering terms for the original board members. If more people are interested or need to be involved, remember that there are plenty of standing and ad hoc committees on which these individuals can serve.





Ardmore Main Street new streetscape, photo credit: Ardmore Main Street

The organization by-laws should limit terms of office for board members. The most common limitation is 2 three-year consecutive terms of office. Sometimes the by-laws allow a board member to come back after a three-year absence for another two consecutive terms. However, it is very important that board members continually roll off the board and new board members are selected from the community. If this does not happen with regularity, the organization is perceived as belonging to a select group and not the community. This has been the cause of failure for some downtown organizations.

#### **Officers:**

Usually elected by the organization’s board or by the membership, the officers typically include a president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary.

#### **Ex Officio Board Members:**

These are people who serve on the board because of another office they hold, such as the mayor, council member, or the president of a local institution like a university or the chamber of commerce. If

the current mayor resigns, for example and a new mayor is elected, the new mayor will take the board seat. Sometimes an ex officio member will designate a staff person to serve in his or her place. Be careful, however, not to put too many ex officio members on the board, as their role is often one of communication, not leadership. Ex officio members can be voting or nonvoting, depending on the program’s bylaws.

#### **Executive Committee:**

The executive committee, typically composed of the board’s officers, can streamline board meetings by handling administrative items that do not merit full board discussion. Non-controversial items, such as record-keeping systems, approval of staff vacations, office equipment, etc., can drag out board meetings unnecessarily. The executive committee can also be a good place to start policy discussion so that when the discussion reaches the full board, it is already focused. Remember to keep the executive committee small. More than six committee members becomes a miniature board of directors.

# Board Officer Job Descriptions

## **President:**

- Serves as primary link between the board of directors and the executive director.
- Acts as coordinator to facilitate decision-making process.
- Delegates responsibilities.
- Monitors accountability of the organization.
- Supervises executive director's performance.
- Works with executive director to determine board meeting agenda.
- Chairs board meetings.
- Calls special meetings when necessary.
- Appoints committee chairs with board input.
- Serves as a visible leader of the organization.

## **Vice President:**

- Supports president and shares responsibilities as delegated by president.
- Performs presidential duties when president is unable to do so.
- In some cases, takes a more active role in monitoring committee activities.

## **Secretary:**

- Serves as primary record keeper.
- Transcribes and prepares official board meeting minutes for approval by board and delivers them to the executive director.
- Maintains these documents in a format that is accessible by all board members and the executive director and that can be carried to meetings for use as a reference.

## **Treasurer:**

- Pays debts and taxes on time.
- Prepares monthly financial reports (should be submitted to the executive director for inclusion with the minutes of the next board meeting).
- Maintains all financial books and records in auditable format, according to standard accounting practices.
- Provides financial information upon request.

# Board Member Orientation Checklist

## Describe the Organization to the Board Member:

- ◇ Who the Main Street organization serves
- ◇ What the organization does
- ◇ How the organization is financed
- ◇ Any other key information regarding the purpose and function of the organization

## Explain and Discuss with Board Member:

- ◇ Meeting attendance –both full board and committee
- ◇ Committee Assignment
- ◇ Board role and relation to administration/ staff

## Conduct Tours:

- ◇ Designated historic district and focus area; organization office
- ◇ Greater community, if necessary

## Deliver Important Information to Board Member:

- ◇ Letter of welcome from the program director
- ◇ Organizational materials (brochures, membership information, etc.)
- ◇ Mission and Vision statements
- ◇ Bylaws and articles of incorporation
- ◇ Board policies
- ◇ Copies of the minutes of board meetings from the last year
- ◇ Current budget and other financial reports including year-end statements from preceding year
- ◇ Current action plan including goals and objectives
- ◇ Long-range strategic plans
- ◇ Latest newsletter

- ◇ List of all board members, including addresses and telephone numbers
- ◇ List of committee members including committee chairs
- ◇ Calendar of meetings and events for the year
- ◇ Any other important documents or materials

## Introduce Board Member to:

- ◇ Chairperson of committee to which board member has volunteered
- ◇ Other board members and committee chairs
- ◇ Others who play a prominent role or have a strong relationship with the program

## Collect Data:

- ◇ Mailing address, email address and telephone numbers
- ◇ Best time to contact
- ◇ Best time for meetings
- ◇ Other important information

# Selecting Board Members

## When choosing board members, look for three types of people:

- Those who will become actively involved in planning and implementing projects
- Those who can provide needed services or information, such as accountants, architects, or lawyers
- Those who have money or access to money that could be used to finance the program's projects.

In short, board members should bring the following to the organization: commitment, leadership, time, enthusiasm, money, community respect, and skills.

## Seek to balance the composition of the board, both ethnically and by gender, within the context of these criteria. Each board member should offer one or more of the following:

- A demonstrated interest in the program's purpose and goals.
- Specific experience in and/or knowledge of administration, finance, program development, advertising, public relations, commercial district activity, communications, design or economic development.
- Representation of a public or private organization in the community.
- A commitment of four to 10 hours a month.

## As a group, the Main Street Board is responsible for:

- Fundraising and collecting the funds needed to operate the program, both asking and giving. This is not the program director's responsibility.
- Walking, talking, and advocating for the

local program. If not you, who?

- Accountability to the community for the successes of the local program and for the wise use of its resources, both human and financial, in the best interests of the commercial district.
- Planning for the long and short-term... Mission, vision, and action plans!
- Monitoring and approving the budget.
- Reviewing the performance and salary of the director.
- Evaluating the program and the progress.
- Governance of the organization, board and policies.
- Volunteer recruitment to carry out projects and activities.

## Individually, board members need to pause for a moment and understand what is expected of them. As a board member, you need to:

- Participate with your knowledge, time, and money.
- Attend monthly board meetings and activity assignments.
- Understand the mission of the local Main Street program and actively promote its goals. You must commit this mission to memory!
- Share your opinions at board meetings and then support the board's decisions as they are made.
- Learn all you can at educational sessions and other opportunities related to the development and management of commercial districts.

### Main Street Boards should represent the four W's:

- Workers who are willing to roll up their sleeves and actively participate in the implementation of the program
- Wisdom which will further the mission of the local program
- Worrier (at least one!) who will act as the reality check for the entire board.
- Wealth and ability to know where to get it!

### Finally:

- Do not ask or expect board members to wear more, or fewer, than two hats! Board members should serve on the board and one committee. They cannot serve well on the board unless they also serve on a committee because within the committee structure is where the work of the organization is done. However, they also cannot serve adequately on the board of directors and on more than one committee.
- Do not ask or expect board members to give more than five hours per month for volunteer activity, exclusive of meetings! If your board members are the only ones doing the work, then it becomes a board organization instead of a community organization.

## Board of Directors Composition:

### Officers:

(Executive Committee)

President

President-Elect

Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer

Past President

### Committee Members:

(at least one from each division)

Organization

Promotion

Design

Economic Vitality

### Other Members/Volunteers

*The Board of Directors is made up of the officers, at least one committee member from each division, and other members or volunteers.*

# Board Effectiveness

How well a board functions depends on how well the members understand their roles; conduct meetings; resolve conflicts among themselves; and communicate with volunteers, the executive director and the community. All Main Street revitalization programs need to develop qualified, effective board members regardless of the type of community in which it is located.

## Leadership Development

Successful leaders motivate and manage people to bring about desired results. They must be able to work with people and be willing to make difficult choices. Without strong collective leadership, the Main Street program will flounder. As an effective leader, you should:

- **Give yourself permission to be a leader.** Some people think they aren't worthy to lead. While others may be more capable, they are not serving—you are. Leaders who make self-denigrating statements and are reluctant to make decisions not only let themselves down, they hinder the program. Many of us simply need practice and confidence in what we are doing.
- **Take the time to be a leader.** Being an effective leader means attending many meetings, both as part of the program and as its formal representative to other groups. Informal activities are equally important and time consuming. Allow yourself sufficient time to be a good leader; on average, a board member should expect to give four to 10 hours a month to the job.
- **Be positive and optimistic.** Leaders set the mood for program volunteers and staff. Start meetings with positive remarks. Resist the

tendency to forget the good things and focus only on the problems.

- **Recognize and accept** that the leader serves as a symbol. When you become a leader, you become a symbol of the program. Be aware that your personal opinions may be interpreted as those of the organization and take care how and when you speak.
- **Be a worker!** Those who pick up a broom on a clean-up day win a lot of respect and support. Effective leaders don't ask others to do something they would not do themselves. However, be sure to maintain a balance and do not harm your program by trying to do it all yourself.
- **Understand and accept people** as they are. Identify and tap into an individual's interests and talents. You may not be able to change someone's personality, but you can harness his or her energy and skills.
- **Show people they are part of the vision.** People need to know that they are among the shapers and contributors to the revitalization program. Keep lines of communication open and share the vision.
- **Empower others.** Empower program workers by identifying capable people and recognizing them formally in public speeches as well as informally. Encourage them to make decisions independently of your counsel. Identify the parameters of a project, and then give others the opportunity to implement it. Do not get caught up in your own control and credibility. You have more to gain by sharing the credit than by claiming it.



Committee, Sapulpa Main Street, photo credit: Sapulpa Main Street

- **Be an open, honest communicator.**

Always tell the truth. Show people you are open to constructive criticism and listen to what is being said. If people believe you are not listening to them, they are apt to work around you, against you, or not at all.

**Be a decisive, yet flexible negotiator.** There will come a time when a group will want to do something its leaders have doubts about. Judge the risks, deciding what can be gained and what might be lost. Know where you can compromise and where you can be flexible. If it seems reasonable, let the group try its idea.

- **Don't compromise basic principles.**

Thomas Jefferson said, “in matters of style, swim with the current; in matters of principle, stand like a rock.” Stand firm on your own personal principles and those of Main Street.

- **Focus on the problem.** Passing judgment on others will block your own thinking. By concentrating on the issues instead of on blame, you will keep people from choosing sides and keep them focused instead on solving the problem.

- **Ask for help.** Effective leaders know that when they do not have the skills or time to carry out a project they should involve others

in the process. Supplement your talents with the abilities of others to keep the organization strong.

- **Investigate** when “things are going too well to be true”. Hidden conflict may result from stagnation or the undue influence of one individual. At other times, unspoken conflict stems from a fear that cooperation will be lost if differences of opinion are voiced. Conflict is part of an effective group process for arriving at good decisions.

# Main Street Program Director Job Descriptions

The Main Street program is a comprehensive program, which requires many skills. The program director is responsible for the conduct, execution and documentation of the program. A program director is the principal on-site staff person, the contact person for the community and is responsible for coordinating all program activities locally, as well as representing the community regionally and nationally as appropriate. They also serve as the local expert for the historic commercial district.

The director cannot be the one person doing all the work. When a program becomes too dependent on the director to do everything there is a very real danger of failure for the program due to burn out of the director, and when he/she leaves, the board is not strong enough to hold the program together. The board is responsible to maximize the time of the director.

## **Organization:**

- Encourage cooperative climate between historic core interest and local public officials.
- Work with local organizations and encourage improvements in their abilities to undertake joint activities
- Represent the community at prominent conferences on the state and national levels

## **Committee/Task Force Development:**

- Helps the committees and the chair learn the mechanics of committee management
- Provides expert advice and concise information on revitalization and the Main Street Approach
- Collaborates with committee members and chair as a strategist/planner

## **Action Plans:**

- Assists committee members in developing action plan documents
- Helps committee members complete their projects but does not assume responsibility for those activities.
- Integrates own action plan with the committee's plan

## **Fundraising Activities:**

- Coordinates fundraising campaigns, newsletter production, volunteer communications, and financial systems
- Helps members coordinate projects



### **Promotional Projects:**

- Coordinates production of PR, graphic image, and other promotional materials.
- Helps members coordinate special events, retail promotions, and advertising activities.
- Keep program and its goals and objectives constantly in public eye through speaking engagements, radio, television appearances and newspaper interviews.

### **Rehabilitation and Design Projects:**

- Coordinates information on design assistance and financial incentives for building owners.
- Acts as first contact for the public on preservation issues in the commercial district.
- Assist individual tenants and property owners with physical improvements to property through professional design consultants.

### **Economic Vitality Projects:**

- Coordinates data collection, analysis, financial incentive programs, and other economic development activities.
- Helps members coordinate business improvement seminars and workshops.

### **Volunteer Management:**

- Helps chair develop good systems for recruitment, supervision, and reward of volunteers.
- Helps develop volunteer capacity of committees by participating in recruitment efforts.

### **Committee Meetings:**

- Attends most meetings to provide technical information and professional opinions.
- Helps strategize and develop solutions.
- Works with chair to assure that decisions and assignments are made and completed.

### **Program Directors do not...**

- Run committee/board meetings or take minutes.
- Have authority over the committee or its structure.
- Take on the majority of tasks in the action plans.
- Take the lead on donor solicitation and fundraising.
- Take the lead on organizing or running events and projects.
- Report committee updates at board meetings.
- Sign their own paycheck.
- Manage the accounting (that's the treasurer's responsibility).
- Write the newsletter.
- Voice organizational opinions without the approval of the board of directors.

# Main Street Program Strategies

Every community and commercial district is different, with its own distinctive assets and sense of place. The Main Street Approach™ offers community-based revitalization initiatives with a practical, adaptable framework for historic commercial district transformation that is easily tailored to local conditions. The Main Street Approach helps local programs get started with revitalization, and grows with them over time.

**Transformation Strategies:** The Main Street Approach is centered around Transformation Strategies. A Transformation Strategy articulates a focused, deliberate path to revitalizing or strengthening a downtown or commercial district's economy. Transformation Strategies are generated through meaningful community engagement and informed by an analysis of the district's market position. These "strategies" help guide a revitalization program's work and should be organized around the Four Points of Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion and Organization. An effective Transformation Strategy serves a particular customer segment, responds to an underserved market demand, or creates a differentiated destination.



© National Main Street Center, 2016, All Rights Reserved.



**Outcomes:** In today’s resource-constrained environment, impact is everything. Good leaders know that measuring impact makes for a more effective organization. And in turn, savvy funders recognize that an organization is a worthwhile investment if they can be specific about their impact. So, whether your organization is looking to better assess internal operations, communicate more effectively about your mission, build on successful programming, or strengthen your bottom-line (likely, you’re doing all of these things), measuring impact is key.

In addition, the Main Street Approach emphasizes the importance of rigorous outcome measurement, both as a means to assess effectiveness, and as a way to communicate the impact of the Main Street program to stakeholders. While all Main Street programs measure standard outcomes through the collection of Reinvestment Statistics, each local program should also be looking at a series of tailored outcome measures that reflect your program’s particular goals as an organization, as well as the Transformation Strategies that have been developed.

# Main Street Program Structure

## Committees/Task Forces

(Design, Promotion, Economic Vitality, and Organization) are the workforce that implements the activities, and well-functioning committees/task forces should:

- Develop and prioritize their action plans with board approval.
- Be concerned with implementing and documenting the program.
- Endeavor to build new relationships (enabling other groups to come together and work for a common goal)
- Develop leaders
- Determine ways to measure success

### Committee/Task Force Chair Responsibilities:

- Calling meetings and running the meetings, and keeping them on schedule and to the point.
- Making sure each member's opinion is respected and heard at the meeting.
- Following up with members to see that work is progressing.

### Qualities of a Good Committee/Task Force Chair:

- **Organized:**
  - Makes time for Main Street.
  - Uses committee members' time efficiently.
  - Keeps committee/task force on track and productive.
  - Experience in recruiting and using volunteers.
- **Leadership:**
  - Has overall vision of how committee and task force's work fits into the big picture.
  - Is a team player and works well with a group but does not have to dominate.

- Respects the time and opinions of others.
- Gives credit to others.
- Is considerate.

- **Ability to Delegate:**

- Can break activities down to specific, achievable tasks.
- Makes clear assignments of tasks, responsibilities and deadlines.
- Keeps track of progress on assignments.
- Identifies and trains next chairperson (leadership development).

## Fundraising

### Three steps in Fundraising Development Process:

- **Cultivation**

- Cultivation is the process of introducing new donors to your mission. Are your cultivation activities appropriate? What could you be doing better? What are you missing? How can the board be more engaged?

- **Solicitation Techniques**

- Personal: Face-to-face in teams of two, or just one person
- Personal letter on personal stationary
- Personal telephone call as a follow up or introduction
- Personalized form letter
- Impersonal direct mail letter
- Fund raising benefit or special even
- Media and advertising

- **Stewardship**

- How does Main Street treat existing donors? Do they feel valued and appreciated? Are you keeping them informed of your progress and about the use of their investment?

- **Donors Want:**

- Acknowledgement—prompt and personal
- Information—confirmation that their gifts have been set to work as intended
- More information—measurable results or what effect the donor’s gift has had.

- **Remember:**

- The number one reason people do not donate to your organization is that they were not asked.
- Involvement invites investment
- The board must role model giving behavior for other prospects and donors to follow.
- All fundraising is local.
- No donor gives away his or her last \$500.00 (or \$5,000.00).
- You seldom get more than you ask for.
- Fundraising is about building and maintaining relationships—it is a marathon, not a sprint.
- It is much easier to get more money from an existing donor than \$1.00 from a non-donor.

## Volunteers

### Trends:

- More people are volunteering
- The “typical” volunteer has evolved
- Volunteers are more focused on what they want to do
- Volunteers have to budget their time commitments better
- Many more organizations are vying for volunteers
- More volunteers want one-time or short-term opportunities
- More people are volunteering to support their careers
- New technology is broadening volunteer opportunities

### Motivations:

- Praise—Volunteers need to be thanked and praised.
- Affiliation—Volunteers need to feel a part of something.
- Accomplishment—Volunteers need to be able to reflect on their volunteer time with a sense of accomplishment.
- Power/Influence—Volunteering sometimes gives a person a sense of power and influence.

## Meetings

### 7 Signs of a bad meeting:

1. No written agenda
2. Too long
3. Wrong people at the meeting
4. Starts late and ends late
5. No purpose or conclusion
6. Members unprepared
7. Chair does all the talking

### Ground Rules:

- Start on time and end on time
- Respect and consider the ideas and opinions of others
- Participate
- Listen while others are talking
- There are no dumb questions
- Define time of meeting

### A Great Main Street Board or Committee Meeting:

- Has a clear agenda and purpose
- Starts and finishes on time
- Has a good facilitator/leader
- Has agreed-upon ground rules
- Assembles the right people in the room
- Has active group discussions and reaches conclusions through consensus



Hobart Main Street town square, photo credit: Hobart Main Street

# Developing Mission & Vision Statements

The local program's board of directors should be a strong, working board capable of developing and implementing policy to create positive change.

## **Mission Statement**

A mission statement is a short description of your organization's purpose stated clearly and simply and communicate the Main Street's organization's sense of purpose and overall direction. It should state who your group is (the name and type of agency), what you do and where you do it, and distinguish your organization from others in the community. Keep the statement flexible so it will stay relevant as your organization evolves. Mission statements should be only a few sentences. A good mission statement is the organization's 'elevator speech,' a short answer about what your organization does that you can recite during an elevator ride. Post your mission statement to your website and include it in your annual report, press releases and other materials.

Your mission statement will serve as the starting point for developing an annual action plan (see next page) and will prevent your organization from taking on work that exceeds your program's purpose. If someone proposes taking the organization in a new direction or tackling a major new project, board members can refer to the mission statement to see if the new project or direction adheres to the mission.

## **Vision Statement**

A vision statement communicates the organization's long term hopes and intentions for the commercial district and should be developed with broad participation by the board, committees, program volunteers and community input. Visions can vary widely but the National Main Street Center recommends they be at least several paragraphs long and be written as if the writer were compiling the program's accomplishments 10 to 30 years from now. The vision statement is a glimpse into the future to see how the revitalizations effort paid off, what the Main Street district is like, and how the Main Street program helped transform the district.

The Main Street program can use its vision when selling the community's dream to potential investors, business owners, volunteers, partners, and others. Your statement will coalesce a dream, and the work going on behind the scenes will be geared toward achieving that vision. The Main Street organization can use the vision statement as a means not only to motivate its staff and volunteers but also to see if its annual projects and initiatives help you realize this dream.

## **The Visioning Process**

### **Preliminary/Initiation Phase**

At the first meeting, explain to the participants what a vision statement is, what a visioning process involves, and how the statement will be used. The first step is to determine the logistics and timeline of the process. Set up a steering



El Reno Main Street Fried Onion Burger Day Festival, photo credit: Oklahoma Tourism

committee made up of individuals and groups representing broad segments of the community to guide and implement the process. When a Main Street program undertakes a visioning initiative, the board of directors should represent the different interests of the commercial district. It is also during this phase that target areas are identified and a timeframe of 10, 20 or 30 years is established for the visioning process.

### Facilitated Discussions

If your goal is to create a comprehensive vision statement that will guide overall community planning and address a breadth of issues, the process should involve all segments of the community. Here are some key questions to be posed for public discussion:

- Why is this historic commercial district special to you personally?
- How do you wish the district were better?
- What will revitalization success look, sound, smell and taste like?
- How do you want the area to be viewed in 10 years?
- What activities and businesses do you hope to enjoy in this district in 10 years?

### Writing the Vision Statement

Next, draft a preliminary vision statement narrative using keywords from the facilitated public discussions. Distilling the many ideas from the visioning meetings will be tricky and you'll need to enlist the most gifted writer among your staff or volunteers. Writing the vision statement should be the job of a single person. The statement should be written in the present tense and approached as though the community has achieved all of its goals. For example, "It is 10 years from [today's date], and we have created our most vibrant district." The draft should be reviewed and edited by each board member. Now is not the time to introduce new concepts – the statement and the board's edits must respect the community's input. If your program wished to submit the statement for formal endorsement by the municipality, you can do so once the board approves it.

The final vision statement should be presented publicly. Hold another meeting to unveil the statement, discuss next steps, and generate excitement for the years ahead. Be sure to post the vision on your website, email it to stakeholders and partners,





Main Street Duncan, photo credit: Main Street Duncan

and highlight the salient concepts in press releases to local media. Make sure the public has access to the statement and understands the consensus-building process used to develop it.

### The Vision and Implementation Plan

After the vision statement is approved your Main Street organization needs to develop its action plan. These action plans are the guiding implementation documents that board of directors and committees use to carry out the program's activities. In the case of community-wide visioning projects, short- and long-term implementation strategies are developed and responsibilities assigned to those delegated to carry out the vision. These strategies may include timetables for achieving specific objectives as well as integrating the vision into current community planning activities. Large-scale, community-wide visioning and master planning processes will include implementation strategies for many entities in the community, not just your organization. For most Main Street programs the original vision plan can guide their work for several years. Every five years or so, your board may want to review the plan to see whether it is still relevant or if it needs modifying. Small changes are normal but a wholesale rewrite should not be necessary.

### To Recap:

#### Mission Statement – who you are and what you're doing

- Concise
- Easily understood
- Distinct from other organization

#### Vision Statement – where you are going

- Longer than mission statement (but still brief)
- Preferred future of the district
- Specific, sensory language – INSPIRING!
- Consensus, developed by a broad cross-section of the community
- Comprehensive (i.e., addressing each of the Four Points)

# Developing Action Plans

A comprehensive annual action plan provides a detailed blueprint for the Main Street program's activities, reinforces the program's accountability both within the organization and also in the broader community; and provides measurable objectives by which the program can track its progress.

**Mission Statement:** The purpose of the organization.

**For Example:** *The purpose of the XXX Main Street program is to develop and promote a healthy and prosperous downtown within the context of cultural and historic preservation.*

**Goals:** These are more specific statements of purpose, which can be clearly divided into a committee/point structure. Usually it is best for each committee/point to have only one goal. This goal should reflect the general purpose or mission of the committee.

**Examples include:**

***Goal for the Board of Directors and Organizational Committee/Point*** – Provide effective centralized management of the historic district and increase involvement in the program.

***Goal for the Promotion Committee/Point*** – Promote the historic core as the community's social, cultural and economic center.

***Goal for the Design Committee/Point*** – Encourage visual improvements through good design compatible with historic features.

***Goal for Economic Vitality Committee/Point*** – Strengthen and broaden the economic base of the historic commercial district.

**Issues:**

These are typically classified as “problems” or “unmet opportunities.” They are not usually focused on just one activity, but tend to be broader, encouraging a number of possibly activities.

**Example:** There aren't enough things for kids to do downtown.

**Objectives:**

These are specific statements of how a goal will be reached. They usually outline the major areas of responsibility for committees/points. Objectives give structure to the numerous activities undertaken and help explain why a specific activity has been chosen. Objectives are usually issues that have been turned into positive action statements. Objectives might also be measurable.

**Example:** Provide (at least two) more activities for children in the historic commercial district.

**Activities:**

These are specific projects that have an identified timeframe. When completed, they are usually recognized as tangible accomplishments, such as an Easter parade or building inventory.

**Tasks:**

These are specific steps required to complete an activity.



Main Street Guymon, photo credit: Main Street Guymon

## Developing one-two year action plans:

The purpose of the organization.

**STEP 1** - Goal Setting/Action Plan session for board of directors (plan up to four to five hours to complete).

- **List issues at random.**
- **Determine what area of concentration** each issue fits under (organization, promotion, design, or economic vitality). Group them together, and then delete duplicates. Note that the areas of concentration are reflective of the Main Street committee/point structure.
- **Determine priorities.** Remove the rest of the issues.
- **Create objectives.** Each objective statement should begin with an action verb.
- **Create a goal statement** for each committee/point based on the objectives
- **Create an overall mission statement** to guide the organization, use the committee/point goal statements as a reference. If a mission statement has already been created, check it against the committee/point goals to see if it is still reflective of what the organization is working toward accomplishing.

**STEP 2** - The board of directors should come up with a list of potential committee/point members based on the objectives for each committee/point.

**STEP 3** - Committee/Point “activity planning”:  
brainstorming session (takes about two hours per committee)

- **List possible activities** under each objective.
- **Determine priority activities** for each objective.

**STEP 4** - Committee/Point “action planning”  
session (takes two or three hour-long meetings to complete).

- **Discuss possible timelines** for each priority activity.
- **Complete an “action plan” for each priority activity.** Think about the workload required. Adjust as needed. The board should approve finished plan.

**STEP 5** - Refer back to your completed action plan at each committee/point meeting. The committee/point or task force responsible for an upcoming activity should fill out/update the action plan as the activity draws near.

# Statistics Tracking Instructions

Tracking statistics – reinvestment, job and business creation, and so on – provides a tangible measurement of your local Main Street program’s progress and is crucial to garnering financial and programmatic support for the revitalization effort. Statistics must be collected on a regular, ongoing basis and are reported to the Oklahoma Main Street Center on a monthly basis. Here are instructions on how to report statistics and where to find them. As always, contact the OMSC with any questions regarding this information below.

- **Business Expansion and/or Relocation:** List the number of businesses that have relocated or expanded within the Main Street district. This can include businesses that were located inside the city limits of your community but outside the Main Street district that moved to the Main Street district.
- **New Businesses:** List the number of new businesses that have opened in the Main Street district monthly. This will include new business startups or a business that was previously located outside the city limits of your community and moved to your Main Street program area.
- **Business Closure:** List the number of businesses that closed in the Main Street district monthly. This will also include businesses located in your Main Street district that moved outside the city limits or to another community.

- **Jobs Created:** This will always be the total number of full-time people employed by each new business (or full-time equivalent). If a business has relocated or expanded within the district, new jobs will be created only if additional people are employed after the move expansion.
- **Jobs Lost:** List the number of jobs lost to business closure, consolidation or downsizing. Please note the number of jobs lost to the businesses relocating outside the district will always be zero unless the business decreases the number of its employees with the move.
- **Public Investment Dollars:** Please indicate the amount of public improvement dollars spent within the district, i.e. city, county, state, or federal money spent on building rehabilitations, public improvements, or new construction. Types of public improvement projects are improvements to public buildings, installation and improvement of street lighting, street and sidewalk repairs, parking improvements, public signage, marketing and tourism, and landscaping.
- **Volunteer Hours:** Please indicate the total number of volunteer hours contributed to the organization. This includes hours spent in both board and committee meetings.



Circle Cinema, Kendall Whittier, photo credit: Oklahoma Tourism

# Nonprofit, Tax Exempt Organizational Categories

	501(c)3	501(c)4	501(c)6
<b>Purpose</b>	Charitable or educational	Nonprofit civic leagues and organizations promoting social welfare	Promotion of some common business interest
<b>Comments</b>	Must be organized and operated exclusively for one or more of the purposes specified; operates for the common good of the entire district	Can serve recreational purposes as well; can serve a wider class of beneficiaries than (c)3 and (c)6 organizations	Must be devoted to improvement of business conditions of one or more lines of business, rather than performance of particular services for individuals; primarily membership groups
<b>Political activity allowed?</b>	May not direct a substantial part of its activities towards influencing legislation	May be involved in lobbying but cannot support a candidate for public office	Unlimited lobbying efforts as long as activities are directly to promoting common business interests of the organization
<b>Exempt from federal tax?</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Charitable deductions available to donors?</b>	Yes	No	No
<b>Eligible for foundation and federal grants</b>	Yes	Not usually	Not usually
<b>Property tax exemption?</b>	Yes	Not usually	Not usually
<b>Business deductions available to donor?</b>	Only as charitable deductions	No	Portion of membership dues attributable to permissible lobbying that has a direct interest to member is deductible

# Sample: Board Meeting Agenda

**District**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**(Date)**  
**(Time)**  
**Main Street Office**

- I. Call to Order—President (5:30-5:35)
  
- II. Approve Consent Agenda (5:35-5:50)
  - A. Minutes
  - B. Treasurer’s Report
  - C. Committee Reports
  
- III. Committee/Task Force Updates (5:50-6:10)
  - A. Executive
  - B. Organization/Membership and Fundraising
  - C. Promotion
  - D. Design
  - E. Economic Vitality
  
- IV. Director’s Report (6:10-6:20)
  
- V. Ongoing Project /Program (6:20-6:30)
  
- VI. Old Business (6:30-6:40)
  
- VII. New Business (6:40-6:50)
  
- VIII. Adjourn (7:00 p.m.)

If discussion goes over allotted timetable, if it cannot be tabled, decide as a board if you wish to continue and stay late, delegate to a task force and/or eliminate other items.

Note: The consent agenda can be mailed to board members a week before the board meeting to review.

# Sample: Board of Directors Commitment Form

## (Year) Board of Directors Expectations & Commitment Form

*The board of directors of Main Street XXXX is legally and ethically responsible for all activities of the program*

### **I understand my responsibilities as a Board Member are to:**

- Advocate for the organization, educate the community, promote our mission
- Attend at least 75% of scheduled Board Meetings 3rd Wednesdays
- Determine how the organization carries out its mission through long- and short-range planning
- Adopt an annual budget and provide fiscal oversight
- Hire and evaluate the performance of the executive director
- Establish policies for the effective management of the organization
- Approve work plans annually
- Attend the annual Board Retreat.
- Nominate potential new Board Members

### **Annual Fundraising Responsibilities:**

- Become a History Maker, \$100 annual personal gift
- Recruit new Partner Sponsors with an annual goal of \$4,500

### **Annual Volunteer Responsibilities:**

- Be a working member of at least one committee (below)
- Help put up Christmas items at least one Saturday morning in November (at least 2 hours)  
Help take down Christmas items at least one Saturday morning in January (at least 2 hours)

### **COMMITTEES (choose at least one)**

- Economic Vitality Committee business recruitment and retention 1st Wednesdays
- Design Committee – landscaping, architecture and walkability 2nd Tuesdays
- Promotion Committee event planning, participation and Christmas 2nd Thursdays
- Organization Committee – fundraising, membership, policies 4th Tuesdays

I accept the above commitment as an understanding of my role and responsibilities as a member of the Board of Directors.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Board Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# Sample: Letter of Intent

(Date)

Buffy Hughes, Director  
Oklahoma Main Street Center  
Oklahoma Department of Commerce  
900 N. Stiles Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73104

Two representatives from \_\_\_\_\_(town) attended the Oklahoma Main Street Program Application Workshop on [DATE], in [LOCATION] at the OML Conference. Having met this first criterion for application, please accept this letter as evidence that the community of \_\_\_\_\_intends to apply to be a designated Oklahoma Main Street town.

We understand that this in no way binds us to submitting an application. However, a group of citizens is currently working toward completion of the requirements for the \_\_\_\_\_ (Small Towns/Mid-Sized, Urban) application.

If, for any reason, we are unable to complete the application, we will notify you to explain the situation. We understand the application is due in your office no later than 5:00 p.m., [DATE].

Until then, if we have any questions, we will call on you or your staff.

Sincerely,

Contact Person  
Title

# Sample: By-Laws

## Anywhere Downtown Main Street Association

### ARTICLE I Name and Term

The name of this association shall be the Anywhere Downtown Main Street Association (hereinafter ADM-SA), and its duration shall be perpetual. It shall be a nonprofit corporation and seek exemption under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

### ARTICLE II Offices

A. Principal office: The principal office of the ADMSA shall be in the State of Oklahoma, County of Greatness, City of Anywhere. Further, it shall be located within the boundaries of the Anywhere Downtown Main Street Association.

B. Registered office: The registered office of the ADMSA shall be maintained in the State of Oklahoma, and may be, but need not be, identical with the principal office. The address of the registered office may be changed from time to time by resolution of the Board of Directors.

### ARTICLE III Amendments

These by-laws may be amended by resolution at any time by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the entire Board of Directors.

### ARTICLE IV Purposes

A. Promotion: ADMSA shall promote the positive image of the downtown's assets, to include image events, special events and retail sales events. ADMSA shall maintain information regarding revitalization in the downtown area. ADMSA will sponsor cultural, employment and commercial revitalization activities into the downtown area. ADMSA will provide a forum for members to share knowledge, common experiences and problems.

B. Organization: ADMSA will organize and promote constructive relationships between local government bodies and private business and citizens, and to sponsor discussion groups and shall educate and inform citizens and members on topics of common interest and concern to the downtown area. ADMSA will aid in the coordination of zoning, and other regulatory activity affecting the downtown area. ADMSA will support other charitable and educational organizations whose primary interest is to preserve and develop the beauty and economic stability of Anywhere. ADMSA will promote the concerns of the downtown area at the city, county and special district level. ADMSA shall publish community information regarding its activities and other data relevant to downtown revitalization. Such publications may include the following:

1. Planning studies, such as the Resource Team Report.
2. An organization brochure.
3. Tourist and visitor information brochures, maps, and guides.
4. The ADMSA regular newsletter.

C. Economic Vitality: ADMSA will help to diversify the community by recruiting new stores to balance the retail mix; devising and writing marketing packages for interested owners and/or business people who want to recruit new business into their space, aiding potential business owners in finding retail space, and by aiding in the acquiring of adequate financing. ADMSA will provide educational workshops to merchants to direct them in the effective means of strengthening their existing business and how to expand their business base, as deemed appropriate through market surveys and analysis.

D. Design: ADMSA will assist in planning and coordinating the design of improvements in or adjacent to the downtown area. ADMSA will aid in providing design services for buildings and signage. ADMSA will provide information on painting, construction, historic renovation, and preservation. ADMSA will promote and assist in city beautification projects. ADMSA will participate in the planning and development of public interest projects in the downtown area. ADMSA will promote effective redevelopment efforts and assist in planning for the revitalization of the downtown area. ADMSA shall, whenever possible, recommend appropriate uses and design standards for downtown area development.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Powers**

A. General Powers: ADMSA shall have all powers granted by Oklahoma law. It shall also have the power to undertake, either alone or in cooperation with others, any lawful activity which may be necessary or desirable for the furtherance of any or all purposes for which ADMSA is organized.

B. Investment Powers: ADMSA may invest both assets secured by ADMSA, and services provided by ADMSA resulting in development, as program related investments. Any returns from such investment shall be used by ADMSA for: 1) ongoing operational funding; or 2) reinvestment in additional development projects. No portion of the returns will inure to the benefit of any member, director, officer or staff member of ADMSA.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Boundaries and Membership**

A. Boundaries: The boundaries of the downtown district shall be defined as; Bounded by Eleanor Avenue on the south, Betsy Avenue on the north, Andrew Street on the west, and Theodore Street on the east.

B. Membership: There shall be three types of membership in ADMSA: 1) businesses who pay occupational taxes to the City of Anywhere located within the downtown district, 2) real property owners located within the downtown district, and 3) patron members. Dues of occupational tax payees shall be assessed as a surcharge to said occupational tax. Dues from other members shall be collected as the board shall from time to time establish. Dues for each type of membership may be different and shall be in the amounts as may be set from time to time by the board of directors.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Annual Meeting**

The annual meeting of the ADMSA membership shall be the second Tuesday in April or such other time as the board of directors may direct. Members shall be notified by mail at the address listed on their license or membership application more than 30 days before the meeting convenes. The purpose of the annual meeting shall be to complete tallying and announce the board of directors of ADMSA for the following year, and such other business as the board of directors brings before the membership.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Directors**

A. Duties: The board of directors shall manage, set the policy for, and oversee the management of the affairs of ADMSA. They shall control its property, be responsible for its finances, formulate its policy, and direct its affairs. The board of directors may hire an executive director and support personnel. The board of directors may enter into contracts necessary to accomplish the ADMSA goals.

B. Qualifications: There shall be nine members of the board of directors. Any member, employee of a member business, or partner or associate in a member business of ADMSA may be a director. However, there must be a director from both retail and non-retail businesses, as well as real property owner and patron membership categories. There shall not be a majority of any occupation on the board. Directors must be of sound mind and of legal age.

C. Term: Every director shall be elected for a three (3) year term. However, the initial board of directors shall serve staggered terms. Directors on the initial board shall by lot be elected: three for three (3) years, three for two (2) years and three until the first annual meeting.

D. Elections: Directors shall be elected by the membership by mailed ballot. Tallying of ballots shall be completed, and the new directors announced at the Annual Meeting. Every member shall have one vote for each available director's position. Nominations to the ballot slate shall be made either: 1) by petition submitted to the ADMSA office more than 20 days in advance of the annual meeting, signed by nine members; or 2) by the nominating committee, which shall consist of the outgoing board members and the president. Ballots shall be mailed to each member more than 14 and less than 21 days before the annual meeting. Ballots must be received at the ADMSA office by 5 p.m. on the day before the annual meeting. In the event of a tie, a runoff election shall be held by written ballot at the annual meeting. In the event there is not a director elected from a membership category; then the new director with the fewest votes shall not be named, and an election for that position shall be held by written ballot, at the annual meeting.

E. Vacancies: Any director may resign at any time by giving written notice to the ADMSA office. Any vacancy in the board occurring because of death, resignation, refusal to serve, or otherwise shall be filled for the unexpired term by action a majority of the remaining directors. Three consecutive unexcused absences from regular board of director's meetings shall be considered a vacancy.

F. Meetings: The board of directors shall meet at least monthly. The president and/or any three directors may call a meeting of the board. At a duly called meeting of the board of directors, five (5) members shall constitute a quorum. All business of the board of directors shall be transacted at a duly called meeting of the board.

G. Compensation: Directors shall receive no compensation for their services as directors, but the board may by resolution authorize reasonable reimbursement of expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. Nothing herein shall preclude a director from serving ADMSA in any other capacity and receiving reasonable compensation for such service.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Officers**

A. Number of Officers: ADMSA shall have a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and such additional officers as the board of Directors may from time to time designate. Each officer shall serve a one-year term. Officers shall be elected by the board of directors at the first board meeting following the annual meeting of membership.

B. Duties of President: The president shall preside at all meetings of the board of directors, and at the annual meeting ending his or her term of office. The president shall be entitled to the same vote as any other director. The president shall sign all checks and documents pertaining to ADMSA for which the president's signature is necessary or desirable. The president shall have the right to limit the speaking time of any director or member at any meeting.

C. Duties of Vice President: In the absence of the president, or his or her inability to act, the vice president shall possess all the president's powers and discharge all presidential duties. The vice president may also sign any checks or documents necessary for ADMSA.

D. Duties of the Secretary: The secretary shall keep, and preserve, a full and correct record of the proceedings of ADMSA, and sign any checks or documents necessary for ADMSA, and shall perform such other duties as the board may from time to time direct.

E. Duties of Treasurer: The treasurer shall receive and account for, and deposit in the ADMSA bank account all funds received by ADMSA. The treasurer shall sign checks for the ADMSA. At the annual meeting, and at regular board of directors' meetings, the treasurer shall provide a report and summary statement on the financial affairs of ADMSA.

F. Delegation of Officer's Duties: The duties of any officer may be delegated to the executive director, if delegated by the board of directors and included in the executive director's job description.

## **ARTICLE X Committees**

ADMSA shall have the following standing committees:

Design;  
Economic Vitality;  
Promotion; and  
Organization.

ADMSA shall also have such other committees as the board of directors may from time to time establish. Committees shall report at least monthly to the board of directors. At least one director shall serve on each committee. Committees shall be appointed by the president with the approval of the board of directors. Committees need not be limited in membership to ADMSA members, but can have representatives from other relevant areas of the community, if appropriate.

## **ARTICLE XI Corporate Seal**

ADMSA shall have no corporate seal.

## **ARTICLE XII Indemnification**

ADMSA may indemnify any officer or director, or former officer or director, his heirs or assigns, for any and all judgments, settlement amounts, attorneys fees and litigation expenses incurred by him by reason of his having been made a party to litigation due to his capacity or former capacity as officer or director of ADMSA. ADMSA may advance expenses where appropriate. Payments of Indemnification must be reported at the next annual meeting. The provisions of this section apply to any cause of action arising prior to the adoption of these bylaws also. The rights of indemnification set forth herein are not exclusive.

An officer or director is not entitled to indemnification if the cause of action is brought by ADMSA itself against the officer or director, or if it is determined in judgment that the officer or director was derelict in the performance of his duties, or had reason to believe his action was unlawful.

No director, trustee or any uncompensated officer of the corporation shall be personally liable to the corporation or its members for monetary damages for conduct as a director, trustee, or any uncompensated officer provided that this Article shall not eliminate the liability of a director, trustee or any uncompensated officer for any act or omission occurring prior to the date when this article becomes effective and for any act or omission for which eliminated of liability is not permitted under the Oklahoma Nonprofit Corporation Act. Any director, trustee or any uncompensated officer shall be entitled to indemnification for any expenses or liability incurred in his or her capacity as a director, trustee or any other uncompensated officer as provided by the Oklahoma Nonprofit Corporation Act

# Sample: Articles of Incorporation

## Oklahoma Main Street Association

The undersigned, for the purpose of forming an Oklahoma not-for-profit corporation under the provisions of Title 18, Section 101, do hereby adopt the following Articles of Incorporation.

### ARTICLE I

The name of the corporation is the *XXXXX Main Street Association*, and its duration shall be perpetual.

### ARTICLE II

The purposes of this corporation are as follows:

To engage in educational and charitable activities. This corporation is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Articles, this corporation shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from federal income taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

To engage in any lawful activity for which not for profit corporations may be organized under the general corporation law of Oklahoma.

### ARTICLE III

The initial registered office of the corporation in the State of Oklahoma is *23rd and Classen, Oklahoma City, OK, 73126*, and the initial registered agent for the corporation is *Attorney, John Doe*.

### ARTICLE IV

The members of the governing board shall be known as directors, and the number thereof shall be fixed by the bylaws of this corporation. The initial board of directors shall consist of *nine directors*, whose names and addresses are:

*Dewey Doe, P.O. Box 123, Oklahoma City, OK 73126*  
*Tom Smith, P.O. Box 456, Oklahoma City, OK 73126*  
*Jane Jones, P.O. Box 789, Oklahoma City, OK 73126*  
*Linda Johnson, P.O. Box 1011, Oklahoma City, OK 73126*  
*Al Luminum, P.O. Box 1213, Oklahoma City, OK 73126*  
*Charles Mansard, P.O. Box 1415, Oklahoma City, OK 73126*  
*Willie Nelson, P.O. Box 1617, Oklahoma City, OK 73126*  
*George Strait, P.O. Box 1819, Oklahoma City, OK 73126*  
*Merle Haggard, P.O. Box 2021, Oklahoma City, OK 73126*

### ARTICLE V

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article II hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in, any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding sections of any future federal tax code.

## ARTICLE VI

Upon dissolution of the corporation, assets shall be distributed to a not for profit fund, foundation, or corporation which has established its tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

## ARTICLE VII

These articles may be amended as provided by Oklahoma law. However, no amendment may be made to Articles V and VI.

## ARTICLE VIII

No director, trustee or any uncompensated officer of the corporation shall be personally liable to the corporation or its members for monetary damages for conduct as a director, trustee, or any uncompensated officer provided that this article shall not eliminate the liability of a director, trustee or any uncompensated officer for any act or omission occurring prior to the date when this article becomes effective and for any act or omission for which elimination of liability is not permitted under the Oklahoma Not for Profit Corporation Act. Any director, trustee or uncompensated officer shall be entitled to indemnification for any expenses or liability incurred in his or her capacity as a director, trustee or any other uncompensated officer as provided by the Oklahoma Not for Profit Corporation Act.

## ARTICLE IX

The names and addresses of the incorporators are:

*Dewey Doe, P.O. Box 123, Oklahoma City, OK 73126*

*Tom Smith, P.O. Box 456, Oklahoma City, OK 73126*

*Jane Jones, P.O. Box 789, Oklahoma City, OK 73126*

*Linda Johnson, P.O. Box 1011, Oklahoma City, OK 73126*

We, the undersigned incorporators, declare under penalty of perjury, that we have read the forgoing and to the best of our knowledge and belief, it is true, correct, and complete. *Dated this 11th day of July, 20XX.*

---

*Dewey Doe*

---

*Tom Smith*

---

*Jane Jones*

---

*Linda Johnson*



## Oklahoma Main Street Center

Oklahoma Department of Commerce

900 North Stiles, Oklahoma City, OK 73104

Phone: 405-815-6552

Toll Free: 800-879-6552

[Okcommerce.gov/main-street](http://Okcommerce.gov/main-street)