OREGON MAIN STREET

Where Place and Time meet

OREGON

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

CONTACT INFORMATION

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www.oregon.gov/ECDD/mainstreet

Main Street Principles

❶Comprehensive
❷Incremental
❸Self Help
❹Public/Private Partnerships
❺Identifying and Capitalizing on Existing Assets
❻Quality
❼Change
❽Action Oriented

Oregon Main Street Program

The Oregon Main Street Program provides assistance, training, technical services, and grants to communities who want to preserve, revitalize, and establish their downtown commercial districts. The program is a locally driven process following the proven Main Street Approach™ which is a practical and comprehensive model that capitalizes on the unique assets of their downtown. The goal is to build a high quality, livable, and sustainable communities that will grow Oregon's economy.

The Oregon Main Street Program was started in 2008 to rebuild and grow the successful Main Street Program that operated from 1986 through 2002. The program is coordinated with the National Main Street Center, a division of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, state agencies, and state organizations. The Oregon Main Street Program will have a competitive process for Main Street designation, and will provide designed services to communities learning about the Main Street Approach™ to those advancing their downtown program.

The Main Street Approach™

Main Street
NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Main Street Approach™ is a proven comprehensive approach to downtown commercial district revitalization. This approach has been implemented in over 1,800 cities and towns in 45 states across the nation with the help of the National Main Street Center and statewide downtown revitalization programs. The success of the Main Street Approach™ is based on its comprehensive nature. By fully integrating four points into a practical downtown management strategy, a local program will produce fundamental changes in a community's economic base:

Organization involves building a Main Street™ framework that is well represented by business and property owners, bankers, citizens, public officials, chambers of commerce, and other local economic development organizations. Everyone must work together to renew downtown. A strong organization provides the stability to build and maintain a long-term effort.

Promotion creates excitement downtown. Street festivals, parades, retail events, and image development campaigns are some of the ways Main Street™ encourages customer traffic. Promotion involves marketing an enticing image to shoppers, investors, and visitors.

Design enhances the attractiveness of the business district. Historic building rehabilitation, street and alley clean-up, colorful banners, landscaping, and lighting all improve the physical image of the downtown as a quality place to shop, work, walk, invest in, and live. Design improvements result in a reinvestment of public and private dollars to downtown.

Economic Restructuring involves analyzing current market forces to develop long-term solutions. Recruiting new businesses, creatively converting unused space for new uses, and sharpening the competitiveness of Main Street's traditional merchants are examples of economic restructuring activities.

Meeting the Needs of Oregon Communities

The Oregon Main Street Program will provide assistance to all communities in Oregon whether they are just beginning to explore options for their downtown or seeking national recognition as a Main Street™ City. This will be accomplished with three levels of requirements, services, and community commitments. The services of the Oregon Main Street program will be tailored to meet the specific or typical needs of communities at their particular stage of downtown revitalization. These levels include;

Exploring Downtown is for those communities that demonstrate an interest in revitalizing their downtowns and want to learn mores about the Main Street Approach™.

Transforming Downtown is for communities who are committed to downtown revitalization using the Main Street Approach™ but need technical assistance to take them to the next level.

Performing Main Street is for those communities who were previously certified Nation Main Street cities and those communities with advanced downtown programs following the Main Street Approach.

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Benefits of Oregon Main Street

The Main Street Approach is a comprehensive approach to economic development of downtown commercial districts. It requires commitment and collaboration from the community to build a successful program. This process follows eight common sense principals that have proven to achieve results in over 1800 cities with an average of $28 return on every dollar invested. The Main Street Approach can provide;

- Improved image and community pride
- Historical education and preservation of valuable local assets
- Increased occupancy rates
- Business retention, recruitment, expansion, and jobs
- Reduced vandalism and crime
- Technical assistance, funding opportunities, finance assistance, and training
- New business and job opportunities
- Promotion and marketing of community
- Increased variety of services
- Increased investment

Following this model, communities will see positive incremental changes in their downtown; however, real reinvestment and improvement in the local economy typically does not occur until after three years. To be successful, this is a long-term commitment.

Partners and the Main Street Approach™
City and County Government

Without the support and involvement of local government, it is doubtful that a downtown revitalization program will achieve long-lasting success. Local government can help provide the financial and information resources, technical skills and leadership to the revitalization effort. Because local government plays a major role in directing the community's economic growth, it must be an active participant in restructuring the downtown's economic base and developing innovative solutions to downtown issues. Direct benefits to the Local Government include;

- increased tax base
- more tourism
- increased property values
- increased number of jobs
- better goals and vision
- healthy economy
- Improved local services
- positive perception of downtown and community
- better relations between city hall and private sector
- takes political heat, develop consensus for political requests (avoid "victimization")
- industrial recruitment
- impetus for public improvements and CDBG grant funding
- increased volunteer base for city
- education resources for city leaders on planning and economic development

Indirect benefits to the City will be developed from the efforts of the downtown committees for organization, design, promotion, and economic restructuring. The Oregon Main Street Program can also provide technical assistance through consultants, trainers, and response teams, many of which may be open to other local organizations and businesses. Long term benefits that may come from the design efforts could include;

- building façade improvements
- improved business signage and directional signs
- development of ordinances that preserve identity
- improved lighting, streetscape improvements
- community cleanliness and safety

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Retail & Service Sector
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Chambers of Commerce
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Local Internet Providers
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Garden Clubs
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Public Utilities

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Partners and the Main Street Approach™

Chambers of Commerce

The chamber of commerce is an important player in most downtown revitalization programs because of its interest in the community's commercial development. The chamber can help the downtown program by providing liaison with local and regional economic development agencies, helping businesses expand, recruiting new businesses and sharing information resources. It is important to remember that the chamber must be concerned with community-wide development. Focusing too much on the downtown can contradict its direct mission.

Chambers and their membership will benefit from the work and information developed from the local Main Street program including;

- Information on vacancy rates
- New construction and remodeling statistics
- Jobs gained or lost
- Market analysis
- Niche and cluster studies
- Downtown festivals
- Downtown promotion
- Increased tourism
- Business assistance

Many indirect benefits to Chambers and their members will be developed from the efforts of the standing committees for organization, design, promotion, and economic restructuring. The Oregon Main Street Program can also provide technical assistance through consultants, trainers, and response teams, many of which may be open to other local organizations and businesses. Long term benefits that may come from the design efforts could include;

- Building façade improvements
- Improved business signage and directional signs
- Development of ordinances that preserve identity
- Improved lighting, streetscape improvements
- Community cleanliness and safety

Support your local program by getting involved, staying involved, keeping informed, and communicating accurate information to your members.

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Partners and the Main Street Approach™
Historical & Preservation Organizations

Local Main Street Programs need the support of local historical and preservation groups to achieve long-lasting success. Preservation projects can be complex and can take years to develop plans, acquire funding, and create the partnerships needed. Having this partnership with the local historical and preservation organizations will provide the continuity needed to successfully revitalize the downtown. Direct benefits to the local historical and preservation organizations include;

- increased awareness of the benefits of preservation
- provides another advocate for preservation projects
- integrates preservation goals into a comprehensive downtown plan
- positive perception of downtown and community
- better relations between city hall and private sector on preservation issues
- can help recruit businesses and developers for key renovations
- be more competitive for grants and funding
- quick response on building code issues
- increase volunteer base for your organizations
- education resources for your organization

Indirect benefits to the City will be developed from the efforts of the downtown committees for organization, design, promotion, and economic restructuring. The Oregon Main Street Program will also provide technical assistance through consultants, trainers, and response teams, many of which may be available to other local organizations and businesses. Long term benefits that may come from this process will include;

- architectural design assistance
- matching funds for façade renovations
- improved business signage and directional signs
- development of ordinances that preserve identity
- compatible lighting, streetscape improvements
- compatible infill or replacement development
- cascade effect to surrounding historical neighborhoods

"all of us, if we are reasonably comfortable, healthy and safe, owe immense debts to the past. There is no way of course, to repay the past. We can only repay those debts by making gifts to the future." Jane Jacobs

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