



# SUMMARY OF OREGON MAIN STREET NETWORK SERVICES

## Introduction to the Oregon Main Street Network

A healthy, thriving downtown or neighborhood commercial district is an asset to any community. This is especially true if the community is endeavoring to preserve its historic character, sustain or grow its local economy, and create or retain jobs. Oregon Main Street provides resources, education, training, and services that preserve and enhance the built environment, protect local heritage and cultural resources, and stimulate the economic vitality of participating communities.

Oregon Main Street uses the successful Main Street® methodology developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as its foundation for assistance. This approach emphasizes four critical areas of revitalization: **organization** helps everyone work towards the same goals and maximizes involvement of public and private leaders within the community; **promotion** brings people back downtown by helping to attract visitors, shoppers, and investors; **design** enhances a district's appearance and pedestrian amenities while preserving its historic features; and **economic restructuring** stimulates business development and helps strengthen the district's economic base.

Services are offered through a tiered system. If your community wishes to use the Main Street Approach® in a non-traditional setting or just wants to receive notification of workshops and conferences sponsored by Oregon Main Street, there is the **Affiliate** level. For communities exploring the possibility of future Main Street designation and wish to learn more about using the Main Street Approach®, there is the **Exploring Downtown** level. The **Transforming Downtown** level is for communities that are working towards implementing the Main Street Approach® and need assistance in developing a sustainable organizational structure. And, the **Performing Main Street** level is for communities that have a non-profit organization focused solely on the historic commercial district in place with a high degree of commitment and readiness towards using the Main Street Approach®.

## Affiliate Services

The Affiliate option provides an opportunity to learn more about the Main Street Approach® to downtown revitalization by receiving an invitation to attend workshops and conferences sponsored by Oregon Main Street. It is particularly for communities who wish to apply the Main Street Approach® in a non-traditional setting. Enrolled cities can receive the following types of assistance:

- Invitation and notification of all statewide Oregon Main Street workshops and conferences.
- "Introduction to the Main Street Approach®" Community Presentation (as requested).
- Phone technical assistance.

## General Eligibility Criteria: Exploring Downtown, Transforming Downtown, or Performing Main Street Communities

All organizations applying for Exploring Downtown, Transforming Downtown, or Performing Main Street designation must meet the following general eligibility criteria:

1. The boundaries/primary focus area of the organization must be that of a historic downtown or neighborhood commercial district—basically a “Main Street” district. This area must be:
  - a. A traditional central business district and center for socio-economic interaction.
  - b. Characterized by a cohesive core of historic or older commercial and mixed-use buildings that represent the community’s architectural heritage. It may also include compatible in-fill development.
  - c. Have a sufficient mass of businesses, buildings, and density to be effective.
  - d. Typically arranged with most of the buildings side-by-side and fronting the sidewalk along a main street with intersecting side streets.
  - e. Compact, easily walkable, and pedestrian-oriented.
2. In general, districts containing newer, lower-density automobile oriented commercial development (e.g., sprawl), strip malls, and enclosed shopping/entertainment centers will not qualify for designation unless they are fully integrated into the fabric of a traditional “Main Street” district.
3. Preferably, all or part of the main street district would be listed in, or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. National Register designation provides added marketing appeal and tax incentives for building improvements.

### **“Exploring Downtown” Services (Beginner Level)**

Oregon Main Street provides Exploring Downtown level organizations a range of services and assistance to meet a variety of community commitment and readiness levels. It is for communities that are just starting a downtown revitalization effort and wish to explore using the Main Street Approach®. Enrolled cities can receive the following types of assistance:

- Invitation and notification of all statewide Oregon Main Street workshops and conferences.
- “Introduction to the Main Street Approach®” Community Presentation (as requested).
- Board Work Plan Retreat facilitated by OMS staff (as requested).
- Reconnaissance level historic building surveys.
- Telephone consultations.
- Oregon Main Street list serve access.
- Resource lending library access.
- Eligibility for the “Excellence in Downtown Revitalization” Awards.

### **Participation Requirements**

Any city, town, or downtown organization participating at the Exploring Downtown level is expected to:

#### **A. Provide a local contact**

Communities at the Exploring Downtown level are not required to have a local program representative dedicated to downtown revitalization through the Main Street Approach. The Oregon Main Street Coordinator will work with the individual identified as the “Key Contact” in the application form. Typical responsibilities for the local program contact will be making arrangements for meeting space, notifying partners of upcoming meetings, coordinating community announcements, and leading activities for local organization efforts.

#### **B. Consider forming a downtown revitalization organization**

At the Exploring Downtown level, communities are not required to have an independent downtown revitalization organization in place. We do encourage communities to explore the different options for

undertaking a focused, comprehensive effort and consider where it is best for the community to start the revitalization organization.

### **C. Commit to learning and using the Main Street Approach® and Eight Principles**

Successful downtown organizations work systematically through a work plan stating goals and objectives based on the Four-Point, eight-principle Main Street Approach® to downtown revitalization—concentrating attention on issues related to Design, Organization, Promotion, and Economic Restructuring. While the approach is tailored to each community, all technical assistance is geared to this successful model.

### **D. Complete the Exploring Downtown Application**

#### **The Enrollment Process**

A brief application form must be completed by the sponsoring organization or local government representative. Application for the Oregon Main Street Exploring Downtown level may be submitted at any time. The state coordinator will review the application and send an official letter to the designated local contact acknowledging acceptance at the Exploring Downtown level.

### **“Transforming Downtown” Services (Intermediate Level)**

The primary emphasis of the **Transforming Downtown level** is to provide technical assistance to communities selected during their program’s formative years. Selected cities can expect to receive the following types of assistance.

- Reconnaissance Visits
- “Introduction to the Main Street Approach®” Community Presentation
- Assistance in hiring a downtown Director/Program Manager
- New Executive Director/Program Manager Orientation
- Main Street Starter Kits from the National Main Street Center
- Developing Mission and Vision Statements
- Board and Committee Roles and Responsibility Training
- Facilitate Goal Setting/Board Retreat
- Development of a First Year Work Plan
- Reconnaissance level historic surveys
- Regional Training and Annual Conference
- Quarterly Network Meetings
- Local Program Evaluations
- Scholarships and discounts to national conferences
- Public Relations Assistance
- Telephone Consultation
- First Year Membership in the National Main Street Center
- Customized Technical Assistance Visits
- Access to the Oregon Main Street Program’s Resource Library and Four-Point Files
- Access to Oregon Main Street list serve

### **Participation Requirements**

Communities selected to participate in the Oregon Transforming Downtown Program must agree to:

#### **A. Guarantee a dedicated local program representative**

Communities at the Transforming Downtown level are required to have a local program representative dedicate a minimum of 20% of their time (an average of one day per week) to assisting downtown revitalization efforts. This includes time working with the State Coordinator, contractors, and consultants that will work with the communities during the agreement period. The local program representative can be a volunteer or paid employee from the local government, local non-profit organization, membership organization, or other organization with a commitment to downtown revitalization. The local community must understand that a long-term commitment to the downtown revitalization will require the formation of an organization and paid staff.

#### **B. Guarantee adequate support for the local program representative**

Each community is encouraged to generate in-kind or paid assistance from the local municipality, private business, or through a volunteer organization. This is considered very important for the long-term viability of a program.

#### **C. Work on forming a downtown revitalization organization**

A lasting downtown revitalization effort will only succeed in communities having a well structured, ongoing, and active downtown development organization. Such groups assume responsibility for certain tasks such as downtown promotions, facilitation of private sector building improvements and other cooperative projects. The downtown organization is responsible for establishing the overall direction of local revitalization efforts, program budget, and staffing. This organization should ultimately become a major resource for local government on all matters affecting the downtown. This entails building a certain amount of trust and understanding of each entity's interrelated role.

#### **D. Commit to learning and using the Main Street Approach®**

Successful downtown organizations work systematically through a work plan stating goals and objectives based on the Four-Point, Eight-Principle Main Street Approach® to downtown revitalization—concentrating attention on issues related to Design, Organization, Promotion, and Economic Restructuring. While the approach is tailored to each community, all technical assistance is geared to this successful model.

#### **E. Participate in training sessions scheduled by OMS throughout the year**

The designated local program representative is required to attend Oregon Main Street Network meetings and trainings unless excused by the OMS Coordinator. Other community members are encouraged to attend.

#### **F. Complete the Application Process**

The competitive application process is open once per year or as resources allow.

#### **G. Enter into a 2-Year Participation Agreement with Oregon Main Street**

Oregon Main Street's ability to assist a community in the revitalization of its downtown is dependent upon the level of local commitment and involvement. For this reason, Oregon Main Street asks the local government to pass a resolution that endorses the local application effort. If selected, the sponsoring organization or local government must sign a Participation Agreement with Oregon Main Street that clearly specifies the responsibilities of the local program and those of the Oregon Main Street.

#### **H. National Register of Historic Places Nomination.**

In coordination with the historic preservation program, explore options for nominating all or part of the Main Street district for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

## **Other Selection Criteria for Transforming Downtown Designation**

The following additional selection criteria will be used to evaluate all Transforming Downtown applications.

1. Fulfillment of eligibility requirements.
2. Strong commitment from the municipal government and various private sector organizations to support the local revitalization efforts and a clear understanding that the Main Street Approach® is a process that will require commitment.
3. Designate a local program representative for a minimum of 20% time commitment and provide support for the local program.
4. The community's need for commercial district revitalization/preservation.
5. The likelihood that demonstrable change will occur in the commercial district as a result of the community's participation in the Transforming Downtown Program.
6. Past record of community development efforts.
7. The community's readiness to begin a downtown revitalization effort.
8. Broad-based community support.

## **“Performing Main Street” Services (Advanced Level)**

The primary emphasis of the **Performing Main Street level** is to provide technical assistance to communities competitively selected during their program's formative years and to provide sustaining services for mature programs. Selected cities and towns can expect to receive the following types of assistance:

- Assistance in Hiring a downtown Executive Director/Program Manager
- New Executive Director/Program Manager Orientation
- Main Street Starter Kits from the National Main Street Center
- Developing Mission and Vision Statements
- Board Roles and Responsibilities Training
- Main Street 101 Training
- Facilitate Annual Goal Setting
- Development of a First Year Work Plan
- Resource Team Visit
- Reconnaissance level historic survey
- Oregon Main Street Network Meetings
- Quarterly Oregon Main Street Network trainings and Annual Statewide conference
- Scholarships and discounts to national downtown conferences
- Local Program Evaluations
- Public Relations Assistance, including state-wide promotion through web site, signage, brochure, and press releases
- Telephone Consultation
- First Year Membership in the National Main Street Center
- Customized Technical Assistance
- Access to the Oregon Main Street Program's Resource Library and Four-Point Files
- Access to Oregon Main Street List Serve

## **Participation Requirements**

Communities selected to participate at the **Performing Main Street level** must agree to:

**A. Guarantee employment of an Executive Director or Program Manager**

Experience has demonstrated the need for a local Executive Director or Program Manager for the downtown—someone who can market the downtown, plan and carry out promotional and development projects, administer the local downtown organization, and help volunteers implement its objectives. In small-sized communities (populations of less than 5,000), national experience shows that an Executive Director or Program Manager can work part-time (a minimum of 25 hours per week), while larger communities need a full-time manager (minimum of 40 hours per week). Eligible communities must commit to hire a paid Executive Director or Program Manager according to these guidelines.

**B. Guarantee that an adequate and sustainable operating budget will be funded on an ongoing basis and that this application must include the first three (3) years of committed pledges**

Besides funds to pay an Executive Director/Program Manager’s salary, downtown revitalization organizations must provide an adequate operating budget to cover expenditures for travel, training, promotions, office rent, telephone service, computers, printing, postage, clerical assistance, and other miscellaneous expenses. The amount of the budget will vary from community to community depending on size, needs, and the area’s cost-of-living. Municipalities that fund a portion of the Main Street Program should see this as an investment. After the initial three years, it is logical and necessary that the community would continue funding a successful program. The more successful a program is the more reason for the municipality to increase the organization’s responsibility and funding. Applicants must develop adequate growth-oriented budgets for a minimum of the program’s first three years.

**Communities must show they and their funders are aware that the Main Street program is an on-going program—not a three year project.**

**C. Have an existing revitalization organization or commit to organize one**

A lasting downtown revitalization effort will only succeed in communities having a well structured, ongoing, and active downtown development organization. Such groups assume responsibility for certain tasks such as downtown promotions, facilitation of private sector building improvements, and other cooperative projects. The downtown organization is responsible for establishing the overall direction of local revitalization efforts, program budget, and staffing. This organization should ultimately become a major resource for local government on all matters affecting the downtown. This entails building a certain amount of trust and understanding of each entity’s interrelated role.

**D. Commit to using the Main Street Approach®**

Successful downtown organizations and their staff work systematically through a work plan stating goals and objectives based on the Four-Point, eight-principle Main Street approach to downtown revitalization – concentrating attention on issues related to Design, Organization, Promotion, and Economic Restructuring. While the approach is tailored to each community, all technical assistance is geared to this successful model.

**E. Participate in training sessions scheduled by OMS throughout the year**

Program Director or Manager’s attendance at managers’ meetings is mandatory unless excused by the OMS Coordinator. Board and committee members are encouraged to attend.

**F. Promote historic preservation in the Main Street district.**

In coordination with the city’s historic preservation program, encourage and follow through on projects that enhance the character of the historic district, including building rehabilitation.

**G. Share information with other Main Street programs.**

If requested, be willing to mentor or assist developing Oregon local programs.

## **H. Complete the Application Process.**

The competitive application process is open once per year or as resources allow.

## **I. Enter into a 2-Year Participation Agreement with Oregon Main Street.**

Oregon Main Street's ability to assist a community in the revitalization of its downtown is dependent upon the level of local commitment and involvement. For this reason, we ask the selected downtown organization to sign a Participation Agreement with Oregon Main Street that clearly specifies the responsibilities of the downtown organization and those of local Main Street program. The municipality is expected to pass a resolution that endorses the local Main Street program's application.

## **Other Selection Criteria for Performing Main Street Designation**

The following additional selection criteria will be used to evaluate all Oregon Performing Main Street applications.

1. Fulfillment of eligibility requirements.
2. Strong commitment from the municipal government and various private sector organizations to support a local Main Street Program and a clear understanding that Main Street is an ongoing program, with funding needs beyond three years.
3. An adequate local budget and evidence of funding commitments to fund the local program. Pledge letters demonstrating at least three years worth of funding must be submitted with the application.
4. A commitment by the community to hire a paid Executive Director or Program Manager and hire or provide clerical assistance.
5. The existence of, or willingness to establish, a private independent corporation that is locally designated as the governing body and policy board for the local Main Street Program. Or, establish a formal affiliation with a similar organization that has a focus on the downtown.
6. The community's true need for commercial district revitalization/preservation.
7. The likelihood that demonstrable change will occur in the commercial district as a result of the community's participation in the **Oregon Main Street Program**.
8. Past record of community and economic development efforts.
9. Past record of commercial district revitalization efforts.
10. Community familiarity with the concepts and principles of the Main Street Approach.
11. The existence of local historic preservation activity and architecturally or historically significant commercial buildings in the target area, including buildings or districts on the State or National Register of Historic Places.
12. Current Main Street or central business district demographics, such as business mix, employment data, housing, size, and position of the commercial district.
13. The community's readiness to begin a Main Street Program.
14. Broad-based community support.