

2025 Excellence on Main Awards

General Information, Categories, Nomination Criteria

NOMINATION DEADLINE: June 20, 2025 (11:59 p.m.)



GENERAL INFORMATION

Eligible Applicants: The Excellence on Main Awards is open to communities participating in the Oregon Main Street Network at the Accredited Main Street, Designated Main Street, and Affiliated Main Street levels.

Project Time Frame: If applicable, all projects must have been completed between July 2023 and June 2025. Projects or activities that received an award in previous years are not eligible unless there have been substantial changes or additions made during the nomination timeframe.

Registration for the Online Application System: To access the application, register at oprgrants.org. If you already have an account, then request through Kuri.Gill@oregon.gov or 503-986-0685 to add Excellence on Main Awards option to your account. Log in using your email address and your password. See online registration instructions for detailed directions to use the online grant system. <https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/OH/Pages/Grants.aspx#one>

Application Submission: Once you have a login, you will be able to submit your application. You can enter information, save, log out, log back in, enter more, etc. as many times as you would like before you submit. Instructions for OPRD: Grants Online visit our website. <https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/OH/Pages/Grants.aspx>

Review: A jury of downtown revitalization peers will review nominations to evaluate how the nomination meets the criteria described under each of the nomination categories. The jury reserves the right to eliminate categories if a reasonable number of nominees haven't been submitted in each category. Award judges also reserve the right to move a nomination to a different category.

Winners: Winners will be announced at a special Awards Celebration during the Oregon Main Street Conference from October 8-10, in Albany, Oregon. The recipient of the award is expected to be present to accept their award in-person. Each recipient is allowed 2 to 3 minutes to speak at the Awards Celebration.

Other:

- A minimum of ten digital images must be submitted with your nomination. All images become the property of Oregon Main Street and may be used for future presentations and publications.
- A video clip of up to 3 minutes in length may be submitted in addition to the required materials when it is necessary to show the full scope (or ambiance) of the project. Videos submitted with your entries become the property of the Oregon Main Street and may be used for future presentations.
- Each project or activity may only be nominated in one category.
- For purposes of this award, projects or activities must be within the boundary of the downtown or neighborhood commercial district identified in the map Oregon Main Street has on file for your organization.

Questions? Contact Sheri.Stuart@oregon.gov or 503.551.3705.

NOMINATION INFORMATION

Please Note: All nominations are required to be submitted using our on-line system. To help you prepare to submit the nomination, the questions are identified below. **Make sure to review the award category summaries for additional information to submit when answering the questions below.** You are encouraged to complete the award nomination in a word document to ensure you address all the criteria to consider as you answer the questions before copying and pasting into the on-line system.

1. Project Information

- a. Project Name: Use the Category and Project/Name (Partnership – New business welcome project)

- b. Brief Project Description: Please provide a brief summary of the person project, or activity in one or two sentences.
- c. Project start date: If it is a person award or not a specific event date, use July 1, 2023.
- d. Project end date: If it is a person award use or not a specific event date, use May 31, 2025.
- e. Site name: Use the community or district name.
- f. Site City/Town/Area: Use the city name.
- g. Site County: Enter county.
- h. Site Description: N/A
- i. Site Acreage: Enter '1'.
- j. Latitude and Longitude: Follow the instructions using the Lat/Long button to enter the information.

2. Contact Information – This auto-fills from the account information.

3. Supplemental Information

- a. Nomination Name
- b. Nomination Category (Select One)

*Outstanding
Partnership*

*Leadership on
Main*

*Executive Director
(or Main Street
Manager) of the
Year*

*Standout
Volunteer*

*Outstanding
Promotional Event*

*Bricks and Mortar
Rehabilitation*

Best New Building

*Creative
Placemaking*

*Business of the
Year*

Economic Vitality

*Main Street
Resilience &
Innovation Award*

Open Door Award

- c. Describe the person, project, or activity you are nominating. Refer to the category description for additional information to submit.
- d. Describe the impact the person, project, or activity has had on improving your downtown or neighborhood commercial district and the businesses located there. If a project or activity, are there secondary or spin off effects? For instance, did the rehab of a particular building spur additional investment downtown or have an effect on a nearby business?
- e. Please tell us why this person, project, or activity should be considered for an Excellence on Main award. What lessons were learned and what can be taken away from your experience?
- f. Additional Information: Is there anything else you would like us to know about this nomination?

4. Attachments: High resolution photos/images are required for all submissions in jpeg or tiff format. Submit ten (10) to fifteen (15) images digitally with brief corresponding descriptions and photo credits – these will be used in the videos of all recipients. Please feel free to submit images of pamphlets, promotional materials, or newspaper articles if appropriate. These are used for the selection process and to create the award videos if selected.

AWARD CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO INCLUDE IN NARRATIVE

1. **Outstanding Partnership:** This award is designed to recognize a Main Street program and partner(s) who have demonstrated the highest and best degree of cooperation to improve and enhance your downtown.

Include in your narrative:

- Identify the partners, how the relationship was formed, and how the partners worked together.
- A description of the project undertaken, including scope, location, planning, fundraising, etc.
- Submit 10+ photos of the project and of the partnership in action to highlight your narrative.

2. **Leadership on Main Award:** Leadership is at the heart of community building. This award recognizes an individual who has shown extraordinary dedication to their local Main Street over a significant period of time. Nominees may be committee volunteers, board members, or other community leaders involved in the Main Street program.

Include in your narrative:

- Their leadership – in terms of expertise, commitment, and focus on empowering others – should be clearly demonstrated in the nomination.
- Submit 10+ photos to highlight your narrative including some of your nominee in action.

3. **Standout Volunteer:** We know that Main Streets are only as strong as their volunteer leaders. This non-competitive category is a way for local Main Street programs to recognize their outstanding volunteers. You may nominate one individual per year to be recognized with a certificate at the Excellence on Main awards and in subsequent promotional materials.

Include in your narrative:

- How the volunteer has been an integral part of the local program and their impact.
- Submit 10+ photographs to highlight your narrative including some of your volunteer in action or the project they worked on.
- Additional information such as news articles, number of volunteer hours, statistics, or other information to support the nomination.

4. **Executive Director (or Main Street Manager) of the Year:** This award will be given to a Main Street Executive Director or Main Street Manager from an Accredited Main Street or Designated Main Street level community for the overall impact they have had in their downtown and main street organization.

Include in your narrative:

- How the executive director has been a positive force behind the program's success including support for the board and committees, resource to downtown business and property owners, and fostering collaboration with other organizations and partners.
- Submit 10+ photographs to highlight your narrative including some of the executive director in action.
- Additional information such as news articles, statistics, or other information to support the nomination.

5. **Outstanding Promotional Event:** Nominations should be made for creative and effective image campaigns, special events, or other promotional projects that market to and attract people to the downtown or neighborhood commercial district.

Include in your narrative:

- Information about the target audience, goal of the event, and how it's grown (or, If this is a first-year event, how it was embraced by the community).
- What role local businesses played, and significant in-kind donations.
- Submit 10+ photos to highlight the narrative including of the event or activity, as well as pdfs or jpeg of posters, flyers, or image materials as appropriate.

6. **Bricks & Mortar Rehabilitation**: This award is designed to recognize building owners or programs that positively impact preservation efforts. This may submit façade improvements, restoration projects, adaptive reuse, and more.

Include in your narrative:

- Historic preservation elements of the project.
- Creativity and impact within budget or constraints.
- Please provide a brief history of the building (if appropriate), its significance to the community, and how the project benefits the Main Street district.
- Any financial incentives, including tax credits, used.
- How your Main Street program was involved with the project.
- Submit 10+ photos to highlight the narrative including before, during construction and after photos of the project, preferably from the same angle.

7. **Best New Building Project**: This award is granted to the individual, business or organization that has constructed the best new building or building addition in a downtown area.

Include in your narrative:

- The quality of the design and how it integrates with the surrounding architecture.
- If the building is occupied at the time of the nomination deadline, what is the use of the new structure and how well does the new business or tenant complement the existing business mix in the downtown.
- Submit 10+ photos highlighting the narrative including before photos of the lot, during construction, and of the completed project.

8. **Creative Placemaking Project**: Placemaking capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being. This award will honor those who have implemented attractive and sympathetic improvements for a public area in the historic district.

Include in your narrative:

- Information about the project goal and community impact.
- Key groups/individuals involved and their respective roles.
- How the project fits with the overall Main Street goals and objectives.
- Describe any post-project evaluation and lessons learned.
- Submit 10+ photos to highlight the narrative, including before, during, and after photos.

9. **Business of the Year**: This award is designed to recognize the innovation, dedication, and entrepreneurial spirit displayed by our entrepreneurs and small businesses. Nominations should be made for a business located in the downtown or neighborhood commercial district that has increased its volume of business, expanded operations, and demonstrated a strong commitment to downtown revitalization.

Include in your narrative:

- The business's history with the local Main Street program and in downtown.
- Examples of its involvement in efforts to sustain and enhance downtown.
- How the business exemplifies the best in quality, merchandising, and community spirit.
- Submit 10+ photos to highlight your narrative including some of the business owner, interior and exterior of the nominated business.

10. **Economic Vitality**: This award is designed to recognize economic enhancement efforts within the downtown district. Nominations should be made for projects that have resulted in substantially improving the economic vitality of the district including job creation and retention, sales growth, profitability and reinvestments, increased assets and an influx of new dollars from outside the area.

Include in your narrative:

- Explain scope of and elements of program/project.
- How and why this project identified.

- Financial incentives and assistance offered.
- Role of your local Main Street program.
- Impact on the downtown or target audiences.
- Submit 10+ photos demonstrating economic vitality to support the narrative.

11. Main Street Resilience & Innovation Award: This award honors businesses, individuals, and projects that demonstrate the power of perseverance, collaboration, and creativity in strengthening their downtowns. Nominations should recognize special projects that make a lasting impact—whether through fundraising initiatives, customer service programs, resiliency in overcoming challenges, or unique one-time efforts that bring people together and inspire positive change. This award celebrates those who go above and beyond to ensure their communities remain strong, vibrant, and connected.

Include in your narrative:

- Description of the project or challenge.
- The goals of the project and how they were met or exceeded.
- What was innovative about this approach to the issues, opportunity, or challenge?
- Submit 10+ photos highlighting the narrative.

12. Open Door Award: This award celebrates those who open doors, ensuring Main Street is a place where everyone belongs and thrives. It honors initiatives that build community by celebrating diversity, supporting underrepresented groups, and amplifying new voices.

Include in your narrative:

- The people, project, or event your main street organization identified to foster inclusivity and create a welcoming space for all.
- Impact because of undertaking your project or event.
- Submit 10+ photos highlighting the narrative and featuring the people, project, or event.