



**National Main Street
Center**
a subsidiary of the
National Trust for Historic Preservation

WHAT IS MAIN STREET ABOUT NMSC SERVICES RESOURCES

SEARCH

The Main Street Four-Point Approach®

As a unique economic development tool, the **Main Street Four-Point Approach®** is the foundation for local initiatives to revitalize their districts by leveraging local assets—from cultural or architectural heritage to local enterprises and community pride.

*For the longest time, we all waited for a white knight to ride into town and fix the problem. But the Main Street people made us realize that the only way to get it done right was to do it ourselves."
Russell Thomas, mayor of Americus, Georgia*

The four points of the Main Street approach work together to build a sustainable and complete community revitalization effort.

Also read: [The Eight Guiding Principles](#)

Organization

Organization establishes consensus and cooperation by building partnerships among the various groups that have a stake in the commercial district. By getting everyone working toward the same goal, your Main Street program can provide effective, ongoing management and advocacy for the your downtown or neighborhood business district. Through volunteer recruitment and collaboration with partners representing a broad cross section of the community, your program can incorporate a wide range of perspectives into its efforts. A governing board of directors and standing committees make up the fundamental organizational structure of volunteer-driven revitalization programs. Volunteers are coordinated and supported by a paid program director. This structure not only divides the workload and clearly delineates responsibilities, but also builds consensus and cooperation among the various stakeholders.



Promotion

Promotion takes many forms, but the goal is to create a positive image that will rekindle community pride and improve consumer and investor confidence in your commercial district. Advertising, retail promotions, special events, and marketing campaigns help sell the image and promise of Main Street to the community and surrounding region. Promotions communicate your commercial district's unique characteristics, business establishments, and activities to shoppers, investors, potential business and property owners, and visitors.



Design

Design means getting Main Street into top physical shape and creating a safe, inviting environment for shoppers, workers, and visitors. It takes advantage of the visual opportunities inherent in a commercial district by directing attention to all of its physical elements: public and private buildings, storefronts, signs, public spaces, parking areas, street furniture, public art, landscaping, merchandising, window displays, and promotional materials. An appealing atmosphere, created through attention to all of these visual elements, conveys a positive message about the commercial district and what it has to offer. Design activities also include instilling good maintenance practices in the commercial district, enhancing the district's physical appearance through the rehabilitation of historic buildings, encouraging appropriate new construction, developing sensitive design management systems, educating business and property owners about design quality, and long-term planning.



Economic Restructuring

Economic restructuring strengthens your community's existing economic assets while diversifying its economic base. This is accomplished by retaining and expanding successful businesses to provide a balanced commercial mix, sharpening the competitiveness and merchandising skills of business owners, and attracting new businesses that the market can support. Converting unused or underused commercial space into economically productive property also helps boost the profitability of the district. The goal is to build a commercial district that responds to the needs of today's consumers.



Coincidentally, the four points of the Main Street approach correspond with the four forces of real estate value, which are social, political, physical, and economic.

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The National Trust for Historic Preservation, a privately funded nonprofit organization, works to save America's historic places.

2800 Virginia Avenue NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20037
P 202.588.6000 T 800.944.6847 F 202.588.6038

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