



**MAIN STREET
AMERICA™**

Nationally recognized.
Locally powered.™



Healthy and Vibrant Main Streets

Unlocking the Potential of Rhode Island's
Commercial Districts



Why do Communities look to the Main Street Program for help?

- Disinvestment (both the private and public sectors)
- Historic buildings neglected
- Vacancies and dealing with absentee landlords
- Loss of retail within the district
- Apathy
- Loss of vibrancy in the heart of their communities





Changes in transportation shaped commercial districts and communities

While communities were by-passed – and continue to be by-passed - it also meant people could more easily visit from further away.



Silver Spring Shopping Center, Silver Spring, Md.



Strip centers,
malls, then big box
retailers and
category killers
pulled retail from
downtowns

And then came Amazon!



What Happened to our Downtowns

Modernization took away downtown's advantage



OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FIFTH CENTURY | The Hallock & McMilen Building, shown during a flood in 1894, was built in 1857, before Oregon was a state.



ERNEST L. RAGMULLSON/STAFF

TODAY | The Hallock & McMilen Building, Portland's oldest commercial brick building, was "modernized" in the 1940s.



JOHN RUSSELL

FUTURE | Developer John Russell says this is what the building will look like when restoration is completed.

Building once made 'new' will soon be made old again

By John Hillen
The Oregonian/OregonLive

The Hallock & McMilen Building on Southwest Naito Parkway doesn't really look like much today. It's drab and nothing about it says "historic landmark."

But that bland exterior is hiding a secret. Originally designed by pioneer architect Absalom Hallock and built in

1857, it is the oldest surviving commercial brick building in Portland. Oregon didn't become a state until 1859.

It's also the city's oldest example of cast-iron architecture, which was popular in downtown Portland's early days. Its cast-iron framing was removed sometime in the 1940s in an effort to "modernize" it.

Now, after several years of trying, a local developer says he's ready to restore the building to its past glory, complete with authentic new ironwork.

John Russell says the restoration effort will begin soon, and he's hoping that a new tenant will occupy it by February.

The two-story building is on the northwest corner of South-

west Oak Street and Naito Parkway. It's one of five on a block that Russell owns; others next to it have already been restored. In 2011, Russell first announced plans to restore the Hallock & McMilen building, as well.

But the recession was still lapping over Portland. Russell didn't have a tenant lined up "and rental rates weren't

anywhere near where they are now," he said.

Now rental rates are back up and there's a lot of interest in Portland's old downtown buildings from high-tech tenants, he said.

That's given him the green light. He said last week the only thing he's awaiting is the new building permits as the old

See [Building](#). □



ERNEST L. RAGMULLSON/STAFF

Removing inappropriate materials



- Attempt to modernize
- Rendered upper stories for storage
- Takes away downtown vibrancy with no lights on, or people living or working in this building



Alterations (and new uses) Changed so Much



What Happened ????

It's hard to believe that it's the same building and WHY anyone thought that this was an improvement.



.....and this became its fate



The good news is there is a
Boutique hotel on this site now.



Other bad things happened too



Under-insured property owner unable to afford to rebuild

High interest in the property on the 100% corner of downtown – from automobile-oriented businesses



Main Street advocated for the city to purchase

Economic Impact report

Developed a design for new construction

25 Years of Vacancy



- Building Appraised at \$50,000
- Historic elements removed and damaged
- Flood plain challenges
- County threatening demolition



- Developer chose the city because it was a Main Street city
- Main Street loaned \$100,000
- Helped with tax credits
- Fought the DNA
- Building assessment at \$1.5M

Responding to the need, the National Main Street Program Started

- 1977, a Pilot Program was developed and tested in three Midwestern towns within the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP). Three EDs and NTHP staff developed the Four Point Approach.
- In 1980, after a nationwide tele-conference, the National Main Street Center was established (6 states selected). **Massachusetts was one of them.**
- July 2013 became a subsidiary of the NTHP, forming its own 501(c)(3) and moved its HQ to Chicago from DC.
- Since then, well over 2, 500 communities have used the Main Street Approach, and over 20 years ago established urban Main Street programs.
- NMSC acts as a nonprofit consultant providing training, technical assistance, strategic planning, etc., and works nationally on advocacy and research.
- Raised the visibility of Main Street at the federal level



Main Street America

....is a movement.

- *Main Street America has been helping revitalize older and historic commercial districts for more than 45 years.*
- It is the leading voice for preservation-based economic development and community revitalization across the country.
- Made up of small towns, mid-sized communities, and urban commercial districts, Main Street America represents the broad diversity that makes this country so unique.
- Working together, the programs that make up the Main Street America network help to breathe new life into the places people call home.



Ground Rules for Main Street Revitalization Efforts



- **Main Street** is historic preservation. Saving the places that make the community unique.
- **Main Street** is economic development and doing work on behalf of the municipality.
- **Main Street** drives overall community improvement and is not just for the benefit of downtown businesses and property owners.
- **Main Street is NOT a merchant's association**
- **Main Street** is community-driven, and will only be successful if local resources (funding and volunteers) are secured
- **Main Street is not a Project**, rather a long-term program that is needed to bring about lasting revitalization to downtown.

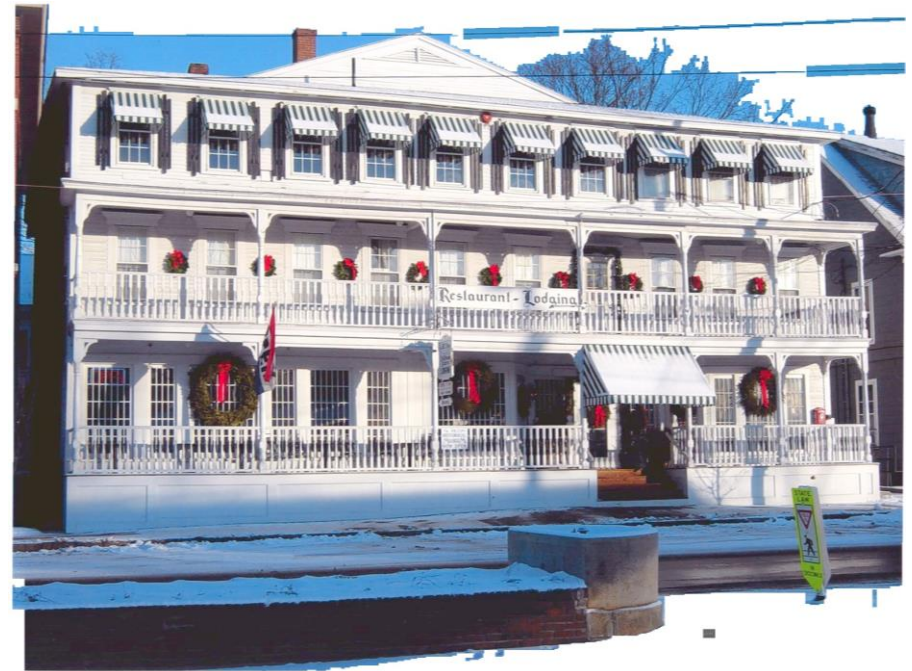
What Happened to our Downtowns?

Bad things happened to good buildings



But good people began to see the opportunities and risked investing in downtown.

Investments Increase with Main Street Programs



Who Wants to Invest?



Local Developers in Littleton, NH



Striving to be a Quintessential New England Downtown

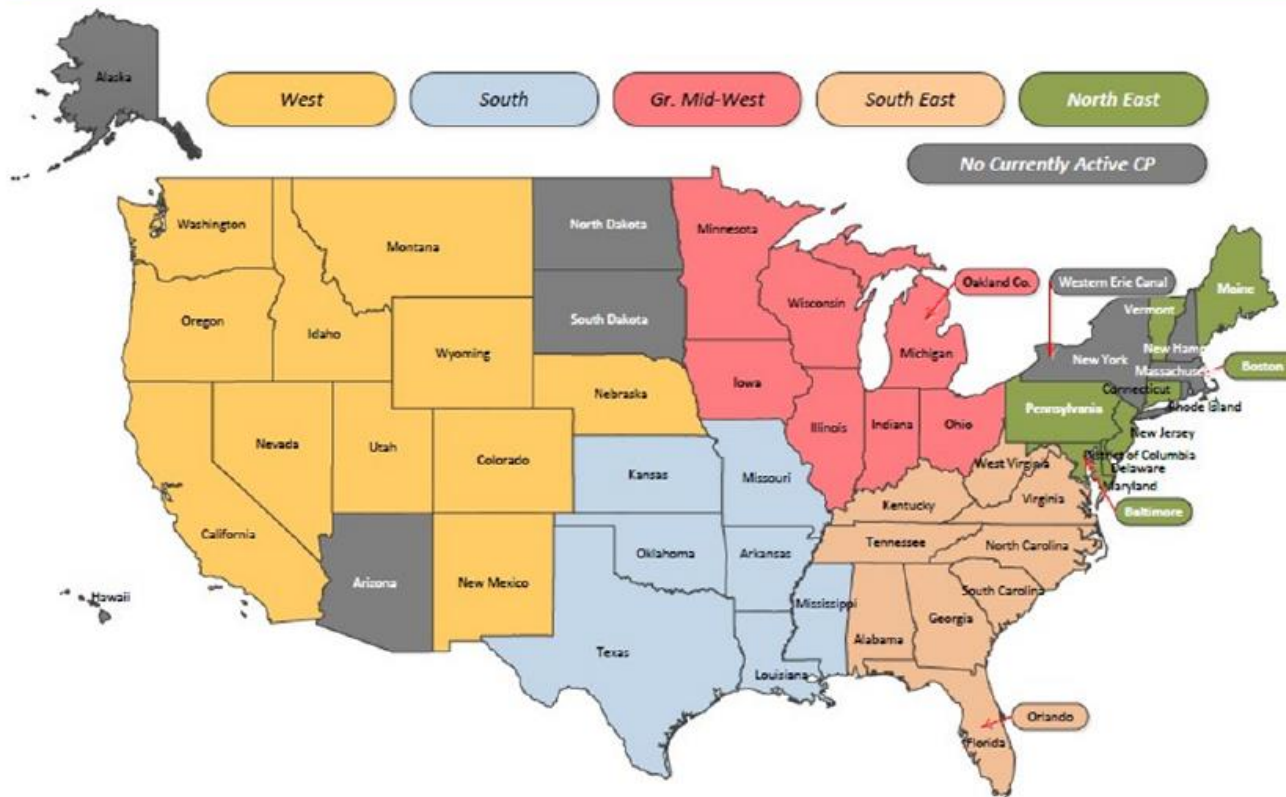
Meredith, NH



4 Historic Inns – one an old asbestos factory.
\$3 voluntary charge per room per night to fund downtown improvements

Our Network of Coordinating Programs

MAIN STREET AMERICA COORDINATING PROGRAMS



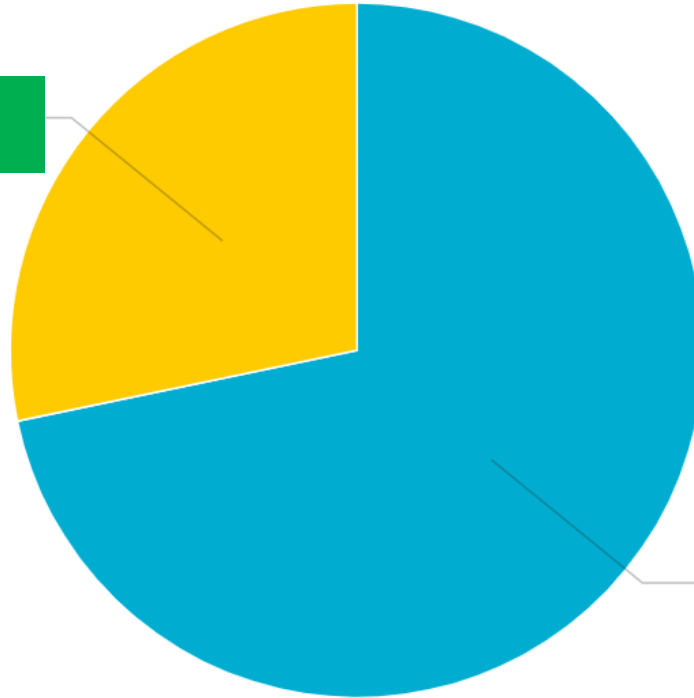
5 States have never had a Statewide Coordinating Program (AK, HI, NY, ND, SD)

4 States have inactive Statewide Coordinating Programs (AZ, MA, NH, RI)

Opportunities exist in large cities for additional Coordinating Programs

Statewide Coordinating Programs

28% are Non-Profits



72% are housed in State Government

All Non-Profit Programs operate
With state funding ranging from \$300,000
To \$1M

The Main Street Network



Implementing The Main Street Approach[®] for Revitalization



- **The National Main Street Center & Coordinating Main Street Programs**
 - *Licensing Agreement with MSA*
 - *Coordinating Partner Membership*
 - *National Designation & Performance Criteria for Coordinating Programs*
 - *Coordinating Program Delivery of Services*

Coordinating Program Standards

1. Demonstrate Leadership
2. Work effectively with participating communities; providing services, TA, funding
3. Maintain a strong preservation ethic
4. Retain experienced professional staff & Administer a comprehensive program
5. Be the liaison to Main Street America
6. Maintain minimum funding levels \$150,000-\$250,000 annually



Below are state-wide economic impact summaries. Each of the four case study areas have a significant Main Street economic impact.

Washington

Number of Programs: 16
Avg. Annual State Budget:
\$1.2 million

Average Business Growth:

- Municipalities: -3.5%
- Main Streets: 1.1%
- **Difference: 4.6%**

Average Revenue Growth:

- Municipalities: 7.3%
- Main Streets: 28.0%
- **Difference: 20.7%**

Average Job Growth:

- Municipalities: -0.3%
- Main Streets: 9.3%
- **Difference: 9.6%**

Oklahoma

Number of Programs: 33
Avg. Annual State Budget:
\$470,000

Average Business Growth:

- Municipalities: -3.6%
- Main Streets: 0.2%
- **Difference: 3.8%**

Average Revenue Growth:

- Municipalities: 3.7%
- Main Streets: 11.3%
- **Difference: 7.6%**

Average Job Growth:

- Municipalities: -1.6%
- Main Streets: 5.8%
- **Difference: 7.5%**

Pennsylvania

Number of Programs: 46
Avg. Annual City Budget:
\$2.8 million

Average Business Growth:

- Municipalities: -3.1%
- Main Streets: 0.2%
- **Difference: 3.2%**

Average Revenue Growth:

- Municipalities: 2.6%
- Main Streets: 7.4%
- **Difference: 4.8%**

Average Job Growth:

- Municipalities: 7.2%
- Main Streets: 12.0%
- **Difference: 4.8%**

Boston

Number of Programs: 20
Avg. Annual City Budget:
\$1.8 million

Average Business Growth:

- Municipalities: 4.0%
- Main Streets: 1.8%
- **Difference: -2.2%**

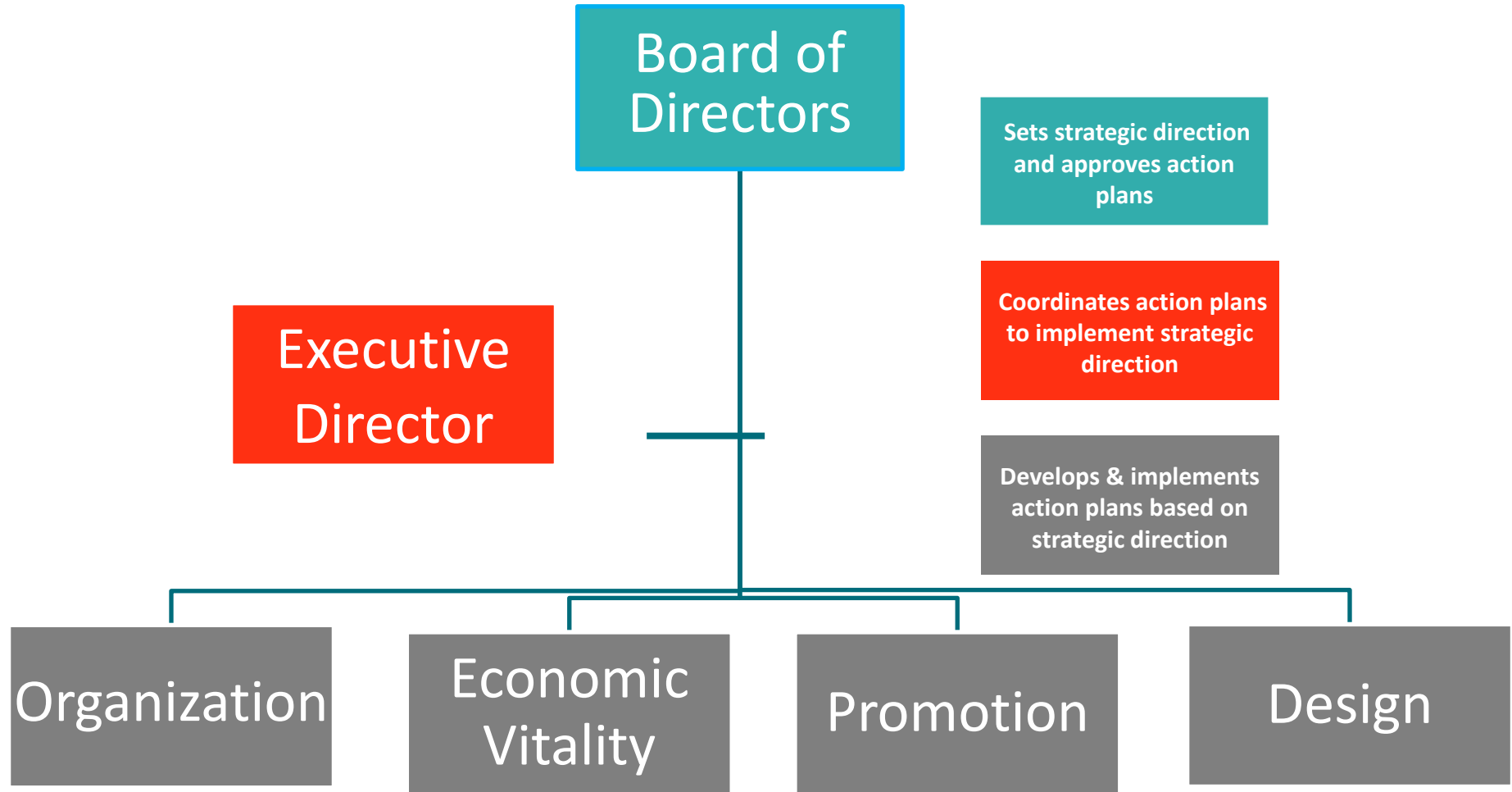
Average Revenue Growth:

- Municipalities: -4.3%
- Main Streets: 13.7%
- **Difference: 18.0%**

Average Job Growth:

- Municipalities: 11.7%
- Main Streets: 26.2%
- **Difference: 14.5%**

Setting the Foundation for Local Programs



MSA Initiatives and Funding



MAIN STREET AMERICA[®]



WITH



We want to hear about the innovative ways you celebrated Small Business Saturday[®] as an American Express Neighborhood Champion in 2022! The Neighborhood Champion Innovation Contest is open now through March 31, 2023 at 11:59 p.m. CT.

Inclusive Backing

Presented by **AMERICAN EXPRESS**

Third round, 60 businesses get \$5,000



INVESTING BIG IN SMALL TOWNS

We are committing \$25 million in grants over the next five years to towns with 50,000 people or less.

[Find out more](#)



We're invested in helping communities across America thrive. That's why we're committing \$25 million to small town grants over the next five years—and it starts with you.

Partnering with Corporations

DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT

EQUIPPING ENTREPRENEURS

Main Street America and GoDaddy are teaming up to provide digital empowerment to business owners around the U.S. Through Empower by GoDaddy, we equip entrepreneurs in communities with training, tools, and peer networks to help small businesses establish and improve an effective digital presence. We are excited that you have indicated a desire to participate in this initial launch and invite you to join us in sharing this opportunity with your small businesses and emerging entrepreneurs.



GM on Main: Pilot Placemaking Grant Program – in February, MSA and General Motors awarded six \$25,000 grants – Now there are \$50,000 grants available for local programs

Main Street Main Street American Resources Membership Benefits

Latest Trends & Topics

- Main Street News (*e-newsletter weekly, Spotlights, State of Main (annual on-line journal)*)
- Webinars (dozens on the website & You Tube)
- **Access to Peers & Best Practices through the Point**
- Board and Committee handbooks digital
- Online “Resource Center” ... *hundreds of samples, case studies, guidelines and resources.*
- Discounts to the National Main Street Conference
- Main Street America Certification Institute
- Research
- Advocacy



Main Street America Institute

New Initiatives

- Research – is rolling out a property inventory tool in January.
- Main Street communities will have access to Place AI data as part of Transformation Strategy Visits, as well as ESRI market data.
- Government Relations will host the 2nd annual Hill Day advocating for our downtowns and commercial districts across the country.
- The Small Deal Initiative is seeking \$100-\$200M in funding for projects under \$5M in cost.



Downtown's Resurgence Isn't by Accident



Grass Valley, CA

“People stay longer and spend more money in places that attract our affection ... but no place in America will stay special by accident.”



Ed McMahon
Senior Fellow for
Sustainable Development
Urban Land Institute
President, NMSC Board of Directors

Downtowns are one-of-a-kind places

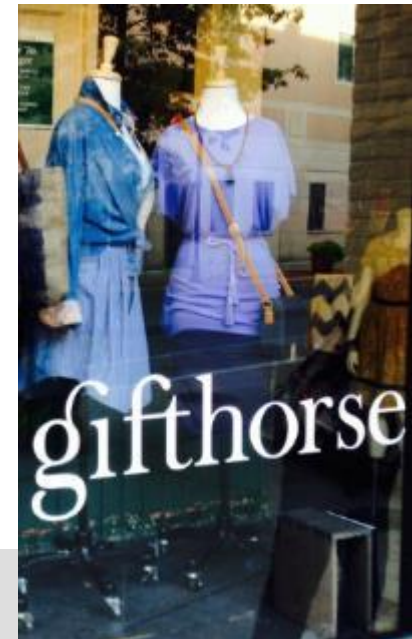
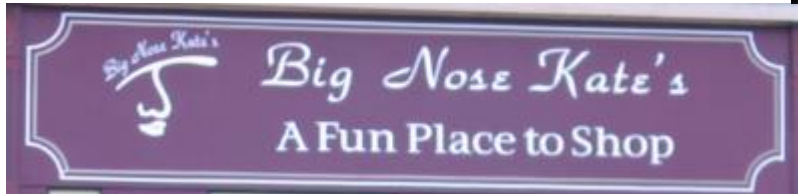
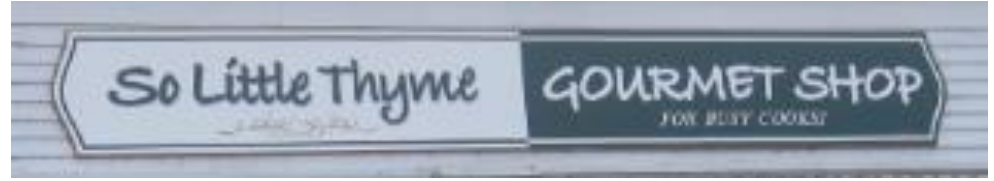
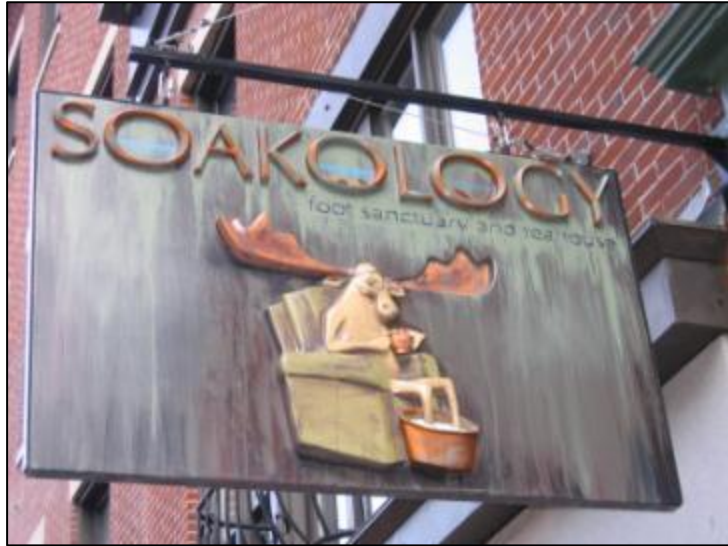
Basket Fence
Artist Ida Edwards



.....Historic Buildings are Protected, and.....



....Great Businesses Thrive.....



.....Events and activities are held to draw people to downtown



We Love Our Downtowns Because they are the...

- Symbol of community character and prosperity
- The heart of the community - providing people with social gathering spaces
- It provides affordable homes for independent businesses - incubators
- People are seeking out authentic and dynamic places to live. Places with a vibrant local economy and special sense of place.



We Love Downtown Because of the Economic Benefit it Brings

- Property tax base
- Job and business base
- Sales Tax collections
- Revenues to businesses
- Private and public reinvestment, especially in saving our historic buildings and culture



Main Street



“There is simply no more cost-effective economic development program of any type, on any scale, anywhere in the country than Main Street...”

Donovan Rypkema

Author of “The Economics of Historic Preservation”

Cumulative Reinvestment in America's Main Streets

Since 1980

\$101.58

Billion Reinvested

325,119

Buildings Rehabilitated

746,897

Jobs Created

168,693

Businesses Started

Over \$30.00: \$1 (2022)

These estimates are based on cumulative statistics gathered from 1980 through 2021, for all designated Main Street Programs nationwide.

The Main Street Approach

Works Because of a Comprehensive Approach



Design - getting the commercial district in top physical shape, creating attractive places and destinations (preserving historic buildings, public spaces, beautification)



Organization - getting the community working together with a shared vision for downtown (fundraising, volunteer management, PR, partnerships)



Promotion - marketing the district's unique characteristics, assets and businesses (marketing, business promotions and special events and festivals)



Economic Vitality - diversifying the district's economic base and strengthening businesses (entrepreneurial development, business retention & expansion, housing)



Our Guiding Principles



- Comprehensive
- Incremental
- Community-Driven
- Public/Private Partnerships
- Capitalizing on Existing Assets
- Quality
- Change
- Implementation-orientated

Thank You!

We hope Rhode Island will join the
Main Street America network too



Kathy La Plante

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