



**MAIN STREET  
AMERICA™**

Nationally recognized.  
Locally powered.™

# MAIN STREET 101

**Smart Growth Rhode Island**

# MAIN STREET FOUR-POINT APPROACH®



- **ORGANIZATION** involves creating a strong foundation for a sustainable revitalization effort, including cultivating partnerships, community involvement, and resources for the district.
- **PROMOTION** positions the downtown or commercial district as the center of the community and hub of economic activity, while creating a positive image that showcases a community's unique characteristics.
- **ECONOMIC VITALITY** focuses on capital, incentives, and other economic and financial tools to assist new and existing businesses, catalyze property development, and create a supportive environment for the scores of entrepreneurs and innovators that drive local economies.
- **DESIGN** supports a community's transformation by enhancing the physical and visual elements of downtown while capitalizing on the unique assets that set the commercial district apart.

# MAIN STREET BRINGS VALUE

## Organization (Civic)

- Brings the community together to build consensus, lead, invest, partner, and add resources to the revitalization efforts



Sense of  
Ownership

## Design (Physical)

- Works with property & business owners and partners to enhance downtown's physical appearance while preserving the community's historic character and identity



Sense of Place

## Econ/Vitality (Economy)

- Works with businesses, property owners, and partners to strengthen and grow the local economic base



Sense of Vitality

## Promotion (Social)

- Works with the community and partners to position downtown as a center of community activity, promote its positive image, and market its unique assets



Sense of Activity



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# ORGANIZATION

# WHAT IS ORGANIZATION?

Strong bones –  
(drink your  
milk!)

Incentivizing creative  
partnerships to build  
sustainable capacity

Listening to  
understand people's  
experience and the  
current environment

Describes the  
Dream and the  
Results

Organization  
Committee “sells”  
the MS philosophy

Strengthening from  
the ground up  
(sometimes *less is more!*)

# Necessary Ingredients for a Sustainable Downtown Revitalization Program



1. **Building a Sense of Ownership** that results in a culture of engagement from everyone in the community.
2. **Building an Organizational Culture** that fosters and rewards community engagement.
3. **Building a Program Worth Giving** (time, money, and other resources) for – offer value.

# ORGANIZATION

- Partnership Building (public and private)
- Public Relations and Outreach / Communications
- Fund-Raising (projects & operations)
- Volunteer development



# COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY PUBLIC RELATIONS

## + Promoting the Organization

**DOWNTOWN LAKE ORION**

Imagine what we can do together!

Working together to build a sustainable community revitalization effort.

[www.downtownlakeorion.org](http://www.downtownlakeorion.org)

Can I make a difference in the revitalization of downtown Waterville?

**WMST**

Waterville Main Street  
177 Main Street  
Waterville, Maine 04901  
207-680-2056  
Fax: 207-680-2056  
[www.watervillmainstreet.org](http://www.watervillmainstreet.org)  
[info@watervillmainstreet.org](mailto:info@watervillmainstreet.org)

## • Promoting Downtown

**Montclair Center** Where The Suburb Meets The City

**Easy to Reach**

**Easy to Stay**

**ENJOY DINE SHOP**

[www.montclaircenter.com](http://www.montclaircenter.com) 973.509.3820





# SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY

Your tax-deductible donation to downtown helps fulfill our vital mission to promote the history, culture and commerce of downtown *Your City*. You'll receive a email receipt for tax purposes. Please consider a monthly donation to support all our downtown initiatives.



# TYPICAL BALANCE OF FUNDING SOURCES FOR MAIN STREET PROGRAMS

**30-50%**

**Public funding**

**20-30%**

**Funding from business district**

**30-40%**

**Community funding**

**5-15%**

**Miscellaneous**

Volunteer Development begins when communities choose initiatives and projects....and volunteer engagement becomes part of the workplan

## Everything Main Street Programs do offers a point for community engagement



The objective is to build a sense of ownership in downtown from each member of the community with a commitment to revitalize it and sustain it as a vital part of their identity – past, present and future



# Main Street Organizations

# Main Street Approach

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- Economic Vitality
- Design
- Promotion
- **Organization**





Economic Vitality  
Design  
Promotion

## Organization



## SOUTH BURLINGTON CITY CENTER COLLABORATIVE



Support and Promote  
a Vibrant and Healthy  
City Center Today

# Organization – Local Commitment

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## Municipality + Local Champions



# Organization – Board and Staff

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# Organization – Volunteers

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# Organization – Responsibilities

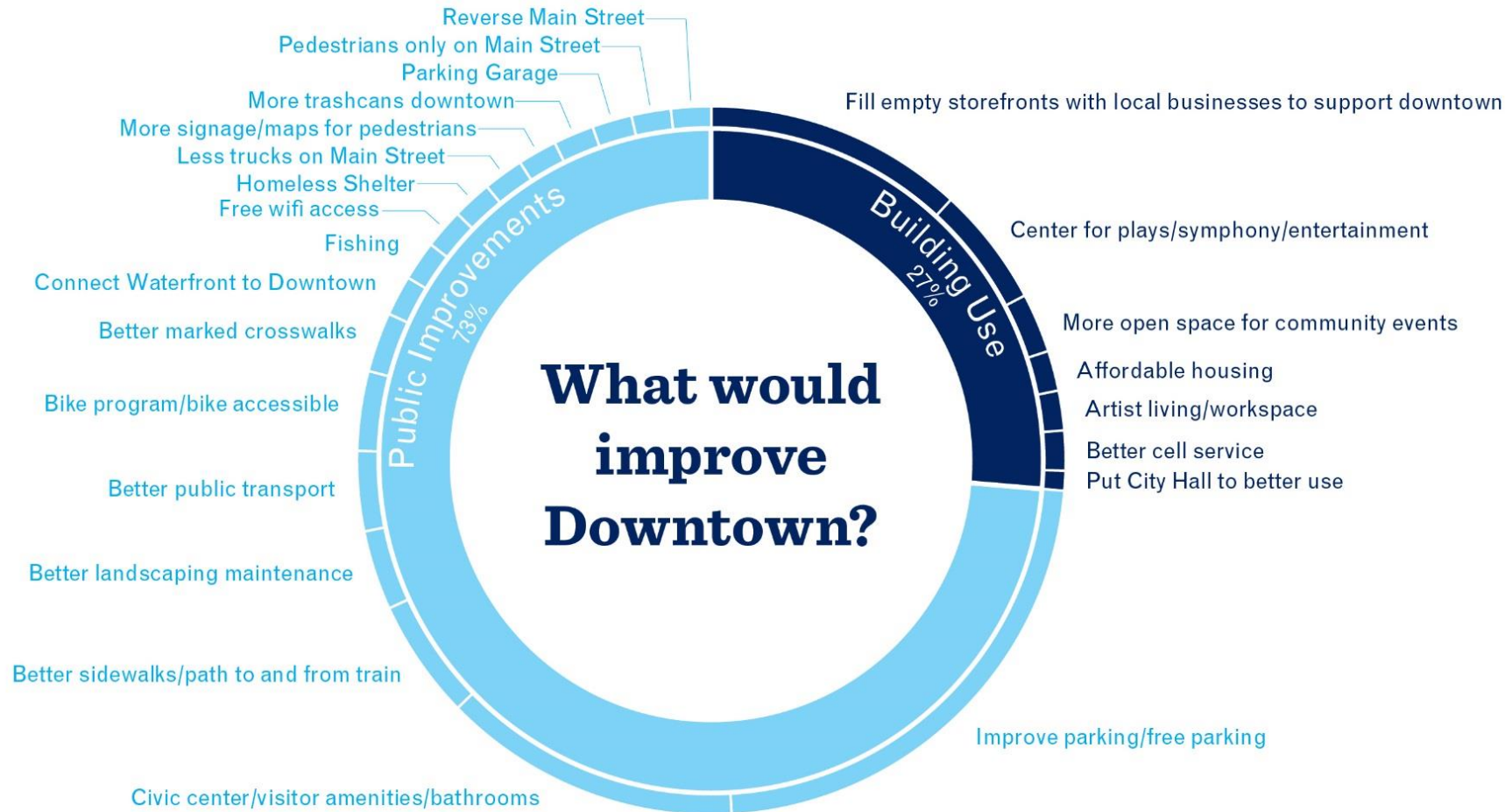
- Support existing businesses
- Attract new businesses
- Attract visitors
- Marketing the downtown
- Events
- Beautification
- Advocate for downtown
- Collaborate with public and private partners
- Everything else that needs to get done



# Organization – Engage the Community



# Organization – Develop a Plan



# Organization – Prioritize and Implement

---



**ROLLIN' on the River**  
BRINGING ROLLER SKATING BACK TO SPRINGFIELD!

**SATURDAYS IN OCTOBER**

BLOCK PARTY STYLE!  
**100 RIVER STREET**  
UPPER PARKING AREA  
GRADES K-5: FROM 5-6:30PM  
GRADES 6-8: FROM 6:30-8PM

**FREE ENTRY!**

CLAFIN FAMILY FOOD - LIVE DJ - GIANT YARD GAMES  
GROWN-UPS: SKATE WITH YOUR KIDS,  
OR ENJOY LIVE MUSIC NEXT DOOR AT VERMONT BEER MAKERS!

*These Events Are Generously Sponsored By:*

Helmets **REQUIRED**  
Need Skates?  
Pick up YOUR free pair TO KEEP  
at The Cosmos Closet!  
802-885-2727

**SAFETY FIRST**

811-4-ORR  
We pick up where the school day leaves off!

Edgar may Health and Recreation CENTER  
SPRINGFIELD AREA PARENT CHILD CENTER  
Springfield  
CAPA

# Organization – Partnerships

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- Local and Regional Government
- Property Owners
- Chambers of Commerce
- Civic Clubs
- Business Owners
- Financial Institutions
- Residents
- Schools
- Churches
- Media



# Organization – Funding Sources



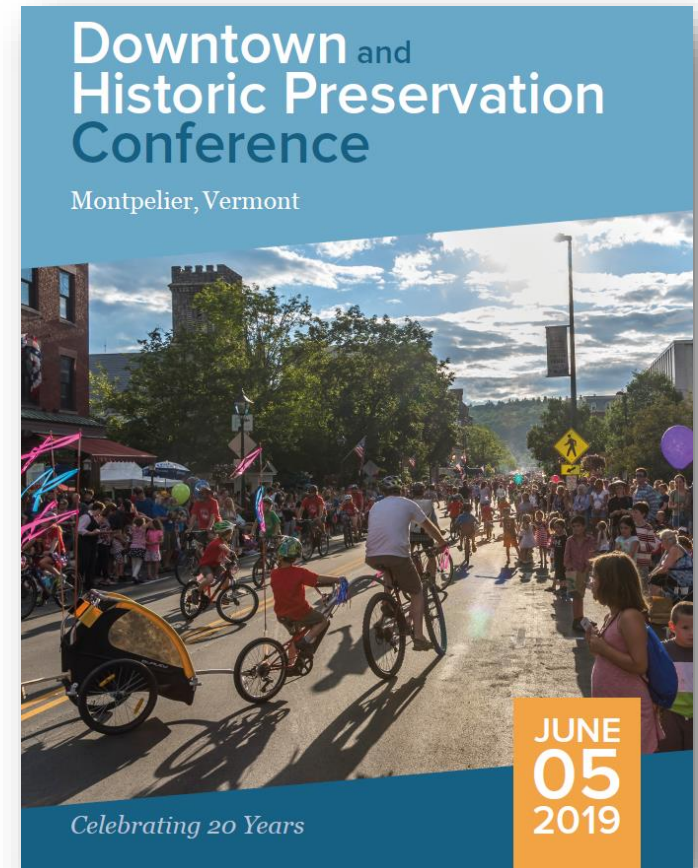
Vermont Downtown Organizations are non-profits with limited budgets and small staff (a median annual budget of \$110,000).

## **Funding Sources:**

- Municipality
- Sponsorships
- Event Revenue
- Business Support / Membership
- Annual Appeal and Donations
- Grants

# Organization – Training and Events

- Annual Downtown and Historic Preservation Conference
- Downtown Retreat at the Grand Isle Lake House
- Downtown Day at State House
- Board, Volunteer & Staff Training
- Technical assistance as needed





# Vermont Downtown Coalition



**V E R M O N T**  
**D O W N T O W N**  
**C O A L I T I O N**

# Organization – Downtown Vibrancy Fund



- Up to \$25,000 grants to support downtown organizations

# Thank you.



**Gary Holloway**  
Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development  
Division of Community Planning and Revitalization  
[Gary.Holloway@vermont.gov](mailto:Gary.Holloway@vermont.gov)



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# DESIGN

# DESIGN GIVES A COMMUNITY A SENSE OF PLACE

## The physical characteristics of a Main Street

Older and historic structures that make up the built environment,

Infrastructure that facilitates the flow of people,

Public spaces that serve as community gathering spots



All contribute to what attracts people to a place, inviting them to visit, set up shop, or call it home.

# THE DESIGN COMMITTEE CHARGE

## Get the district into top physical shape

- capitalize on best assets
- inviting atmosphere
- good window displays
- façade improvements
- parking areas
- street furniture
- Signage
- Lighting
- landscaping



# DESIGN IS ABOUT

## Educating

**Educating others about good design—** enhancing the image of each business as well as that of the district;

## Providing

**Providing good design advice—** encouraging quality improvements to private properties and public spaces;

## Planning

**Planning Main Street's development—** guiding future growth and shaping regulations;

## Motivating

**Motivating others to make changes—** creating incentives and targeting key projects.

# DESIGN BASICS





Grass Valley, CA



Roslindale Main Street, Boston  
© Boston Magazine



# HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Quincy, IL  
© The District



Kalispell, MT



# How technology shapes buildings



# Cast iron



# Glass block and structural glass

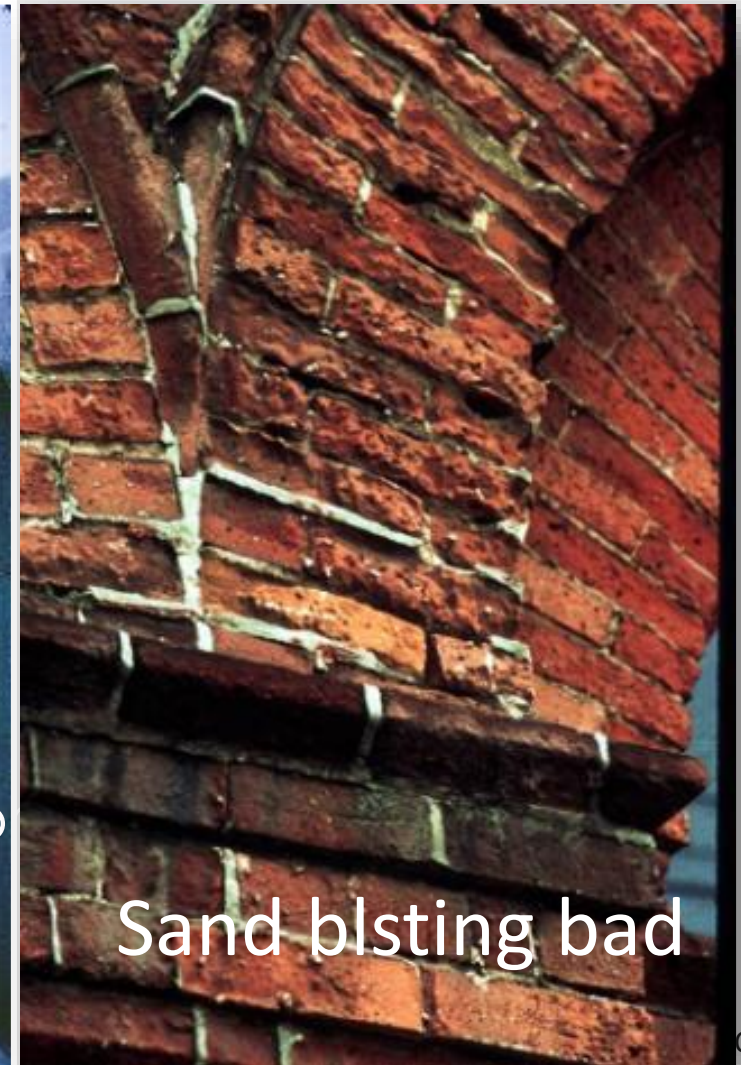
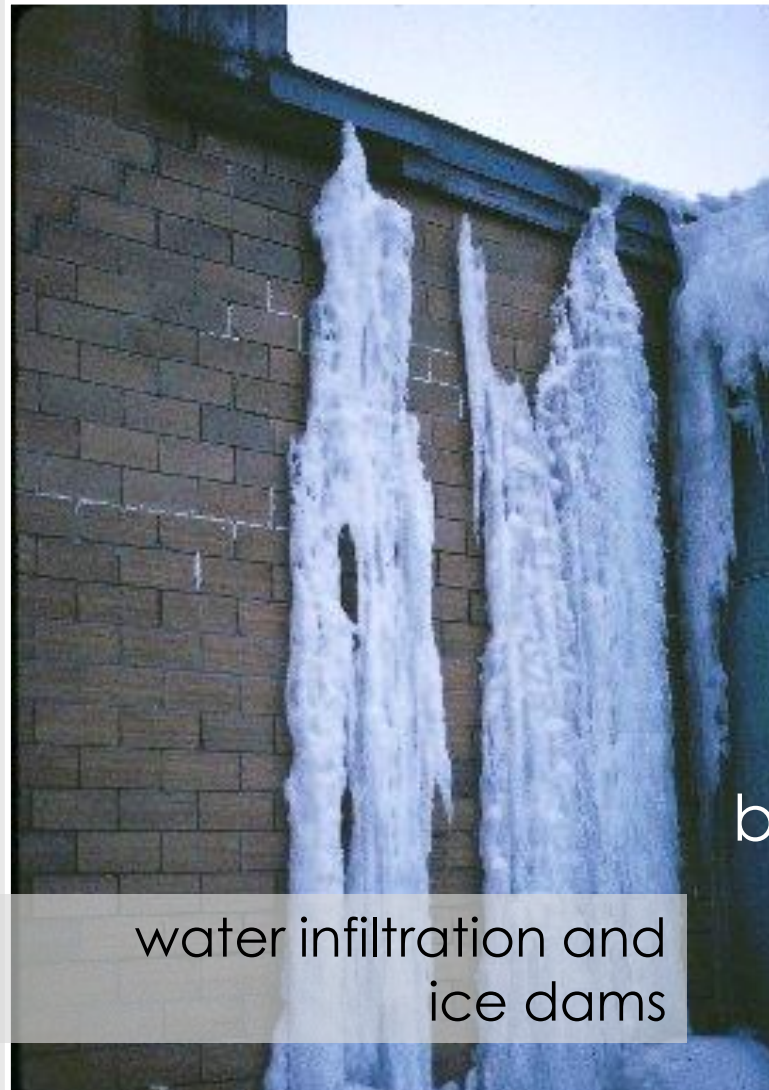


# BEFORE & AFTER: GREEN BAY, WI



**Photos over time document both good and bad changes to downtown**

# MAINTENANCE + REPAIR



# INAPPROPRIATE IN-FILL



# NEW IN-FILL AND CONSTRUCTION





# PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY DISTRICTS

- + Improve the downtown environment (arts, safety, wayfinding, etc.)



Concord, NH



# NATIONAL CHAINS – DESIGN REVIEW/GUIDELINES





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# DESIGN



heart of biddeford  
a main street maine community

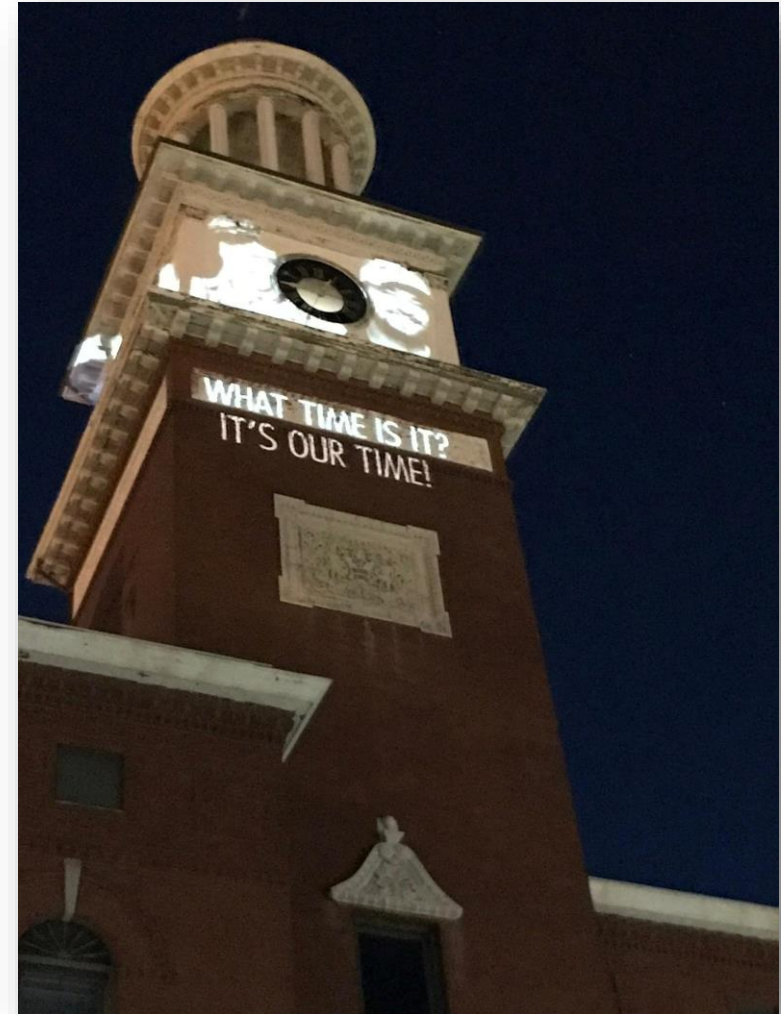
# ADOPT A PARK



# STOREFRONTS THAT SELL



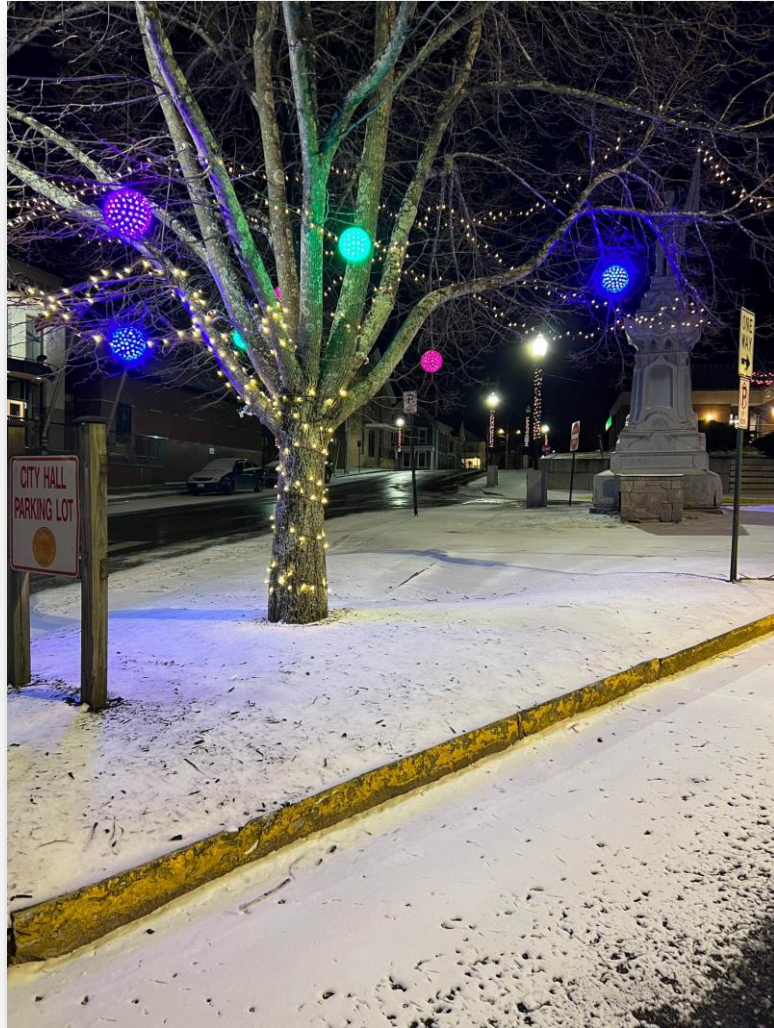
# HISTORIC PRESERVATION



# DOWNTOWN AMENITIES



# HOLIDAY LIGHTING AND DESIGN





# PARK ACTIVATION



# PUBLIC ART



# FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM





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# PROMOTION

# The Main Street Approach<sup>®</sup>

ORGANIZATION

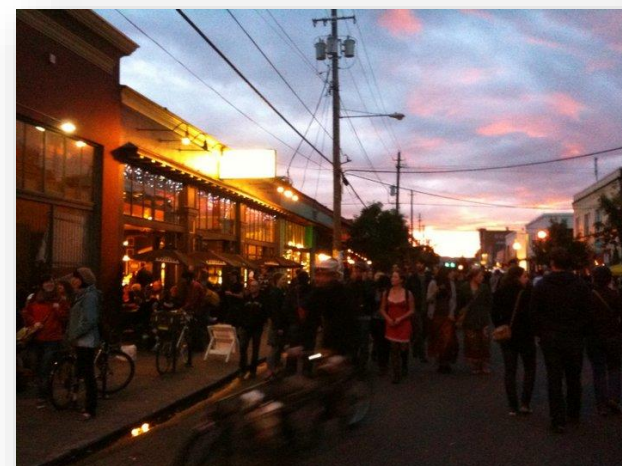
PROMOTION

ECON/VITALITY

DESIGN

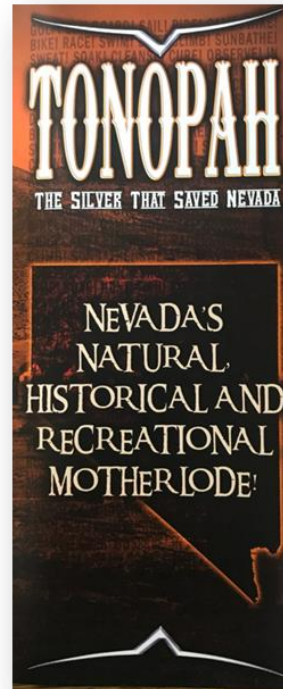
- Positions district as the center of activity, culture, commerce, and community life, market its assets, and positive image

- ***Positions the District as a center of activity***  
Community and special events
- ***Markets the districts assets***  
Retail promotions, marketing
- ***Enhances positive image***  
Image building and branding



# PROMOTION

- + Main Street encourages communities to bring people back to the community center by positioning the downtown as a center of activity, marketing the district's unique characteristics, and fostering its positive image.



# PROMOTION

- + By marketing the district's unique characteristics to shoppers, investors, new businesses, and visitors, an effective promotion strategy forges a positive image through advertising, retail promotional activity, special events, and marketing campaigns carried out by local volunteers.
- It serves to improve consumer and investor confidence in the district.



# MARKET-BASED STRATEGIES

- + **Image campaigns** accentuate the positives, dispel the negatives
- + **Business promotions** generate immediate sales of the goods and services offered downtown
- + **Special events** generate traffic, activity and positive experiences in the downtown





# Communities Build Recognizing Their Assets

- + **Historic Character** – building stock, atmosphere,
  - Builds sense of place, community identity
- + **Heritage** – people, sites, cultural values
- + **Gathering Places** – riverfront, parks/plazas, recreation facilities, pedestrian friendly streets, etc.
- + **Government & Civic Facilities** - City Hall, County court, Post office, library, etc.
- + **People, Products & Services** – personable, unique niches, regular comforts, etc.



# THE BEGINNING



- + When I started at Greater Grove Hall Main Streets . . .
- + People had not heard of us even though the organization had existed for years.
- + People confused us with Grove Hall NDC and Grove Hall Trust
- + People thought we were “defunct.”

# THE BEGINNING

- + I did interviews with as many media outlets as possible to introduce myself and the organization. No media outlet was too small!
- + Community Access, Internet radio, campus radio, and print, etc.
- + This was the foundation of my media relations and media training.
- + How was I coming across, what could I do better?

# TIPS

- + **Writing a News Release Versus Writing the Story.**
- + I will write the story myself because many media outlets will run the story if it requires little or no editing.

## Randolph's Gaskin recognized as a Men's Health Champion

### Community Content

Published 4:04 p.m. ET July 16, 2021 | Updated 4:05 p.m. ET July 16, 2021



Ed Gaskin, of Randolph, was recognized as a Men's Health Champion at Whittier Street Health Center's 21st Annual Men's Health Summit.

In addition to the award, Gaskin received recognition from Boston Mayor Kim Janey and Gov. Charlie Baker.

In his remarks, Gaskin said his next focus would be in the "Food as Medicine Space," with the goal of lowering the incidence of diet related disease. He said he hoped to launch a new food line that



# New insurance business opens on Roxbury's Blue Hill Avenue

Entrepreneur brings 23 years of experience to new venture

Karen Morales



# TIPS

## + Responding to the Media

- What is the story and what are the questions they want to ask?
- When is their deadline?
- Do your homework. You may have the whole day to develop your response.
  - Car Share Service, e.g. Zipcar.
- Draft a written response.
- Become a trusted source and voice for the community.

# TIPS

- + **Using Texts and WhatsApp, not just emails.**
- + These are more popular and useful with some immigrant communities.
- + **Flyers are old school but still work.**



# TIPS

## + **Creating a Pitch**

- What's the story you want to tell?
- Creating a “Backgrounder.” (For example, one backgrounder generated two stories from the same paper).
- Creating a News Release.
- Developing the Talking Points.
- Make sure You Have Photos!

# TIPS

## + Newsletter

- You become editor and publisher
- We have received an award for our newsletter!
- People view you as a trusted source
- We started with zero readers and now have around 2,000.
- (We pay someone to put ours together).

# TIPS

- + Speaking and Writing**
- + Accepting speaking events, always have something to talk about before you are asked to speak.**
- + Writing, there are so many opportunities to publish.**
  - If you have an idea, you can get it published somewhere.**
  - It's easy to come up with ideas, use an email or memo on a topic for a story.**

# CASE BLACK WOMEN LEAD

## + **Started with Instagram Live**

- Within a couple of hours TV-25 wanted to do a story as did a radio station.

# CASE STUDY

## Raising up Black women leaders on Blue Hill Ave.



Ed Gaskin



# CASE STUDY

OPINION

## Gaskin: Project recognizes Black women who shaped Boston



**TAP<sub>Rx</sub> Review**<sup>®</sup>

Recover maximum dollars on identified over-payments with VARIS' 3-step review process

DATA ANALYTICS + HUMAN ANALYSIS + MEDICAL RECORD REVIEW = HARD DOLLAR RECOVERIES

**VARIS** [LEARN MORE](#)

SPONSORED CONTENT

The media could not

# CASE STUDY

+ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXUyG2B-i1s>



**WCVB CityLine**

2.1K likes • 2.2K followers

[Message](#) [Like](#) [Search](#)

# CASE STUDY



+ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXUyG2B-i1s>



# CASE STUDY



+ An internet radio station

# CASE STUDY

- + **Black Women Lead Media Coverage Summary**
- + **Featured on TV stations TV-4, 5, 7, and 25. (And soon TV-10)**
- + <https://original.newsbreak.com/@the-massachusetts-vibe-1750695/3180589600784-roxbury-pays-tribute-to-boston-s-influential-black-women-leaders>
- + <https://whdh.com/news/organizers-hope-to-inspire-next-generation-with-banners-honoring-iconic-black-women-in-boston/>

# CASE STUDY



# CASE STUDY



# CASE STUDY



# CASE STUDY





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# ECONOMIC VITALITY

# FOUR POINT APPROACH ECONOMIC VITALITY

- Strengthens a community's existing economic assets while diversifying its economic base.
- By helping existing businesses expand and recruiting new ones to respond to today's market, Main Street program helps convert unused or underutilized space into economically productive property and sharpen the competitiveness and profitability of businesses.





# ECONOMIC VITALITY

- + EV means rethinking downtowns in a way other than it's traditionally seen
- + EV means **MAKING** things happen in the downtown, rather than letting things happen in the district.



# The Main Street Approach®

Organization

Design

Econ/Vitality

Promotion



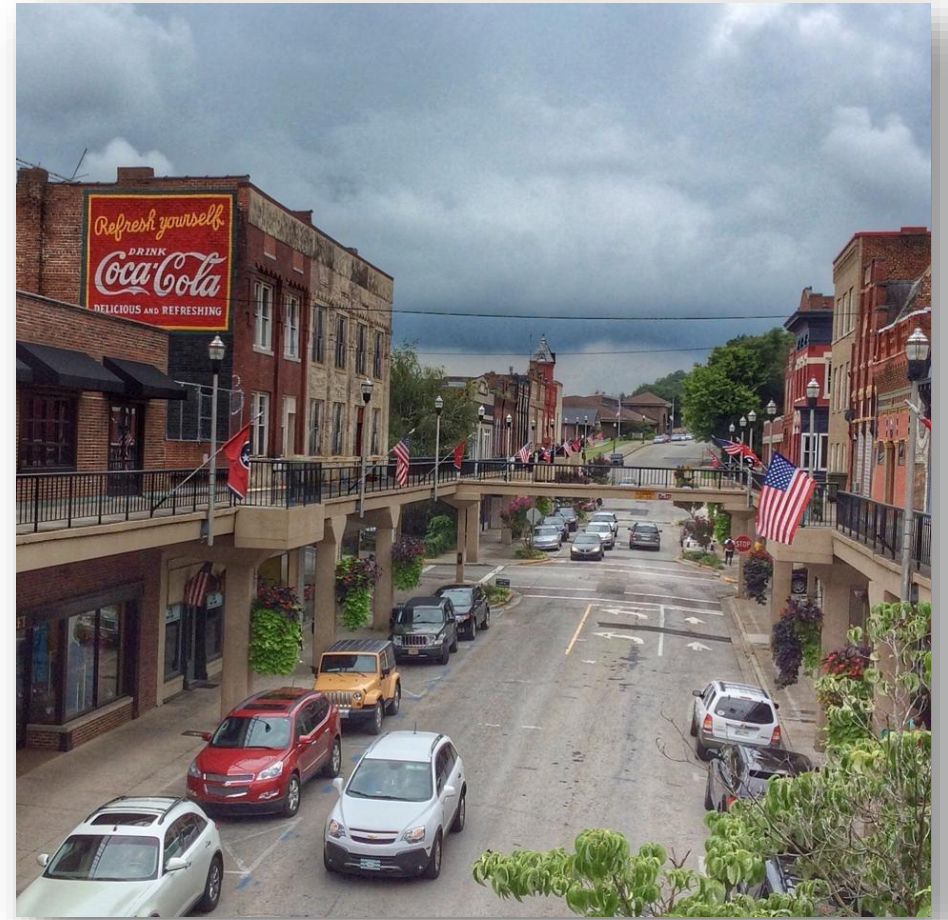
Strengthens & diversifies the local economy supporting existing base, entrepreneurship, and appropriate development

- ***Support existing economic base***
- ***Promote strategic use of space & development***
- ***Assemble Resources***

# PLACE MATTERS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

- + In a survey of 500 businesses study concluded:
  - Talent attraction and retention is the most common reason that businesses have ultimately made their decision to move to a downtown.
  - Architecture also plays a role. Respondents mentioned converted warehouses and lofts impressed potential workers.
  - Location decisions influenced by “live/work/play” neighborhoods, located near bars, restaurants and cafes.

(Cushman-Wakefield Study)



# DOWNTOWN PLANNING

- + Monitoring community planning/development activities
- + Advocating for/and developing a district master plan.
  - Enabling new uses (Small Scale Manufacturing)
  - Understanding/unlocking development potential.
  - Revising district zoning regulations.
- + Changing land use regulations
  - Encouraging new land uses
  - Regulating certain land uses; e.g., first-floor retail zoning



# MSA RESEARCH – ENTREPRENEURSHIP REPRESENTS A HIGHER ROI FOR ECONOMIC VITALITY

- + Most of your Community Businesses were Started by Local Entrepreneurs and NOT from Outside Recruitment Activities
  - Overall, 70 percent of local businesses were started by individuals residing in those same communities.
  - And when it comes to businesses located in older commercial districts, like Main Streets, this number increases to 74 percent.



# ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEMS

- + Growth from existing businesses
- + Growth from within the community - 74 percent of your Main Street businesses came from people that lived in your community (home-based business growing, food trucks moving to bricks and mortar)
- + Opportunities for retiring businesses to transfer ownership



# SMALL-SCALE MANUFACTURING/MAIL ORDER



# QUILTERS RETREAT UPPER STORY EXPANDING CUSTOMER BASE





# MAIN STREET APPROACH<sup>®</sup>



## **Community vision + Market understanding:**

Establish a community vision for the Main Street district that acknowledges market realities and provides a foundation for future (re)development.

*Key tools: local surveys, market data*

## **Transformation Strategies**

Select a strategy aligned with the community vision and local market to guide programming, planning and investment in the downtown district.

*Key tools: focused strategy, implementable goals*

## **Implementation and Measurement**

Identify programming, partners and capital needed to implement transformation strategy; define measures of success to track impact over time.

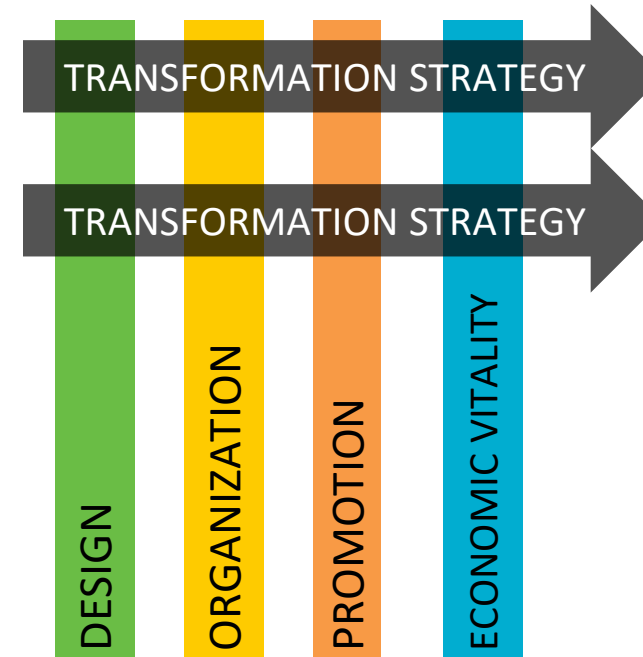
*Key tools: project work plans, data collection and tracking*



# Four Point Refresh

## Key Integrated Components

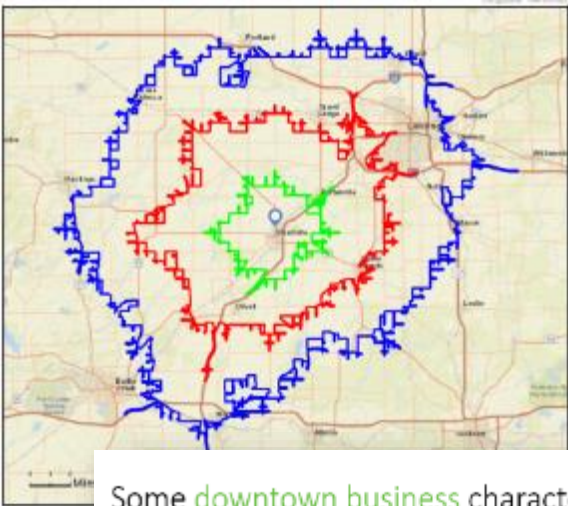
- ❖ **Inputs:**
  - community vision – engagement
  - market understanding
- ❖ **Community Transformation Strategies:**
  - implemented through the Four-Point Framework
- ❖ **Outputs:**
  - qualitative and quantitative outcomes to measure impact



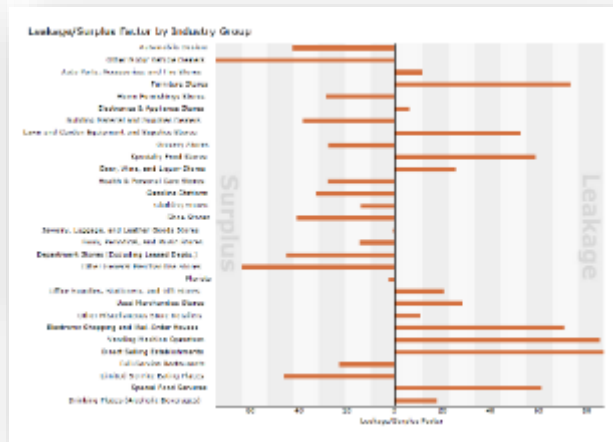
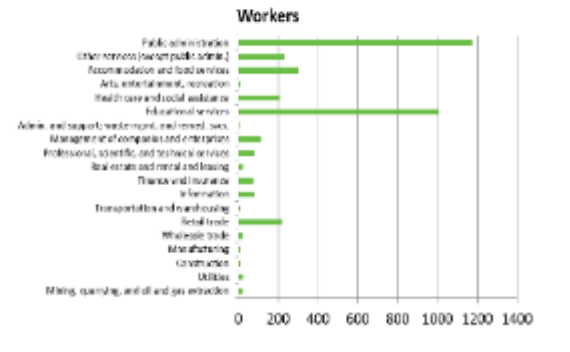
# Market Understanding

## ➤ Helping communities understand market conditions and opportunities

- Essential piece for a complete vision for the district
- Helps identify current economic conditions, important gaps and key opportunities - for business & real estate development
- Groundwork for key additional aspects, such as communication & outreach strategies, volunteer leadership development, fundraising strategies, etc.



Some downtown business characteristics



**1 1/2 Miles from Cozy Country Living**  
**Salt of the Earth**

Households: 3,517,000  
Average Household Size: 2.58  
Median Age: 43.1  
Median Household Income: \$53,000

AGE AND SEX

PEOPLE

Age and Sex

Persons under 5 years, percent, July 1, 2014, (v2014)	X
Persons under 5 years, percent, April 1, 2010	7.7%
Persons under 18 years, percent, July 1, 2014, (v2014)	X
Persons under 18 years, percent, April 1, 2010	28.0%
Persons 65 years and over, percent, July 1, 2014, (v2014)	X
Persons 65 years and over, percent, April 1, 2010	9.7%
Female persons, percent, July 1, 2014, (v2014)	X
Female persons, percent, April 1, 2010	51.8%

RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN

PEOPLE

Race and Hispanic Origin

White alone, percent, July 1, 2014, (v2014) (x)	X
White alone, percent, April 1, 2010 (x)	92.3%
Black or African American alone, percent, July 1, 2014, (v2014) (a)	X
Black or African American alone, percent, April 1, 2010 (a)	2.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent, July 1, 2014, (v2014) (x)	X
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent, April 1, 2010 (a)	0.5%
Asian alone, percent, July 1, 2014, (v2014) (a)	X
Asian alone, percent, April 1, 2010 (a)	0.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent, July 1, 2014, (v2014) (a)	X
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent, April 1, 2010 (a)	0.0%
Two or More Races, percent, July 1, 2014, (v2014)	X
Two or More Races, percent, April 1, 2010	2.6%
Hispanic or Latino, percent, July 1, 2014, (v2014) (b)	X
Hispanic or Latino, percent, April 1, 2010 (b)	4.6%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent, July 1, 2014, (v2014)	X
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent, April 1, 2010	88.9%



# Economic Vitality

Michelle McCabe

CT Main Street Center



# Restoring Economic Value



BUILD A DIVERSE ECONOMIC  
BASE



CATALYZE SMART NEW  
INVESTMENT



CULTIVATE A STRONG  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP ECOSYSTEM

# District Knowledge & Data

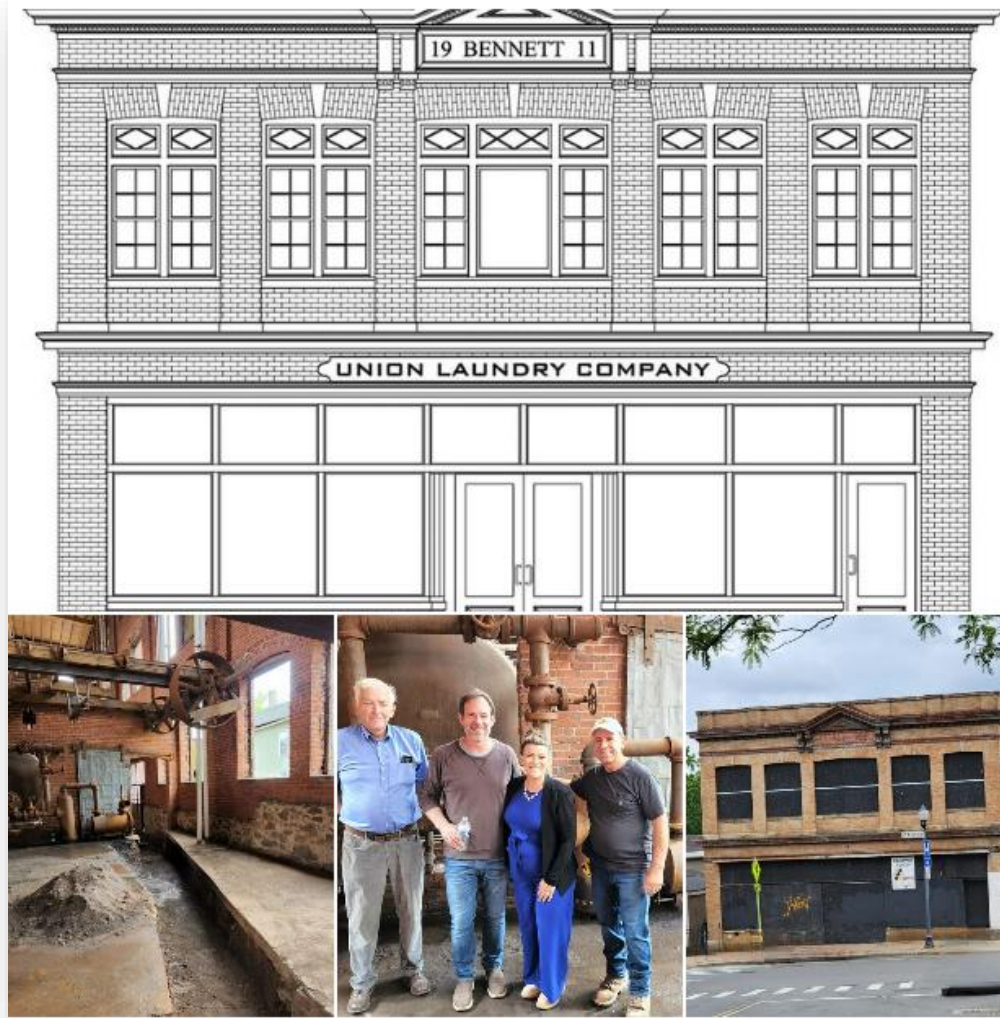
Have you documented your Main Street assets?



Wallingford

# Historic Preservation

Is there a historic preservation ethos?



New Britain, 266 Arch Street, Adaptive Reuse; Photo Credit: City of New Britain

# Housing

Does your zoning support the development of housing downtown?



Torrington, mixed-use & mixed-income riverfront project; Photo Credit: Pennrose



# Vacant Storefronts & Vacant Lots

Do you have a plan for vacant storefronts and lots?



Westville, New Haven, vacant lot after building fire; Photo Credit: New Haven Independent

# Recruiting Businesses

Do you have a strategic plan to recruit businesses based on needs and wants of the community?



Waterbury Main Street

# Property Owner Engagement

Are your property owners regularly engaged?



“From Problems to Partners” CMSC Engagement Workshop

# Attracting Development

Do you have a “one-stop-shop” approach for developers and other Main Street investors?



New Milford Economic  
Development Website

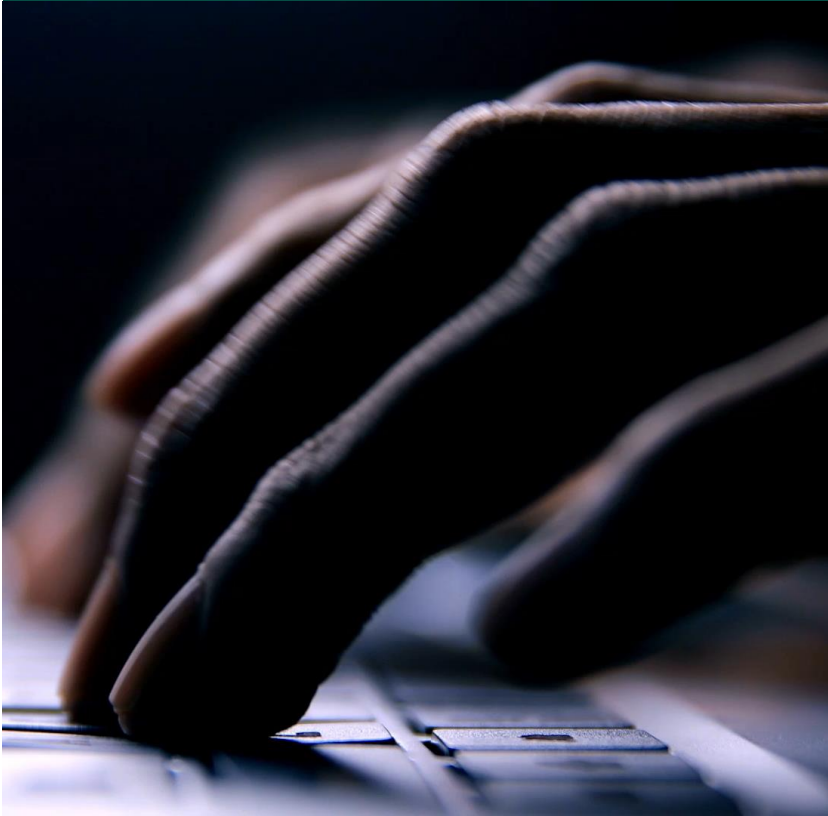
# Small Business Support & Ecosystem

How are your small  
businesses supported?



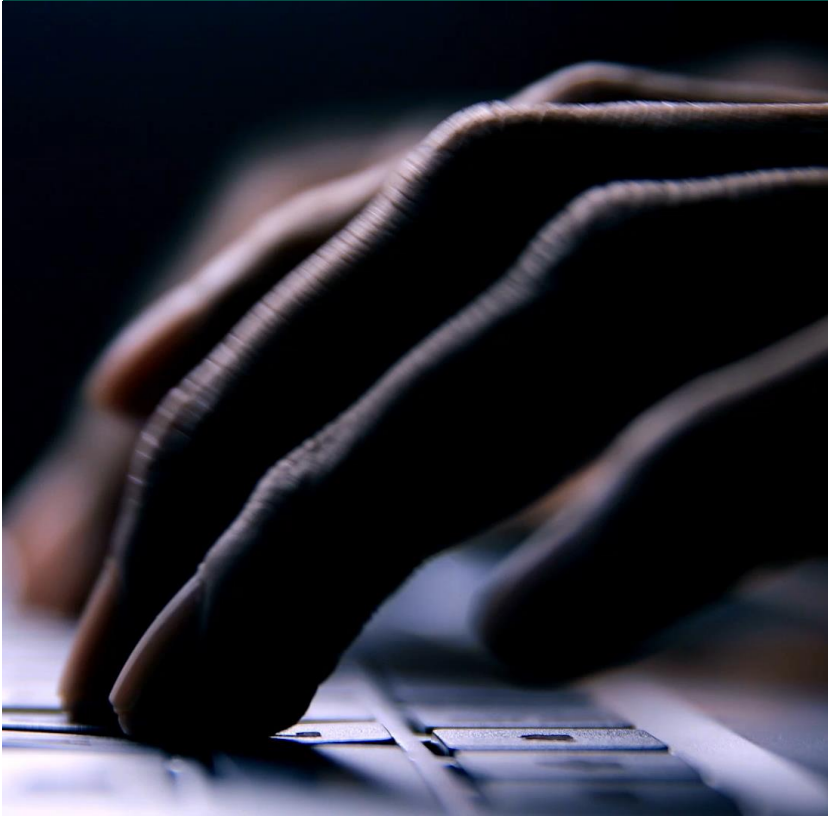
Niantic Main Street

## Economic Vitality Takeaways?



- District Knowledge & Data
- Historic Preservation
- Housing
- Vacant Storefronts and Lots
- Property Owner Engagement
- Attracting Development
- Small Business Support & Ecosystem
- Recruiting Business

## Economic Vitality Takeaways?



- **District Knowledge & Data**
- **Historic Preservation**
- **Housing**
- Vacant Storefronts and Lots
- Property Owner Engagement
- **Attracting Development**
- **Small Business Support & Ecosystem**
- **Recruiting Business**



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