MAIN STREET COMMITTEE MAIN STREET COMMITTEE

MAIN STREET COMMITTEE MEMBERS HANDBOOK

design

National Trust Main Street Center®

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SECTION 1:

welcome to main street

Thank you for supporting your community's important Main Street revitalization program by joining the Design Committee. Your membership will help ensure your commerical district's future as the center of community life.

You are joining a coast-to-coast movement led by the National Main Street Center and involving more than 1,000 community programs across the country. Together, these programs have produced an investment in these districts of more than $5 billion and spurred the rehabilitation of countless historic structures, while providing space for 38,000 net new businesses and creating 100,000 net new jobs for local citizens.

Your participation on the Design Committee will help bring about similar results for your community and make your vision for the commercial district a reality.

This handbook offers tips, guidelines, and sample forms to help you:

- ➤ Understand the Main Street approach to downtown revitalization and good design;
- ➤ Develop an exciting and effective design program and work plans; and
- ➤ Build an effective and efficient committee.

What Happened to Main Street?

Downtown and neighborhood business districts are no longer the primary providers of goods and services to their communities. These commercial cores now suffer from a complicated cycle of disinvestment: with businesses leaving, rental rates slip and property owners have less to invest in their buildings, giving the district a shabby, uncared-for appearance and making it even harder to attract new businesses.

Is There Hope for Main Street?

While many of these changes have contributed to economic decline, there are also trends and assets that support rejuvenation of our Main Streets. For instance:

- Many consumers are tired of the homogeneity and impersonality of shopping malls and chain stores. People value personal attention, name recognition, and exemplary service—all potential features of traditional commercial districts.
- A community's core represents a substantial share of its economy—its jobs, its tax base, its municipal investment, its businesses.
- Because consumers are more mobile today than several decades ago, the market area a downtown or neighborhood district can potentially serve is much greater than it used to be.
- More and more Americans enjoy visiting historic places—not just for vacation but also for everyday business and leisure activities. Traditional community centers offer unique, historic shopping environments.

Where Is Downtown Heading?

Even with some trends on its side, Main Street—and the community image embodied there—cannot survive without help. Consider:

- Most traditional commercial districts will never again be able to provide the range of goods and services they offered 20 or 30 years ago. To support the rehabilitation and maintenance of downtown commercial areas in today's market, we must aggressively expand Main Street's business mix—and market area.

- Main Street is not "city hall's responsibility" and yet our "Mom & Pop" business owners can't do it alone. A collaborative effort, combining the unique skills and vantage points of both public and private sectors, is essential.

- Main Street's renewal doesn't happen overnight; it's a gradual process that begins with small steps, eventually building our capacity to tackle larger, more complicated revitalization projects and problems. "Big fix," overnight solutions to downtown revitalization almost always fail.

- Traditional commercial districts, like shopping malls, require full-time, professional management.

Clearly, Main Street needs an ally, an advocate, a leader...and that's where you come in.

What Is the "Four-Point Approach"?

A community's central business district often accounts for as much as 30 percent of the town's jobs and 40 percent of its tax base. But, Main Street is more than an economic asset. It is also a community's crossroad, a place in our hearts and minds that evokes strong emotions and helps define our identity.

In recent years, many approaches to downtown revitalization, from urban renewal to paint-up, fix-up projects, have failed because they focused on just one or two problems, rather than dealing with the full spectrum of interrelated issues that affect traditional commercial districts.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street program offers an approach to downtown revitalization that has been successful in more than a thousand towns and cities throughout the country. The four points described in the next column are the keys to the success of the Main Street approach:

- **Organization** means getting everyone working toward the same goal. The tough work of building consensus and cooperation among the groups that have an important stake in the district can be eased by using the commonsense formula of a volunteer-driven program and an organizational structure of board and committees.

- **Promotion** means selling the image and promise of Main Street to all prospects. 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.

- **Design** means getting Main Street into top physical shape. Capitalizing on its best assets—such as historic buildings and traditional downtown layout—is just part of the story. An inviting atmosphere created through window displays, parking areas, signs, sidewalks, street lights, and landscaping conveys a visual message about what Main Street is and what it has to offer.

- **Economic Restructuring** means finding a new purpose for Main Street's enterprises. By helping existing downtown businesses expand and recruiting new ones to respond to today's market, Main Street programs help convert unused space into productive property and sharpen the competitiveness of business enterprises.

Facts of Life about Downtown Revitalization

1. There are no "hand-outs." Traditional government and foundation grants shun projects that involve commercial enterprises, and the days of urban renewal "big-fix" projects are long gone.

2. Most resources are local. Whether you need people or money to make projects happen, they are most likely to be found in the community, and YOU must find them.

3. Not everyone will like you, not even everyone you must work with. You must forge coalitions that have never been formed, and many of the people involved may not be used to talking to each other.

4. Everyone has an agenda, and it's probably not just downtown revitalization. YOU must create the culture—and priority—for Main Street's renewal.

5. There is no formula, no magic answers or easy solutions. The Main Street approach cannot save you from hard work, but it can substantially improve your chances for success.

What Makes "Main Street" Unique?

The Main Street approach has eight guiding principles that set it apart from other redevelopment strategies.

1. Comprehensive. Take off the blinders. No single focus—such as lavish public improvements, "name-brand" business recruitment, or endless promotional events—can do the job. Commercial district revitalization is a complex process requiring a simultaneous, comprehensive strategy.

2. Incremental. Baby steps come before walking. Basic, simple activities lead to a more sophisticated understanding of the revitalization process and help members of the community develop skills to tackle more complex problems and ambitious projects.

3. Self-Help. Nobody else will save Main Street. Local leaders must have the will and desire to mobilize local resources. That means convincing residents and business owners alike of the rewards for their investment of time and money in Main Street, as the heart of their community.

4. Partnerships. Stop pointing fingers. Both the public and private sectors have a vital interest in the commercial district. Partnership means that all stakeholders are contributing time, money, and expertise—often individually, but sometimes sitting around the same table—Main Street's table.

5. Assets. History is on our side. To give people a sense of belonging and pride, Main Street must capitalize on the unique assets it already has—qualities such as distinctive buildings, neighborly shop owners, and a human scale that can't be copied out on the strip.

6. Quality. Built-to-last. Shoestring budgets and "cut-and-paste" efforts won't do the job. A high standard of quality must be set for every aspect of the commercial district: from window displays to marketing brochures, from public improvements to storefront renovation.

7. Change. Skeptics turn into believers. Almost no one believes Main Street can really turn around...at first. Changes in attitude and practice are slow but definite—and essential. The Main Street approach often brings about a major shift in downtown's use, purpose...and future.

8. Implementation. Make a difference TODAY. Most communities have enough plans collecting dust on shelves to last them through the next century. Main Street's focus is to simultaneously plan for the future while creating visible change and activity NOW.

Impact of Recent Trends on America's Main Streets

The dramatic increase in the number of two-income households has made traditional downtown 9-to-5 shopping hours obsolete.

An entire generation of younger consumers has grown up shopping in malls; their expectations as consumers have been shaped by this experience.

In the last decade, retail space in America has quadrupled, while retail sales have increased less than 10 percent, taking a heavy toll on traditional commercial districts.

Land-use and transportation planning and policies have favored motorists and suburban sprawl.

SECTION 2:

committee purpose

What Does the Design Committee Do?

The Design Committee plays a key role in shaping the physical image of Main Street as a place attractive to shoppers, investors, business owners, and visitors. To succeed, your committee must persuade fiercely independent business and property owners and civic leaders to adopt a specific approach—and an ambitious agenda—for physical improvements to buildings, businesses and public improvements by:

- ➤ Educating others about good design—enhancing the image of each business as well as that of the district;
- ➤ Providing good design advice—encouraging quality improvements to private properties and public spaces;
- ➤ Planning Main Street's development—guiding future growth and shaping regulations; and
- ➤ Motivating others to make changes—creating incentives and targeting key projects.

Much of this work occurs in partnership with the program manager and in one-on-one relationships with members of the downtown community—property owners, business managers, city staff, and elected officials. This handbook provides an overview of these activities.

What's the Secret to Good Design

Let's face it: your design committee is staffed with volunteers who have varying levels of design expertise and differing opinions on what constitute "good design." You must take the time up front to look long and hard at your Main Street and, as a group, agree upon the essential elements that create the unique character of your commercial district—such features as the scale of buildings, type of materials, colors of facades, or era of construction. Then, you can begin planning design improvements. Here are some basic guidelines to follow:

- **Start small.** Early in the revitalization process, begin with small-scale physical improvements, such as inexpensive planters, banners, paint schemes, and signs. As you build confidence, experience, and expertise, tackle larger-scale improvements, such as building renovations and comprehensive streetscape plans.
- **Avoid themes.** Historic preservation is an ethic, not a theme. It advocates preserving those architectural elements that help tell the community's story—not creating a false past by adopting historic themes or making buildings look like something they never were.
- **Create compatibility.** Improvements should build on existing physical assets. Don't imitate historic styles, but consider complementary changes that respect existing building materials, scale, proportions, patterns of windows or storefronts, detailing, and colors.
- **Stress continuity.** The key to an attractive pedestrian atmosphere is the "street wall" created by continuous facades of lively storefronts. Demolition of historic and traditional commercial buildings will create gaping "holes" in the streetscape; avoid tearing them down whenever possible.
- **Build quality.** The cheap "substitute" materials and low-budget designs of today build the tacky towns of tomorrow. Insist that the best possible materials and craftsmanship be used for any new construction so it will stand the test of time, communicating pride and belief in your Main Street's future as well as its past.
- **Don't copy.** Avoid the "mall formulas" that work out on the strip. The design qualities that entice customers to the shopping mall—unified facades, pedestrian plazas, broadcast music—rarely work in traditional commercial districts where these elements appear unnatural and gimmicky.

- **Be realistic.** Design improvements can enhance Main Street's appearance and function, but alone they will not reverse economic decline. Design must be accompanied by sensible business development, aggressive marketing, and a permanent management of the district by a strong, broad-based organization.

Committee Job #1

The most important work your committee can accomplish is *education*... and the entire community will become your class.

Start with your own committee and board members. Use the various slide shows, videos, and publications available on Main Street design (see "Outside Resources, page 24) to create orientation sessions. Discuss members' reactions and opinions about Main Street's design qualities.

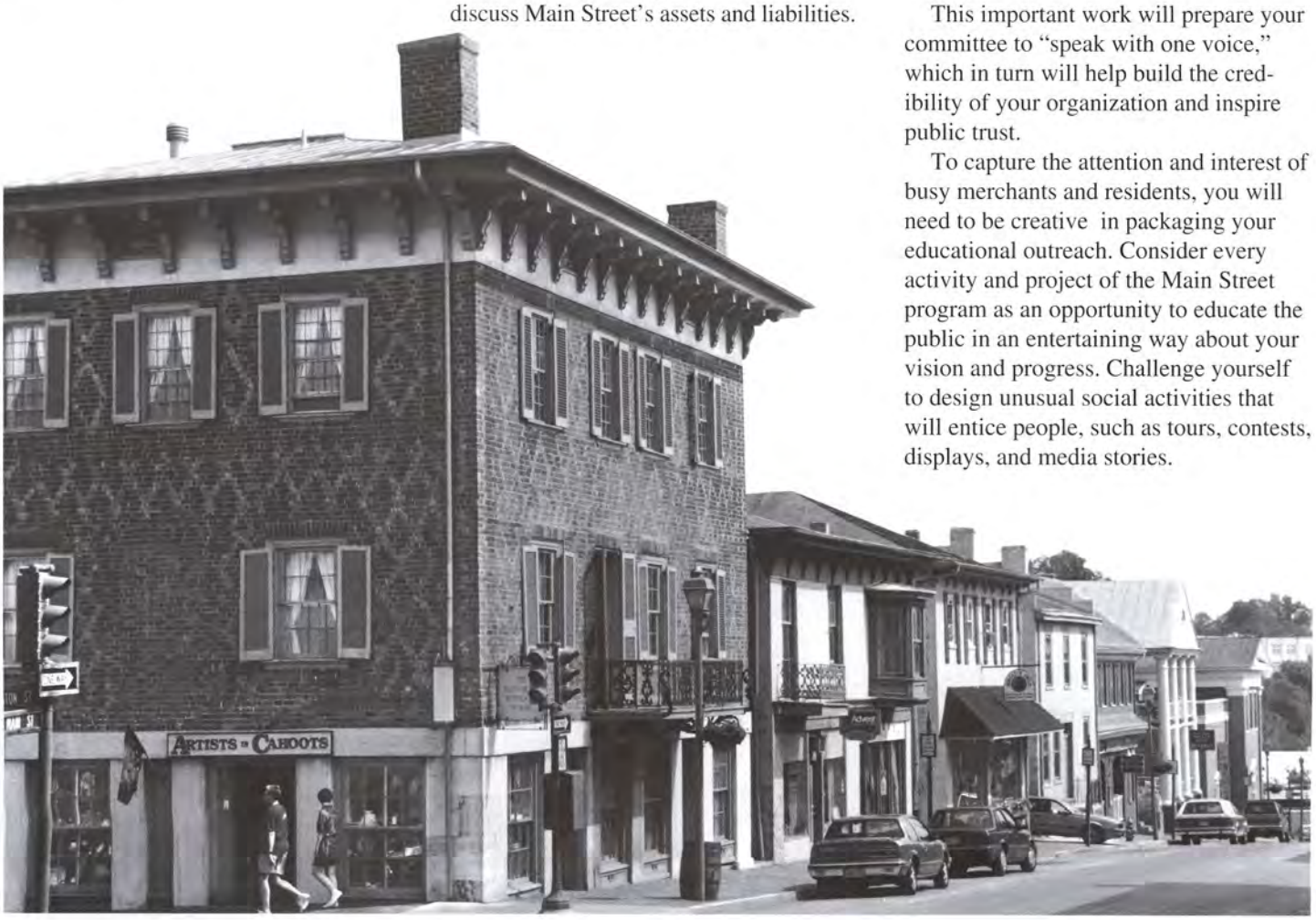
Elements of Committee Design Education	*Examples of Committee Projects*
➤ **Activities:** to help committee members and others familiarize themselves with the district's unique character and assets	• Building inventory by volunteers • Civic club presentations • "Rehab Library" development
➤ **Training:** to improve the design awareness and skills of committee members, property owners, and business people	• "Storefront Design" workshop series • "Design Guidelines" booklet
➤ **Publications:** to call attention to and guide owners through appropriate improvements	• Historic walking tour brochure • "Then & Now" column in local paper • Historic photo displays in store window

Second, take people in the district on group tours, guided by leaders knowledgeable about architecture, preservation, and/or storefront design. Use this time to discuss Main Street's assets and liabilities.

You should also talk about ways your committee can become involved in making improvements to the commercial district.

This important work will prepare your committee to "speak with one voice," which in turn will help build the credibility of your organization and inspire public trust.

To capture the attention and interest of busy merchants and residents, you will need to be creative in packaging your educational outreach. Consider every activity and project of the Main Street program as an opportunity to educate the public in an entertaining way about your vision and progress. Challenge yourself to design unusual social activities that will entice people, such as tours, contests, displays, and media stories.



Seven Steps to Successful Storefront Design

In many traditional commercial districts, older buildings are viewed as a "problem" due to decay, lack of maintenance, and previous "improvements" of poor quality. Actually, these buildings are often Main Street's best hidden asset. Here are some tips on how to capitalize on those assets and how to improve the image—and profit potential of businesses downtown:

1. Consider the entire building. Expand a business's presence and image by utilizing the whole facade—reintegrating upper-story design with the storefront, uncovering facades, and opening up boarded windows.

2. Take cues from the neighbors. Look at the entire streetscape for clues about the range of colors, styles, size, and character of storefront elements. Unity—not conformity—is the goal.

3. Change dramatically with color. The age-old miracle worker on Main Street, paint can cover a million problems, pull together a hodgepodge design, and offer an economical way to put a fresh face on a tired facade. Keep the paint scheme simple (no more than three colors); use it to integrate the entire facade; choose shades and tones of the same hue; and select schemes that work with your neighbors.

4. Integrate facades with awnings. Ugly alterations, A/C exhausts, and a host of other embarrassments can be concealed with a correctly designed awning. Stick to simple, traditional shapes, colors, and materials; "fit" the awning within the storefront opening; avoid jarring or faddish colors or designs; and resist the temptation to use backlit, plastic "sign box" awnings.

5. Change image through signs. The most significant changes can be accomplished through creative and sensitively designed signs. Placement, proportion, colors, material, and style should all reflect the building and business image.

6. Develop focal points with lighting. Call attention to merchandise, signs, and architectural details through unobtrusive lighting. For exterior sign illumination, shaded gooseneck lamps work well. (Avoid bare bulbs, backlit plexiglas, and floods.) Use spots to highlight details.

7. Use windows to inject vitality. Visual displays not only sell the merchandise selected; they set the image of the business. Fresh, creative displays that target only a few ideas or items come to life with dynamic arrangements, selective color, and good lighting.

Guiding Storefront Design

Helping a merchant with a storefront? Remember, the best storefronts reflect the district and the business's "personality." Here are five good questions to help define a business image.

1. Who are your best customers? (age, sex, income, pasttimes)

2. How would they describe your shop? (Take them across the street to look!)

3. What makes your business unique? (your edge on the competition)

4. If the shop were a car, what would it be? (a Cadillac or a comfortable pickup)

5. Whose shop on the street looks best? And why? (Find an image that's appealing.)

Types of Design Assistance	*Examples of Committee Projects*
➤ **Recommendations.** Offer building and property owners conceptual plans and written guidelines on improvements to facades, signs, and displays.	• Storefront renovation renderings • Design sketches and specifications for signs • Scrapbook of great design ideas • Individual visits with store owners
➤ **Resources.** Provide information on materials and contractors for building and storefront improvements.	• Rehab resource library • Contractor referral list • Paint and awning samples kit
➤ **Planning.** Collaborate with city government on future public improvements.	• Storefront analysis by design team • "Streetscape" improvement plans

Once your committee has learned the basics of Main Street design, it is time to spread the work to others on the street.

Providing Design Assistance

In some cases, merchants may want to improve the appearance of their buildings, but don't know what should be done. In others, business owners may not understand—or even believe—in the need for improvements unless they see a picture. Giving good design advice need not be a role for architects only. Your committee volunteers can do much to guide owners toward effective design solutions.

Avoid the temptation to become the district's "design police." Whether your committee has real regulatory power or not, many merchants will regard you in this light unless you take steps to prevent it. If your district has a design ordinance, let someone else conduct design review. Make constant efforts to provide helpful, positive support to business and property owners, and be sure they understand that you're "on their side." This won't be easy; to many, especially the uninformed, the presence of a design committee will feel threatening. It will be YOUR job to convince business and property owners that your work will benefit them directly.

Doesn't Preservation Prevent Progress?

Historic preservation is not "anti-change"; it does not advocate restricting design improvements, reconstructing demolished historic buildings, applying historic themes to new buildings, or saving every old building just for the sake of it. Instead, preservation recognizes good design from the past, maintains the built environment's unique characteristics, and encourages good new design—whether in the construction of new buildings or the modification of existing ones.

Historic preservation means managing change in the built environment. It is an economic development tool that can position downtown as a unique shopping environment offering qualities and services no shopping mall can provide.

The National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places, managed by the U.S. Department of the Interior, is a designation tool for historic properties and districts. Applications for properties to be listed in the National Register are processed through State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO), which also maintain register listings for their states. provide information on preservation, and monitor activities affecting register properties and districts.

Some SHPOs also maintain a State Historic Register, and local municipalities can designate Local Historic Registers, properties on which can be protected by a local historic preservation ordinance. Generally, local ordinances are the only legal protection historic properties may have.

SHPOs also grant Certificates of Appropriateness, which is their stamp of approval that a property has been rehabilitated according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, the national guidelines for building rehabilitations. Property owners wishing to take advantage of the 20 percent federal tax credit for building rehabilitation must have their projects certified by the SHPO; all properties must be listed in the National Register or built before 1936 to be eligible for the tax credit.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards

To qualify for the 20% tax credit for rehabilitation, owners must follow these federal guidelines:

1. Retain original building use, making minimal changes to defining characteristics.

2. Avoid removal of historic materials and alterations.

3. Respect the period and style of the original structure; avoid false additions.

4. Retain major alterations that have acquired their own historic significance.

5. Preserve distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques.

6. Repair deteriorated materials rather than replace them.

7. Use the gentlest means possible to clean surfaces. Do not sandblast.

8. Protect, preserve, and document significant archeological resources.

9. Construct new additions that are compatible, but differentiated from, the old.

10. Build new additions in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property will remain.

Planning Main Street's Future

With one eye on restoring Main Street's glory, your committee will want to turn the other eye toward the future—how to shape tomorrow's Main Street. City hall will play a major role here, in the form of developing master plans and regulations for the district. The design committee should be an active partner in planning long-term physical improvements, while reviewing and offering recommendations for the revision of city codes and ordinances.

Often, Main Street groups take the lead role in implementing streetscape improvements. Your committee can take the initiative in forging a consensus on needed improvements for the street, including sidewalks, utilities, and "street furniture" such as benches, planters, banners, trash receptacles, lampposts, and other landscaping. Then, in partnership with city officials, develop an agreement that spells out how to implement such improvements. Sometimes, in the early stages of a revitalization program, small amenities such as banners and planters are funded and installed entirely by private organizations and sponsorships. As your program matures, careful planning and collaboration with several partners will enable you to carry out large-scale sophisticated public improvements such as plazas and comprehensive repaving projects.

Remember, city officials have many competing demands for their attention, staff, and funds. They will not come begging to you for ideas and input. You must aggressively craft a reasonable plan for design changes, line up key supporters, and go to city officials with the offer to help "get the merchants off their backs" by facilitating sensible, affordable improvements.

Types of Planning Activities

➤ Plans for guiding future real estate development and construction of public improvements, such as new sidewalks, lighting, benches, etc.

➤ Regulations for construction, property use, activity, and appearance of district

Examples of Committee Planning Projects

- Downtown element of comprehensive plan
- Public improvement plans for the district
- Historic district designation

- Sign ordinance revision
- Minimum maintenance ordinance
- Design review ordinance

Public Improvements Checklist

Seven questions to ask when assessing your downtown streetscape:

1. Entrances—Is the district clearly marked with quality signs and landscaping?

2. Cleanliness—Is the street free of dirt, litter, and forgotten or damaged fixtures?

3. Signs—Do streets, parking, and points of interest have attractive signs? Are they well maintained?

4. Utilities—Are poles, lighting, and trash units attractively designed or concealed?

5. Landscaping—Are trees and planters thoughtfully placed and well maintained?

6. "Furniture"—Are benches and banners sturdy, well placed, and attractive?

7. Infrastructure—Are streets and sidewalks adequately maintained?

Types of Design Tools

➤ **"Carrots"**—design support, financial incentives, and resource information

➤ **"Sticks"**—local ordinances, land-use zoning, building codes, and comprehensive planning

Examples of Design Committee Projects

- Free architectural services
- Tax credit application consultation
- Rehabilitation matching grant program
- Contractor and materials reference list

- Sign/design ordinance review and updating
- Minimum maintenance ordinance development

Using All Your Design Tools

There is no single tool that will transform your commercial district. If you can provide the services of an architect and/or sign designer for conceptual drawings, you will have one of the most powerful design tools at your disposal.

In addition, you can offer on-target design assistance merely by providing appropriate examples of quality design improvements. Many programs develop a Main Street design "scrapbook" filled with photographs of good storefront design, signs, and public improvements taken by committee members and staff. Magazine articles from trade periodicals, such as *Signs of the Times, Visual Merchandising & Display,* or *Commercial Renovation* are especially good sources of information. Round out your examples with materials available through your state Main Street architect or program, as well as the publications available from the National Main Street Center.

Otherwise, simply becoming the "ombudsman" for downtown—assisting owners with the red tape of city hall; connecting them with qualified contractors; and locating hard-to-find renovation materials are helpful services.

Building your own library of resource materials (see "Outside Resources", page 24) can supply hard-to-find expertise and sources not available locally.

Codes and ordinances can also be useful tools. It will be important to review existing ordinances and propose additions or improvements that can help guide future physical changes.

By working with local officials and using samples from other Main Street communities, you can help make regulations more effective tools for achieving your goals and a less onerous burden for property owners.

Finally, developing financial incentives for building improvements—such as low-interest loan pools and matching grants—in partnership with the Economic Restructuring Committee can jump-start your progress.

Financial Incentives for Facade Improvement

The most widely used financial incentives are the following:

1. Grants—usually small matching fund programs, sponsored by a local utility or corporation; used to improve storefronts, signs, awnings, and lighting.

2. Loans—typically low-interest pools of funds, provided by a consortium of local financial institutions; used to assist in major building renovations.

3. Tax Breaks—often take the form of an assessment moratorium by the county assessor, for a period of 5 years following certified rehabilitations.

How Do You Make Good Design Happen

Holding seminars, making your advice available, and creating planning tools—as outlined above—is NOT enough. Your committee must convince wary property and business owners of the value and benefit of your ideas and their investment.

Now is the time to act strategically. Create a "hit list" of the top five to seven projects you would like to make happen this year. Pick sites that, as a group, have high:

- **Visibility**—such as corner properties or large, landmark buildings
- **Need**—such as severely dilapidated properties
- **Feasibility**—such as properties owned by "friends of Main Street" or buildings housing new businesses

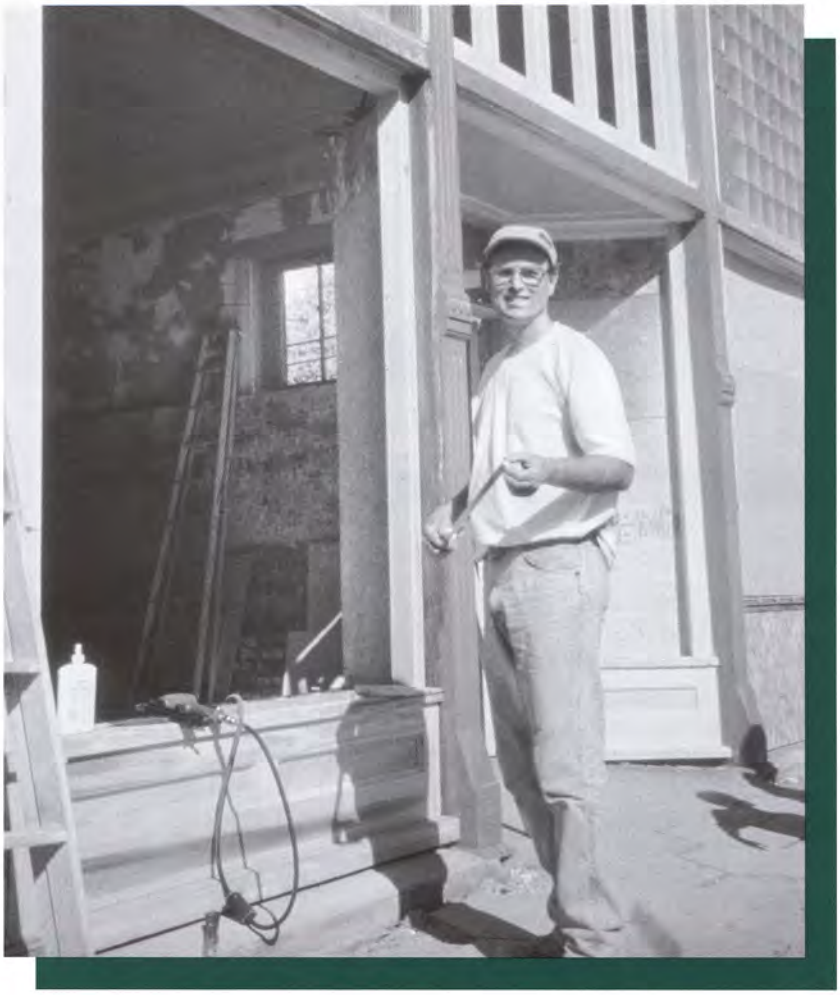
Motivating owners to make improvements may take time and will certainly require careful preparation on your part. You should consider:

- **The message**—what's their "button"? Pride? "Doing the right thing"? Or the "bottom line"?
- **The messenger**—Who should make the pitch? You, a civic leader, or a peer owner?

It may take time to win over some stubborn business and property owners, and for good reason. Your committee and program may be new and, thus, have no track record or credibility. Building trust—essential to persuasion—will happen slowly as these owners see their peers making progressively greater investments, based on your recommendations. As they see positive, attractive results, backed up by enthusiastic support by owners and customers, trust will build, making your job easier. You will want to use all the "carrots and sticks" available to you.

As volunteer committee members, you will be hard-pressed to keep an eye on everything happening on the street, especially during periods of major construction. Be strategic in your focus. It is often a good idea to assign "Design Block Captains" to be responsible for a specific block or area by meeting and getting to know the business and property owners. This way, your committee will often be the first to know when major changes are being planned, either to buildings or to businesses. These changes offer the perfect opportunity to promote your ideas to owners and tenants with whom you have already established a relationship.

Finally, remember that time is on your side. It may take years to implement some of the changes you want to make, but keep in mind that you are slowly building an incremental renewal of Main Street where your initial years of struggle will be rewarded by future improvements and long-term prosperity.



Three Secrets of Good Design

1. Preserve your district's character. You're nothing without your history. Be sure every improvement reinforces your heritage.

2. Ask everyone's opinion. There is less possibility of bad decisions when everyone's unique perspective is tapped; include everyone who uses Main Street: merchants, shoppers, landlords, etc.

3. Keep it simple! Stay clear of "big fix" public improvements and overly exuberant storefront schemes of today; they'll look silly and out of place tomorrow.

SECTION 3: committee roles

Committees are the backbone of a Main Street program, providing the workers who actually "roll up their sleeves" and get the work done, from planning to project implementation—and the Design Committee is no exception!

You will be working with a varied group of people from different backgrounds, as well as with your commercial district's building owners. The changes you will be making in your downtown's image and pride will certainly be a source of satisfaction for you and your committee.

All of your activities will be geared toward the "big picture goal of improving your commercial district's physical image. For many projects, such as a low-interest loan pool, you will be working with the other Main Street committees, pooling your information and resources to produce a great product for downtown. You will need to make the most of opportunities; when a building owner approaches the Main Street program about design improvements, it will take a responsive effort from the design committee to capitalize on this chance to improve downtown's appearance.

On the Design Committee, you will regularly find yourself:

- ➤ Learning about downtown design — to become an "expert on your district's distinctive character;
- ➤ Holding meetings — to discuss downtown design issues, develop strategies, brainstorm ideas and incentives;
- ➤ Making design recommendations — to help owners make improvements to storefronts, signs, and window displays;
- ➤ Visiting building owners — to talk about their buildings, discuss design assistance, act as a resource during rehab projects, and help them use incentive programs;
- ➤ Educating the public — to make them aware of good design and what it means to downtown's image and success;
- ➤ Acting as a liaison — to bring Main Street's message about good design to building owners, financial institutions, architects, the media, and the public;
- ➤ Organizing projects — to develop design guidelines, financial incentives, protective ordinances, and downtown planning projects; and
- ➤ Administering the design review and approval process — to ensure that financial incentive programs are used for design changes.

How Does Design "Fit" in the Organization?

It's important to remember that the board sets the organization's direction, while committees make the projects happen. Thus, while the board may have some general ideas about strategy for design issues, it should look to your committee for concrete work plan proposals that it will review and approve. Once proposals are approved, your group will need to pull together resources and complete the projects.

A good way to maintain two-way communication between the board and your committee is to have one member, often the committee chair, serve as a board member as well. A liaison member can report on the other groups' activities at each committee meeting and minimize confusion or duplication of efforts.

You as a Design Committee Member

A minimum of five to seven people typically meet at least once a month to plan and prepare design activities, which can create additional demands for more time or volunteers. While just about anyone with time and a sincere interest should be welcomed to serve on your committee,

remember that a really productive and effective Design Committee member:

- Knows and supports the Main Street approach to design;
- Has a genuine desire to serve on the committee;
- Expresses self clearly, yet eagerly exchanges ideas with others;
- Keeps an open mind, to be creative and learn from others;
- Thinks about the "big picture," yet also concentrates on the details;
- Knows when to be decisive and come to closure;
- Cooperates willingly in a team effort;
- Stays focused on the task at hand;
- Understands the design issues of older commercial building rehabilitation;
- Rolls up sleeves and pitches in;
- Has skills or interest in the design, history, or preservation of older commercial buildings; and
- Carries out plans and projects in a timely and professional manner.

Who Serves on the Design Committee?

Likely candidates are:

- architects
- history buffs
- real estate agents
- interior designers
- contractors
- graphic designers and artists
- downtown property owners
- architecture students
- city planners
- people who want to be "part of the action"

You as the Design Committee Chairperson

The real "stars" of many Main Street programs are the committee chairs. Public recognition, leadership status, the ability to "make a difference" in the community, and the satisfaction of a job well done are all potential rewards. Accountability to the board for your committee's projects, responsibility for other volunteers, time demands, and the potential for failure are also part of the mix. As committee chair, you must understand these roles and responsibilities clearly.

As the Design Committee Chair, you will regularly find yourself:

- **Recruiting members** — organizing training/orientation, assigning and supervising tasks;
- **Running meetings** — preparing agendas, notifying members, and taking minutes;
- Organizing work plans — scheduling work, managing tasks, knowing "the buck stops here";
- **Forging consensus** — managing discussions, resolving conflicts, and moving ahead on issues;
- **Representing the board** — explaining mission, clarifying policies, reporting on board activities;
- **Representing the committee to board** — presenting work plans and reporting on projects;
- **Working with staff** — coordinating actions, scheduling projects, solving problems; and
- **Doing the "paperwork"** — managing funds, negotiating contracts, and filing reports.

Your responsibilities are great, but you are not alone. Many of the activities listed above can be supported by, but not delegated to, the staff and board leadership.

What Are the Qualities of a Good Chair?

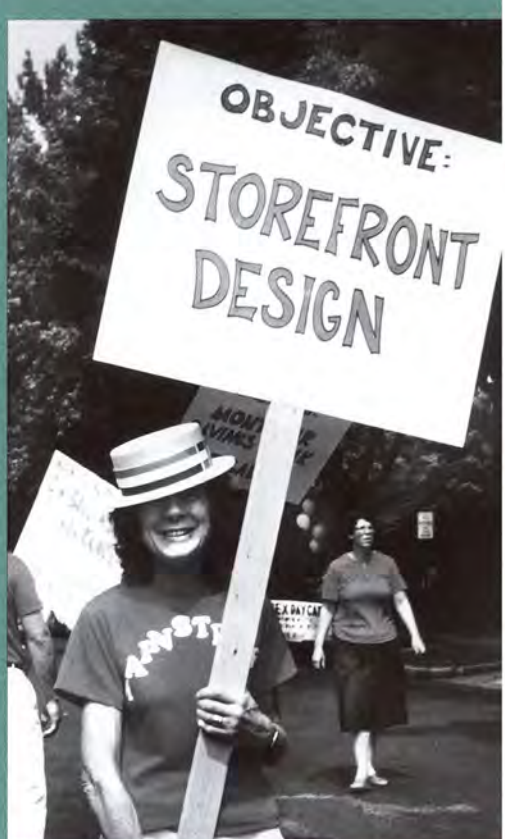
In addition to the qualities listed previously for committee members, an effective chair also:

- Understands—and routinely teaches others—about the Main Street approach to design;
- Has genuine desire to lead the committee and make great things happen;

Expectations for a Committee Member

Members should—at a minimum—expect to:

- Commit to at least one year of service;
- Work 3 to 5 hours a month;
- Attend all training sessions;
- Read selected orientation materials;
- Learn the Main Street approach;
- Recruit/orient new members;
- Prepare in advance for meetings;
- Cooperatively draft an annual plan;
- Take responsibility for projects; and
- Always represent the organization positively to the public.



- Has strong organizational skills, for self and others' work;
- Enjoys leading and managing both people and projects;
- Facilitates group discussion, making sure meeting agendas stay on track and are completed;
- Maintains a positive attitude that encourages participation and enthusiasm by others;
- Respects other people's viewpoints and skills;
- Manages difficult personalities and conflicts to bring the group to consensus;
- Communicates the committee's goals and progress to members and to the public; and
- Displays integrity, self-confidence, persuasiveness, decisiveness, and creativity.

Choosing a Committee Chair

While your committee will probably be asked to develop a list of potential chairpersons, it is ultimately the board of directors' responsibility to appoint that person. Where should you look for candidates? Good chairs are often drawn from the membership of that committee. Otherwise, your search might include outsiders with leadership experience or potential and unique skills or interests in design, such as those listed earlier as potential candidates for committee membership in general.

Staff Role in Committees

As a committee volunteer, you have great responsibilities, some of which can be supported by, but not delegated to, the staff—typically, a single program manager. It's important for you to understand what staff does—and does not do—for your committee. The manager participates in the committee's work in the following areas.

1. Committee Development:

- helps committee and chair learn the mechanics of committee management; provides expert advice and concise information on revitalization and the Main Street approach; and
- collaborates with committee members and chair as a strategist/planner.

... does not have authority over the committee or its structure.

2. Work Plans:

- assists committee members in developing work plan document;
- helps committee members complete their projects but doesn't assume responsibility for those activities; and
- integrates own work plan with the committee's work plan.

... is not someone to whom volunteers delegate all their work.

3. Rehabilitation and Design:

- coordinates information on design assistance and financial incentives for building owners; and
- acts as first contact for the public on preservation issues in the commercial district.

... is not responsible for taking the lead on motivating design change downtown.

4. Volunteer Management:

- helps chair develop good systems for recruitment, supervision, and reward of members; and
- helps develop volunteer capacity of committees by participating in recruitment efforts.

... does not become the volunteer's boss.

5. Committee Meetings:

- attends most meetings to provide technical information and professional opinions;
- helps strategize and develop solutions; and
- works with chair to assure that decisions and assignments are made and completed.

... is not responsible for calling and running meetings or taking minutes.

Expectations for a Committee Chair

A chairperson should—at a minimum — expect to:

- Commit to at least one year of service;
- Work 5 to 8 hours a month in committee;
- Teach others the Main Street approach;
- Recruit and orient committee members;
- Organize the committee's work plan;
- Call and run committee meetings;
- Delegate tasks to responsible members;
- Take responsibility for committee results;
- Appoint and oversee any subcommittees;
- Represent the committee to the board;
- Report on board issues to the committee;
- Manage and reward volunteers' efforts; and
- Remove oneself from office if any personal conflicts-of-interest arise.

SECTION 4:

committee work plans

As a busy committee member, you may feel that spending time creating documents such as a detailed committee work plan is a frivolous luxury, but it isn't. If you want to raise money for projects, motivate volunteers, get things done, and make the time you spend on the committee productive and enjoyable, a good work plan is a necessity.

Developing a Good Work Plan

Planning doesn't need to be painful, boring, or time-consuming. This handbook will outline a quick, effective process and give you a sample form to use, as well as examples of typical work plan activities. Below, we've suggested some important steps that can help you build a solid work plan for design.

1. Identify Design Issues

Ask: What Defines Our Character?

- Evaluate the commercial district's physical image. Inventory its best physical assets: historic landmarks, building materials, and architectural styles that make the heart of your community unique and appealing.

2. Build Downtown's Vision

Ask: How Will Our Future Look?

- Collaborate with other committees, civic leaders, merchants, and property owners to produce a clear picture of future (re)development. (The Promotion and Economic Restructuring committees should participate.)

3. Evaluate Existing Conditions

Ask: How Do We Look Now?

- Measure the "gap" between your vision for the future and the current physical reality. Prioritize major long-term initiatives, such as public improvements, rehabilitations, and new "infill" construction.

4. Draft Work Plan Proposal

Ask: What New Activities Are Needed?

- Develop a written work plan for 12 months, based on the resources of the whole organization, design committee, and potential outside "partners" identified earlier.

5. Get Board Approval

Ask: How Does Your Plan Fit into the Organization?

- Present your plan to the board so it can be integrated with other work plans. The board will then set priorities and allocate resources.

Top Five Reasons to Do a Work Plan

1. Motivates volunteers to achieve a goal.
2. Provides benchmarks for success.
3. Attracts donations for specific projects.
4. Improves success rate of projects.
5. Reduces confusion and conflict.

Seven Essentials for a Good Work Plan

This type of planning goes by many names, and the jargon can be confusing. We suggest seven simple but important components for your work plan:

Component	Purpose	Design Examples
1. GOALS	State very broadly the end results we seek in this committee.	"To save our community's unique character..." "To preserve our heritage"
2. OBJECTIVES	Serve as instructions for reaching our broad goals.	"To educate others about design" "To provide incentives for rehabilitation"
3. PROJECTS	Define specific initiatives this committee will undertake.	"Develop design assistance program" "Establish a matching grant program" "Install planters and benches"
4. TASKS	Describe individual actions necessary to complete a project.	"Draft regulations for design assistance program" "Contact university architecture department about student design work"
5. TIMETABLE	Sets a realistic start and finish date for each task.	"Jan. 30 - Feb. 15, 1996" "... by February 15, 1996" "Within 30 days of completion of proposal"
6. RESPONSIBILITY	Identifies specific member who will take the lead and be responsible for completion.	"John Winslow" "Chairperson" "Lead: Joe (with assistance by Barbara and staff)"
7. BUDGET	Outlines all costs associated with each task, helping committee and board to set priorities.	"$150.00 cash" "$75 cash from committee budget, with $75 in-kind contribution from contractor"

Typical Design Work Plan Projects

You need to make your work plan as unique as your community. A typical design committee work plan might include, but is not limited to, the following projects:

- Conduct survey of downtown buildings.
- Develop facade improvement financial incentives.
- Conduct storefront improvement workshops.
- Develop design guidelines publication.
- Establish relationship with building inspector and discuss historic building regulations.
- Distribute brochure on design services.
- Identify priorities for public improvements.
- Conduct survey of downtown parking supply.
- Produce building renovation drawings.
- Conduct building visits with owners.
- Target building renovations.
- Hold "Downtown Clean-Up Day."
- Hold seminar on rehabilitation technology for local contractors.
- Assist owners with National Register nominations.

NOTES:

- Your committee will usually have just one goal.
- You may have two or three objectives to reach your goal.
- Typically, you will develop several tasks to complete each objective.

Sample Design Committee Work Plan Sheet
(Blank form for photocopying provided at back of this handbook)

MainStreet
Design Committee

WORK PLAN

Submitted by Chairperson: Scott Dates: 9/1/96 - 8/30/97

Project Title: "Profitable Storefront Design" Workshop Project # :

Task	Timetable	Responsibility	Budget
1) Develop course outline	September	Committee	-0-
2) Survey merchants on best time & place	by October meeting	Scott (Steph, Kennedy)	-0-
3) Arrange for meeting space	by October meeting	Steph	-0-
4) Create marketing flyer	10/1/96	Kennedy	$150
5) line up speakers	9/15/96		-0-
- architect		Kennedy	
- business owners (2)		Scott	
- graphics/signmaker		Steph	
6) Hand distribute flyers	11/1/96	Committee	
7) Rent A/V equipment	11/15/96	Scott	$50
8) Registration at workshop	11/16/96	Kennedy	
Facilitate session	11/16/96	Scott/manager	
		TOTAL	$200.00/no

SECTION 5:

committee effectiveness

Avoiding Committee Conflict

As with most groups, the majority of conflicts result from misunderstandings. Your committee will avoid a great deal of unpleasant and unproductive discord if you keep in mind a few basic rules of committee communication:

- **You might disagree in a private meeting** about any issue related to the committee, but when you walk out the door, you are an "ambassador" to the public, and must represent the committee's view, despite any lingering personal misgivings about the group's decision.
- **Your committee may be opposed to a board policy.** If so, you have an obligation to clarify your position, and the reasons for it, as well as ultimately to accept and publicly support the board's final decision.
- **Your chairperson is the key link between the board and the committee.** The chair reports committee ideas and actions to the board and other committees and in turn represents and explains board policy and decisions to the committee.
- **Your support is essential.** If you find yourself in regular conflict with your committee or board's decisions or direction, you should consider stepping down from your position. You'll do yourself and others no favor by staying on.

Meetings, Meetings, Meetings...

Most people hate meetings, and Main Street volunteers are no exception. Too often, meetings are boring, unpleasant, unproductive... utter time-wasters. So why have them? The harsh reality is that, in order to be effective, every organization or group must have communication and consensus; and meetings are often the best, although not the only, way of accomplishing that. This collaborative work is even more important when funds and staff time are limited. In other words, meetings are an essential aspect of any Main Street program.

The good news: we can create better, more productive meetings by following some basic guidelines. The committee chair should answer the following questions affirmatively before you sit down together at the table:

- **Do we really need a meeting?** Meetings are necessary when group action is required or face-to-face discussion is important. Otherwise, consider a written memo, personal phone calls, or even a conference call.
- **Are we prepared to meet?** Choose a meeting time well in advance, usually a month. Give everyone adequate notice, two weeks at a minimum. Prepare and deliver a written agenda, preferably in advance.
- **Has the room been prepared for the meeting?** When people are comfortable, they can be productive. Make sure the room has adequate tables, chairs, space, lighting, privacy, and necessary equipment, such as a flipchart. Refreshments make early morning, noon, or after-work sessions more appealing.
- **Are the right people in the room?** Meetings are fruitless when key players are missing or when unnecessary people are included. Keep the number manageable, usually five to seven people, and make sure key individuals will be able to attend.

YOU Could Be the Problem

Well-meaning committee members are frequently unaware of their own bad habits. You may be sabotaging meetings without realizing it. Don't be the:

Latecomer...
who disrupts discussion, making everyone backtrack to fill you in;

Early Leaver...
who cuts off discussion, robbing others of your input or support;

Broken Record...
who harps on the same point endlessly, dragging the group down;

Drop-out...
who sits there stone-faced, making others feel uneasy or confused;

Gossiper...
who constantly chats with others, distracting the group;

Know-It-All...
who dominates the discussion, inhibiting others' participation; or the

Doubting Thomas...
who is always skeptical and negative—because it's just plain easier.

Is Your Agenda Hidden?

"A problem well defined is a problem half-solved" applies as well to committee meetings as it did to Albert Einstein's equations. Agreement among the group about the purpose and intended results of a meeting will eliminate at least half of the problems that crop up. Clearly recording what happens at each meeting also eliminates confusion and keeps everyone on track. Good agendas and minutes are essential for effective meetings.

But who has time to print up an agenda and transcribe minutes? What goes into a good agenda? What information should be included in the minutes? What is the easiest way to accomplish these tasks? On page 20, you will find a sample form to record both agenda items and minutes. This fill-in-the-blank format can help your committee keep clear records and follow an agenda with a minimum of effort.

Tips for Managing Discussions

If you find yourself running a meeting, here are some good rules of thumb to keep in mind.

- **Make a plan.** In addition to the agenda items, you should have a strategy for conducting the meeting. Anticipate the comments and reactions each topic will spur. How will you keep the meeting from getting sidetracked? Decide now what results you want, and how to get there.

- **Zip your lip.** A sure sign of problems is a meeting dominated by the chair or program manager. Set an agenda that allows others to lead discussions, make presentations, or propose actions. If you want real participation by committee members, consider yourself a "traffic cop" for discussions, and a quiet leader toward your goals. Don't let the staff, or your ego, squelch other people's enthusiasm.

Seven Signs of a Bad Meeting

1. No written agenda
2. Too long
3. Wrong people at meeting
4. Starts late, ends late
5. No purpose or conclusions
6. Members unprepared
7. A manager or chair who does all the talking

A Good Meeting

1. Has a clear agenda and purpose
2. Starts and finishes on-time
3. Has a good facilitator/leader
4. Has agreed-upon ground rules
5. Assembles the right people in the room
6. Has active group discussions and reaches conclusions

Sample Minutes Form

(Blank form for photocopying provided at back of this handbook)

MainStreet
Design Committee

MEETING AGENDA & MINUTES FORM

Meeting Date: 4/15/96
Time: 7:00-8:00 pm
Location: City Hall library
Chairperson: Cynthia

Attending: Cynthia, Albert, Marie, Eugene, Mike

Absent: Bill

Top Issue: Finalize printing & distribution of design guidelines

Item:	Notes:
1. Mike: Status of printing of design guidelines Time: 15 minutes	After delay, guidelines are at printer; costs will be less, though. Action: Mike will follow up & let Cynthia & Albert know when they are done
2. Albert: Update on distribution plans for guidelines Time: 10 minutes	Albert distributed assignments for one-on-one visits Action: Visits must be made within four weeks by all committee members
3. Cynthia: Other outreach to follow up on guidelines distribution Time: 25 minutes	Brainstormed workshop idea Action: Marie will develop workshop concept, outline
4. Eugene: Update on loan pool status Time: 5 minutes	Eugene is working w/ ER committee; loan pool now finalized w/ bank Action: Eugene will distribute guidelines to ER members & keep them posted.

Summary/Notes for Board & Staff:
Guidelines printed; will be distributed by all committee members by 5/10/96
Send to: All Design committee members, manager & Board

Next Meeting Scheduled for:
Date: 5/10/96
Time: 7:00-8:00 p.m.
Location: City Hall library

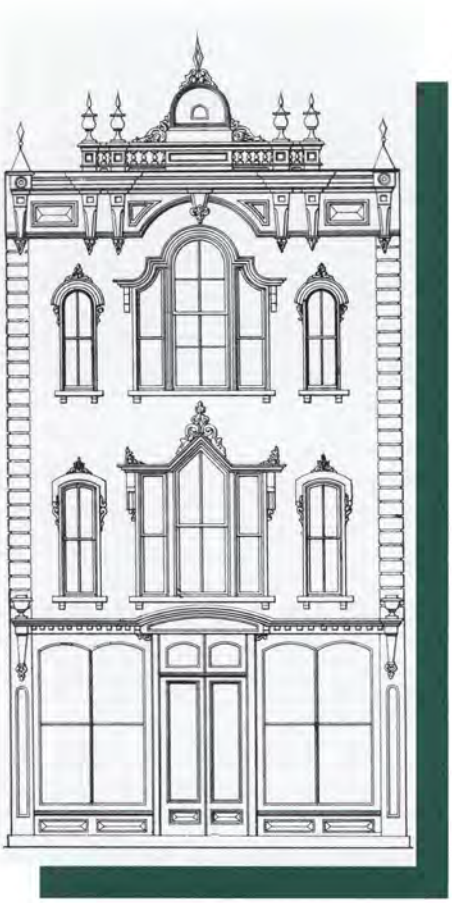
- **State the obvious.** Don't be embarrassed to open the meeting by restating the reason for gathering. Ask for agreement. You'd be surprised how often there is either a misunderstanding about priorities or an important item that everyone wants added to the agenda. Tell others what you want to accomplish and when the meeting will end.

- **Tackle big things first.** Remember Parkinson's Law: "The smaller the item, the greater attention it will receive." While many people may feel reluctant to discuss the legal implications of an ordinance, everyone has an opinion on the appearance of the new trash bins for the park or the color of the organization's new stationary. Address important, complex topics up front; save the small stuff for last... or cut it completely.

- **Cut trivial topics.** Are you trying to cover too much ground in one meeting? Be brutal with your agenda; strip it down to critical issues. Perhaps, some items could be delegated to a person or task force and be covered in a written report rather than taking up everyone's time.

- **Make it safe.** Use your leadership to ensure a comfortable discussion where no one feels threatened by others. This can be tough! Don't let one person monopolize the conversation; say: "I understand your point, now let's hear from someone else." Consider going around the table to equalize everyone's input. DON'T LET ANYONE ATTACK ANOTHER. Reprimand them during the meeting or after, but don't allow any bullying.

- **Reward positive participation.** Support people who make positive comments and stay on target with meeting objectives. Ignore off-target remarks; discussion only reinforces them.



- **Make it fun!** An effective meeting does not have to be boring. Plan a little entertainment, such as a guest speaker. Or break it up with visuals, such as architectural renderings, a slide show, or a video presentation.

- **Wrap it up.** The most frustrating experience for volunteers is to spend an hour or two in deep debate, only to adjourn with no sense of resolution and no idea what steps will be taken. Your job is to constantly summarize the discussion, bring the group to closure, and outline specific steps you or the committee will take to finish specific projects. Also ask the group to define the next steps.

Training Yourself for Maximum Performance

You can make your job easier by taking the time to train committee members. How much time? Over the next year, about 5 percent of your time, approximately two 90-minute meetings, should be dedicated to training. And you can do much of this yourself, with the help of your program manager. Here are some suggestions for format and resources:

MEETING #1

Orientation. The purpose of the first session, led by the chair or program manager, is to familiarize committee members with the Main Street approach. In conducting this meeting, you should:

- Introduce committee members, noting their interests and skills relevant to design.
- Present the NMSC's *Keeping Up Appearances* slide show.
- Tour the commercial district, noting styles, locations, and condition of buildings, window displays, and the general appearance of the street.
- Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the district's physical environment: appearances, layout, traffic flow, etc.

MEETING #2:

Training. Use this meeting to help the group reach consensus on how to apply the Main Street approach to the commercial district's appearance.

- Review this committee handbook, section by section, asking for questions and discussion.
- Analyze what you saw as "negative" about the district to determine its cause.
- Discuss the types of projects that could reverse these negative images.

Now your committee is ready to start developing its own plan of action, as outlined in the previous section of this handbook.

SECTION 6:

committee report card

As your committee grows and matures, it's a good idea periodically to evaluate your operations and effectiveness. The following review will signal whether your committee is moving in the right direction:

Organizational Procedures

(Give yourself a "plus" for every yes answer, a "minus" for every no.)

Does the committee:

HAVE A GOOD CHAIR and MEMBERS who are
- ❑ open and flexible
- ❑ operate together as a group

COMMUNICATE its message and progress to
- ❑ the community
- ❑ its constituents
- ❑ board members
- ❑ program staff

MEET REGULARLY with agendas that
- ❑ have clear objectives
- ❑ emphasize action items
- ❑ result in attainable outcomes

CONDUCT MEETINGS that
- ❑ start and end on time
- ❑ have an informal, relaxed atmosphere
- ❑ provide informational materials for review and study

PRODUCE UPDATED WORK PLANS annually that
- ❑ modify existing objectives
- ❑ identify new objectives
- ❑ are accepted by the community
- ❑ contribute to the organization's goals

ANALYZE COMPLETED PROJECTS to determine if they
- ❑ met their stated objective(s)
- ❑ harmonized with community partners' plans
- ❑ complemented other committees' work programs

15 - 19 *pluses place the committee in a SUPERIOR category.*

10 - 14 *mean you're ON TRACK and headed to the top.*

5 - 9 *indicate that the committee needs to SHAPE UP.*

0 - 4 *show a need to MAKE IMMEDIATE CORRECTIONS.*

Work Plan Effectiveness

Now that you've evaluated your committee's organizational patterns and behavior, the following questions may help assess the effectiveness of the committee's work plan. Again, give yourself a "plus" for each positive response:

- ❑ Do more people know about the downtown revitalization program today than when it started?
- ❑ Has the committee produced design materials and programs to change the downtown's appearance?
- ❑ Were those efforts effective?
- ❑ Are the design improvement programs and services being used?
- ❑ Have members of the Main Street organization met with building owners to assess their needs?
- ❑ Have participants in the Design Committee's projects been thanked or honored in some way?
- ❑ Have you noticed a change in the appearance of the commercial district since the Main Street program began?

5 - 7 *positive responses give your committee a GRADE A rating.*

3 - 4 *indicate you're MAKING AN IMPACT.*

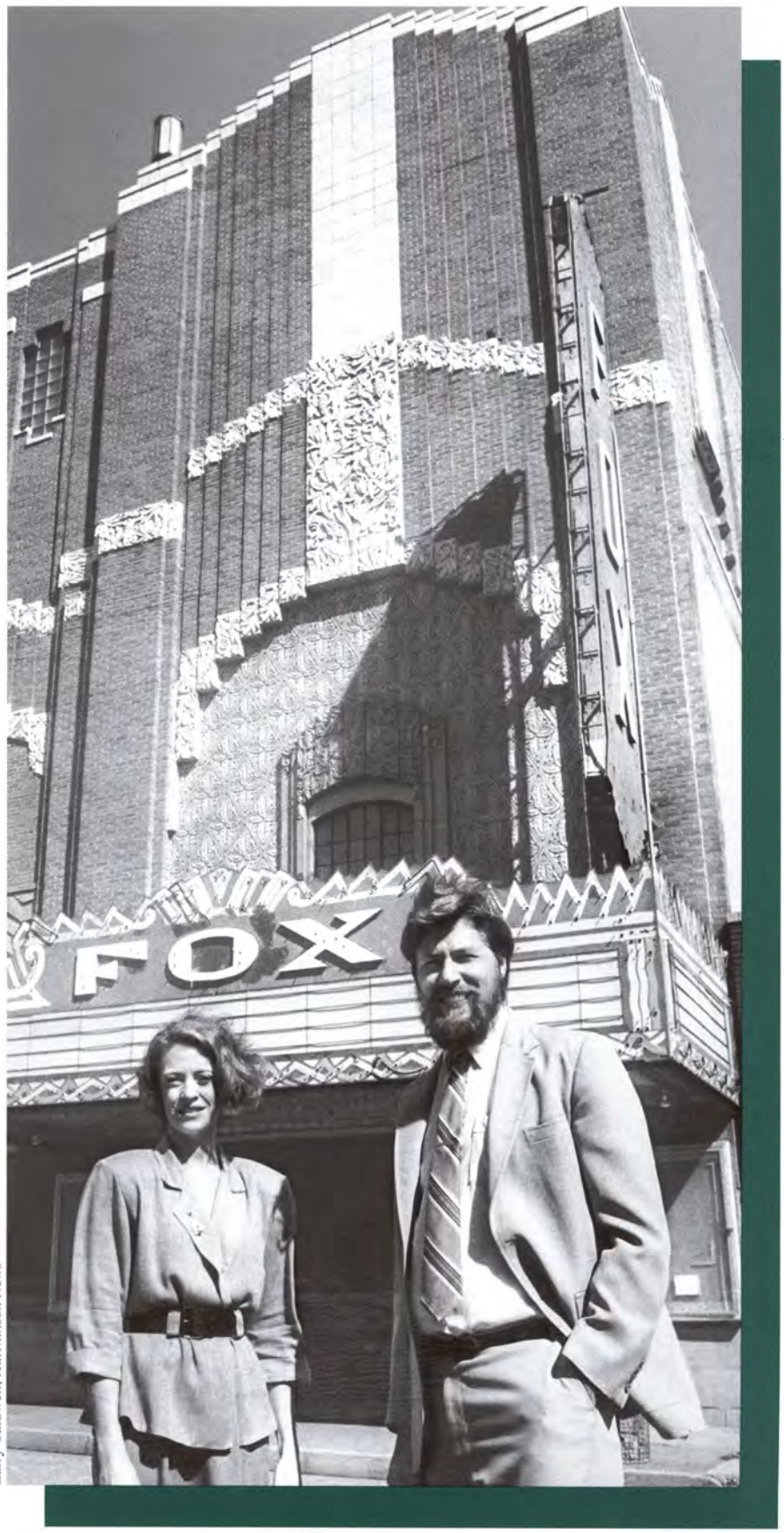
0 - 2 *show that your work plan needs MAJOR COURSE CORRECTIONS.*

Checklist: What Are Your Expectations?

Now that you know what is expected of committee members, take a look at the following questions. They can help you decide if a role on this committee is right for you.

- ❑ Are you more interested in another area of design than the one to which you were assigned?
- ❑ Are you more comfortable working on internal projects that do not require much interaction with others, or would you rather be out mixing with people?
- ❑ Do you feel confident in expressing yourself clearly about design issues?
- ❑ Do you think that you need additional training? If so, in what area?
- ❑ Is the work worthwhile and challenging? Are you growing and learning in your assignment?
- ❑ Do you feel your interests and skills might better be used on another committee?
- ❑ Are you asked to spend more time on committee work than you can afford to give?

If your answers to these questions have given you doubts about your role on the committee, a frank discussion with your committee chair or the person who asked you to serve could help alleviate your worries.



Larry Caldwell, *Hutchinson News*

SECTION 7: outside resources

For more in-depth information on design, see the following publications, slides, and *Main Street News* articles available from the National Main Street Center:

Storefront Design

Building Improvement File. Storefront renovation and guidelines, simplified to lead you through the design improvement process.

Developing Downtown Design Guidelines. From the California Main Street Program, this publication walks you through the process of drafting your own design guidelines.

"Dodgeville, Wisconsin: The Importance of Appearance." *Main Street News*, No. 96. How Dodgeville, Wis., developed an effective design improvement program.

Main Street Guidelines: Design. Four bulletins on downtown design topics: storefronts, signs, public improvements, and awnings and canopies.

Revitalizing Downtown. A comprehensive guide to the Main Street approach, with strong chapters on design.

Storefronts that Sell slide show. 40-slide presentation that offers persuasive examples of dynamic improvements to commercial buildings.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. Contains the national standards for rehabilitating buildings, criteria for National Register building improvements and for Certified Rehabilitations.

Design Management and Assistance

Design Review in Historic District. Information Series #2I85. National Trust for Historic Preservation: Washington, D.C.

Guiding Design on Main Street: Buildings. An informative, comprehensive downtown design publication; includes styles, financial incentives, tax credits, and management information.

Impact of the Americans with Disabilities Act on Historic Structures. Information Series #2I55. National Trust for Historic Preservation: Washington, D.C.

Making Good Design Happen slide show. 40-slide presentation that provides dramatic visual instruction on the basics of a good design program, including effective ways to educate the public about design, offer architectural services, develop incentives for rehabilitations, and plan public improvements.

Reviewing Construction Projects in Historic Areas. Information Series #2I62. National Trust for Historic Preservation: Washington, D.C.

Safety, Building Codes and Historic Preservation. Information Series #2I57. National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C.

Signs

Signs of a Successful Main Street slide show. 40-slide presentation that demonstrates good design for storefront and directional signs; also illustrates appropriate awning styles and materials.

Sign Regulation for Small and Midsize Communities. A comprehensive guide to designing your community's sign regulations. American Planning Association PAS Report #419.

Design Guidelines

Building Improvement File. Storefront renovation and guidelines, simplified to lead you through the design improvement process.

Main Street Guidelines: Design. Four bulletins on downtown design topics: Storefront Design, Signs, Public Improvements, and Awnings.

Revitalizing Downtown. A comprehensive guide to the Main Street approach, with strong chapters on design.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. The national standards for rehabilitating buildings, criteria for National Register building improvements, and for Certified Rehabilitations.

Public Improvements

Building the Streetscape slide show. 40-slide presentation that can help you steer clear of the common mistakes communities make when trying to spruce up Main Street. Covers appropriate street furniture and fixtures, sensible maintenance programs, functional paving, and lighting.

Main Street Guidelines: Design. Four bulletins on downtown design topics: Storefront Design, Signs, Public Improvements, and Awnings and Canopies.

The Parking Handbook for Small Communities. 107-page book on managing parking downtown.

National Register and Protecting Historic Buildings

Basic Preservation Procedures. Information Series #2I48. National Trust for Historic Preservation: Washington, D.C.

Local Government and Historic Preservation. Discusses local government's role in historic preservation initiatives.

Maintaining Community Character: How to Establish a Local Historic District. Information Series #2I58. National Trust for Historic Preservation: Washington, D.C.

Rescuing Historic Resources: How to Respond to a Preservation Emergency. Information Series #2I51. National Trust for Historic Preservation: Washington, D.C.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings. The national standards for rehabilitating buildings, criteria for National Register building improvements and for Certified Rehabilitations.

Financial Incentives for Historic Preservation

The Economics of Rehabilitation. Information Series #2I53. National Trust for Historic Preservation: Washington, D.C.

Guide to Tax-Advantaged Rehabilitation. Information Series #2I89. National Trust for Historic Preservation: Washington, D.C.

Innovative Tools for Historic Preservation. Outlines financial, legal, and organizational tools for implementing preservation projects.

Preservation Revolving Funds. Information Series #2I85. National Trust for Historic Preservation: Washington, D.C.

Revitalizing Downtown. A comprehensive guide to the Main Street approach, with strong chapters on design.

Planning and Development Issues

How Superstore Sprawl Can Harm Communities. Identifies soft and hard costs of unsustained, unplanned development on communities.

Saving Face: How Corporate Franchise Design Can Respect Community Identity. A resource for communities confronted with "cookie-cutter" franchise design. Contains case studies demonstrating how franchises have accommodated local design.

Sign Regulation for Small and Midsize Communities. A comprehensive guide to designing your community's sign regulations. American Planning Association PAS Report #419.

Help from the National Main Street Center

Looking for more answers and solutions? Write the National Main Street Center, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 for more information on:

New Tools for Main Street

More than 60 educational/training publications, slide shows, videos, and computer software are featured in this catalog. These materials provide inspirational, practical "how-to" tips and advice for novice and veteran programs alike.

National Main Street Network

Linking more than a thousand commercial revitalization programs nationwide, this membership program shares ideas, trends, and success stories through a monthly newsletter, annual directory, free telephone consultation service, and the Main Street On-Line World Wide Web computer site.

National Town Meeting on Main Street

Offering a once-a-year opportunity for face-to-face meetings with more than 1,200 professionals, this conference includes a variety of educational sessions and networking forums and features the newest resources available in the field.

On-Site Technical Services

National Main Street Center staff can provide expert advice, training, and organizational development consulting to help revitalization programs tailor their own strategies and plans.

MainStreet
Design Committee

WORK PLAN

Submitted by Chairperson: _____ Dates: ___/___/___ - ___/___/___

Project Title: _____ Project # : _____

Task	Timetable	Responsibility	Budget
		TOTAL	

MainStreet
Design Committee

MEETING AGENDA & MINUTES FORM

Meeting Date: ___ /___ /___
Time: _____
Location: _____
Chairperson: _____

Attending: _____
_____
_____
_____

Absent: _____
_____
_____

Top Issue: _____

Item:

1. _____
_____
_____
Time: _____

Notes:

_____
_____
Action: _____
_____

2. _____
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_____
Time: _____

_____
_____
Action: _____
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3. _____
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_____
Time: _____

_____
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Action: _____
_____

4. _____
_____
_____
Time: _____

_____
_____
Action: _____
_____

Summary/Notes for Board & Staff:

_____
_____
_____
Send to: _____

Next Meeting Scheduled for:
Date: ___/___/___
Time: _____
Location: _____
_____

MAIN STREET COMMITTEE MEMBERS HANDBOOK

design

The Main Street Committee Members Handbook series was developed and written by Douglas A. Loescher and Teresa Lynch. Additional writing was supplied by Elizabeth Jackson, McDuffie Nichols, Kennedy Lawson Smith, and Amanda B. West. Readers for this text were Scott Day, Dale Helmich, Stephanie Redman, David Schure, and P.H. "Cuffy" Sullivan. Support research was conducted by Amanda B. West. The text was edited by Linda S. Glisson. Format designed by Jason Alger, Chadick & Kimball; *Design Committee Handbook* layout by Linda S. Glisson.

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Printed in the United States of America
First Edition

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National Trust for
Historic Preservation
1785 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036