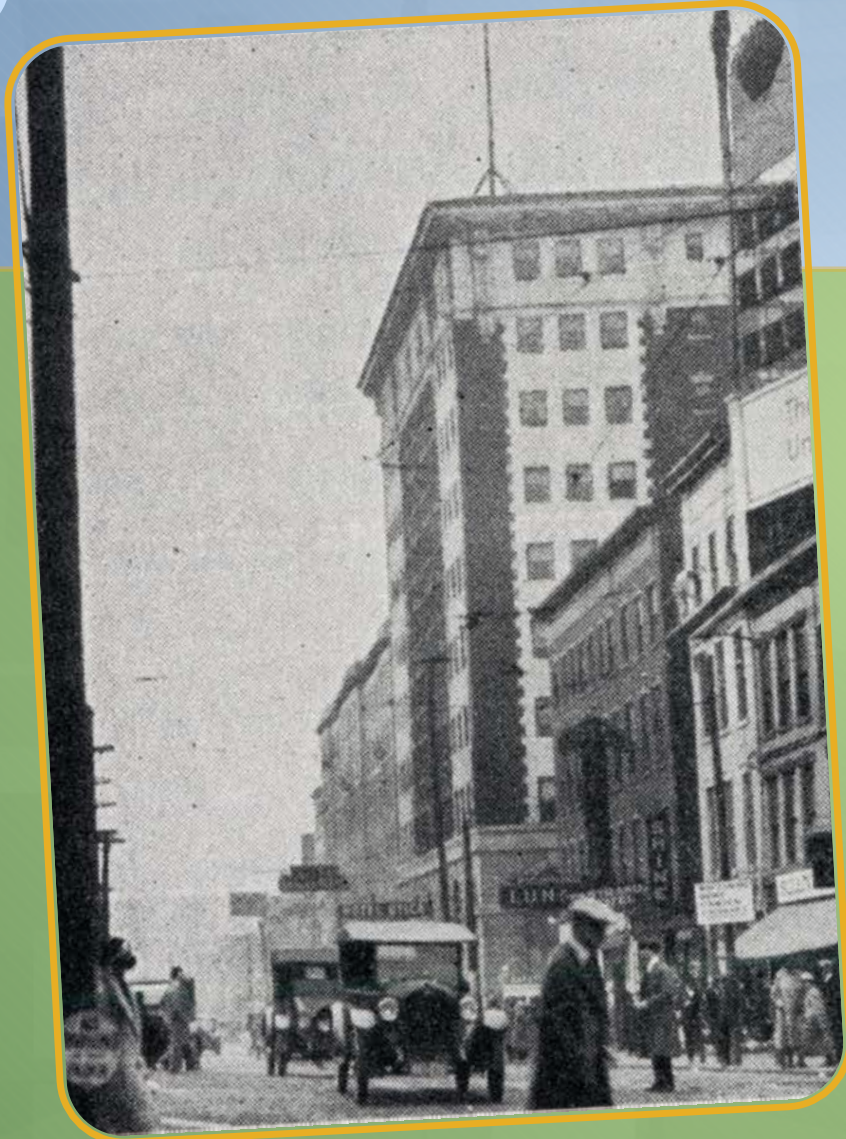


Main Street

National Trust for Historic Preservation's
approach to downtown revitalization

DUDA presentation
March 2012




Main Street Matters

Main Street is the economic engine, the big stage, the core of the community.

Our Main Streets tell us who we are and who we were, and how the past has shaped us.

We do not go to bland suburbs or enclosed shopping malls to learn about our past, explore our culture, or discover our identity.

Our Main Streets are the places of shared memory where people still come together to live, work, and play.

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- ◎ **Downtown districts are highly visible employment centers**
 - ◎ **The commercial district is a reflection of the community, and is either an asset or a liability**
 - ◎ **Main Street represents a significant portion of the tax base**
 - ◎ **The traditional commercial district is an ideal location for smaller and independent “ma and pa” businesses**
 - ◎ **A historic commercial district is often a major tourist attraction, and reflects the community’s heritage and history**
 - ◎ **Main Street provides an important civic forum, where members of the community can congregate**
 - ◎ **The commercial district represents a huge, cumulative public and private investment since 1832**

Who Benefits From Revitalization?

Merchants

Property Owners

Financial Institutions

Professionals and Service
Businesses

Chamber of Commerce

Residents

Local Government



Main Street Approach

The Trust's Main Street® strategy is three things:

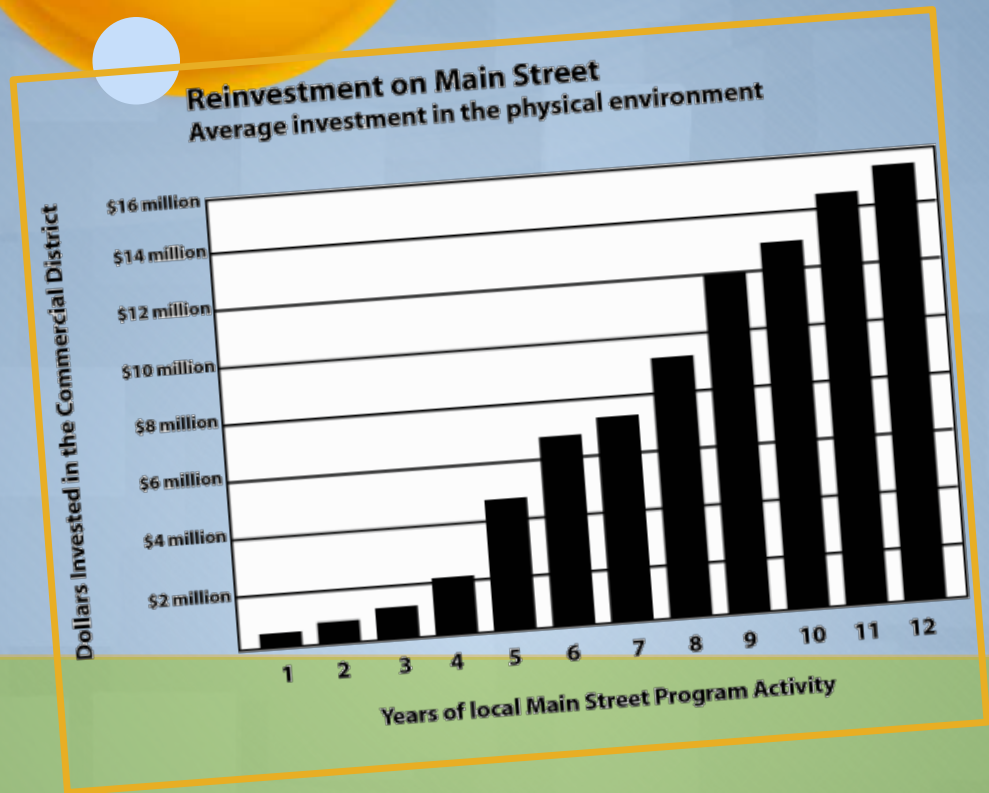
a proven strategy for revitalization,

a powerful network of linked communities,

and a national support program that leads the field.

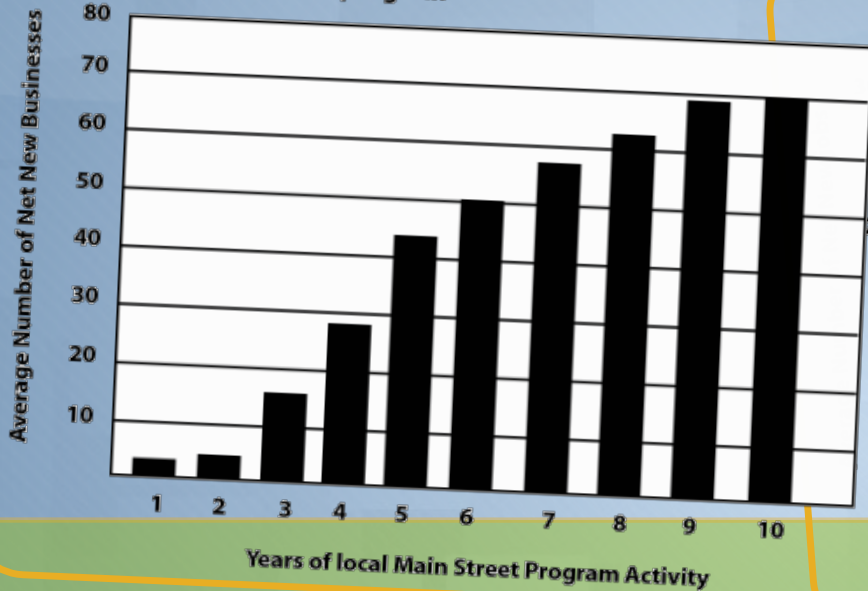


[www.preservationnation.org/
main-street/](http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/)

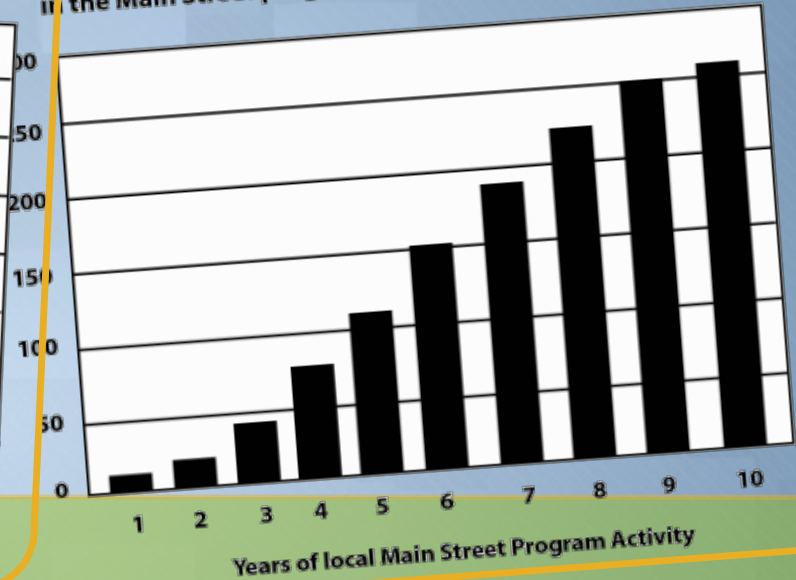


Local Main Street Program Average Reinvestment

Business Growth from the Main Street Program
Cumulative net business growth in communities participating in the Main Street program



Job Growth from the Main Street Program
Cumulative net new jobs in communities participating in the Main Street program



Business & Job Growth from the Main Street Program



A Proven Strategy: The Main Street Four-Point Approach

- **Organization**
BOD and committees; establishes consensus and cooperation; partnerships; goals
- **Promotion**
positive image; community pride; improved consumer and investor confidence; communicate uniqueness; (advertising, retail promotions, special events, and marketing campaigns)
- **Design**
clean, safe, inviting; (buildings, storefronts, signs, public spaces, parking areas, street furniture, public art, landscaping, merchandising, window displays)
- **Economic Restructuring**
retaining and expanding successful businesses; balanced commercial mix; sharpening the competitiveness and merchandising skills of business; attracting new businesses that the market can support.

Eight Guiding Principals

- **Comprehensive:** No single focus — lavish public improvements, name-brand business recruitment, or endless promotional events — can revitalize Main Street. For successful, sustainable, long-term revitalization, a comprehensive approach, including activity in each of Main Street's Four Points, is essential.
- **Incremental:** Successful revitalization programs begin with basic, simple activities that demonstrate that "new things are happening " in the commercial district. As public confidence in the Main Street district grows and participants' understanding of the revitalization process becomes more sophisticated, Main Street is able to tackle increasingly complex problems and more ambitious projects. This incremental change leads to much longer-lasting and dramatic positive change in the Main Street area.
- **Self-help:** No one else will save your Main Street. Local leaders must have the will and desire to mobilize local resources and talent. That means convincing residents and business owners of the rewards they'll reap by investing time and money in Main Street — the heart of their community. Only local leadership can produce long-term success by fostering and demonstrating community involvement and commitment to the revitalization effort.
- **Partnerships:** Both the public and private sectors have a vital interest in the district and must work together to achieve the common goal of revitalization. Each sector has a role to play and each must understand the other's strengths and limitations to forge an effective partnership.

Eight Guiding Principals

- **Identifying and capitalizing on existing assets:** Business districts must capitalize on the assets that make them unique. Every district has unique qualities like distinctive buildings and human scale that give people a sense of belonging. These local assets must serve as the foundation for all aspects of the revitalization program.
- **Quality:** Emphasize quality in every aspect of the revitalization program. This applies to all elements of the process — from storefront designs to promotional campaigns to educational programs. Shoestring budgets and "cut and paste" efforts reinforce a negative image of the commercial district. Instead, concentrate on quality projects over quantity.
- **Change:** Skeptics turn into believers and attitudes on Main Street will turn around. At first, almost no one believes Main Street can really turn around. Changes in attitude and practice are slow but definite — public support for change will build as the Main Street program grows and consistently meets its goals. Change also means engaging in better business practices, altering ways of thinking, and improving the physical appearance of the commercial district.
- **Implementation:** To succeed, Main Street must show visible results that can only come from completing projects. Frequent, visible changes are a reminder that the revitalization effort is under way and succeeding. Small projects at the beginning of the program pave the way for larger ones as the revitalization effort matures, and that constant revitalization activity creates confidence in the program and ever-greater levels of participation.



A Powerful Network: The Main Street Approach in Action

Main Street is a national movement that has spanned three decades and taken root in more than 2,000 communities - a movement that has spurred \$49 billion in reinvestment in traditional commercial districts, galvanized thousands of volunteers, and changed the way governments, planners, and developers view preservation.

Since the inception of the National Trust Main Street Center® in 1980, it has overseen the development of a national network of coordinating programs that today includes 37 statewide programs, citywide programs, and regional programs.

There is no statewide program, but local initiatives include Rome Main Streets and Herkimer Now.



The primary functions of the National program are to:

- “translate” and tailor the Main Street approach according to the specific economic conditions and development tools and resources in its geographic region;
- competitively select local communities with traditional commercial districts for participation in the Main Street program;
- provide an appropriate scope of technical assistance and training to local Main Street organizations;
- provide networking, advocacy, and encouragement to participating local Main Street programs;
- serve as a liaison with the National Trust Main Street Center; and
- identify which local programs annually meet the standards of National Main Street Accreditation



Local Program Structure:

Most often, they are freestanding, nonprofit organizations. All are a volunteer-driven effort that has support and participation from a variety of stakeholders in the revitalization effort.

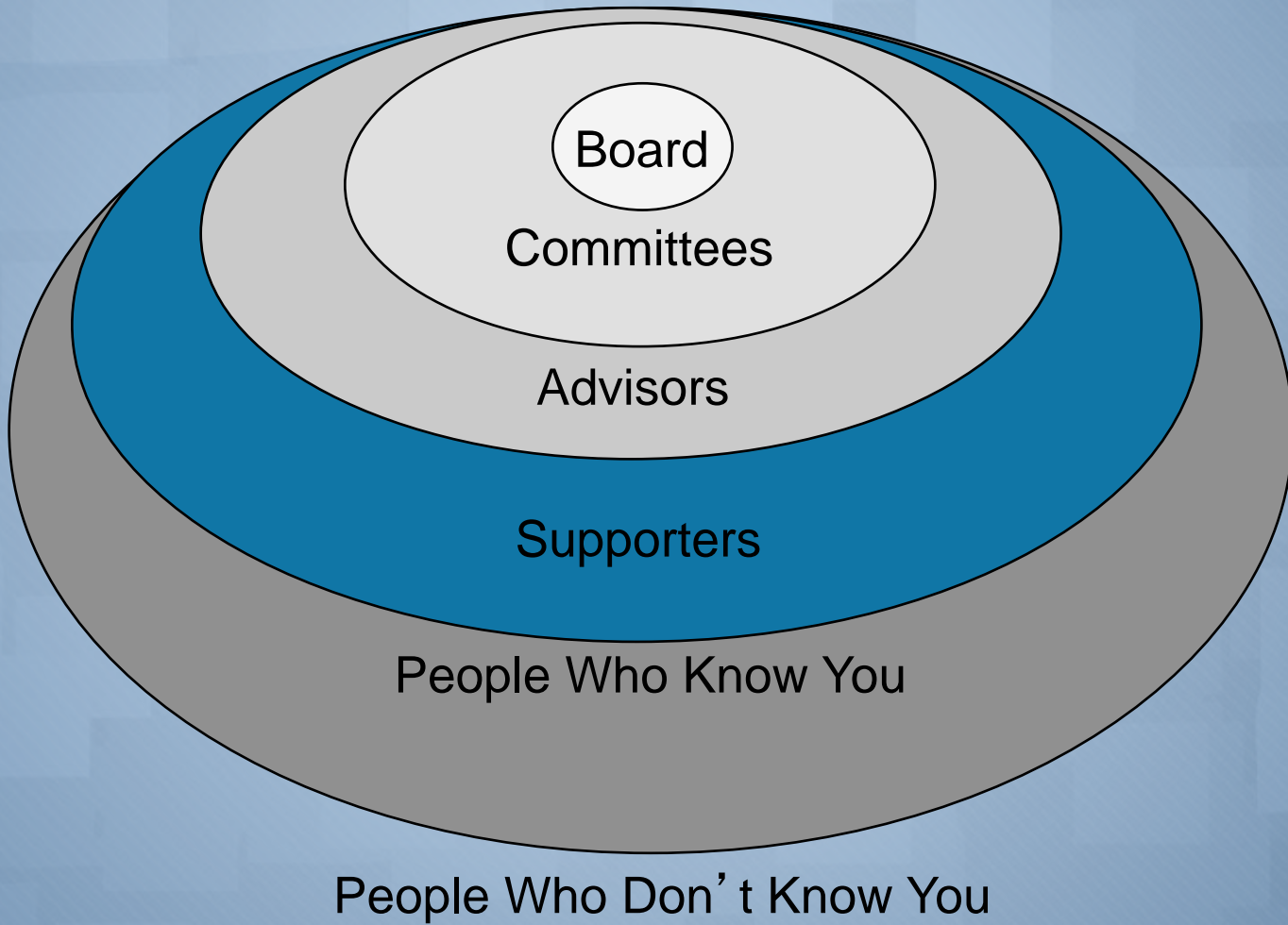
Local programs have a broad-based governing board that includes a variety of representatives from the community. (business and property owners, residents, city officials, financial institutions, schools, religious institutions, civic groups, preservationists, media, etc.) The board guides policy, funding, and planning for Main Street.

Local programs also establish committees that correspond to the four points of the Main Street approach — Organization, Design, Promotion, and Economic Restructuring. Committees consist of five to 10 people, on average, who plan and implement activities in each of the four points.

The local Main Street program hires a director to manage the program, coordinate volunteers, assist with program implementation, and act as a primary spokesperson for the organization. Staff members report to the governing board/steering committee.

Utica's Main Street Structure





Board

Committees

Advisors

Supporters

People Who Know You

People Who Don't Know You



A Leader for the Movement: The National Trust Main Street Center

Since its founding in 1980, The National Trust Main Street Center has been the leader of a coast-to-coast network now encompassing more than 2,000 programs

- **Professional Training**
- **Network Access**
- **Technical Assistance**
- **National Resources**

The Facts of Life

- ① **There is no magic bullet**
- ① **There are no handouts**
- ① **Most resources are local**
- ① **Some change will be needed**
- ① **You can't do it alone**
- ① **It won't happen overnight**
- ① **The process is never finished**
- ① **This has worked for 30 years all across America -- we CAN do this in Utica too!**





<http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/training/conference/2012baltimore/>