

What is Minnesota Main Streets?

An asset-based economic development program that uses historic preservation as a core strategy for downtown revitalization.

- **Main Street is data focused.** Local programs track multiple data pieces to follow revitalization activity in their districts and provide tangible evidence of the revitalization of their district and value of their program.
- **Main Streets Minnesota at Rethos** is a long-term partner. Since 1980, the Main Street America network has helped over 2,000 districts nationwide through coordinating programs like Minnesota Main Street ours and the National Main Street Center. Together, we offer support, resources, and connection to Main Street communities around the state and country, responding to the challenges and changes our unique downtown districts face.

- **Main Street America** is a national movement committed to strengthening communities through preservation-based economic development in older and historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts. But...
- **Minnesota Main Streets** leads locally. The MN Main Streets program provides resources for local programs to learn, grow, and act, but ultimately decisions are made, and actions led by a team of community stakeholders and local staff. The Main Street Approach works in any sized community or urban neighborhood district.
- **Main Streets are for everyone.** At the core of our approach to revitalization is a commitment to creating places of shared prosperity, equal access to opportunity, and inclusive engagement. Main Street America models and champions this vision through actions and programs like the Equitable Entrepreneurship Ecosystem program with five Minnesota communities currently participating.



WHAT MAKES MAIN STREET™ WORK?

Minnesota Main Streets promotes vitality in downtown and neighborhood districts in small towns and urban areas by leveraging communities' existing assets: people, businesses, places, and unique stories.

Rather than providing a list of tasks for a community to undertake without considering local needs, the **Main Street Four Point Approach™** (Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion, and Organization) helps to empower communities to create the vision and goals for each unique downtown district from built infrastructure to entrepreneurs, public events to private investment, zoning and use to beautification and placemaking. Main Street implements a time-tested framework centered around **Transformation Strategies** for community driven, comprehensive revitalization. Transformation Strategies articulate a focused, deliberate path to revitalizing or strengthening a downtown or commercial district's economy.

To put it in simpler terms, **Main Street provides a road map, but each district plans their own route, timeline, and details.**



Rethos is the coordinating partner in Minnesota for Main Street America™. This partnership allows for enhanced resources provided to communities through Main Street America, Rethos, and other revitalization partners.

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“Our community has benefited from the partnerships we have created [through Main Street] with local businesses, organizations, and the City of Wabasha. Since 2016 we have created a thriving and inviting downtown community. We could not have done it without the support of Rethos.”

-Mary Flicek, Wabasha Main Street Program Director

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Minnesota Main Streets provides resources that make it easier for downtown districts to succeed:

- Monthly community group check-ins & district relevant Deep Dives
- Annual Main Street Basic Training
- Annual program evaluation
- Semiannual community site visits
- Consultation opportunities for your district
- Project Assistance funding
- Access to Main Street toolkits, planning documents, and resources.
- Connection to the national, regional, and local Main Street Network of communities and partners.
- Grant funding and other competitive funding opportunities.
- Minnesota Main Streets State Conference
- Main Street NOW! National Conference
- Conference scholarships
- Main Street Day at the Capitol
- Use of “Main Street” branding.

Note: These resources may vary based on membership level and availability. This is a preliminary list and is not comprehensive.

