Asset-Based Economic Development with Rethos Main Streets: Minnesota

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A program of Rethos: Places Reimagined

- Formerly the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota
- Financed in part with funds provided by the State of Minnesota from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the Minnesota Historical Society and a partnership with the Minnesota Heritage Preservation Department.
- Recognized by the Main Street America© as the official statewide coordinating program in Minnesota.
For more than 35 years, the National Main Street Center has been helping communities revitalize their downtowns and commercial districts.

Collectively, the movement is the leading voice for preservation-based economic development and community revitalization across the country.

Made up of small towns, mid-sized communities, and urban commercial districts.
We believe that communities flourish when places are reimagined, histories and cultures are celebrated, and small businesses are supported.
Examples of Community Assets

- Local retail
- Bars and restaurants
- Youth and social programs
- Housing
- Community, religious, and civic organizations
- Historic buildings
- Public art and cultural institutions
- Natural features and parks
- Cultural events and festivals
- Defining cultural characteristics
- Former icons and landmarks
What is Main Street?

An asset-based economic development program that uses historic preservation as a core strategy to revitalize downtowns.
The Main Street Approach provides a framework and roadmap but is not prescriptive.
Main Street’s Guiding Principles

Incremental
Comprehensive
Quality
Partnerships
Change

Leverage Existing Assets
Self-Help
Implementation-Oriented
Leveraging Existing Assets

Successful Main Street programs identify the strengths and unique points of their community and find creative ways to capitalize on them.
Economic Vitality

Strengthening the district's economic base and creating new opportunities through careful analysis and appropriate mixed-use development.
The Retail/Restaurant Challenge

- Retail or Restaurant Challenges work with landlords of vacant spaces and potential renters by offering an incentive package for the winner of the challenge.

- This challenge gives potential entrepreneurs an connection to resources, training, funding opportunities, and more.

- Retail and Restaurant Challenges bring attention to other vacant locations in a downtown district that have the opportunity for business.
Entry Form

Applicant Name(s) ____________________________________________

Business Name ________________________________________________

Current Address _______________________________________________

City __________________ State ________ Zip ________________

Email Address ________________________________________________

I/we, the applicant, understand that no materials submitted for this business plan contest will be disclosed to any person or company, except as deemed necessary to evaluate them for this purpose.
Keeping Tabs on What’s Ready

- Bringing Awareness to Available Spaces
- Step by step resources and ability to act as a liaison between city offices, landlords, developers and entrepreneurs
Promotion

Marketing the commercial district through events and advertising to attract customers, potential investors, new businesses, residents, and visitors.
Main Street Events: Bringing the Crowds

- Events are often the core of local work.
- Events draw thousands of people into downtown districts throughout the year.
- Shop Local and other similar events rely on partnership with local businesses for success, and are a mutually beneficial partnership.
- Main Street can bring together business owner groups, non-profits, civic, and city entities, creating events that impact communities beyond the borders of downtown.
Organization

Building consensus and cooperation among public and private groups and individuals, and identifying sources of funding for revitalization activities.
Design

Enhancing the district’s physical appearance through building rehabilitation, compatible new construction, public improvements, and design management systems.
Making downtown THE place to be

- Garbage Clean Up
- Flower baskets
- Banners
- Benches
- Holiday Decorating

Plus a lot more! If it’s happening downtown in a Main Street Community, Main Street is probably involved.
Historic Faribault
Downtown Bench Project

Famous Faribault People
Faribault Supports the Military
Faribault’s Talented Artisans
Faribault Riverfront 1850

Bench Designs

While downtown, tour the entire series of benches and learn about the city’s famous people: Bishop Whipple, Alexander Faribault, etc. Learn about Faribault’s industrial foundation that began with the flour trade and landmark industries that followed, like Mill A Whirl, and the famous flour mills and the Woolen Mills. Education has been important as well, as represented in benches honoring Faribault’s famous schools and state academies. 530 Wilson Avenue, Faribault, MN www.faribaultmn.org
Design Assistance
Artists on Main Street: Work with local artists and from existing assets

- Artists and creatives use non-traditional and innovative placemaking* methods to solve problems in their downtown communities.

- Placemaking is the act of people coming together to change overlooked and undervalued public and shared spaces into welcoming places where community gathers, supports one another, and thrives.
Artists on Main Street: Artists and Creative Community

- Build & diversify cross-sector networks
- Increase community & economic vitality
- Change the narrative/identity
- Artists are able to approach issues from very different places than most city staff are equipped for
- Artists are paid for their time, talents, and supplies
- Business growth from artist entrepreneurs
Artists on Main Street: Supporting local businesses in innovate ways
MINNESOTA MAIN STREET ECONOMIC IMPACT SINCE 2010

Private Downtown Investment:
$65,000,000

Public Downtown Investment:
$21,000,000

Volunteer Hours Contributed:
38,871

Jobs Created:
593

New Small Businesses and Expansions:
133
Main Street Options in MN

Designated Main Street Program
- Small City Designated Main Street Program
- Nationally Accredited Programs

Network Main Street Community
- Open to community of any size
Workshops, Classes, Trainings

- Statewide Workshops: MN Main Street holds “Train the Trainer” education at least twice a year in greater Minnesota
- How to build a business plan workshops: led by Main Street Programs and their supporting partners
- Rethos education series: training realtors, homeowners, and property owners on how to identify and care for their old buildings
- Main Street programs regularly bring in consultants and experts in specific areas of interest for their town
Main Street = Strong Communities

Main Street provides resources that makes it easier to open a business and succeed in downtown districts.

Healthy downtowns make communities more vibrant, livable, and economically stable.
Thank you!

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To learn more about our programs, please visit www.rethos.org

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