

Main Street America Designation



Being a Main Street America™ community is a special mark of distinction, and represents a commitment to continual improvement, community engagement, and rigorous outcome measurement. It offers national recognition and sends a strong message to local stakeholders, as well as city, state, and national funders. It signifies that you are part of a greater movement that has a 40-year proven track record of generating impressive economic returns, preserving community character, and celebrating local history.

Getting Started

To get started, [become a member](#) of the National Main Street Center. Membership gives you access to a wide range of tools, training materials, discounts, funding opportunities, and an invaluable network that will help you develop your revitalization effort and put you on the path to recognition as a Main Street America™ community.

Once you are a member, you are eligible to become a designated Main Street America™ community! If you are currently working with your state, county, or city Coordinating Program, your Coordinator will work with you to determine the right tier and meet the necessary requirements. Not part of a Coordinating Program yet? Find your program [here](#). This network of partner institutions provides invaluable support and training to Main Street America Communities across the country. In areas where this is no Coordinating Program, you may be able to be designated by NMSC directly. [Contact us to get started](#).

Main Street America™ designation is available at two tiers: Affiliate and Accredited.

Affiliate

Affiliate status is our introductory tier. Main Street America Affiliates™ are programs or organizations that have demonstrated a commitment to comprehensive community revitalization and are on the pathway to achieving meaningful economic, social, physical and organizational improvements in their downtown or commercial districts. Main Street America Affiliates commit to:

- Broadly engaging community stakeholders in the revitalization process;
- Working with stakeholders to identify a unified vision for success for community or district and appropriate success indicators;
- Developing diversified and sustainable funding sources to support your efforts;
- Participating in available training, professional development, and networking opportunities to strengthen leadership capacity and deepen knowledge of the Main Street Approach and community revitalization field;
- Maintaining membership with the National Main Street Center.



This tier consists of programs, districts, or communities interested in learning more about the Main Street model tapping into the national network's strategies and resources. These programs are eligible to become Accredited when they meet the necessary performance standards. They may also remain Affiliates if they do not have the capacity or are otherwise ineligible for higher tiers.

How to become an Affiliate:

In states or regions that have existing [Coordinating Programs](#), communities work with their Coordinating Program to learn the Main Street Approach, build capacity, and reach Affiliate status. Coordinating Programs select and recommend Affiliates to the National Main Street Center annually. NMSC may also independently designate Affiliates in areas where there is no Coordinating Program – [learn more here](#).

Accredited

Accredited status is our top tier of recognition. This exclusive designation signifies a commitment to comprehensive revitalization, community engagement, and rigorous outcome measurement. Main Street America Accredited™ programs have a proven track record of planning, implementing, and measuring results that align with the Main Street Approach. National Accreditation is a powerful advocacy tool that highlights a program's work and showcases their achievements. All Accredited programs have demonstrated their success by meeting a series of rigorous accreditation standards:

1. Has broad-based community support for the commercial district revitalization process, with strong support from both the public and private sectors
2. Has developed vision and mission statements relevant to community conditions and to the local Main Street program's organizational stage
3. Has a comprehensive Main Street work plan
4. Possesses an historic preservation ethic
5. Has an active board of directors and committees
6. Has an adequate operating budget
7. Has a paid professional program manager
8. Conducts a program of ongoing training for staff and volunteers
9. Reports key statistics
10. Is a current member of the Main Street America™ Network

[Learn more here](#)

How to become Accredited:

In states or regions that have existing [Coordinating Programs](#), communities work with their Coordinating Program to grow their revitalization effort and meet the performance standards above. Coordinating Programs evaluate, select, and recommend Accredited programs to the National Main Street Center annually. In areas where there is no Coordinating Program, NMSC may accredit communities that have retained the necessary training and evaluation services needed to meet accreditation standards – [contact us to learn more](#).