

Main Street Name Use Policy

MEMBERSHIP IN THE NATIONAL MAIN STREET NETWORK® DOES NOT ENTITLE AN ORGANIZATION TO USE THE NAME “MAIN STREET.” FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE NATIONAL MAIN STREET CENTER’S NAME USE POLICY SEE BELOW.

Policy on the Use of the Name “Main Street”

The National Trust for Historic Preservation® owns the trademark for the phrase “Main Street”¹ as it applies to the revitalization of traditional and historic commercial districts. The National Main Street Center allows local, regional, state, and citywide organizations involved in the revitalization of these commercial districts to use the name “Main Street” to describe their programs, according to the following guidelines:

Local Main Street Programs' Use of “Main Street” Name

- Local non-profit or government-based Main Street® programs may use the Main Street® name if the Main Street® revitalization methodology is the fundamental organizational framework of the organization using the name “Main Street.” In particular, the organization *must* work comprehensively in all four areas of the Main Street Four-Point Approach®, with historic preservation as a key principle and practice, have a volunteer governing board and volunteer committees corresponding to Main Street's Four Points®, and have paid staff.
- Main Street® coordinating programs have sole discretion in determining whether a community may claim to be part of that Main Street® coordinating program, designating communities as such through a selection process. See *Enforcement*, below.
- A “self-initiated” or “independent” local program (defined as an organization that utilizes the Main Street Four-Point Approach® but has not been selected to participate in a statewide or citywide Main Street® program) *may not* use “Main Street” in its organizational name without the express written permission of the National Trust®. The Trust may grant permission for the organization to use “Main Street” in its name if it is able to determine with confidence that the local organization works comprehensively in all four areas of the Main Street Four-Point Approach®, with historic preservation as a key principle and practice, has a volunteer governing board and volunteer committees corresponding to Main Street's Four Points®, and has paid staff.
- While “self-initiated” or “independent” local programs *may not* use “Main Street” as part of their organizations' names without permission from the National Main Street Center®, they may state that they utilize or follow the Main Street Approach® in their commercial district revitalization efforts. This claim is subject to the same rules of enforcement as using “Main Street” in the organization's name.
- Use of the name “Main Street” by a local revitalization program does not necessarily mean that the program is part of a state, city, or regional coordinating program or that it meets the 10 criteria necessary to be an accredited National Main Street® Program.
- Statewide, citywide, and regional Main Street® coordinating programs are responsible for determining which communities within their geographic jurisdiction meet the 10 criteria of the National Trust Main Street Center's® National Accreditation for local Main Street® programs.
- **Purchase of National Main Street Network® Membership has no relevance or relationship with local Main Street® program selection/designation and does not convey permission for any organization to use the name “Main Street” or to call themselves such.**

Coordinating Main Street® Programs' Use of the Main Street® Name

- The National Main Street Center® permits only officially recognized state, city, and regional Main Street® coordinating programs to use the Main Street® name to describe the organization.
- Statewide, citywide, and regional coordinating Main Street® programs must meet national criteria established by the National Main Street Center® in order to use the name “Main Street.”
- Use of the “Main Street” name by a coordinating Main Street® program does not necessarily mean that the program meets the standards required for coordinating program accreditation.

Enforcement

The National Main Street Center® places tremendous value on the Main Street® brand and vigorously protects its trademark rights. When informed of examples of misuse of the Main Street® name, the National Main Street Center® will make appropriate efforts to protect its trademark rights, including taking legal action when necessary to uphold the above standards and policies.

Statewide, citywide, and regional coordinating programs should inform the National Main Street Center® of any local organizations that use “Main Street” in their name but *do not* make the Main Street® revitalization methodology the fundamental organizational framework of their programs. Statewide, citywide, and regional coordinating programs should also inform the National Main Street Center® of any local organizations that claim to follow the Main Street Four Point Approach® but are not actually using any or all of the system, so that the National Main Street Center® can take appropriate actions.

Statewide, citywide, and other coordinating Main Street® programs are permitted to deny local Main Street® organizations the privilege of using the name “Main Street,” if the local organization is an active participant in the coordinating program but has ceased to follow the program membership guidelines established by the coordinating program or the terms of the sub-licensing agreement between with the coordinating program. In such event, the coordinating program should contact for approval from the National Main Street Center® before requesting that the program stop use of the name. The coordinating program does not have the authority to deny the use of the Main Street® name to organizations outside its selected/designated participants. That responsibility rests solely with the National Trust®, which will examine and act accordingly upon reported instances of misuse of the Main Street® name.

Footnotes

1) This includes the phrase Main Street®, Great American Main Street Awards®, Main Street Four Point Approach®, National Main Street Center®, National Main Street Institute®, National Main Street Network®, National Town Meeting on Main Street® and National Trust Main Street Center®. *Revised December 11, 2013*