Place Matters on Michigan’s Main Streets
People choose to live, work, and play in vibrant cities and walkable, safe neighborhoods. The Michigan Main Street Center @ MSHDA helps communities develop main street districts and traditional commercial neighborhoods that attract new residents and businesses, promote investment, and jump-start economic growth and create a “Sense of Place.”

Main Street Four-Point Approach

The Main Street Four-Point Approach™ is a community-driven, comprehensive strategy encouraging economic development through historic preservation in ways appropriate to today’s marketplace. The Four-Points focus on:

- **Design:** enhancing the downtown’s physical environment by capitalizing on its best assets such as historic buildings, and creating an inviting atmosphere through attractive window displays, parking areas, building improvements, streetscapes, and landscaping.

- **Economic Restructuring:** helping existing businesses expand and recruiting new ones to respond to today’s market, the Main Street program helps to convert unused space into productive property, sharpening the competitive climate for business enterprises.

- **Promotion:** developing a positive promotional strategy showcasing the downtown and the unique assets of its businesses through advertising, retail activities, special events, and campaigns to encourage commercial activity and investment in the area.

- **Organization:** engaging and managing all resources including volunteers and funding to ensure an even workload and clearly delineated responsibilities. A consistent communications effort on behalf of the program ensures consensus and cooperation among the various stakeholders.

**Why are downtowns important?**

- They provide jobs and are an economic stimulator.
- They create a sense of synergy and a strong base for independent businesses and entrepreneurs.
- They increase property values in surrounding neighborhoods.
- They offer density, critical mass and a focused tax base.
Since its inception in 2003, the Michigan Main Street Center (MMSC) has facilitated real results in participating communities.

**Michigan Main Street Accomplishments**

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<th>2003–09</th>
<th>2009–10</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Net new businesses created</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing businesses expanded</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net new full-time employees (FTE/jobs)</td>
<td>887</td>
<td>165.5</td>
<td>1038.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total number of façade rehabilitations</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>554</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total building rehabilitation investment</td>
<td>$28,279,745</td>
<td>$1,716,486</td>
<td>$29,996,231</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total private investment</td>
<td>$65,717,416</td>
<td>$3,885,280</td>
<td>$69,602,697</td>
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<td>Total public investment</td>
<td>$29,474,055</td>
<td>$3,906,929</td>
<td>$33,380,984</td>
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<td>Total private and public</td>
<td>$93,395,847</td>
<td>$590,246</td>
<td>$93,986,093</td>
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- Michigan Main Street program years run from July to June of the following year. Charts reflect an annual increase in the number of participating communities. These figures are derived from Michigan Main Street community annual reports.
How can we help?

Michigan Main Street Services

Michigan Main Street Center staff provides technical assistance and services to communities at three different levels: Associate, Selected and Master. Each level is designed to assist the community in tackling increasingly sophisticated downtown revitalization efforts.
Associate Level: 1 year

The Associate Level is the introduction to the Michigan Main Street Program, providing communities with no-cost training available in Selected and Master Level Michigan Main Street communities across the state. The intent of the Associate Level is to provide communities with a basic understanding and knowledge of the Main Street Four-Point Approach. Additionally, communities learn the benefits and requirements of the Michigan Main Street program, in order to prepare for the Selected Level. Communities are able to continue in the Associate Level providing they have attended all required training including:

- **Main Street Basics**: Designed for those interested in learning more about Main Street and how the Four-Point Approach works, this introduction session discusses how to structure a local Main Street program, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the board of directors, committees, staff and volunteers.

- **Main Street in Practice**: This session provides the attendees the perfect opportunity to see how a successful Michigan Main Street community operates. Attendees will hear from local Main Street managers, volunteers, committee chairs, board members and city officials on how the Main Street program works in their community. Attendees will get a realistic idea of the upsides and downsides of getting a program started in their own communities.

- **Michigan Main Street Onsite Visit/Overview Presentation**: MMSC staff is available for a one-day site visit to discuss individualized topics relevant to the success of the local program. The site visit can also include an overview presentation open to the public, explaining the basics of the Michigan Main Street program.

For a full list of Michigan Main Street services at each level of the program, visit MichiganMainStreetCenter.com
Selected Level: 5 years

The Selected Level provides communities with specialized training within their own community. The intent of the Selected Level is to assist communities in implementing the Main Street Four-Point Approach to revitalization by creating a fully-functioning and sustainable local Main Street program. The Main Street program has an active board of directors, providing oversight and direction, four volunteer-driven committees completing projects and a Main Street manager assisting with day-to-day needs.

Michigan Main Street staff, along with other professionals, work closely with Selected Level communities to train their boards and committees, hire a full-time Main Street manager, recruit volunteers and get the program up and running. In addition, at the Selected Level, communities receive a market analysis and other specialized trainings designed to help revitalize their downtown or traditional neighborhood commercial district.
Michigan Main Street works to provide support in each of the four areas of Main Street to create a healthy base for the organization to grow.

- **Base-Line Assessment:** Evaluative process to further educate and develop strategies for program development.
- **Resource Team:** Evaluative process to identify strategies for making the best and most efficient use of available financial and human resources.
- **Market Study:** Researching and understanding the commercial district’s market and opportunities including housing for their downtown.
- **15 Design Services:** Individualized design assistance for three buildings per year including budgets, paint samples, product information and schematic drawings.
- **Quarterly Trainings:** Opportunity to communicate with network of managers throughout the state on rotating topics.
- **Commercial Real Estate Development:** Teaches the process of community initiated development through real-life redevelopment models.
- **Retail Merchandising:** Workshop and consultation regarding inventory, floor plan, lighting, and window displays.
- **Community Branding Service:** Professional designer will identify and package a community’s unique image.
- **Market Study Update:** This portion of the market study process puts the information to work by exploring marketing and recruitment ideas that can be implemented in the community.
Master Level: 6+ years

The Master Level is the most prestigious of the three levels of the Michigan Main Street program and is available to communities only after they have successfully completed five years in the Selected Level program. The intent of the Master Level is to continue assisting communities that have successfully integrated a full Main Street program into their community. This is achieved by continuing to offer trainings and networking opportunities through MMSC, as well as the opportunity to act as mentors for other Michigan Main Street communities.

- **Design Services:** Individualized design assistance for three buildings per year including budgets, paint samples, product information and schematic drawings.

- **Quarterly Trainings:** Opportunity to communicate with network of managers throughout the state on rotating topics.

- **Commercial Real Estate Development:** Teaches the process of Community Initiated Development through real-life redevelopment models.

- **Retail Merchandising:** Workshop and consultation regarding inventory, floor plan, lighting and window displays.

- **Community Branding Service:** Professional designer will identify and package a community’s unique image.

- **Market Study Updates:** This portion of the market study process puts the information to work by exploring marketing and recruitment ideas that can be implemented in the community.
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Partners
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Main Street Oakland County Michigan Downtown Association • Michigan Association of Planning
Michigan Economic Development Corporation • Michigan Department of Transportation
Michigan Downtown Association • Michigan Historic Preservation Network
Michigan Municipal League • Michigan State Historic Preservation Office
Michigan State Housing Development Authority