



PROGRAM GUIDELINES



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Partners for Better Communities

VIRGINIA MAIN STREET® PROGRAM
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VIRGINIA MAIN STREET® PROGRAM GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

The Main Street® program was introduced in 1980 to address the decline of America's traditional downtown neighborhoods. A program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the economic and community development methodology depends on its trademarked Main Street Approach™ to affect revitalization in historic downtowns. To date, more than 2,000 communities nationwide have utilized the Main Street® methodology to achieve downtown revitalization as a member of the internationally-known Main Street® network.

In 2016, the national movement begins a new era as *Main Street America™*. Maintaining the core principles, values, and methods of the Main Street Four Points™, the refreshed Main Street America™ will continue to provide the resources, training, and credibility of the program that has inspired and informed the rejuvenation of downtowns for over 35 years.



Virginia Main Street® is the coordinating program for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Administered through the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Virginia Main Street® is one component of an extensive menu of programs and services. The focal point of the program is assistance to competitively selected communities working in traditional downtown settings and meeting certain threshold criteria. Communities with a population of 75,000 or less, a high degree of commitment, and organizational readiness may apply for formal Virginia Main Street® designation.



Virginia Main Street® also serves as general clearinghouse on the latest tools and techniques in downtown development. Whether your goal is to achieve full Main Street® designation, begin your Virginia Main Street® journey in Virginia Downtowns, or implement the Main Street Approach™ as a Community Affiliate, DHCD is ready to help your community initiate your downtown revitalization

process. Virginia Main Street® staff is available as resources permit to provide both on-site and long-distance support.

As Virginia Main Street enters its third decade of service to communities of the Commonwealth, we continue spotlighting sustainable development in historic downtown neighborhoods. By focusing on the environmental, economic, and social sustainability of the individual and collective properties that compose a traditional downtown neighborhood, the outcome is one that results in job creation, a distinctive downtown vibe, and invigorated community pride.

For additional information, contact us at:

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MAIN STREET[®] COMMUNITY DESIGNATION

Virginia Main Street[®] provides a full-range of assistance to designated communities; from intensive services to meet the needs of newly designated communities to services that help mature programs maintain focus and effectiveness.

Designated Main Street[®] programs work to develop the critical tools for downtown revitalization such as design and economic incentives, market driven promotions and volunteer recruitment programs. Virginia Main Street[®] provides resources and guidance to help local programs create core competencies in revitalization.

How to Apply

Application rounds are held periodically as state resources permit. Programs with an interest in seeking Main Street designation are encouraged to participate as a “Virginia Downtown” community first.

Eligibility Criteria

Towns, cities or counties must meet the following requirements to be eligible to apply for full Main Street[®] designation:

1. **Have a population of no more than 75,000 based on the 2010 Census (cities and towns only).** There is no population maximum for Counties that apply on behalf of an unincorporated area or village.
2. **Have at least 50 commercial enterprises and 70 commercial structures in the proposed Main Street[®] district.** Experience shows that there must be a critical mass of buildings and businesses in a traditional district to form a foundation for revitalization efforts (see discussion of traditional districts below). It is also critical that there is a concentration of structures that would be eligible for frequently used rehabilitation incentives. Counties may submit an application on behalf of an unincorporated area that has at least 50 commercial enterprises and 70 commercial structures in the proposed Main Street[®] district.
3. **Be an affiliate member of the National Main Street Center[®].** The most basic form of participation in the Main Street America network, affiliate membership indicates your community’s commitment to the Main Street Approach methodology.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

Where to House the Program - Experience has shown that a Main Street program functions most successfully as an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Working in partnership with local government, as well as Chambers of Commerce and other community organizations, your Main Street program is focused on creating an inviting downtown environment rather than the larger geographical area addressed by community partners. If your community is interested in full Main Street designation, you will need to apply with the Internal Revenue Service for 501(c)(3) status.

Financial Commitment – Financial support, stability, and diversity is key to a Main Street program’s success. A comprehensive fund development program should include pledged support from local government(s), corporations and individuals, as well as anticipated revenue from fee-based programs and services, registrations from events, attractions, and organizational/event sponsorships. Funding support for your Main Street program must be in place for your first three years and documented in your application.

Clerical Support – Your Executive Director will be focused on the management of your program. Committee and Board meeting attendance; coordination of activities, programs, and services through the volunteer pool; serving as liaison with local, state, and national partners; participating in professional development opportunities; and representing your local organization encompass much of your program director’s time and attention. He/she will need clerical support to be effective. It is strongly recommended that local programs provide paid or volunteer clerical support to coordinate office tasks such as answering the phone and entering data into management programs.

Designation Requirements

Communities selected to join Virginia Main Street® must meet the following designation criteria and continue to meet them to maintain their designation and receive VMS services.

DESIGNATED MAIN STREET® COMMUNITY REQUIREMENTS	
Work in a traditional Main Street® district	Main Street® districts must be a physical setting conducive to applying the Main Street Approach™, including a pedestrian scale and orientation; critical mass of buildings and businesses; and critical mass of structures that would be eligible for frequently used rehabilitation incentives. See Page 12 for the specific criteria for a traditional Main Street® district.
Use the Main Street Approach™	Main Street® provides the only comprehensive approach specifically designed to address the issues and opportunities of traditional downtown commercial districts. It is proven to work and following the approach is a requirement of initial and on-going designation. Downtown revitalization in the context of historic preservation is central to the approach. Whether your program is project or committee driven, the inclusion of the components of Design, Organization, Economic Vitality and Promotion are strategic to its success.
Have a downtown organization	The downtown constituency is unique and has not been adequately served by traditional economic and business development groups. A separate, independent organization with a mission to act as the advocate for downtown is the best way to reverse decline and foster progress. The downtown organization should include a wide variety of stakeholders and have strong support from both public and private sectors. Ideally the downtown organization is incorporated and holds 501(c)(3) non-profit status.
Have sustainable program funding	Financial stability of the Main Street® organization is crucial to staying focused on the program's mission. Besides covering salaries, downtown organizations must provide an adequate operating budget to cover an active program of work, clerical assistance, and travel and training for both board members and staff. Budgets will vary by community and samples are available from VMS.
Employ an Executive Director	Paid professional staff to manage the downtown and the revitalization work is critical. It is recommended that Main Street programs have full-time (40+ hours per week) professional management with administrative support staff. Communities with populations under 5,000 may be able to achieve their goals with a part-time director (a minimum of 25 hours per week). Salaries with benefits should be commensurate with public-oriented professionals in the area.
Organizational systems and structures	Administrative systems and tools help effectively manage program activities throughout the organization while benchmarking progress. Each year a comprehensive four point based work plan and budget should outline activities of organization.
Public/Private Letter of Agreement; DHCD Contracts	Local commitment and support is critical to Main Street® success. In designated communities, the downtown organization will sign a letter of agreement with the local government as well as an organization contract with DHCD that will clearly specify the responsibilities of each entity. Designated communities are required to an annual renewal of their contract with DHCD.
Maintain standards of excellence	Each designated community must be annually recognized as an accredited National Main Street® Community in order to demonstrate the performance standards of the organization; national recognition is an additional benefit that qualifies communities for VMS grant funding. Building skills through regular attendance at VMS trainings is also required. Failure to meet the accreditation standards for two consecutive years will result in termination from the program.
Submit timely information to VMS	All designated Main Street® communities must submit the following each year: 1) twelve monthly reports (submitted quarterly); 2) salary survey; 3) program survey; and 4) an annual report that includes: a) a vision and mission statement, b) the actual budget, including revenues and expenses, c) a list of the board of directors, d) dates and topics of training for board, volunteers and staff (including attendance record for VMS training), e) key accomplishments and achievements, and f) the current Comprehensive Main Street® work plan.
Membership in the National Main Street® Center Network	All designated Main Street® communities must maintain membership in the National Main Street Center® network. This membership gives each community access to online resources through the Center and qualifies them for discounts for the National Conference. Membership also demonstrates a commitment to the program.

Newly Designated Main Street® Communities

Virginia Main Street® provides the most intensive service in the first three years of program designation. Special services are generally provided in the first year in order to help the community assess issues facing downtown, map out a general strategy for revitalization and train the community in the tools and techniques needed to succeed. The services listed below will be provided to communities using a performance-based approach that will require discussions between the community and VMS to set appropriate targets and outcomes.

NEWLY DESIGNATED MAIN STREET® COMMUNITY SERVICES	
Special Services	
Resource Team Visit	A team composed of specialists from the National Main Street Center, Virginia Main Street, and other resources will spend two days with local public and private stakeholders to analyze, evaluate, and make recommendations for organizational work plan, budget, and Marketplace development direction. (On-site)
Core Competencies Checklist	Identifies program benchmarks and serves as the basis for committee work plans (see Page 13).
Specialist Services and Technical Assistance	
Design Assistance	Comprehensive assistance from an architectural firm with expertise in older historic commercial architecture, including façade designs, consultations and training.
Specialist Visits	One-day visits by State staff and downtown development specialists to assist communities address specific issues.
Annual Evaluations	Virginia Main Street and outside professional staff provide on-site and remote organizational progress assessments and recommendations. An annual evaluation is conducted to determine National Main Street® Accreditation, a remote process to evaluate local programs according to 10 performance standards and provides national recognition to those that meet these standards.
Program Support and Professional Development	
National Main Street Center Network Membership	Benefits include subscriptions to technical publications, newsletters and a hot line. Designation by NMSC is required prior to use of the phrase "Main Street" in the title of your program.
Program Director Training	Training by state and national experts. Local program directors must attend.
Regional Board Training	As needed training by Virginia Main Street staff.
Main Street® Essentials	Virginia Main Street professionals and outside specialists provide required training for local programs in the Main Street Approach™.
Topical Training/Toolkits	Virginia Main Street professional staff and outside specialists train programs in specific revitalization topics. At least one board/committee member from each designated Main Street are strongly encouraged to attend. Local program directors must attend.
Scholarships	Scholarships to the NMSC's annual conference are provided as available.
Work Planning Assistance	Virginia Main Street staff is available to facilitate local strategic and work planning.
Remote Consultation	State and Main Street America™ staff is available by phone and e-mail.
Resource & Information Sharing	State staff and specialists prepare quarterly newsletters and timely e-mail updates of opportunities for services and funding available. Networking with other communities is encouraged using VMS maintained contact lists.
Marketing	
Road signage	Road signs to denote Main Street® designation are provided.
Public Relations	Regular press coverage and exposure is provided through media releases and marketing materials, consumer advertising and other promotional opportunities.
Use of Main Street® Logo	The Main Street America logo may be used only by nationally accredited communities.

Current Main Street® Communities

Restored facades, lower vacancy rates and new streetscapes are not signs that revitalization is finished. It means that Main Street® programs are entering the management phase. Designated communities must continue to meet the requirements as specified on Page 5. Virginia Main Street® provides ongoing services to assist current communities in maintaining long-term effectiveness and progress. Using a performance-based approach, Virginia Main Street® will provide the services listed below as determined through discussions between the community and VMS to set appropriate targets and outcomes.

CURRENT MAIN STREET® COMMUNITY SERVICES	
Specialist Services and Technical Assistance	
Design Assistance	Comprehensive assistance from an architect with expertise in older historic commercial architecture, including façade designs, consultations and training. As resources allow.
Specialist Visits	Virginia Main Street® Staff available on request. Specialists, as resources allow.
Organizational Visit	State and/or NMSC staff assists with organizational issues including roles and responsibilities of staff and Board. Work planning assistance, fund development plans, volunteer management and non-profit organizational management are also provided. (On-site)
Annual Evaluations	An annual evaluation is conducted to determine National Main Street® Accreditation, a remote process to evaluate local programs according to 10 performance standards and provides national recognition to those that meet these standards.
Research	Staff will conduct research on issues or topics of interest using state and national contacts.
Program Support and Professional Development	
Program Director Training	Regular training by state and national experts is provided. Local program directors must attend.
Regional Board Training	As needed training by State staff and experienced Board members. Board members are required to attend State or National Main Street® Board training within one year of the beginning of their term of service.
Main Street® Essentials	Virginia Main Street professionals and outside specialists provide required training for local programs in the Main Street Approach™.
Topical Training/Toolkit	Targeted training by VMS staff and outside specialists. Local program directors must attend. Attendance by local program volunteers is encouraged.
Scholarships	Scholarships to the NMSC's annual conference are provided, as available. (only available to Accredited Main Street communities)
Work Planning Assistance	State staff is available to facilitate local strategic and work planning.
Remote Consultation	State and Main Street America™ staff members are available by phone and e-mail.
Resource & Information Sharing	Frequent electronic communications from the Main Street America™ and Virginia Main Street® assist local programs with accessing programs, services, and information around the Main Street® global network. On-site state and regional meetings provide resourcing opportunities among local programs.
Marketing	
Public Relations	Regular press coverage and exposure is provided through media releases and marketing materials, consumer advertising and other promotional opportunities.
Use of Main Street® Logo	The Main Street America logo is available for use only by nationally accredited communities.

National Main Street Center® Accreditation Standards

The National Main Street Center® has 10 Standards of Performance that must be met to be considered an Accredited Community. Only communities that are accredited by the National Main Street Center® are eligible to apply for Virginia Main Street® grants.

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE	
1. Broad-based community support for the commercial district revitalization process, with strong support from both the public and private sectors.	By actively involving a broad range of interests and perspectives from the public and private sectors in the revitalization process, the Main Street program leverages the community's collective skills and resources to maximum advantage.
2. Develop vision and mission statements relevant to community conditions and to the local Main Street program's organizational state.	Both should be developed with broad participation by the board, committees, volunteers, and community input. <i>At a minimum</i> , the Main Street organization should have a mission statement in place, reviewed annually.
3. Have a comprehensive Main Street work plan.	A comprehensive annual work plan provides a detailed blueprint for the Main Street program's activities; reinforces the program's accountability both within the organization and also in the broader community; and provides measurable objectives by which the program can track its progress.
4. Possess an historic preservation ethic.	Historic preservation is central to the Main Street program's purpose and is what makes historic and traditional commercial districts authentic places. Historic preservation involves saving, rehabilitating, and finding new uses for existing buildings, as well as intensifying the uses of the existing buildings, through building improvement projects and policy and regulatory changes that make it easier to develop property within the commercial district.
5. Have an active board of directors and committees.	Community members must take an active role in leading and implementing positive change. While the executive director is responsible for facilitating the work of volunteers, this staff member is not tasked with single-handedly revitalizing the commercial district. The direct involvement of an active board of directors and committees are keys to success.
6. Have an adequate operating budget.	The Main Street program's budget should be adequate to achieve the program's goals. The dollar amount that is "adequate" for a program budget may vary from region to region, depending on local costs of living, level of sponsorships and in-kind gifts of products and services from community partners.
7. Have a paid, professional executive director.	Coordinating a Main Street program requires a trained, professional staff person. Ideally, the Main Street executive director's position is full time (generally 40+ hours per week). In small towns without the resources to hire a full-time executive director, a part-time director may be acceptable (generally 20+ hours per week). Your VMS administrator will be helpful in determining the needs for your organization.
8. Conduct a program of ongoing training for staff and volunteers	Program staff and volunteers should stay current on issues that affect traditional commercial districts and on new revitalization techniques and models.
9. Report key statistics	Tracking statistics — reinvestment, job and business creation, and so on — provides a tangible measurement of the local Main Street program's progress and is crucial to garnering financial and programmatic support for the revitalization effort.
10. Current member of the National Main Street Center® Network.	Participation in the National Trust Main Street Network membership program connects local programs to their counterparts throughout the nation, providing them with valuable information resources and creating a sense of community.

Receiving Accredited Main Street America™ status is a prestigious designation. While every designated local Main Street program can work toward accreditation, not every Main Street program receives it. Virginia Main Street® evaluates local Virginia programs every year and submits the eligible programs to the National Main Street Center® for recognition. Failure to achieve accreditation for two consecutive years will result in a program losing VMS designation. These communities may enter Virginia Downtowns for up to one year in an effort to regain designation and national accreditation.

Maintaining Designation

Virginia Main Street® (VMS) is committed to maintaining long-term relationships with designated communities. Through VMS services, we assist your organization with meeting the requirements (see Page 5) that contribute to its maintenance and growth as an active, effective downtown revitalization program. Regular attendance by staff and volunteers at meetings sponsored by Virginia Main Street® and the National Main Street Center® (NMSC) provide resources, networking, and tools that inspire and augment your local team's efforts. Attendance for paid staff is mandatory. Attendance for volunteers is strongly recommended.

Occasionally, a community with an interest in maintaining designation encounters difficulty meeting the designation requirements in one or more areas. If that happens, the organization should contact VMS as soon as possible to discuss the situation, arrange assistance and develop a schedule to address the issues in a timely manner. VMS will also review and submit to NMSC the administrative information that programs submit annually (see box on this page) and will work with localities, as needed, to strengthen areas that may impact the program's effectiveness and its ability to meet designation requirements. In such cases, VMS will offer targeted assistance to the program, including assisting with the development of a detailed work plan to address areas of concern in a timely fashion.

Dedicated and well-planned efforts by the local program to meet designation requirements are vital to continued economic health in downtown and a strong partnership with VMS. Since services from VMS are provided using a performance-based approach, additional special services such as consultant visits and design services may be provided at VMS discretion to help the community with designation requirements and strengthening their organization. Other staff and consultant services may be provided to assist with this organizational growth, as well as to identify areas of improvement.

In the event that an organization encounters difficulty in maintaining designated Main Street® requirements, Virginia Main Street® will assist the community as a DHCD Virginia Downtown or Community Affiliate. The organization will have access to VMS trainings, networking opportunities, consultation with state staff on downtown revitalization issues and access to the VMS library and files. Formerly designated communities may re-apply for full designation after being an active Community Affiliate for at least two years and a member of Virginia Downtowns for one year. They must apply during a regular VMS designation round, complete the current application and will be competitively evaluated along with all other applicants.

Information Reviewed by VMS

As noted in the designation requirements above, a variety of information must be submitted to VMS each year. This serves the dual purpose of determining eligibility for recognition as an Accredited Main Street America™ Community and providing an opportunity for targeted assistance from VMS as needed. Communities must submit:

- Monthly reports
- Salary survey
- Program survey
- An annual report that includes:
 - ♦ Vision and mission statement,
 - ♦ The actual budget, including revenues and expenses,
 - ♦ The board of directors,
 - ♦ Dates and topics of training for board, volunteers and staff (including attendance record for VMS training),
 - ♦ Key accomplishments and achievements,
 - ♦ Policies and procedures, and
 - ♦ The current Comprehensive Main Street work plan

If these items are not submitted, or indicate that the organization may not be meeting designation requirements, VMS will immediately begin working with the community on a plan to maintain designation.

COMMUNITY AFFILIATE OPTIONS

The goal for a Community Affiliate is to employ the Main Street Approach™ in the development of the organizational stability and public-private partnerships necessary for successful administration of a downtown revitalization program. Community Affiliate core services include: access to training by state and national downtown development experts; organizational structure development assistance; and eligibility for DHCD grants as available. Affiliates have the opportunity to learn about best practices in the field and to network with peers from around the state. There are two levels of Main Street Affiliates, based on the community's capacity and intent on becoming a Designated Main Street program.

Virginia Downtowns: Local programs aspiring to pursue Virginia Main Street® Designation by incorporating the Main Street Approach™ into their downtown and community revitalization efforts. For a period of up to two years, these programs receive VMS staff support concentrating on capacity building to support a Main Street® program. Concentrated organizational development, volunteer management and fund development planning assistance will be provided in the form of regional meetings, trainings, on-site visits (as resources allow) and other VMS training opportunities.

Virginia Downtown communities are required to document their program's progress as required by DHCD. Each year, these programs must submit an annual report to include:

- ♦ Current/Updated community contact information;
- ♦ Dates, topics, & attendance records for board, volunteer and staff training;
- ♦ Key accomplishments and achievements in the areas of the Main Street Approach™;
- ♦ Net new jobs and net new businesses in the downtown district, if available; and
- ♦ Current downtown revitalization work plan, if applicable.

Communities in the start-up mode of Virginia Downtowns have specific benchmarks to satisfy:

- Complete Board training
- Achieve incorporation and 501(c)(3) non-profit status
- Develop a balanced and comprehensive work plan
- Develop a fund development strategy
- Participate in all Virginia Main Street training opportunities

DHCD Community Affiliates: Incorporated municipalities, counties, and urban neighborhood commercial districts located within the Commonwealth of Virginia who utilize the Main Street Approach™ for downtown revitalization, but may not have the capacity to support a Main Street® program or do not meet the current Virginia Main Street® requirements for designation.

Community Affiliates must also employ the Main Street Approach™ in their development of revitalization efforts for their downtown districts. Community Affiliates must keep their community contact information updated with Virginia Main Street®. Community Affiliates must attend at least one VMS training per year, and will have access to VMS staff as time and resources allow.

Community Affiliates, Virginia Downtowns and any previously undesignated VMS communities are prohibited from using Virginia Main Street® or Main Street America™ logos. The terms "Community Affiliate" and "Virginia Downtown" describe the relationship between a community and DHCD's Virginia Main Street® program. They are only intended for use in public relations or educational communication, but not for marketing materials, public displays, signs or similar promotional tools. Virginia Downtowns meeting the criteria for full Main Street® designation will be encouraged to apply during program expansion cycles.

VIRGINIA DOWNTOWNS

Services available (as resources permit)

Reconnaissance Visit	State and outside specialists perform a preliminary needs assessment of the physical and economic environment of the community and downtown. (On-site)
Organizational Visit	State staff assists with organizational issues including roles and responsibilities of staff and Board. Work planning assistance is also provided. (On-site)
Training Opportunities	Virginia Downtowns program staff and volunteers are encouraged to attend all Virginia Main Street training opportunities and the annual Main Street Now Conference presented in Main Street cities around the U.S.
VMS Staff Consultation	State staff is available by phone and e-mail, or in-person as time permits.
Resource & Information Sharing	Frequent electronic communications from Virginia Main Street® assist local programs with accessing programs, services, and information around the state. On-site state and regional meetings provide resourcing opportunities among local programs.

Requirements

Work in a pedestrian-oriented commercial district	Virginia Downtown programs should have a pedestrian-oriented commercial area with a high percentage of locally owned businesses. A county may become a Community Affiliate on behalf of one or more communities within the county. Neighborhood districts within larger cities may become Affiliate programs through their local government.
Have a broad-based revitalization organization	Virginia Downtown communities are required to form an independent, dedicated downtown revitalization organization with 501(c)(3) status as they work toward Main Street Designation. These organizations may be housed within a larger organization for support, but are required to maintain independent governance and activity as they pursue Main Street designation.
Employ the Main Street Approach™	The hallmark of the Main Street® program is its foundation of comprehensive downtown revitalization using the Main Street Approach. It is critical to the success of the program.
Active Participation	Virginia Downtown program paid or volunteer staff must attend at least one (1) Virginia Main Street-sponsored training opportunity annually. Steering Committee/Board of Directors members are required to attend the following training sessions or their equivalents prior to designation application: Main Street 101; Board Roles & Responsibilities; Work Plans & Budgets; Marketplace Development. Paid or volunteer Executive Director must complete Virginia Main Street Professional Development training prior to designation application.
Progress Reporting	Virginia Downtown programs are required to file the following quarterly progress reports with Virginia Main Street: minutes of Steering Committee/Board of Directors meetings; Treasurer's Reports; follow-up activity evaluations.
National Main Street Center Membership at Affiliate level	Virginia Downtown programs are required to join the National Main Street Center at the Affiliate level. This membership provides access to resources available to programs demonstrating a commitment to the Main Street Approach through the Center.

COMMUNITY AFFILIATES

Services available (as resources permit)

Reconnaissance Visit	Virginia Main Street and DHCD staff perform a one-time preliminary needs assessment of the physical and economic environment of the community and downtown. This service may be provided in conjunction with other DHCD downtown revitalization programs. (On-site)
Training Opportunities	Community Affiliate program staff and volunteers are encouraged to attend all Virginia Main Street training opportunities and the annual Main Street Now Conference presented in Main Street cities around the U.S.
VMS Staff Consultation	State staff is available by phone and e-mail, or in-person as time permits.
Resource & Information Sharing	Frequent electronic communications from Virginia Main Street® assist local programs with accessing programs, services, and information around the state. On-site state and regional meetings provide resourcing opportunities among local programs.

Requirements

Work in a pedestrian-oriented commercial district	Community Affiliate programs should have a pedestrian-oriented commercial area with a high percentage of locally owned businesses. A county may become a Community Affiliate on behalf of one or more communities exploring a regional implementation of community revitalization. Neighborhood districts within larger cities may become Affiliate programs through their local government.
Have a broad-based revitalization organization	Community Affiliates not on track for Main Street® designation are not required to be an independent nonprofit. They may include Chambers of Commerce, departments of local government or other organizational structures.
Employ the Main Street Approach™	The hallmark of the Main Street America™ program is its foundation of comprehensive downtown revitalization using the Main Street Four Points. It is critical to the success of the program.
Active Participation	Community Affiliate programs must utilize VMS services at least once annually to maintain Community Affiliate status.
National Main Street Center Membership at Affiliate level	Community Affiliate programs are required to join the National Main Street Center at the Affiliate level. This membership provides access to resources available to programs demonstrating a commitment to the Main Street Approach™ through the Center.

TRADITIONAL MAIN STREET® DISTRICTS

The Virginia Main Street® Program is a preservation-based economic and community development program that follows the Main Street Approach™ created by Main Street America™. The program was designed to address the need for revitalization and on-going management of smaller to mid-sized downtowns and uses the traditional assets of downtowns as a catalyst for revitalization. Nationwide and in Virginia, successful Main Street® districts share certain common characteristics:

- ✓ A pedestrian scale and orientation;
- ✓ A critical mass of buildings and businesses which form the foundation for revitalization efforts;
- ✓ A critical mass of structures that would be eligible for frequently used rehabilitation incentives (state and federal tax credits and local tax abatement).

In order to assure a physical setting conducive to applying the Main Street Four Points to commercial revitalization, designated Main Street® districts must have:

- ✓ At least **50 commercial enterprises** and **70 commercial structures**;
- ✓ At least **2/3rds of the structures are commercial** (or commercially zoned) buildings and have a pedestrian scale and orientation including such elements as ground floor storefronts;
- ✓ At least **25 percent** of the linear street frontage has a **setback of 15' or less** from the sidewalk;
- ✓ A **compact size** and regular pattern of sidewalks so that it can be comfortably walked by pedestrians.

Communities interested in Main Street® designation may request that Virginia Main Street® review a potential district for its appropriateness. Existing Main Street® programs seeking to enlarge the boundaries of their current districts must also meet these guidelines for the expanded district. Community Affiliates are not required to have a traditional district, but should have a pedestrian-oriented commercial district and submit the appropriate maps along with their application. For Virginia Downtowns that plan to pursue designation in the future, it is suggested that the traditional district criteria be used in order to prevent the need for a change to the boundaries when application for designation is made.

Roles and Responsibilities

The **community** must propose specific boundaries for the commercial district revitalization effort and provide evidence that the district meets these criteria. Virginia Main Street® can provide assistance with methods for compiling this information including building and business inventories, as well as guidance on how to measure setback.

Virginia Main Street® will review the district criteria and make an on-site visual assessment of the commercial district at the request of the community to determine the appropriateness of the proposed new or expanded district. A written summary of the assessment will also be provided.

REQUIRED CORE COMPETENCIES

To assist designated Main Street® communities in the incremental and comprehensive development of an active downtown revitalization program, Virginia Main Street® has developed the following list of core competencies. While individual projects and activities are unique to the community, there are some general tasks and types of projects Virginia Main Street® has found to be vital to the progressive growth of a Main Street® program and organization. These competencies are meant to be a base level of activity, and communities should strive to undertake more challenging projects as they build capacity.

Steady progress in meeting core competencies must occur during the first three to five years of the organization's Main Street® Designation in order for specialist services to continue. Core competencies must be in place in order for a community to progress to Accredited Main Street® designation. Progress in meeting the core competencies will be assessed during the annual Year-End Evaluations.

The core competencies are listed below and categorized according to the Main Street Approach™. In order to build a strong foundation for the program, a very active Organization Committee (often the Board of Directors) is required to work on the numerous projects listed under this category. Although there are many important organizational tasks, it is necessary to remember that the Main Street Four Points are comprehensive. Activities in the areas of Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion, as well as Organization, are essential for an action-oriented program that achieves successful, on-going revitalization of the historic central business district.

The Main Street Approach requires focus on economic impact in communities, creating potential significant positive change on Main Street by stressing broad community engagement to secure support for a Main Street vision and monitoring tangible, quantifiable outcomes to better tell the local story to funders and key stakeholders. The Main Street Approach consists of three tightly-integrated components:

1. Identifying community vision and understanding the local market (Inputs)
2. Implementing transformation strategies through the Four Point framework
3. Impact and measurement, monitoring quantitative and qualitative outcomes (Outputs)

Core competencies often build upon each other and are often related to competencies in other categories. While each community will complete the core competencies in their own time frame within the three to five year window, it is recommended that they be completed in the general sequence in which they are listed.



ECONOMIC VITALITY

This element of the Main Street Four Points concentrates on strengthening the district's existing economic base while finding ways to expand its economy and introduce compatible new uses. This work is rooted in a commitment to making the most of a community's unique sense of place and existing historic assets, harnessing local economic opportunity and creating a supportive business environment for small businesses and entrepreneurs.

The Economic Vitality Committee and project teams have the job of identifying new market opportunities for the traditional commercial district, finding new uses for historic commercial buildings and stimulating investment in property. To succeed, this committee must develop a thorough understanding of the community's economic condition and opportunities for incremental market growth. Specifically:

- ⇒ Build entrepreneurial economies;
- ⇒ Strengthen existing businesses and recruiting new ones;
- ⇒ Find new economic uses for traditional Main Street® buildings;
- ⇒ Develop financial incentives and capital for business development and retail operations layout;
- ⇒ Monitor the economic performance of the district.

ECONOMIC VITALITY CORE COMPETENCIES

Basic

- ✓ Complete and maintain building inventory for the downtown including:
 - Rental rates
 - Square footage
 - Age of building
 - Unique features
 - Condition
 - Ownership
 - Vacancy
 - Taxes
 - Current photograph
- ✓ Complete and maintain a business inventory for the downtown including:
 - Cumulative number of businesses
 - Ownership
 - Product / Service
 - Customers
 - Amount of sales
 - Sales patterns
 - Lease conditions
 - Availability (date / price)
- ✓ Track program impact, including:
 - Changes in sales tax revenue
 - Changes in property tax revenue
 - Net new jobs
 - Net new businesses
 - Amount of private investment
 - Number of volunteer hours
- ✓ Create a new business owners' orientation kit. Develop a network of entrepreneur development partners to assist new entrepreneurs and existing businesses (micro-enterprise development organizations, SBDC, SCORE, EDA, Chamber of Commerce, etc.)

Intermediate

- ✓ Complete market analysis including:
 - Surveys
 - Sales leakage assessment
 - Business recruitment plan
 - Business retention plan
 - Summary report
- ✓ Develop a downtown development vision and strategy
 - Identify target niche markets
 - Develop a downtown clustering/leasing plan/strategy
- ✓ Develop and market economic development incentives, including
 - Business seminars
 - Loan pool programs
 - Grant programs
- ✓ Develop a small, local business recruitment packet and procedures
- ✓ Develop business retention programs

Advanced

- ✓ Expand organization's role to develop or be a partner in the development of property in downtown (act like CDC).
- ✓ Expand organization's role to provide micro-business development services, including micro-financing, credit building, etc.
- ✓ Create new financial capital.
- ✓ Support local community banks (banks that are locally owned and rooted in a particular community), credit unions, and community development financial institutions (CDFI).
- ✓ Start a Move Your Money Campaign to get local residents to move their deposits to a local community bank or credit union or to invest in a local CDFI.
- ✓ Tap the power of local banks for local investment and work with financial institutions to create additional lending platforms (e.g. linking local deposits with local loans).
- ✓ Develop community owned and supported businesses.
- ✓ Start a Local Investment Opportunity Network (LION) or other local angel investor "club."
- ✓ Find ways to incorporate crowdfunding (e.g., Kickstarter.com, Indiegogo.com, Fundrise.com) into new business development
- ✓ Slow Money
- ✓ Cooperatives
- ✓ Unaccredited investing



DESIGN

This element of the Main Street Four Points focuses on improving the physical environment by renovating buildings, constructing compatible new buildings, improving signs and merchandise displays, creating attractive and usable public spaces and ensuring that planning and zoning regulations support Main Street® revitalization.

The Design Committee and its project teams play a key role in shaping the physical image of Main Street® as a place attractive to shoppers, investors, business owners and visitors. To succeed this committee must persuade business owners, building owners and civic leaders to adopt a specific approach for physical improvements to buildings, businesses and public improvements. Specifically:

- ⇒ Educate others about good design by enhancing the image of each business as well as that of the district;
- ⇒ Provide good design advice by encouraging quality improvements to private properties and public spaces;
- ⇒ Plan Main Street's development by guiding future growth and shaping regulations;
- ⇒ Motivate others to make changes by creating incentives and targeting key projects.

DESIGN CORE COMPETENCIES

Basic

- ✓ Develop and market improvement incentives and assistance including:
 - Working with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to list the downtown district on the National Register of Historic Places and/or the Virginia Landmarks Register
 - Design guidelines – develop a design guidelines publication *Keeping up Appearances*
 - Design Assistance – through Virginia Main Street® Architect
- ✓ Evaluate existing physical assets – buildings, streets, public signs, parking lots and open spaces
- ✓ Inventory conditions of physical environment
- ✓ Façade improvements

Intermediate

- ✓ Develop and market improvement incentives and assistance including:
 - Loan programs
 - Grant programs
 - Design Assistance – through Virginia Main Street®
- ✓ Explore a formalized design review process with custom design guidelines
- ✓ Develop district identification signs
- ✓ Create a detailed and visually appealing map of downtown
- ✓ Photograph downtown extensively; including before, during and after photos of rehabilitation work and promotional events; Streetscape improvements
- ✓ Mid-size rehabilitation projects

Advanced

- ✓ Conduct a traffic study
- ✓ Conduct a parking study (if appropriate)
- ✓ Continue façade improvements
- ✓ Large rehabilitation projects
- ✓ New development



PROMOTION

This element of the Main Street Four Points deals with marketing the district's assets to residents, visitors, investors and others through special events, retail promotion and activities that improve the way the district is perceived.

Promoting Main Street takes many forms, but the ultimate goal is to position the downtown or commercial district as the center of the community and the hub of economic activity, while creating a positive image that showcases a community's unique characteristics. To be effective this committee must move beyond cookie-cutter downtown promotion ideas. Specifically:

- ⇒ Understand the changing market - identifying both potential shoppers and the competition;
- ⇒ Identify downtown assets - including people, buildings, heritage and institutions;
- ⇒ Define Main Street's market niche - its unique position in the marketplace;
- ⇒ Create new image campaigns, retail promotions and special events - to bring people back to downtown.

PROMOTION CORE COMPETENCIES

- ✓ Develop, approve and publish a balanced annual calendar of promotional events that includes a mix of special events, retail and image events.
- ✓ Evaluate promotional events - including information on number of attendees and impact in reaching program goals
- ✓ Develop a media resource list
- ✓ Conduct outreach / media relations activities including:
 - Press releases
 - Print media columns
 - Press liaison
 - Feature articles
 - Radio/TV talk shows
- ✓ Create a downtown business directory
- ✓ Initiate and complete at least one special event
- ✓ Initiate and complete at least one retail event
- ✓ Conduct downtown image development activities including:
 - Identify downtown's assets
 - Compile information about the marketplace
 - Analyze data
 - Match assets with market niches
 - Write a positioning statement
 - Conduct Image advertising (Examples: newspaper, radio, TV, direct mail ads)
 - Develop collateral materials (Examples: entrance signs, banner, shopping bags, buttons, Tee-shirts w/ logo)
 - Develop media relations (Examples: media kits, press releases, press receptions for major projects, TV, radio and newspaper interviews)
 - Develop image-building events (Examples: downtown progress awards ceremonies, ribbon-cutting for new projects, "before and after" renovation displays)



ORGANIZATION

A strong organizational foundation is crucial for a sustainable Main Street revitalization effort. This element of the Main Street Four Points focuses on building collaboration among a broad range of public and private sector groups, organizations and constituencies.

The Organization Committee and its project teams play a key role in keeping the board, committees and staff functioning by attracting people and money to the Main Street Program. To succeed, this committee must take responsibility for managing these financial and logistical aspects of the non-profit organization:

- ⇒ Raise money - for projects and administration, from donations and sponsorships;
- ⇒ Oversee volunteer activities- recruit and supervise people, and reward good work;
- ⇒ Promote the program - to downtown interests and the public;
- ⇒ Manage finances - develop good accounting procedures.

ORGANIZATION CORE COMPETENCIES

The activities listed below are grouped by *basic*, *intermediate* and *advanced*. In general, projects grouped in the basic category should be completed before the organization moves onto intermediate activities. Intermediate activities should be completed before tackling advanced projects. This progression will serve to build a strong foundation upon which the organization can build a long-term, successful program.

Basic

- ✓ Develop an organizational structure, Articles of Incorporation and By-laws
- ✓ Formulate accounting systems (It is suggested that all programs have an annual audit by a CPA)
- ✓ Bookkeeping system
- ✓ Payroll/employee number
- ✓ Bank/charge accounts
- ✓ Hire a Program Director
- ✓ Set up Main Street® office including:
 - Permanent Location
 - Equipment
 - Furnishings
- ✓ Registrations: state, county, city
- ✓ Develop a clear, shared mission and write it as a mission statement
- ✓ Hold annual work planning sessions
- ✓ Develop a written work plan
 - Achieve Board approval
 - Send to VMS
- ✓ Form committees and hold regular meetings

Intermediate

- ✓ Develop an organization logo (letterhead, etc.)
- ✓ Develop 501(c)(3) non-profit application to Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
- ✓ Develop an annual budget
 - Achieve Board approval
 - Send to VMS
- ✓ Initiate an annual, signed agreement with local government
- ✓ Create and regularly update job descriptions for both staff and volunteers
- ✓ Compile and send Board of Directors list, including contact information and mini-resume for each Officer and Director

Advanced

- ✓ Develop a five-year fundraising plan including:
 - Sustainable and diverse income base
 - List of private contributors
 - At least one fundraising event
 - Produce an informational brochure about the organization
 - Develop various methods for communicating with donors throughout the year

- ✓ Create a mailing list for the organization including:
 - Downtown business owners
 - Downtown property owners
 - Local interest groups
 - Officials
 - Supporters

- ✓ Develop a communications strategy
 - Website
 - Social media
 - Downtown map with business and attractions directory
 - Print and broadcast media resources
 - Downtown brochure

- ✓ Build a volunteer database
 - Develop and maintain a method for documenting volunteer hours and skill sets
 - Develop and maintain a Volunteer Participation waiver

GRANT FUNDING

Virginia Main Street® grants are available only to Accredited Main Street America™ communities.

Downtown Investment Grants

Purpose: Downtown Investment Grants (DIGs) allow Main Street® organizations to take on unique, one-time projects that measurably, creatively and sustainably advance the organization's economic vitality goals and strategies. DIGs involve multiple downtown partners and require active leadership and participation by the organization's board, committees and volunteers. DIGs may not be used for marketing, printing, continuing operations, program administration, payroll, debts or any other operational expenses.

Scoring: This is a competitive grant, and scoring criteria will be included in all application materials. Generally, VMS looks for projects that support the organization's goals and strategies, has local support and matching funds, includes volunteer involvement and the organization has capacity to complete the project on time.

Award Amounts: Up to \$50,000

Match Requirement: 1:1 match. Can include volunteer hours and in-kind services

Application Period: February 15, 2016 – April 15, 2016

Project Implementation Period: July 2016- June 2017 (12 months)

Eligible Applicants: Accredited Main Street America® organizations

Application Process: Applications must be completed through the DHCD's CAMS online system at <https://dmzi.dhcd.virginia.gov/camsportal/Login.aspx>. All applicants must complete an organization profile before submitting an application.

Financial Feasibility Grants

Purpose: Financial Feasibility Grants allow Main Street® organizations to work with owners of significant "white elephant" buildings to identify the highest and best use of such properties and to develop sufficient information to allow the owner or Main Street® organization to "shop" the rehabilitation and reuse of the property to private developers and investors. Feasibility grants generally fund the development of preliminary engineering reports, preliminary architecture reports, market demand studies for an identified highest and best use and gap-financing research.

Scoring: This is a competitive grant, and scoring criteria will be included in all application materials. Generally VMS looks for projects that have an impact on the community's Economic Vitality goals and strategies, including match funding, a financial feasibility team with appropriate credentials, and the organization's capacity to complete the project on time.

Award Amounts: Up to \$15,000-\$25,000

Match Requirement: 1:1 match. Can include volunteer hours and in-kind services

Application Period: February 15, 2016- April 15, 2016

Project Implementation Period: As established by MOU (usually 3-6 months)

Eligible Applicants: Accredited Main Street America® organizations. VMS, at its discretion and as funds are available, may offer this grant opportunity to active Designated Virginia Main Street® communities; however, accredited communities will be given first priority.

Application Process: Applications must be completed through the DHCD's CAMS online system at <https://dmzi.dhcd.virginia.gov/camsportal/Login.aspx>. The application will consist questions related to: 1) a description of the property, 2) the potential benefit the property's rehabilitation/reuse for the Main Street district, 3) current threats or opportunities posed by the property to the on-going revitalization of the Main Street district, 4) the willingness of the property owner to facilitate a feasibility study, 5) current and expected demand by investors or developers for a feasibility study, and 6) a description of how the building's redevelopment is related to the economic vitality goals of the local Main Street organization. In addition, the applicant must provide a proposed budget (including both financial feasibility study grant funds and leverage) based on a pay-for-performance style budget that lists all expected project products, a project timeline, and a list of the local team that will develop the financial feasibility study. Photographs and a map showing the location of the property must also be submitted.

Additional grant opportunities for nationally Accredited Main Street America™ communities, DHCD Virginia Downtowns and Community Affiliates will be published as they are made available.

Visit www.dhcd.virginia.gov/mainstreet for more information.

CONSULTANT SERVICES

Only Accredited and Designated Main Street America communities are eligible to receive consulting services provided by DHCD – Virginia Main Street®.

Architectural Design Services

Site visits - Site visits can include meetings with property owners and studying individual buildings to find feasible design solutions that assure historically sensitive restoration and maintenance. Design consultations will range from providing assistance with compatible signage design to storefront design and rehabilitation recommendations. The Consultant shall also provide general technical assistance on proper building rehabilitation techniques consistent with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, as well as look at non-building improvements such as streetscape or parking lot layouts.

Long Distance Façade Renderings – Long distance façade renderings are façade improvement drawings and recommendations that property owners can use to improve their projects in a historically sensitive manner. These services are provided on a first come, first served basis.

Specialized Design Visits – A limited number of specialized design visits are offered to the designated VMS community. The purpose of the visits may include:

- a. **Wayfinding Sign System Issues and Opportunities.** A wayfinding visit will include a preliminary inventory of existing signs, interviews with key stakeholders in the community about the need for a system, potential destinations, and current and potential graphics or system. A presentation will be made to the community summarizing these findings as well as an overview of what wayfinding is and recommendations for how the design and installation of the system can move forward. A follow-up report will be prepared and delivered to the community. This report will include schematic designs for the community including gateway and trailblazer signage and show examples from other communities and provide guidance for the best way for the community to move forward with designing and implementing a system. This guidance shall include cost estimates and examples, but need not be a construction document.
- b. **Feasibility Study.** The purpose of this service is to assist property owners and the community in how to proceed with making improvements to “white elephant” buildings or buildings “ready for demolition.” A feasibility study visit will include the evaluation of the building, which can be roughly 30 feet wide by 100 feet deep and two-stories high. . The visit will include a preliminary assessment of the building’s architectural features and historic value and documentation of the building and an interview with the property owner to learn possible uses. A brief report will be prepared that includes a scope of work necessary to bring the building back into service, a building code analysis, potential uses, plans and historic tax credit potential. A range of comparable construction cost estimates will be included in the final report.
- c. **Other Study.** In the course of the year, if another type of study related to economic development or aesthetics is determined by the VMS to be needed in a VMS community a specialized site visit can be customized to that need.

Only accredited and designated VMS communities are eligible for this service. Application for this service is completed by the organization and submitted to the Consultant (architect). VMS will approve each service in consultation with the Consultant. Services are provided on a first come, first served basis, within reason, to ensure equity among all designated communities. Service value ranges from \$5,000 -\$25,000 per project.

Organization Visits

These services are only effective with the full involvement of the local Main Street® Board, all of the committees, staff, local government representatives and other local Main Street® stakeholders.

Tune-Up Visit - National Main Street Center® staff and Virginia Main Street® staff conduct a one or two-day visit to evaluate the local Main Street® program's structure, strategic plan, and committee work plans. The functioning of the Board and each of the four committees (Design, Promotion, EV and Organization) will be assessed. The perception of the local Main Street® organization will also be evaluated by meeting with local government leaders and Main Street® stakeholders. A final report providing recommendations for the local Main Street® will be provided shortly after the visit.

The purpose of the Tune-Up Visit is to evaluate the local Main Street® organization's efforts, while recognizing the program's accomplishments and offering advice for the organization's future programming.

Organization Consulting Visit - The National Main Street® Center will provide, in coordination with the VMS staff, 1-1/2 day site visits for communities needing additional board and committee training, strategic planning assistance, fundraising plan development and/or work plan development. Each organizational visit will be customized for the community and will be provided by the National Main Street® Center.

Fundraising Plan Development - The National Main Street Center® will provide, in coordination with VMS Staff, one and half day visits for communities needing additional fundraising development assistance. This service will help the organization better plan, implement and market a comprehensive fundraising campaign given the distinct challenges and opportunities in the specific community.

Promotional Assessment Visit - The National Main Street Center® will provide, in coordination with VMS staff, one and half day site visits for communities needing assistance in evaluating their promotions events and calendars. This service will help the organization better plan, implement and market a comprehensive promotional calendar given the distinct challenges and opportunities in the specific community.

Accredited and designated VMS communities are eligible for these organizational services. Service value estimated at \$7,500. VMS, at its discretion and as funds are available, may offer any organizational consulting visits and services to active Community Affiliates and Virginia Downtowns that are working to pursue full designation in the future.

Downtown Development Planning/Economic Vitality Visits

National Main Street Center® staff and Virginia Main Street® staff conduct a two-day visit to assist in creating a downtown development plan, help identify and prioritize work for the Economic Vitality Committee, and help develop a market position, if not previously accomplished. The visit usually includes a 2-3 hour clustering/leasing work session to help create a downtown development plan. A final report providing recommendations for the Main Street® organization's economic vitality strategies will be provided shortly after the visit. All visits are customized based on the community's previously completed economic vitality studies and planning.

This service is only effective with the full involvement of the local Main Street Board, Economic Vitality Committee, staff, local downtown development experts and local Main Street stakeholders.

Only accredited and designated VMS communities are eligible for this service. Service value estimated at \$7,500.

Small Town Merchant Visits

The Virginia SBDC Small Town & Merchant Program is a comprehensive collection of workshops, hands-on initiatives and resources designed to address the specific needs of Main Street® retail and restaurant businesses. Program staff delivers targeted, relevant guidance that business owners and managers can put to use immediately. Small Town & Merchant Program highlights include: individual, comprehensive retail/restaurant check-up; confidential, on-site business visits; and, before/after hour seminars. In addition, Program staff will provide a “Community Walk Through” survey of the Main Street district to give an outsiders perspective of the how attractive the district is to potential visitors and customers.

This service is provided for and requires the participation of Main Street district retail and restaurant owners.

Accredited and designated VMS communities, as well as Virginia Downtown communities are eligible for this service. Service value estimated at \$1,500.

Non-Profit Risk Management Center

Organizational issues from Board development and governance to creating an employee and volunteer manual to crafting a financial management procedure can sidetrack a group of volunteers trying to make their Main Street District a more exciting place. For the first time, Virginia Main Street® is providing Designated Virginia Main Street and Virginia Downtowns communities, as well as Community Affiliates with a one-stop resource for all things related to non-profit risk management.

Non-Profit Risk Management Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit led by a volunteer Board of Directors. They are not unlike your organization in that, instead of working to develop a dynamic downtown, their mission is to provide other non-profits with the risk awareness tools they need to operate smoothly, efficiently, and effectively for maximum results. The professionals at this award-winning organization have over two decades of experience working with best-in-class non-profits and are well-versed in the everyday and not-so-common occurrences that can easily derail a volunteer group on a mission. The NPRMC website, located at www.nonprofitrisk.org, is a wealth of knowledge and common sense counsel helpful to the casual site surfer or volunteer seeking answers for some tough questions related to their Main Street organization.

We encourage you to visit their website for information on a broad range of topics including: employment practices and volunteer management; governance and reputation risk; fraud prevention and fiscal oversight; legal and compliance risks; insurance buying and program oversight; as well as client safety and youth protection.

Service value estimated at \$900 per community annually.

VIRGINIA MAIN STREET PROGRAM

Tier System At-A-Glance 2016



AFFILIATE OPTIONS		DESIGNATED Virginia Main Street® Communities	ACCREDITED Main Street America™ Communities
DHCD Community Affiliates	DHCD Virginia Downtowns		

REQUIREMENTS

Traditional Main Street District		●	●	●
Employ the Main Street Approach™	●	●	●	●
Independent Downtown Organization		Goal	●	●
Current Community Contact Information	●	●	●	●
Diversified & Sustainable Funding		Goal	●	●
Employ an Executive Director		Goal	●	●
Organizational Systems & Structures: Vision, Mission, and Work Plan		Goal	●	●
Public/Private Letter of Agreement		2 year	●	●
DHCD Contract		2 year	●	●
Attend Trainings	1 per year	●	●	●
Submit Quarterly Econ. Data Reports		Annual	●	●
Member of the National Main Street Center Network	●	●	●	●

SERVICES FROM VIRGINIA MAIN STREET, available upon request

Main Street America™ Accreditation Review			●	●
May use the Main Street® Trademark		Goal	●	●
Designated VMS Staff Person		●	●	●
Telephone Consultation	●	●	●	●
Community Milestone Awards	●	●	●	●
Award Program Eligibility			●	●
Main Street Information Sessions	●	●	●	●
Virginia Main Street Workshop Series	●	●	●	●
Media Releases About Your Community		●	●	●

	AFFILIATE OPTIONS		DESIGNATED Virginia Main Street® Communities	ACCREDITED Main Street America™ Communities
	DHCD Community Affiliates	DHCD Virginia Downtowns		
SERVICES FROM VIRGINIA MAIN STREET (continued)				
1 Free Volunteer Scholarship for Paid VMS Events		as resources allow	•	•
1 Free Volunteer Registration for Main Street Now Conference				•
Director Training		•	•	•
New Director Orientation		•	•	•
Director Retreat			•	•
Organizational Assistance	•	•	•	•
Work Plan Retreat for Board		•	•	•
Façade drawings			•	•
Wayfinding Sign System Assessment			•	•
Architectural Feasibility Study			•	•
Interior Layout Design			•	•
Other Design Assistance, i.e. rear facades, sign design, parking lot layout, concepts for landscaping and new infill construction			•	•
Economic Vitality Assistance		•	•	•
VSBC Small Town & Merchant Program	•	•	•	•
Promotion Development Assistance		•	•	•
SERVICES FROM MAIN STREET AMERICA™, available upon request				
“Tune Up” Consultant Visits			•	•
Organization Consultant Visits			•	•
Fundraising Plan Development			•	•
Downtown Marketplace Assessment & Plan Development			•	•
Promotion Assessment Visit			•	•
GRANTS				
VMS Downtown Investment Grant				•
VMS Financial Feasibility Grant				•
Eligibility for DHCD Grants	•	•	•	•

VIRGINIA MAIN STREET PROGRAM 2016 Training & Events Calendar

Date	Activity/Event	Location
January 20, 2016	Executive Director Training	
January 21, 2016	VMS Directors Retreat (Day One) <i>The Main Street America Four Point Refresh with Kathy LaPlante, NMSC</i>	The Martha Washington Hotel, Abingdon, VA
January 22, 2016	VMS Directors Retreat (Day One) <u><i>Your Town: A Destination: The 25 Immutable Rules of Successful Tourism</i></u>	Heartwood, Abingdon, VA
February 15-April 1, 2016	VMS Grant Cycle	www.dhcd.virginia.gov/MainStreet
February 19, 2016	WEBINAR: Bringing Historic Tax Credits to Main Street Kathy Frazier, Frazier Associates, Staunton	In your community with volunteers and professionals from Design, Economic Vitality, and others
February 29-March 4, 2016	Resource Team Visits	New Designated Communities
March 7-11, 2016	Resource Team Visits	New Designated Communities
March 1-April 15, 2016	Building Entrepreneurial Economies (BEE) Grant Cycle	www.dhcd.virginia.gov/BEE
April 6, 2016	Regional RevUp with South VMS Milestone Awards Luncheon <i>Historic Tax Credits on Main Street</i>	Hopewell Downtown Partnership Hopewell, VA
April 13, 2016	Regional RevUp with Southwest VMS Milestone Awards Luncheon <i>Historic Tax Credits on Main Street</i>	Downtown Marion Revitalization Association Marion, VA
April 20, 2016 *	Regional RevUp with North VMS Milestone Awards Luncheon <i>Historic Tax Credits on Main Street</i>	Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance Harrisonburg, VA
May 3, 2016 *	VMS Webinar: <i>Getting more bang for the buck: Determining the fiscal impact of Main Street events</i> Kathy LaPlante, NMSC	In front of your computer
May 23-25, 2016	Main Street Now: NMSC Annual Conference	Milwaukee, WI
July 11-13, 2016	<i>VMS State Conference</i>	The Stonewall Jackson Hotel Staunton Downtown Development Inc. Staunton, VA



To learn more, please visit:

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Virginia Department of
Housing and Community Development
Main Street Centre
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