Main Street founded in 1980 to assist communities in revitalizing business districts.
Prior to World War II, Main Street was the focus of community activity.
Commercial
Retail
Social
Institutional
Post War prosperity and defense concerns led to programs that fostered suburban expansion which in turn created auto-dependency.

Downtown and neighborhood business districts were no longer primary providers of good and services to their communities.
Earlier commercial districts suffered from a cycle of disinvestment. Business left, rental rates slipped, and property owners had less to invest in their buildings. “Benign Neglect”
“Redlining”
Today…Big Box Retail and Category Killers abound, especially outside traditional commercial districts.
Vermont…
Main Street’s Assets

- Unique stores and personal service
- Substantial contribution to local economy
- Wider market draw than before
- ‘Experience’ shopping with more than just stores

Assets to support revitalization
1. Tired of sameness and impersonality of malls and chain stores…consumers value uniqueness, personal attention, and service
2. Core represents a substantial share of economy through its tax bas, jobs, and municipal investment (infrastructure)
3. Wider market due to customer mobility “the road goes both ways”
4. Shoppers seek an “experience” and enjoy historic areas…heritage tourism
Obstacles:
Narrower range of goods
Competition from large retailers…can not compete on price alone
CBD must be entrepreneurial and creative
Find a niche
Responsibility…not city hall or “mom and pop” alone…Collaborative effort needed…strong public-private partnerships
Not an overnight phenomenon ... gradual series of small steps ... gains momentum with success
“Big fix” single issue project solutions almost always fail
Main Street needs allies, advocates, and leadership to make revitalization a community priority.
Economics AND… community identity, pride, and preservation of history and culture
Recent solutions: big dollar urban renewal, pedestrian malls, and stadiums to small pain and fix up projects FAILED due to focus on 1 or 2 problems rather than full spectrum.
Main Street Approach for over 1600 communities (by 2002)…comprehensive
Organization…getting everyone working towards the same goal
Promotion: selling the IMAGE
Design: getting Main Street into top physical shape…buildings and layouts but also inviting atmosphere enhanced by window displays, parking, good lighting, signs, sidewalks, and landscape
Economic Restructuring: find new purposes for Main Street enterprises. Expansion and recruitment.
Coordinate all four areas
Well structured, securely funded, and committed
Most create a non-profit organization.
Some are extensions of existing organizations (CDC or DDA)
All are clearinghouses for information about CBD
Org Chart
Elements of Organization

- Coalitions and Partnerships
- Managing Volunteers and Staff
- Fundraising
- Public Relations and Outreach
- Managing Finances and Operation

Organization: responsible for managing financial and logistical aspects of nonprofit organization by forming coalitions and partnerships, managing volunteers and staff, attracting money, promoting program, and managing finances and operations.
Broad-based: all stakeholders need to be at the table
Long list but important to be inclusive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>merchants, business owners and managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>property owners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elected and appointed officials</td>
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<tr>
<td>civic organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>chamber of commerce</td>
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<tr>
<td>preservationists</td>
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<tr>
<td>bankers</td>
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<tr>
<td>economic &amp; community development groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>utility companies</td>
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<tr>
<td>schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>media</td>
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<tr>
<td>religious institutions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
100s of volunteers with wide range of tasks
A management process...an active, visible and trained professional...local Main Street director
Clear vision and work plans

- Partnerships
- Management of Staff
- Education of Board Members
- Nominations and Elections
- By-Laws and Policies
- Volunteers
- Program Funding
- 2000-2002 Work Plan
- Newsletter
- Network Coffee
- Awards/Installation
- Holiday Street Decorations
Track responsibilities for work and funding sources
Promotion
Attract volunteers, build community, reverse negative attitudes and bring customers to Main Street
Elements of Promotion

- Image Promotion
- Retail Promotion
- Special Events

Three parts
Attract diverse customers but identify primary consumers of downtown services
Unified image
Advertise unique qualities and special features
Publish monthly newsletter
Promote district’s history and architecture
Business promotions
Create a market niche
Look for clusters…similar or complementary services or products
Libertyville Valentine’s Day event
Special events and festivals
Themed to local history
Children’s activities
Promote local ethnic heritage
Food!
Make economic as well as aesthetic sense
Elements of Design

- Historic Preservation Education
- Architectural Assistance
- Building Improvements
- Public Spaces
- Design Regulation & Review
Describe components…
Components are fairly consistent despite varying styles or number of floors.
Respect architectural relationships
Evolution…carrera glass/vitrolite