



MAIN STREET™ MAINE PROGRAM

2009 APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Application Deadline:

4pm • Friday, January 30, 2009

Please submit **ONE original application** with appendices and **ONE digital document** (Word or PDF), including high-resolution JPEG images, preferably in Microsoft PowerPoint, to the addresses above.

Important Dates*

Mandatory Application Workshops:	Bangor: Friday, October 17, 2008
	Brunswick: Monday, October 20, 2008
Deadline for Applications:	Friday, January 30, 2009
Selection Committee review and scoring of applications:	February 1 - February 15, 2009
Selection Committee meets to choose finalists:	During week of February 23, 2009
Visit Finalist Communities:	Week of March 16
Announce New Community:	Week of March 30
Begin work with New Community:	End of April 2009

*Dates are subject to change at the discretion of the Maine Downtown Center.

Main Street™ Maine Application Guidelines

Contents

Introduction.....	3
The Main Street™ Maine Approach to Downtown Vitality.....	4
Maine’s Approach	
National Main Street™ Program – Overview	
National Main Street™ Center’s Four-Point Approach	
National main Street™ Center’s Eight Principles	
Services Provided To Main Street™ Maine Communities.....	8
Year-One Training and Technical Assistance	
Three Years of Training and Networking	
Downtown Innovation Grants	
Benefits of Main Street™ Maine Designation	
Community Commitment	13
Prepare and Submit Application	
Financial Commitment	
Institutional Commitment	
Time Commitment	
Evaluation and Information Sharing	
Selection of Main Street™ Maine Community	16
Criteria	
Selection Process	
Assistance from the Maine Downtown Center	
How to Apply.....	20
How to Prepare an Application	
How to Format and Where to Send	
Application Checklist.....	23
Samples	24
Sample Resolutions	
Sample Letters	
Sample Budgets	

I. Introduction

This manual contains information for communities submitting applications for participation in the Main Street™ Maine Program. Before a community decides to submit an application or begins filling out the form, the contents of this manual should be reviewed carefully.

Even if your application for participating in the Main Street™ Maine Program is not accepted this year, you should find the application process valuable. The questions you and others will seek to answer and the goals you will articulate during the application process may help to provide direction to your town's downtown revitalization efforts – and make your community better positioned for Main Street Maine designation in coming years.

Selection of Main Street™ Maine communities is based on resource availability. A selection committee comprised of Maine Downtown Center staff and Advisory Council members will designate one Main Street™ Maine community in 2009. We reserve the right to add communities in future years based on the 2009 application round as resources become available.

Further information concerning the Main Street™ Maine Program may be obtained from:

Roxanne Eflin
Interim Director
Maine Downtown Center
A program of the Maine Development Foundation
295 Water Street, Suite 5
Augusta, ME 04330
P: 207-512-4906
F: 207-622-6346
reflin@mdf.org
www.mdf.org/downtown

Kristen Cady (on maternity leave)
Director
Maine Downtown Center
A program of the Maine Development Foundation
295 Water Street, Suite 5
Augusta, ME 04330
P: 207-626-3117
F: 207-622-6346
kcady@mdf.org
www.mdf.org/downtown

For information on the National Main Street™ program from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, visit
www.mainstreet.org

II. The Main Street™ Maine Approach to Downtown Vitality

A. Maine's Approach

Maine is blessed with a number of historic commercial downtown districts that are not only key drivers in Maine's economy, but also provide quality of life elements that help define our state as "the way life should be". Vibrant downtowns help small businesses grow and thrive, attract young and creative entrepreneurs, host cultural and artistic events and venues, and provide an alternative to our growing problem of suburban sprawl. They provide residents and visitors alike with unique shopping alternatives and restaurants as well as key services such as health care, education, and libraries.

To help spur revitalization of Maine's downtown districts, the Maine Downtown Center (MDC) was created in 1999 by the Legislature to be the statewide resource for downtown revitalization efforts. A program of the non-profit, non-partisan Maine Development Foundation, MDC works with communities across the state that are developing and/or implementing downtown revitalization strategies. We provide technical assistance and training, as well as serve as a resource for downtown revitalization information.

Successful downtown revitalization programs encompass much more than building improvements. Most communities require a comprehensive revitalization strategy that focuses on bringing people back to the downtown district while simultaneously addressing economic issues and physical improvements. Simply improving buildings will not bring business and customers back to the downtown. **There is no one thing, no one magic answer, to downtown revitalization; rather, it is a long-term process that requires the commitment and support of the entire community.**

In order to provide communities with a comprehensive strategy for downtown revitalization, we instituted the Main Street™ Maine program in 2001. Our program is based on the successful Main Street™ economic development model created by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Communities are chosen through a competitive application process, and must demonstrate broad-based community support for the program as well as commit to raising funds to operate and staff a downtown revitalization program based on the Main Street™ approach. Once selected, communities receive technical assistance and training from the Maine Downtown Center over a three-year period. Current Main Street™ Maine communities are Saco, Norway, Bath, Gardiner, Waterville, Eastport, Skowhegan, Van Buren and Biddeford. *We strongly encourage interested applicants to visit these communities and/or meet with Main Street board members and staff before submitting an application.*

B. The National Main Street™ Program - Overview

The Main Street Four-Point Approach™ was developed by the National Main Street™ Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. There are currently over 2200 local Main Street™ programs who have adopted this preservation-based approach and have realized \$44.9 billion dollars in reinvestment in their downtown commercial districts, the creation of 82,909 net new businesses and over 370,000 net new jobs, and 199,519 building rehabilitation projects. While concentrating on revitalization of the community's historic commercial center, these local volunteer-based programs enhance the economic vitality, quality of life, and civic pride of the whole community while countering sprawl and encouraging greater citizen participation in the decisions that are shaping their future.

While commercial district revitalization can be addressed in many ways, the underlying premise of the Main Street Four-Point Approach™ is to encourage economic development, within the context of historic preservation that is appropriate to today's market place. This Approach advocates a return to community self-reliance, empowerment, and the rebuilding of commercial districts based on its traditional assets: unique architecture, personal service, local ownership, and a sense of community.

The Main Street Four-Point Approach™ is incremental and will not produce wholesale, immediate change. Expensive improvements, such as pedestrian malls constructed with once plentiful public funds, often fail to address the underlying causes of commercial district decline and do not always produce the desired economic results. If a long-term revitalization effort is to succeed, it will require careful attention to every aspect of downtown – a process that takes time and requires leadership and local capacity building. The Main Street™ program should be seen as one of many tools that a community utilizes to generate economic and entrepreneurial growth. Also, while they may be an important component of an overall plan for downtown revitalization, communities should not confuse substantial public improvement projects for the Main Street™ program.

A local Main Street™ program is not designed to tackle the bigger issues of an entire community. The focus is limited to the revitalization of the central business district. This certainly takes into account that a healthy, economically viable, and attractive downtown is important to the community's overall health and vitality, and vice versa.

Both the public and private sectors of the community must be involved and committed for a local Main Street™ program to succeed. Each sector has an important role to play and each must understand the other's needs, strengths and limitations so that an effective partnership can be created. An effective Main Street™ program has representation from downtown merchants and building owners, community residents, and official town representation (city manager, select board member, etc). You may find that your community has other key stakeholders, such as local economic development organizations, business associations or Chambers, faith-based organizations, and/or local community development organizations.

For more information, visit the National Main Street™ Center's web site at www.mainstreet.org.

C. The National Main Street Center's Four-Point Approach™

The Main Street™ methodology addresses the following four areas of concern and combines activities in these areas to develop a community's individual strategy for redeveloping their downtown. They are organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring.

1. Organization

The Main Street™ approach to downtown revitalization requires the effort of the entire community. The merchants, property owners, local government officials, community residents, and civic leaders must agree to support common goals for revitalization and join together in a partnership. The downtown development organization and the local Main Street™ Executive Director are key players. A local Executive Director is necessary to act as an advocate for the downtown and to coordinate the various efforts of individuals and groups to ensure that all are working together to develop the downtown.

2. Promotion

The promotion of the downtown as a single, unified commercial area will help attract customers and strengthen Main Street's™ role as a viable business center. The downtown organization can coordinate an aggressive promotion and marketing campaign that includes a program of special events and business promotions. If it is to thrive, the downtown must improve both its self-image and the image it projects to potential customers and investors.

3. Design

Good design is essential to all aspects of downtown revitalization. The Main Street™ design philosophy is not a "purist" preservation approach, but one that seeks to utilize and enhance those elements of quality design that remain in each building. Good design must be extended to include promotional literature, store window and merchandise displays, public building improvements, and street amenities.

4. Economic Restructuring

Economic restructuring seeks to change the ways in which downtown "works" by restoring many of the elements that Main Street has lost over the past few decades. While many small downtowns may not regain their dominance as primary retail centers, careful economic and market analysis usually confirms that they can maintain economic strength by diversifying the present mix of retail uses and by attracting new retail and non-retail functions, including office, recreation, services, and residential uses. Retail and business retention and recruitment, development of effective merchandising techniques, encouraging entrepreneurial reuse of upper stories for downtown housing and office space, and better utilization of existing and potential recreational assets are all aspects of economic restructuring.

Successful Main Street™ programs are usually structured as a non-profit corporation guided by an **active working volunteer board**. Four standing committees that correspond to the four points develop projects and work plans for implementation. Local programs hire a paid director to help coordinate the efforts of volunteers and implement the program.

D. The National Main Street™ Center's Eight Principles

Countless experiences in helping communities bring renewed life to downtown have shown time and again that the Main Street Four-Point Approach™ succeeds only when combined with the following eight foundation principles:

1. Comprehensive

A single project cannot revitalize a downtown or commercial neighborhood. An ongoing series of initiatives of the four points is vital to build community support and create lasting progress.

2. Incremental

Small projects make a big difference. They demonstrate that “things are happening” on Main Street and hone the skills and confidence the program will need to tackle more complex problems. Over time, small changes make a dramatic difference in the commercial district.

3. Self-help

The Maine Downtown Center can provide valuable direction and hands-on technical assistance, but only local leadership will bring long-term success by fostering and demonstrating grassroots community involvement and building local capacity, entrepreneurship and commitment to the revitalization effort.

4. Public/Private partnership

Every local Main Street™ program needs the support and expertise of both the public and private sectors. Both local government and the private sector bear responsibility for funding the local Main Street™ program.

5. Identifying and capitalizing on existing assets

To avoid mistakes or creating false expectations, one of the Maine Downtown Center's key goals is to empower communities to recognize and make the best use of their unique offerings. Local assets provide the solid foundation of a successful Main Street™ initiative.

6. Quality

From storefront design to promotional campaigns to graphics to special events, quality must be the goal. The local Main Street™ program and the commercial district must be synonymous with quality.

7. Change

Changing community attitudes and habits is essential to bring about a commercial district renaissance. A carefully planned Main Street™ program will help create paradigm shifts that change public perceptions and practices to support and sustain the revitalization process.

8. Action-oriented

Frequent, visible changes in the look and activities of the commercial district will reinforce the perception of positive change. Small, but dramatic improvements early in the process will remind merchants and the community that the revitalization effort is underway. This requires the hands-on involvement of program leaders, staff, and volunteers.

III. Services Provided to Main Street™ Maine Communities

The following services of the Maine Downtown Center are available to ALL Maine communities (not just Main Street™ communities):

Hard Copy Resource Library

Access to hard copy files, newsletters, reports and audiovisual aids relating to downtown revitalization from the Maine Downtown Center.

Online Resource Library

Coming online within the next six months, a new and improved Online Resource Library with information on the Main Street™ Approach and basic downtown revitalization topics. It will also include archives of news about Maine downtowns, a downtown calendar, links to downtown on-line resources, and more!

Telephone/E-Mail Consultation

Maine Downtown Center staff are available by telephone and e-mail to discuss and offer advice on any Downtown issue.

Community Talks

A slide presentation and discussion about downtown revitalization, or a facilitated discussion about downtown priority-setting. Generally one per community per year.

Special Consulting

Maine Downtown Center staff or consultants are available for a fee to facilitate community organizing. Staff and/or consultants can provide on-site assistance for boards and Main Street™ directors, when necessary, to deal with local issues and problems. This can involve special strategy sessions, goal setting, committee training, or other specialized assistance.

Maine Downtown Institute

New in 2009! A series of six workshops on basic downtown revitalization held in Augusta throughout 2009 starting in January 2009. More info to come!

The following services are available to officially designated Main Street™ Maine communities:

A. Year-One Training and Technical Assistance

Main Street™ Maine communities can expect to receive the following types of intensive assistance during their first year in the program.

Reconnaissance Visits

The Maine Downtown Center staff will visit each community for a day to assist with an informal needs assessment, to help organize the downtown program, and if appropriate, to assist in the selection of a Downtown Director.

Hiring Assistance

While it is totally a local decision as to who is hired to serve as the Executive Director of the local Main Street™ organization, the Maine Downtown Center must be consulted prior to hiring the director (unless the director has been hired prior to designation). We can provide you with sample job descriptions, ads, and other information to help insure you make the best possible choice. A representative from the Maine Downtown Center should be included as a non-voting member of a hiring panel whenever possible. We can also assist the community by posting the opening on our website and on job listing service at the National Trust's Main Street™ Center.

Main Street™ Approach Training

Two-day training session for downtown boards and local Main Street directors. The Maine Downtown Center staff and specialists in the areas of organization, design, promotion, and economic restructuring, will provide training. The workshop will emphasize the mechanics of downtown revitalization and what it means to be a Main Street™ Executive Director or a member of a downtown development board. A minimum of at least eight (more encouraged) should attend this session.

Organizational Development Assistance

The Maine Downtown Center staff will be available to each community for a total of two days spread out over several weeks to assist with aspects of organizational development (organizing committees, by-laws, fundraising, strategic planning, etc.) – based on specific community needs.

Resource Team Visits

Three experts on-site for three days. An interdisciplinary team with representatives from architecture, business development and marketing will be assembled to address the needs of each Main Street™ Maine community. Each resource team will spend three days in each town meeting with community leaders, observing, and analyzing local conditions. A realistic assessment will be made of the city or town's capacities and opportunities that will provide the basis for the local downtown organization's ongoing work plans.

Design Assistance

An architect will visit each community for four days, spread out over a year. These visits might consist of one-on-one visits with property owners on a building-by-building basis. The architect

will offer suggestions for improvements. In addition, the architect will assist with facade improvements (no interior work), infill building design, and graphics assistance for such things as signage and downtown logos. Design work will typically include sketch elevations and preliminary guidelines.

Specialized Technical Assistance and Training

Funds are available to hire experts mutually chosen by the local program and the state director to assist local programs with specific aspects of the Main Street™ Approach. For instance, experts may be engaged to assist with market analysis, graphic design, marketing the downtown, organizing promotions and special events, and a variety of other topics.

Program Evaluation

At the end of the first year of a Main Street™ Maine program, Downtown Center staff will conduct a program evaluation and discuss findings with the local Downtown Director and Board.

B. Three Years of Training and Networking

Main Street™ Maine communities can expect to receive the following types of assistance for each of the first three years following official designation.

Conferences – State and National

Main Street™ Maine communities will be able to send people to state and national conferences as follows:

National Main Street Conference:	2 people
State Downtown conference attendance:	5 people (discounts for additional attendees)

(Maine Downtown Center will pay registration fees – local programs or participants need to pay for travel and accommodations)

Membership in the National Main Street™ Network

For three years, each Main Street Maine community will be a member in the National Main Street™ Network, paid for by the Maine Downtown Center. Benefits of membership include a monthly newsletter, access to on-line database and list serve, a telephone information hot-line, and discounts on Main Street™ publications and products.

Specialized Technical Assistance and Training

Technical assistance provided in second and third years of the organization's program are intensive, but less structured and will vary depending on the community's needs. Executive Director and volunteer meetings and workshops and ongoing technical assistance will continue. Progress evaluations and assistance in yearly work plan development are generally considered necessary services provided by the Maine Downtown Center upon request. Special visits to address a particular local topic of concern will also be offered. Maine Downtown Center staff expect to spend one or two days on-site in each year-two and year-three community.

Public Relations

Maine Downtown Center staff and specialists will visit with community and business leaders to help generate community interest. MDC will publicize local accomplishments and promote local events.

Quarterly Downtown Director Meetings

Downtown Directors are required to attend quarterly meetings that include an educational component as well as discussion and networking. Meetings are held in Augusta, with the exception of one yearly retreat held in August in Eastport for all Managers, of which MDC will pay for travel and lodging.

C. Downtown Innovation Grants

Main Street™ Maine communities will be eligible to apply for small downtown innovation grants. These grants are typically \$2,000 - \$5,000 and are to be used for small but creative and visible projects. These grants are dependent upon resource availability.

D. Benefits of Main Street™ Maine Designation

The most important benefit to Main Street™ Maine designation is that over time, your downtown district will become a thriving, productive center of commerce and social activity. The program promotes local leadership development and civic engagement, supports local business retention and recruitment efforts, improves the downtown's visual image, and brings people downtown again through promotions and other events.

In addition to the value of technical assistance and training provided by the Maine Downtown Center, there are other tangible benefits including:

- ❖ Access to Maine Downtown Center Advisory Council Members. Our Advisory Coard members are all experts in different fields related to downtown revitalization, and many provide pro bono assistance and guidance to designated Main Street™ Maine communities.
- ❖ In-kind assistance. We are working on developing in-kind relationships as resources allow. More to come on this.
- ❖ Inclusion in Maine Downtown Center grant applications: From time to time, the Maine Downtown Center initiates grant applications to support Main Street™ Maine programming at the state and local level. Examples include \$50,000 for Norway and Eastport to develop downtown creative economy initiatives, and a \$20,000 grant from Bank of America to provide specialized retail consulting for Waterville, Gardiner, Bath and Saco.
- ❖ CDBG Downtown Revitalization Grants: Designated communities will be awarded extra points through the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for downtown revitalization.

IV. Community Commitment

A. Prepare and Submit Application

Any Maine municipality, or any non-profit organization dedicated to downtown revitalization, may apply for Main Street™ Maine designation in accordance with the following:

1. At least two representatives of the applying organization attend an application workshop.
2. Completed application is received no later than 4pm Friday, January 30, 2009, which includes:
 - a. Signed pledges of financial and other commitments
 - b. Resolution of support by the municipality
3. If chosen as next Main Street™ Maine Community, must sign Letter of Agreement with the Maine Downtown Center:
 - a. Community pledges to use the four point approach, hire a downtown manager, and have a downtown revitalization organization
 - b. Maine Downtown Center pledges to offer training, technical assistance and other responsibilities.

In applying for designation as a Main Street™ Maine community, you are inviting representatives from the Maine Downtown Center to help guide and focus your downtown revitalization efforts based on the Main Street approach.

B. Financial Commitment

Main Street™ Maine communities must raise adequate funding to support a downtown management program for at least three years. However, this is an **ONGOING PROGRAM, NOT A THREE YEAR PROJECT, AND FUNDING WILL BE NEEDED AFTER THE INTIAL THREE YEAR PLEDGE. IT'S IMPORTANT THAT YOU COMMUNICATE WITH THIS WITH ALL FUNDERS!**

For municipalities with populations greater than 5,000, there must be adequate funding to support a full-time downtown manager. For municipalities with populations less than 5,000, there must be adequate funding to support a downtown manager at least 25 hours per week. However, we **STRONGLY** encourage even small communities to consider a full-time manager.

Short of actually being able to secure three years of adequate funding by the application deadline, consideration will be given to demonstrating commitment to secure funding by virtue of pledge letters and other means.

Besides funds to pay the Downtown Manager's salary, downtown revitalization organizations must provide an adequate operating budget to cover expenditures for travel, training, promotions, specialist services, office rent, printing, postage, clerical assistance, and other miscellaneous

expenses for running a Main Street™ program. The amount of the budget will vary from community-to-community depending on size, needs, and the area's cost-of-living. Municipalities and businesses that fund the Main Street™ program should see this as an investment (see sample budgets under Section VII, letters F & G).

After the initial three years, if the program has shown measurable results, it is logical that the community would continue funding a successful program. Applicants must develop adequate growth oriented budgets for a minimum of the program's first three years.

Each community is encouraged to generate in-kind or paid assistance to provide clerical support from the local municipality, some private concern, or through a volunteer-type organization. It is unfair to the organization and to the Executive Director if he/she is hired for their expertise in revitalization, but then is bogged down in the daily routine of typing letters, filing, answering phone calls, etc.

Community-based funding to support a downtown management program for three years may come from municipal government, local business contributions, contributions from local individuals, community-based fundraising events, and other sources.

C. Institutional Commitment

1. Have an existing downtown organization or start one

Lasting downtown revitalization effort will only succeed in communities having well structured and ongoing, incorporated active downtown development organizations. Such groups assume responsibility for certain needed tasks such as downtown promotions, facilitation of private sector building improvements and other cooperative projects. The downtown organization is responsible for establishing the overall direction of the local revitalization program, the program budget and staff. This organization should ultimately become a contact for the local community government on all matters affecting the downtown. This entails building a certain amount of trust and understanding of each one's roles.

2. Commit to using the Four-Point Approach and Eight Principles

Successful downtown organizations and their staff work systematically through a work plan stating goals and objectives based on the Four-Point, Eight-Principle Main Street Approach™ to downtown revitalization – concentrating attention on issues related to design, organization, promotion, and economic restructuring. While the approach is tailored to each community, training and technical assistance is geared to this successful model.

D. Time Commitment

A considerable time commitment will be required of volunteers in order to implement the Main Street™ Maine program. It is essential that the board members realize what is expected of them. Below is a list of the projected time requirements of the local program staff and board of directors. Many of these meetings are mandatory for the downtown manager and board members. Attendance is recommended at some meetings for other members of the downtown organization.

Projected Time Requirements:

Main Street Approach Training	Two-days – all board members
Reconnaissance Visit	One day – all board members
Resource Team Visits	Three days – all board members
Local Board and Committee work	Four to six days – all board members
Downtown Manager Quarterly Meetings	Four days – staff
National Conference	Three to Four days – staff and one board member
Maine Downtown Conference	One day – staff and as many board members as possible

E. Evaluation and Information Sharing

Upon completion of the first year of operating as a Main Street™ Maine program, the Maine Downtown Center will conduct a program evaluation and share the results with the program leadership. The evaluation will include successes and areas for improvement.

It is expected that each Main Street™ Maine community will freely discuss lessons learned with other Maine communities. Staff and local leaders may occasionally be asked to make presentations to other communities.

V. Selection of Main Street Maine Communities

1. Criteria

The Main Street™ Maine selection committee will designate downtowns likely to show demonstrable success.

The following criteria will be used to designate Main Street™ Maine communities:

Funding Commitment	20%
Broad Public/Private Support	20%
Foundation for Revitalization	20%
Work Plan	20%
Likelihood of Demonstrable Change	20%

These criteria (above) correspond with parts b-f of the application form.

a. Basic Information

Part A of the application form asks for basic information. While not strictly part of the criteria by which applications will be judged, this information will be reviewed and will assist the selection committee with the decision. Compiling this information will also benefit the applicant community.

b. Funding commitment to sustain local program – 20%

Ideally, enough funds are formally committed to support a downtown manager, support staff, and an office for at least three years. Communities over 5,000 should raise enough funds to support a program with a full-time downtown manager. Communities under 5,000 should raise enough funds to support a program with a Downtown Manager working 25 hours per week. **However, we STRONGLY encourage even small communities to consider a full-time manager.**

In lieu of formal commitment of funds, pledges of intent to commit funds will be considered. Signed, written pledges will be given more consideration than less formal pledges.

Commitments for cash pledges are given more consideration than pledges of in-kind support, although in-kind support is valid.

The higher percentage of funds needed that are committed in writing, the more consideration will be given.

Additional consideration will be given to applicants that show commitment of funding support beyond three years. **Again, this is an ONGOING PROGRAM, NOT A THREE YEAR PROJECT, AND FUNDING WILL BE NEEDED AFTER THE INTIAL THREE YEAR PLEDGE.**

c. Broad-based public/private support – 20%

Ideally, funding support is balanced from among the following three sources:

Municipal government	1/3
Downtown businesses and property owners	1/3
Citizens (and other sources*)	1/3

* other businesses, individuals, foundations, fundraisers

These are not exact and rigid requirements, but should be used as a guide when developing your local fundraising strategy.

In lieu of support coming in thirds from each of the above noted sources, consideration will be given for support from a variety of sources. Minimal consideration will be given to applications where overwhelming support comes from a single source.

Ideally, the desire to become a Main Street™ Maine community is supported throughout the community and this is demonstrated with letters of support from a wide variety of community interests, such as businesses, property owners, non-profit organizations, and citizens.

d. Foundation for Downtown Revitalization – 20%

Ideally, the community has the following:

- a. Strong, capable public and private sector leadership with a solid knowledge of and strong desire for downtown revitalization
- b. A non-profit corporation devoted to downtown revitalization and supported by a broad mix of public and private interests
- c. An accomplished track record of planning and actions that demonstrate commitment to community improvement, such as:
 - i. A town-approved comprehensive plan consistent with Maine’s Growth Management Act
 - ii. A downtown improvement plan
 - iii. A well defined Main Street or central business district for which there is existing data on business mix, housing, size, and position of the commercial district.
 - iv. Existence of local historic preservation activity and/or architecturally or historically significant commercial buildings in the commercial district, including locally certified buildings or districts or those listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
 - v. Other activities, institutions, and/or plans that contribute to a strong foundation for establishing a Main Street™ Maine program.

In lieu of the actual existence of each of the things noted above, consideration will be given to commitment to achieve these things.

For instance, in lieu of an already established independent corporation, the following will be considered:

- Pledge of commitment to establish an independent corporation
- Establishment of a formal affiliation with a similar organization with a downtown focus
- Pledge of commitment to establish a formal affiliation with a similar organization with a downtown focus

e. Work plan for downtown revitalization – 20%

Ideally, the work plan:

- a. incorporates the Main Street Approach™ to downtown revitalization and demonstrates broad-based understanding of the Main Street Four-Point Approach™ and the Eight Principles
- b. works toward a vision for the downtown that is widely supported by the community
- c. builds on existing community strengths and addresses existing community weaknesses
- d. perpetuates an ethic of historic preservation
- e. includes a realistic three-year budget that supports:
 - Executive Director/Downtown Manager
 - Support staff
 - Administrative expenses including office, travel, promotions, etc.
 - Ongoing training for staff and volunteers

In lieu of full incorporation of each of the above listed elements, consideration will be given to work plans that partially incorporate these elements.

f. Likelihood of demonstrable change – 20%

Ideally, the application persuades any reader that if awarded Main Street™ Maine designation, this community will achieve great things relative to their present status. Over the next few years downtown investment will soar, number of downtown businesses and downtown jobs will grow dramatically, valuation of downtown property will dramatically increase, and the downtown will experience an obvious and profound cultural change; it will be more active, vibrant, and vital.

Considerations include: (1) true need for commercial district revitalization and preservation, (2) changing demographics and economic conditions, (3) likelihood of success of the program as designed.

Not so much consideration is given to a community's need for downtown revitalization, but rather to a community's prospects for improvement. The community's starting place may be a factor in its ability to achieve great improvements, but it is not the most important factor. Likelihood of demonstrable change is the most important factor.

2. Selection Process

Main Street™ Maine designation is determined by the Director of the Maine Downtown Center based on the recommendation of a selection committee of the Maine Downtown Center's Advisory Council members.

Finalists will be announced the week of March 30, 2009 and committee members will conduct site visits the week of March 16, 2009. Winning community will be announced the week of March 30, 2009.

After designation is announced, if desired, the Director of the Maine Downtown Center will meet with each community that applied to discuss their application.

3. Assistance from the Maine Downtown Center

Staff and Advisory Council members of the Maine Downtown Center want to be helpful to communities as they prepare their applications; however, at the same time we want to be sure that all applicant communities are treated similarly.

For this reason, the Downtown Center has established the following Application Assistance Guidelines:

1. Applicant communities may contact the Director of the Maine Downtown Center with any questions regarding the application process. Questions should be sent via email to kcady@mdf.org . To insure consistency, please direct questions regarding the application to the Director only, not to Advisory Council members or other staff of the Maine Development Foundation.
2. Written answers to all questions submitted will be provided to all applicant communities via the Maine Downtown Center's web page.

VI. How To Apply

Any Maine municipality, or any non-profit organization dedicated to downtown revitalization, may apply for Main Street™ Maine designation.

At least two representatives of the applying organization must attend one of the three application workshops listed on the front of this document.

A completed application must be received no later than 4pm, January 30, 2009.

How to Prepare an Application

In addition to preparing and submitting an application, you must also attend an application workshop.

The application is designed to be completed by laypersons and **SHOULD NOT be completed by one person.** One of the most effective ways to complete the application and build awareness of the Main Street™ program locally is to make multiple copies of the application and divide the application into sections that are then completed by members of the Main Street™ steering committee or organizing group. Collect the answers and transfer them to the original form, gathering the appropriate signatures where needed. A wide variety of individuals, governments, and constituent groups can be involved in completing the application.

Application Helpful Hints

1. For assistance, please contact Kristen Cady, director of the Maine Downtown Center. at kcady@mdf.org
Note that all questions asked by any applicant, and the Director's answer, will be shared with all applicant via the Maine Downtown Center web page.
2. Begin work first on those items which depend on other people – such as getting a municipal resolution or pledges of financial support.
3. Every question may not be relevant to every applicant. N/A (Not Applicable) may be an acceptable answer to some questions.
4. The downtown management area should be the well-defined traditional commercial core of your community. Select the area that has the strongest concentration of commercial buildings. Avoid the temptations to include many peripheral areas with mixed uses, scattered buildings and vacant land.
5. Be generous and complete with your budget. For instance, the downtown manager and volunteers will have to travel to several meetings per year, in some cases national conferences.

6. Broad-based participation is essential to a successful Main Street™ Program. Letters and resolutions of support from a wide range of organizations offer a strong indication that participation will be community-wide. We encourage you to think of the application process as a tool to seek community opinions and to build partnerships. Groups that you may wish to solicit for support are: businesses, residents, shoppers, schools, local organizations, government (municipal), individual merchants, chambers of commerce, tourism/convention and visitor bureaus, historical societies, financial institutions, arts associations, civic organizations, realtors, property owners, and other constituents. Letters of support should explain the writer's commitment to the Main Street™ Program such as: financial support, in-kind contributions, volunteer time or interest in the program. You may include as many letters of support as you collect.
7. Understand that revitalization is a long-term process of improvement that must involve the entire community. Main Street™ is a continuous process for downtown revitalization, just as your community's industrial recruitment efforts must be ongoing to be successful.
8. The Main Street™ program succeeds because of volunteer collaboration – and collaboration begins with the application process itself. The application is designed to be completed by volunteers. It represents an opportunity for you to learn more about your community and gain public input for the revitalization process.
9. Be sure to use the application checklists to assure a complete application has been submitted.
10. Proofread the application.

3. How to Format and Where to Send

Applications must be submitted following the 2009 Main Street™ Maine application format. Alternative formats will not be accepted.

Please try to limit your answers to the space provided in the application, however, if you must use more space, please make sure your application does not number more than 25 pages (single-spaced, 12 point type). If you are using an electronic version of the form, you must keep the text of the question asked in the form to be fair to those submitting a hard copy application.

Applications that are shorter than 25 pages are fine – **brevity and conciseness is encouraged.**

Attachments won't be counted in the page count.

Although application scores are not based on presentation, a well-organized application facilitates review. The application should be submitted in hardcopy on 8.5 x 11" white paper, double sided, no staples or holes please. Attachments should be confined to an 8.5 x 11" format. Attachments can be folded or reduced to fit this size.

Applications and all attached materials, including photographs, become the property of the Maine Downtown Center and may be used for promotional purposes. If photographs are

copyrighted or require attribution, this must be clearly stated. Copies of submitted applications, or portions of applications, will be available only by contacting the community that submitted the application. A fee may be charged to provide such copies.

Do not include materials in the application that have not been requested, such as oversized maps, meeting minutes, brochures, etc.

Only one copy of any downtown plan, survey, or study completed in the past three years should be included with the original application – multiple copies are not necessary.

Please submit **ONE original application** with appendices and **ONE digital document** (Word or PDF), including high-resolution JPEG images, preferably in Microsoft PowerPoint, to

Kristen Cady
Director, Maine Downtown Center
295 Water Street, Suite 5 | Augusta, ME 04330
P: 626-3117 | kcady@mdf.org.

By:
4pm • Friday, January 30, 2009

4. Application Checklist

Does your application contain:

- ___ ONE original application with appendices and ONE digital document (Word or PDF), including high-resolution JPEG images, preferably in Microsoft PowerPoint. With only ONE copy of your downtown plan/study.

- ___ **Maps** (Appendix A) folded to fit 11x17” format, which show:
 - A clear outline of the downtown area that will be the focus of your Main Street™ Maine program
 - Zoning in the downtown area
 - Special districts such as: special assessment district; tax increment financing district; historic district

- ___ **10 Photographs** (Appendix B) of various aspects of your Main Street™ Maine Program Area. These should be submitted electronically on disk, preferably jpeg format.

- ___ **Historic Properties** (Appendix C). Please list any properties within your Main Street™ Program Area that are locally land marked or listed individually on the National Historic Register.

- ___ **Financial Pledges** (Appendix D). Be sure to create a list of pledges for years one, two, and three. The list should identify specific sources and amounts and should note if the pledges are cash or in-kind. Actual signed letters and / or resolutions should be included behind the overall list of pledges, in the same order as listed.

- ___ **Letters and Resolution of Support** (Appendix E). Please create a list of letters of resolution and support and behind this, in the same order as listed, please include the actual documents of support (without financial or in-kind support).

- ___ **Organization Documents** (Appendix F). If the organization that will administer your Main Street™ Program already exist, please provide a copy of the organization’s incorporation papers, By-Laws, and IRS tax status determination letter, if you have one.

- ___ **Commitment to Hire** a Downtown Manager (Appendix G). A letter of commitment to hire a downtown manager for three years.

VII. Samples: Sample Resolutions, Letters, Budgets, Organizational Chart and Application Checklist

A. Sample Resolution for the Host Organization

A resolution for the new or existing organization that will be responsible for the local Main Street™ Program. The resolution authorizes participation in the Main Street™ Maine program and should be included in Appendix E

WHEREAS, the Main Street™ Maine program has been established to assist cities and towns, in developing a public/private effort to revitalize urban neighborhood and traditional central business district commercial areas and,

WHEREAS, the Main Street™ Maine Program will accept up to three cities or towns to participate in its ongoing program and receive intensive technical assistance from the Maine Downtown Center for a minimum of three years,

WHEREAS, the City/Town of _____ desires to participate in the Main Street™ Maine Program,

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF

(new or existing organization)

SECTION 1. That the organization applies for selection to participate in the 2009 Main Street™ Maine program with the specific goal of economically revitalizing the designated Main Street™ district within the context of the preservation and rehabilitation of its historic commercial buildings, and agrees to participate in the development and financial support of the local Main Street™ program.

SECTION 2. That the organization guarantees that a Downtown Manager will be employed for a minimum of three years.

SECTION 3. That the organization recognizes that a commitment to commercial district revitalization is an ongoing process requiring continuous attention, community support and involvement, and a full public/private partnership.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED THIS _____ day of _____, 2009.

President of Board/Steering Committee

B. Sample Resolution for a City or Town

This resolution authorizes participation in the Main Street™ Maine program and designating a municipal official to represent the city/town on the local non-profit Main Street governing board of directors. It should be included in Appendix E.

WHEREAS, the Main Street™ Maine program has been established to assist cities and towns in developing a public/private effort to revitalize urban neighborhood and traditional central business district commercial areas, and

WHEREAS, the Main Street™ Maine program will accept one city or town to participate in its ongoing program and receive intensive technical assistance from the Maine Downtown Center for a minimum of three years,

WHEREAS, the City/Town of _____ desires to participate in the Main Street™ Maine program,

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL/BOARD OF SELECTMEN: OF THE CITY/TOWN OF _____.

SECTION 1. That the City/Town of _____ endorses the submission of this application and agrees to participate in the development and financial support of the local Main Street™ program.

SECTION 2. Endorses the goal of economic revitalization of the designated Main Street™ district within the context of the preservation and rehabilitation of its historic commercial buildings, recognizing that the Main Street™ program is one of many economic and community development tools.

SECTION 3. That the City/Town of _____ endorses the hiring of a Downtown Manager.

SECTION 4. Recognizes that a commitment to commercial district revitalization is an ongoing process requiring ongoing attention, community support and involvement, and a full public/private partnership.

ADOPTED THIS _____ day of _____, 2009.

Mayor/Chair, Board of Selectmen

Attest

C. Sample Resolution for a Chamber of Commerce, downtown merchants association, economic development corporation, or similar organization(s)

This should be included in Appendix E.

WHEREAS, the Main Street™ Maine program has been established to assist cities and towns, in developing a public/private effort to revitalize urban neighborhood and traditional central business district commercial areas and,

WHEREAS, the Main Street™ Maine program will accept up to three cities or towns to participate in its ongoing program and receive intensive training and technical assistance from the Maine Downtown Center for a minimum of three years,

WHEREAS, the City/Town of _____ desires to participate in the Main Street™ Maine program,

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF

(name of organization)

SECTION 1. Fully endorses the submission of this application and agrees to participate in the development and financial support of the local Main Street™ program.

SECTION 2. Recognizes that a commitment to commercial district revitalization is an ongoing process requiring ongoing attention, community support and involvement, and a full public/private partnership.

SECTION 3. Endorses the goal of economic revitalization of the designated Main Street™ district within the context of the preservation and rehabilitation of its historic commercial buildings, recognizing that the Main Street™ program is one of many economic and community development tools.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED THIS ____ day of _____, 2009.

President of Board

Executive Director

D. Sample Letter of Commitment to Hire a Downtown Manager

This should be included in Appendix G.

We hereby declare that upon selection to participate in the 2006 Main Street™ Maine Program, the _____ Main Street™ Program will conduct a search (name of community) to find and hire a _____ time* paid Executive Director to coordinate the volunteers and activities of our local Main Street™ program.

We further commit to funding this position for a minimum of three years during the startup partnership with the Main Street™ Maine Program.

(Signature of President of new or existing organization
that will be responsible for the local Main Street™ program)

Date

*Indicate full- or part-time, depending on the population of the community. Communities with less than 5,000 population may hire a part-time (minimum 25 hours per week) paid Downtown Manager, although full-time is highly recommended. Communities with population greater than 5,000 must hire a full-time (minimum of 40 hours per week) paid Downtown Manager.

E. Sample Pledge Letter

This is to be used by local partners to make pledges of financial commitment.

Letters should initially be sent to whoever is assembling the application and all pledge letters should be submitted as attachments to the application.

This should be included in Appendix D.

Date

Kristen Cady
Director
Maine Downtown Center
295 Water Street, Suite 5
Augusta, ME 04330

RE: Pledge Agreement

Dear Ms. Cady:

We enthusiastically endorse the application of _____ to become a Main Street™ Maine community.

To this end, you will find our pledge to assist in the implementation of this effort for \$ _____ payable in equal annual payments of \$ _____ over the next three years.

We are pleased to make this contribution and to support the revitalization and promotion efforts of our Downtown. We understand that the local Main Street™ program will be an ongoing effort for years to come, focusing on the comprehensive Four-Point Approach; Organization, Design, Promotion, and Economic Restructuring. This pledge is contingent upon

Being accepted into the Main Street™ Maine Program.

Sincerely,

Signature

Please Print Name: _____
Business Name: _____
Address: _____
City/Town: _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Phone Number: _____

F. Sample Budget for Smaller Community - Under 5,000 Population

Sources of Income and Support - Smaller Community

	1 st Year	1 st Year	2 nd Year	2 nd Year	3 rd Year	3 rd Year
	Projected Income	Amount Pledged	Projected Income	Amount Pledged	Projected Income	Amount Pledged
SOURCE						
Local Government	\$12,400	\$12,400	\$12,800	\$12,800	\$13,200	\$13,200
Cash	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
In-Kind	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$2,800	\$2,800	\$3,200	\$3,200
Private Contributions	\$21,200	\$19,200	\$24,977	\$20,977	\$27,153	\$21,153
Cash	\$17,900	\$15,900	\$21,177	\$17,177	\$24,853	\$18,853
In-Kind	\$3,300	\$ 3,300	\$ 3,800	\$ 3,800	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,300
Grants Be Specific						
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Other Be Specific						
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
*Total	\$33,600	\$31,600	\$37,777	\$33,777	\$40,353	\$38,500

- Small (under 5,000) communities must show at least \$30,000 in committed/pledged support.
- Copies of Pledge Letters should be included in the application, behind the total list of pledges.
- Total column should equal the total of the In-Kind and Pledged columns.
- Total of Income and Donations should equal Total Expenditures on following page.

Projected Expenses - Smaller Community

	1 st Year Amount	2 nd Year Amount	3 rd Year Amount
Manager's Salary	17,000	18,000	19,000
Manager Benefits	1,300	1,377	1,453
Travel	1,200	1,400	1,500
Professional Development	1,000	1,500	1,500
Rent	*2,400	*2,800	*3,200
Utilities	500	500	500
Telephone	900	1,000	1,000
Office Supplies	750	500	500
Postage	750	1,000	1,000
Insurance/Bonding	500	500	500
Accounting/Legal Fees	*1,000	*1,000	*1,000
Equipment ¹	1,500 (*1,000)	500	500
Dues/Subscriptions	200	200	200
Printing/Photocopying	1,500 (*1,000)	2,000 (*1,500)	2,000 (*1,500)
Photographic Supplies	100	0	0
Project Activities	1,500 (*300)	4,500 (*1,300)	5,500 (*800)
App. For 501 (c)(3) Tax Status	500	0	0
Contingency	1,000	1000	1000
Other (Specify)			
TOTAL²	33,600	37,777	40,353

*Indicate which items (if any) will be supplied by in-kind donations.

- Office Space donated by ABC Mercantile
- Computer hardware, fax machine, Internet Service donated by
- Printing donated by House of Copies
- Local professionals are providing Legal and CPA Services.

¹ Include computer equipment and answering machine. Purchase or donation of these items is mandatory.

² Total expenditures should equal Total of Income and Donations from previous page.

G. Sample Budget for Larger Community - Over 5,000 Population

Sources of Income and Support – Larger Community

	1 st Year	1 st Year	2 nd Year	2 nd Year	3 rd Year	3 rd Year
	Projected Income	Amount Pledged	Projected Income	Amount Pledged	Projected Income	Amount Pledged
SOURCE						
Local Government	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Cash	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
In-Kind						
Private Contributions	\$45,000	\$43,000	\$47,000	\$40,000	\$48,500	\$38,500
Cash	\$35,000	\$33,000	\$37,000	\$31,000	\$39,500	\$30,000
In-Kind	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 8,500
Grants Be Specific						
Central Business Service District						
Other Be Specific						
*Total	\$60,000	\$58,000	\$62,000	\$55,000	\$63,500	\$53,500

*Copies of Actual Pledge Letters should be included as attachments to the application.

*Total of Income and Donations should equal Total Expenditures from the following page.

Projected Expenses - Larger Community

	1 st Year Amount	2 nd Year Amount	3 rd Year Amount
Manager's Salary	\$31,000	\$33,000	\$35,000
Manager Benefits	2,371	2,524	2,677
Additional Staff Salary	1,850	4,100	4,100
Additional Staff Benefits	150	300	300
Travel	1,200	1,400	1,500
Professional Development	1,500	1,500	1,500
Rent	*4,200	*4,200	*4,200
Utilities	500	500	500
Telephone	1,000	1,000	1,000
Office Supplies	1,000	*500	500
Postage	1,000	1,000	1,000
Insurance/Bonding	500	500	500
Accounting/Legal Fees	*2,000	*2,000	*2,000
Equipment ³	2,500 (*2,000)	500	200
Dues/Subscriptions	200	200	200
Printing/Photocopying	2,000 (*1,500)	2,000 (*1,500)	2,000 (*1,500)
Photographic Supplies	100	0	0
Promotional Activities	2,500 (*300)	2,500 (*800)	1,500 (*300)
Business Improvement Projects ⁴	1,000	1,500	2,000
App for 501 (c)(3) Tax Status	500		
Contingency	1,929	1,276	823
Other (Specify)			
TOTAL⁵	\$60,000	\$62,000	\$63,500

*Indicate which items (if any) will be supplied by in-kind donations.

-Rent donated by XYZ Real Estate Co.

-Computer/printer, other peripherals, facsimile, and answering machine donated by PC Land.

-Accounting and legal services donated by local professionals.

-Printing donated by the Print Shoppe (including promotional materials)

³ Include computer equipment and answering machine. Purchase or donation of these items is important.

⁴ Funds used to assist businesses with façade grants, workshops, consultants, etc.

⁵ Total expenditures should equal Total of Income and Donations from previous page.