



# 2016 Annual Standards for Accreditation

# Introduction

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The purpose of the Georgia Main Street Program's annual year-end assessment is to recognize program accomplishments made in 2016, to address and discuss additional downtown revitalization issues, and to eliminate barriers to achieving work plan goals and activities. This assessment is not meant to be a qualitative ranking to compare your community's 2016 downtown revitalization and management activities with other programs, and no official "report card" will be issued. Main Street communities vary considerably in the scope and type of downtown revitalization activities the Main Street program decides to undertake; therefore, comparison between communities is impossible. Instead, this evaluation examines the effectiveness of the local Main Street program within its own context and circumstances, and recommends a level of activity the organization and community is prepared to undertake in the coming year that is appropriate to accomplish your overall goals and objectives. During this year-end assessment, information might be collected from several sources, including input from municipal partners, on-site interviews with the board, committee members and staff. This information will be integrated into recommendations organized within the context of the criteria needed to meet the 10 National Standards for Accreditation. The National Main Street Center's Accreditation Process evaluates local Main Street programs according to 10 performance standards and provides national recognition to those that meet these standards. The standards, developed by the National Main Street Center (NMSC), in cooperation with the Georgia Main Street coordinating program, provides benchmarks and guidelines on how a Main Street revitalization program should optimally function, and serves as an incentive for programs to operate more effectively. Your compliance with the Memorandum of Understanding between the local program and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs is closely monitored during the evaluation process.



# National Main Street Program Accreditation Criteria

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- 1. Broad-based community support
- 2. Vision and mission statements
- 3. Comprehensive work plan
- 4. Historic preservation ethic
- 5. Active board and committees
- 6. Adequate operating budget
- 7. Paid professional staff
- 8. Program of ongoing training
- 9. Reporting of key statistics
- 10. Main Street Network membership

Recommendations for discussion during next year’s evaluation:

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In order for a local program to be designated as an Accredited Georgia Main Street Program, the organization must meet eligibility requirements and receive a score of at least 7 points on 9 of the 10 standards, and a minimum of 10 points in Standard 4.

**Total number of accreditation criteria receiving 7 or more points: \_\_\_\_\_**

Your community’s Main Street Program **IS / IS NOT** accredited for 2017.

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Signature of Evaluator Date

# 1. Broad-based Community Support

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At its best, a local Main Street Program represents and involves a coalition of organizations, agencies, businesses, and individuals from throughout the community. This does not only include property or businesses in the commercial district or those who have a direct economic tie to it, but all members of the community who are interested in the community's overall economic, cultural and historical health. Involvement by both the public and private sectors is critical as well; neither sector can revitalize the commercial district without the skills and vantage points of the other. Ideally, both sectors will participate in the revitalization process by providing funding, leadership, and ideas, and by encouraging collaboration between existing programs to assist in the revitalization process. By actively involving a broad range of interests and perspectives in the development of your historic district, the Main Street program leverages the community's collective skills and resources to its maximum advantage. The overall goal is for a broad range of constituencies from both sectors to understand and be philosophically committed to the revitalization process, and the maximum resources possible to achieve the goal of revitalizing the commercial district.

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## Indicators-

- Organization actively recruited new volunteers during 2016. (1 point)
- Staff spends time building relationships with downtown business owners and district stake-holders. (1 point)
- Organizations that have a membership program or Business Improvement District actively worked to recruit new members and retain existing members. (1 point)
- Board representation came from at least 4 of the following entities: chamber, CVB, city, county, preservation organization, district property owner, business owner, resident, large employer, other community institution/organization. (1 point)
- Community involvement was comprised of financial, in-kind, and volunteer support for the success of the program. (1 point)
- Organization partnered with at least 3 other organizations in 2016. (1 point)
- The Board and Manager presented at a City Council Meeting regarding the benefits and accomplishments of the Main Street Program. (1 point)
- Program shared goals and objectives with County Commissioner and/or State Legislator. (1 point)
- Organization demonstrated a strong relationship with top city officials. (Mayor, City Manager or City Clerk) (1 point)
- Organization maintained an active public relations campaign that includes tools such as a newsletter, updated website, social media, press releases, annual meeting, annual report. (1 point)

## 2. Vision and Mission Statement

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A mission statement communicates the organization's sense of purpose and overall direction. A vision statement communicates and describes the look and feel of the district when the mission has been accomplished. The mission statement should additionally identify the method to achieve the community's vision for their downtown.

Be mindful that neither is simply a slogan. Both statements should be developed with the participation of the board, committees, program volunteers, and the community.

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### Indicators-

- Current and clear mission statement. (2 points)
- Current and clear vision statement. (2 points)
- All board members are familiar with the mission statement. (2 points)
- Organization has reviewed the mission and/or vision in 2016. (2 points)
- Organization actively promoted the mission and/or vision to the public using tools such as its website, business cards, press releases, banners, printed materials, etc. (2 points)

**TOTAL**     10

# 3. Comprehensive Work Plan

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A comprehensive annual work plan provides a detailed blueprint for the organization's activities; reinforces the program's accountability both within the organization and in the broader community; and provides measurable objectives by which the program will track its progress. Tasks, with names of people assigned to complete them, budgets and timelines are important components that add to the strength of this document.

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## Indicators-

- Has a current annual work plan on file with DCA and this document was regularly reviewed during board meetings. (2 points)
- Has an annual work plan accessible and visible on website. (1 point)
- Hosted an Community Visioning Session in 2016. (1 point)
- Hosted at least one annual meeting of the Board to develop the annual work plan. (1 point)
- Solicited input from the community, through a survey, public meeting or online inquiries regarding the development of the work plan. (1 point)
- Board members assisted in the execution of the work plan. (1 point)
- Committees, task forces or volunteers met to detail and execute items identified in the work plan. (1 point)
- Work plan contained measurable objectives including a timeline, budget and job assignments. (1 point)
- A copy of the approved work plan was provided to the City Manager/Clerk and Mayor. (1 point)

**TOTAL** 10

# 4. Historic Preservation Ethic

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Historic preservation is central to a Main Street program's purpose. The historic buildings and public spaces of a traditional commercial district enrich civic life and add value on many levels to the community. Developing a historic preservation ethic is an ongoing process of education and discovery for a community and for a local Main Street program. Main Street programs that have embraced a strong historic preservation ethic are successful in saving, rehabilitating, and finding new uses for traditional commercial buildings. A strong focus should be on intensifying the uses of the district's buildings, through both specific building improvement projects and through policy and regulatory changes, which make it easier to develop property within the commercial district.

Many Main Street programs support preservation values, but do not fully understand that preservation is a shared responsibility and ethic, not just an activity or group of activities. Historic preservation involves not only the process of preserving, rehabilitating, restoring, or renovating older commercial buildings, but also the process of adopting long term preservation sensitive planning and positive land use policies, and removing barriers to downtown investment.

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## Indicators-

- Downtown property or district is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. (2 points)
- Organization used news media to educate community regarding the history and cultural significance of your downtown. (1 point)
- The downtown district has a facade grant program available for local businesses. (1 point)
- Community is a Certified Local Government. (1 point)
- Municipality has a code enforcement strategy in place. (1 point)
- Organization or local business utilized the Downtown Design Studio in the current calendar year. (2 points)
- No historically significant buildings were demolished in the calendar year. If a building was demolished, the documentation process was thoughtfully executed and the community was made aware of demolition mitigation measures. (2 points)

\*List continued on next page\*

## 4. Historic Preservation Ethic Cont.

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- Community received and executed a Historic Preservation Fund Grant from the National Park Service. (2 points)
- Local community hosted a national historic preservation activity in May or another preservation project during the calendar year. (2 points)
- Local program *hosted* or *attended* a statewide Historic Preservation Commission training during the calendar year. (3 pts hosting, 2 pts attended)  2 pts  3pts
- Community has an active database of the downtown business district including photos and property descriptions (1 point)
- Historic District has designated a local design ordinance with design review process in place. (2 points)
- The city has historic preservation protections for residential neighborhoods contiguous to the historic central business district. (1 point)
- Preservation sensitive building rehabilitation and/or restoration was completed in 2016. (1 point)
- Projects using either Federal Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credits (RITC) or the State Income Tax Credit for Rehabilitated Historic Property incentives were completed downtown. (2 points)
- State financial incentives were utilized for downtown projects in 2016.(1 point)
- Community has a sign ordinance in place that is specific to the historic commercial district.(1 point)
- Program or City developed or updated design guidelines for the commercial historic district. (2 points)

Total: 13

*For this standard you must achieve a total of 10 out of the possible 27 points in order to be recommended for accreditation.*



# 5. Active Board & Committees

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Main Street revitalization is an ongoing process of changing a community's attitudes about its traditional commercial district(s). The direct involvement of an active board of directors and active volunteers is vital to this process. The Main Street director is responsible for facilitating the work of volunteers, not for single-handedly revitalizing the commercial district. In some cases, local Main Street programs were originated by or have merged with other organizations, which have a broader agenda (such as a chamber of commerce or a convention and visitors bureau). A local Main Street program with this structure has a better chance of long-term success if it maintains focus on its particular purpose and if its mission statement, work plan, budget, and governing body remain distinct from that of the larger organization in which it is contained. A full board that meets regularly, as stated in its by-laws, is extremely important in supporting this success.

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## Indicators-

- Board of directors is not a figurehead board but is a working board. (1 point)
- Board met at least 6 times during the calendar year and had a quorum at all meetings. (1 point)
- Board members participated in the activities of the organization. (1 point)
- A copy of all board minutes are on file with DCA. (1 point)
- Board meetings are well-managed, with an agenda prepared and distributed in advance, along with a copy of the past meeting's minutes. (1 point)
- Organization has a signed annual MOU on file with the DCA regarding the processes and official execution of the local Main Street program. (1 point)
- Organization has by-laws, board member commitment letter, board member job descriptions, and supports a formal board member orientation. (1 point)
- All new and/or existing Board Members attended Main Street 101 within their first year of their first term on the board. (1 point)
- Organization holds Directors and Officers insurance. (1 point)
- Board members participated in training in 2016, such as DCA/NMSC *webinars, Main Street 101, Main Street 201, the Georgia Academy for Economic Development, Statewide Historic Preservation Commission Training, the Governor's Tourism Conference, The National Main Streets Conference, the Georgia Downtown Conference, National Alliance of Preservation Commissions or any other preservation based training.* (1 point)

TOTAL: 7

# 6. Adequate Operating Budget

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In order to be successful, a local Main Street program must have the financial resources necessary to carry out the annual program of work. The size of a program's budget will change as the program matures (in its early years, it may need less money than in high growth years). In addition, program budgets are likely to vary according to regional economic differences and community size.

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## Indicators-

- Program has a budget adequate to the execution of the annual work plan in conjunction with the MOU. (1 point)
- Funding is derived from at least 3 of the following sources: membership, earned income, sponsorship, municipal support, county support, facility leases, special event revenue, special tax districts, charitable contributions or grants. (1 point)
- At least 20% of the budget comes from non-tax generated revenue. (1 point)
- Budget includes education and travel expenses to attend the National Main Streets Conference or other training opportunities as outlined in the MOU with DCA. (1 point)
- Organization has at least 3 months of operating reserves in savings, at the time of completing the annual assessment. (1 point)
- A copy of the budget is submitted to the City Manager and Mayor. (1 point)
- A copy of the organizations budget is publically accessible. (2 points)
- Program has an annual audit or review of finances. (1 point)
- Board is provided an up-to-date financial report at each meeting. (1 point)

TOTAL: 9

# 7. Staff Management & Development

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Coordinating a successful Main Street program requires a trained, professional staff person whose sole focus is the success of their downtown. Main Street Managers come from a broad range of academic and professional backgrounds. The most successful Main Street Managers are those who are good communicators, support and motivate volunteers, have good project management skills and keeping revitalization activities moving forward on schedule and on budget.

Date of Hire for Main Street/Organization Director: 08/24/2015

Date of 2016 employee evaluation: December 2016

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## Indicators-

- Full-time staff meets the Georgia Main Street Program salary average of \$46,500, Part-time staff meets the salary average of \$15,500. (1 point)
- Staff received appropriate benefits. (1 point)
- Executive Staff has completed any level of certification from the GDA professional development course. (1 point)
- Executive staff was in place for at least 10 months during 2016. (1 point)
- Executive staff received a formal written evaluation during 2016, during which performance expectations & compensation package of staff were discussed, reviewed and revised. (1 point)
- Organization provided staff with professional development opportunities in 2016. (1 point)
- Executive staff is active and engaged in the community. (1 point)
- 75% of the staff's time was spent on Downtown Development related activities, programs or initiatives. (1 point)
- Executive staff made regular monthly reports to the board. (1 point)
- Manager is a Nationally Certified Main Street Manager or holds a license, or certificate in the field of planning, economic development, finance and/or architecture. (1 point)

TOTAL: 8

## FOR NEW MANAGERS ONLY

Completion Date for Main Street 101: \_\_\_\_\_

# 8. Program of Ongoing Training

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In order to meet new challenges and ensure a strong organization, Main Street program participants need ongoing training. Participants, both staff and volunteers, need different skills in different phases of the revitalization process. For that reason, the skills a program's participants learn in the program's catalyst phase are rarely adequate for the growth or management phases. As staff and volunteer turnover occurs, new staff members and new volunteers will need basic Main Street training. Moreover, all program participants should stay current on issues that affect traditional commercial districts and recent revitalization techniques and models. Regular attendance at trainings and networking events is required for Main Street executive staff.

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## Indicators-

- Staff or program representative attended at least 1 Regional Main Street Managers Meeting. (1 point)
- Organization representative (staff and/or board member) attended the Georgia Downtown Conference and/or the National Main Streets Conference. (1 point)
- At least 2 volunteers (board members or committee members) viewed a Georgia Main Street Program Webinar. (1 point)
- Manager and or 2 or more board members attended statewide or national preservation based training during the calendar year. (1 point)
- Main Street Manager received at least 30 hours of downtown development related training. (4 points)
- Organization representative (staff and/or volunteer) attended training opportunities or workshops hosted by the Georgia Academy for Economic Development, Georgia Department of Economic Development, the Georgia Downtown Association, The State Historic Preservation Office, The Carl Vinson Institute of Government, the Georgia Municipal Association, the Georgia Planning Association, or other organizations as applicable. (2 points)

**TOTAL:** 8

# 9. Reporting of Key Statistics

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Tracking statistics—reinvestment, job and business creation, etc. —provides a tangible measurement of the local Main Street program’s impact and is crucial to securing financial and programmatic support for the revitalization effort. **Statistics must be collected on a regular, ongoing basis, and shared as needed.**

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## Indicators-

- Organization submitted 2016 monthly reports **no later than 30 days** after the end of each calendar month. (6 points)
- Organization created/distributed an annual report promoting work plan accomplishments and reinvestment statistics. (2 points)
- Staff regularly communicated with Office of Downtown Development staff outside of trainings and networking meetings. (1 point)
- Staff used the Georgia Main Street Managers Facebook Group and/or National Main Street list serve as a tool to improve your district. (1 point)

**TOTAL** 9

# 10. Main Street Network Membership

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Participation in the National Main Street Network membership program connects local programs to their counterparts throughout the nation, providing them with valuable information and resources.

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## Indicators-

- Organization is a current National Main Street Network member (10 points)

TOTAL: 10

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Standard 1 Totals: 10

Standard 2 Totals: 10

Standard 3 Totals: 10

Standard 4 Totals: 13

Standard 5 Totals: 7

Standard 6 Totals: 9

Standard 7 Totals: 8

Standard 8 Totals: 8

Standard 9 Totals: 9

Standard 10 Totals: 10

Total number of the above accreditation standards receiving 7 or more points: \_\_\_\_\_

**Organizations scoring at least 7 points on standards 1,2,3,5,6,7,8,9,10 and at least 10 points on standard 4 criteria will be recommended for national accreditation.**

# A. Attachments

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Please provide the following attachments in your Dropbox folder to assist us in providing you the most accurate evaluation of the program as possible. If you need access to your community's Dropbox folder, please email [mainstreet@dca.ga.gov](mailto:mainstreet@dca.ga.gov)

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## **Attachments-**

- Board roster, contact information, and terms
- Annual work plan for the program
- Mission statement and vision statement
- 2016 budget showing revenue/expenses
- Monthly Board Minutes and Financial Statement
- Program Organizational Chart
- Main Street District Boundaries
- Main Street Program Bylaws