



Message from the State Coordinator

Sheri Stuart, Oregon Main Street Program Coordinator



I have worked with Main Street communities for a very long time, starting out as the executive director of a program in a small town in Washington, spending time with the National Main Street Center, and now here with Oregon Main Street for the past 14 years.

Through that experience, I have seen downtowns literally transform. Stepping into a community where there has been a spiral of disinvestment for years leading to boarded-up storefronts and a feeling of hopelessness and neglect to seeing those districts become reactivated. It is truly a soul-enriching experience.

I also have worked with communities that have a beautiful downtown but want to maintain and enhance what they have. They join our Network to learn new skills, access resources, and connect with other communities. It is inspiring to see people work together to ensure their downtowns thrive.

Wherever people come to us – just starting out or desiring to take their community to the next level – some of the common indicators of success are:

- **Downtown is Important:** People need to share a common belief their downtown is important to the health and well-being of their community. Yes, it is important to the business and property owners who made an investment, but a community needs to recognize downtown is the heart of the community and if the heart isn't healthy, the rest of the community won't be as healthy as it can be.
- **Partnerships Are Key:** The work of enhancing and sustaining your downtown is broad. Main Streets need to recognize that they don't need to do all the work themselves. With many different groups doing good things in a community, there are abundant opportunities to work in collaboration.
- **Change Happens:** We need to recognize that change happens regardless of whether we do anything or not. By working together, we can establish the vision we have for our community and then set goals and objectives to guide us toward the future rather than let change happen to us.
- **Small things matter:** those small incremental projects and activities add up to positive improvements. Through these small projects, we learn to work together as a community which enhances social connections. And it influences how people feel about their community – we begin to see the possibilities and increase our sense of pride in being part of something bigger.
- **People make a difference:** It is so inspiring to see people who care about their community roll up their sleeves and begin the process of improving their downtown. We need make sure that we make space at the table for all to be involved. Everyone brings skills, talents, energy, and resources. We need to tap into that shared care and love for our community and find ways to work together.

When these elements are in place, I have literally seen miracles happen on main street.

ABOUT OREGON MAIN STREET

Oregon Main Street (OMS)

is part of Heritage Programs in Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. OMS is designed to assist with the revitalization of traditional downtowns and historic commercial districts, promote economic development, and encourage historic preservation. The program uses an approach that advocates a return to community self-reliance, local empowerment, and the rebuilding of central business districts based on their assets, unique architecture, personal service, local ownership and entrepreneurship, and sense of community.

OMS coordinates resources and provides technical assistance based on the Main Street Approach™ to communities that are working in historically relevant business district settings and that meet certain threshold criteria. Oregon Main Street provides assistance to all communities whether they are just beginning to explore options for their downtown or seeking national recognition as an accredited Main Street™ town.

Main Street America™

Main Street America™ is a program of the National Main Street Center. What sets Main Street America™ apart is the powerful network: the unique combination of grassroots dedication to comprehensively improving quality of life at the local level; integral support and expertise provided by Coordinating Programs at the city, county, and state level; and leadership and direction from the NMSC. Main Street America™ is also a special mark of distinction. It is a seal, recognizing that participating programs, organizations, and communities are part of a national movement with a proven track record for celebrating community character, preserving local history, and generating impressive economic returns.

The Main Street Approach™

The Main Street Approach™ is an asset-based economic development strategy. It is a comprehensive, incremental approach to sustain and enhance historic downtowns and traditional commercial neighborhoods based on the district's unique heritage and attributes. Main Street organizations are locally driven, funded, organized, and run.



Annual Statistical Highlights



Building Rehab Projects

2023: 174+
Cumulative: 1959+

Volunteer Hours

2023: 30,506+
Cumulative: 341,312+



Private Investment

2023: \$ 70,580,049+
Cumulative: \$256,544,325+

Net New Businesses

2023: 139+
Cumulative: 755+



Public Investment

2023: \$21,752,212+
Cumulative: \$197,166,841+

Business Expansions

2023: 33+
Cumulative: 238+



Net New Jobs

2023: 567+
Cumulative: 5762+

Business Acquisition

2023: 63+
Cumulative: 231+



All statistics include '+' to indicate additional data from communities who have not yet completed reporting.



Spotlight on Excellence on Main Award: Mr. Ed's in Port Orford

The 2023 Economic Vitality Award was granted to Mr. Ed's in Port Orford for significantly boosting the local economy. In 1994, Eddie Houck opened Port Orford's first coffee shop, later evolving the business model. Facing a lease loss due to building sale, he pursued his dream to build his own space with community support through a GoFundMe campaign. Now, Mr. Ed's family-friendly pub stands as a local attraction, hosting music events, drum circles, Open Mic Nights, and more. The venue serves as a hub for celebrations, fundraisers, and meetings, expanding to include an overflow room in 2023. Eddie's dedication has put Port Orford on the map with this stellar establishment, serving good coffee, food, and music to the tiny coastal village.



Oregon Main Street Goals/Services:

Here's what we are doing to meet our OMS goals!

Ensure organizational advancement of Main Street communities based on local priorities

- Supported strategic planning efforts in Main Street Track communities through mini grants.
- Facilitated board retreats as requested.
- Conducted local program evaluations and organizational visits.

Strengthen Historic Character Focus

- Awarded \$5 million in Oregon Main Street Revitalization Grants.
- Provided Reconnaissance Level Historic Surveys to communities in the Rural Regional Main Street tier.

Engage Partners

- Invited partners to share at Mornings on Main and the OMS Conference.
- Continued economic vitality partnership with RDI.

Increase awareness of Main Street impact

- Awarded 10 Excellence on Main Awards.
- Hosted OMS Annual Conference in downtown Independence.
- Promoted Impact of Oregon Main Street study via social media.

Create structure that is healthy, impactful, and sustainable.

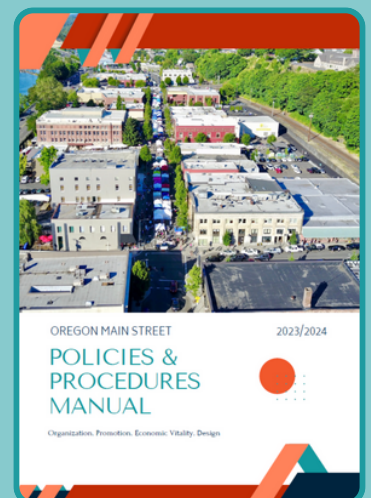
- Developed new Policies and Procedures template.
- Hosted 57 check-in calls with Accredited, Designated, and Affiliated Main Street members.
- Provided 7 Board Institutes.
- Conducted 7 board and committee trainings.
- Provided 3 new executive director orientations.
- Hosted 3 network meetings and trainings (OMSRG, National Accreditation, Virtual Tools).

Our Communities

- 2023 Total Communities: 113
- Accredited: 6
- Designated Main Street: 8
- Affiliated Main Street: 28
- Rural Regional Main Street: 12 (2 hubs)
- Connected Communities: 59

New Towns/Tiers

- Affiliated Main Street: Canyonville, Gresham, Riddle, Sherwood
- Rural Regional Main Street Pilot:
- Oregon Frontier Chamber of Commerce: added Antelope to the regional hub.
- Northeast Oregon Economic Development District: Enterprise, Joseph, Wallowa



Main Street Revitalization Grant Spotlight: City of Maupin's Entrepreneurial Hub

The City of Maupin received a 2022 OMSRG to refurbishing the former city hall and library in downtown Maupin. Completed in 2023, the project created vibrant new workspace for 26 entrepreneurs in downtown Maupin. The library space has transformed into a co-working hub, Maupin Works, welcoming area entrepreneurs and workers, and is home to 2 non-profit organizations, the Maupin Area Chamber of Commerce and the South Wasco Alliance. A coffee roaster has moved into the former city hall. Additional space is available for other makers and producers. Furthermore, the project has significantly increased the organizational capacity of key entities such as the City of Maupin, South Wasco Alliance, Small Business Development Center, and Maupin Area Chamber of Commerce. The OMSRG brought together a group of people in Maupin to form a Main Street Committee who have been catalyzing improvements in downtown. What started with Maupin Works, continues with Richmond's Service Station, and now has grown into a separate façade improvement program funded by other sources. Providing space for entrepreneurs in a rural environment could not have happened without the Main Street grant, which helped to provide accessible, welcoming, affordable space for emerging small businesses and entrepreneurs in Maupin, and has increased the engagement, dialogue, and collaboration of Main Street businesses.



Excellence on Main Street Awards | 2023

Resiliency Award
Buoy Beer, Astoria

Outstanding Promotion
Boba Dash, Beaverton

Standout Volunteers:

- Nicole Felty, La Grande
- Tommy Wood, Estacada
- Richard Barney, Medford
- Josh Johnson, Beaverton

Bricks and Mortar Award
Woodburn Museum & Bungalow Theater

Leadership on Main Award
Stephanie Gutierrez, Albany

Business of the Year
Sybaris Bistro, Albany

Outstanding Special Project
Reedsport Main Street Open House, Reedsport

Economic Vitality
Mr. Ed's, Port Orford

Main Street Executive Director of the Year
Harv Schubothe, Bandon

Bricks and Mortar Award
Woodburn Museum & Bungalow Theater

Open Door Award
Kit's Apothecary, Astoria

