



ANNUAL MAIN STREET MAIN STREET PROGRAM COMMUNITY ACCREDITATION



To: Staff and Boards of Texas Main Street communities

From: Debra Drescher, State Coordinator, Texas Main Street Program

Date: October 1, 2019

Report due date: **Monday, Dec. 16, 2019**

The template and process for the annual Accreditation review of local programs is being revised by the National Main Street Center/Main Street America™ as part of a nationwide strategic effort by the Center –in conjunction with coordinating programs – to ensure that the Accreditation framework remains a viable tool for reviewing progress, highlighting accomplishments, and setting targeted program goals, while giving coordinating programs an opportunity to participate in the review and provide recommendations based on local information and on the coordinating program’s broader perspective working with many Main Street communities.

Several important points:

- The process is still evolving and is currently in draft form; the final version to be used across all coordinating programs will not be finalized for distribution until the 2021 review cycle.
- The new process is largely a self-assessment checklist, which should make the report less time consuming to complete.
- ‘10 Criteria’ will no longer exist. It is now **Main Street Community Accreditation Standards**. There are six, instead of 10, strategy areas- outlined below. Texas Main Street continues to do the review and makes the recommendation for national accreditation for Texas, as do all other coordinating programs for their local programs.
- The new process aligns with the [Main Street Transformation Strategy](#) model we’ve been talking about for several years now, and you’ll see that reflected in the different sections.

Foundational elements/strategy areas of the new National Accreditation Standards:

1. Broad-based Community Commitment
2. Leadership & Organizational Capacity
3. Diverse and Sustainable Funding
4. Strategy-Driven Programming
5. Preservation-Based Economic Development
6. Demonstrated Impact & Result

The Texas Main Street Program will review all submitted reports and provide feedback to you prior to making our Accreditation recommendations to Main Street America™ in early 2020. National Accreditation for all programs nationally is announced on-screen during the opening session of the annual conference: Monday, May 18, 2020 in Dallas.



A local program not achieving accreditation in a given year remains a designated Main Street program and has the opportunity in the next year to work toward achieving the standard.

National Main Street has recommended a system for our office to determine final cumulative scores and alignment with the standards based upon your completion of the assessment and our additional input, as well as your work driving toward the Transformation Strategy model.

INSTRUCTIONS

This template is largely a self-evaluation checklist with added narrative and should be completed by board and staff between now and the **due date of Monday, Dec. 16, 2019**. You do not need to turn in a monthly report in December or January as it is assumed that the information will be covered in this assessment. *(However, you'll still turn in your quarterly reinvestment report for 2019 4th quarter, due January 10, 2020.)*

How to submit. As in the past, please submit reports electronically via:

1. A compressed **email**, with 'Accreditation Report' and your city name in the subject line.
2. Upload to a **sharing site** of your choosing (Dropbox, Google Docs etc.) and share with us.

Regardless of the submission method, the whole report should be in a single document or email and sent to mainstreet-reports@thc.texas.gov. The exceptions are the Work Plan and Design/Improvement project examples that can be separately submitted. Please contact us if you have any submission issues.

THE ACCREDITATION TEMPLATE BEGINS ON THE NEXT PAGE



Elgin CITY / PROGRAM NAME

** Some questions are asked in more than one place due to the integrated nature of Main Street and the Four Points.*

Value:

1 = We do not do this.

2= Marginal performance. We do not consistently do this.

3 = Average performance. We do this, but there is general agreement improvement is needed.

4-5=Strong/exceptional performance. It's part of our plan; it consistently helps us reach stated goals; our organization's credibility is high because of how well this is done etc.

STANDARD I. BROAD-BASED COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

A. The **Main Street organization** fosters a culture of community engagement, collaboration and commitment to the revitalization process.

Key Indicators	Value (1=low to 5=high/strong)
1. We build awareness of the value of the district and show the measurable impact of our efforts through regular external communications.	
2. An inclusive outreach strategy exists through which all sectors of the community are invited to participate, and which encourages volunteer effort.	
3. Connecting with businesses in the district regularly is a program priority. This includes an active visitation program (by staff, board and committee leaders) and stakeholder meetings/activities that provide opportunities for businesses to regularly come together.	
4. The Main Street volunteer base reflects district and community demographics (age, race & ethnicity, gender, skills & interests, socio-economic, etc.). This is clearly demonstrated by the make-up of the supporting volunteer structure.	
5. There is active participation from the public sector in the volunteer structure that supports Main Street (i.e. ex-officio board membership, engagement in program activities etc.)	
6. Main Street regularly updates City officials and share progress and impact of the revitalization effort at council meetings and throughout the year.	
7. The supporting volunteer structure of Main Street includes participation from partner organizations such as chamber, economic development corporations, tourism agencies, schools & universities, and anchor corporations.	



B. Public sector participation. In addition to what is covered in the previous section, the public sector is a crucial leader and foundational partner to build and sustain a successful revitalization program.

Key Indicators	Value (1=low to 5=high/strong)
1. The City promotes the district as an important community asset.	
2. Main Street/downtown is a priority of the City.	
3. The City adequately funds the Main Street program at a level which allows it to achieve its goals and objectives.	
4. Main Street is included in municipal decisions pertaining to planning and implementation of initiatives for the district.	

C. District Stakeholders, including property and business owners, organizations, and residents are the most immediate beneficiaries and the most important investors for successful revitalization.

Key Indicators	Value (1=low to 5=high/strong)
1. A majority of district property and business owners show commitment to the district's vitality through direct <u>investment</u> of resources in physical, economic, and promotional improvements.	
2. A broad base of district property and business owners, residents, workforce, and other organizations participate in revitalization through direct <u>involvement</u> in Main Street activities.	

D. The Community-at-large, including residents, local organizations and corporations outside the district, but within the community.

Key Indicators	Value (1=low to 5=high/strong)
1. A broad base of community members/residents is engaged in Main Street activities. <i>(Refer to similar questions under A.)</i>	
2. Local corporations actively support and invest in the district's revitalization program through investment of human (leadership & employee participation) and financial resources directly and in partnership with the Main Street program. <i>(Refer to similar question under A.7.)</i>	
3. We have downtown residents and they are involved in program activities. (Mark n/a if you do not have downtown residents.)	

Project profile/narrative. (Please provide a project/activity profile or brief narrative to elaborate on one or more of the key indicators in the section above. One page or less. If you choose to provide any supplemental information such as images, posters, newspaper clips etc. please include all of them at the end of the report.



STANDARD II. ACTIVE LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Main Street has a unique position to be able to offer a diverse range of opportunities for people to come together to become active leaders in various capacities and at different points in the revitalization process.

A. Active Volunteer Leadership. The Board.

Key Indicators	Value (1=low to 5=high/strong)
1. The Board has balanced representation from district stakeholders, public sector leaders, essential partners and community members. <i>(Refer to similar questions under Standard I.)</i>	
2. The Board leads through strategy, which includes annual review of organizational and programming efforts in a retreat setting; an active work plan guided by the Board that aligns with strategies; and focus on strategies through the business segments of monthly Board meetings.	
3. Each board member demonstrates an active level of board participation through regular attendance at board meetings.	
4. Board members are active advocates for the program and the district.	
5. Every Board member, in addition to attending meetings, has a working role in different aspects of the program, by leading or participating in committees or teams and projects throughout the year.	
6. Board members sign an Accountability Agreement that outlines the commitment for board service. <i>(Note: examples are in the Online Resource Library)</i>	
7. Board members participate in leadership development and trainings that support board roles and knowledge base in revitalization.	
8. New board members receive an orientation to become more familiar with the Main Street Approach, board roles & responsibilities, the district, agreements with the coordinating program, and ongoing program efforts.	
9. There is adherence to bylaws, including term limitations, and other elements related to Board service.	

B. Supporting Volunteer Structure.

Key Indicators	Value (1=low to 5=high/strong)
1. All four points of the Approach are addressed through the work plan and program activities. <i>Note: Specific questions about the Work Plan is covered in Standard IV.</i>	
2. There is a volunteer coordination structure in place that includes rotation and retention initiatives.	
3. Each volunteer committee, team, task force, and project or activity has active chair or co-chairs and enough supporting members to implement their focus effectively and carry appropriate planning and implementation successfully.	
4. To avoid 'silos' there is a mechanism in place that regularly brings volunteers together throughout the year to ensure cross-collaborative effort and alignment of strategy.	



(i.e. annual retreat, quarterly meetings etc.)	
5. Volunteers not in board leadership roles also receive orientation and training.	
6. The organization has active volunteer recognition initiatives and activities that highlight the talent, contributions, and impact provided by individuals and groups within the organization.	

C. Professional Program Management.

Key Indicators	Value (1=low to 5=high/strong)
1. The organization has continually had a Program Director in place for at least 8 of the 12 months during the past year.	
2. Within the existing organizational structure (city employee or urban/non-profit), Main Street staff salary & benefits are sufficient at a level, and which reflects the perceived value of the revitalization effort. Regular salary increases occur. <i>(Note: see related questions under Standard III)</i>	
3. A staff job description is in place that includes clearly defines performance expectations.	
4. There is a formal staff performance review process (typically will be completed in the city structure by the program manager’s supervisor).	
5. There is regular staff communication among staff, board and committees, task forces etc.	
6. The chain of command/relationship between staff and board is clearly defined and results in effective, positive and strong two-way relationships throughout the program.	
7. Main Street staff receives professional development annually aligned with the Texas Historical Commission Main Street contract.	
8. Monthly reports of activities as required in the contract are consistently submitted. <i>(Note: December 2019 and January 2020 monthly reports will be not required because you’ll be submitting this annual report. Fourth quarter reinvestment reports, due January 10, 2020, will be due.)</i>	<i>Texas Main Street office will score this based on your report submissions.</i>

D. Defined mission and organizational foundation. *Note: the Work Plan is covered in Standard IV.*

Key Indicators	Value (1=low to 5=high/strong)
1. The Main Street program has a clearly defined purpose, outlined through a mission statement. The Board reviews the mission statement annually and uses it as a tool to help evaluate the organization’s priorities, areas of focus and involvement, and to drive the program’s work.	
2. The mission statement is highly visible and promoted in the program’s online, printed communication tools, and projects and activities.	
3. The Main Street organization has by-laws. <i>Please note when they were last reviewed: (2011)</i>	
4. Program activities are effectively coordinated.	



Indicate in this section trainings/professional development staff and volunteers have completed in the past 12 months.

Please provide your Vision and Mission statements and Core Values (if you have adopted a Value statement):

Project profile/narrative. (Please provide a project/activity profile or brief narrative to elaborate on one or more of the key indicators in this section. One page or less. If you choose to provide any supplemental information such as images, posters, newspaper clips etc. please include all of them at the end of the report.



STANDARD III. DIVERSE FUNDING & SUSTAINABLE PROGRAM OPERATIONS

A. The Main Street Program Has Diversified Funding Sources.

Key Indicators	Value (1=low to 5=high/strong)
1. The Main Street funding structure has a balanced mix of sources that includes adequate city funding.	
2. District stakeholders (businesses and property owners, workforce, residents, organizations) invest in Main Street programming and revitalization efforts through partnerships, sponsorships, marketing, memberships, and fundraising initiatives etc. <i>(Also asked in Standard I.)</i>	
3. Similarly, community-wide individual and organizational stakeholders understand downtown's value and invest in the effort. <i>(Also asked in Standard I.)</i>	

B. The Main Street Program Has Sustainable Program Operations.

Key Indicators	Value (1=low to 5=high/strong)
1. The Main Street funding structure provides for balanced distribution of attention to all four points.	
2. Work aligns with financial capacity.	
3. A detailed budget is in place that adequately covers operations, including program personnel, office administration, financial management activities	
4. The budget adequately covers programming and activity expenses.	
5. The budget adequately covers professional development and training expenses.	
6. For city-based programs: The Main Street Board is kept apprised of and is familiar with the Main Street budget allocated through the City and related sources. They advocate for additional funding when needed.	
7. For city-based programs: If a separate fundraising or similar account is maintained under the authority of the City, the Main Street Board regularly reviews and manages it effectively, and, if applicable, effectively raises funds to support the program.	
8. For urban non-profits: The Main Street Board understands its responsibility for program finances, manages it effectively, and takes individual responsibility for fundraising/development.	
9. For urban non-profits: There has been an independent financial review in the last 12 months.	

Every other year, we alternate an Incentives/Tools Survey with an **Operations and Funding Survey**. The information is quite frequently requested as a reference tool for communities to set a budget for applying to Main Street (a required part of the application process); and for existing programs looking to increase or adapt their funding. **Please answer the following:**

Population



Length of time your city has been a designated Main Street community			
Length of time you have been in your position as a Main Street program manager			
The position			
Who do you report to (i.e. city manager)?			
Do you have other job titles (i.e. Historic Preservation Officer). If so, what are they?			
Do you find that you are effectively able to manage these additional job duties, given current funding and available time?			
Are you salaried or hourly?			
What is your annual salary/hourly pay?			
Do you have an assistant?			
If yes, what is the salary/hourly pay for your assistant?			
Benefits			
Are you covered by medical insurance from your employer?			
Do you have a pension from your employer?			
Do you have a car allowance?			
Do you have paid vacation?			
Do you earn comp time?			
If hourly, do you receive overtime?			
Other benefits?			
Program funding- OPERATIONS. Please indicate below the sources and amount that fund your program's basic OPERATIONS (i.e. salary, office, supplies, travel and training etc.)			
	Source	Amount	
	City General Fund		
	HOT funds (Hotel Occupancy Tax)		
	Economic Development (Type A or B?)		
	CDBG or other federal sources		
	Assessment district (TIRZ, PID etc.)		
	Foundations, grants, memberships and/or corporate donations (Please indicate which ones)		
	Other		
TOTAL OPERATING BUDGET			
Program funding: SPECIAL PROJECTS. Please indicate below the sources and amount that fund your program's SPECIAL PROJECTS (i.e. local grant program, events, etc.)			
	Source	Amount	What is funded? (i.e.improvement grant program)
	Economic Development (Type A or B?)		



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CDBG or other federal sources		
Assessment district (TIRZ, PID etc.)		
Foundations, grants, memberships and/or corporate donations <i>(Please indicate which ones)</i>		
Other		
TOTAL SPECIAL PROJECTS BUDGET		

We realize that budgets are unique to individual programs. Feel free to add notes here if needed.



STANDARD IV. STRATEGY-DRIVEN PROGRAMMING

Decades of experience implementing the Main Street Approach™ has demonstrated that building and sustaining a successful downtown effort is not a project, but an ongoing process that requires long-term commitment.

A. Main Street Has a **Vision** for the future of District and **Defined Strategic Direction** for the Program's Work.

Key Indicators	Value (1=low to 5=high/strong)
1. Feedback from district stakeholders is regularly collected.	
2. We have up-to-date district market, economic and demographic data.	
3. Our vision and mission (<i>outlined in Standard II-Leadership</i>) drives our work.	
4. To understand and act upon market opportunities, we have conducted a consumer survey in the last 2 years.	
5. To understand and act upon market opportunities, we have an up-to-date building and business inventory.	

B. Main Street's **Work Plan** is Aligned to Selected Strategies and the Main Street 4-Point Approach.

Key Indicators	Value (1=low to 5=high/strong)
1. We have a Plan of Work driven by market understanding.	
2. We are (<i>please indicate which one</i>) <u>exploring</u> / <u>have begun</u> / <u>have adopted</u> a Transformation Strategy plan of work.	
3. Our work plan has activities across all four points of the Approach.	

Please submit your current work plan as a separate document.



STANDARD V. PRESERVATION-BASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Main Street Program was developed with historic preservation at its core. A community's historic buildings and structures are some of its greatest assets to reflect the richness of its fabric and the strength of its character and to convey a unique and inviting sense of place. Consequently, preservation and rehabilitation should be a priority goal for all Main Street programs. Promoting a historic preservation-based program includes educating the public on their value and history to the community, as well as, working with businesses and property owners on appropriate improvements, uses and utilizing as possible the services of the TMSP design staff.

Key Indicators	Value (1=low to 5=high/strong)
1. There have been visible changes in the appearance of downtown over the last year through reinvestment activity and appropriate design work from façade and building rehabilitations, signage, awnings, maintenance etc. <i>(We will reference your reinvestment reports for this section.)</i>	
2. Downtown/the commercial district is listed in the National Register of Historic Places or eligible. If not, has this been previously explored?	
3. There is an educational program in place to build community awareness about the value of the district's historic assets and history.	
4. The community is a Certified Local Government, has a preservation ordinance, or the organization has design guidelines, based on the Secretary of Interior Standards, in place and applies them during reviews as applicable. <i>Please provide details.</i>	
5. We have a design review process that ensures appropriate preservation outcomes.	
6. There is a design review process. <i>(Mark as '3' if it only applies to projects receiving local grants; '5' if there is review for any work in the Main Street district.)</i>	
7. There is a recent business/property inventory. <i>(Also asked in Standard IV)</i>	
8. Volunteer leadership, staff seek out preservation-based training, whether in person, or through seminars, webinars etc. and as a result are confident in their understanding of basic concepts of historic preservation.	
9. Preservation-based economic incentives are in place to encourage appropriate improvements to historic resources in the district.	
10. Ordinances, activities and/or incentives have been put into place to address and target issues such as building underutilization, long-term vacancies, storage etc.	
11. We have not lost any historic resources/assets/properties in the district over the past 12 months.	
12. We are live on DowntownTX.org.	
13. We are actively working to become live on DowntownTX.org.	

From the information provided in your quarterly reinvestment reports, please submit several examples of design projects/building improvements that were completed during the last 12 months. Please provide below before/during/after images and a brief description of the work.



STANDARD VI. DEMONSTRATED IMPACT & RESULTS

Key Indicators	Value (1=low to 5=high/strong)
1. Reinvestment reports are submitted as required in the contract.	<i>Texas Main Street office will score this based on your report submissions.</i>
2. Reinvestment into the district during the year and over time indicates improvement is occurring.	
3. The Main Street program is recognized and valued locally as the driver of the revitalization effort and for the resulting contribution to quality of life.	
4. Downtown/the program/projects have been recognized with external awards, grants or designations over the year (i.e. Texas Downtown Association President's Awards, THC Texas Treasures awards for downtown businesses, Cultural District, Texas Capital Fund, etc.)	
5. Downtown is generally viewed as an active marketplace which the community supports.	
6. There are long-time businesses in downtown, providing evidence that there is a marketplace that can support them.	
7. Property values and market activity means that new businesses opening in our downtown are prepared for and capable of effectively running a business. 'Hobby' businesses have decreased over time.	
8. Property owners generally understand the inherent value of historic buildings and their responsibility to be good stewards of them.	
9. Property owners see a positive return on their investments.	
10. Downtown's occupancy rate has increased over time, including second floor uses.	
11. Downtown has destination businesses.	

Project profile/narrative. (Please provide a project/activity profile or brief narrative to elaborate.

