

## Historic Preservation IS Smart Growth

by Donovan Rypkema

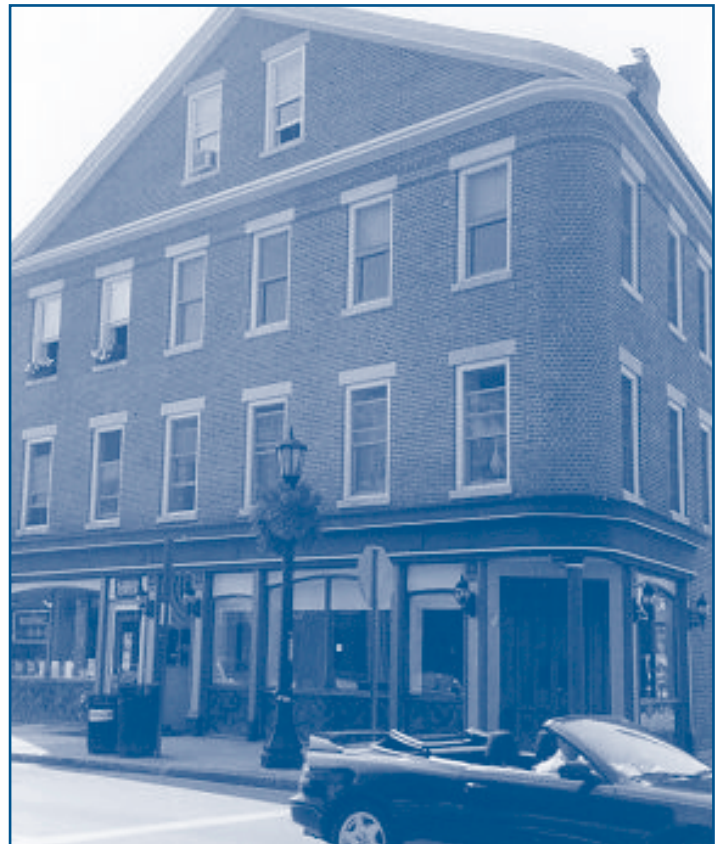
*The following speech was given by Mr. Rypkema at the Conference on Smart Growth, National Audubon Society of New York, March 3, 1999.*

I suspect for many of you “historic preservation” is the local group of retired librarians writing letters to the editor and struggling to raise funds to save the mansions of the local rich, dead white guy. Well thank god for those activists, those letters to the editor, those fund raising events, and even for those rich, dead, white guys, because the properties that have been saved are an important component of understanding ourselves as people and constitute an irreplaceable collection of the art of architecture and landscape architecture that has been created in our country’s relatively short history.

But that part of historic preservation - saving old mansions - represents an insignificant percentage of preservation activists today. In fact, in the last two decades, historic preservation has moved from an activity whose goal was an end in itself - save old buildings in order to save old buildings - to a broad based, multifaceted group of activities that uses our built heritage not as an end in itself but as a means to broader and, frankly more important ends. Here in New York State that has meant historic preservation as a means for downtown revitalization, neighborhood stabilization, attraction for tourism, job creation, film industry production, small town revitalization, affordable housing, luxury housing, education, transportation, and others. Saturday at the annual meeting of the Preservation League of New York State we are releasing the results of a study conducted over the past year identifying the multitude of ways that historic preservation contributes to the economy of the state of New York.

But I’m not here today to talk about mansions or about economic development. I’m here to suggest that historic preservation, in and of itself, is one of the most important tools in the entire Smart Growth movement. I’ll title my remarks, “Twenty Reasons in Twelve Minutes why Historic Preservation IS Smart Growth.” And here, in no particular order, are those reasons:

**Reason One:** Public Infrastructure. Almost without exception **historic buildings are where public infrastructure already exists.** No new water lines, sewer lines, streets, curbs, gutters required. That’s Smart Growth.



*Hygienic Arts Building on Bank Street in New London.*

**Reason Two:** Municipalities need financial resources if they are going to grow smart. Vacant, unused, and underused historic buildings brought back to life are also brought back as **tax generating assets for a community.** That’s Smart Growth.

**Reason Three:** New activities - residential, retail, office, manufacturing - in historic buildings inherently **reinforces the viability of public transportation.** That’s Smart Growth.

**Reason Four:** If we are to expect citizens to use their cars less, and use their feet more, that the physical environment within which they live, work, shop and play needs to have a **pedestrian rather than vehicular orientation.** That’s Smart Growth.

**Reason Five:** Another element in the drive to encourage human movement by means other than the automobile is the

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# HISTORIC PRESERVATION *IS* SMART GROWTH — continued from page 1



*LaSalle Music on Main Street in East Hartford.*

interconnection of uses. Based on the foolishness of post World War II planning and development patterns, uses have been sharply separated. Historic neighborhoods were built from the beginning with a mix of uses in close proximity. Cities with the foresight to **readjust their zoning ordinances to encourage integration of uses** are seeing that interconnectivity reemerging in historic areas. That's Smart Growth.

**Reason Six:** As a strong proponent of economic development I am certainly glad the phrase is Smart Growth as opposed to no growth. Smart Growth suggests that growth has positive benefits and I would agree that is true. At the same time we cannot say we are having smart growth - regardless of how well it is physically planned - if at the same time we are abandoning existing assets. **The encouraged reinvestment in historic areas in and of itself revitalizes and revalues the nearby existing investment of both the public and private sector.** That's Smart Growth.

**Reason Seven:** We see periodic headlines about some real or imagined "Back to the City" movement. Certainly people moving back to the core of a town or city of any size have a positive impact on a whole range of environmental goals. Well, across America, and in many places here in New York State, people are indeed moving "back to the city." But almost nowhere is it back to the city in general. In nearly every instance it is back to the historic neighborhoods and historic buildings within the city. We do need to **pay attention to market patterns**, and if it is back to historic neighborhoods to which people are moving, we need to **keep those neighborhoods viable** for that to happen. That's Smart Growth.

**Reason Eight:** Smart Growth ought to imply not just physical growth but economic growth. And economic growth means new jobs. But who is creating the net new jobs in America? Not General Motors, or IBM, or Kodak. **85% of all net new jobs in America are created by small businesses.** And for most small businesses there are few costs that are controllable, but there is one - occupancy. Barring massive public subsidies, you cannot build new and rent cheap. **Older and historic**

**buildings often provide the affordable rent that allows small businesses to get started.** That's Smart Growth.

**Reason Nine: Business districts are sustainably successful when there is a diversity of businesses.** And that diverse business mix requires a diverse range of rental rates. Only in downtowns and older commercial neighborhoods is there such a diversity. Try finding any rental rate diversity in the regional shopping center or the so-called office park. There ain't none. Older business districts with their diverse rents are Smart Growth.

**Reason Ten:** Smart Growth ought to be about jobs. Let me distinguish new construction from rehabilitation in terms of creating jobs. As a general rule new construction is 50 percent labor and 50 percent materials. Rehabilitation, on the other hand, is 60 to 70 percent labor. While we buy an HVAC system from Ohio, sheetrock from Texas and timber from Oregon, we buy the services of the carpenter and plumber, painter and electrician from across the street. They subsequently spend that paycheck for a hair cut, membership in the local Y and a new car, resulting in a **significantly greater local economic impact dollar for dollar than new construction.** The rehabilitation of older structures is Smart Growth.

**Reason Eleven:** Solid waste landfill is expensive in both dollars and environmental quality. Sixty to sixty-five percent of most landfill sites are made up of construction debris. And much of that waste comes from the razing of existing structures. **Preserving instead of demolishing our inventory of historic buildings reduces that construction waste.** Preserving instead of demolishing our inventory of historic buildings is Smart Growth.

**Reason Twelve:** Its critics have pointed out that the so-called New Urbanism is neither new nor urban. But I don't think anyone here would dispute that in most instances, at least, New Urbanist development is fully compatible with the goals of Smart Growth. I would argue that **New Urbanism reflects good urban design principles. But those principles have already been at work for a century or more in our historic neighborhoods.** The sensitive renewal of those neighborhoods is Smart Growth. So are you starting to get the picture? Let me be briefer with the rest of the list.

**Reason Thirteen:** Smart Growth advocates a **density of use. Historic residential and commercial neighborhoods are built to be dense.**

**Reason Fourteen:** Historic buildings themselves are not liabilities as often seen by public and private sector demolition advocates, but **are assets not yet returned to productive use.**

**Reason Fifteen:** The rehabilitation of older and historic neighborhoods is **putting jobs where the workers already are.**

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# Meet Our Main Street Program Managers

## SPOTLIGHT

A retired attorney and former police officer, Marlene Dougherty was hired by *Friends of Main Street* in Winsted to coordinate the group's efforts in the revitalization of their historic downtown. Being an effective Main Street Manager takes a variety of skills - "and I'm using many of them now in the early stages," she says.

Raised in Plainville and a 15-year resident of Winsted, Marlene says she sees physical revitalization of the downtown's buildings as a primary focus. "The downtown has a lot of beautiful buildings. Many of them need to be rehabilitated", she says. Marlene already knows first-hand about rehabilitating old structures, having spent several years bringing back to life three different homes she has bought and lived in. She is now rehabbing her home on High Street in Winsted.

In conjunction with that, the new Main Street manager says she believes the town needs to maintain a positive outlook for the future. As a result of the devastating hurricane and flood of 1955, virtually the entire south side of Main Street within the downtown area was washed away and never rebuilt. Total damage was estimated at over \$28 million! In their 2001 application to Connecticut Main Street Center, *Friends of Main Street* listed one of the community's liabilities as having an "image of an old mill town that has not recovered from the 1955 flood". "But that attitude is beginning to change," Marlene comments. "People are beginning to move forward. The community's attitude toward commercial district revitalization is that of great optimism tempered with a concern to retain what is unique and special about our downtown."



*Connecticut Main Street Center is generously sponsored by  
The Connecticut Light and Power Company and the  
State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development.*

## Connecticut Main Street Managers

### East Hartford

Main Street Plus, Inc.  
Donna Kehoe  
860-282-7577

### Middletown

Main Street Middletown, Inc.  
Terry Concannon  
860-347-1424  
middletown.main.st@snet.net

### New London

New London Main Street Corp.  
Penny Parsekian  
860-444-2489  
ppnlms@snet.net  
www.newlondonmainstreet.org

### Portland

Portland - P.R.I.D.E  
Elizabeth Swenson  
860-342-6798  
ebswenson@aol.com  
www.PortlandPride.org

### Rockville

The Rockville Downtown Association  
Luise S. Ernest  
860-870-3561  
rdaCT@hotmail.com  
www.vernonct.org/rda

### Simsbury

Simsbury Main Street Partnership  
860-651-8577  
Simmaint@aol.com

### Upper Albany (Hartford)

Upper Albany Main Street  
Marilyn L. Risi  
860-727-9830  
risi@mail.hartford.edu

### Windsor

First Town Downtown  
Katie Breen  
860-683-8410  
info@firsttowndowntown.org  
www.firsttowndowntown.org

### Winsted

Friends of Main Street  
Marlene Dougherty, Program Manager  
860-738-3351  
friendsmst@snet.net

To visit any Connecticut Main Street Community's website, go to [www.ctmainstreet.org](http://www.ctmainstreet.org), and follow the links





## Bloomfield Selected as a Connecticut Main Street Community

**L**ieutenant Governor M. Jodi Rell joined representatives from CMSC and the Town of Bloomfield in a public ceremony in December 2001 to announce that Bloomfield has been selected as the newest Connecticut Main Street Community.

“Through this program and other revitalization efforts, the vitality and importance of Bloomfield’s Town Center will be restored and an important part of Bloomfield’s history will be retained.” she said. In speaking of CMSC, Lt. Governor Rell said, “In the five years the program has been in existence, ten communities have joined the Connecticut Main Street program and \$101 million in public and private funds have been reinvested into these downtowns. It’s obviously a great program that brings about great results - Bloomfield will soon see its own results.”

Douglas Fisher, Manager of Economic Development for The Connecticut Light and Power Company (CL&P) described the Connecticut Main Street initiative as

“the cornerstone of our community development efforts.” CL&P and the state of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) are major sponsors of CMSC.

To be accepted into the program, communities must demonstrate that they have: broad-based community support for commercial district revitalization, a commitment to Main Street’s comprehensive approach to revitalization and a commitment and resources to hire a professional program manager. CMSC Board Chair Jack Shannahan states, “Bloomfield is ready. They have already demonstrated evidence of widespread community and corporate support that can add value to the overall revitalization of their commercial district. A local Main Street program can help coordinate, leverage and add value to what is already happening with new initiatives, a comprehensive work plan and an inclusive approach.”



## Portland Manager Selected for National Certification Institute

**P**PRIDE Executive Director, Liz Swenson, has been accepted into The Main Street Certification Institute in Professional Downtown Management. This program of the National Main Street Center provides advanced-level training and certification to experienced professionals in the Main Street Four-Point Approach to commercial district revitalization.

Two of the four units are taught each year at the headquarters of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in Washington, D.C. This year the institute focus is Main Street Organizational Development and Promotion. In 2003, the focus will be on Economic Development and Design. Students must pass a

written exam at the end of each unit. In order to receive certification, students must complete all four units of the curriculum and receive passing scores on all exams.

PRIDE, Portland Revitalization, Inc., is working with community groups and individual volunteers and businesses and the Town of Portland to revitalize Portland’s Main Street. PRIDE is working to create a more pedestrian friendly environment for the whole community as well as providing technical assistance to businesses to encourage their success. Portland was designated a Connecticut Main Street Community in 2000.

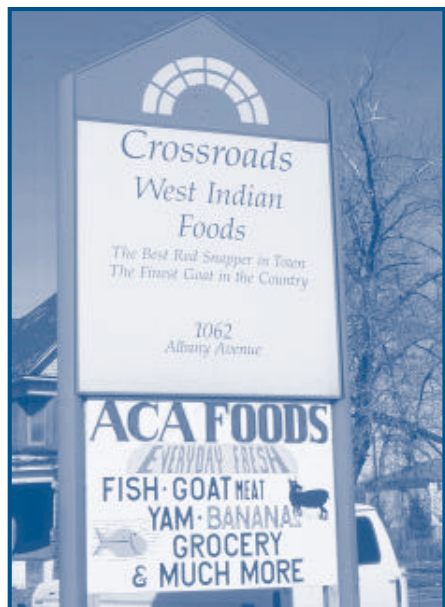




## Shopping on Connecticut's Main Streets

*No matter what you're looking for, chances are you can find it on Main Street!*

*A sample of the vibrant and unique shopping experiences that can be found in Connecticut Main Street Communities:*



*Specialty food shopping in Upper Albany.*

### **Amanda's Specialty Gifts, LLC**

**224 Main Street, Portland CT 06480**

**Phone: 860-342-4647**

**Renee L. Ghent, Owner; Suzanne Schultz, Store Manager**

*Amanda's is a gourmet food and specialty gift store.*

*We specialize in custom gift baskets and offer worldwide shipping.*

*Amanda's is the place to find elegant and quality products.*

### **Evay Day Spa and Beauty Salon**

**1463-1465 Albany Avenue, Hartford CT 06112**

**Phone: 860-724-0606**

**Naomi Forde & Vivian Akuoko, Owners**

*Evay Day Spa & Beauty Salon (formerly known as It's My Hair) is a full service hair salon that has expanded and now offers a full menu of massages, facials, manicures & pedicures, body waxing and the total relaxation of mind and body.*

## Shopping on Connecticut's Main Streets

As part of a feature in an upcoming issue of *CT's Main Streets*, we would like to highlight your business as an example of the vibrant, unique shopping experiences that can be found in designated Connecticut Main Street communities.

Please provide us with the information below by faxing this completed sheet to 860-280-2487.

**Name of Business:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Name and Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Owner:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Website:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of Business (25 words or less):** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Reinvestment in Connecticut's Main Streets tops \$114 million

In its bi-annual survey of Connecticut Main Street communities actively involved in revitalizing their historic downtowns and neighborhood districts, the Connecticut Main Street Center (CMSC) has found compelling evidence of the continuing economic rebound of historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts in Main Street Communities across the state.

Since the CMSC program began in 1995, participating communities have generated over \$114 million in public and private reinvestment in their downtowns. Over the same time, 168 net new businesses have opened and 1,231 net new jobs have been created. This represents \$40.74 of reinvestment for every \$1 spent on a local Main Street program, making the Main Street initiative one of the most successful economic development programs in the country. Since December 2001, the town of Bloomfield has been accepted into the Connecticut Main Street program, joining the current towns of East

Hartford, Middletown, New London, Portland, Rockville, Simsbury, Upper Albany, Windsor and Winsted

Kent Burnes, a nationally recognized consultant in downtown revitalization, recently engaged to work with Connecticut Main Street communities, provided some perspective on positive trends relating to downtowns during a presentation in New London. Underscoring how downtowns and commercial neighborhoods have been contributing to the overall economy, Mr. Burnes stated: "in the last 10 years, 87% of all job growth has been in companies with 20 or fewer employees while Fortune 1000 companies have actually experienced a net loss in jobs over the last 50 years." He continued, "Downtowns have been, and will continue to be, great incubators for small and locally-owned businesses that, in aggregate, are a clear pillar of our overall economy."



## CMSC Awarded UTC Grant

Connecticut Main Street Center is pleased to report it has been awarded a grant of \$5,000 from United Technologies Corporation (UTC) in support of Main Street Technical Assistance to designated Connecticut Main Street organizations.

The Connecticut Main Street Center is a non-profit organization devoted to the revitalization of Connecticut's downtown districts. By spurring economic development within the context of historic preservation, CMSC can help town centers and commercial neighborhoods once more become thriving centers of commercial and social activity. CMSC's core strategic initiatives are helping current Main Street communities succeed, preparing prospective Main Street communities to gain acceptance into

the program and becoming an advocate for the Main Street Approach and how it complements other land-use, planning and growth initiatives at the local, state and national levels.

Connecticut Main Street Center's major sponsors are The Connecticut Light and Power Company and the State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development.

CMSC reminds all non-profit organizations that wish to apply for a 2003 UTC grant that they must apply online. The 2003 grant application will be available on the UTC Internet site, [www.utc.com](http://www.utc.com), between March 1 and June 1, 2002.

# GREAT WEBSITES

Connecticut Light & Power Company ..... [www.cl-p.com](http://www.cl-p.com)  
 State of CT Department of Economic & Community  
 Development ..... [www.decd.org](http://www.decd.org)  
 State of Connecticut ..... [www.state.ct.us](http://www.state.ct.us)  
 Connecticut General Assembly ..... [www.ega.state.ct.us](http://www.ega.state.ct.us)  
 National Main Street Center ..... [www.mainst.org](http://www.mainst.org)  
 National Trust For Historic Preservation ..... [www.nthp.org](http://www.nthp.org)

## Resources:

### Economic Restructuring / Business Development

American Demographics . . . [www.inside.com/default.asp?entity=AmericanDemo](http://www.inside.com/default.asp?entity=AmericanDemo)  
 Claritas ..... [www.claritas.com](http://www.claritas.com)  
 Connecticut Dept. of Economic & Community Development . . . [www.decd.org](http://www.decd.org)  
 Connecticut Department of Labor ..... [www.ctdol.state.ct.us](http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us)  
 Connecticut Development Authority ..... [www.state.ct.us/cda](http://www.state.ct.us/cda)  
 Connecticut Economic Resource Center ..... [www.cerc.com](http://www.cerc.com)  
 Connecticut Innovations ..... [www.ctinnovations.com/site/home.html](http://www.ctinnovations.com/site/home.html)  
 Connecticut Small Business Development Center ..... [www.sbdc.uconn.edu](http://www.sbdc.uconn.edu)  
 International Council of Shopping Centers ..... [www.icsc.org](http://www.icsc.org)  
 Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) ..... [www.liscnet.org](http://www.liscnet.org)  
 Office of Secretary of the State ..... [www.sots.state.ct.us](http://www.sots.state.ct.us)  
 Service Corps Of Retired Executives (SCORE) ..... [www.score.org](http://www.score.org)  
 Small Business Administration ..... [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

### Design

American Planning Association ..... [www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org)  
 American Society of Landscape Architects ..... [www.asla.org](http://www.asla.org)  
 BOCA International (Building Codes) ..... [www.bocai.org/index.html](http://www.bocai.org/index.html)  
 Connecticut Historical  
 Commission . . . [http://archnet.asu.edu/archnet/uconn\\_extras/crm/conn/ctshpo.html](http://archnet.asu.edu/archnet/uconn_extras/crm/conn/ctshpo.html)  
 Connecticut Rural Development Council / Center for Village  
 Design Program . . . [www.ruralct.org/docs/village\\_center\\_design\\_project\\_pr.htm](http://www.ruralct.org/docs/village_center_design_project_pr.htm)  
 Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation ..... [www.cttrust.org](http://www.cttrust.org)  
 National Park Service ..... [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)  
 Project for Public Spaces ..... [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org)  
 Regional Planning Association ..... [www.rpa.org](http://www.rpa.org)

State of CT Department of Transportation ..... [www.dot.state.ct.us](http://www.dot.state.ct.us)  
 The American Institute of Architects, CT Chapter ..... [www.aiact.org](http://www.aiact.org)  
 Town Greens ..... [www.towngreens.com](http://www.towngreens.com)  
 Transportation for Livable Communities ..... [www.tlcnetwork.org](http://www.tlcnetwork.org)  
 Urban Land Institute ..... [www.uli.org](http://www.uli.org)  
 Walkable Communities, Inc. .... [www.walkable.org](http://www.walkable.org)  
 Yale Urban Design Workshop ..... [www.yale.edu/udw/udw.html](http://www.yale.edu/udw/udw.html)

### Promotion

Allen Consulting, Inc. .... [www.allenconsulting.com](http://www.allenconsulting.com)  
 International Special Events Society ..... [www.ises.com](http://www.ises.com)  
 Promotion Link ..... [www.promotionlink.com](http://www.promotionlink.com)  
 Schallert & Associates, Inc. .... [www.Retail-USA.com](http://www.Retail-USA.com)  
 Special Events Magazine ..... [www.specialevents.com](http://www.specialevents.com)

### Organization

Center for Community Change ..... [www.communitychange.org](http://www.communitychange.org)  
 Connecticut Association of Nonprofits ..... [www.ctnonprofits.org](http://www.ctnonprofits.org)  
 Connecticut Council for Philanthropy ..... [www.ctphilanthropy.org](http://www.ctphilanthropy.org)  
 Foundation Center ..... <http://fdncenter.org>  
 Fund Raiser Cyberzine ..... [www.fundraiser.com](http://www.fundraiser.com)  
 Grants Hotline ..... <http://grants hotline.com>  
 Hartford Foundation for Public Giving ..... [www.hfpg.org](http://www.hfpg.org)  
 United Way of the Capital Area ..... [www.uwcaact.org](http://www.uwcaact.org)  
 U.S. Census Bureau ..... [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

## Check Out Our Local Main Street Websites

**New London Main Street Corp.**  
[www.newlondonmainstreet.org](http://www.newlondonmainstreet.org)

**Portland-P.R.I.D.E.**  
[www.PortandPride.org](http://www.PortandPride.org)

**Rockville Downtown Association**  
[www.vernonct.com/rda](http://www.vernonct.com/rda)

**First Town Downtown (Windsor)**  
[www.firsttowndowntown.org](http://www.firsttowndowntown.org)

## and the new CMSC website!

[www.ctmainstreet.org](http://www.ctmainstreet.org)

## Announcing the Connecticut Main Street Center website!

Log onto [www.ctmainstreet.org](http://www.ctmainstreet.org) to learn the latest about the revitalization of Connecticut's town centers and neighborhood commercial districts.

Our new website tells you about CMSC, how to become a Main Street Community, lists the services we provide. You can also link to over 100 resources in downtown revitalization and download a copy of this newsletter, *CT's Main Streets*.

**[www.ctmainstreet.org](http://www.ctmainstreet.org)**



## ATTENTION MAIN STREET COMMUNITIES!

Has your town recently been featured in articles in local publications? Please send CMSC a copy! We want to know how your program is being covered in the media and would love to share this coverage with our readers!

# How to Become a Main Street Community

*An outline of the steps a community needs to take to be accepted into the Connecticut Main Street Program, through the successful completion of the first year.*

## Main Street Works When You: Investigate

- Contact CMSC staff to find out how the program works.

## Host a Tour

- Invite CMSC staff to tour your downtown or commercial neighborhood district, followed by a meeting with 5 or so key stakeholders representing both the public and private sectors.

## Organize

- Formulate a steering committee of 10 or more stakeholders (public and private) to organize and complete the application process and to educate and mobilize the community at large.
- Host a "Town Meeting" in your community, conducted by CMSC staff, to provide an overview of the Main Street program and to gauge the level of community-wide support to begin a Main Street program locally. This meeting should be attended by 25-50 stakeholders representing a diverse cross-section of the community, including residents, local industries and corporations, professionals,

business and property owners, elected officials and town staff, financial institutions, civic groups, historic preservation organizations, etc.

- If your community decides to apply, send CMSC a Letter of Intent to apply to the program signed by the top public official and a private sector community leader from the steering committee.

## Attend

- At least 2 or 3 representatives from the steering committee (representing both public and private sectors) attend CMSC's application workshop. This is mandatory to be considered for acceptance in the current year.

## Apply

- Submit application
- Start (or continue) raising funds for the first year of operation of your Main Street organization.
- Finalist candidates will be invited to bring five people from the steering committee to make an in-person presentation to the selection committee. This usually occurs three weeks after the application is due.

- Applicants are notified whether their applications have been accepted or declined within one month of the due date.

## The Work of Revitalizing Your Downtown Begins!

*First-year activities for successful applicants:*

### Announcement & Formation of local Main Street organization

- Steering committee and CMSC hold a **press conference** in your town to announce the selection of your community by the Connecticut Main Street Center (CMSC).
- **Letter of agreement** is signed by top public official, a private representative from the steering committee and CMSC outlining respective roles and responsibilities for the coming year.
- Steering committee **establishes the local Main Street organization** (certificate of incorporation, by laws, board of directors, application to become a non-profit agency, program manager hired, office established, committees established and chairs & members identified).

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# REVITALIZE 'YOUR' DOWNTOWN!

## Benefits of a Local Main Street Program

- Enhances community pride and quality of life
- Preserves and creates jobs
- Enhances industrial, commercial and professional development
- Increases collaboration between public and private sectors in order to attain common goals
- Bolsters property values throughout the community
- Grows existing businesses, attracts new businesses, and reinforces other economic development activities
- Protects and nurtures the historic assets in downtown
- Increases the tax base by developing vacant and underutilized buildings to higher and better uses
- Leverages significant reinvestment in downtown: Connecticut Main Street communities have generated over \$114 million in public and private reinvestment in their downtowns since the program began in 1996. This represents \$40.74 of reinvestment for every \$1 spent on a local Main Street program.





## HOW TO BECOME A MAIN STREET COMMUNITY — continued from page 8

- CMSC facilitates **Main Street Board Development Training and Program Manager orientation.**

### Strategic Planning Process

- Strategic planning workshop conducted by CMSC for board, program manager, key stakeholders and volunteers (**12 hours - 2 consecutive days. Attendance required by board, program manager and 5-10 stakeholders from both the public and private sector.**)

### Volunteer and Staff Development & Training

- **Workplan development and committee training** conducted by CMSC.
- **Committee Chair Roundtable.**

- Committees complete and board approves **workplans.**
- Board President and Program Manager **attend regularly scheduled CMSC meetings.**
- Attend National Town Meeting on Main Street, the National Main Street Center's annual conference (annually, in April).
- **Ongoing workshops and seminars** - CMSC hosts a number of events for the board, program manager and volunteers from all the Main Street communities that will continue to build attendees' revitalization skills.

### Program Assessment

- **First Year Program Assessment** - Near the end of the first full year,

CMSC staff and outside consultants will spend an intensive four days in the community meeting with all stakeholders, the board, committees and program manager. This visit will result in a report that will provide an outside perspective from downtown revitalization specialists addressing:

- First year activities and accomplishments
- Recommendations based on opportunities that exist and the community's capacity to respond
- Strategies, goals and projects for the coming year



## HISTORIC PRESERVATION *IS* SMART GROWTH — continued from page 2

**Reason Sixteen:** Around the country **historic preservation is the one form of economic development that is simultaneously community development.**

**Reason Seventeen:** Reinvigorating historic neighborhoods **reinforces existing schools and allows them to recapture their important educational, social and cultural role on a neighborhood level.**

**Reason Eighteen:** **No new land is consumed when rehabilitating a historic building.**

**Reason Nineteen:** The diversity of housing sites, qualities, styles and characteristics of historic neighborhoods stands in sharp contrast to the monolithic character of current subdivisions. **The diversity of housing options means a diversity of human beings who can live in historic neighborhoods.**

**Reason Twenty:** Historic preservation constitutes a demand side approach to Smart Growth. I'm not at all opposed to acquiring greenbelts around cities or development rights on agricultural properties. Those are certainly important and valuable tools in a comprehensive Smart Growth strategy. But they only reduce the supply of land to be developed - they do not address the demand for the use of that land. The conversion of a historic warehouse into 40 residential units reduces the demand for ten acres of farmland. The economic revitalization of Main Street reduces the demand for another strip center. The restoration of an empty 1920's skyscraper reduces the demand for another glass and chrome building a the office park. Again, **I don't mean to be remotely critical of supply side strategies, but without demand side responses their successes will be limited at best.**

Finally, I think most of you would acknowledge that Maryland is among the states leading the way in creating comprehensive Smart Growth policies. Many of you are probably familiar with the publication, *Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation: A Legacy for Our Children*, which enumerates forty-seven specific policy initiatives to encourage Smart Growth. I went through the entire list, and here's what I found: of the forty-seven initiatives, historic preservation was a key component in thirty-two of them. But even more importantly, if communities had a strong historic preservation strategy, the goals of 44 of the 47 are automatically met. Historic Preservation IS Smart Growth. For years activists in the historic preservation movement have said, "We need to get closer to the environmentalists. They've been successful in raising public consciousness about the issues, and getting legislation put into place to advance those aims." I have no quarrel with that strategy. But I would suggest to you environmentalists, that your strong support for historic preservation in your communities would, in and of itself, significantly advance your environmental goals. Further, I would suggest that **a Smart Growth approach that does not include historic preservation high on the agenda is not only missing a valuable strategy, but, like the historic buildings themselves, an irreplaceable one.**

*Donovan Rypkema is principal of Place Economics, a Washington DC based economic development consulting firm. Permission to reprint the text of this address was granted by Mr. Rypkema and The Alliance Review, the newsletter of The National Alliance of Preservation Commissions.*



## DOES YOUR PROMOTIONAL CALANDAR NEED A BOOST?

*Are some of your events growing stale? Are you struggling to come up with new ideas to promote downtown's image? Here's a quick look at some activities that have been successful in communities around the country. Use them to stimulate your promotion committee's imagination.*

*Image-building activities help combat negative perceptions and promote positive image of various aspects of downtown:*

### ⇨ "100 Good Things Going in Downtown Buffalo"

In 1994, Buffalo Place, Inc., began a public relations campaign to heighten awareness of downtown and gather positive feedback about the district from western New Yorkers. Contestants were asked to describe their favorite thing about downtown in 10 words or less.

### ⇨ Art Gallery Guides

Do you have a strong mix of art galleries in your community? Consider developing an "Art Gallery" guide that highlights each gallery in your town. Include a map of gallery locations and a brief description of each gallery's specialties, the owner's name, and the hours.

### ⇨ "The Owner is Home" Ad Campaign

Are a majority of your businesses locally owned and operated? An "Owner is Home" ad campaign, such as the one put together by Franklin, VA (and Windsor CT!), can emphasize the positive aspects of local business ownership and its importance to the community.

### ⇨ Viroqua's "Got Milk" Annual Campaign

Viroqua, WI has developed a series of image ads based on the "Got Milk?" advertising campaign. This year's campaign focused on Viroqua's road construction project and featured road crews in full "milk mustache" under humorous slogans, such as "The Dirt & Dust, the Mud & Crud...Got Milk!?"

### ⇨ Downtown Magazine

Main Street Enid (Okla.) produced and circulated a four-color magazine appropriately called "Main Street Enid" to more than 20,000 residents of northwest Oklahoma free of charge. The magazine, which is more than 30 pages long, features the history of downtown Enid and showcases projects, people, and success stories of downtown merchants, business owners, and volunteers.

*Retail/business activities promote the goods and services offered downtown and serve to generate immediate sales:*

### ⇨ Downtown Gift Certificates

Designed to increase sales, downtown gift certificates are used in Main Street towns throughout the country. You can give them fun names like "Downtown Dollars" or "Main Street Bucks." Typically, a Main Street program will work with a

local bank which will offer the certificates in denominations of \$5, \$10, \$20, etc. Businesses voluntarily sign up to accept the certificates, which can be redeemed just like checks.

⇨ **Student Passport to Downtown Walla Walla** Downtown Walla Walla's "Student Passport" is a promotional card created specifically for college students. It encourages them to explore downtown by offering significant savings at participating businesses.

### ⇨ Thank You for "Just Looking"

Are your merchants trying to find a way to turn "just lookers" into buyers? Consider printing non-negotiable coupons that say: "Thank You for 'Just Looking'! I am sorry you were unable to find exactly what you were looking for today but your visit to our store was greatly appreciated! Please take this coupon as a gift for coming by. Bring it on your next visit's worth \$5.00 off the purchase of any item valued at \$20 or more!"

### ⇨ "Fashionable Collinsville Corsets to Catsup" Fashion Show

Highlighting both its business community and its heritage, Downtown Collinsville (Ill.) held a fund raiser that showcased women's fashions from 1900 to the present and netted the program \$2,400. A narrator, dressed in tails, read a carefully scripted history of fashion while male escorts conducted each model from the stage to the audience. Lavish desserts, professionally prepared, were served to the audience before the show began.

*Special events and festivals attract people down- town to have a good time and enjoy a festive atmosphere. The purpose of these events is to generate eventual, not immediate, business for the commercial district. Consequently, they are not sales or discount-oriented.*

### ⇨ Victorian Festival

Want to generate increased tourist traffic during the off-season? Create a multi-day festival based on your local history. Port Townsend, a seaport in Washington State, took advantage of its Victorian heritage by creating an annual event that showcases restoration, renovation, crafts, hobbies, and designs of that period through a collection of workshops. The festival also features entertainment and special activities to immerse participants in the spirit of the era.

### ⇨ Cool Cars Under the Stars

Elmhurst City Centre, Ill., sponsors a classic, antique, and collectible car show every Wednesday night, June through September, in a downtown bank parking lot. Each Wednesday has a different theme. Surveys taken during the event show that it is reaching its target market of people over 35 with incomes over \$50,000. Businesses now remain open on

*continued on page 11*

# DOES YOUR PROFESSIONAL CALANDAR NEED A BOOST? — continued from page 10

Wednesday nights, and downtown restaurants report that business has increased more than 20 percent.

## ➔ American Pie Day

With January 23 officially designated as American Pie Day, Belleville (Ill.) Main Street merchants were asked to make pies for customers to sample while visiting their stores. The recipes were compiled in a booklet, with one ingredient missing from each pie. Customers could get the missing ingredients by visiting the businesses and sampling the pies. And, since it was January, many shops also treated pie-eaters to hot chocolate!

## ➔ Downtown Tour

The Main Street program in Paris, Tenn., researched each building in the historic downtown area and produced an

audiotaped walking tour of the district.

## ➔ Letters to the Editor

A community in Pennsylvania re-searched all of the local newspaper's letters to the editor during the town's entire 200-year history. A playwright compiled the letters into a play, which drew sell-out crowds and attracted national publicity.

*By Sheri Stuart, Program Associate, NMSC, and Susan Kempf, State Coordinator, Washington Downtown Revitalization Program. Excerpted from the April 2000 issue of Main Street News, with permission of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street Center.*



## As you add new events and activities to your promotion calendar, remember to:

- Start small and build on your successes.
- Strive for quality in all that you do.
- Strategize when to hold an event, how to reach your target market, and how to handle specific issues.
- Try to achieve a balance among the three main types of promotions: special events, image building activities, and retail promotions. Be clear about the purpose and expectations for each activity: for example, explain to business owners that a festival may not bring them an immediate increase in sales.
- Draw up a work plan for each activity - no exceptions!
- Evaluate every promotion. If possible, quantify the impact of each activity in terms of volunteer hours, number of attendees, increases in retail sales, etc.
- Document each event or activity; keep a folder that includes notes, the work plan, volunteer list, budget, photos, and an evaluation summary.



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*“A city should be a place with such beauty and order that it is inspirational. A key component of urban design is a belief in the value of the public realm, which every citizen owns. If we are a nation where all the nest zones are privately owned, then what we own together as citizens is not very much. The greatest cities are those with the most beautiful public places...”*



*The Drummer Boy in Bloomfield's Town Center.*



*Windsor Town Hall in Windsor Center.*

*There is no excuse for anything to ever be built that does not add to the beauty of a city. Every investment in beauty yields an economic payoff. If you build beautiful places—whether they are parks, parking garages, or public housing—the land next to these places becomes more successful. They become catalytic agents to generate economic activity.”*

*-Joseph P. Riley, Jr.  
Mayor of Charleston, SC*



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