



## Connecticut Main Street Center Program Description

At Connecticut Main Street Center we help inspire great Connecticut downtowns, Main Street by Main Street. We serve as the champion and leading resource for vibrant and sustainable Main Streets as foundations for healthy communities. We bring historic downtowns throughout Connecticut back to life by strengthening our downtowns and village centers. At the local level, we share our expertise and give people the tools to create powerful partnerships and vibrant communities. At the state level, we are the voice for programs and policies that advance the Main Street way of life in Connecticut.

CT Main Street Center offers programs and services in response to the needs of communities across the state by:

- Providing technical expertise, resources and support so that local coalitions can revitalize their main street districts. The approach is comprehensive, incremental and action-oriented.
- Engaging in and encouraging advocacy among its member communities and other partners to address relevant public policy issues;
- Being a one-stop resource for communities engaging in mixed use / mixed income town center development.

CT Main Street Center follows a proven national model called the Main Street Four Point Approach to Downtown Revitalization™, successful in 46 states and 1,800 communities, which addresses the restoration of each of these values, simultaneously:

- *Organization - Restoring the civic value of downtown*, by building consensus and cooperation among groups that play a role in the downtown.
- *Promotion - Restoring the social value of downtown*, through branding (creating a positive image of downtown), retail promotions, and special events.
- *Design - Restoring the physical value of downtown*, through both new and rehabilitation construction and through the design of public spaces that will attract more people to walk and gather on a regular basis.
- *Economic Restructuring - Restoring the economic value of downtown*, by diversifying it with an appropriate mix of current and new businesses suitable for the given marketplace.

We are guided by our Core Values:

- Encouraging civic engagement;
- Place-making, preservation of historic buildings and places, and enlivening of the public realm;
- Main Streets that thrive with a mix of uses, incomes and cultures; and
- Responsible policies integrating land use, housing, transportation and energy.

c/o CL&P ▪ P.O. Box 270 ▪ Hartford, CT 06141  
860.280.2337 ▪ [www.ctmainstreet.org](http://www.ctmainstreet.org)

## Education & Training

CT Main Street Center established the Downtown Revitalization Institute to provide advanced training in the Main Street Four Point Approach™ to Downtown Revitalization. Whether you're an elected official, professional staff, or a Main Street volunteer, education and training are important components in any successful main street revitalization program. You can find the training and networking you're looking for right here!

Each quarter CT Main Street Center's Downtown Revitalization Institute presents a different workshop which addresses pertinent issues. These workshops are presented by experts in the subject and the workshop format includes working sessions and time for participant questions and exchange. Networking with others interested in downtown revitalization and development is a valuable component of the workshops, and networking meals are provided to encourage informal dialogue.

## Resources & Technical Assistance

CT Main Street Center is the statewide resource for technical assistance to Connecticut downtowns. We provide training and support using the expertise of our board, our partners and national consultants. Some of the fee-based assistance we offer includes:

- Capacity Building: partnership development, funding strategies, engaging community
- Urban Design & Placemaking: vision & master planning, Complete Streets, façade improvement, design guidelines
- Downtown Economic Development: small business improvement & attraction, mixed-use redevelopment strategies, market analysis
- Marketing, Branding & Promotion: image development, promoting the district

## Public Policy & Advocacy

CT Main Street Center is an active participant in public decisions that affect our communities. Working with our partners, we analyze problems, seek solutions, collaborate for positive change, and advocate for Connecticut's historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts.

The Main Street Approach is consistent with the State of Connecticut's Growth Management Principles:

- Redevelop and revitalize regional centers and areas with existing or currently planned physical infrastructure;
- Expand housing opportunities and design choices to accommodate a variety of household types and needs;
- Concentrate development around transportation nodes to support the viability of transportation options;
- Conserve and restore the natural environment, cultural and historical resources;
- Protect and ensure the integrity of environment assets; and
- Promote integrated planning across all levels of government.

## Benefits of Membership

- 1) Advocacy / Public Policy: CT Main Street Center advocates on behalf of Connecticut's historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts for downtown-friendly policies and procedures
- 2) Member discounts at our quarterly Downtown Revitalization Institute statewide educational workshops
- 3) Additional educational and networking events:
  - Quarterly Main Street Executive Meetings for Designated Main Street Management Programs
  - Regional educational programs for all members, featuring a Speaker's Bureau of experts
  - Regional member networking events encouraging peer networking and information sharing
  - Annual CT Main Street Awards Gala in June
- 4) Promotion of local Main Streets, their programs, initiatives, events and activities, via traditional and social media:
  - CMSC's Downtown Update monthly e-newsletter, with a distribution of over 5,000 to a statewide audience that includes state and local officials
  - CT Main Street Center Facebook page, posting local downtown news, events, etc.
  - Success Stories and Best Practices, taken from the CT Main Street Annual Awards of Excellence
  - Member alerts and on-going communication regarding topical issues and pertinent information
- 5) Eligibility for CMSC's annual Preservation of Place grant program: technical assistance grant program for preservation and revitalization initiatives
- 6) Eligibility for CMSC's annual Awards of Excellence program: statewide recognition for outstanding projects and partnerships
- 7) Consideration for state resources, funding and programs:
  - State of CT's Main Street Investment Fund
  - CMSC's Come Home to Downtown Pilot Program, mixed-use real estate planning
- 8) Discounted rates to topic specific technical assistance (see menu of member services)
- 9) Access to onsite and telephone consultation by CT Main Street Center staff

## Menu of Services for CT Main Street Members

Fee

### Reconnaissance Visit & Summary Report

\$2,000

This service is often the activity that begins building the relationship between CT Main Street Center (CMSC) and the Member Community. Through a meeting with stakeholders and a walking tour of the district, this visit will *initially*:

- Assess the physical conditions of the “main street” district
- Identify the current business mix and its relevance to the district’s success
- Evaluate the organizational and managerial structure of the district
- Provide the district with the *best course of action* in moving forward with revitalization

A follow up report will make recommendations that can help the community with both long and short term implementation strategies.

### Customized Technical Assistance & Access to Consultants

TBD

CT Main Street Center utilizes the services of leading experts in the complex field of Downtown Development. Member Communities benefit from discounted rates to topic specific technical assistance. Examples include:

#### Organizational Development

- Consensus Building
- Partnership & Leadership Development
- Managing Change in Downtown
- Funding Strategies & Revenue Development for Main Street Management
- Establishing a Special Services District for Main Street

#### Urban Design

- Visioning & Master Planning
- Placemaking & Complete Streets
- Façade Improvement Program
- Design Guidelines

#### Economic Development

- Small Business Improvement: Business Planning, Coaching
- Assisting small property owners with mixed use development strategies
- Housing Absorption Studies / Market Analysis

#### Marketing & Promotion

- Branding & Image Development for the Main Street District
- Marketing & Promoting the district
- Special Event development & promotion
- Retail Promotion



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## Downtown Revitalization Institute Series Sponsors



## Additional Partners



National Trust for  
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**Main Street**

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