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Minnesota Main Street - Preservation Alliance of Minnesota
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May 27, 2010

Subject: Minnesota Main Street Application

We are excited to be launching Minnesota Main Street to assist local communities in their commercial district revitalization efforts. This first year, we have a very short application window for communities to apply and be accepted as Designated Minnesota Main Street programs due to funding time constraints.

The difference between “Designated MN Main Street Communities” and “Associate Members”...

Designated Minnesota Main Street Program

This is a local commercial district revitalization program that uses the Four-Point approach, has broad community support, paid staff, and meets (or will soon be able to meet) other standards.

Associate Member Community of Minnesota Main Street

This may range from a community just learning about Main Street with a group of volunteers to a long-standing downtown development group with years of success under its belt.

We want to ensure that we are helping communities succeed with this model of downtown revitalization. To provide us with the necessary time to make this important selection, we are requesting that the following application be filled out and returned to the office of the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota no later than 5 p.m. on June 21, 2010.

Documents included with this cover letter are:

- Associate Member Community of Minnesota Main Street – Registration Form
- Designated Minnesota Main Street Program - Application Packet
 - Selection Criteria to be used in reviewing Designated applications
 - Memorandum of Understanding for Designated Communities – This is a draft pending legal review

Minnesota Main Street is already in the process of considering our application timeline for the 2011 program designation. Please note that applicants not selected in 2010 will be given feedback about their application to use in reapplying in 2011. The 2011 application process will also favorably weight applications from communities that are Minnesota Main Street Associate Members this year.

Thank you for taking the time and effort to submit this application for Minnesota Main Street’s re-inaugural year. Please contact me at (651) 293-9047 or by email at enorthey@mnpreservation.org with any questions you have along the way.

Sincerely,

Emily Northey
Minnesota Main Street Program Coordinator

AN OVERVIEW: THE MAIN STREET APPROACH® TO COMMERCIAL DISTRICT REVITALIZATION

Revitalization can be approached in many different ways. The primary objective of the Main Street Approach® is to foster economic development within the context of historic preservation. Downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts across the country have prospered by using this cost-effective approach of attracting new investment to their districts while reusing the existing building stock and amenities.

Recognizing that quick-fix solutions do not work, the Main Street Approach® advocates a return to community self-reliance and the redevelopment of Main Street project areas based on their traditional assets: personal service, local ownership, a unique physical environment and a sense of community. It is an incremental, long-term, total community effort differing in philosophy and effect from capital-intensive, quick-fix projects. The Main Street Approach® incorporates activities in four distinctive areas; each of these combine to build a positive, identifiable image for the Main Street project area.

ORGANIZATION: The Main Street Approach® to revitalization is a total community effort. To be successful, a local program must organize many different public and private sectors of the community to unite for the common goal of a better downtown/neighborhood. Groups and individuals typically involved in Main Street programs include business people, merchants, property owners, local government, financial institutions, industry, clergy, schools, utilities, residents and civic groups. Building the organization's capacity with enough people, funds and local enthusiasm to implement the program is critical to successful district revitalization.

PROMOTION: Promoting and marketing a main street district can attract customers and investors to the area and increase community economic viability. Main Street programs work to market the district and community through a series of aggressive, targeted activities such as: special events and festivals, events to boost retail sales, image development, cooperative advertising, marketing the entire district and developing heritage tourism opportunities.

DESIGN: The physical appearance of a business district sets that district apart from any other. A physically attractive district is more appealing to shoppers, residents, visitors and potential investors. The Main Street design philosophy is based on a historic preservation ethic and involves improving the appearance of all physical things in the project area, including buildings, signs, window displays, and public improvements.

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING: Using the Main Street Approach®, communities work to retain existing commercial businesses by analyzing current market forces in order to develop long-term solutions. The Main Street program works to identify the strengths, challenges and opportunities for the project area and assists in expanding existing businesses and/or recruiting complementary new business to fill vacant spaces.

NATIONAL MAIN STREET CENTER'S STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

1. Has broad-based community support for the commercial district revitalization process, with strong support from both the public and private sectors.
2. Has developed vision and mission statements relevant to community conditions and to the local Main Street program's organizational stage.
3. Has a comprehensive Main Street work plan.
4. Possesses an historic preservation ethic.
5. Has an active board of directors and committees.
6. Has an adequate budget.
7. Has a paid professional executive director.
8. Conducts a program of ongoing training for staff and volunteers.
9. Reports key statistics.
10. Has current membership in the National Trust's National Main Street Network membership program.

MINNESOTA MAIN STREET DATES TO REMEMBER- 2010

Date	Activity / Event / Deadline	<u>Required of Designated Program?</u>	<u>Optional for Associate Program?</u>
May 27	Designated Applications and Associate Registration Forms available	N/A	N/A
June 21, by 5 p.m.	Designated Applications and Associate Registration Forms due	Yes	Yes
June 30	Communities notified of application results	N/A	N/A
July/Aug.	TRAINING: Main Street Basic Training Held	Yes	Yes
Sept. 16-17	TRAINING: Minnesota Main Street Training at Minnesota State Historic Preservation Conference, Winona	Yes	Yes
Nov. 3-4	TRAINING: Joint Main Street Workshop with Iowa and Wisconsin	Yes	Yes
TBD	TRAINING: Fourth training session of 2010	Yes	Yes
Jan./Feb.	Local Reinvestment Statistics Due to MN Main Street	Yes	Yes

MINNESOTA MAIN STREET BENEFITS

	Cost	Training Admission	Access to E-Newsletter	Networking	\$6,400 in Services ¹	Use of Main Street Name	Unlimited Access to MN Main Street Staff
Designated MN Main Street Member	\$2,000	Free	★	★	★	★	★
Associate Member Community	\$200	Discounted	★	★			
Network Members (Individuals & Businesses)	Individual \$20 Business \$100	Full Cost	★	★			
Non-Members		Full Cost	★				

The Minnesota Main Street Program is recognized by the National Trust Main Street Center® as the official statewide coordinating program in Minnesota.

The Minnesota Main Street Program has been financed in part with funds provided by the State of Minnesota from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the Minnesota Historical Society. For more information, visit the Alliance website at www.mnpreservation.org/programs/main-street

¹ Includes training, materials, community workshops, etc.