HOW TO MAINTAIN A SUSTAINABLE MAIN STREET ORGANIZATION

Lindsey Wallace, Director of Strategic Projects and Design Services

Great Lakes Main Street Conference  August 19, 2019
AGENDA

+ Organization: growth and sustainability
+ Volunteers: recruitment and retention
+ Hiring staff: strategy and fundraising
+ Q&A
THE MAIN STREET APPROACH®

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Build a diverse economic base | Catalyze smart new investment | Cultivate a strong entrepreneurship ecosystem

DESIGN

Create an inviting, inclusive atmosphere | Celebrate historic character | Foster accessible, people-centered public spaces

COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

Build leadership and strong organizational capacity | Ensure broad community engagement | Forge partnerships across sectors

ORGANIZATION

Market district’s defining assets | Communicate unique features through storytelling | Support buy-local experience

PROMOTION
## Organization: Areas of Responsibility

### Promoting the Program
- Selling your program/efforts

### Fundraising
- For downtown and your organization

### Volunteer Development
- Recruitment and management strategies

### Work Plans
- Managing the scope of work

## Operations

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Office Administration</th>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Management</td>
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<td>Fiscal &amp; Legal Accountability</td>
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| Staff & Volunteer Training |
| Action Planning & Coordination |
| MS Designation / Reporting |
WHEN DO PEOPLE OWN REVITALIZATION?

- When **THEY** recognize the importance of having a **ROLE** in the process.

- When **WE** recognize that **everyone** has a role in the process.
WHEN DO PEOPLE OWN REVITALIZATION?

When they move into ACTION
Beyond *passive* support to *active* engagement!
What tools or strategies do you find to be the most effective at creating a strong sense of ownership in members of the community and for your organization?

• “I find that involvement, especially in smaller projects, leads to more long-term involvement.”
  - Katy Kassian, Motivational Speaker, Tait and Kate

• “Keeping them informed, giving them behind the scenes looks at new projects, giving them opportunities to participate in shaping our program’s work, sharing the credit, celebrating successes together.”
  - Andrea Dono, Executive Director, Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance, Virginia

• “Have volunteers decide what projects they will produce. Few want to be given or take over an assignment they did not create.”
  - Donna Ann Harris, Principal, Heritage Consulting Inc.

• “Try to involve everyone no matter how small the task and make them feel like they are part of the change.”
  - Cristina Amoruso, Coordinator, DC Main Streets
Build an organizational culture that fosters and rewards stakeholder engagement.

- Volunteers’ role (s) match their skills and background.
- Volunteer opportunities are clearly defined and outlined.
- Volunteers’ time & contributions are recognized as much as financial support.

Build a sense of ownership that results in a culture of volunteering from everyone in the community.

- Incorporate stakeholders of all sectors in the revitalization efforts so everyone plays a role and can take ownership.

Build a program worth volunteering for – offer value.

- Main Street offers a unifying opportunity to lead the vision and accomplish results.
Main Street benefits everyone

- For property owners
- For local residents & consumers
- For retail business owners
- For service business owners
- For financial institutions
- For utilities
- For municipal government
- For county government
- For preservationists
MAIN STREET BENEFITS THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

- Increased tax base
- More tourism
- Increased property values
- Increased number of jobs
- Better goals and vision
- Healthy economy
- Better services available
- Positive perception of downtown/commercial district and community
- Better relations between local government and private sector

- Better relations between local government and private sector
- Increased volunteer base for city
- Takes political heat, develops consensus for political requests
- Industrial recruitment
- Impetus for public improvements
- Grant solicitation
- Information resource for city/town leaders
Who serves on the organization committee?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Communicators</th>
<th>Money Managers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Salespeople</td>
<td>Accountants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media representatives</td>
<td>Bankers</td>
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<tr>
<td>People w/communication</td>
<td>Financial investors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skills; writers</td>
<td>Business/property owners</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Individuals with fund-raising or grant-writing experience</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizers</th>
<th>Givers of Time and Money</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>Reps from other civic organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Librarians</td>
<td>Residents/newcomers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perfectionists</td>
<td>Seniors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attorneys</td>
<td>Students</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Volunteers
Why do people volunteer?
WHY DO PEOPLE VOLUNTEER?

Toolkit Resource:
*Volunteer Motivation, Trends, Types Document*

1. Achievement (Training and job experience)
2. Power/Influence (Recognition/Self-Interest)
3. Affiliation (Social Outlet, Cause)

- Obligation
- To consume spare time
- To combat negative image
- Resume-building
- Altruism
- Professional development
- Connection to the mission of your organization
VALUE OF A VOLUNTEER

- Extra hands
- Local “buy-in”
- Political and social clout
- Staying power
- Multiple community perspectives
How many times have you heard or said:

“We need more volunteers!”

...and then no one did anything about it?
ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

- Matching positions to mission
- Organizational identity
- Job descriptions
- Recruiting
- In-take process
- On-boarding and training
- Engagement
- Recognition
- Retention
- Out-processing
THE LANGUAGE WE USE

Involve not use

Us not me
Volunteer Trends According to Kathy LaPlante

- Successful volunteer development starts with a plan
- Successful volunteer strategies start with volunteer skills sets: warm bodies are easier to get.
- Too often, you’d rather do it yourself.
- Success communities develop leaders
Engagement

- What is considered “engagement”?
- What ways are volunteers engaged with your organization?
- Do your volunteers have a sense of ownership?
- Are you engaging youth, seniors, corporations, interns, service groups, etc?
ENGAGING YOUTH

- Clean up days
- Ground breakings
- Events
- Advisory board
- Junior Main Street
- What else?
ENGAGING THE RETIRED

- Advisory board
- Maker opportunities: crafts, food, etc.
- Consistent roles and clear responsibilities
- Events
- What else?
OUTREACH

- Stakeholder meetings/recruitment events
  - General – district or community
    - Visioning, forums, booths, etc.
  - Specific – merchants, businesses, property owners, employees

- With community groups
  - Civic / social / faith-based
  - Residents

- With key partners
  - City, County
  - Large corporations
  - Schools
  - Social Services (libraries, etc.)

- Employees – participation in committees
  - City, banks, corporations

- Students - for projects, events
  - College / University: internships
  - High School “community graduate” service
  - Middle-Schools, elementary

- Social Services
  - Returning citizens
  - Libraries
RECRUITMENT

Find out what people know about the organization already
- Who has the talent to donate time to put together an informational brochure for you?
- Outline your goals and share your vision.
- Good for fundraising AND friend-raising (volunteers)

Techniques:
- Social Media
- Canvassing
- Events
- Recruitment Contests
- Word of Mouth
- Targeted: Board, Corporate, Project-Based, Student, Intern, General, etc.
- Online Postings:
  - volunteermatch.org, createthegood.org, networkforgood.org, idealist.org
RECRUITMENT

Board Members
- Those who will become actively involved in planning and implementing of projects
- Those who can provide needed services or information (accountants, architects, or lawyers)
- Those who have money or access to money that could be used to finance the program’s projects.

Today’s volunteers look for:
- Short term assignments
- Flexible timing
- Closed-end assignments
- Fun
- Mixed cultural exposure
- Chance to excel in a new area
- Opportunity to combine volunteering with fitness, ecology, socializing, learning, resume-building, recognition by boss, contacts, training and values
Keep in mind: those who work multiple jobs, care-take, attend school full-time, etc., may not be able to volunteer.

- How could your organization engage them?
- What roles or opportunities for input could your organization offer them?
Work plans are tools for:

- Project management
  - Improves success rate of projects
  - Reduces confusion and conflict
- Volunteer management
  - Motivates volunteers to achieve a goal
- Evaluation
  - Provides benchmarks for success
- Fundraising
  - Attracts donations for specific projects
- Budgeting
- Record-keeping
Volunteer types

- **Starters**: enthusiastic, bring energy, start projects but do not finish
  - **Good role**: new projects, kickoff

- **Sustainers**: can sustain and expand
  - **Good role**: project manager for long-term initiative

- **Achievers**: work best independently
  - **Good role**: solo project, behind the scenes event staff

- **Affiliators**: work best in groups
  - **Good role**: team efforts, front line event staff

- **Power brokers**: can make certain things happen, e.g. raise money, pass an ordinance, or arrange for a high-profile speaker at an event. May not be able to attend meetings on a consistent basis.
  - **Good role**: advisor or specific projects with defined timelines
JOB DESCRIPTIONS/WORK PLANS

- Be clear
- Be concise
- Be descriptive

Include:
1. Title
2. Position - goals, objectives
3. Individual responsibilities/duties as included in Work Plan
4. Supervision /Immediate contact
5. Time expectations
6. Qualifications/Skills or talents needed
7. Benefits & Value
Volunteer Assignments
For a festival that begins at 11 am and ends at 6 pm

Notes: Except for planning committee members, schedule volunteers in 2-hour shifts. For jobs that last all day, plan on recruiting enough people to cover all shifts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job</th>
<th>8:00 am</th>
<th>9:00 am</th>
<th>10:00 am</th>
<th>11:00 am</th>
<th>Noon</th>
<th>1:00 pm</th>
<th>2:00 pm</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meet equipment deliveries</td>
<td>Volunteer #1</td>
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<td>Layout booths and all event space</td>
<td>Volunteer #2, 3, 4</td>
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<td>Set up booths</td>
<td>Volunteer #4, 5, 6</td>
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<td>Set up sound system</td>
<td>Volunteer #11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteer check-in</td>
<td>Volunteer #12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Run concession stand</td>
<td>Volunteer #13, 14, 15, 16</td>
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<td>Meet bands</td>
<td>Volunteer #17</td>
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<td>Emcee</td>
<td>Volunteer #18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Run children’s games</td>
<td>Volunteer #19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26</td>
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<td>Staff info booth</td>
<td>Volunteer #27 &amp; 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empty trash cans</td>
<td>Volunteer #29 &amp; 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Break down booths &amp; clean up</td>
<td>Volunteer #31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40</td>
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INTAKE PROCESS

What does it take for a person to volunteer with your organization? Be clear up front.

- Interview
- Application
- Training
- Meetings
- Commitment expectations
- Minimum hours
ONBOARDING AND TRAINING

- How are volunteers welcomed?
- Processes to assist them with their work?
- Collaboration with staff/volunteers?
- Training for supervisors
- Formal Trainings

**Orientation**
- Orientation is an introduction

**Training**
- Training is skill development
Volunteer fatigue
Recognition

- Private Praise
  - Face-to-face
  - Thank you letters/cards
- Public Praise
  - Annual awards program: certificates, plaques, etc.
  - “Volunteer of the Month”
  - Newspaper/mass media
- Ask advice/include in important meetings
- Invites/scholarships to special events
- Letters of recommendation
- Thoughtful gifts
- Social Media
- Tax benefits (Travel expenses, transportation, uniforms, etc.)
RETENTION

- Good orientation & training (manage expectations)
- Good organization & leadership (Volunteer Handbook)
- Positive atmosphere & reinforcement
- Keep promises and time commitments
- Let volunteers rest between projects without guilt
- Promote volunteers on to new projects & new opportunities
- Foster opportunities for them to bring & mentor new people/volunteers
- Thank & recognize often and in as many ways as possible!
Why Such a Formal Process?

Volunteers are not **JUST** volunteers, they are staff members who provide vital services free of charge.

*We make a living by what we do, but we make a life by what we give.*

Winston Churchill

*You tell me and I forget. You teach me and I remember. You involve me and I learn.*

Ben Franklin
What do you think is the most effective way to empower people to lead?

“Connect to their passion and find out what they are most interested in. Then, provide the tools they need to move forward and take ownership of a project in a safe environment where they know they are supported by those around them.”

Cristie Thomas, Executive Director, Marietta Main Street, Ohio

“Make sure that they have a chance to participate in the creation of the work plan and see their ideas come to life. There is a saying, those that write a plan help underwrite a plan, and that does not just mean financially; time is one of the most valuable gifts. It is also very important to help them understand how their participation directly affects success.”

Diana Schwartz, Director, Ocala Main Street, Florida
It is okay if a volunteer is not a good fit.

How do you handle those leaving the organization?
NMSC Volunteer Toolkit

Online

Volunteer Toolkit

Grow Your Network

Volunteers are the bedrock of a grassroots community revitalization effort. Every successful Main Street America program cultivates volunteers from the community to serve in leadership roles, provide input on overall direction, and assist in a wide variety of functions throughout the year.

This toolkit provides a range of resources and sample documents on volunteer recruitment, management, and recognition. Explore below, and if you have suggestions for resources to add, let us know.

Publications

Community Engagement

A practical framework for streamlining your community engagement efforts.

Organization Committee Handbook

Learn about Main Street fundraising, volunteer recruitment, and networking, program promotion and advocacy, and more.

Revitalizing Main Street

Learn about aspects of downtown growth, development, revitalization.

Sample Documents

- Sample Volunteer Brochure - Sample outlining the volunteer available opportunities from Franklin, Tennessee.
- Sample Volunteer Applications - check out Farmington, Michigan's and Monmouth, Illinois's volunteer application forms to get some ideas of how to best organize your form for recruitment.
- Sample Volunteer Interview Questions - get some ideas for great questions to ask your volunteers during their initial phone or in-person interview.
- Sample Volunteer Job Description Templates - Template 1 and Template 2 can be used internally to determine your volunteer staffing needs and then post the information to online recruiting sites.
- Planning Volunteer Involvement Worksheet - These questions will guide you through planning your volunteer involvement, redrafting a plan already in place.
- Extending Volunteer Engagement Worksheet - Use this worksheet as a guide to design new volunteer positions within a department, unit or function to get the ball rolling on expanding your volunteer reach.
- Volunteer Recruitment Exercise - This document includes the tools, rules and types of volunteers that your organization may have. Finding out what motivates your volunteers will help you determine effective recognition, retention and placement that will last much longer.
- Volunteer Management Tool - The handbook complete with worksheets and tips will help you promote volunteerism and plan volunteer engagement in your community.
- Accessing Volunteer Involvement Exercise - This checklist of questions will help your program to evaluate and assess your current volunteer involvement and get you thinking of ways to improve its quality and effectiveness.
- Sample Volunteer Procedure Manual - volunteer management manual from Baltimore Main Streets including tips on position descriptions, policies, recognition, and tracking.

Articles

- Cultivating Effective Leadership to Transform Communities by Noreen Ramirez de Mesa and Rachel Douds, State of Maine, 2010
- Engaging the Future to Preserve the Past by Katherine Oben and Sue Stanworth Miller, Main Street News, Fall 2013
- Growing Your Volunteer Program: Another Four Point Approach by Todd Noon, Main Street News, March-April 2011
- Ways to Encourage the Board of Directors in Volunteer Involvement by Betsy Sattler, Leading the Way
- How to Value Volunteer Contributions by Betsy Sattler, Leading the Way

Webinar

Volunteer Management: Recruiting Volunteers through Work Plans
Hiring Staff
2018 Main Street Network Trends Survey: Staff

Staff Composition

- Of the 268 communities that reported:
  - 7% operate without full-time staff
  - 52% operate without part-time staff
  - 66% operate on a team with only one full-time staff member
  - 43% operate with just one full-time staff member

Benefits Offered to Staff

- Paid Vacation/Holiday: 84%
- Paid Sick Leave: 70%
- Medical Insurance: 66%
- Cell Phone Reimbursement: 53%
- Dental Insurance: 41%
- Vision Insurance: 38%
- Life Insurance: 33%
- Pre-Tax Flexible Spending: 33%
- None of the Above: 16%
- Commuter Cost Assistance: 12%
- Other: 8%
2018 Main Street Network Trends Survey: Board Composition

Board Composition

- Business Owner: 95%
- Resident: 86%
- City/Elected Official: 66%
- Financial Industry Leader: 63%
- Other: 44%
- Attorney: 42%

Top “Other” Categories
1. Property Owner
2. College Representative
3. Real Estate
4. Retirees
5. Chamber of Commerce
2018 Main Street Network Trends Survey: Executive Directors

Executive Director’s Salary

- >$85,000: 6%
- $80,000 - $84,000: 3%
- $75,000 - $79,000: 4%
- $70,000 - $74,000: 3%
- $65,000 - $69,000: 3%
- $60,000 - $64,000: 6%
- $55,000 - $59,000: 10%
- $50,000 - $54,000: 10%
- $45,000 - $49,000: 13%
- $40,000 - $44,000: 14%
- $35,000 - $39,000: 10%
- $30,000 - $34,000: 6%
- $25,000 - $29,000: 4%
- < $24,000: 9%
2018 Main Street Network Trends Survey: Executive Directors

Number of Years Executive Director Has Held Position

- 10+ years: 30 executive directors
- 9 years: 10 executive directors
- 8 years: 10 executive directors
- 7 years: 5 executive directors
- 6 years: 5 executive directors
- 5 years: 5 executive directors
- 4 years: 5 executive directors
- 3 years: 5 executive directors
- 2 years: 10 executive directors
- 1 year: 20 executive directors
- >1 year: 10 executive directors
Figure 1: A Model of the Employee Recruitment Process

1. Establish Recruitment Objectives
2. Develop a Recruitment Strategy
3. Carry Out Recruitment Activities
4. Evaluate Recruitment Results
Recruiting talent

Figure 3: Five Possible Changes Prompted by Evaluating Past Recruitment Activities

Results of Evaluation

- Employee referral program is lacking in terms of the number and the quality of applicants generated
- Several applicants withdrew during the recruitment process
- Only a few colleges provided a sufficient number of applicants to justify the cost of the college visit
- New hires complained that the website made submitting a resume difficult

Change Mode

- Begin offering a referral bonus that is contingent on retention for one year and satisfactory referee performance
- Start the recruitment process earlier and make more timely job offers
- Place greater emphasis on these colleges and select new colleges that have similar attributes
- Change the website so that applicants can paste in resumes
Recruiting Talent

Society for Human Resource Management
Recruiting Talent

Considerations:

- Where to post online?
  - General: Idealist, Indeed
  - Specialized: NTHP/NMSC, Planetizen, APA, IDA, IEDC, ICMA, etc.
  - Be sure platform is simple, easy to use

- Who are you looking for?
  - Executive Directors: is this be a transitional/short-term role or long-term?
  - Administrative staff: new to the workforce or career admin?

- If budget is tight, how can you make the role more attractive?
  - Benefits packages
  - PTO: vacation and sick time
  - Flexible hours and working from home
  - Professional development funds and opportunities
ONBOARDING AND TRAINING

- New staff welcoming
- Set onboarding processes
- Staff/Board/Volunteer collaboration
- Work plans within first week
- Consistent check-ins: 30-, 60-, 90-days
- Ongoing trainings + skill development
  - National, state, regional, local
  - Professional development
Main Street Funding Sources

30-50% Public funding
Note: To achieve National Main Street accreditation, financial/philosophical support from the city is a required.

20-30% Funding from business district

30-40% Community funding

5-15% Miscellaneous
Additional sources:
- Events and campaigns
- Membership
- Friends of Downtown/Neighborhood Commercial District
- BID/TIF/DDA funds or hotel occupancy tax
- Foundations
- Government grants (federal, state, local)
- Local investment funds
- University partnerships
- Corporate sponsors ("adopt-a-main street")
- Community benefits agreements (CBA)
- Merchandise and miscellaneous donations
- Property acquisition and ownership
Myths of Raising Money for Revitalization

- We’re raising money for the Main Street Program
- Fundraising is a shameful activity
- People are getting sick of getting “hit up” for contributions
- It’s not my job
- If we only had one big cash cow
- Our community just doesn’t have enough resources
- The program will eventually be self sustaining
Before asking for money...

Define the plan, the process, and measures:

- What are you selling?
- Who are you selling it to?
- Who are your most likely funding sources?
- What should be your message?
- Who will do the asking?
- Timelines
- Materials, tools, visitation
- Measuring tools
- Ideas for solicitation
- Fundraising events and activities
FUNDRAISING

Be sure to have:

1. A clear mission and vision
2. An identified and well-defined niche in the marketplace
3. Strong messaging and delivery to customers and other constituencies
How much do you need – and for what?

- Use work plans to define your budget and funding needs
- Develop a funding plan – broad base public and private sector support

**BUDGET**

**Organization**
- Staff!
- Operations
- Training + Professional development
- Office + Equipment

**Design**
- Physical rehabilitation and Improvements
- Education and assistance
- Strategic planning

**Economic Vitality**
- Education and assistance to existing businesses and property owners
- Entrepreneurship development

**Promotion**
- Events
- Image & branding campaigns
Funding Responsibilities

Main Street Board of Directors
- Fiscal responsibility for program’s financial management
- Establishes PRIORITIES driven by vision and mission and ensures alignment between work plan and budget
- Leads and/or supports fund development (personal commitment, access to wealth)

Organization Committee
- Develops and implements specific initiatives, events, and materials that foster funding for the Program.
  - Partnership / Membership Campaigns
  - Fundraising Events

Other Committees
- Develops and implements initiatives that foster funding for specific committee’s efforts
- Supporting fundraising activities of the organization

Main Street Staff
- Provides essential leadership support to board and committees with regards to developing and managing resources
BOARD ROLES FOR RAISING FUNDS

- Identifying contacts (businesses and individuals)
- Going on calls with others
- Developing materials
- Developing ideas and working at fundraising events
- Giving
- Nurturing funders (invite to annual meeting, ask for opinions)
THE FUNDRAISING PLAN

Components of the Plan

- Municipal contribution
- Annual pledge drive
- Friends of Main Street/residents
- Grants
- Merchandise sales
- Sponsorships
- Special event and special project income
- BID, DDA, TIF, EID (other assessment districts)

With nonprofits every board member should make a contribution. Professionally and personally.

*How can you ask others for money if the board hasn’t given?*
THE FUNDRAISING PLAN

- Package your value
- Define your process
- Outline your budget and projected outcomes
- Confirm your potential funding sources
- Plan how you will recognize your supporters
- Follow through on pledged support
- Assure long-term commitment
Understand their goals!

Communicate

Educate newly elected officials and key town staff

Promise, perform, and deliver (service agreements)

Create value-added collaborations

Track in-kind support from local govt.

Demonstrate the value of volunteer hours

Present the expectation that they will continue to invest in the district
GRANTS

- Typically project-based
- Can support staff and operations – 20%

Sources

Federal/State Government:
- CLG (Certified Local Government)
- USDA (Department of Agriculture)
- US EPA
- US DoT/FHWA Transportation Enhancements
- National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)

Foundations/Nonprofits:
- AARP
- KaBoom!
- National Association of Realtors
- CDFIs

For-profit/Private:
- Banks
- Financial investment firms
- Philanthropy arms
- University partnerships
- Local investment funds
Annual Campaigns

Downtown District Stakeholders
- Property & Business Owners
- Employees / Residents
- Organizations / Corporations

Community
- Corporations, Utilities
- Foundations / Other Organizations
- Residents

Earned Income
- Products & Services

- Self Assessed Tax Mechanisms (property, sales)
- Partnership (Membership) Programs
- Sponsorship / Marketing Initiatives

- Sponsorship of Events, Marketing Initiatives
- Fundraising Activities
- Partnership (Membership) Programs
- Grants
STARTING THE ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

- Assign a Campaign Chair
  - Organization Chair
  - Board Chair (early organizer)
  - Local Celebrity
- Ask every board member to make a personal contribution
- Set a fundraising goal
- Identify potential supporters, investors, members
- Figure split among categories
- Establish the timeline – ideally 4-6 weeks
- Assign Board Member teams
STARTING THE ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

- Prepare support materials
- Assign askers and train
- Get two or three (board members or investors) to pledge significant gifts/challenge others prior to the kickoff
- Publicity and kickoff
- Contact and ask
- Thank and celebrate
- Record, remind, renew
- Maintain database

A systemic problem that stops organizations from successful fundraising is they are unable to state the obvious:

*What difference do we make?*
BUSINESSES DOING BUSINESS IN THE DISTRICT

- Ask businesses in the district to make a list of businesses they use and community organizations (trash haulers, uniform and carpet supplies, restaurant and beverage suppliers, contractors, planners, etc.)
- Have those businesses hand letters to those vendors, or mail with invoice payment
- Explain the benefits for them to support your downtown organization
- Follow up with a reminder
DONOR COMMUNICATION

Be sure to:

- Invite them to annual meeting
- Send them an annual report
- Invite them to a special event
- Send thank you notes
- Acknowledge supporters at event – verbally and with banners
- Get your board to be intentional with them
- Invite them to a special donors reception and/or tour of the downtown
EARNED INCOME

- Investing idle money
- Endowments – long term strategy
- Commitment to setting aside a percentage of all event income.
- Long-term sustainability
Sources of Event Funding:
- admissions
- activity fees
- booth fees
- retail “package”
- merchandise sales
- raffles
- sponsorships
- donations
- tying into others events
Serves more than one purpose:

- Fundraising
- Public Relations
- Promotion/Marketing
Review

- **With** versus for
- **Involve** versus use
- **Us** versus me
- Volunteers + staff: Engage, recruit, onboard, retain
- Fundraise: diversify sources
Questions?