Delaware Main Street

A Tool For Downtown Revitalization
Traditions...
Cultural activities...
Special Events...
Unique historic streetscapes...
Attractions...
Unique businesses...
The traditional downtown has the potential to offer and promote:

- Attractive, historic assets
- Unique style
- Unique products

So...
...what happened to Main Street?

• **Competition:** Malls and strip shopping centers provide goods and services.

• **Economic decline:** Many downtowns are suffering from disinvestment.

• **Poor appearance:** Many commercial cores are physically unattractive.
Is there hope for Main Street?

YES!

- Community’s core represents much of its economy.
- Downtown serves area beyond town-proper.
- Individually-owned stores can offer a “personal touch.”
- Opportunity to experience unique style and an historic sense of place.
BUT…

Successfully revitalizing a downtown will not take place without...

- a comprehensive plan
- committed volunteers
- ongoing strategies to improve
The Main Street Program...

helps a group of interested people in the downtown or urban neighborhood form an “umbrella organization”
so that they can create a...

unified plan and voice for the common vision and common revitalization goals that represents various entities and interests of the downtown.
Main Street builds through:

economic development

historic preservation
Delaware Main Street’s Mission:

To provide Delaware’s historic commercial districts with the tools to:

> promote economic stability in business and workforce

> retain and enhance the downtown’s unique sense of place
Delaware Main Street is...

- Affiliated with the National Trust Main Street Center (a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation)

- Delaware’s downtown revitalization program, created in 1994 by the Delaware Tourism Office.

- Housed within the Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO) in Dover, DE.
Delaware Main Street Towns

Newark
Middletown
Smyrna
Dover

Brandywine Village (Wilmington)
Delaware City
Rehoboth Beach
Vital statistics...
Business & Job Creation

122 new businesses

942 new jobs

1996 through June 2005
More statistics...

Building Rehabilitations

641 façade improvements & building rehabilitations

1996 – June 2005
Monetary investment

Every dollar of public investment has been matched by nearly $2 in private investment.

Public investment $59,587,728

Private investment $110,816,668

1996 - 2005
Look at all the potential for our downtown!

How does the Main Street program pull it all together?
The Four Point Approach

- Organization
- Design
- Promotion
- Economic Restructuring
Organization...
the root of successful revitalization
Organization

Establishes consensus and cooperation by building partnerships.

- Develops Mission & Vision
- Creates By-Laws
- Manages Personnel and Finances
- Promotes the Program
Design

Shapes the physical image of Main Street.

- Public and Private Buildings
- Public Space & Streetscape
- Signage, Lighting, Landscaping
- Façade Improvements
- Design Guidelines & Incentives
Promotion

Sells the image and promise of Main Street to all prospects.

- Promotes the downtown through
  - Image Campaigns
  - Retail Promotions
  - Festivals & special events
Economic Restructuring

Identifies economic opportunities in the downtown.

- Market and manage downtown properties
- Create balanced commercial mix
- Develop merchant skills
- Offer incentives to retain and recruit key businesses
10 Criteria for Recognition as a National Main Street Community

1. Broad-based Support
2. Vision and Mission Statements
3. Comprehensive Master Plan
4. Historic Preservation Ethic
5. Active Board of Directors
6. Operating Budget
7. Program Manager
8. Training for Staff and Volunteers
9. Reporting of Key Statistics
10. National Main Street Network
Some common misconceptions...

- DE Main Street gives money to communities...
- DE Main Street will do the work for you...
More misconceptions...

- Main Street can fix everything that’s wrong in the downtown AND do it overnight...
- After the streetscape is done, the program is finished...
- It’s impossible for our town to raise $40,000 or $50,000...
What does Delaware Main Street provide to participating towns?

- Advocacy at state level and promotion at the national level
- Design assistance
- Technical assistance and training
- Help for small business owners
- Communication with National Main Street Center
- Network membership to Main Streets nationwide
“Our future is up to us…”

“We each write the history of our communities with the choices we make every day about the places that are important to us and to our images of what our communities mean.

“The markers we leave will tell future generations what we value about ourselves and our communities. We are our own stewards of the history people will learn about us …

Kennedy Smith, Former Director
National Trust Main Street Center
“It’s up to us, and the choices we make, to decide what the markers for the future will be.”

Kennedy Smith, Former Director
National Trust Main Street Center
Since the inception of Main Street nationally in 1970...

* 244,545 jobs
* 60,500 businesses
* over 96,000 buildings rehabbed
How YOU can support Main Street...

- Shop downtown!
- Be a Main Street sponsor!
- Become a member of your local Main Street program!
- Initiate a Main Street program in YOUR town!
To learn more:

- **Call:** 302-739-4271

- **Write:**
  Delaware Main Street (DEDO)
  99 Kings Highway
  Dover, DE 19901

- **E.mail:** Diane.Laird @state.de.us
Portions of this presentation were excerpted from National Main Street Center 1996 (and later) publications:

- *Main Street Committee Members Handbooks*
- *Revitalizing Downtown*

To contact the National Trust Main Street Center:

- Phone: 202-588-6219
Downtown Newark Partnership
Rehoboth Beach Main Street
Unique shopping and dining!
Rehoboth Beach Main Street
Façade & Signage Grants!
Rehoboth Beach Main Street Festivals!
Rehoboth Beach Main Street
Dolphin Project!
Rehoboth Beach Main Street Streetscape project!
Rehoboth Beach Main Street is Open for Business!
Middletown Main Street
Business development
Middletown Main Street Organization
Middletown Main Street
Economic Restructuring
Middletown Main Street Promotions
Positively Middletown!
“It’s up to us, and the choices we make, to decide what the markers for the future will be.”

Kennedy Smith, Former Director
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