

Main Street: Michigan's Grassroots Economic Development Engine

Celebrating 20 years of empowering the people of Michigan to get involved in the health of their communities while preserving the charm and history of our state.

2025 EDITION

MICHIGAN MAIN STREET State Coordinating Program | miplace.org



REAL IMPACT

The numbers prove it!



\$49,135,925

2023-24 Total Private Investment

\$473,749,204
Program to date



\$5,855,343

2023-24 Total Public Investment

\$152,552,988
Program to date



30,094

2023-24 Volunteer Hours

922,796 Program to date



136

2023-24 New Businesses

2,033 Program to date



117

2023-24 Façade & Building Improvements

2,934 Program to date

Michigan's Downtowns: The Vision Begins at the Heart

Michigan Main Street (MMS) assists communities across Michigan interested in revitalizing and preserving their traditional commercial district. MMS provides technical assistance to local communities as they implement the Main Street Four-Point Approach®, a community-driven, comprehensive strategy encouraging economic development through historic preservation in ways appropriate for the modern marketplace. The program aims to create communities distinguished by economically vital and vibrant commercial districts and downtowns, thereby developing attractive places that make the state economically stronger and culturally diverse.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SPOTLIGHT

"Michigan Main Street provides us with a template and resources to execute projects and events in our community. We have accomplished more since we have become a Main Street Community than we had for several years prior. The Impact Report, compiled with support from Michigan Main Street, allows us to tell our story in a consistent and annual manner. There is nothing more important than telling the story of your community."

—Jay Marks, Executive Director, Adrian Main Street/DDA



DELIVERING REAL SERVICE DOWNTOWN



Howell and Wayland were the first two Michigan Main Street communities to start the revamped Equitable Entrepreneurial Ecosystems (E3) service, offered in partnership with Main Street America. This program aims to assist communities in transitioning their local economies to be more inclusive of small and cottage industry businesses, starting with an onsite evaluation of local small business challenges and their support systems, and culminating in an actionable plan to strengthen local business efforts in the communities. In the second part of this service in 2025, each community will receive coaching calls and implementation dollars to address their action plans.



In partnership with Place + Main Advisors, Michigan Main Street provided strategic planning services to four Main Street organizations: Cheboygan, Mexicantown, Niles, and Owosso. The service allowed each of the organizations to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to organizational sustainability and district vitality. In addition, each organization discussed priority projects and determined goals that will act as a guide for the next 3–5 years.



Michigan Main Street invested heavily in the continued education of our Main Street directors, board members, and volunteers. We provided four webinar series over topics including: retail merchandising, historic preservation, diversity, equity and inclusion, and fund development. We also provided in-person workshops including our executive director retreat, a workshop focused on planning and zoning in partnership with the Michigan Association of Planning, and a public relations training in partnership with the MEDC's Growth and Marketing Team. Last, we partnered with Main Street Oakland County to provide a new-director training facilitated by Main Street America to our new directors in 2024. Our education and training aims to expand the knowledge and skill-sets of our Main Street organization staff and volunteers so they can accomplish increasingly sophisticated projects and programming.

LAUNCH OF NEW MAIN STREET LEVELS

Michigan Main Street introduced a new level this year! The Network Level provides an opportunity for communities to participate with Michigan Main Street through gaining access to resources and Main Street staff expertise without pursuing full designation with the program. In addition, the Engaged Level was greatly expanded as efforts to support downtowns state-wide were prioritized. Through this expansion, Michigan Main Street is now working with an additional 15 communities state-wide on downtown or district revitalization.

Interested in starting your Main Street Journey? Find your path below!

Community is interested in downtown or traditional Commercial District Revitalization and Management → Ready to connect? Email us at michiganmainstreet@michigan.org

Community has declined opportunity for full participation in Michigan Main Street → Network Level Main Street

Community is looking for resources, additional staff, and training for full participation → Engaged Level Main Street

Learn more with the Michigan Main Street Brochure → Main Street Designation

| Service | Network | Engaged | Select | Master |
|---|---------|---------|--------|--------|
| MAIN STREET TRAINING | | | | |
| • Main Street presentation | | | | |
| • Director course | | | | |
| • Executive Director Roleplay course (distinct from roleplay) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (1 day/2 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (2 day/4 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (3 day/6 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (4 day/8 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (5 day/10 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (6 day/12 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (7 day/14 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (8 day/16 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (9 day/18 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (10 day/20 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (11 day/22 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (12 day/24 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (13 day/26 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (14 day/28 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (15 day/30 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (16 day/32 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (17 day/34 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (18 day/36 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (19 day/38 hrs) | | | | |
| • Main Street leadership training (20 day/40 hrs) | | | | |

Invest in your Downtown's Future with Michigan Main Street!

- Access resources
- Increase capacity
- Strengthen your network
- Identify priorities
- Learn & adopt downtown management best practices

MICHIGAN MAIN STREET
mplace.org/michiganmainstreet

Engaged Level Resources

This year, two virtual cohort meet-ups were held to better engage with prospective Main Street communities and continue to provide resources after completion of the online training series. In addition to training sessions, a brand new Engaged Level guide and work plan were created to provide resources, templates, and talking points to help guide Engaged Level communities through the process of applying to be fully designated.

Impact Insights

Since 2003, Michigan Main Street (MMS) has transformed commercial districts and communities across the state through dedicated economic development efforts, leading to economic growth and downtown revitalization, which can be seen from the economic impact of our communities' success over the past 20 years.

Transforming Downtowns with Business Attraction & Retention

Main Street turned downtown dreams into thriving realities, bringing in 1,753 new businesses and creating 2,150 jobs statewide. With \$180.7 million in economic impact, Main Street fills vacant storefronts, sparks local economies, and delivers results that matter. Tailored strategies and programs like Match on Main ensure businesses not only open but thrive, meeting each community's unique needs. From bold business recruitment to robust retention efforts, MMS keeps downtowns buzzing. **This isn't just growth—it's transformation.**

Bold Marketing, Captivating Branding, & Vibrant Events

In 20 years, MMS helps downtowns with bold marketing, unforgettable events, and a vibe that draws 4.2 million visitors—34% from outside the community. These efforts have pumped \$116.9 million into local economies, proving that branding is more than just a logo—it's a movement. With strategic campaigns and dynamic partnerships, each Main Street community showcases its unique flair. Events don't just bring people downtown; they bring dollars, loyalty, and a sense of belonging. **MMS knows how to make downtowns shine, 365 days a year.**

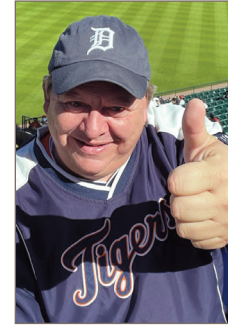
Revitalizing History & Saving Historic Buildings

Main Street saves the past while building the future, driving \$407 million in private and \$137 million in public investment to breathe new life into 2,673 historic buildings. With \$24.6 million in economic impact and 123 jobs created, preservation isn't just about looks—it's a powerhouse for growth. Grants, tax credits, and expert support make saving history a smart business move. MMS ensures downtowns stay authentic, charming, and ready for modern investment. **This is preservation with a purpose.**

Powerful Placemaking Projects

Since 2003, Main Street makes downtowns irresistible with placemaking projects that drive \$123.4 million in economic impact and create 637 jobs. From murals to beautified streetscapes, every detail invites people to gather, shop, and invest. These vibrant spaces are more than pretty—they're powerful, drawing businesses and energy into every corner. Placemaking isn't just an add-on; it's the secret sauce that makes communities shine. **With MMS, downtowns become destinations.**

CITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



“Rogers City’s partnership with Michigan Main Street has brought an energy to our downtown that we haven’t experienced

in a great many years. Empty spaces are filling up, storefronts are decorated, bright, and welcoming, great new events with a focus on arts and culture have brought foot traffic, smiles, and excitement. We have a fantastic Main Street executive director who is making positive things happen daily, aided by an engaged Main Street board and a growing army of fabulous volunteers. While there is plenty of work to do, we have forward momentum and a flashing arrow pointing toward a better tomorrow. It’s just been really, really cool to be a part of.”

—Joe Hefele, City Manager, Rogers City

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

“Eight years ago I opened my dream store, Vintage Green Antiques. At the time, I had no idea that Main Street existed and that my business was in the district. During these years, I was encouraged to get involved, invited to attend, and even received a small grant for technology.

I’m so grateful for the support and encouragement. It truly has made a difference for my small business.

Today, I am honored to be the Main Street chair. It’s wonderful to welcome new businesses into the fold. I’m proud of the work the board does on behalf of all stakeholders. We are grateful to be partners with Main Street.”

—Joyce Workman, Board Chair, Wayland Main Street



MEDC LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

2024 has been another fulfilling year for the Michigan Main Street (MMS) team and time flies when you're having this much fun! The MMS team is dedicated to refining technical assistance services that empower local leaders, engage new contributors to downtown revitalization, strengthen partnerships to enhance relationships for both established Main Street programs and organizations pursuing accreditation, and develop a robust network for downtown professionals and volunteers engaged in revitalizing downtowns and commercial corridors across the state.

There is so much to celebrate across the two peninsulas! The MMS team continues to expand available technical assistance service offerings, building new and innovative resources to meet the diverse needs of communities across Michigan. New this year is the property development primer, created to increase development capacity and provide a path to development for

interested and motivated property owners that was deployed in Evert with resounding success! You asked and MMS delivered: three new webinars were added to the Solution Center based on topics communities wanted more information on including historic preservation, fund development and retail merchandising. We are also growing the partnership with Storyville Social to share insights from communities, local leaders and developers that have successfully leveraged technical assistance resources available through MMS and Redevelopment Ready Communities.

My sincere gratitude to Laura Krizov for positioning MMS as an outstanding coordinating program nationally, and to Leigh Young, Josh Prusik and Jill Tremonti for their continued creativity, enthusiasm, and determination in supporting place-based revitalization. The MMS team is here to support community-driven revitalization, ensuring every Michigander has a chance to "Make It in Michigan."

—Michelle Parkkonen, Managing Director, Technical Assistance Programs

MAIN STREET TRAINING SERIES

If your community is interested in learning more about the Michigan Main Street program and the Main Street Approach®, the first step is to complete our training series.

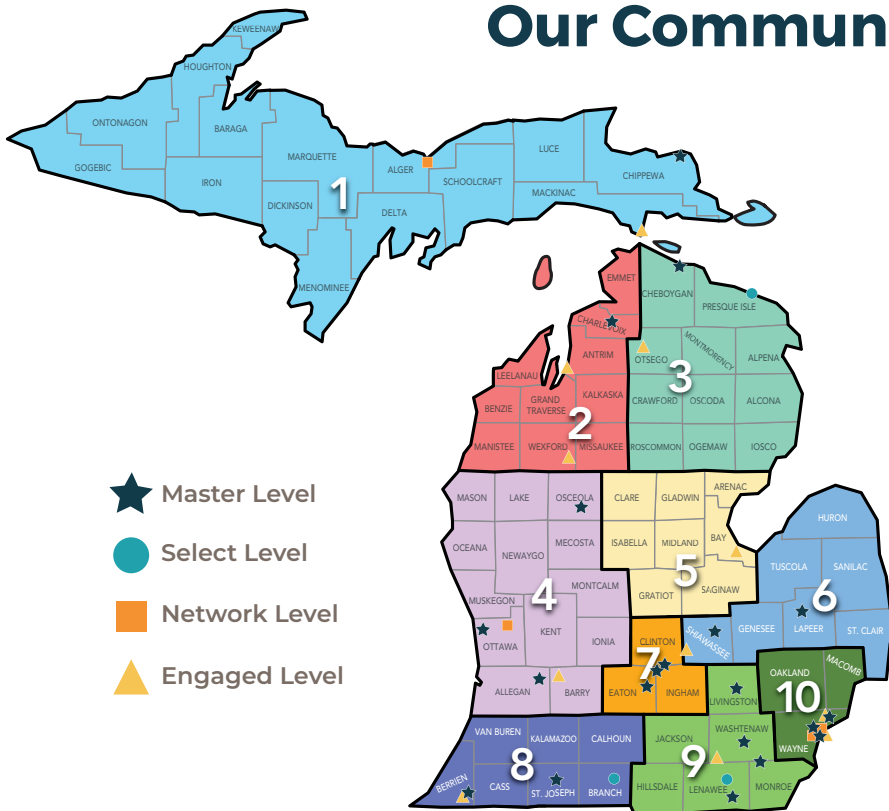
More information about the process to participate in the program can be found on our website at www.miplace.org/programs/michigan-main-street/process.

For more information about our online training, visit www.miplace.org.

"Michigan Main Street communities continue to prove the power of local leadership, driving economic growth, boosting small business, and creating vibrant and engaging places for everyone to enjoy. With the Michigan Main Street program, communities across the state are proving the success that comes with investing in our downtowns."

—Michele Wildman,
Senior Vice President of Community Development, MEDC

Our Communities



MICHIGAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION