Kansas Main Street and
How it Can Help Your Community

Grassroots Economic Development 101: Session 8
Monday, January 24, 2022
A Strong Downtown:

• Builds a positive image for the entire community
• Attracts new businesses, creates jobs, strengthens retail and service markets
• Keeps dollars in the community
• Stabilizes and improves the tax base
• Preserves the historic character of the community
Main Street Is...

• An incremental and comprehensive process (local)
• A self-help program (local)
• A technical-assistance program (state)
• It is NOT a quick fix
Main Street Four-Point Approach

• Began as a pilot program in the 1970s in Texas
• Historic Preservation based
• Kansas program began in 1985 and lasted until 2012
• Kansas program returned in late 2019
• Best Bang-for-the-Buck Economic Development Tool
Main Street Four-Point Approach

• Builds on Assets
  ✓ Architecture
  ✓ Sense of Place
  ✓ Personal Service
  ✓ Character

• Four-Points:
  ✓ Organization
  ✓ Design
  ✓ Promotions
  ✓ Economic Vitality
Organization

- Establishing consensus and cooperation between the public and private sectors
- Volunteer development
- Making sure the local organization is solvent
- Communication/Public relations
Design

• Enhancing the visual quality of downtown
  ✓ Buildings and storefronts
  ✓ Signs
  ✓ Window displays
  ✓ Graphics
  ✓ Streetscape
Promotion

• Re-establishing downtown as a compelling place to shop, visit, invest

• Marketing downtowns unique characteristics
  ✓ Retail promotional activities
  ✓ Special events
  ✓ Image development
Economic Vitality

• Strengthen and diversify economic base of downtown
  ✓ Helping existing business expand
  ✓ Recruit new business
  ✓ Provide a balanced mix of business
  ✓ Convert unused space into productive property
  ✓ Sharpen the competitiveness of downtown merchants
Eight Guiding Principles

• Strengthen and diversify economic base of downtown
  ✓ Comprehensive Approach
  ✓ Relies on Quality
  ✓ Public-Private Partnership
  ✓ Changing Attitudes
  ✓ Focus on Existing Assets
  ✓ Self-Help Approach
  ✓ Incremental
  ✓ Implementation Oriented
Next Step(s)

• Affiliate Community
  • $400/year
  • Send up to four people to quarterly training

• Designated Community
  • Workshop in late 2021
  • Competitive application process
  • Demonstrate need and commitment to Main Street Approach
  • Communities receive extensive training and technical support
Benefits of Designation

• Specific assistance for your community
  ✓ Training for staff, board and committees
• Market Analysis
• Progress Visits
• Quarterly training
• Design assistance and training
• Technical assistance as needed
• Access to grants (when available)
• Registration to national conference
What is Your Commitment?

• Understand and commit to the Main Street Approach
  ✓ Including the Eight Principles
• Sufficient local program funding
• Hire a professional, qualified director
• Create an organization to carry out the work
Contact us with questions

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CDBG Downtown Commercial Rehabilitation

• CDBG-CR is designed to assist private property owners in the rehabilitation of blighted downtown buildings.

• The goal is that the strategic investment of grant funds will help prevent the spread of blighted conditions to other nearby structures.
CDBG-CR General Overview

• Slum and Blight or LMI Job National Objective
• Limit of one building per application
• Only for-profit buildings
• Applicant must be the local unit of government
CDBG-CR Funding Details

• Applications accepted until December 2, 2022
• $1 million set aside for Slum and Blight
• $1 million set aside for Job Creation and Retention
• Maximum Grant amount $250,000
• 25% match required by private owner of building
CDBG-CR Questions?

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