Citizens’ Institute on Rural Design

The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ is a National Endowment for the Arts leadership initiative in partnership with the Housing Assistance Council and buildingcommunityWORKSHOP.

rural-design.org
CIRD Partnership Team
Today’s Presenters

Manuel Ochoa
Principal Founder
Ochoa Urban Collaborative

Margie Reese
Executive Director
Wichita Falls Alliance for Arts and Culture

Megan Laudenschlager
Executive Director
Strengthen ND
Special Guest Message

Congresswoman Chellie Pingree
Maine, D-1
Congresswoman Chellie Pingree (D-1 Maine)
Next Presenter

Manuel Ochoa
Principal Founder
Ochoa Urban Collaborative
Rethinking/Redesigning Downtown
Resources for COVID-19 Recovery
COVID-19 AND MAIN STREET:
Small Business Research Report

Mike Powe, Ph.D., Director of Research, Main Street America
Matt Wagner, Ph.D., VP of Revitalization Programs, Main Street America
Coronavirus Fallout

- 100,000 businesses have closed for good (Washington Post)
- Of the nation’s approximately 30 million small businesses, nearly 7.5 million small businesses may be at risk of closing permanently over the coming five months, and 3.5 million are at risk of closure in the next two months.
- COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on small businesses’ revenue, and millions of Americans employed by our nation’s smallest businesses are at risk of unemployment as a result. Approximately 35.7 million Americans employed by small businesses appear to be at risk of unemployment.
Snapshot of Main Street Businesses

- Over 58% of businesses lease, over 38% own
- Almost 66% have 5 employees or less
- 63% do not have an online sales presence
- Over 38% report that about 25% of their sales from their online portal
Economic Shifts

We will survive this!

However, downtowns will look very different when we get through this
Very different, indeed!
To Clutter or Declutter
Main Street Defined

• Main Street™ is a volunteer-led, place-based management strategy and network of over 1,600 communities of all sizes from rural to urban areas who share a commitment to place and building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development.

• Main Street is a preservation-based economic development framework driven by a locally-adopted, market-based strategy.
Main Street America

• Since 1980, Main Street America has been helping revitalize older and historic commercial districts.

• Main Street was invented when retail left downtown for the shopping mall. Main Streets have survived the Big Box, the Great Recession, and “town center” shopping mall conversions.
The Main Street Approach
TRIAGE, TRANSITION, AND TRANSFORMATION
Design to improve the physical environment. For example:

- Façade improvements
- Streetscapes
- Adaptive reuse
- Public art
- Open space design
- Wayfinding
Promotion

Promotion to market the district. For example:

- Street festivals
- Business niche events
- Branding
- Image-building
- Social media strategy
Transformation Strategies Include:

- Health
- Seniors/Aging-in-Place
- Food & Agriculture
- Arts
- Entertainment & Nightlife
- Recreation
- Heritage tourism
Examples
DOUBLE UP FOOD BUCKS
IS NOW AT

NOGALES MERCADO
FARMERS MARKET

WWW.NOGALESMERCADO.COM

The corner of Court Street and
Morley Avenue, Nogales, AZ 85621
Fridays 4 p.m. – 7 p.m.
Some best practices to keep in mind:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering when you cough or sneeze.
- Keep a safe distance from others, at least 6 feet apart.

Some tips on how to wash your mask:

- Wash your mask with soap and water.
- Use hot water and detergent.
- Let it air dry completely before reuse.

Some tips on how to store your mask:

- Keep it away from direct sunlight.
- Store it in a clean, dry place.
- Avoid touching your face when wearing this or other masks.

These are non-medical, washable masks. We recommend that you wash your masks after each use. Please allow 2-3 weeks for your order to be shipped.

For more information:

Downtown Rochester Development Authority
248-656-0060 • info@downtownrochestermi.com • 308 1/2 Main Street Rochester, Michigan 48307
Enhance Choices!

A wide variety of independent businesses, each serving their customers' tastes, creates greater overall choice for all of us.

More reasons: amiba.net/locathero
Case Studies
Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance is helping businesses implement digital and physical store improvements. Their three-part small business assistance program, Bricks & Clicks, will start with a training for all downtown businesses. Small business owners will then apply to get matched with local technical assistance experts, who will help them identify solutions to challenges and prepare grant project proposals. Grant-eligible projects can either address public health improvements at physical locations (the Bricks) or make digital enhancements (the Clicks) to boost online brand identity and e-commerce.
Niles Main Street will create an online sales portal for their local merchants called Meet ME Downtown in Niles. Niles has already started telling stories of their local businesses on social media and plans to repurpose this content for the website, which will be accompanied by links to webstores (for those that have them). Along with the website, Niles Main Street will create promotional materials, including posters, window clings for participating businesses, car window clings for customers, t-shirts, and shopping bags, as well as advertising with local newspaper and radio media.
The Main Street Approach to Recovery

As downtowns begin to reopen to the public, the Main Street Approach can serve as a powerful tool for economic recovery efforts. The Main Street Approach is a time-tested framework for community-driven, comprehensive revitalization that has strengthened downtowns across the country. The strategies that guide this approach are organized around four points: Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion, and Organization. Organization involves creating a strong foundation for a sustainable revitalization effort, including cultivating partnerships, community involvement, and resources for the district. Keep reading to learn about Organization-related recovery activities and ideas to help your Main Street navigate the impact of COVID-19.

- Recruit a public health official to your Board of Directors.
  - Offer an ex-officio slot to help guide your recovery efforts.
- Be prepared to advocate for your program when state and local stimulus packages are developed.
  - Publish your program’s annual statistics.
  - Create a recovery plan with a budget.
  - Have letters of support ready for your organization.
  - Reach out to your city to ensure they know your program needs continued or increased funding. Ask your coordinating program for a letter of support to your local government officials.

- Risk assess your budget.
  - Develop backup plans for revenue reductions and consider other sources of revenue, including:
    - Community Foundations
    - Local/Regional Corporations for small business programming and operational support
    - Permission to recall special event sponsorships for alternative downtown programming and operational support
- Develop strategies to raise revenue now.
  - Create an email campaign asking your stakeholders for donations to support Main Street. Describe how COVID-19 is impacting your downtown and your organization, share how your program is responding, and explain how you will use their donation.
  - Thank everyone who has supported your organization in the past, and show photos of your recent impact, if possible.
Helpful Tips for Community Leaders

- Understand local, state, and Federal guidelines for reopening
- Survey residents
- Engage with local public health officials
- Adjust community events

As small businesses begin to reopen to the public across the nation, they will not only need to adhere to local and state guidelines for reopening, but also adjust basic operations to address changes in consumer psyche that may shift shopping habits and perceptions of safe shopping. The following is a set of tips and resources for Main Street programs and other community leaders who will serve as an important source of information for small businesses seeking guidance and clarity during a reopening period.

1. Understand local, state, and federal guidelines for reopening. While there will be much consistency between states, we fully anticipate each state may have particular nuances that will need to be communicated to your small businesses. Read through your state and local reopening guidelines as they are released. Here is an example from Sandy Springs, Ga.

2. Survey your residents about their shopping preferences. While your state may have "reopened," your consumers’ response is a big unknown at this time. Will they shop the same way? Have they become dependent upon delivery and pick-up, and thus those access alternatives should remain as part of business operations? How will they feel about shopping in close proximity to other shoppers? What social distancing protocols should you put in place as you reopen?

3. Engage with local public health officials on guidance they could provide to small business owners. While it is unlikely the CDC and/or OSHA will develop a national “safe business certification,” you may consider working with local and state officials to develop a set of recommendations in addition to state guidelines.

4. Adjust community events as needed to ensure community health. Special events are also an important form of social engagement, but should be carefully considered given recommended large group gathering guidelines and any local consumer safety concerns. Activities that can be managed by closing streets or leveraging park spaces, riverfronts, etc. with egress/ingress locations to control for density, may be needed in early recovery stages to effectively position districts as safe gathering places.

Other ways to engage with your public health officials include asking them to host a webinar reviewing the state guidelines with a Q&A session, having them review any additional recommendations you are encouraging your small business owners to consider, or offering them a temporary or full-time board seat to provide guidance and support to your board of directors.

Special events are also an important form of social engagement. For example, to meet consumer demand for social engagement safely, some cities are closing down downtown streets on Sundays to allow...
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A Guidebook to Help Independent Retailers Re-Enter Storefronts Safely
Streetsense

Hotel Survival Guide: How to Reopen Profitably

RESOURCES FOR HOTELS PLANNING RELAUNCH
MAY 2020
Thank You

For contact: Manuel T. Ochoa, AICP
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Margie Reese
Executive Director
Wichita Falls Alliance for Arts and Culture
Design in Rural Communities

Don’t Fence Me In

Imaginative Minds murals

Wichita Dome

Activating Public Spaces with Art
Design Thinking Approach

Activating Public Spaces with Art
Teams/Talent/Partners

Activating Public Spaces with Art
The Dream Project

Activating Public Spaces with Art
Next Presenter

Megan Laudenschlager
Executive Director
Strengthen ND
North Dakota & COVID-19
Worry about everything; panic about nothing.
- Questions -
- Questions -