Main Street America™ is a program of the nonprofit National Main Street Center, a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Coordinating agencies such as the N.C. Department of Commerce’s NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center, locally designated communities in North Carolina and more than 1,400 additional neighborhoods and communities across the country are working in collaboration with the National Main Street Center to build stronger communities through preservation-based economic development. There are 78 designated Main Street and Small Town Main Street communities in North Carolina, yet the principles of Main Street® are adopted and followed by hundreds of communities throughout the state.

We are so excited about the direction that Downtown Morehead City is headed, and we attribute that to the Four-Point Approach of Main Street!

LISA RUEH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DOWNTOWN MOREHEAD CITY, INC.

OUR MISSION
The NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center works in regions, counties, cities, towns, downtown districts and in designated North Carolina Main Street communities, to inspire placemaking through building asset-based economic development strategies that achieve measurable results such as investment, business growth and jobs.
2019 Calendar Year
NC MAIN STREET PROGRAM SERVICES DELIVERED

The NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center provides a robust calendar of training and education opportunities each year. In partnership with the North Carolina Downtown Development Association (NCDDA), Regional Meetings were held with downtown professionals in May and November in the state’s prosperity zones. A Main Street Directors’ Meeting was held in Mount Airy in August 2019 and provided three days of intense training for Main Street Directors and their staff. Main Street Basic Training provides Main Street and Small Town Main Street program staff, board members and volunteers with in-depth knowledge in the components of each of the four areas of Main Street’s comprehensive program: Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion and Organization. Training on one of the four points is held each quarter, in January, April, August and November.

TRAINING & EDUCATION

Numerous networking events and educational opportunities focused on small business and downtown revitalization were offered throughout the conference.

NC MAIN STREET COMMUNITIES DATA 1981 - 2019

COMMUNITY STATISTICS | FISCAL YEAR 2018-19
NCMS – NORTH CAROLINA MAIN STREET COMMUNITIES; STMS – SMALL TOWN MAIN STREET COMMUNITIES

North Carolina Main Street and Small Town Main Street volunteers spent a total of 150,372 volunteer hours in their respective downtown districts in FY 2018-19. Independent Sector, (IndependentSector.org) the nation’s leading authority in the value of a volunteer hour, estimates that in North Carolina, an hour of volunteer service is valued at $24.19. Therefore, 150,372 volunteer hours is an investment of $3,637,499.
GRANTS & FUNDING

Main Street Solutions Fund

The North Carolina Main Street Solutions Fund provides maximum support to small businesses in designated micropolitans located in Tier 2 and Tier 3 counties and/or in designated North Carolina Main Street communities. Seven Sounds Brewery in Elizabeth City was awarded $200,000 in Main Street Solutions funding in 2019. It is anticipated that the funds will leverage an additional $4.1 million in local public and private investment and will create eight full-time and part-time jobs.

Since the inception of the Main Street Solutions Fund program in 2009, the $4.8 million in Main Street Solutions Funds has leveraged an additional $41.8 million in local public and private investment to assist 65 businesses that have created or retained 767 full-time and part-time jobs.

Downtown Strong & Local Capacity Grant Awards

In 2019, the NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center partnered with Governor Roy Cooper’s Hometown Strong Initiative to spur rural economic development in North Carolina communities. Downtown Revitalization services were provided to 24 communities located in the eight prosperity zones in the state. Five experienced Main Street professionals were hired to conduct a downtown assessment and provide each town with a plan of work to serve as a step-by-step roadmap to improve the downtown districts for economic prosperity. In addition, Local Capacity Grant Awards totaling $600,740 were allocated to 32 projects in 29 communities. Some of the funds for this program were specifically allocated to hurricane recovery efforts such as stormwater mitigation and building repair. Other funds were awarded to community efforts such as studies on employment, economic development and business recruitment; web design and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) support; and commercial façade improvements for downtown properties. These grants all support community-designed, short-term, municipal projects that help build local capacity. All projects will be completed in 2020.

NC MAIN STREET & RURAL PLANNING CENTER TEAM

The NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center team is comprised of Main Street and downtown revitalization specialists, rural and community economic development planners, special project coordinators, and Geographic Information System (GIS) analysts.

Elizabeth (Liz) Parham
Director
Darren Rhodes
Rural Planning Program Manager
Community Economic Development Planner - Piedmont Triad Region
Sherry Adams
Coordinator, Downtown Programming and Technical Assistance
Wesley Barker
ARC Community Development Planner - Northwest Region
Ann Bass
ARC Community Development Planner - Western Region
Will Best
Coordinator, Special Projects
Viki Dekle
Main Street Grants Administrator
Jeff Emory
Community Economic Development Planner - Southwest Region
Charles Halsall
Coordinator, Downtown Programming and Technical Assistance
Grace Lawrence
Community Economic Development Planner – Sandhills Region
Glen Locascio
GIS Analyst
Bruce Naegelen
Community Economic Development Planner - North Central Region
Tierra Norwood
Program Associate
Lee Padrick
Chief Planner
Community Economic Development Planner - Northeast Region
Naomi Riley
Coordinator, Downtown Services
Karen Smith
Coordinator, Rural Solutions
Amy Suggs
Community Economic Development Planner - Southeast Region
Mark Zeigler
Community Economic Development Planner

For a complete list of the NC Main Street and Small Town Main Street communities, visit nccommerce.com/about-us/divisions-programs/rural-economic-development/nc-main-street-rural-planning-center