



# NEW MEXICO MAINSTREET™

ENGAGE PEOPLE • REBUILD PLACES • REVITALIZE ECONOMIES

## New Mexico MainStreet Accelerator Benchmarks

*Revised, January 2024*

### BACKGROUND

In 2023, New Mexico MainStreet (NMMS) developed a new pathway for local communities to achieve Main Street designation. Organizations and/or communities interested in becoming a Main Street program must first apply to participate in a NMMS project-based initiative – either a Frontier Communities Initiative, Native American Communities Initiative, or an Urban Neighborhood Commercial Corridor Communities Initiative. Please see the NMMS Program Guidelines document or [nmmainstreet.org](http://nmmainstreet.org) for more information on project-based initiatives.

Upon successful completion of a project-based initiative, applicants interested in moving toward Main Street designation will be invited to submit an application for a second project and development of a Revitalization Action Plan that will include both local priorities and benchmarks established by NMMS to guide the applicants progress toward Main Street designation. Revitalization Action Plans should include actions and projects within each of the four points of the Main Street Approach (Organization, Economic Vitality, Promotion, Design), including actions specific to resource development, such as fundraising/ grantwriting, volunteer recruitment, and securing a MOU/service contract with the local municipality.

Upon successful completion of the second project and the Revitalization Action Plan, the applicant will be eligible for NMMS Accelerator program designation. As an Accelerator program, the designee will embark on achieving the benchmarks established by NMMS and contained within this document. Over a 12-to-18-month timeframe, NMMS will provide guidance and technical assistance throughout the Accelerator process to move the designee toward designation as a Main Street America Affiliate program.

### ACCELERATOR BENCHMARKS

The following goals and objectives should be incorporated into the Revitalization Action Plan and achieved during the Accelerator process. Some objectives identified below contain specific tasks that “must” be completed, as well as some example tasks that Accelerator designees should use as a guide for identifying tasks and actions specific to their program. NMMS anticipates that the action plans will also include projects and activities specific to that community/district that have been identified as a priority by local stakeholders and their local government partners.

**GOAL 1 - ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Establish and maintain a high-functioning non-profit organization. (Lead Point: Organization)

OBJECTIVES

- A. Implement and update revitalization action plan to guide work, track efforts, and measure impacts during Accelerator process.
- B. Achieve IRS 501c3 non-profit organization status.
  - a. File Articles of Incorporation with NM Secretary of State.
  - b. Develop and approve organizational bylaws.
  - c. Develop and approve organizational policies.
  - d. Develop Board Member job descriptions and responsibilities.
  - e. Recruit and seat Board.
  - f. Submit IRS Form 1023 Application.
- C. Seek funding for the organization and projects.
  - a. Plan and/or implement at least one fundraising activity.
  - b. Develop fundraising collateral materials.
- D. Recruitment of volunteers for project implementation
  - a. Plan and/or implement volunteer recruitment for the organization and/or a project.
- E. Educate Board and volunteers on the Main Street Approach and other topics as needed.
  - a. Complete Main Street Approach overview training (Required for Board).
  - b. Complete Non-Profit Management training (Required for Board).
  - c. Complete Organization Point training (Required for Board).
  - d. Complete Economic Vitality Point training (Required for Board).
  - e. Complete Promotion Point training (Required for Board).
  - f. Complete Design Point training (Required for Board).
- F. Hire staff (minimum part-time to achieve MSA Affiliate designation).
  - a. Develop staff job description(s).
  - b. Develop staff policies and procedures.
- G. Develop an annual work plan to be implemented as an MSA Affiliate program.

**GOAL 2 - PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS:** Establish and maintain partnerships with partner organizations, anchor institutions and governmental entities whose work is relevant to the success of the organization and its projects. (Lead Point: Organization; Secondary Point: Economic Vitality)

OBJECTIVES

- A. Establish a working relationship with local government, including key city/county officials and staff (e.g., elected official representing district, city/county administrator, planning/community development/code enforcement, etc.).
  - a. Secure Memorandum of Understanding/service contract with local government.
- B. Establish a working relationship with partner organizations (Economic Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Development Center, regional Council of Governments, NMEDD Regional Representative, etc.).
- C. Establish a working relationship with district and community anchor institutions (other non-profits, higher education institutions, local financial institutions, etc.).

**GOAL 3 - COMMUNICATION, OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT:** Create awareness of the organization and its activities among community members and stakeholders. (Lead Point: Organization; Secondary Point: Promotion).

OBJECTIVES

- A. Generate and distribute communication pieces and collateral materials.
  - a. Create a Business Card, Letterhead, Press Release Template.
  - b. Create a General Brochure/Rack Card about the organization.
- B. Develop and utilize online marketing venues (website and social media).
  - a. Create a Facebook page; update on a weekly basis.
  - b. Create an Instagram profile; update on a weekly basis. (Can be linked to Facebook page.)
  - c. Create a social media strategy/calendar
  - d. Create a website, add organizational elements, such as the organization's mission and vision statements, Board and volunteer information, district map, etc.
- C. Establish relationships with local media.
  - a. Create an email list of contacts for local, regional, and state media.

**GOAL 4 – DISTRICT PROMOTION:** Use marketing, events, and promotions to establish a place brand/identity for the district/downtown/compound/commercial corridor to instill community pride and attract visitors and tourists. (Lead Point: Promotion)

OBJECTIVES

- A. Promote the district and its businesses.
  - a. Create a brand essence statement for the district.
  - b. Develop a brand strategy and marketing plan (integrate with social media strategy)
  - c. Create or adopt a district logo with style guide.
  - d. Add district elements to website that include:
    - i. Events and activities page
    - ii. District business listing/map
    - iii. District information for residents, visitors, tourists, entrepreneurs/investors
    - iv. Hosting information for other organizations holding events in the district
- B. Develop and implement events, activities, and promotions.
  - a. Review and list existing events held in the district.
  - b. Select one existing event to add a MainStreet element and implement it.
  - c. Develop idea, create PIP for a special event.
  - d. Develop idea, create PIP for a retail activity/event.
  - e. Create an event sponsorship/donation form.

**GOAL 5 - BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT:** Engage with and support existing and future businesses and entrepreneurs in the Corridor. (Lead Point: Economic Vitality)

OBJECTIVES

- A. Engage with and build relationships with business owners/property owners.
  - a. Develop business inventory.
  - b. Develop property inventory and identify priority vacancies.
  - c. Conduct business/property owner visits.
- B. Facilitate and provide education and support/assist to business owners/property owners.
  - a. Develop and implement a plan for collecting business owner feedback to identify wants, needs, opportunities, and challenges; this might include surveys, meetings, conversations, etc.
  - b. Develop and deliver education and support based on business owner feedback.

**GOAL 6 - PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS:** Implement physical improvements and other related activities that connect the district, enhance public spaces, improve commercial properties, and increase public art offerings. (Lead Point: Design)

OBJECTIVES

- A. Work with NMMS to define initial district boundaries.
- B. Identify opportunities for physically enhancing the district (public and private property).
  - a. Ex: Regular district walks with Board/volunteers/stakeholders).
- C. Work with business/property owners to enhance and improve their property.
  - a. Ex: Good design education, Façade squads, façade/signage grants
- D. Work with the community to implement placemaking and beautification projects.
  - a. Ex: District clean ups, public art (murals, painted electrical boxes), parklets, pop ups, etc.)