THE MAIN STREET DESIGN: POWER, POLITICS, AND PRIORITIES

by

HELEN ARNOLD PERSON

(Under the Direction of John C. Waters)

ABSTRACT

Introduced in 1980 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Main Street program is defined as economic revitalization within the context of historic preservation. The program is recommended as a local government supported entity with non-profit administration. Some Georgia cities have opted to implement a governmental administration structure but, for some, a lack of collaboration among public and private entities exacerbated by the state's fragmented training and information delivery system has resulted in erratic success rates among statewide Main Street cities. For some, this has resulted in the loss of historic buildings and character central to the success of the Main Street model.

This examination of Georgia's Main Street program confirms this premise leading to the call for development and implementation of a more holistic approach to the Main Street program in Georgia.

INDEX WORDS: Main Street; National Trust for Historic Preservation; Downtown Development Authority (DDA); Historic Preservation Commission (HPC); historic preservation; downtown development; economic revitalization; community development; economic development; Georgia Main Street; The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation

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DEDICATION

To my husband Darrell for his love, support, encouragement, steadfast commitment and great dinners;

To my parents Haase & Evelyn Arnold for their love and lifelong dedication to the betterment of their children and our educations;

To my daughter Stephanie for being a cheerleader throughout this process; and

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To Donna Gabriel for having the patience of Job;

To my classmates for rising to the challenge of educating someone older than their parents;

To the preservation pioneers who fought the battles, gave us the how-to-do-it pieces, and continue to encourage the fight;

To the professionals throughout Georgia who are striving daily to prove that economic revitalization in a historic context works and who have been so forthcoming in providing information and opinions for this work; and

To my friends and family who have listened so patiently and didn't make fun of me for going back to school when everyone else my age is retiring;

I dedicate this work to all of you with my love and sincere appreciation.

- *Helen*

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PREFACE

The small town struggling to make a comeback is not a new dilemma nor is it the direct result of the current economic woes being experienced since 2007 throughout the United States. My own north Georgia hometown, once bustling with a thriving agricultural and industrial economic base, has been battling an exodus of sorts since the mid-twentieth century. In 1980, a program from the National Trust for Historic Preservation was introduced in Georgia and five other states. Amid cries that it will save our town from deterioration and bring back jobs, our citizens embraced the Main Street program hoping it could, indeed, save us from the inevitable decay caused by shuttered buildings and empty streets.

After twenty-five years, Main Street's success in my hometown had been sporadic; it had posted a record of "two steps forward, one step back". The only aspect of Main Street that had been consistently successful was the community events and even those were met with some resistance from retailers feeling the competition from participating crafters. We could see great success in the form of building rehabilitations and new businesses opening in nearby towns of similar size and demographic and wanted that for our city. Earlier this year, hometown's Main Street program fell victim to budget cuts. The Mayor said the program had never worked as it was supposed to anyway.

During its last year of existence, I was serving on my hometown's Main Street Board of Directors. The directors reached the conclusion that local deficiencies were compounded by the state administration's own shortcomings. The uneven success rate of Main Street programs around Georgia confirmed Main Street's claim to be a local self-help program dependent upon local resources, but it must have the support of the statewide coordinating administration to realize success throughout the program. From the frustration of watching my town's program falter, the idea to research the Main Street program, its history and implementation in Georgia was born. In evaluating what had happened to our local

program, I wondered how the state organization could be a better model and mentor to the local programs and teach them how to make optimum use of their local resources, human or otherwise.

Purpose of this Study

The purpose for this study is to determine whether the Georgia Main Street program has been implemented in accordance with the National Trust of Historic Preservation program design, briefly document the Georgia program's history, and make an analysis of the health of the program today with recommendations for future consideration. A cooperative, holistic approach coordinating efforts among elected officials, appointed boards, authorities, and commissions, local business owners, and community non-profit organizations, along with community volunteers is reputed to be the key to the success of a community's Main Street program and has been promoted by the National Trust since the program's inception. That has not been the method adopted in some communities, however, begging the question "why not since that is how it works best?"

Examining the history of the Main Street program from its infancy as the Main Street project, its introduction as a three year, six state pilot program, and its current structure in the former pilot states thirty years later, this document will further show the present structure and operation of partner organizations in Georgia. The teamwork of these groups with Main Street participating cities and how some present day policies and procedures are positively or negatively impacting the Georgia Main Street statewide program hold one of the keys to the state of Georgia Main Street today. In Georgia, these groups typically consist of the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office, the Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions, the Georgia Municipal Association, the Georgia Downtown Association, and the Georgia Cities Foundation. With the Georgia Trust, SHPO, and GAPC all preservation-related while the latter three primarily focus on economic development, a critical piece to their successful partnership will be the ability to generate a strong cache of tools, services and programs showing the distinctions among the organization while emphasizing the importance of a collaborative approach.

Finally, a look into Main Street's progress in the Georgia cities of Vienna, Fort Valley, Washington, Eatonton, and Bainbridge will underline the question of whether Georgia's Main Street program should remain under the state government umbrella or move to a new, but familiar, non-profit administrator.

Methodology

This document will share a snapshot of Georgia Main Street as viewed through information originated in published news and feature stories; journal and magazine articles; published opinions and observations; an online survey and follow-up case study interviews, as well as information from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, its National Main Street Center and coordinating state and local programs throughout the United States.

An online survey was developed with questions regarding the interaction of the local Main Street program with the municipal Downtown Development Authority and Historic Preservation Commission, as well as the level of support received from the state coordinating program. Opportunity for opinion statements from participants revealed a program that has enjoyed a good reputation overall, but that is struggling for survival on several fronts. The current struggle is contributing to a state of uncertainty for local programs compounded by the compromised fiscal support for the program. This inadequacy is filtering to the local level and could easily jeopardize the stability of local Main Street programs fighting to keep the funding to continue.

The Georgia Main Street program includes a second category of eligibility for cities of fewer than 5,000 residents. In the 1990s, the Better Hometown program was introduced with modified eligibility standards to allow smaller communities the opportunity to participate in the Main Street program without some of the more stringent regulations as specified for cities with more than 5,000 residents. Better Hometown cities are not required to employ a full-time paid manager opting, instead, for a part time manager who may have other responsibilities, in the case of city-sponsored programs or who may strictly work on a part-time basis as is the case in some of the smaller cities.

The Case Studies

The Case Study phase of research for this paper offered the opportunity to visit the cities whose representatives were being interviewed. During this phase, the individuality of the city becomes more evident as its story is shared through the follow-up question-and-answer process. Specific questions were asked, but additional information shared with the interviewer offered a more individual perspective of the role Main Street, the local DDA and HPC, and revitalization overall are playing in the city.

In Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION, the comprehensive revitalization approach is demonstrated in Vienna's holistic implementation strategy. The presence of a longtime volunteer transitioning to the role of community development professional has contributed to the local program's stability and is a major factor in its success despite the town's small population and building inventory.

Located south of Macon in the western quadrant of the state, Fort Valley (2000 Census: pop. 8,005) has enjoyed the success of another longtime volunteer-turned-professional serving as the rudder for the town's Main Street program. The greatest challenges for Fort Valley – unenforced city ordinances and a lack of citizen awareness of preservation issues – are being addressed by an active DDA-Main Street Board of Directors presenting community awareness workshops and gently nudging City Hall to demand code enforcement for the good of the community. A spirit of cooperation among community development entities – DDA-Main Street and the HPC – as well as recognition of the value of volunteer training contribute to the successes being tallied in Fort Valley and demonstrate the mid-range results of the online survey presented in Chapter 2 MAIN STREET: A SURVEY OF GEORGIA CITIES.

The backdrop for Chapter 3 MAIN STREET: A SOLID SOLUTION FOR STRUGGLING DOWNTOWNS is one of Georgia's oldest cities. Washington's location on U.S. Highway 78 between Augusta and Athens offered great opportunity for growth until the advent of the interstate highway system routing major traffic south of the city on Interstate Highway 20 bisecting the state east-to-west from Augusta to Atlanta to Carrollton. Though Washington is one of three incorporated cities in Wilkes County and has served as the county seat since its 1804 incorporation, the city provides the bulk of community economic development activity for the county of 10,687. Washington's program is indicative

of the success that follows a cooperative, creative approach to community development within an environment boasting as many historic houses and buildings as Washington. Despite perceived inconsistencies within the interpretation and regulation of the historic preservation activity in Washington, the city's redevelopment efforts have been successful during its Main Street-Better Hometown history confirming the value of a properly incorporated Main Street program as the basis for local revitalization efforts.

The middle Georgia city of Eatonton in CHAPTER 4 MAIN STREET: GEORGIA'S IDENTITY CRISIS demonstrates how an inconsistency in the city's historic preservation ordinance has greatly impacted ability of the Eatonton Historic Preservation Commission to perform their regulatory duties. Further, this situation has rendered the city ineligible for Certified Local Government status due to the incompatibility of the local ordinance with the State of Georgia's 1980 enabling legislation. Personality conflicts, politics, and power plays among the members of the city's DDA appear to have stalled the city's forward motion toward revitalizing the downtown business district and resulted in the third reconstitution of this body since 2008. This presentation of a city's revitalization in flux due to ordinance and appointed authority dysfunction will illustrate the value of dedicated, informed professionals and volunteers striving toward the common goal of maintaining historic preservation as the heart of community redevelopment.

The deep southwest Georgia city of Bainbridge serves as the model city for CHAPTER 5 MAIN STREET TODAY: GEORGIA PARTNERS. Illustrating the importance for the local-state-national public-private bodies to work together cooperatively, lifelong Bainbridge residents created a statewide network to accomplish the rehabilitation of buildings they knew were critical to the overall redevelopment efforts of the city. That historic preservation lies at the core of any successful revitalization of an historic district – residential or commercial – is the hallmark of the Main Street program as designed by the National Trust. The dedication of the Bainbridge preservationists and community leaders to maintain that model for their city stands testament as the city continues to call on its state and local partner network as they move forward with new projects.

Expected Results

In some cities today, their downtowns are the picture of success. Shoppers and diners of all ages fill the streets while retailers scurry to find the next big item that will bring customers into their store awhile longer. Other communities continue to struggle with vacant storefronts, deteriorating buildings, and a frustrated citizenry seeing the productivity of neighboring towns and wonder why their own business district suffers.

Why does the Main Street concept not succeed in some communities? Main Street's success hinges on a comprehensive, collaborative strategy among all stakeholders. Failure to accomplish that working arrangement will result in limited successes over a longer time frame. On the pages that follow, we will examine the implementation of the Main Street Design in Georgia and some of its member communities in an effort to pinpoint how this observation has been realized on a local level, as well as to make recommendations for the future of Main Street in Georgia.

Is the Main Street program being abandoned in favor of a thinly-veiled imitation? Has the State program lost its Main Street focus and, thereby, its roots in historic preservation in favor of an economic development-heavy agenda without consideration for the community's heritage or historic assets? Has failure to approach the historic preservation ethic at the grassroots level contributed to a mindset among downtown entities that historic preservation is, as one Georgia Main Street employee referred to it, "elitist"? What is the state of Georgia's Main Street program? Is it too late for revitalization?

For the towns that have not experienced successful downtown revitalization through Main Street, all is not lost. A revised approach to the implementation of the Georgia Main Street program may be the ticket to economic redevelopment for these communities. This document will suggest that, like the downtowns it was designed to save, the Georgia Main Street program needs a revitalization of its structure, program delivery, training, and partnerships to realize maximum return on the state's three decade investment.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BHT	Better Hometown
CLG	Certified Local Government Program
COA	Certificate of Appropriateness
DCA	Department of Community Affairs
DDA	Downtown Development Authority
GAPC	Georgia Alliance for Preservation Commissions
GARC	Georgia Alliance of Regional Commissions
GDA	Georgia Downtown Association
GMA	Georgia Municipal Association
Georgia Trust	Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation
HPC	Historic Preservation Commission
HUD	Housing and Urban Development
MS	Main Street
NASP	National Accreditation Standards of Performance
National Trust	National Trust for Historic Preservation
NMSC	National Main Street Center
DD Programs & Service	*Downtown Development Program Descriptions & Levels of Service*
MS Program Standards	*Main Street/Better Hometown Annual Program Standards*
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Main Streets Then and Now

Traveling through many small to medium sized towns in the United States, one will discover a common theme in their development: government and commercial buildings form the town center from which fan all manner of buildings housing commercial establishments ranging from a bakery to the corner drug store, a dental practice to the local newspaper office. Just beyond the business district will be older residential neighborhoods where everyone from the family of the local bank president to a clerk in the millinery store reside in houses reflective of their inhabitants' socio-economic status. Further still from the town center is the industrial district where stand the factories that built industrialized America.

The hierarchy of government to business to finer residences to more modest houses may vary from place to place, but within a city's developmental pattern resides the distinct characteristics distinguishing one town from another. Whether in unique architectural features, the signature millwork of a local craftsman or the circuitous street patterns that accommodated an historical need, each of America's towns and cities bears the mark of its founding fathers.

It was in an effort to perpetuate this distinctiveness that the Main Street program was developed. As the twentieth century progressed, the debut of the automobile contributed to the suburbanization of residential neighborhoods altering America's need to focus on ensuring each town counted a department store, grocer, and pharmacy among its downtown commercial offerings. In the post-World War II years, traditional composition of downtown gave way to a climate of survival of the fittest. The automobile and improved road systems threatened the very existence of the towns they were invented to support.

As families sought a less urban environment in which to raise their families, their priority became finding convenient access to the goods and services required to support their new lifestyle and living

spaces. Suburban malls and strip shopping centers began to replace the downtown commercial district as a more modern and opportune place to shop. Promises of free parking and climate controlled indoor shopping environments beckoned the mid-twentieth century consumer. As a result, retailers began shuttering their outdated downtown locations as they sought to persuade the consumer of their modern attitude toward business by re-locating in the new suburbia. In mid-size to larger cities, empty downtown buildings became breeding grounds for derelicts seeking shelter bringing with them crime and an atmosphere of neglect. Smaller towns and cities were also faced with empty storefronts contributing to their similarity to a ghost town.

Simultaneously with suburbanization, a drastic shift was occurring in the manufacturing sector as factory owners began to succumb to a price-driven consumer no longer willing to pay more in order to purchase domestically produced goods. It is well documented that many American manufacturers could not compete with the cheaper cost of doing business outside of the United States. By the last quarter of the century, the vacant downtown storefronts were joined by shuttered factories contributing to an environment of decay plaguing America from sea to shining sea.

Despite the decay, the buildings that had once housed busy factories and bustling commercial establishments stood witness to a grand time in the history of their hometowns that had defined the American way of life. It would be their distinctive architecture and past contribution to the building of the community that would prove to be their lifeline to the future.

The 1980 arrival of the Main Street program presented to communities the opportunity to implement a program for revitalizing downtown business districts through the celebration of their unique architecture and community. Focusing on the preservation of historic buildings as a means for a return to economic prosperity, town after town embraced the Main Street program by faithfully employing its recommendations and suggestions. Within a few years, communities began reporting an increase in employment as a result of the restoration and adaptive reuse of buildings that had been a hair's breadth from the wrecking ball. Heightened community satisfaction and involvement, along with a downtown

business retention they had not experienced in years induced an excitement for community redevelopment through the adaptive use of historic, traditional buildings.

The future of local Main Street programs depends upon the adoption of the priority of constructing a sustainable development ethic built upon public-private cooperation and collaboration. The goal of achieving a comprehensive economic and environmental revitalization must be realigned to focus once more upon revitalization occurring within the context of historic preservation using the character-laden buildings that define each city's personality and identity. This must be implemented at the state level by embracing the nationally-recognized Main Street program.

The Main Street design was created in an effort to offer Smalltown USA the tools its populace could use on a local level to resuscitate its local economy. However, just as with any toolbox, the contents must be used as intended and the directions followed in their entirety to produce the desired result. Such has not been the case in locales like my own hometown in northeast Georgia. The reasons for the program's limited success in some communities are varied, but the success or failure of Main Street is the result of what former Bainbridge (GA) newspaper publisher Sam Griffin refers to as "political will"[1]: the desire and motivation on the part of all parties concerned to implement a program in order to fulfill its intent rather than to suit a personal agenda.

Sam Griffin, along with Main Street and Better Hometown Directors, combine with appointed commission members and community volunteers to present a perspective of how the Main Street-Better Hometown program, its state program administration, and local groups are pooling their resources to create a comprehensive community development strategy for their Georgia cities. Presented as chronicles from the follow-up interviews conducted after the online survey had been completed, the narratives allow interviewees to tell their stories in their words.

The case studies are interspersed throughout this document. In each case, an aspect of the city's Main Street experience relates to the topic of the chapter. For example, in this chapter, the Vienna (vi•AN•a) case study presents a small southwest Georgia town with longtime volunteers, some of whom

[1] Griffin, Sam. 2010. Survey follow-up interview by author. Bainbridge, GA. February 10.

have transitioned to employed positions as the Better Hometown or Community Development Executive Director, but who have incorporated the preservation of the city's historic resources as the bastion on which the town's economic revitalization must be based. Seizing every opportunity for collaboration among the municipal, civic, business, and private factions of the city and Dooly County, this city of just under 3,000 (2000 Census: 2,973) shows what an active and properly implemented Main Street program can accomplish.

Case Study: Vienna Better Hometown/DDA - Working Together[2, 3]

The small southwest Georgia town of Vienna is situated seventeen miles north of the small southwest Georgia city of Cordele and just a couple of miles west of Interstate Highway 75. Residents preferring the small town setting enjoy the best of both worlds as less than a one hour drive in almost any direction will place them in a place of employment with a larger organization than those available at home.

It was for towns as small as Vienna and its larger regional neighbors, Cordele, Perry, Albany, and Americus, that the Main Street program was created. Many of these communities were founded through the grit and determination that defined a time in American history when automobile travel from Vienna to Cordele was not a possibility; the mode of transportation took most of a day rather than twenty minutes.

When suburbanization hit Dooly County, many family farms began to cease operation. It did not take long for the business district to feel the county's pain as dress shop after drug store after five and dime went dark. The pluck and determination that had carved Vienna out of the earth lay in the cemetery as the new generation of leaders looked for something or someone to save their town.

The self-help program of Main Street-Better Hometown has been the answer for Vienna, according to Community Development Director Janet Joiner and Vienna Better Hometown Director

[2] Joiner, Janet. 2010. survey follow-up interview by author. Vienna, GA. February 10.

[3] Langley, Stephanie. 2010. "Main Street, DDA, and Historic Preservation – How Are They Working?" online survey. Collector: Main Street/DDA/HPC Survey (Web Link). January 21.

Stephanie Langley. In her online survey responses, Langley said the downtown had made "large strides" in its revitalization efforts.

"We have done well gaining the support of citizens and business owners; the only problem is keeping them 'on board' for an extended period of time," she wrote, "as revitalization and redevelopment is not a 'quick' response."

Vienna's Better Hometown program was established in 2001 as a 501(c)(3) volunteer-driven organization. In the survey follow-up interview conducted February 10, 2010, in her Vienna City Hall office, Joiner explained that a city council member had attempted to implement the program sooner, but the City could not meet the Georgia requirement for a dedicated full-time staff member to head the day-to-day operation. Joiner volunteered with the local program before becoming the Community Development Director, a position that is a direct result of the efforts of the Better Hometown program.

Langley is the second director of the Vienna program and also serves as the City's Beautification Director. A young mother, she was at home with a sick child the day of the interview which presented the opportunity for a second perspective from former Better Hometown Director Joiner. The pair works closely as they build on the accomplishments of the early years of Vienna's involvement in Better Hometown and strive for a strong future.

"We've done a tremendous amount of work in downtown Vienna with restorations and enhancements made possible through grants, private investments, and city funds," Joiner said. "People get excited when you have something going on, but it's hard to keep up the excitement when the down times come. We've been fortunate because we are designated as an Empowerment Zone which provided funding passed along through non-profits and the City, but that expired at the end of 2009."

Echoing the economic downturn distress woes of sister cities, Vienna has set its sights on any program that may offer financial relief in the form of federal, state, regional, or private monies to help finance local efforts. Joiner and Langley research and author most of the proposals in application for grants, but are fortunate to have assembled a group of grant writers who share the time consuming task of answering the requests for proposals from grant makers with deadlines.

In October, 2009, their efforts paid off as Vienna was designated a Preserve America city, a program the Obama Administration has targeted to slash from the 2011 Federal Budget. For now, though, the designation recognizes the efforts of the people of Vienna in preserving their historic rural character while retooling for the future.

Responding to the online survey regarding the structure of Vienna's redevelopment engine, Langley indicated the Vienna DDA "serves mainly for real estate transactions. A DDA member is on the economic restructuring committee of (Vienna Better Hometown) to keep the lines of communication open between both entities…but most of the grant funding, community input, etc. is through Better Hometown."

Noting that the DDA is not diligent about soliciting community input nor is the group proactive in seeking assistance or advice from outside the community, Langley acknowledges there are members from both the DDA and Vienna historic Preservation Commission who either are members or attend the meetings of the other City-appointed group. With a small pool from which to solicit appointees, Langley shared that the DDA "pulls out the stops to repurpose and save the building" when faced with a restore v. teardown situation with one of the historic buildings.

Vienna's Historic Preservation Commission is a dedicated group that has worked to regulate the treatment of the city's historic assets, including the Richardsonian Romanesque Dooly County Courthouse standing sentry on the downtown square. Though the group is well-versed in local issues involving the history and heritage of the community and its resources, Langley lamented their lack of knowledge regarding historic preservation in its entirety.

In calling for a training program for Historic Preservation Commissions, Langley wrote: "It is very important that those who serve on HPC must be educated on Historic Preservation as a whole, not just the efforts that have taken place in their community. This affects our community because we are a small community and some cannot grasp the idea of setting parameters for preservation."

According to Langley's online survey responses, Vienna has varying demographics within its historic district which translates to financial hardship for some to be able to make the improvements to

their property based on the current set of Design Guidelines. “They feel they should not be governed on certain maintenance issues,” she wrote. The ordinance does not include a hardship provision, so the HPC works with property owners on a case-by-case basis in an effort to assist them with compliance.

During the interview, Joiner agreed with Langley’s assessment of both the HPC’s range of knowledge and the challenges of regulating an area composed of a wide range of socio-economic situations literally next door to one another. Joiner said the HPC is “lacking in real knowledge and expertise” and noted that “a lot of it is their fault because they don’t spend more time outside of meetings reading and researching.”

The training the Vienna HPC received was through the Georgia Alliance for Preservation Commissions, but some local enrichment programs have helped to supplement the basics in an attempt to keep the commissioners informed.

In many small cities, the role of the HPC is often confused with that of the local historical society, a situation that exists in Vienna. Joiner explained that the twenty-six-year-old Dooly County Historical Society has been an active proponent for historic preservation efforts in Vienna. As locally significant buildings became endangered with some being demolished, the local officials recognized the benefits of an active historic preservation program and got on board with the development of a preservation ethic on which to build the city’s economic development structure.

“The key right now is getting businesses in place,” Joiner said. She noted that an individual investor has purchased most of the downtown buildings and has begun a restoration and rehabilitation process preparing them for the inevitable economic upswing many hope is just around the corner.

The community has adopted the attitude that they don’t want development to adversely impact Vienna’s rural character, so they strive to enforce the Design Guidelines while trying not to ruffle too many feathers. Joiner said that most Certificates of Appropriateness are approved by the Vienna HPC and that those denied were ultimately approved with conditions. One denial filed for an appeal, but did not complete the process in a timely fashion, so Vienna’s governing body has not yet been publicly tested to

determine their official stance on enforcing Vienna's Design Guidelines. Joiner said that one Council member is a strong preservation proponent, but the rest have, so far, been uncommitted and untested.

For Langley, more support from the Georgia Main Street program would be of great help. Her call for more accessible training opportunities for local organizations resonated with Joiner. As an original member of Vienna Better Hometown, Joiner offered a veteran's assessment of the program's interaction with and support from Georgia Main Street, including the delivery of training.

"Early on, the State DCA was super in helping us get our program established," she recalled, "but I have noticed that the budget crunch has affected our state support. Different departments are handling various programs rather than the same folks we had. Because the State Historic Preservation Office is always fighting for funding, some programs have had to be re-configured contributing to an inconsistency in service capability.

"All the shuffling around and change of personnel has affected the amount of support we now get from the State. Jo Childers[4] is now doing leadership classes with Economic Development and Kimberly Carter is now the State's Main Street contact. The DCA is still handling Main Street, but there has been discussion of dissolving Main Street Georgia due to the budget crunch."

While funding to support the State program remains scarce, the same dilemma is faced at home, Joiner said. Training is a dire need for everyone involved with the DDA, Better Hometown, and the HPC, but participation through the State is difficult.

"By the time a community sends seven people to Savannah or Atlanta for training at $200 each plus their travel expenses, the cost becomes prohibitive for smaller communities," Joiner said. "A matter of finding a solution to time and cost issues is the key."

How does this affect the ability of Vienna Better Hometown to lead the charge for a revitalization of the city's economic and residential communities? How has the community fared despite the challenges of economic doom and gloom all around?

[4] Jo Childers is the former State Coordinator for the Georgia Main Street program. She transitioned to Coordinator of the Office of Downtown Development in mid-2009.

Joiner's summary was that of good participation from the community for the organization's events, programs, and promotions. "Like any other organization, we have had a lot of people who have been on these Better Hometown committees for a long time and we're trying to get some new blood," she noted while adding that the volunteers have been the driving force behind the local Better Hometown successes. "Trying to find new opportunities for existing volunteers is also going to be the key to keeping people involved."

Keeping volunteers motivated during the planning process for community events is the greatest challenge, Joiner said. She acknowledged that the best events are those that are well planned, but that people don't like to attend planning meetings.

Vienna's success through the Main Street-Better Hometown program is testament to the descriptive self-help term often used to describe the local level implementation. The community has integrated the tools to the best of its ability and garnered support from wherever help could be found. While few organizations have the wealth of resources necessary to produce long term success, the small town of Vienna has fared well by reaching consensus on the priority of setting its revitalization efforts within the historic core, distributing decision making and regulatory power throughout the organizational structure, and working to neutralize local political agendas for the betterment of the city.

CHAPTER 2

MAIN STREET: A SURVEY OF GEORGIA CITIES

The Online Statewide Survey

In December, 2009, an online survey link was electronically transmitted to 102 Main Street-Better Hometown Executive Directors / Managers. The title of the survey, "Main Street, DDA, and Preservation - How Are They Working?" was created by the author and submitted for distribution approval through the University of Georgia's Human Subjects Office in fulfillment of the requirements for research using human subjects for the gathering of information.

Of the 102 recipients of the survey link, five deleted the message without opening it, twenty-five read the message without action, and another twenty-four participated in the online survey presented through Survey Monkey, an online survey website. From the pool of participants, four case study cities were selected with two cities indicating their Main Street program is operating successfully, while the remaining two cities indicated difficulty in achieving their goals. The survey with responses is included in the Appendix.

With the purpose of this document examining the state of the Georgia Main Street program, the survey asked questions regarding the function, training, level, cooperation, and effectiveness of the main Street programs at the state and local levels. The responses of survey participants were both intriguing and revealing. In the follow-up interviews, opportunity to respond beyond the ordered choice online instrument offered a more in-depth and candid perspective.

The survey was presented in three parts with each part focusing on the local Downtown Development Authority, the local Historic Preservation Commission, or the local Main Street program. Additionally, questions regarding the level of support received from the state coordinating program, as

well as local issues impacting their ability to achieve success were posed. One city, Washington, was not included in the online survey.

Of those responding, 50.0% (7) indicated they believed the local Main Street-Better Hometown and Downtown Development Authority coordinate efforts with the local HPC to ensure preservation is considered in revitalization efforts; 21.4% (3) indicated they believed this was happening for the most part; one indicated it happens sometimes; one indicated it doesn't really happen; one indicates it never happens; and one indicated their city has no HPC. Of the cities represented in the case studies throughout this document, Vienna, Fort Valley, and Bainbridge fall into the first category while Eatonton indicated the HPC and DDA seldom coordinate their efforts.

With regard to the composition of the local HPC, 28.6% (4) indicated their commission represents varied backgrounds of expertise; 14.3% (2) said there was a good variation; 28.6% said the variation of expertise was okay; while another 7.1% (1) in each of the remaining responses (not really, not at all, I don't know, and We don't have an HPC) showed a lack of diversity among HPC members. Case study cities Fort Valley and Bainbridge indicated varied backgrounds among the HPC members while Eatonton and Vienna indicated good variation.

When asked how their community regulates preservation, 50.0% (7) indicated their city has a stand-alone preservation ordinance; 21.4% (3) indicated their preservation ordinance is part of the Planning section of their municipal Code of Ordinances; while 28.6% (4) indicated their city has no preservation ordinance in any form. All of the case study cities have a stand-alone preservation ordinance.

In the area concerning the Downtown Development Authority, questions were asked regarding the training, function, understanding of preservation's role in DDA activities, as well as interaction with the community. In response to the question of whether DDA members have received DDA training in the past three years, 53.8% (7) indicated they had; 30.8 % (4) indicated the training was occasional; 15.4% (2) indicated their DDA members had not received training in the past three years. Of the five case study cities, all but Washington were included in the online survey responses. Of the four represented, the DDA

in Fort Valley, Bainbridge and Vienna had all received training in the past three years, while some most of Eatonton's DDA members were untrained.

Responding to the question of whether the DDA solicits input from the community, 66.7% (8) indicated their DDA's active solicitation of community input was occasional; 16.7% (2) indicated their local DDA was consistent in seeking community input; while another 16.7% (2) indicated their DDA never solicits community input. Of the four case study cities represented in the online survey, Fort Valley indicated consistent DDA solicitation of community input. Bainbridge indicated occasional community input. Vienna's DDA seldom solicits community input, while Eatonton indicated the DDA never solicits community input.

When asked whether their DDA demonstrates an understanding of the role of historic preservation as the foundation for revitalization and whether the entity works to promote adaptive use of historic buildings, 61.5% (8) said the DDA consistently demonstrates their understanding while 30.8% (4) indicated the DDA demonstrated some knowledge while 7.7% (1) indicated the local DDA has demonstrated no understanding of the historic preservation role in downtown development. Of the four responding case study cities, Fort Valley, Vienna, and Bainbridge all indicated consistent knowledge of historic preservation's role in revitalization while Eatonton's DDA did not demonstrate an understanding of preservation's role in revitalization efforts.

The majority of respondents (61.5% or 8 participants) indicated their Main Street-Better Hometown organization is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that operates independently of the local government body. Within the Main Street organizational structure, 69.2% (9) responded that their Main Street-Better Hometown organization is the umbrella under which DDA operates as the Economic Development arm while Historic Preservation coordinates the Design element. Additionally, 53.8% (7) indicated that their DDA Executive Director also serves as the Executive Director for the local Main Street-Better Hometown organization. Of the four responding case study cities represented in the online survey results, all are operated as 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Regarding the proactive stance of their local DDA, 61.5% (8) of respondents indicated their DDA always encourages joint efforts with other groups in an effort to find solutions to preservation issues. Of the case study cities responding to the survey, Fort Valley, Bainbridge, and Vienna all noted a practice of using joint efforts for preservation projects while Eatonton did not have joint efforts at present.

Most concerning, however, were the responses regarding the compatibility of preservation/ restoration policies, techniques, and ordinances when regarded as part of the Design arm of the local Main Street program. Responding that their Historic Preservation Commission seldom oversees this area, 38.5% (5), this response indicates an existing disconnect between historic preservation policy making and regulation and historic preservation activities in the cities. Of the four case study cities responding, Eatonton displays the most obvious disconnect between HPC and historic property regulation.

In response to questions about the local program's interaction with and support from the state coordinating program, 46.2% (6) indicated the support from the state was more than adequate while 30.8% (4) said they were okay and 23.1% (3) indicated they could use more help. In the area of needing support from the state agency, 46.2% (6) said they really did not need any help from the state, 23.1% (3) indicated they absolutely need help from the state, and 30.8% (4) marked that they were okay. In this area, the four responding case study cities acknowledged they receive some help from the state. The absence of consistent training programs and infrequency of training opportunities for Main Street professionals was of concern for Fort Valley, Eatonton, and Vienna. The distance to existing training opportunities was also of concern for all four cities.

However, in the area of self-evaluation, 61.5% (8) indicated they could use a self-evaluation tool that keeps everyone accountable. Another 38.5% (5) said that a system of evaluation for struggling Main Street programs would be helpful. All four of the case study cities responding to the online survey indicated a self-evaluation tool for the purpose of accountability would be very helpful. Washington agreed.

Finally, with regard to the effectiveness of their local Main Street-Better Hometown program, 38.5% (5) indicated they succeed most of the time in the area of neighborhood and community group

involvement; 46.2% indicated that their DDA and Main Street-Better Hometown consult with each other to develop downtown revitalization programs; 38.5% (5) believe the promotions arm of their Main Street-Better Hometown has a good mix of retail promotions and community promotions. An even 30.8% split among believing they experience great success, succeed most of the time, or run a 50/50 success rate in the area of having varied, imaginative, and fun promotions. The need for a more diverse pool of volunteers for Main Street-Better Hometown community participation was indicated by 30.8% (4) while 23.1% (3) showed they succeed in this area most of the time, 23.1% (3) indicated they sputter on this one, 7.7% said they have not done well in this area, and 15.4% (2) indicated they are experiencing great success. All four of responding case study cities indicated they believed their overall progress and effectiveness of their Main Street-Better Hometown programs was good.

Open-ended response capability incorporated into the survey allowed respondents the ability to explain answers for which they would like to offer clarification or more information. Some of the comments included:

"We need some new volunteers with expertise and time. We need volunteers who can attend class away from home & have initiative. Our new manager is great; ; we would love to pay her more. We could also use a lot more funding overall."

"We need more retail establishments, but we also need our citizens to shop locally. I have tried different campaigns, but it is hard to keep people from shopping at WalMart when it is just fifteen minutes away. we have had two businesses, one restaurant and one doctor's office to close in the past two years. In our little town, that is a lot (20%). Probably economy driven. We have mainly service businesses downtown, and we need to recruit and retain retail but it is hard in this economy. It seems like a great time for the DDA to be obtaining and renovating some vacant buildings to get ready for when the economy returns. If anything I need someone to convince my DDA to do that. Maybe it should be someone from a similar community where it has worked well."

"Getting new volunteers on a regular basis and having several of them receive training."

"We have a board that has not changed much in five years and we could use some new blood, new ideas, and people willing to make change. Change in small towns does not come easy. Our Board works hard but they are burning out and we need some change."

The mixed results of a survey tell only a part of the story of Georgia Main Street and its member cities. Survey requests often go unanswered for one or more reasons: the recipient's spam filter deleted the message with the link though it never returned a response indicating the survey request was not delivered; time constraints on the part of the recipient pre-empted their ability to participate. [5] [6]

Follow-Up Interviews and Case Studies

From the online survey, follow- up interviews with five Main Street-Better Hometown cities, were conducted during February, 2010, David Jenkins, Economic Development Director for the City of Washington, had previously indicated to the author his interest in participating in the interview portion of research for this thesis and was included in the follow-up interview segment.

The case study cities were selected from seven that responded to the online survey their willingness to be interviewed for this research. The five cities were chosen based on, but not limited to: communication through the online survey that their city had in the past or was currently experiencing a less-than-cooperative working arrangement with either their town's Mayor and Council, DDA, or HPC; their town's Main Street program had in the past or was currently experiencing a very successful cooperative working arrangement with the town's Mayor and Council, DDA, or HPC; the city's HPC was being allowed to function in accordance with the 1980 Georgian historic Preservation Act that established the structure, purpose, function, and power of the local HPC; the local Main Street program was receiving good support from the Georgia Main Street program; the local Main Street program was not receiving good support from the Georgia Main Street program; deficiencies perceived on the part of the state

[5] Zarca Interactive, "Common Pitfalls in Online Surveys", Zarca Interactive, http://www.zarca.com/Online-Surveys-Customer/common-pitfalls-in-online-surveys.html (accessed June 8, 2010)

[6] Survey Monkey, "Response Rates & Survey Techniques", Survey Monkey, http://s3.amazonaws.com/SurveyMonkeyFiles/Response_Rates.pdf (accessed June 1, 2010)

coordinating program and proposed solutions to remedy said deficiencies; as well as the town's current status within the Georgia Main Street-Better Hometown program.

Emphasizing the need for training opportunities even for successful Main Street programs, Fort Valley has been a member of the Georgia Main Street program for almost twenty years. The continuity of leadership has contributed to the program's success though code enforcement in the city would go far toward strengthening the DDA-Main Street organization's efforts.

Case Study: Fort Valley DDA-Main Street - Education Makes the Difference[7, 8]

Driving on I-75 about half-an-hour south of Macon, the evidence you're in peach country is undeniable. The agricultural tradition of this part of Georgia continues to shape an ethic of hard work, applied rain or shine, adding to the power of Main Street for Fort Valley DDA-Main Street Executive Director Loraine Khoury.

The owner of a family downtown department store-turned men's shop bearing the family name, Khoury has been intimately involved with the Fort Valley Main Street program since its inception in 1989. In the beginning, she said, several attempts were made at establishing a downtown business group with dues set at the princely sum of $10 per year. "With such a budget," she laughed, "you can imagine how much we could pay for."

Khoury learned of an open Main Street meeting behind held in the deep south city of Thomasville near the Georgia-Florida state line and decided to investigate the program about which she had heard so many positive things. After attending the meeting, Khoury and other local business owners determined the Main Street program was the best bet for the future of Fort Valley. Khoury became the first Chair of the Main Street Board of Directors in 1991. She hired a manager who later left to become Chair of the Greene County Chamber of Commerce. The second manager was a retired military officer who had the ability to be a good manager, but who was unable to realize any real productivity, she said.

[7] Khoury, Loraine. 2010. "Main Street, DDA, and Historic Preservation – How Are They Working?" online survey. Collector: Main Street/DDA/HPC Survey (Web Link). January 13.

[8] Khoury, Loraine. 2010. Survey follow-up interview by author. Fort Valley, GA. February 11.

In 2006, Loraine Khoury became Fort Valley's Main Street Executive Director.

Khoury's almost two decades of involvement with the local program has provided an element of continuity and stability that would be difficult to deny. She has witnessed firsthand the evolution of the Fort Valley Main Street program, including its transition to a City-sponsored entity with a combined Board of Directors and DDA.

"We have one board for both groups and that can present a few challenges," Khoury said from the desk of the restored Greek Revival mansion in which her office is located. "Not everyone has a clear vision of how Downtown Development Authorities, Main Street, and the Historic Preservation Commission are supposed to interact and support one another, but they all work together well. We've been able to successfully complete enough projects that everyone is on board with the process."

Khoury attributes the success of Fort Valley's efforts to training and education of the board members, Historic Preservation Commission members, and the general public.

"Education is the strongest tool we have for preservation," she insisted. "When (decision makers) are looking at their wallets, they often don't realize the effect those extra dollars can have or that saving those dollars can make in the overall product.

"Our DDA-Main Street Board is getting training everywhere we can get it and it's making a big difference in the perspective being brought to our boards and commissions. All of our Board members have been trained with the exception of one member who is a banker and hasn't been able to attend the out-of-town weekday meetings," she said. "He's had one local training, but admitted it could have been more comprehensive."

Joined by DDA-Main Street Program Manager Kathie Lambert, Khoury responded to the questions regarding how the local HPC can be more effective and what resources can be utilized to assist them with the execution of their duties.

"The greatest thing our HPC needs is support from our local government," she lamented. "Our City Marshal doesn't want anyone to be mad at him, so he doesn't always enforce the ordinances and

codes as he should." She cited the example of a residence that had a car on blocks out in the yard. The owner put a tarp over the car and the City Marshal determined that to be sufficient mitigation.

Khoury said the HPC cannot implement fines or enforce violations of the local historic preservation ordinance, so preservation efforts are somewhat impeded by the City Marshal's ineffective method. However, she said, the community has recently experienced some success with the Historic Preservation Commission's composition, so a better line of communication has been established and she hopes to have better results for the future.

Lambert, a retired Northrup Grumman executive, shared that her Historic Preservation Commission philosophy is that of information and teaching rather than enforcing. The Fort Valley DDA-Main Street organization recently offered a tax credit workshop at the local theater. Members of the DDA-Main Street Board of Directors presented information about tax incentives and ordinances to offer the citizens the tools they may need to repair, restore, or preserve their houses and commercial buildings. Additionally, the HPC has started a neighborhood association in order to develop a social platform from which to broadcast the preservation message.

Many of the questions fielded during community workshops are maintenance-related, Khoury said. She and her husband own four of Fort Valley's historic houses and her husband spends his weekends teaching classes on creating stained glass. Some of his work becomes décor for the city's historic houses.

"Many of our historic houses are considered depressed because of absentee or elderly owners who have passed away," she explained. "Their families are not interested in keeping them, so we're trying to salvage what we can from old houses that are being demolished." Khoury explained that some of the old houses cannot be saved, but have architectural elements such as wooden doors, windows, mantels, or cabinetry that can be salvaged. For other residents attempting to replace or repair damaged elements in their own historic houses, the availability of the replacements is a big help, she said. The replacements are either donated or inexpensively sold. Khoury said the community consoles itself that at least parts of the demolished houses are being used rather than ending up in the landfill.

The City of Fort Valley has a stand-alone historic preservation ordinance not included in the planning and zoning ordinance. At present, efforts are being made to complete application for a grant that will fund the re-write of the historic district design guidelines in an effort to strengthen the regulation and allow the HPC more and better authority in situations involving Fort Valley's historic houses and buildings.

"One of the success stories because of our education efforts has been that a former preservation ordinance detractor has become one of our greatest champions," she beamed.

What about the Downtown Development Authority's position on historic preservation? Khoury said the DDA-Main Street members are appointed annually, though some who demonstrate a strong interest in the downtown district may be re-appointed due to their vested interest in the area. Some are preservation-sensitive, but would rather not have to deal with preservation issues.

Khoury pointed to the success of a half-million dollar park project that has greatly enhanced the appeal of the downtown area. The funding was a result of the city's Main Street certification and has proven to be a critical piece for the new generation of Main Street for Fort Valley. The local historical society holds events in the park and Fort Valley's residents enjoy the walkability of Downtown because of the park's central location.

In addition, Khoury identified the Austin Theater preservation project as the cornerstone for preservation and economic revitalization in Fort Valley. "The Austin Theater project really got Main Street ignited in Fort Valley," she remembered. Next up, the Agriculture and Transportation Museum that will serve the greater Fort Valley region is scheduled to be housed in the former railroad depot.

Khoury said one bone of contention for the DDA-Main Street organization has been the presence of storefront churches in downtown. "Downtown churches have been discouraged due to being open only on Sundays and Wednesdays. We are encouraging 'footsteps to the door' by recruiting independent and small regional chains known for their practice of being good neighbors. For chains, she added, the franchise holder is the key to whether they live up to their reputation."

An additional issue in the downtown business district is the presence of offices and a retail storefront owned by nearby Fort Valley State University. A vital part of the Peach County community, Fort Valley State students, faculty, and staff constitute an active constituency for the downtown district. The only concern for Khoury is that the retail storefronts operated by students maintain the same schedule as the college. When classes are not in session, the store is closed which means that during the busiest retail seasons, downtown Fort Valley has a dark storefront whose student managers could be discovering just how busy Fort Valley can be.

Khoury believes that bringing the potential for a positive solution is but a phone call and a couple of conversations away. She hopes the 2010-2011 academic year will bring the needed changes in the store's operating schedule that will be a winning solution for everyone.

Crediting the National Trust with the inclusion of the historic preservation focus, Khoury said the component dictates accountability for historic preservation activity in the member city though it would be difficult to hold the Main Street Executive Director responsible for the successes or failures of a group over which he or she holds no control.

Khoury recommends that DDA-Main Street directors be selected from local people who know who to contact as needs arise. "This familiarity with local people and contacts is the key to forming a successful Main Street organization," she said.

Likewise, "having a director who does nothing will hurt your program, so it is important for your success to hire the right person," she warned. "The people performing a search need to look inside the community first to hire a DDA-Main Street Executive Director before venturing outside the area. "Local people know the community and care about what happens in, with and to the town because it's their home, too." She also pointed out that hiring a person with a sales and marketing background and who understands the techniques involved in making a sale is vital to the packaging and presentation of the Main Street idea.

Khoury feels strongly that dissolution of an existing Main Street program that isn't working well should be a last resort. "Main Street and the Downtown Development Authority need to be combined

rather than dissolved," she said. "Educating them so everyone knows what everyone else is doing is vital to the success of your economic revitalization efforts."

Loraine Khoury recognizes the importance of a strong Main Street program and the critical need for a solid delivery of training opportunities for member cities. The value of Fort Valley's participation in the state's CLG program has been immeasurable, she said, and addresses the vital role historic preservation commissions play in an economic redevelopment strategy.

CHAPTER 3

MAIN STREET: A SOLID SOLUTION FOR STRUGGLING DOWNTOWNS

Despite the positive examples in some Georgia cities, deterioration of historic downtown districts continues some thirty years after the debut of the Main Street program. In this chapter, research and observation combine to create a picture of the impetus behind the creation of the Main Street program, its implementation in state coordinating programs, and its translation through the Georgia Main Street program as it is implemented at the local level.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation Presents Main Street

For the first 150 years following the establishment of the United States of America, towns and cities across the land prided themselves on the flavor, character, and industrious nature of their individual communities. Supported by local manufacturing concerns capitalizing on the presence of natural resources such as ores, minerals and agriculture, America's towns and cities distinguished themselves through their identification with products, services, events or persons that called their city "home".

By the dawn of the twentieth century, the major streets traversing a town often converged onto the area collectively referred to as "Main Street" and, indeed, many locales could boast of a main traffic artery named Main Street. In fact, Main Street became popular culture's moniker for the primary commercial hub in a downtown area.

In 1977, the National Trust for Historic Preservation introduced a pilot program targeting the revitalization of dying downtown cities. For three years, economic development and historic preservation professionals in Hot Springs, SD; Madison, IN; and Galesburg, IL worked on the development of what was then known as "the Main Street Project". According to Scott Gerloff of Hot Springs, the program was an exercise in "back door" preservation.

"I would love to say that we knew exactly or even had a good idea what to do. But we didn't. The Main Street Project was truly a demonstration. We tried many things; some worked, some didn't. We were proud to say that we were 'street smart' preservationists,"[9] Gerloff wrote in "Main Street: The Early Years."

In 1995, Gerloff was the National Trust's Executive Director for Marketing and Product Development and had served as director of the National Main Street Center from 1983-1988. He wrote in the Spring, 1995 issue of *Forum Journal* that he and his counterparts in Indiana and Illinois initially spent a great deal of time organizing and persuading business people and the public as they were developing and implementing promotions in an effort to gain support for their programs. More slowly, the project managers began to recruit businesses for empty storefronts, analyze the local markets, and implement real estate development practices. As changes in traffic, retail numbers, and populated storefronts began to be noticed, visible physical changes soon followed with encouraged property owners taking an interest in the free design assistance and small grants that would assist with building improvements.

Realizing the National Trust did not have the manpower to coordinate the Main Street model in every state, the organization piloted the program in a total of thirty cities scattered among six states to test the idea of implementing statewide coordinating Main Street programs. From 1980 to 1983, Georgia, North Carolina, Texas, South Dakota, Colorado, and Pennsylvania tested the new program they hoped would be the answer to rebuilding their historic commercial districts.

One of the outcomes of the three-year pilot was the successful application of the program's flexible structure allowing for integration into the host program's local government structure presenting an opportunity for modification to accommodate local and state needs. However, while the properly utilized Main Street Four-Point Approach has been proven to be the most successful implementation

[9] Gerloff, Scott; "Main Street: The Early Years"; 1995; *Forum Journal,* (National Trust for Historic Preservation, Vol. 9, no. 3, reprinted.

technique, some programs have failed to recognize that the degree of achievement for the program will be dependent upon the intensity of incorporation of its holistic methodology.

The Main Street program is built around its patented "Main Street Four-Point Approach": Organization, Economic Restructuring, Design, and Promotion. Its implementation is recommended as following a non-profit operational model employing widespread personnel and funding support from elected, appointed, and employed local government officials, as well as the community at-large in the form of volunteers giving of their time, talents, skills, and other resources for the good of their city. "Its Main Street Four-Point Approach showed that a holistic strategy was necessary to save historic buildings and that establishing a volunteer-based organization to become downtown's advocate yielded big successes."[10]

Within the Main Street design are eight principles that the National Main Street Center asserts "set the Main Street methodology apart from other redevelopment strategies. For a Main Street program to be successful, it must whole-heartedly embrace the following time-tested Eight Principles"[11]:

1. The program must be **comprehensive** rather than focusing on a single project. The Main Street program must encompass the entire area to be effective.
2. The Main Street method is **incremental** embracing many small successes punctuated by the major triumphs rather than targeting only the big projects.
3. The community must see Main Street as a **self-help** effort rather than expecting someone else to do it for them.
4. The development of public-private **partnerships** is crucial to the success of a Main Street® program.

[10] Loescher, Doug. "Why Main Street Matters" in *Revitalizing Main Street – A practitioner's guide to comprehensive commercial district revitalization,* ed. Andrea L. Dono and Linda S. Glisson (Washington, DC: National Trust for Historic Preservation), 2009.

[11] National Trust for Historic Preservation, "About Us: The Eight Principles", 2009, (http://www.preservationnation.org/main_street/about_us_the_eight_principles [27 May 2010])

5. I**dentifying and capitalizing on existing assets** incorporates the practice of sustainable development into the community's focus.
6. Projects must demonstrate a **standard of quality** in every aspect of their facilitation from the planning and education to the actual finished product in order to reverse the perception of negativity.
7. **Change** in the look and feel of the downtown core will work slowly in your favor, but will be the greatest proponent to the success of the Main Street program.
8. Project completion will demonstrate a positive **implementation** of the program leading to a heightened sense of success.

Conventional wisdom contributes to the philosophy that success breeds success. As citizens in a Main Street town begin to experience the multi-dimensional successes of the program, they will become invigorated. They will want to become a part of the program that is positively impacting their communities. [12]

In addition to the Four-Point Approach and Eight Principles, the National Main Street Center developed a system of evaluating not only the program design for Main Street, but for local users to judge for themselves how the program was impacting their community. The National Accreditation Standards of Performance compose the annual assessment process each member community must meet in order to maintain membership in good standing with the National Main Street Center. The National Accreditation Standards of Performance employs a comprehensive strategy that, if faithfully executed, will result in success for the local Main Street initiative. Within the standards are guidelines that assist the state and local member programs with their success strategy as they include, but are not limited to development of : public-private partnerships; vision and mission statements; a comprehensive work plan; a historic preservation ethic; an active board of directors and committees; an adequate operating budget; a paid, professional Main Street manager; ongoing training for staff and volunteers; key statistics reporting; and

[12] Loescher, Doug. "A Movement is Born" in *Revitalizing Main Street – A practitioner's guide to comprehensive commercial district revitalization,* ed. Andrea L. Dono and Linda S. Glisson (Washington, DC; National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2009), 8.

membership in the National Main Street Network. The Standards of Performance are listed in Appendix A of this document.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation through its National Main Street Center has established a successful economic revitalization program to address historic downtowns in distress. A proven, time-tested program, Main Street is dependent upon the successful implementation in member states. Following is an overview of the national program today.

Main Street Pilots Today

As of 2010, the National Main Street Network is active in all but nine states: Alabama, Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, New Hampshire, Nevada, North Dakota, Utah, and Rhode Island. With a total of forty-four coordinating programs, the cities of Orlando, FL; Boston, MA; and Portland, OR serve as metropolitan programs coordinating non-profit programs through as many as nineteen (Boston) suburban communities in the respective city's metropolitan area. Of the six pilot states originating the Main Street program from 1980-1983, all but South Dakota are still active, though some of South Dakota's member cities maintain their accreditation.. Of the remaining five, Colorado's and Pennsylvania's programs utilize the non-profit administration model while Georgia, North Carolina and Texas are all housed within a state governmental agency.

Colorado left the Main Street program following its participation from 1980-83 during the pilot program administered by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). "Although the Main Street Approach to downtown revitalization proved very successful in Colorado, the state discontinued the program after completing the three-year pilot project."[13] In 2000, Downtown Colorado, Inc. (DCI) received a State Historical Fund grant from The Colorado Historical Society that allowed the non-profit, membership-based organization to re-establish the Colorado Main Street program as a non-profit administrative structure.

[13] Downtown Colorado, Inc., "Main Street Colorado", 2010, (http://www.downtowncolorado.org/Page.aspx?PageID=3580 [27 May 2010])

Downtown Colorado's central focus is promoting better community development through its assistance to the business core of Colorado's towns and cities, as well as being the statewide Main Street coordinating partner. "The program uses an approach that advocates a return to community self-reliance, local empowerment, and the rebuilding of central business districts based on their traditional assets of architecture, personal service, local ownership, and a sense of community."[14]

While the statewide non-profit operates similarly to state run agencies such as the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) in assisting with development and improvement districts, as well as downtown development, Downtown Colorado's primary focus is the downtown commercial core of its member cities. Housing programs such as the development of loft apartments, condos, and other downtown residential initiatives are included in the general downtown development scheme. Georgia's DCA also administers Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs, including low income and subsidized housing.

The support of The Colorado Historical Society has resulted in the development of a stronger historic preservation concentration for funding the statewide Main Street program than during the pilot program phase. Development of historic surveys, establishment of local historic districts, creation of design guidelines, as well as state and national register nominations are some of the preservation related activities facilitated. Public awareness through educational programs to educate property owners about tax credits; the provision of historic preservation/design assessment workshops; development of historic walking tour brochures; and the establishment of an Historic Preservation Commission have contributed to a sound preservation foundation throughout the state. Economically, the Colorado Main Street program has generated façade improvement financial incentive programs, as well as invested over $16.8 million in private funds for rehabilitation and renovation of downtown buildings in their Main Street member communities.

The Pennsylvania Downtown Center (PDC) Board of Directors' composition reflects the National Main Street Standard #5 regarding representation from a cross-section of the community it serves. It

[14] *Ibid*.

includes representatives from city and state governmental agencies; heritage, preservation and environmental organizations; financial institutions; retail, commercial, and industrial business; Chambers of Commerce and Visitors Bureaus; and private citizens. Additionally, state assembly members serve in an ex-officio capacity to liaison with the non-profit organization at the state level.

Pennsylvania Downtown Center has embraced the philosophy of cooperative, comprehensive collaboration as the Main Street coordinating partner for the state. With leaders from towns and cities of all sizes serving as directors, committee members, or occasional volunteers, PDC depends upon the input and energy emanating from the communities it serves. A member-based non-profit, PDC derives financial support not only from its member cities, but from individual and corporate annual dues and fees ranging from $250 for any non-profit organization or local government agency up to $1500 annual Gold Business Memberships that provides a choice of two incentives in the form of consultation services, sponsorship listings, or registration for two at the PDC Annual Conference.

As the only Pennsylvania nonprofit to support downtowns and the issues they encounter with revitalization, PDC works closely with the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). Primarily, PDC provides technical assistance and training as the administrator for the Pennsylvania Main Street program.

"A well run downtown revitalization program is an important and worthwhile investment in the economic health and quality of life of a community…. Most importantly, a strong downtown revitalization program creates a sense of place, which is increasingly becoming a crucial factor in twenty-first century economic development….A sense of place describes the various characteristics that give a particular neighborhood or community its own unique flavor. Increasingly, this is being understood as a valuable driving force behind the locational decisions being made by entrepreneurs, innovators, and creators of the New Economy. Where sense of place was once considered fluff, today, creating a sense of place is perhaps the most critical element of an overall economic development strategy."[15]

[15] Pennsylvania Downtown Center, "Frequently Asked Questions", 2010 (http://www.padowntown.org/about/faqs [27 May 2010])

Another Main Street pilot program participant – Texas – has placed historic preservation in a spotlight equal with Pennsylvania with the statewide program being administered through its Texas Historical Commission (THC). Presenting to municipalities statewide the recommended model for local implementation, the State of Texas has organized the Texas Historical Commission as the umbrella agency for all things preservation related. From the support of local Historic Preservation Commissions to providing education for community organizations and property owners, the Texas Historical Commission has laid a solid preservation foundation for the state's economic development success through historic preservation.

With an average twelve year accreditation longevity by Texas Main Street cities, efforts by the eighty-six member programs have created over 6,400 businesses through 2008 and realized economic redevelopment investments exceeding $2 billion. As a part of the Community Heritage Development Division of the THC, the Texas Main Street Program (TMSP) demonstrates a strong support for the critical role historic preservation plays in an economic revitalization program.

> There are many reasons why downtown revitalization is a crucial tool for enhancing the economic and social health of a community. In addition to being the most visible indicator of community pride and economic health, the historic downtown is also the foundation of community heritage. The historic buildings in a downtown are prime locations for the establishment of unique entrepreneurial businesses and can also be tourism attractors, all of which add to the community's sales tax collections and property values. Today big-box development permeates the national landscape, making it even more important that communities be proactive in saving and using their historic spaces to avoid becoming featureless places.[16]

An additional program through the Texas Historical Commission is the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program credited with kindling excitement for Texas' downtown revitalization endeavors. The 1969 restoration of the Hood County Courthouse in Granbury showed other Texans how their iconic buildings were the heart of their communities rekindling an emotional connection to the heritage that defined their towns. The Hood County Courthouse project inspired others and eventually resulted in the creation of the courthouse restoration project that is still active today. It was because of the

[16] Texas Historical Commission, "The Texas Main Street Program", 2010 (http://www.thc.state.tx.us/mainstreet/msabout.shtml] 27 May 2010)

grassroots efforts in Granbury that an historic downtown district was established in 1972 some eight years before Texas became a pilot Main Street state. The 1974 National Register of Historic Places designation of the Granbury Courthouse Square was the first listing of a Texas town square heralded as … "one of the most complete examples of a late nineteenth century courthouse square in Texas."[17] The Texas Historic Preservation Commission reports that $207 million in partial matching grants has been awarded to sixty-eight Texas counties for restoration efforts on their courthouses with close to 7,800 jobs and almost $17 million in local taxes realized as a result of the program.

In the state of North Carolina, the Main Street Program is administered through the North Carolina Office of Urban Development in the North Carolina Department of Commerce. Sixty-one designated Main Street cities throughout the state combine to create an historic preservation-based economic revitalization program highlighting the rich heritage and natural resources of the Tarheel State.

A revolving fund program entitled North Carolina Main Street Solutions Fund (MSSF) serves as a incentive to assist private investors interested in staking a claim in one of North Carolina' Main Street cities. Through the MSSF, revolving funds provide the impetus for downtown investment through building purchase, façade improvements, interest rate subsidies for revolving fund programs, market studies, entrepreneurial ventures, and public improvements to buildings or infrastructure in Main Street downtown areas.

The strong historic and heritage preservation philosophy in North Carolina is evident as preservation stands on an equal footing with economic development and provides support for the state-sponsored Main Street coordinating program. Since 1980, the North Carolina Main Street program has posted strong revitalization and historic preservation efforts with a net gain of 13,700 jobs, 3,300 building renovations, and 3,300 new businesses reported as the product of Main Street efforts. North Carolina has posted a gain of $1.4 billion in new investment due to the Main Street program.

[17] City of Granbury's Historic Preservation Commission, "Granbury Historic Preservation Handbook", 1999, (City of Granbury Historic Preservation Commission)

Georgia Adopts Main Street

One of America's original thirteen colonies, in 1980, Georgia joined five other states as one of six pioneering coordinating programs for the National Trust's Main Street Program. Choosing to exercise the flexibility of the economic revitalization program, the State of Georgia adopted Main Street as one of the community programs available through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). In addition to the Main Street program, DCA also coordinates federal Housing and Urban Development programs in Georgia cities, as well as administering the Office of Downtown Development (ODD) activities for the state.

Over its three decades, Georgia Main Street has been housed, first, within the DCA before going to the Department of Industry and Trade before being outside any agency umbrella and then bounced back under DCA. As of mid-2010, DCA itself may be on the chopping block due to continued budgetary constraints at the state level.

Regional Representatives provide support for the Main Street program in member cities throughout their assigned region(s) by assisting with the coordination of training, grant and design assistance, and information needed to facilitate the Main Street program and activities in the local communities. This mode of operation is not unlike the function of similarly sponsored Main Street programs in any of the member states. There, however, the similarity with the remaining four of its sister pilot states appears to cease.

In the mid-1990s, Georgia created a second tier of Main Street programs designed for cities with populations of fewer than 5,000. The Better Hometown program allows smaller, usually rural, communities to manage a Main Street program with a part-time local manager as opposed to the full-time (40 hours per week minimum) administrator required by the Georgia Main Street program's 10 Standards of Performance. Better Hometown communities receive the same services and opportunities as their Main Street cousins, but are not subject to some of the more restrictive requirements that might prohibit their ability to adhere to the program. While Montana has a similar program targeting towns with fewer than 2,000 residents, many states have maintained the Main Street designation for cities of all sizes. The Better

Hometown program is strictly a local color version of Main Street, but only addresses the need of the smaller city in terms of paid manager requirements. While Georgia Main Street requires a full-time dedicated Main Street manager, Better Hometown allows for a part-time paid manager.

A third tier of Main Street was introduced in a February 2008 document *Downtown Development Program Descriptions & Levels of Service* [18] (DD Programs & Service). The Affiliate program targets cities that are eligible for Main Street application, but that have elected not to participate in the Main Street program. Whether transitioning out of Main Street or choosing to never affiliate, these cities elect not to be members of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, program standard #10. Affiliate members receive limited service and support from the Office of Downtown Development (as opposed to the Main Street Regional Representative), but must commit to the Main Street Four-Point Approach, professional downtown management; participate in ODD Training Programs and ODD Annual Data Collection through an Annual Economic Activity Report; provide an Outline of Work; and demonstrate a primary focus of downtown development. Main Street cities opting for Affiliate membership must remove all reference to Main Street-Better Hometown from literature, signage, or any media, documentation, letterhead, or other item that identifies the city as a Main Street member. The Affiliate option can be a crippling blow to a local program that needs a stronger, more wide-ranging ethic such as that available through the Main Street program.

If a city chooses to withdraw altogether from Main Street, the administration may opt to seek Inactive status. Inactive status may be initiated by either the local administrative body or the state coordinating program. However, Inactive status should not be a stated option in published information. Perhaps the decision makers believe that, in a time of economic downturn, offering a lower standard for performance will allow cities an option. It is during times of economic downturn that cities must raise their standards, but find new methods of achieving them. Main Street Inactive status should be offered only when no other option is viable after all efforts to assist and mitigate the local program have failed.

[18] Office of Downtown Development. *Downtown Development Program Descriptions & DD Programs & Service,* (Atlanta, GA: Georgia Department of Community Affairs, 2008). http://www.mainstreetgeorgia.org/assets/pdf/general/LevelsService.pdf (accessed October 15, 2009)

In March 2008, the DCA published *Main Street-Better Hometown Annual MS Program Standards* (MS Program Standards)[19].On the cover of both DD Programs & Service and the Main Street annual MS Program Standards manual is printed "…economic development through downtown revitalization, heritage preservation and restoring a sense of place" and the Georgia Main Street website address is prominently displayed. The Programs and Service publication provides an overview of the national Main Street program and history of the Georgia Main Street-Better Hometown program, as well as step-by-step application instructions and checklist for initiating Main Street-Better Hometown membership, Affiliate membership, or assuming Inactive status. The MS Program Standards publication encompasses a detailed explanation and listing of options for attaining annual National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street accreditation.

The MS Program Standards required by the Georgia Main Street office are compatible with, but much more stringent than, the NASP required by the National Trust as shown in Chapter 3 beginning on page 26. The Georgia MS Program Standards are published as an extensive list that, if met, would certainly guarantee a dynamic program of downtown revitalization, but that would require an indefatigable professional manager, in addition to a pool of committee members and volunteers with a virtually limitless supply of time, energy, and resources. Though the MS Program Standards offer options of fulfilling a minimum number of items to meet the state office's assessment requirement, the amount of time and recordkeeping is discouraging to a manager focused on revitalization rather than reporting. In addition, many of the options listed are beyond the scope of a Main Street-Better Hometown manager's position description and require outcomes for which the professional manager is in a position to present education, training, and information, but that should be acknowledged as being out of his or her control or range of accountability.

[19] Office of Downtown Development, *Main Street/Better Hometown Annual MS Program Standards* (Atlanta, GA: Georgia Department of Community Affairs, 2008).
http://www.mainstreetgeorgia.org/assets/pdf/general/enhancedminimumstandards-march2008.pdf (accessed October 15, 2009)

It would seem the national program created a set of criteria used to determine eligibility for city requesting Main Street accreditation. In Georgia, the criteria have become a tool to judge the local program's effectiveness. A local Main Street program should be held accountable for its compatibility with the national model. However, a local manager is dependent upon the cooperative efforts of the local government, its boards, authorities and commissions, and property owners in order to meet the state's criteria for achievement. Unless full cooperation is available to the manager by all factions of the local program, some standards for accreditation may be exceedingly difficult to achieve.

According to the online survey responses, support from the Georgia Main Street program's state office ranges from excellent to not very strong. Since 2008, well-publicized budget cuts throughout Georgia state government and its associated agencies and offices have resulted in cutbacks of funding, staffing, programs, training and support creating an alteration in priorities for the Department of Community Affairs and its subsidiary offices, including Main Street.

The hierarchy of Georgia Main Street in 2010 is such that the program is positioned within the Office of Downtown Development. As of October 2009, Georgia Main Street's management structure is as shown in Figure 1 below:

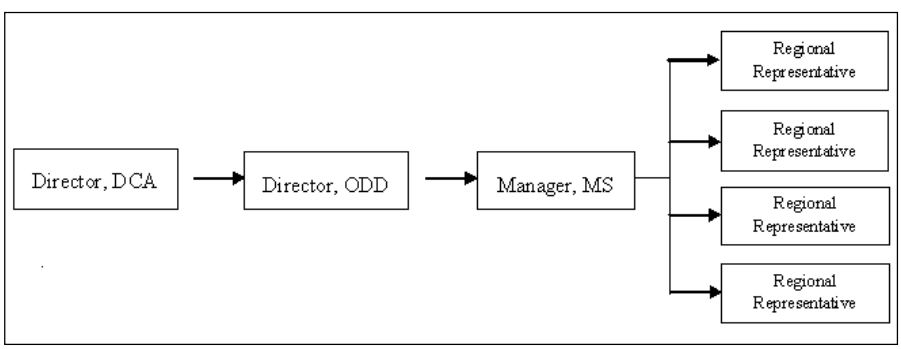

Figure 1. Georgia DCA Main Street Hierarchy, October, 2009.

On the surface, the distribution of service personnel appears sufficient until an analysis of the changes since June 2007 is considered. Figure 2 (below) is the published Georgia Main Street

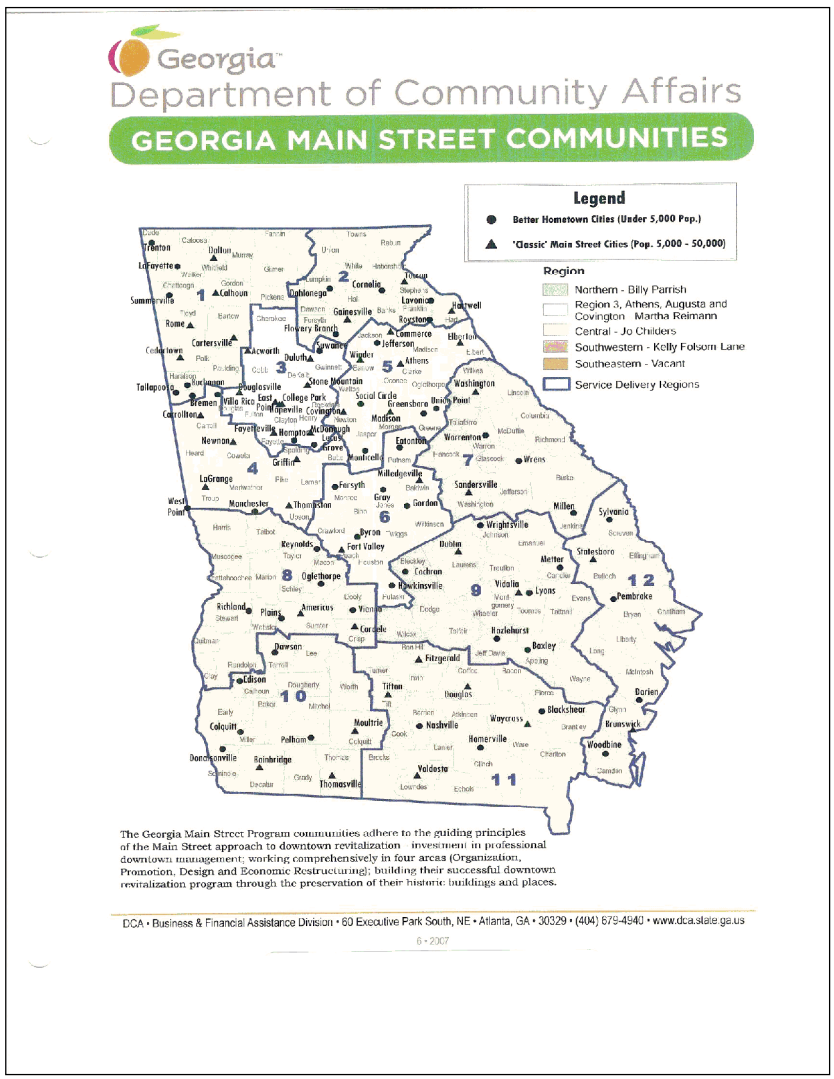

Figure 2: Georgia Main Street Communities Map, June 2007.

Communities map indicating the five service Regions and their assigned Representatives: North (Billy Parrish); Region 3 – Athens, Augusta, and Covington (Martha Reimann); Central (Jo Childers); Southwestern (Kelly Folsom-Lane), and Southeastern (Vacant).

A visual examination of the maps does not fully emphasize the degree of modification taking place for local Main Street-Better Hometown programs, the state personnel serving as liaisons, nor how

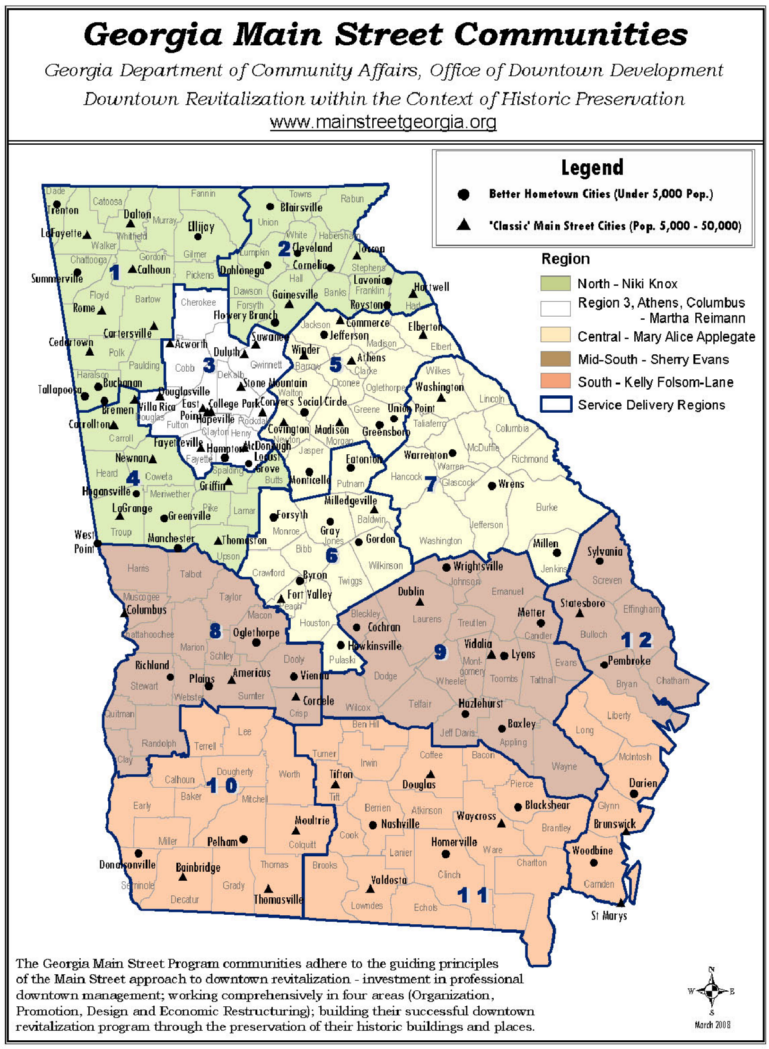

Figure 3: Georgia Main Street Communities Map, March 2008.

the frequent changes could be impacting the state and local program, let alone the personnel attempting to administer them. The following verbal description provides a more descriptive perspective:

By March, 2008, the Georgia DCA website (www.dca.state.ga.us) included a revised Georgia Main Street Communities Map. Figure 3 (above) illustrates a coverage shift with Areas 4 (Central), 7 and the southern half of Area 12 (both Southeastern) having shifted to, respectively, the North, Southeastern and South Regions. Additionally, the regional designations were changed from Northern;

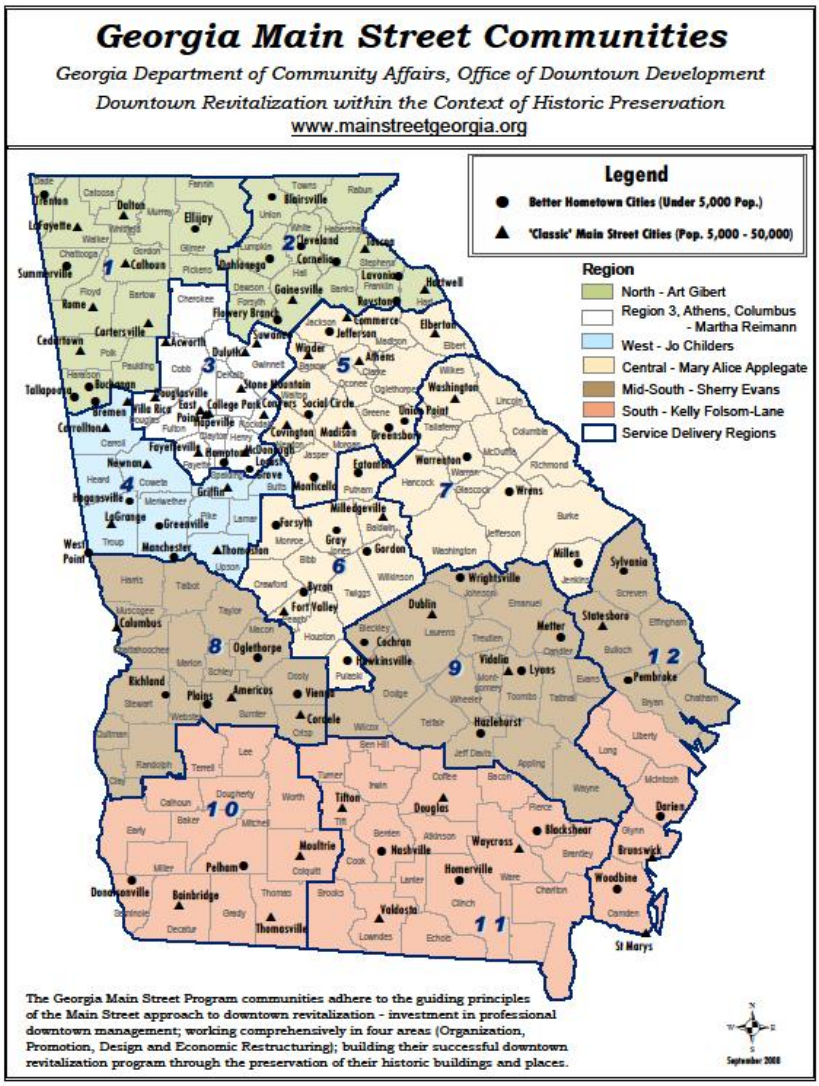

Figure 4: Georgia Main Street Communities Map, September 2008.

Region 3, Athens, Augusta, and Covington; Central; Southwestern; and Southeastern to North; Region 3, Athens, Columbus; Central; Mid-South; and South.

In September 2008, a new Georgia Main Street Communities coverage map (Figure 4), above, was published with the following changes: Area 4 was designated as the West Region (Jo Childers) and Niki Knox in the North Region had been replaced by Art Gilbert.

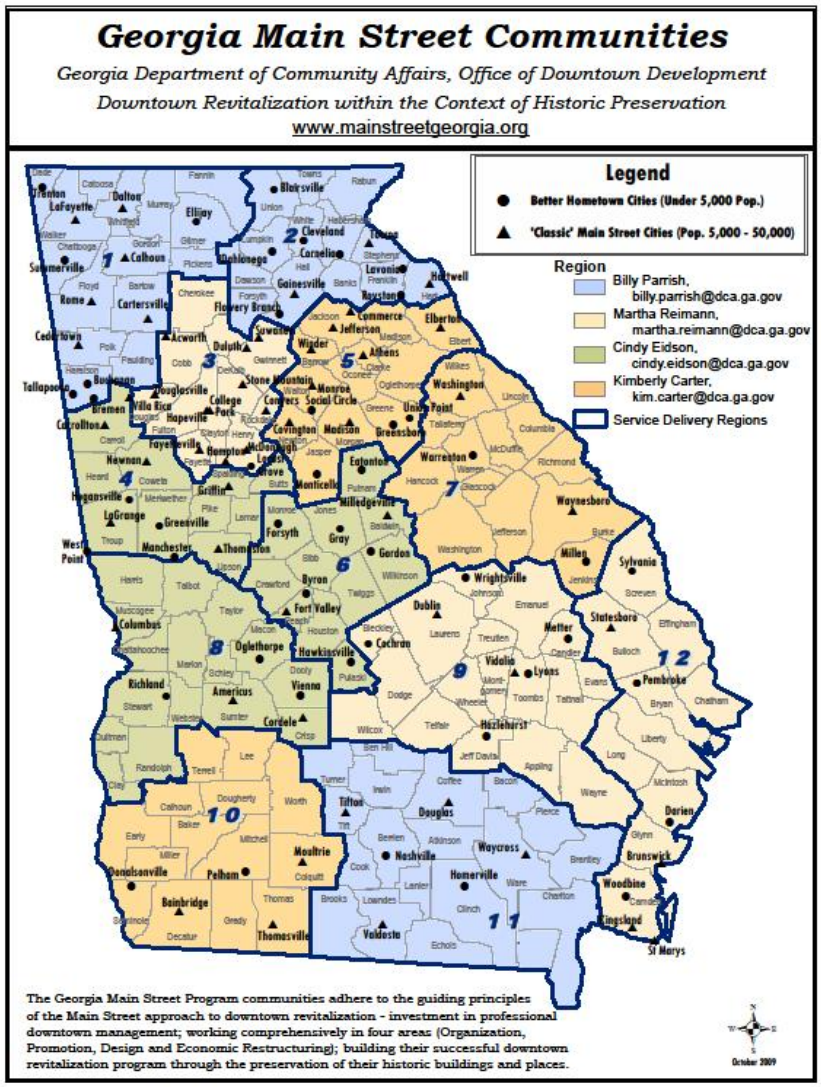

Figure 5: Georgia Main Street Communities Map, October 2009.

Eight months later, in October, 2009, the Regions were no longer categorized geographically, but by color (Figure 5) as shown in the map above. There had also been personnel changes since February: Regions 1 and 2 that had been represented by Art Gilbert were, once again being serviced by Billy Parrish and were now part of the Blue Region which also included Region 11 in deep south Georgia; Region 3 had been combined with Regions 9 and 12 to create the Cream Region with Martha Reimann still in Region 3, but replacing Sherry Evans from the Mid-South; Regions 4, 6, and 8 had become the Green

Region with Cindy Eidson replacing Jo Childers in Region 4 (West), Mary Alice Applegate in Region 6 (Central) and Sherry Evans in Region 8 (Mid-South); Regions 5 and 7 had been combined with Region 10 in deep southwest Georgia to create the Gold Region with Kimberly Carter as their Representative replacing Mary Alice Applegate in Regions 5 and 7 (Central) and Kelly Folsom-Lane in Region 10. Carter had also replaced Jo Childers as State Coordinator when Childers was named as State Coordinator for the Office of Downtown Development division. Of the former Main Street Regional Representatives no longer in the Main Street program, Applegate had moved to the Community Development program for DCA.

The impact the shuffling of personnel and area configurations created for the Main Street program and its participants was symptomatic of a move by the Georgia DCA and ODD toward emphasizing the Economic Development arm of the Main Street Four-Point Approach. The strengthening of the Georgia Downtown Association's Certified Downtown Professional program in Georgia coincided with the 2008 decision by the National Trust to suspend the certification program for Main Street Managers until an online delivery system could be devised. Georgia's downtown development professionals seeking a certification program to increase their value to their employers and their communities seized the opportunity. As a result, the economic development training sessions offered through GDA and Georgia Municipal Association are supported by broad-based attendance while Georgia Main Street's primary learning opportunity is the basic Main Street 101 offered in the spring. However, the GDA training does not include reference to the Main Street program, critical for a revitalization program based in historic downtown districts.

Georgia DCA administers a wide variety of programs from both the State and Federal governments, all of which are beneficial to communities struggling to provide adequate housing for their underserved residents. However, when a program important to the overall development of the community is shaken by a change in Regional Representative and Regional configuration two, three or four times within a three-year period, the continuity of service and local administrators' concentration on their home program is complicated by the seemingly never ending process of establishing new working relationships

even if the program stays the same. Factor in the State's apparent, intense focus on Downtown Development as a replacement for a tried-and-true method of revitalization that has served Georgia and her cities for three decades and the possible consequences to the member cities is unsettling. Complete the picture with the well-documented budget cuts the State agencies have endured since 2008 and will continue to navigate for the unforeseen future and the prospects for many State agencies appear bleak.

At present, training opportunities through the State of Georgia for local Main Street managers and program volunteers is at a minimum with the basic Main Street 101 limited to one presentation in March of 2010 and a second scheduled for the Georgia Downtown Conference (GDC) held each fall. During the GDC meeting, attendees are offered the opportunity to gain an overall look not only at the function of Main Street, but to learn about DDA responsibilities and functions, as well as those of the local HPC, During the training presentation, attendees attend a two-and-one-half hour session on Economic Restructuring and a second session of equal length, but split between an introduction to Preserving Downtown through state and federal tax credits, National Register districts, and preservation planning; and the second segment entitled "Promoting Downtown."

The 2008-2009 state budget was introduced with a flurry of cuts that have grown more severe over the past two years and are projected to go deeper still for 2010-2011. In an effort to continue to provide services throughout state government, positions and programs have been suspended, moved into other departments, or permanently abolished. State jobs have been eliminated - including within the DCA -- and knowledgeable sources have speculated that DCA itself may be parceled out to other state agencies for the 2010-2011 budget year. With 2010 being a gubernatorial election cycle, changes in elected positions may, as it so often does, lead to changes in appointed directorships and other state positions. A new leadership team may choose to eliminate Main Street from state government as a financially expendable program leaving Georgia's Main Street-Better Hometown cities in a similar position as that of the Washington State Main Street program when directors discovered three weeks before the end of 2009 that the state's budget for their program had been eliminated. In that case, a grassroots effort among the

state's Main Street managers and executive directors, as well as public outcry persuaded the governor to reinstate funding for the economic revitalization program.

As of June 15, 2010, an update as to the number of jobs created, new businesses opened, buildings rehabilitated, or dollars spent as a result of the Main Street program in Georgia was not available on the DCA website's Georgia Main Street page. Many of the documents posted date back to 2008 and some updated contact information is only as recent as 2009. Is Georgia Main Street is a program in peril?

Case Study: Washington DDA-Main Street - History Comes Alive [20]

A partnership of economic development and historic preservation for the revitalization of its city defines the focus of today's Main Street program in Washington, GA. The city has navigated periods of unsettling discord among its appointed, elected, and volunteer groups to finally reach a point that the decision makers recognize that recommended methods are also the most effective for their community development.

The east Georgia city of Washington located in the heart of Georgia's first county bears the distinction of being home to a number of historic firsts. Its distinction as the first and only dually-designated Main Street and Better Hometown city stands witness to the City's determination to employ whatever means possible to rebuild where its agrarian foundation left off.

Washington became a member of the Main Street program in 1982 though it was not technically large enough to participate, according to Georgia Main Street criteria for inclusion in the program. When Better Hometown was initiated in the 1990s, Washington chose to participate in the program for cities of fewer than 5,000 residents while maintaining its Main Street accreditation. Officially, it is listed as having joined the Main Street program in 1999.

The Washington Main Street program was initiated under the direction of Deborah Rushton and enjoyed early successes as the city took advantage of various state and federal grant and loan programs to fund a streetscape project that redefined the downtown commercial district. It was on Rushton's

[20] Jenkins, David. 2010. Survey follow-up interview by author. Washington, GA. February 6.

foundation that the city banked its Main Street future as she navigated the city through the infancy of revitalization. A University of Georgia Master of Historic Preservation graduate, Rushton introduced a strong preservation focus to the economic development scheme for Washington. Her untimely death in the early 1990s left a void in the program.

Today's Washington Main Street program operates under the Director of Economic Development and, at present, David Jenkins is functioning as the Economic Development-Main Street Director. His intent is to hire a Main Street Director by the end of calendar year 2010 since he believes the cooperative effort encompassed in the Main Street design is a critical facet of successful downtown revitalization. The State of Georgia DCA requires a full-time director for Georgia Main Street cities.

Serving in his position since 2007, Jenkins is proud of the success of the local program and points to the degree of support for Main Street programs and activities including, but not limited to: resident property owner receptivity to facilitating rental/sale agreements resulting in viable business introductions into downtown commercial storefronts; resident property owner willingness to investigate restoration and rehabilitation procedures resulting in better maintained buildings with a higher level of occupancy; and participation in Main Street-sponsored community and retail promotions.

Though the bulk of his training has been in economic and downtown development, Jenkins has navigated through the channels of economic development, historic preservation, and Main Street educational opportunities developing proficiency in all three areas. His multi-faceted approach to community economic development does not end with his downtown development toolbox. Jenkins collaborates with other community organizations, as well as city and county offices to produce community focus events, as well as retail events benefitting the downtown retailers. Heritage tourism events and ongoing initiatives capitalize on the rich history represented throughout Washington and Wilkes County, Georgia's first officially established political boundary.

The Washington Downtown Development Authority (WDDA) works cooperatively with the Washington-Wilkes Redevelopment Plan Manager (WWRP), the Director of Economic Development (DED), the Washington-Wilkes Tourism Director (WWTD), and the Washington-Wilkes Chamber of

Commerce (WWCofC). The Washington-Wilkes Payroll Development Authority (WWPDA) was constitutionally created to function similarly to the Economic Authority office typically in place in Georgia counties. It functions in much the same way as an Economic Development Authority. Jenkins has been instrumental in creating cooperative relationships that have proven beneficial to the collaborating organizations and, ultimately, benefitting the City of Washington, as well as the greater Wilkes County area.

While Jenkins does not have an historic preservation background, his strong regard for preservation and its role in community revitalization motivate him to actively advocate for stronger historic preservation regulation in Washington. Combined with his on-the-job preservation education, Jenkins believes his experience in downtown and economic development has served him well throughout his career as he has melded preservation and economic development into a professional historic preservation-as-revitalization value system.

He acknowledges that while the State of Georgia provides thorough training for specific entities, the emphasis on coordination among local boards, authorities and commissions is lacking with only minimal introduction provided at training sessions. The cooperative effort is left to the local level volunteers, elected officials, and employees who recognize the importance of coordinating efforts for maximum results. Since some people approach their positions only from the viewpoint of their particular group, they do not often see that collaborative efforts among the local groups will make their job easier.

Cooperative relationships in themselves are not the revitalization silver bullet, Jenkins said, as he noted that he would grade their cooperative efforts at a C+. “They are lacking still in expertise and vision,” Jenkins said reflecting his personal philosophy that success is an all-encompassing, never ending process. “They still don’t reach out as they should in order to realize what tools are available to them in other groups, communities, and at the state and federal levels.” He credits appointee and volunteer participation in organization-related training sessions as essential to their productive, proactive approach to the revitalization process.

Jenkins acknowledged "there are some bumpy spots here and there, but those are always going to be around." One of the challenges for the community organizations, Jenkins said, is in personnel turnover that often introduces new ideas, but also yields a productivity blip. He cites in example that the average tenure for the Washington-Wilkes Planning Authority Executive Director is 18 months. "It is really hard to achieve productivity when the executive director changes every year and a half," he said.

A second example involves relocation of the Washington-Wilkes County Chamber of Commerce office following the Tourism Director's departure. In Jenkins' opinion, the organization made a "boo-boo" by moving to the Courthouse Square in order to achieve greater visibility. The Chamber's Executive Director was elected county commissioner while the Chamber President became Emergency Medical Services director before running for Wilkes County Sheriff. The continuity needed to ensure successful operation of an entity as important as the Chamber of Commerce was compromised due to these changes in executive positions, Jenkins believes.

A strong proponent of the Main Street Four-Point Approach, Jenkins believes the cooperative effort promoted through the Main Street design is the best method for ensuring successful revitalization efforts in a community. In his capacity as Director of Economic Development, Jenkins recognizes the necessity of using every tool at one's disposal in order to ignite the community excitement needed to drive revitalization efforts.

"You have to get the community excited," he said. "Whatever you're doing involves their homes, their neighborhoods, their streets, their schools. They have a stake in the outcome, so they want to see the best possible result. It's my job to use whatever tool I can find to help them see how what we want to do will be to their long-term advantage."

To further demonstrate his successful collaboration philosophy, Jenkins has employed several University of Georgia Community Design Charrettes to address a variety of projects in Washington-Wilkes. The Rusher Street project targeted a depressed, blighted neighborhood on the outskirts of the city. The result of a $15,000 University of Georgia College of Environment and Design (CED) Charrette in 2008, the City was so inspired by the possibilities the project raised, a second CED Design Charrette

conducted in November, 2009, focused on designing entry corridors into Washington and Wilkes County was presented to Jenkins in early 2010. A Georgia Initiative for Community Housing grant will support the Rusher Street project that will include infill housing constructed to maintain and enhance the historic character of the neighborhood.

The inspiration for utilizing the design Charrettes was the question: "What are visitors seeing when they come here?" Jenkins said the current elected officials of the city and county recognize Washington-Wilkes County's strong heritage tourism draw due to the large number of extant historic houses and commercial buildings populating its major thoroughfares and believe the preservation of the properties to be the key to Washington-Wilkes' successful revitalization. Though visitors to the city may see individual properties that do not reflect that principle, Jenkins said the increased understanding of what constitutes "historic" is being felt around the city.

Washington's rich history as Georgia's first political frontier boundary plays a pivotal role in the scheme to boost the area's economic future. As a result, Jenkins' focus on promoting the historic assets of the area is in no small part dependent upon the proficiency of the Washington Historic Preservation Commission.

Washington has an historic preservation ordinance within its Municipal Code of Ordinances. The comprehensive nature of the ordinance allows for strong enforcement and includes a demolition by neglect component. *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties* is the source document guiding the Washington HPC in determining appropriate procedures where historic properties are concerned. The history of Washington's HPC has been that of not providing the leadership strength needed to regulate the city's historic properties. Its record of uneven application has not demonstrated its adoption of a preservation value system.

"The Historic Preservation Commission in Washington doesn't have big teeth, I'm afraid," he lamented during the February 6, 2010 interview in his office. The City Council listens, but they haven't had any wacky situations come up to really challenge the preservation ordinance."

Designation of the local historic district was "determined by what the commission members deemed to be historic. If they didn't like a building or decided it wasn't historic because it wasn't pretty, the boundary was drawn around it." According to Jenkins, past decisions revolved as much around what the council members wanted and what various citizens perceived to be historic as what was determined to be the actual significance of the property. He said the HPC was not functioning as intended and, in fact, acted counter to recommendations by professional and academic preservation advisory groups.

The city has five National Register Historic Districts including commercial and residential neighborhoods, as well as another twenty-five National Register of Historic Places designates as individual buildings. Presently, an historic resources survey is planned to identify historic built and natural resources throughout Washington and Wilkes County.

The Washington HPC encourages property owners not to leave their commercial or residential building(s) vacant, Jenkins stated. "The return on investment for some of our more affluent property owners creates some challenges when asking them to consider creative rent structures in an effort to attract prospective businesses to the downtown Washington area," Jenkins said.

The Washington DDA functions in accordance with the state's 1981 enabling legislation. Though the group has demonstrated success through rehabilitation of Washington's Courthouse square and other projects, Jenkins said the cooperative efforts of local property owners are being exacerbated by low taxes that don't encourage creative recruiting for new business. Consequently, the inventory of empty storefronts is greater than he would like.

A downtown inventory of available building stock has not been performed recently, but Jenkins has been developing a strategic plan he believes will help the city's DDA and Main Street focus. He said that the low cost of property ownership combined with absentee owners contribute to empty storefronts.

"Some of the property owners have determined the amount of rent they want to receive each month. Since they don't have to rent the buildings, they are not encouraged to make any deals with prospective tenants to get their buildings rented. They don't seem to realize what the empty space does both to the downtown business district as well as to the building itself by standing vacant."

Outside the scope of the Washington DDA has been the designation within the city limits of Enterprise and Opportunity Zones in conjunction with the Southwest Washington Urban Redevelopment Plan Community of Opportunity. Created under the auspices of the State of Georgia's Urban Redevelopment Act, the designations of these zones will allow the various economic development entities to pool their resources in an effort to secure funding and design resources to jumpstart a dying area of Washington, Jenkins explained.

On the positive side, Jenkins said "there are more projects on the horizon than you can imagine." A renovation of the historically African-American Rusher Street neighborhood; a $19 million regeneration of the local hospital; two water plants being rebuilt at a cost of $6 million; and the completion of a $2.2 million conference center have excited the local community. A companion hotel to the conference center has recently been proposed and local industry has moved into two vacant industrial buildings on the outskirts of town. Additional industrial prospects and a new Homeland Security center east of the city are generating a positive atmosphere.

Closer to the community's heart, a cemetery focus project is scheduled for 2011, Jenkins said, in an effort to learn more about and utilize the unique architecture residing in Washington's final resting places. Cemeteries dating from the Revolutionary War through present day are located throughout the county and Jenkins believes they hold the key to attracting genealogists searching to fill in the blanks on their family trees.

Finally, Jenkins is working to create a Career Academy with the mission to equip members of the community with skills needed to perform well in a variety of settings from restaurant management to construction to information technology. Jenkins believes another key to local success is in the creation and equipping of local residents to perform jobs needed in their hometown.

The focus of a comprehensive, cooperative approach to community redevelopment and revitalization within the rich fabric of Washington's historic built and natural resources is the defining element of Washington's leadership . The possible demise of the Georgia Main Street program in favor of a state-created economic development model would be a mistake, in his opinion, since Main Street offers

the national recognition and association with successful community collaboration so crucial to what today's cities are trying to realize. Fortunately for Washington, Jenkins has the attention of a Mayor and Council that recognize the value of historic preservation for the city's economic recovery. Washington's model for collaborative action and its interdisciplinary approach ensures a future for preservation in the city's economic revitalization plan.

CHAPTER 4

MAIN STREET: GEORGIA'S IDENTITY CRISIS

The Downtown Development Authority

During a conversation at the 2008 National Main Street Conference in Philadelphia, PA, then-Georgia Main Street Manager Jo Childers remarked to me, "You have to remember that Georgia is a DDA state."[21] I was serving as Secretary of the Main Street Board of Directors in my hometown where the Main Street philosophy had not been wholeheartedly embraced by members of the political arena, as well as some downtown business and property owners. With a frustrating history of rocky relationships and ineffective efforts outside of some great community events, the Board of Directors was actively seeking advice and possible solutions and had encountered Childers several times during the national meeting. Our group had begun to explore the possibility of moving Main Street to a non-profit model in an effort to extract the organization from the politics of City Hall. While attending the National Main Street Conference that year, the opportunity presented itself for our board members to pose the possibility to our State Manager.

Jo Childers was the first Main Street Executive Director for the City of Americus in southwest Georgia. One of Georgia's early entries into Main Street, Americus had achieved great things under Jo's direction and it was to the state program's benefit to have Jo at the helm. She knows Main Street inside and out and is always willing to help a local program find solutions for even the toughest of dilemmas. Jo was well aware that our local Main Street program had struggled since its earliest years; she knew that personalities and politics would be the death of Main Street in our city.

[21] Childers, Jo. 2008. conversation with author. Philadelphia, PA, March 31.

In explanation for her remark, Jo explained that because Downtown Development Authorities (DDA) had been established in Georgia during the same time frame as Main Street's statewide introduction and because, in many opinions, the two entities competed for control over activities in downtown business districts, some community DDAs had viewed Main Street with some degree of suspicion for fear the program would interfere with DDA plans for the downtown business district.

Enabled through the Georgia General Assembly via the Downtown Development Authorities Law of 1981, the DDA has been responsible for much of the growth in the cities that have one. A town's DDA is a powerful entity whose powers include, but are not limited to: authority to levy taxes and fines; borrow and lend money for downtown development projects; and change ideas into realities in the commercial districts over which they preside. Primarily composed of downtown property and business owners, as well as city or county private citizens, the DDA is an arm of City Hall. Appointed for three year terms, DDA members bring to the table their business expertise, along with a vested interest in the success of the downtown commercial district.

In Georgia, DDAs receive information from the Georgia Office of Downtown Development (ODD), as well as the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA), Georgia Downtown Association (GDA), and Georgia Cities Foundation, with the latter three non-profit groups also delivering access to grant information, funds, and coordination with other state and national organizations concerned with the operations in downtown commercial districts. While the DDA functions somewhat independently of Mayor and City Council direction, the DDA is prohibited from encumbering the City for debt assumed by the Authority.

When DDAs were first established in 1981, appointed Authority members in some cities eagerly attended training sessions provided by the state agencies, non-profit organizations, and municipally-affiliated educational institutions. Currently, an extensive eight-hour training session on the function and powers of the DDA is available during the annual GMA Annual Meeting. The introductory informational workshop for a new DDA member, this session introduces DDA members to the menu of items with which their appointed group is concerned including Main Street and the Historic Preservation

Commission (HPC), along with their functions, powers, and procedures. Main Street and HPCs are presented as part of a morning session scheduled for 8:45 – 10:00 am. During that period, according to the 2010 curriculum outline posted on the GMA website, the 75-minute session entitled "DDA Function and Purpose" includes the following three sections with included topics listed:

Why Create a DDA
- *Access to grants*
- *Funding entity for business revitalization, expansion, retention*
- *Funding entity for infrastructure improvements*
- *Revenue bond conduits*

Developing Your Agenda & Implementation
- *Main Street and Better Hometown program*
- *Historic Preservation*
- *Asset inventory and management*
- *Asset acquisition and improvement*
- *Marketing capabilities of a DDA*

Funding and Project Incentives
- *Operational funding*
- *Project and deal making incentives*[22]

If each topic listed within the three segments in the 75-minute session is allotted an equal amount of presentation time, each of the eleven topics would be given just less than seven minutes of the training time. That would not include any time for questions or discussion. The same timing holds true throughout the eight hour training for appointed members of an entity that will be the machine driving the revitalization of a downtown business district. However, though there are many training opportunities of which DDA members may take advantage through the GMA, GDA, ODD, and the Georgia Main Street program, there is not a training session offered for DDA appointees to participate with Main Street-Better Hometown Managers and Board of Directors members nor the HPC. Likewise, there is no posting on any of the three non-profit websites indicating the availability of a dedicated workshop on either topic though an extensive menu of workshops for other topics is listed.

The functionality of a DDA is, in part, dependent upon the knowledge and individual skill sets of its members. Familiarity with practices, techniques, laws, and requirements involved with the acquisition, sales, restoration or rehabilitation, and funding of buildings in a downtown commercial district is a

[22] Georgia Municipal Association, "Course Curriculum Outline," 2009 (http://www.gmanet.com/Assets/Training/dda.pdf [12 Mar 2010])

critical package of knowledge for members of the DDA. Lacking that knowledge, members are placed in the position of recruiting willing professional volunteers or hiring paid staff to facilitate the acquisition of information related to the day-to-day operations of the DDA. Failing that, DDA members themselves must either devote personal time to researching the various aspects of projects before the DDA or wait for someone outside of the community itself to initiate the rehabilitation activity of a deteriorating building.

Dependence upon a group of volunteer personnel to facilitate the decision making and, to some extent, research and coordinate of the various programs and incentives necessary to motivate a community to take the plunge into self-directed redevelopment is a very real situation in many of Georgia's cities. A paid manager in the form of a Main Street Manager/Executive Director or Economic/Community Development Director coordinates the daily operations of the DDA and Main Street programs and, in some instances, serves as the liaison or coordinator for the city's appointed HPC. In some cases, a paid staff member provides clerical support allowing the manager to participate in meetings, community trainings, interface with retailers and prospective business/property owners, as well as coordinate the committees, volunteers, and activities/ events.

Typically, DDA members, along with other appointees, are business owners or busy members of the community who take time out of the work day to attend meetings of the organization, but whose participation goes far beyond the hour or two per month required for the regular meeting. Communications with citizens, work area responsibilities, and study on various programs and incentives that enable the responsible member to do the best job possible are time consuming. To expect a volunteer to include the day-to-day contact with downtown business and property owners so they may address concerns and suggestions, as well as create retail and community events and activities is beyond the scope of the DDA appointee's position description.

Many and varied DDA-related workshops are sponsored throughout the calendar year by the GMA, Georgia Cities Foundation, GDA, and Georgia DCA through its Office of Downtown Development. Whether an incentive or program regarding transportation issues, federal or state regulatory issues that impact a DDA, a how-to on serving as a DDA member, or navigating tax credits and other

funding incentives to encourage downtown rehabilitations and restorations of our historic buildings, there is a training session offered at least once during the course of the calendar year. The Georgia Downtown Association's Georgia Academy for Economic Development offers a more in-depth view of the issues facing various municipal and county economic development organizations – some appointed, some elected, some employed. With support through the Office of Downtown Development and the three economic development/municipal non-profits in Georgia, economic development is an accessible topic with plenty of room for navigation.

The previously-referenced 2008 DD Programs & Service manual focuses on what programs and services are offered through the Office of Downtown Development within the Georgia DCA. It presents an introduction into the many services available to the downtown development committee or professional and specifically lists Training & Special Events including the Main Street Institute and Advanced Training Courses. The Programs of Service documents in detail the Design and Preservation Services offered through the ODD. It fully discusses the Main Street/ Better Hometown Programs, including the Four-Point Approach® and Program Standards. The booklet explains the selection process for becoming a Georgia Main Street or Better Hometown member city. It offers an extensive list delineating components of the annual assessment process including the previously-referenced expanded list of criteria for meeting or exceeding the State ODD expectations for the local Main Street program. Then it lists how to become an Affiliate program with most of the accessibility of the Main Street program, but without being able to call one's program "Main Street".

The nationally-recognized Main Street program is more than a way of implementing a downtown redevelopment program; Main Street is a brand. The more widespread the message, the more accountability is expected of the associated programs. In a business sense, the National Trust for Historic Preservation through its National Main Street Center is the franchisor while the state coordinating programs charged with the geographical administration of the program within its boundaries are the liaisons between the national program center and the local member cities.

In Georgia, however, the Main Street program appears to just be functioning, but not thriving, as the program's elements are being harvested to support economic development focused programs that relegate the historic preservation partnership to a lesser level than does Main Street. The national program offers flexibility, but utilizes the Four-Point Approach which includes Economic Restructuring. The national program recommends that Downtown Development Authorities and/or its members serve as the Economic Restructuring committee for the local Main Street program. Because the DDA has as its primary function economic development, the group does not have as its purpose the promotion of the downtown, the organization of volunteers, nor the design of the buildings. The DDA is concerned with filling storefronts, facilitating grants and loans for rehabilitations, and pumping life back into dilapidated downtown business districts but, by and large, historic preservation is not their priority.

Over the past decade, the Main Street process as applied in Georgia has been reconstructed to resemble but a shadow of what it once was. While the Main Street presentations are made and the Four-Point Approach recited at workshops, the focus for more and more of Georgia's Main Street programs has shifted from a comprehensive organization/economic restructuring/promotion/design umbrella to a dominant economic restructuring model with organization, promotion, and design being relegated to a much lesser status.

There are some within the current state and local programs who recognize the altered state of Georgia's Main Street program and wonder to what extent the 2008 discontinuation of the National Main Street Manager's Certification program has contributed to the mindset of restructuring Main Street. With local program managers unable to obtain a certification from the National Main Street Center, state coordinating programs are left to create their own version of the national certification curriculum or cast their eyes to an existing program from a different entity. In Georgia's case, the certification is coming in the form of the GDA Professional Development Certification Program, a three-year, three-stage program combining classroom learning with field experience to create a credible standard accepted throughout the state.

Because the Georgia Downtown Development Professional program is recognized throughout the state as the consummate standard for economic development in the downtown setting, the GDA series allows the prospective downtown professional an avenue to attain a recognized qualification that translates to a downtown development manager's position. Because the certification program is on hold until an online component can be devised, according to Erica Stewart of the National Main Street Center, Main Street risks replacement by programs such as the Georgia Downtown Development Professional program. Worse yet, Main Street risks becoming irrelevant as its trademarked components are stripped, renamed and placed on a new chassis to be introduced as the new and improved model with Main Street's logo as ghost writing on the wall.

The National Main Street program has contributed to the state of Main Street in Georgia by not introducing an alternative certification program to allow not only prospective managers, but existing managers to obtain a main Street professional development designation that distinguishes them from a talented volunteer who knows how to organize and present, but has not the faintest idea about Main Street economic restructuring or incentives available to the owners of historic properties. Georgia Main Street has failed to recognize that the Main Street program initiated economic redevelopment in an historic preservation setting. Instead, the State is embracing an Economic Development track it hopes will produce jobs, but will remove the emphasis on embracing the community spirit that created the city in which the program operates.

As Economic Development authority and Historic Preservation proponent Donovan Rypkema said during the April 7, 2010 Bill Kennedy Memorial Lecture at Georgia Tech:

> Historic buildings are invariably where millions of dollars of infrastructure investment has already been made by previous generations. All too often that infrastructure is underutilized as we substitute suburban sprawl for neighborhood reinvestment.

> One of the great success stories for cities and for historic preservation in the last two decades has been downtown revitalization….But I cannot identify a single example of a sustained success story in downtown revitalization where historic preservation wasn't a key component. Not one. Conversely, the examples of very expensive revitalization have nearly all had the destruction of historic buildings as a major element. Downtown revitalization through historic preservation is one of the best examples in this country of sustainable economic development. [23]

This was not the first time Rypkema has made these assertions in some form. At the 2007 National Main Street Conference in Seattle, WA, Rypkema acknowledged that the perceived importance of historic preservation in a downtown revitalization program will be dependent on the resources and age of the city, as well as the strength of the local preservation groups and "enlightenment of the leadership and whether there is a Main Street program. But successful revitalization and no historic preservation? It ain't happening."[24]

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 established the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register is primarily a commemorative designation created to raise awareness and accountability for the protection of historic sites due to their association with nationally significant people, events, districts, or archaeology. At that time, much of the emphasis was placed on buildings of national importance, often the homes of patriotic heroes, the buildings where nationally significant events took place, those resources that were built or designed by widely recognized persons accomplished in the field of architecture or construction, or a collection of buildings that represented a community way of life during a period in American history. Hence, the four criteria for significance leading to nomination for the National Register of Historic Places are based on associations within those four categories.

In 1980, the Georgia General Assembly passed the enabling legislation allowing Georgia cities to establish a local historic preservation ordinance for the purpose of regulating the treatment of buildings, sites, and artifacts significant at the local level. As a part of the 1980 legislation, the local Historic

[23] Donovan D. Rypkema, "Historic Preservation and Sustainable Development" (Bill Kennedy Memorial lecture, Georgia Tech College of Architecture, Atlanta, GA, April 7, 2010)

[24] Donovan D. Rypkema, "Downtown Revitalization, Sustainability, and Historic Preservation" (National Main Streets Conference Closing Plenary, Seattle, WA, March 28, 2007)

Preservation Commission was established in an effort to provide for a regulatory group appointed by the local governing body. The stated purpose for the HPC is "to provide for the protection, enhancement, perpetuation, or use of historic properties or historic districts" (O.C.G.A. § 44-10-24)[25] through a locally adopted Historic Preservation ordinance. Through the appointed members of the local HPC, the local historic preservation ordinance will provide regulation of the treatment of historic buildings, sites, and landscapes. The legislation also allows for a joint city-county HPC allowing smaller cities and unincorporated communities to combine resources to create a unified Historic Preservation Commission often in a rural county with few residents.

The enactment of a local Historic Preservation ordinance and appointment of a local HPC contributes toward a city's eligibility as a Certified Local Government (CLG). Each state designates an agency to administer the CLG program and liaison with the cities to ensure compliance and service delivery. Grants, loans and services are made available to CLG cities who have demonstrated active compliance with the program's standards and guidelines. In Georgia, the 1980 legislation appointed the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office as the administrator for the CLG program.

The Georgia Historic Preservation Act grants the local HPC a series of regulatory powers. The local HPC is empowered to maintain the development of educational programs; increase public awareness of historic properties within its jurisdiction; maintain an accurate historic resources inventory of all properties within its boundaries; participate in the preservation or restoration of any city-owned or managed historic properties; review applications for Certificates of Appropriateness (COA) for material changes to properties located within its jurisdictional boundaries; recommend the establishment of local historic districts, as well as a local historic register to which historic built and natural resources can be nominated; and create liaisons with the state and federal historic preservation-related authorities in an effort to secure funding and educational as well as non-educational resources for the purpose of perpetuating and cultivating the activity of grassroots historic preservation activity within its boundaries.

[25] *Official Code of Georgia Annotated*, § 44-10-24 (2009) (LexisNexis Custom Solution)

Though it has regulatory authority, the HPC makes recommendations to the local governing body regarding the designation of local historic districts, properties, and artifacts so further action can be pursued.

Unfortunately, in some Georgia cities, the purpose and powers of the local HPC are often misunderstood by the public. Budget restraints prevent needed participation in training opportunities, so appointees are faced with either funding their own training, seeking grants that will pay for training for HPC members, or attempting to teach themselves. In some cases, local elected officials do not have a clear understanding of the HPC's purpose in their community development strategy and view them as less than an officially appointed extension of the Mayor and Council or other local governing body. As such, educational opportunities for the Historic Preservation Commission that provide instruction and information related to its purpose, function and powers are given non-essential status in the budgetary process, as well as in the governing body's priority for action. The result is an appointed regulatory body that is uninformed and unprepared to execute the task for which it exists. Unless a hot-button topic arises, the HPC is left to fend for itself in terms of attempting to regulate the historic resources of the community. When the hot button topic surfaces, the uninformed members of the Commission are ill-prepared to appropriately address the situation. This often results in a locally significant building's demise. At that, the local governing body often has its collective mind set for one outcome and that may just as likely not be on behalf of the building or historic resource.

Several of the case study cities interviewed for this work have encountered such situations. In the Putnam County city of Eatonton, for example, the proactive HPC has taken it upon itself to become informed. Chair Shelagh Fagan is heading the charge to provide leadership for the historic east Georgia hometown of the late Joel Chandler Harris, author of the Uncle Remus stories and former editor of *The Atlanta Constitution.* While Mr. Harris' notoriety helped put Eatonton on the map, the character of the city with its distinctive courthouse square, tightly woven commercial district and stately residential neighborhoods define the city. It is that defining character that Fagan and Better Hometown Director Katy

Smith are working together to defend as Smith coordinates local property owners and businesses in a revitalization of Eatonton's commercial district.

Fagan acknowledges that she has stepped on some toes in Eatonton in her quest to promote the preservation of the city's historic buildings. Recognizing that the needs of property owners such as commercial and industrial interests, churches, and some individuals will differ from those of the HPC, Fagan sympathizes with the plight of an owner attempting to find a less expensive alternative to recommended treatments for replacement of historic building materials. In a society where cheaper translates to smarter, property owners strive for renovations that serve a purpose rather than seek solutions that add years to the life of an historic property. Fagan views as her responsibility the education of property owners as to why a quality repair or renovation can be seen as a long-term investment rather than an expedient item on a check list.

The Eatonton HPC has encountered its share of frustration as the City's Mayor and Council have not followed commission recommendations in some high-profile situations, Fagan said. The perception of preservation by ballot box has hampered efforts by the HPC to encourage and regulate progressive historic preservation policies since the local commission can be pre-empted by popular opinion or relationships with high ranking local officials. Since there is no preservation professional to assist the HPC in presenting the commission's recommendations to the Mayor and Council, local politics, instead of policy, can determine the outcome. The resulting disposition by the governing body may take on an appearance of bias regarding an issue that should be determined based on fact and compliance with the preservation ordinance. In a February 17, 2010 interview with the author, Fagan's annoyance with the situation was apparent, but her resolve to realize the establishment of a strong historic preservation ethic is steeled.

The Eatonton HPC is not alone in their struggle, but they are not indicative of every HPC in the state either. While Shelagh Fagan is but one of over one hundred Historic Preservation Commission chairs in Georgia who fight the battles of priorities, politics, and power on behalf of the historic assets of

their towns and cities, other cities are fortunate to have local preservation-sensitive citizens who recognize the need for an active preservation program.

In Bainbridge, former *Post-Searchlight* newspaper publisher Sam Griffin and his wife Mary Ann assumed an enviable position among local preservationists as the power of the press was on the side of historic preservation. While Griffin himself did not wade into the local fray when his spouse fought the battles of Bainbridge and Decatur County in efforts to save the former firehouse and courthouse, his presence and that of his newspaper offered a measure of support many local organizations must work years to obtain.

Historic Preservation Commissions work with local Main Street programs to provide guidance in the area of design. Assisting with the research and development of design guidelines appropriate for a specific building, group of buildings, commercial or residential district, an informed and appropriately trained HPC works to the definite advantage of the overall economic revitalization efforts of a city. While the HPC's function is not to tell a property owner how their property is to be presented, the recommendations of the HPC can be invaluable in terms of assisting with the development of a specific period of interpretation for an historic neighborhood, knowledge of a specific type of construction method, providing information regarding form, scale, and other aspects of the appearance of the district.

Not to be confused with the local historical society or historic preservation advocacy group, the local Historic Preservation Commission is composed of appointees, but there the similarities grind to a slow crawl. Most historical societies are concerned with the acquisition of artifacts and information relevant to the historical development of the targeted community. Their focus is on the people who contributed to the city's foundation, the roles they played in the city's history, where they lived and worked while gathering and telling the stories. An historic preservation advocacy group is often concerned with the built and natural environment of the target city. With a focus toward preserving and restoring historic buildings that may have no other advocate, the historic preservation organization works with the historical society to research the histories of the buildings in order to be able to tell their stories,

make a connection with the community, and motivate area residents to discover the importance of the old buildings in their midst.

A community that has these three groups working together can accomplish the goals of a downtown economic redevelopment program, but not without a great degree of cooperation from the DDA. At that, the DDA and HPC working together still does not address the need to promote their collaborative efforts nor does it target the creation of a volunteer network that provides so much of the manpower needed to facilitate daily operational needs, as well as the periodic community or retail event necessary to promote the city and its accomplishments.

A strong commitment to the recognition of the critical role of the HPC as an integral piece of the revitalization puzzle. Every city cannot budget for a staff preservation planner though the services of one is needed in any city engaged in a revitalization program. All of these situations accentuate the need for the State of Georgia to adopt the priority of providing funding for a preservation planner to be positioned within the structure of each Regional Commission. As the state's historic resources age and more cities are surrounded by dormant pasture land and dilapidated chicken houses that once supported the community, the need for a strong preservation focus is needed. Tragically, the perception of historic preservation as a critical piece of the redevelopment puzzle seems to have been lost on officials who do not recognize the correlation between job creation and historic preservation.

A statewide campaign toward rekindling the fire that was Georgia Main Street will awaken a program on the cusp of perceived irrelevancy. If the state's administrative agency continues its move toward the apparent re-branding of Main Street into an economic development model focused solely on downtown revitalization, a grave error in judgment will result in the virtual abandonment of thousands of historic properties throughout the state. A breach in relationship will have occurred as Main Street cities experience a collision between the DDA and Historic Preservation Commission without the unifying direction of the Main Street program. In its rush to create jobs and reverse the trend of unemployment and empty storefronts, the state agency in charge of administering Georgia's Main Street program will have inadvertently contributed to the culture of destruction that will seize historic downtown districts.

Georgia's Main Street cities will have been all but abandoned by the very program that offered them solutions for their dilapidated downtowns.

The character of Georgia's downtown business districts and adjacent historic residential districts must be embraced and enhanced through regulation for their perpetuation while protecting the heritage they proclaim to all who travel their thoroughfares.

Georgia Main Street Today

The Georgia Main Street program has been administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) twice in its thirty year history. Budgetary and staffing concerns required the program to be shifted to other state agencies during the 1990s. Now back at the DCA, the current economic downturn has the State examining yet another shift for Main Street, perhaps to the non-profits Georgia Cities Foundation or the Georgia Downtown Association, both organizations with a downtown economic development focus.

First, the nationwide economic crisis since 2008 has greatly strained the State of Georgia's financial resources. Well-documented budget cuts in excess of ten percent per year in both 2009 and 2010 have placed lawmakers and administrators in all state dollar-dependent areas scrambling to find other sources of income, as well as making difficult decisions regarding programs that may need to be suspended until the fiscal picture improves, the alternative is the total termination of jobs and programs deemed unnecessary to the State's survival as an operational entity.

Main Street was developed by the National Trust as a non-profit administrative model accountable to local government in exchange for its financial and moral support. Financial crises such as the one being experienced nationwide in the U.S. since 2008 make programs such as Main Street vulnerable to the inevitable budget cuts that ensue. If moved from DCA, it will be the Georgia Main Street program's third move in its thirty year history. As previously discussed in Chapter 3, changes in the program's administrative model over the last three years have contributed to an uneven and inconsistent delivery of service to local programs that best respond to continuity of program and personnel in order to thrive. Changing representatives with modified titles and responsibilities creates a climate of

irregularity, thereby threatening the stability of its service delivery and establishment of relationships among local members and the state program. Main Street is a program designed to be flexible, but that needs a stable environment in order to thrive.

Clearly, when compared with other state programs, the administration of the Main Street program through a statewide non-profit demonstrates a stronger connection to the program's historic preservation roots while overwhelmingly contributing to the economic survival of towns that might otherwise be little more than collections of buildings on a road to somewhere else. The evidence in Colorado, Pennsylvania and fifteen other non-profit administered state programs shows that non-profit administration allows for a more diverse influx of funds for the Main Street program, as well as the ability for the boards of directors and organization's committees to respond to changes in the economic climate, develop alternative sources of income, adjust to advocacy needs, and develop the community connections cross-sections for a more comprehensive approach to public awareness, funding, promotion, and economic development without the level of restriction involved with a state government-affiliated Main Street Program.

Several factors seem to characterize the status of Georgia's Main Street-Better Hometown cities since 2007 and contribute to concern about the future:

1) Overlap of service within the administrative agency;
2) Expectations beyond the control of a local Main Street manager/executive director;
3) Personnel changes or responsibility changes contributing to a lack of continuity in service for local programs;
4) Budget cuts that threaten the program's existence;
5) Uncertainty as to the future of Georgia's Main Street program.

The presence of these factors raises questions as to the feasibility of moving the Main Street program from a fiscally-strapped state agency to a non-profit organization. Main Street is too vital to almost 100 Georgia cities to continue the uncertainty that will permeate to the local level if left unchecked.

Further justification for the transition to a non-profit administrative structure is the opportunity to model for local programs the program as it was designed to be implemented. Local programs headed by paid managers will be able to look to the state program as an example of how Main Street should operate on the local level as a cooperative effort among public and private entities. Utilizing a range of funding sources, the Main Street program presents the paradigm of a comprehensive, coordinated effort incorporating paid and volunteer personnel with a passion for community development and economic revitalization fueled by the buildings that define the community's past.

In a lecture entitled *Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Economic and Social Development* during the European Cultural Heritage Forum in Brussels, Belgium, on December 7, 2005, economic development and historic preservation authority Donovan Rypkema introduced the Main Street program to his listeners as being "the most cost effective program of economic development of any kind in the US is a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation called Main Street."

That Donovan Rypkema is a fan of the Main Street program is evidenced by his references in lectures dating from 2003. Rypkema recognizes the ultimate value of a program like Main Street that promotes a balanced approach to redeveloping and reinvigorating downtown commercial districts through the reuse of their built resource. His is an endorsement of very high order and not one to be ignored.

The focus on economic redevelopment in Georgia has pre-empted the other components of a balanced downtown program with the proverbial marbles being awarded to the economic development professional who gains the state certification, creates programs based solely on economics while giving not so much as a serious nod to historic preservation, its impact on or contributions to the building's future, or how it fits into the downtown district whole.

Only the Main Street program is equipped to face the issues of the city as a whole, not just its downtown business district. While the economic restructuring of a deteriorated downtown corridor must serve as the catalyst for redevelopment of all historic districts within a city's boundaries, redevelopment of pockets of commercial activity can be vital to the overall achievement of citywide restoration of positive activity. Though Main Street's primary focus is the downtown area, it is not limited to a specific

geographically bound area as is the DDA nor is its boundary restricted by the eligibility of a neighborhood to be considered historic due to its age or local significance. By virtue of it not being a legislated entity, Main Street's reach can stretch to the city limits encompassing commercial developments beyond the DDA boundary and rsidential districts younger than fifty years of age.

The Main Street program is defined as economic development in an historic preservation context, but its value as a community development tool holds the potential to rebuild lives as the properly implemented program boosts community pride and rekindles community spirit through its myriad opportunities for involvement, partnership, and positive impact. The power of Main Street is undeniable and should be the motivating force behind a transition in Georgia economic restructuring activities.

When the administrative agency faces an uncertain future and is stretched beyond its capability to provide the support needed for the local cities, local organizations are left to fend for themselves. A phone call to the preservation planner or regional representative can deliver the result of clarification of a point of procedure, a poorly written ordinance, or a clear explanation of the regulatory power afforded a legislatively enabled group like the HPC.

For the case study city of Eatonton, the availability of a Regional Commission Preservation Planner could have assisted the city in joining the Certified Local Government program twelve years ago. As a result, ordinance development mistakes have cost the city untold rehabilitation dollars.

Case Study: Eatonton Better Hometown - A Rich Heritage Struggles for Recognition[26, 27, 28]

Widely known as the birthplace and childhood home of legendary newspaper editor Joel Chandler Harris, the middle Georgia city of Eatonton is the epitome of a toe-to-toe battle pitting the

[26] Smith, Katy and Fagan, Shelagh. 2010. Survey follow-up interview by author. Eatonton, GA. February 16.

[27] Fagan, Shelagh. 2009. "Main Street, DDA, and Historic Preservation – How Are They Working?" online survey. Collector: Main Street/DDA/HPC Survey (Web Link). December 28.

[5] Smith, Katy. 2010. "Main Street, DDA, and Historic Preservation – How Are They Working?" online survey. Collector: Main Street/DDA/HPC Survey (Web Link). January 4.

Eatonton HPC, the DDA, and the Eatonton Mayor and Council in a political power struggle with the Better Hometown Director caught in the crossfire. Former teacher Katy Smith took the wheel for the Better Hometown program in 2009. Her teaching experience will prove invaluable as she sets to the task of educating those with whom she interacts about the role of cooperation in a community project such as economic development within the historic context of a city such as Eatonton.

Smith reflected that her first year was a year of accomplishment for the local revitalization program as visible change began to be evident. "Moving forward just takes time and money," she observed as she noted that tangible evidence of improvements have been sporadic, but is beginning to take shape.

Eatonton Historic Preservation Commission Chair Shelagh Fagan agreed. "Over the last five years, there is a difference, but many people won't notice. This last year we've made great strides forward."

According to Smith and Fagan, however, the improvements are largely intangibles in the form of community support for projects, public awareness of BHT efforts, and stronger downtown appeal through the efforts of individual business owners. While contributing to what the women hope will translate into an interest in business growth in downtown Eatonton, several deep-seated issues woven into the fabric of city government, appointed groups, and local property owners have created cause for concern.

The Eatonton DDA tends to work independently of community involvement, according to survey responses from Smith and Fagan. The DDA's knowledge is minimal due to the failure of its members to attend training and information sessions provided by the Georgia Municipal Association, Office of Downtown Development, and Georgia Downtown Association. Fagan acknowledges the DDA possesses a minimal understanding of the role of historic preservation as the foundation for economic revitalization while Smith's perception was not so generous. Re-formed in 2009, the latest installment of Eatonton's DDA is described by Fagan as "a disaster". A lack of cooperative effort complicated by interpersonal conflict spurred the chair to step down at the beginning of 2010. Fagan has volunteered to serve as Vice

Chair and has begun the process for a grant application to fund some of the group's activity as a part of its function.

During the February 16, 2010 interview with Smith and Fagan, both women reflected on the miscues of the past DDA. According to Fagan, Eatonton's DDA jurisdiction extends into what is described as a Tier 1 and Tier 2 arrangement with Better Hometown focusing on the Tier 1 downtown area. The DDA group prior to the one formed in 2009 was easily as dysfunctional as the most recent installment, according to both women.

"Until recently, the community has viewed historic preservation and downtown revitalization through very different lenses," Fagan observed.

Eatonton's Better Hometown program has encountered some challenges, in part, because of the strength of local politics. Smith recognizes that there is a perception among well-intentioned, but uninformed citizens that the HPC goes overboard in exercising their powers. "Luckily, our merchants are coming around to understand there's a happy medium,' she said.

The historic district does not include the downtown area because downtown merchants and property owners believed the designation would restrict their property rights, Fagan said.

"The first district was turned down flat," she recalled. "In retrospect, we probably should have waited. I put it in the (news)paper saying the meeting would be a public hearing for information and that the City Council was going to vote on the district at a second meeting.

"The naysayers were at the first meeting, but the people who were for it waited until the next meeting when the vote had been requested to happen. The City Council decided not to wait until the second meeting and to kill it at the first meeting. They later came back and decided to give us a smaller residential district."

Personal agendas often drive the ability of a program to achieve effectiveness as evidenced by the lack of cooperation realized with downtown merchants. Smith said that many of the commercial property owners had purchased their downtown buildings for investment purposes during the real estate bubble a few years back. Their plan, she said, was to hold the property for a short time until the market rate had

risen and then sell their property at a profit, a philosophy known in the real estate industry as "flipping". With the sag in real estate since 2008, Smith said those plans have been shelved . That could turn out to be a positive thing for Eatonton's Better Hometown as some of the owners discover that rendering their buildings marketable will require more than just required maintenance and repair.

On the political front, Fagan's more than casual frustration with the Eatonton City Council punctuates her discussion of how the HPC has been able to perform their duties. While Eatonton has enacted an historic preservation ordinance, one sentence regarding the Statement of Powers for the appointed commission stands in the way of the City being granted Certified Local Government status and is usurping the HPCs authority regarding Certificates of Appropriateness. In the City of Eatonton Code of Ordinances adopted April 18, 1988, Article II. Historic Preservation Commission, Section 42-33(g) Statement of powers reads:

> The commission shall be authorized to:
> (3) Review application for certificates of appropriateness and recommend to the board of council that it grant or deny such in accordance with the provisions of this article;[29]

Eligibility for CLG status requires that local historic preservation ordinances be compatible with and reflect the same powers and authority as granted in the State of Georgia's enabling legislation which states, according to the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office:

> In Georgia, Historic Preservation Commissions are authorized to:
> (3) Review applications for certificates of appropriateness and grant or deny the same in accordance with Code Section 44-10-28;[30]

The inability of the local commission to grant or deny requests for Certificates of Appropriateness has prevented the City of Eatonton from being eligible for the benefits of the CLG program for the past twelve years costing the City eligibility for grant dollars and services provided with admission to the CLG

[29] City of Eatonton Code of Ordinances, Section 42-33. Creation of Historic Preservation Commission (g)(3), September 19, 2009 (http://library6.municode.com/default-test/home.htm?infobase=13291&doc_action=whatsnew [accessed May 31, 2010])

[30] Official Code of Georgia Annotated 44-10-25, LexisNexis Custom Solution: Georgia Code, http://www.lexis-nexis.com/hottopics/gacode/Default.asp (accessed June 6, 2010)

program. Fagan believes many on the Eatonton City Council do not realize the wording of the ordinance is the singular obstacle to attaining the CLG designation. The absence of a preservation planner to advise the city government regarding the advantages of CLG participation has contributed to this dilemma, Fagan noted. While many smaller Georgia towns do not employ a preservation planner on the city payroll, the ability of the appropriate Georgia Regional Commission to provide this service would be invaluable for cities attempting to develop preservation plans and ensure compatibility with state law. An amendment to the current ordinance to bring it into compliance with the State Code could provide the remedy for the CLG dilemma, but a complete examination of the city's preservation ordinance would provide a more concise direction for the city preservation efforts and the commission that regulates them.

While this dilemma in Eatonton could, perhaps, be addressed best through a stronger presence by the Regional Commission's preservation planner or the Georgia SHPO's CLG Coordinator to assist with interpretation of the Georgia Historic Preservation Act and its CLG legislation, it underscores the impact that confusion or dysfunction on the part of one area of local government can have on the whole. In Eatonton, the HPC is grappling with the City Council over the preservation ordinance while the DDA is struggling within itself.

The conflict and confusion permeating the Eatonton DDA and HPC create cause for concern for Katy Smith and the efforts of the BHT Board of Directors. A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Eatonton Better Hometown's efforts are largely dependent upon the functionality of the two coordinating City appointed groups. Their turmoil translates to an obstacle laden downtown revitalization effort in Eatonton with Smith attempting to navigate the battlefield.

Complicating matters for Smith as she enters her second year of service was the delivery of training by the Georgia Main Street coordinating program.

"Basic training could and should be more accessible," she said. "A DVD presentation or some sort of distance learning component would be helpful. When the training is being held too far away, it is difficult for everyone who needs it to get there."

Fagan added that changes in training delivery through the Georgia Alliance for Preservation Commissions would be of benefit, as well. Offering HPC notebooks and manuals on compact disks, flash drives, or as internet downloads would be very helpful when money is tight and traveling to another part of the state creates a hardship for the local group. Though face-to-face training and networking is the preferred method for Smith, she would be happy with there being a focus on getting the information to member cities to be disseminated to those in need. She noted that training was being held in April in the southwest Georgia city of Albany and is hoping for a second opportunity in the fall, perhaps closer than the two-and-one-half hours required to drive to a training session. With five hours round trip involved in travel alone, the cost in time and dollars becomes prohibitive in a climate of budget cuts and no frills spending.

With regard to support from the state office beyond training accessibility, Smith responded to the online survey that Eatonton Better Hometown could use more support from the DCA in overseeing the local Main Street, DDA, and HPC cooperative efforts. She believed a tool for self-evaluation would be very helpful and that a system of evaluation for struggling Main Street programs would be beneficial. Smith would like to see training addressing the coordination of efforts within her community.

When asked what three tools she would like to see that would provide support from the State to her local program, Smith's teaching background came to the forefront:

"When new hires come on, there needs to be some form of training for them. Not really knowing about the organization and how it operates made it pretty hard," she said. "The Main Street Institute was really helpful for me. We have a great camaraderie among cities, so we network very well. We get good support from the state. Kimberly (Carter, Georgia Main Street Manager) and everyone from the state are very helpful. Our regional representative has just taken a new position with the state, so Kimberly is our sole contact."

For the moment, Smith's greatest concern is the loss of businesses in the downtown business district. She and Fagan agree that the current money crunch is responsible for the tenuous position of

many prospects; the time is not good for venturing into a new business unless one has the financial backing to operate until the business has time to establish itself.

Cooperation and an understanding of the functions and responsibilities of each of the coordinating entities must be fundamental, yet imperative, components of a successful downtown revitalization effort, Smith said.

"If all entities work well together," she said, "the sky's the limit."

CHAPTER 5

MAIN STREET TODAY: GEORGIA PARTNERS

Building partnerships throughout the preservation community at home and throughout the state was the hallmark of Mary Ann Griffin's campaign to rehabilitate some of Bainbridge's most pathetic shadows to their former grandeur. In no small part, Mrs. Griffin credits the Georgia Trust, architect Gene Surber, and Bainbridge native John Waters, graduate coordinator for the University of Georgia's Master of Historic Preservation program and one of the founders of the Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation, with their invaluable assistance in advising the Bainbridge committees as they picked their way through tax credits, grant applications, preservation planning, laws and ordinances, and assembled the team of consultants, contractors, journeymen, and other professionals whose contributions would be invaluable to the success of the early preservation efforts in Bainbridge. Those efforts initiated the Main Street Bainbridge and Bainbridge DDA movements as the community witnessed the power of cooperation among friends, neighbors, the business community, preservationists, and politicians.

Like Mary Ann Griffin, other case study participants acknowledged the pivotal role of strong partnerships in the ongoing campaign to keep historic preservation at the forefront of the economic revitalization battle. Their stories throughout this document emphasize the need for strong collaboration to enable Main Street success.

The State Historic Preservation Office

The Georgia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), a product of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, is housed in the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Serving as the State Review Board for the National Register of Historic Places, the Georgia SHPO identifies and recommends for nomination to the National Register buildings, sites, artifacts, and other historic assets within the state

of Georgia. The national non-profit partner for the Georgia SHPO is the National Trust for Historic Preservation with the state counterpart being the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation in Atlanta.

The Georgia SHPO performs the duties as charged in the NHPA including, but not limited to: developing programs of public education and awareness for historic preservation in Georgia; processing loans and grants at the state and federal level, as appropriate; interface with the National Register Review Board to facilitate the nomination to the National Register of the state's significant historic assets; create a preservation plan for the state of Georgia; perform a statewide historic resources survey to identify significant historic resources; coordinate with local governing bodies to assist with the establishment of local Historic Preservation Commissions; and administer Georgia's Certified Local Government program.

The state office, like all agencies affiliated with the State of Georgia at present, is operating with greatly reduced fiscal support. The office's place within the Department of Natural Resources also translates to operating within the larger framework of state government. Since the 1980 adoption of the Georgia Historic Preservation Act, the SHPO has had responsibility for the CLG program. Traditionally under-budgeted, however, a single employee manages the CLG program. Coordinating efforts for training and support; ensuring that each of the state's seventy-five member cities is in compliance with the regulation of the program; and overseeing the efforts for remediation for those that have lost their certification and seek to reclaim is the job of a solitary employee.

Georgia's SHPO has not always labored under a cloud of budget cuts and short staffing. In the 1980s, SHPO employee Pratt Cassity engineered a phenomenally successful effort to encourage establishment of over one-half of the 129 HPCs still active today. Cassity incorporated John C. Waters' 1983 grassroots preservation classic *Maintaining a Sense of Place: A Citizen's Guide to Community Preservation*[31] into his presentation of the value of HPCs for regulating the treatment of local historic properties. Acquainting citizen appointees and elected officials with the concept of preservation for the regular person resulted in the addition of many of today's seventy-five CLGs to the statewide program.

[31] Waters, John C., 1983. *Maintaining a Sense of Place: A Citizen's Guide to Community Preservation.* Athens, GA: Institute of Community and Area Development, University of Georgia.

Today's budgeting allowances for the Georgia SHPO discourage proactive programs like those initiated in the 1980s and result in protracted wait times and overburdened employees attempting to respond to a public waiting for answers to preservation-related questions including, but not limited to: grant requests, National Register nomination processing issues and CLG information. Since its publication, three cities have left the Main Street-BHT program citing budgetary concerns as the culprit.

In *Georgia's State Historic Preservation Plan 2007-2011: Building a Preservation Ethic,* the Main Street program is discussed in the section entitled "Growth and Development Strategies. In this section, the emphasis on historic buildings and their contributions to a city is coupled with recognition that Georgia boasts 105 Main Street-Better Hometown cities working to achieve economic vitality using their historic building stock.

According to sources within the Georgia Main Street administration, however, the perception of preservation being "elitist" and "unbending" has contributed to the tentative nature of the relationship between the state Main Street program and preservation-related state and non-profit offices. Considering the Georgia SHPO tends to act more slowly than needed by local programs trying to keep up with real estate development needs, the State Historic Preservation Office is viewed as something of an impediment to those who are satisfied with constructing buildings that look old rather than using the buildings of the last century where hometown boys bought flowers for their girlfriends before going off to war, where the latest television set projecting pictures in living color were displayed in decorative cast iron framed plate glass windows, and where the bank of telephone operators worked in second floor offices housed beneath corbelled cornices connecting callers one to another. Those buildings hearken to a time when great care was taken to create downtowns that would last several lifetimes While many are considered attractive, many of today's buildings are being designed in the same mold, so to speak, and contributing to an Anywhere USA epidemic sweeping the country.

The Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions

Local Historic Preservation Commissions are supported by the Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions as the non-profit organization develops HPC training to equip appointees with the

information they need to perform the task at hand. Composed of commission members from around the state, the GAPC is dependent for its support from local governments, donations, and monies received through fundraising efforts. As a 501(c)(3) organization, the GAPC is the state affiliate for the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions housed at the University of Georgia (www.napc.org).

GAPC's executive committee, volunteers, and interested supporters organize and produce the training sessions available to HPC members during the course of a calendar year. However, with the members of a local preservation commission changing annually as their three-year appointments expire, access to consistent training is essential to the organization's success and that of its member commissions. As laws and ordinances are enacted, amended and modified; historic preservation-related court cases are concluded; and issues involving HPCs come to the forefront, it is vital for appointees to have the opportunity to network, receive training and information in a venue where questions can be asked and live interaction with the more experienced commissioner or preservation attorney can ensue.

The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation

Based at historic Rhodes Hall on Peachtree Street in Atlanta, the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation has ascended to become the preservation non-profit headquarters for the state. As the state counterpart to the National Trust, the Georgia Trust offers real estate services to historic property owners needing assistance with the sale or acquisition of a building, as well as facilitating preservation easements, rehabilitation plans, revolving loan agreements, and design services.

The Georgia Trust, like many non-profits, has been affected by the economic downturn since 2008, but rests secure that a return to prosperity for its many supporters will translate to increased donations for the organization that has assisted so many public and private owners through lean, as well as prosperous, times. Through the production of events and activities both at Rhodes Hall and in off-site locations, a steady expansion of alliances with public and private partners keeps the Georgia Trust in the public eye and on the minds of stakeholders seeking help for a any of a wide array of preservation-related topics. The Georgia Trust is frequently consulted when communities are facing the loss of an important historic resource, but inquiries may range from seeking help with development projects; looking for

suggestions on how to rehabilitate an old school so it can, once again, become a contributing part of the community. Event when determining how to mitigate a conflict among neighbors whose ideas of what constitutes historic are not being communicated effectively, the Georgia Trust is often the community preservationist's first call for help.

The Georgia Trust demonstrates a well-rounded philosophy as it approaches historic preservation from the perspective of an investor seeking the most gain possible from expenditures for an historic property, but the staff at the Georgia Trust always has their collective eye on the best treatment for historic assets to not only showcase its best features, but to determine how best to accommodate the need of the contemporary user. As occupant of two of Georgia's most distinctive former residences – Rhodes Hall (leased from the State) in Atlanta and the Hay House (Georgia Trust owned) in Macon – the Georgia Trust makes the most of the opportunity to demonstrate the process of preserving or restoring an historic building. Employing bona fide methods of restoration interspersed with modern experimental techniques, the Georgia Trust speaks from experience when advising a property owner, architect, developer or contractor on the most appropriate, yet cost-effective, processes for accomplishing needed repairs, replacements, or reconstructions.

Partners in the Field, the Georgia Trust's signature public awareness program, is a collaboration with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. "Partners" showcases the annual designees to the Georgia Trust's Places in Peril, a listing of ten sites, buildings, or districts located in Georgia all of which are endangered and facing uncertain futures. Through the Partners program, the national and state non-profits team to provide community stakeholders, including owners and developers, with needed services in the field, as well as financial assistance while boosting the state's outreach capability.

In 2009, the Georgia Trust awarded Places in Peril designees almost $50,000 in matching grants for preservation projects including: structural feasibility studies; marketing plans and materials; community leadership training; preparation of a National Register of Historic Places nomination; and design competition. Through its partnership with the National Trust, the state organization provides in-the-field support to designees to provide local owners and grassroots preservationists the tools and

funding needed to protect and enhance the significant built resources that contribute to the sense of place in their hometowns and rural countryside.

In addition to its partnership with the National Trust, as well as state and local agencies and non-profit organizations, the Georgia Trust has assembled a cadre of preservation professionals available to consult with local partners in need of assistance. This wealth of knowledge and experience serves the Georgia Trust well as it not only boosts its credibility throughout the state, but solidifies relationships through a tradition of mutual respect, cooperation, and teamwork augmenting its impeccable standard of professionalism. Additionally, the Georgia Trust boasts a strong working relationship with various State agencies as it provides design assistance to Main Street-Better Hometown cities from the DCA's Athens offices.

Georgia Regional Commissions

As an agency of the state government, the Georgia Regional Commissions provide an additional layer of support for cities and counties throughout the state. With offices centrally located throughout the twelve regions of Georgia, the Regional Commissions are an excellent resource for planning, economic development, historic preservation, and legal services and suggestions. The close proximity and frequent contact among the local governments and their regional commission allows for a close relationship as the commission becomes a type of extension of the local government.

Within each of the Regional Commissions, a historic preservation planning consultant can assist local historic preservation commissions, city and county governments, and associated boards and authorities with the information and guidance required for sound decision making. The professionals within the Regional Commissions facilitate tailored training for local officials, provide design assistance and counseling on preservation issues, as well as assist with the generation of application documentation for state and federal loans, grants, and other instruments critical to the operation of local facilities and initiatives.

Regional Commissions are an excellent resource for Main Street-Better Hometown support, but are too frequently overlooked by member city personnel who may not be aware of the Regional

Commission's capabilities in the areas of historic preservation and community-economic development. A more proactive public awareness campaign to inform the public of the services available from the Regional Commission would be most beneficial toward providing Main Street-Better Hometown members with the support they may be missing at present.

The need for cooperative collaborative effort to further community development through preservation is exhibited in many of Georgia's cities, but few Georgia cities realized the role historic buildings and the power of partnerships played in their economic revitalization as did Bainbridge. The city serves as an example of the importance of creating and maintaining relationships with other community preservationists, professionals, state and non-profit organizations, and local, state and national elected officials and demonstrates how partnerships, priorities and political will combine to create a powerful preservation force.

Case Study: Bainbridge Main Street: Preservation at the Heart[32, 33, 34]

An afternoon with Main Street Bainbridge Executive Director Marietta "Dit" Albritton painted the picture of Main Street done right as Albritton talked about success following struggle in the history of the Main Street program in this southwest Georgia city. On this sunny February day early in 2010, Albritton's candor about the status of the Main Street program and how the efforts of former-Main-Street-now-Bainbridge DDA Executive Director Amanda Glover had given her a solid foundation on which to build recent triumphs even in a down economy.

"We work hand-in-hand, "Albritton offered in response to the level of cooperation between DDA and Main Street Bainbridge. That the DDA Executive Director is the former Main Street Executive Director contributes greatly to the positive working relationship between the two who share an office in the DDA-Main Street office on the historic courthouse square downtown.

[32] Albritton, Marietta "Dit". 2010. survey follow-up interview with author. Bainbridge, GA. February 10.

[33] Griffin, Marvin S. "Sam" and Griffin, Mary Ann. 2010. survey follow-up interview with author. Bainbridge, GA February 10.

[34] Albritton, Marietta "Dit". 2010. "Main Street, DDA, and Historic Preservation – How Are They Working?" online survey. Collector: Main Street/DDA/HPC Survey (Web Link). January 21.

Main Street Bainbridge is the umbrella organization with the Downtown Development Authority serving as the economic development arm as designed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, but, as Albritton said, "It's all our jobs. I do the events downtown, DDA sponsors a car show, so everyone participates. The fact that DDA feels their main purpose is to purchase buildings and get them into marketable shape is their drive."

Albritton attributes part of the success of Main Street Bainbridge and their cooperative working relationship with the DDA to the diversified DDA composition. "They all have an interest in downtown from the standpoint of either living here or owning a business here, but they are not all speaking from one perspective like real estate," she explained. The current mayor is "a hometown boy" whose pharmacy is in a rehabilitated former bank building. Albritton's assessment of Mayor Edward Reynolds is that he is very preservation-friendly, loves his hometown, and is a generous, caring person serving because of his love for Bainbridge.

Another part of the success is the occasional turnover experienced by the DDA bringing with it fresh faces and perspectives. The present DDA composition includes: a banker, an Edward Jones financial advisor, the owner of the Dairy Queen, an insurance agent, an attorney whose office is in a restored building, a high school guidance counselor whose family owns one of the historic commercial buildings, an engineer who purchased a commercial building downtown, with the chair being the owner of Isaacs Bakery located a few doors down from the DDA-Main Street office. "We have a good cross-section of folks who have the well-being of the community at heart," Albritton surmised.

With regard to DDA-Main Street's interaction with the local Historic Preservation Commission, Albritton said the Bainbridge Historic Preservation Commission is "a very effective, very strong Historic Preservation Commission. They are diligent about enforcing Certificates of Appropriateness for every project within the historic district." A dedicated group, the Bainbridge HPC meets monthly if it has issues on the table, Albritton said. They work to enforce the design guidelines, but also will seek compromise if necessary to save an historic building. Having lost too many buildings, the group's main priority is finding a solution to save the building while keeping its integrity intact as much as possible.

The Bainbridge HPC recently received a grant to write new design guidelines created by a consulting firm. An instrumental figure in the Design Guidelines project, Paul Simo also created a walking tour for the community to raise public awareness of the historic assets located in Bainbridge. Simo led participants through the historic district while pointing out architectural significance, vernacular versus high style building designs, and evolutions of the buildings.

"It was a well attended, interesting event that garnered community support for strengthening our design guidelines," Albritton said.

Albritton said that the focus on preservation activities in Bainbridge has become mildly contagious with the success stories spawning new efforts as money and investors become available. She pointed to the Bon Air Hotel and the Water Street project being tied if she had to identify the landmark project that defines preservation's contribution to economic revitalization in Bainbridge. Because of the involvement of the Georgia Trust and other statewide resource groups, the Bon Air restoration received much media attention making it the primary project identified with Bainbridge preservation.

"I would have to say that, in all these cases, dedication to restoration to capture the authentic character and elements has been paramount to the success of these projects," she offered.

Albritton's impression on the support she receives from the state office is "phenomenal. If I have a question or concern, my regional rep (Kelly Folsom-Lane) gets the question out there and gets a response for me. I'm fairly new in this position, so having people I can bounce ideas off who have been at this for a very long time is so helpful!"

Across town from Albritton's office, former newspaper publisher Sam Griffin and his wife Mary Ann presented the picture of Main Street Bainbridge and the city's preservation efforts from the viewpoint of citizens present from the beginning of the program and who were privy to some of the early struggles among private citizens, property owners, and elected officials. The Griffins were not respondents for the online survey, but were recommended by Albritton for the follow-up interview and answered the same questions as Albritton and other follow-up interviewees.

According to retired *Post-Searchlight* publisher Griffin, a third generation newspaperman and Bainbridge native, the early days of organizing downtown redevelopment were fraught with struggles. A Downtown Business Association was formed to give business owners a voice in downtown activities, incentives, and development. "The newspaper had contributed what we could for downtown to encourage people to come downtown and shop, but the members of the association didn't want to pay any dues or finance any activities or promotions to get people and businesses downtown," Griffin recalled. "There were 40 DBA members paying $5 a month. That's $2,400 annually. They didn't want to raise the dues to $10. They thought it was too much, so the City took over the DBA.

"Many of the Main Street and DDA appointees could not get along," he continued. "There were just too many egos and too much back scratching to get anything done. Our downtown business district began to struggle because retention for financial purposes just wasn't happening. People weren't keeping up their buildings, so there was little interest in new businesses coming to downtown. When the historic integrity was diminished or compromised, the value was equally diminished and the attraction was gone."

Mrs. Griffin was instrumental in the acquisition of the former downtown firehouse building which was restored and put into use as a gallery and events center for the local arts guild. She also spearheaded the restoration of the historic Decatur County Courthouse located on the square in downtown Bainbridge.

"Mary Ann was instrumental in forging relationships and bringing people to the table," Griffin said as he recounted names of county commissioners, regional consultants, architects and professionals from around the state who were contacted and recruited by his wife to contribute advice, suggestions, or expertise to projects that kick started interest in Bainbridge preservation efforts.

Eventually, the personality conflicts between Main Street Bainbridge and Bainbridge DDA were reconciled and the two groups function together today. Griffin's only concern is one that Albritton shared: Main Street Bainbridge has not enjoyed recent success in the recruitment of new retail establishments for the downtown business district. Albritton attributed this to the sluggish economy with the hesitancy of prospective proprietors to gamble on a new business for the present time.

Griffin's assessment of the success of any downtown redevelopment effort boils down to two words: political will.

"It all comes down to the will of the elected officials," he surmised as he shared memories of neighborhoods in the area deteriorating because landlords would buy a house in an old, established residential area and move in as many migrant workers as they could fit into the building. People who were of independent means would move away while others who needed to sell their homes in order to relocate would try to sell, but often could not. Griffin, a firm believer in the power of the elected official to monitor such behavior on the part of a property owner, called the Georgia Municipal Association for help.

"I believe City officials have a responsibility to the fixed income residents and established citizens to protect these old, historic homes and neighborhoods from these 'barracks.' The city inspector used the Southern Building Code as support for his position that no one was in violation of the building code and that there was nothing he could do.

"So I called an attorney who said the Southern Building Code is the minimum and that Bainbridge could be more restrictive rather than less," Griffin recalled. "Municipalities have the choice of telling the opportunist he can't do what he's doing. No one wanted to push those relationships, so nothing happened. Cities can do a lot more than political will wants to do."

Dit Albritton and the Griffins exemplify the inevitable struggles that accompany any initiative devised to motivate people with different backgrounds, needs, agendas, purposes, and visions. The passion for excellence and the overall good of the community must be the determining force undergirding the successes and overshadowing the failures. They and their elected, appointed, employed, and private fellow citizens continue to demonstrate to others in and around their city that cooperation, compromise, and a dedication to celebrating their past through historic assets will result in a vital revitalization effort for the future.

CHAPTER 6

GEORGIA MAIN STREET: RETHINKING THE APPROACH

The Future of Georgia Main Street

The cities included in the case studies for this document have demonstrated in no small way their dedication to the foundation of well-rounded sustainability promoted through the Main Street Four-Point Approach. Even when, as David Jenkins referred to them, "bumpy spots" happen, the committed downtown professional can employ one or more of the areas of Main Street focus to address the matter and help smooth the terrain.

It is imperative to the future of Georgia's Main Street cities that an immediate examination of the priorities and functionality of the state coordinating program be initiated. Left unaddressed, the dysfunction at the state level will soon permeate the local programs and create problems for those programs whose success has been marginal. Main Street is Georgia's best option for streamlining a program and its personnel leading to a leaner operating budget, focused purpose and stronger performance through strong alliances that model the Main Street design for local programs. Left unaddressed, the Georgia Main Street program is as endangered as the historic buildings its vision seeks to save.

If the status quo is continued, the DCA may well have created its own self-fulfilling prophecy of doom through its treatment of the Main Street program. Rather than develop public and private consortiums for the purpose of collaborating to strengthen both the state and local programs, DCA has cannibalized a nationally-known entity in an effort to create a local program that, while well-regarded in

the state, does not command the universal reputation of the Main Street program nor does it address all of the facets of economic revitalization as incorporated into the Main Street model.

An analysis of the current operation and administration of the Georgia Main Street program is needed. Its integration with the Office of Downtown Development, its associations with economic and downtown development partners including, but not limited to: the Georgia Municipal Association, the Georgia Cities Foundation, the Georgia Downtown Association. An analysis of its partnerships with preservation partners to include: the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office, the Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions, and the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation should keep an eye toward which organizations are best equipped to assist Georgia Main Street realign its focus. The Main Street program must be reclaimed for its member cities while reducing the duplications and overlaps in services and programs and, thereby, streamline the function and operation of the state coordinating program and the office in which it is housed.

Structuring for Success

In an effort to save the program for its 102 member cities, an overhaul of the Georgia Main Street program needs to take place. Recommendations for this process are found in some of the most basic of community organization principles:

- look within the organization and its associations to harness the gifts, talents, skills, and abilities of the human resources available;
- determine which elements of the current operation need to be retained, which need to be eliminated, and which need to be reworked to best accommodate the needs of the organizations involved;
- develop an action plan based on the principles of the program to accomplish the goals and objectives.

It would be cavalier to consider that all of the recommendations listed can be accomplished in a short span of time. However, time is of the essence as are budgetary concerns. Much is at stake for the employees who have faithfully worked toward what they believe has been in the best interest of the cities

with which they liaison, as well as for the state agency they serve. In retrospect, it appears they may have been seeking a redeemer to provide a solution. When they found what they believed to be the answer, they placed their confidence in something besides the tried and true.

First and foremost, the Georgia Main Street program should be a living demonstration of how a Main Street program is designed to operate. The program's dependence upon the State of Georgia for its sole means of support has not served it well. The moves from department to department over the years have created an atmosphere of uncertainty compounded with the fluctuation of financial support for Main Street and the department on which it depends for support.

The recommendations for the future of Georgia Main Street are multi-faceted. First, a strong look at the state's coordinating program, its program delivery, training opportunities, and coordination with other entities throughout the state must be undertaken. With coordination of effort among public and private boards, commissions, authorities, and organizations residing at the heart of any community's Main Street success, the current entity-specific training model does not encourage development of a comprehensive pool of knowledge from which each local organization can draw information that will enable that body to better coordinate community-wide efforts. As a result, the priorities for each organization often conflict with personalities and politics contributing to an unsuccessful working arrangement for volunteer, elected, appointed, and employed members of these groups. This can be addressed at the state level providing a model for success that can be duplicated in local programs.

Support from and cooperative efforts within the community-at-large are hallmarks of the successful Main Street program both at the local and state levels. It is strategic to any program to discover the most successful methods for their community and ensure they are fully implemented. According to *The Main Street Four-Point Approach,* an online publication by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, "The Four-Points of the Main Street approach work together to build a sustainable and

complete community development effort. The Four-Points of the Main Street approach work together to build a sustainable and complete community revitalization effort"[35]

The transition to a non-profit statewide coordinating partner system removing Georgia Main Street from the State of Georgia umbrella is recommended for the long term. The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation currently provides Main Street design, real estate, and economic development services to towns and cities both in and out of the Main Street network. Their familiarity with the Main Street model, their affiliation with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, their close relationship with the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office, and the existence of their many existing statewide relationships makes the Georgia Trust the non-profit 501(c)(3) organization best equipped to create a seamless transition for the program while building upon a foundation of trust already established throughout the state. Through its relationships with local and state governments, their appointed boards, authorities and commissions, as well as the various state agencies addressing community development issues, the public-private partnership element recommended by the National Trust will be in place.

Included in recommendations for the rehabilitation of the Georgia Main Street program are:

- **Georgia Main Street must be restructured as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization making it accountable to the cities it serves rather than to the State of Georgia.** The dependence upon a governmental agency such as the DCA rend the program subject to the political winds of change every two years as the Georgia General Assembly roster changes from one majority political party and back again. Likewise, the Georgia Governor's office wields a great deal of power to which Main Street and every other state supported agency is subjected. A suggested two-year time frame for planning and execution of these recommendations would allow time for a complete development of the logistics involved while making the necessary preparation for the complete transformation of Georgia Main Street into a model of the Main Street Four-Point Approach in action.

[35] National Trust for Historic Preservation, "About Us: The Main Street Four-Point Approach®", 2009, (http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street.the-approach [17 Feb 2010])

Explore the non-profit organizations that most closely align with the philosophy and mission of the Main Street program and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Most likely, the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation will be the recommended home for the Georgia Main Street program, but the responsibility cannot be assumed without financial support from the program's current benefactor, the State of Georgia. With its current level of knowledge of the Main Street operation and philosophy, the Georgia Trust would be best equipped to integrate the program into its current relational process with many of the state's Main Street cities.

As the premier non-profit preservation advocacy organization in the state, the Georgia Trust enjoys an impeccable reputation among public and private organizations in a position to provide support to the program in myriad forms. Finally, the Georgia Trust's level of knowledge of the historic preservation issues facing Main Street cities, along with its close relationship with the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office, makes the Georgia Trust the best, most comprehensive match for the Georgia Main Street program.

- **Execute a structural assessment of the Georgia Main Street operation to incorporate the Main Street Four-Point Approach into the operational model.** As in the local programs Georgia Main Street supports, the state program should model the Main Street Four-Point Approach utilizing Organization, Economic Restructuring, Promotion and Design. Cultivating community and professional partnerships will allow Georgia Main Street to be a living example for its member cities.
- **Appoint a Board of Directors** composed of professionals and community volunteers from around the state. Take nominations from member Main Street cities and appoint a working Board of Directors whose task it will be to ignite a fire under the Georgia Main Street program. Within the Board of Directors, standing committees would include, though not be limited to, groups based on the Main Street Four-Point Approach. Examples include:
    - **Organization:** Recruit faculty and graduates from the University of Georgia, Georgia State University, and Savannah College of Art & Design, as well as members of the Georgian historical Society and representatives from other interested organizations who would serve in the area of

organizing a series of regional workshops for local entity educational purposes. Develop a pool of volunteers around the state who are willing to be recruited to assist with Georgia Main Street program activities and goal achievement in their cities.

- **Economic Restructuring:** Recruit representatives from the Georgia Municipal Association, Georgia Cities Foundation, Georgia Downtown Association, the Georgia Banking Association, the Georgia Bar Association, and other professional non-profits, as well as for- profit groups to serve on an Economic Restructuring committee for the state organization. Their input and information sharing will be invaluable as each becomes more aware of the issues facing cities trying to revitalize their local economies.
- **Promotion:** Recruit representatives from local, state and national news media, marketing organizations, the Public Relations Society of America, and other professional organizations whose expertise in promotion and event planning will be beneficial to the Georgia Main Street program. Develop ideas that can be translated to any size city in an effort to assist with retail events, as well as community events.
- **Design:** Coordinate with the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office, the National Register Review Board, the American Institute of Architects, the Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions, and the colleges and universities that teach community development, historic preservation and other relevant topics to develop the Design committee. Providing help to local communities in the areas of strengthening local preservation ordinances, creating design guidelines, conducting historic resources surveys, writing historic structure reports, and conducting old house workshops to teach homeowners how to care for historic properties would be of great benefit to the state-at-large. Consider including representatives from hardware, plumbing, interior design, and other interested professions and product areas, to name a few.

- **Within the means of the Georgia Trust as the parent organization and the Georgia Main Street program, the Board of Directors should develop a financial-fund raising strategy to support funding needs for the Georgia Main Street program.** A sound, holistic approach to various income

streams will be strategic to the overall success of the Georgia Main Street program. The Georgia Trust is a fiscally responsible organization with the expertise to lend to the Georgia Main Street program a fiscally conservative ethic of fund raising, spending, and planning for the future needs of the organization. Though the Georgia Trust is diligently working to overcome the economic struggles of many non-profit and government-related organizations at all levels, it possesses the power to direct its path for the future making the adjustments needed to work within the limits of an economic downturn including, but not being limited to, recruiting volunteer assistance as needed from member cities. Though an overuse of volunteer professionals is not recommended, short term or intermittent utilization can be beneficial for a non-profit organization. Most volunteers are passionate about the cause of the organization and are willing to give time and resources willingly as they are able.

- **Examine the MS Program Standards** as presently written with the following recommendations strongly encouraged:
  - For all assessment standard items not identified in the National Main Street Center's National Accreditation Standards of Performance, remove the mandatory element to accommodate the needs of the member city in determining the work load for the local Main Street Director;
  - Abolish, rescind, and otherwise eliminate the Affiliate member option for Georgia Main Street. Cities should either become accredited Main Street cities or remain unaffiliated.
  - Remove the option for Inactive Main Street status from all publications. A great deal of work must be completed in order to qualify for consideration to enter Main Street. The option for Inactive status should not be published in any Main Street materials and discussed with a city representative only as a last resort.
- **Assure that historic preservation is a fully-represented partner in each Main Street program by including the requirement that all member cities be members of the Certified Local Government program.** While the designation of historic assets to the National Register of Historic Places is not a requirement of the CLG program, the benefit for a local program in adopting a Historic Preservation ordinance and appointing a Historic Preservation Commission to interpret and enforce the

ordinance will be extremely advantageous to a CLG city. The presence of a strong historic preservation ethic has been proven to be critical in a solid revitalization strategy. As demonstrated previously, those cities throughout Georgia and in the four pilot states that have embraced heritage tourism as a pivotal element have experienced steadily increasing success.

- **Work toward the amendment of the 1980 Georgia Historic Preservation Act to include the requirement that each Regional Commission include a preservation planning professional among its staff to ensure responsible administration of local preservation policies in concert with community revitalization programs.** As of May, 2010, all twelve Regional Commissions listed a Preservation Planner among their staff directories. Of the twelve Preservation Planners, only one does not possess a Historic Preservation educational background having, instead, a background in archaeology.

- **Create a delivery of service methodology that promotes and encourages participation by member cities.** The current system of training delivery is targeted by member cities as being the area of greatest concern. Through the Organization Committee, a strategy for several areas should be prioritized and addressed including, but not limited to:

  - Develop a system of regions around the state so that meetings and in-person networking opportunities can take place within an hour to one-and-a-half hour drive from a member's home city.
  - Develop a certification program for Main Street Professional Development incorporating the Georgia Downtown Association's Professional Downtown Development certification process. Certified Main Street Professional designation should be in tiers based on demonstrated knowledge, proficiency and experience. Explore the possibility of including a nationally recognized Certified Main Street Professional component to be offered through at least one of the academic institutions offering the Master of Historic Preservation program.
  - Develop a method of service delivery by involving active and recently retired Main Street professionals. Create an organization committee among Main Street cities that plans programs and activities throughout the state; cultivate a strong network of Main Street professionals

through cooperative activities and regional training sessions presented by recognized authorities on specific topics of interest; encourage cooperative information sharing among member cities to augment statewide opportunities; incorporate a mentoring program for new Main Street professionals to provide support and a network of self-help.

- Develop a method of self-evaluation beyond the MS Program Standards for the local programs. There are elements of the MS Program Standards that go beyond the ability of the Main Street professional to control. Include a check list of references and resources for the local professional to provide tools that can be utilized to address situations without going outside the local organization. Encourage goal-setting supported by objectives as a beneficial, if informal, method for determining next steps in a local Main Street program's development, along with its administrator, staff and volunteers.
- Develop a comprehensive regional training design and delivery that will promote cooperative effort among local entities who all are serving because of their desire to contribute to a better future for their community.

Holistic Training Delivery

The inaccessibility of training under the present Georgia Main Street program was identified repeatedly in both the online survey and in the follow-up interviews with current local Main Street professionals. Offering a comprehensive package of training opportunities is central to the overall successful implementation of the Main Street program at the state and local levels.

1. Identify and recruit active and recently retired Main Street Directors who have demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the Main Street program, the Four-Point Approach, the Eight Principles, and the NASP. Partner the recruits with a certified instructor of trainers or other community trainer who can assist or instruct the group on the Experiential Learning Cycle of training to be used as a basis for developing training designs to be utilized in regional training sessions of varying length dependent upon the situation, number of participants, time allotted, and other factors as deemed relevant. Knowledgeable professionals

can be a tremendous resource and may be willing to assist regularly for a previously determined fee rather than maintaining a staff person year round.

2. Create a series of videotaped training sessions on such topics as paperwork, computer programs and applications, and instructional videos for topics for which knowledge is important to the successful completion of a task, but for which classroom delivery is not strategic to the delivery of the message. Make the videos available via download on a secure internet website or ensure that each Main Street office receives a set of compact discs on which the training sessions have been loaded for local use.

3. Develop a rotation of Main Street professionals to serve as the liaison for his or her area with the Georgia Main Street office. Each professional will have the opportunity to serve for a specific period of time (i.e., one year). In the course of service, the liaison will be responsible for planning training opportunities for other Main Street cities in the region. However, cross-regional training sessions can be available and encouraged to motivate other Main Street administrators to attend training in a city they may not have visited for awhile, if at all.

A holistic training approach incorporating the Main Street directors as designers and facilitators ensures the information meets the need of the group, as well as the need of the Georgia Main Street program and, ultimately, the National Main Street purpose. Getting information into the hands of local Main Street directors so that the process is convenient, financially expedient, and timely can be one of the most prudent, but necessary, investments the organization can make.

CONCLUSION

Because downtown revitalization is a continuous process, it is recommended that future research and analysis of the progress of Main Street be considered by graduate researchers. As state agencies and non-profits grapple with the ever present dilemmas of politics, power, and priorities, the periodic examination of the functionality of Main Street in various settings will be intriguing.

Capitalizing on the Main Street Brand

The Main Street program is self-described as a program of self help for cities struggling with the inevitable deterioration caused by the departure of business to suburban and offshore locations from the mid-to-late twentieth century. Founded on self-sufficiency, many small cities and rural communities discovered the pluck and determination that characterized the earliest days of their hometowns had diminished with the generations. Main Street trained its focus on a sustainable development philosophy incorporating not only the economic welfare, but the socio-economic and environmental impact of repurposing old buildings to meet downtown development needs.

Prospective business owners exploring Georgia as a possible relocation or expansion site immediately recognize the Main Street brand, as well as associated local logos incorporating the program name, and make instantaneous connection with its reputation. The Main Street brand carries with it recognized criteria for achievement combining local government with community involvement from both civic organizations and private individuals. In the current economic climate, that association with a known and respected entity such as Main Street lays claim to working for the future based on the successes of the past while not resting on them. The orientation and acquaintance phase is abbreviated on the strength of a city's demonstration of a strong revitalization effort utilizing the Main Street Four-Point Approach.

A city's accredited participation in the national Main Street network could mean the difference between a business bringing with it 500 jobs choosing a Georgia Main Street city or selecting to move the operation with its 500 jobs to a Main Street city in another state where Main Street is still Main Street.

The Main Street brand represents a city that has embraced the public and private partnerships so attractive to a prospective business or resident seeking to become involved in the life of a community. While new buildings can be built to look old, even the new old buildings have begun to take on a cookie cutter appearance compromising their position as a suitable replacement for the 100 year old structure it replaced.

The Main Street brand represents a community that recognizes the value of community involvement as the city recaptures its founding spirit through the historic buildings and landscapes that have contributed to and identified its way of life since its beginning.

The Main Street brand carries with it a value on which a dollar value cannot be placed. It represents the creation of jobs from the planning to the construction to the operation to the consumer.

The Main Street brand represents solid American values and the establishment of roots in a time when so many families are displaced by career-related moves. They are looking for a hometown that reminds them of the one they left, the one that the Main Street banners announced as they drove into downtown.

The Main Street brand represents the American dream that anyone can do anything if he puts his mind to it. Through a return to its comprehensive approach to cooperation, collaboration, and community, Georgia Main Street will continue to rebuild hometowns.

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APPENDIX A

National Accreditation Standards of Performance

1. Has broad-based community support for the commercial district revitalization process, with strong support from both the public and private sectors.

    - The Main Street organization should have the active participation of various stakeholders at the committee and board levels, including such constituents as: local government, historic preservation organizations, civic groups, regional planning groups, community development organizations, real estate agents, consumers, property owners, religious institutions, business owners, local industries, school groups and students, financial institutions, architects and building contractors, transportation authorities, parking authorities, developers, district/neighborhood resident.
    - Participants should contribute financial, in-kind, and volunteer support for the revitalization program.
    - Participants should also look for, and act on, opportunities to make connections between other programs with which they are involved and the Main Street revitalization effort so that, by doing their own work a little smarter, or in a more integrated way, other programs help further the revitalization process.
    - The program should include an ongoing process for volunteer recruitment, orientation, and recognition, constantly refreshing its pool of volunteers and involving new people each year.
    - The revitalization program has broad-based philosophical support from the community.
    - Municipal government demonstrates a philosophical commitment to commercial district revitalization.

2. Has developed vision and mission statements relevant to community conditions and to the local Main Street program's organizational stage.

    - The organization has an appropriate written mission statement.
    - The mission statement is reviewed annually and updated as appropriate.
    - The organization has an appropriate written vision statement.

3. Has a comprehensive Main Street work plan.

    - The work plan should contain a balance of activities in each of the four broad program areas that comprise the Main Street Approach – design, organization, promotion, and economic restructuring.
    - The work plan should contain measurable objectives, including timelines, budgets, desired outcomes, and specific responsibilities.
    - The work plan should be reviewed, and a new one should be developed annually.
    - Ideally, the full board and committees will be involved in developing the annual work plan.

At a minimum, the full board should adopt/approve the annual work plan.

- The work plan should distribute work activities and tasks to a broad range of volunteers and program participants.
- There has been significant progress in each of the Four-Points based on the work plan submitted for the previous year.

4. Possesses an historic preservation ethic.

   - The program has, or is working toward putting in place, an active and effective design management program (which may include financial incentives, design assistance, regulatory relief, design review, education, and other forms of management).
   - The program encourages appropriate building renovation, restoration, and rehabilitation projects.
   - When faced with a potential demolition or substantial structural alteration of a significant, historic, or traditional building in the Main Street district, the program actively works to prevent the demolition or alteration, including working with appropriate partners at the state, local, or national level to attempt to stay or alter the proposed activity; developing alternative strategies for the building's use; and/or educating local leaders about the importance of retaining existing buildings and maintaining their architectural integrity.
   - The program works to find creative adaptive use, financing, and physical rehabilitation solutions for preserving old buildings.
   - The program recognizes the importance of planning and land-use policies that support the revitalization of existing commercial centers and works toward putting planning and land-use policies in place that make it as easy (if not easier) to develop property within the commercial district as it is outside the commercial district. Similarly, it ensures that financing, technical assistance, and other incentives are available to facilitate the process of attracting investment to the historic commercial district.
   - The program builds public awareness for the commercial district's historic buildings and for good design.

5. Has an active board of directors and committees.

   - The board is a working, functional board that understands its roles and responsibilities and is willing to put forth the effort to make the program succeed.
   - Committee members assume responsibility for the implementation of the work plan.
   - The program has a dedicated governing body, its own rules of operation, its own budget, and its own bylaws, and is empowered to carry out Main Street's mission, even if the Main Street program is part of a larger organization.
   - The board has well-managed, regular monthly meetings, with an advance agenda and regular distribution of minutes.
   - Committees have regularly scheduled monthly meetings with an advance agenda that addresses the committee work plan.

6. Has an adequate operating budget.

   - The Main Street program's budget should be adequate to achieve the program's goals. The dollar amount that is 'adequate' for a program budget may vary from region to region, depending on local costs of living, and may be different for small town, midsize, and urban Main Street programs. General guidelines for *minimum* operating budgets are:
     - Small town programs: $40,000+ annually (populations of less than 5,000 people)
     - Midsize community programs: $60,000+ annually (populations of between 5,000 – 50,000)

- Large town or urban neighborhood programs: $100,000+ annually (community or neighborhood population greater than 50,000 people)

- The budget should be specifically dedicated for the purpose of revitalizing the commercial district.
- The Main Street program's budget should contain funds adequate to cover the salary and benefits of staff; office expenses; travel; professional development; and committee activities.
- Revenue sources are varied and broad-based, including appropriate support from the municipal government.
- There is a strategy in place to help maintain stable funding.
- There is a process in place for financial oversight and management.
- Regular monthly financial reports are made by the treasurer to the board.

7. Has a paid, professional executive director.

- The Main Street executive director should be paid a salary consistent with those of other community development professionals within the city, state, or region in which the program operates.
- The minimum amount of time the Main Street executive director works each week should be consistent with comparable Main Street programs in the city, state, or region.
- The executive director should be adequately trained – and should continue learning about revitalization techniques and about issues affecting traditional commercial districts.
- The executive director has a written job description that correlates with the roles and responsibilities of a Main Street director.
- There is a formal system in place for evaluating the performance of the executive director on an annual basis.
- Adequate staff management policies and procedures are in place.

8. Conducts program of ongoing training for staff and volunteers.
   The local Main Street program develops leadership capacity though such mechanisms as:
   - taking advantage of citywide, state, regional, and national training opportunities;
   - making reference and training materials available locally – and using them; and
   - providing/conducting training when appropriate, including annual Main Street 101 training, annual orientation for board members, and annual committee training.

9. Reports key statistics.

- he program collects and tallies statistics related to the revitalization movement, using the baseline criteria listed below. It should keep this data from year to year, providing the economic record of the program's impact over the course of its history. This information is distributed regularly to constituents and in the annual report.
- The program submits regular reports to the statewide, countywide, or citywide Main Street coordinating program (either monthly or quarterly, as specified by the coordinating program).
- Baseline data should include: community population; net of all gains and losses in jobs; net of all gains and losses in new businesses; number of building rehabilitation projects; number of public improvement projects; number of new construction projects; number of housing units created: upper floor or other; monetary value of private investment spent in above projects: i.e., individuals or private sources of money spent on building rehabs, public improvements, or new construction; monetary value total of all investment and public and private investment; ground-floor vacancy rate when your program started; ground-floor vacancy rate now; rental rate per

square foot when program started; rental rate per square foot now; and your program's annual operating budget.

10. Current member of the National Trust National Main Street Network.

- The organization is a current member of the national Trust Main Street Network Membership program.[36]

[36] National Main Street Center, "National Accreditation Standards of Performance", 2009 (http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street/the-programs/performance-standards.html [accessed 17 Feb 2010]

APPENDIX B

Bason, James J. and Person, Helen A. 2009. “Main Street, DDA and Preservation – How Are They Working?” research survey. Survey Monkey. (https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/F25RQBW)

Main Street, DDA and Preservation - How Are They Working?

Summary Responses from electronic survey distributed through http://www.surveymonkey.com.

IRB Approval: 11/29/2009 Project #: 2010-10380-0 Principal Investigator: Dr. James J. Bason

1. By completing the survey, you are agreeing to participate in the research. By entering the survey, you are indicating your consent to be a participant and waiver signed consent. To enter the survey, click beside "START SURVEY".

	Response Percent
"START SURVEY".	100.0%
answered question	
skipped question	

2. Please tell us who you represent and your contact information:

	Response Percent	Response Count
Name:	100.0%	15
Company:	100.0%	15
Address:	100.0%	15
Address 2:	53.3%	8
City/Town:	100.0%	15
State:	100.0%	15
ZIP/Postal Code:	100.0%	15
Country:	100.0%	15
Email Address:	100.0%	15
Phone Number:	100.0%	15
answered question		15
skipped question		9

3. In what official (elected, appointed, or employed) capacity do you serve your municipality or county?

	Response Count
	15
answered question	**15**
skipped question	**9**

4. Considering the issues facing many communities with their revitalization efforts, how do you believe your citizens would respond if asked to comment on progress in the following areas?

	Wow! What a difference! (Excellent)	Our community is really on the revitalization track. Good job! (Good)	They've done some good stuff, but there's still a lot to do. (Fair)	I'm seeing a few improvements here and there. (Sporadic)	What's Main Street? Do we have one of those? (Poor)	Response Count
Facade Restorations	26.7% (4)	13.3% (2)	**53.3% (8)**	6.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	15
Streetscape	26.7% (4)	**33.3% (5)**	26.7% (4)	13.3% (2)	0.0% (0)	15
Pedestrian-friendliness	6.7% (1)	33.3% (5)	**40.0% (6)**	20.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	15
Retail mix	0.0% (0)	20.0% (3)	33.3% (5)	**40.0% (6)**	6.7% (1)	15
Community Support for Projects	0.0% (0)	33.3% (5)	**60.0% (9)**	6.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	15
Community Support for Promotions	0.0% (0)	33.3% (5)	**53.3% (8)**	13.3% (2)	0.0% (0)	15
Economic Improvement	0.0% (0)	13.3% (2)	**53.3% (8)**	26.7% (4)	6.7% (1)	15
Downtown Appeal	0.0% (0)	**73.3% (11)**	13.3% (2)	13.3% (2)	0.0% (0)	15
Public Awareness	6.7% (1)	**40.0% (6)**	26.7% (4)	20.0% (3)	6.7% (1)	15
		Comments?				7
			answered question			**15**
			skipped question			**9**

5. How do you view the progress and accomplishments of your revitalization efforts?

	Response Count
	15
answered question	**15**
skipped question	**9**

6. In order to qualify as a Certified Local Government (CLG) and be eligible for various grants, loans and programs developed to assist with revitalization efforts, the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act was amended in 1980 to mandate that a community must have a local historic preservation ordinance providing for the establishment of a local historic preservation commission whose first responsibility is to conduct and maintain a survey of local historic resources.

	Well-trained, organized and well- informed. They are very effective (Excellent)	Tries hard, but hasn't had training in years. Their record of preservation success is spotty. (Fair)	Is uninformed as to their position responsibilities. They are very ineffective. (Poor)	Response Count
We have an HPC in our community. I would describe it as:	**42.9% (6)**	28.6% (4)	28.6% (4)	14
If you could make a suggestion to your HPC, what would it be?				10
answered question				**14**
skipped question				**10**

7. Here are some questions about your Historic Preservation Commission. Please take a moment to offer your considered opinion regarding each topic.

	Absolutely	For the most part	Yes and no	Not really	Not at all	I don't know	We don't have an HPC	Response Count
Has attended training from the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions or Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions.	21.4% (3)	7.1% (1)	14.3% (2)	7.1% (1)	14.3% (2)	**28.6% (4)**	7.1% (1)	14
Demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge of preservation issues.	14.3% (2)	**35.7% (5)**	14.3% (2)	21.4% (3)	0.0% (0)	7.1% (1)	7.1% (1)	14
Demonstrates ability to interpret our community's preservation ordinances.	**28.6% (4)**	21.4% (3)	14.3% (2)	21.4% (3)	0.0% (0)	7.1% (1)	7.1% (1)	14
Local governing body is responsive to HPC recommendations.	14.3% (2)	21.4% (3)	**28.6% (4)**	21.4% (3)	7.1% (1)	0.0% (0)	7.1% (1)	14
Main Street/Better Hometown and Downtown Development Authority coordinate efforts with our local HPC to ensure preservation is considered in revitalization efforts.	**50.0% (7)**	21.4% (3)	7.1% (1)	7.1% (1)	7.1% (1)	0.0% (0)	7.1% (1)	14
HPC appointees represent varied backgrounds of expertise (i.e., suggested professions include, but are not limited to: attorney, architect, landscape architect, real estate agent, historian).	**28.6% (4)**	14.3% (2)	**28.6% (4)**	7.1% (1)	7.1% (1)	7.1% (1)	7.1% (1)	14
Please share any comments you believe can be helpful in understanding your local HPC:								10
	answered question							**14**
	skipped question							**10**

8. How does your community regulate preservation?

	Response Percent	Response Count
We have a stand-alone preservation ordinance to guide the HPC, Mayor & City Council, Planning Dept., and property owners.	**50.0%**	**7**
Our preservation ordinance is included in the Planning section of the municipal code.	21.4%	3
We don't have a preservation ordinance in any form.	28.6%	4
answered question		**14**
skipped question		**10**

9. How is your Downtown Development Authority doing? Have they been successful in their efforts to rebuild your community's downtown business district? Following are topics of interest concerning your community's Downtown Development Authority. Please indicate your response to each.

	Quite effectively/Consistently/Yes	Runs hot & cold/Occasionally	Not at all/No	We do not have a DDA	Response Count
DDA members have received DDA training during the past three years	**53.8% (7)**	30.8% (4)	15.4% (2)	0.0% (0)	13
Actively solicits input from the community	16.7% (2)	**66.7% (8)**	16.7% (2)	0.0% (0)	12
Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge of DDA role, authority & function	**53.8% (7)**	23.1% (3)	23.1% (3)	0.0% (0)	13
Works with property owners to negotiate rents and selling prices that will encourage pr prospective tenants/buyers	15.4% (2)	**46.2% (6)**	38.5% (5)	0.0% (0)	13
Effectively communicates information about available grants and loans to property owners	**61.5% (8)**	15.4% (2)	23.1% (3)	0.0% (0)	13
Demonstrates understanding of historic preservation role as the foundation for revitalization and works to promote the adaptive use of historic properties	**61.5% (8)**	30.8% (4)	7.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	13
Appointees include local residents and property owners other than those of downtown buildings	**84.6% (11)**	7.7% (1)	7.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	13
DDA composition varies from year-to-year (i.e., the same people are not serving over and over)	30.8% (4)	**46.2% (6)**	23.1% (3)	0.0% (0)	13
DDA operates as the economic development arm of Main Street/Better Hometown	**61.5% (8)**	15.4% (2)	23.1% (3)	0.0% (0)	13
DDA has been successful in securing financing for preservation/ restoration/repurposing projects for historic buildings in our downtown	**53.8% (7)**	23.1% (3)	23.1% (3)	0.0% (0)	13
DDA has a representative available to talk with prospective property owners about financing options and local support	**69.2% (9)**	7.7% (1)	23.1% (3)	0.0% (0)	13
	Comments?				6
		answered question			**13**
		skipped question			**11**

10. In Georgia, the DDA was legislated prior to the implementation of the Main Street/Better Hometown organization. How do these two groups function in your community?

	Yes	No	I don't know	Response Count
Main Street/Better Hometown is the promotions arm for the DDA	38.5% (5)	**53.8% (7)**	7.7% (1)	13
Main Street/Better Hometown is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization operating independently of the local governmental body	**61.5% (8)**	38.5% (5)	0.0% (0)	13
Main Street/Better Hometown is the umbrella organization under which DDA operates as the Economic Development arm and Historic Preservation coordinates as the Design element	30.8% (4)	**69.2% (9)**	0.0% (0)	13
Main Street/Better Hometown is the revitalization organization with DDA operating as the economic development arm	**53.8% (7)**	46.2% (6)	0.0% (0)	13
The DDA has open meetings, but the community seldom attends	**76.9% (10)**	23.1% (3)	0.0% (0)	13
T The DDA solicits input from the community on improvement projects	**63.6% (7)**	36.4% (4)	0.0% (0)	11
The DDA recruits professionals from many fields to offer inputs/suggestions on projects	41.7% (5)	**58.3% (7)**	0.0% (0)	12
The DDA has an Executive Director who also serves as the Main Street/Better Hometown Executive Director	**53.8% (7)**	46.2% (6)	0.0% (0)	13
The Main Street/Better Hometown Executive Officer serves on the DDA	46.2% (6)	**53.8% (7)**	0.0% (0)	13
A representative from our local HPC serves on the DDA	41.7% (5)	**58.3% (7)**	0.0% (0)	12
A representative from our local HPC regularly attends DDA meetings to offer input	**53.8% (7)**	46.2% (6)	0.0% (0)	13
	Other (please specify)			3
		answered question		**13**
		skipped question		**11**

11. When faced with a restore v. teardown situation, how does your DDA typically respond?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Tear it down.		7.7%	1
Pull out the stops to repurpose and save the building.		61.5%	**8**
Let it sit indefinitely until it is a hazard.		30.8%	4
	answered question		**13**
	skipped question		**11**

12. How proactive is your DDA in working with other groups to find solutions to preservation issues?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Always encourages joint efforts with other groups.	**61.5%**	**8**
Always seeks guidance from HPC regarding preservation issues.	38.5%	5
Tries to do everything themselves within their group.	23.1%	3
Approaches every situation as if it's a real estate transaction.	7.7%	1
Sometimes looks outside their body to find answers.	23.1%	3
Sees the long-term result and acts Accordingly.	38.5%	5
How does this work for your community?	53.8%	7
answered question		**13**
skipped question		**11**

13. If you could make a suggestion to your DDA regarding their approach to downtown revitalization, what would it be?

	Response Count
	13
answered question	**13**
skipped question	**11**

14. With regard to the Design arm of the Main Street program, how does your community facilitate ensuring compatible application of preservation/restoration policies, techniques and ordinances?

	Always	Most of the Time	Sometimes	Hardly Ever	Nobody does this	Response Count
Our Historic Preservation Commission oversees this area for our community.	23.1% (3)	23.1% (3)	0.0% (0)	**38.5% (5)**	15.4% (2)	13
Our DDA handles all aspects of preservation/restoration in our community.	0.0% (0)	15.4% (2)	23.1% (3)	**61.5% (8)**	0.0% (0)	13
The extent of our design service is a book of paint samples from the local hardware store.	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	7.7% (1)	**53.8% (7)**	38.5% (5)	13
The local historical society rather than the HPC works with property owners to ensure authenticity for restoration	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	15.4% (2)	**53.8% (7)**	30.8% (4)	13
The local planning commission oversees all the restoration work in our community.	0.0% (0)	7.7% (1)	7.7% (1)	**46.2% (6)**	38.5% (5)	13
It's their property. They can do with it as they see fit.	0.0% (0)	30.8% (4)	15.4% (2)	15.4% (2)	**38.5% (5)**	13
	How is this working for you?					11
			answered question			**13**
			skipped question			**11**

15. In considering the history of the Main Street/Downtown Development Authority/Historic Preservation Commission in your community, please answer the following:

	Absolutely	We're okay	Not really	Please help us	Response Count
Our Main Street program is very successful.	**69.2% (9)**	30.8% (4)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	13
Our Main Street program operates as designed by the National Trust.	**69.2% (9)**	23.1% (3)	7.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	13
The support we receive from the state is more than adequate.	**46.2% (6)**	30.8% (4)	23.1% (3)	0.0% (0)	13
We could use more support from the Department of Community Affairs in overseeing our Main Street, DDA, and HPC cooperative efforts.	23.1% (3)	30.8% (4)	**46.2% (6)**	0.0% (0)	13
We need lots of help.	0.0% (0)	**53.8% (7)**	46.2% (6)	0.0% (0)	13
We could use a self-evaluation tool that keeps everyone accountable.	**61.5% (8)**	7.7% (1)	30.8% (4)	0.0% (0)	13
A system of evaluation for struggling Main Street programs would be helpful.	**38.5% (5)**	30.8% (4)	30.8% (4)	7.7% (1)	13
We need training in coordinating efforts in our community.	7.7% (1)	**53.8% (7)**	38.5% (5)	0.0% (0)	13
	Would you be willing to be a study community for the purpose of this thesis?				9
	answered question				**13**
	skipped question				**11**

16. On a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (best), please indicate your opinion of how effective is your Main Street/Better Hometown program in each of the following areas:

	1 = We have not done this well	2 = We sputter on this one	3 = We run about a 50/50 success rate in this area	4 = We succeed in this area most of the time	5 = We are experiencing great success!	N/A = We do not have this type of organization	Response Count
Organization includes neighborhood and community groups interested in revitalization.	7.7% (1)	7.7% (1)	30.8% (4)	**38.5% (5)**	15.4% (2)	0.0% (0)	13
DDA and Main Street/Better Hometown consult with each other to develop downtown programs for revitalization.	7.7% (1)	7.7% (1)	7.7% (1)	23.1% (3)	**46.2% (6)**	7.7% (1)	13
The Promotions arm of Main Street/Better Hometown has a good mix of retail promotions and community promotions.	7.7% (1)	7.7% (1)	15.4% (2)	**38.5% (5)**	30.8% (4)	0.0% (0)	13
Our Main Street/Better Hometown is constantly including new volunteers to encourage greater community participation.	7.7% (1)	23.1% (3)	**30.8% (4)**	23.1% (3)	15.4% (2)	0.0% (0)	13
Our promotions are varied, imaginative, and fun.	7.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	**30.8% (4)**	**30.8% (4)**	**30.8% (4)**	0.0% (0)	13
How do you believe your Main Street/Better Hometown organization could be more effective?							10
			answered question				**13**
			skipped question				**11**

17. Yes, our community would like to serve as a case study community for Helen A. Person's Thesis to be submitted toward requirements for graduation from the Master of Historic Preservation program from the University of Georgia, Athens, GA in 2010: The Main Street Program - More Than Municipal Party Planning. I understand participation as a case study community will involve personal/telephone/electronic interviews with me and any interested stakeholders from the DDA, HPC, and governing authority of our community, as well as an exchange of information pertinent to the completion of this case study to be conducted between January 1 and February 15, 2010.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Name:	**100.0%**	**7**
Company:	**100.0%**	**7**
Address:	**100.0%**	**7**
Address 2:	28.6%	2
City/Town:	**100.0%**	**7**
State:	**100.0%**	**7**
ZIP/Postal Code:	**100.0%**	**7**
Country:	**100.0%**	**7**
Email Address:	**100.0%**	**7**
Phone Number:	**100.0%**	**7**
answered question		**7**
skipped question		**17**