

The Rejuvenation of America's Downtowns

Governor's Conference on Rural Development

RENEWABLE NEBRASKA

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What is Main Street?

Who is Main Street?

- 45 states and regions
- 2,000+ local programs
- 23 Nebraska Communities
 - *15 officially designated*
 - *8 members/aspiring communities*

Trends on Main Street

- America's population is growing—young, old, more culturally diverse
- The world is becoming more connected and technologically savvy
- Economic realities and the increased cost of living

What it Takes/Keys to Success

- Welcoming atmosphere
- Retaining the talent pool
- Mix of housing in downtown
- Healthy lifestyles and recreation
- Increased tourism
- Entrepreneurship
- Adaptive reuse & historic preservation vital

Elkhorn, Nebraska

- Most Challenged Main Street Community in Nebraska—but they don't let the challenges get in the way of success
- Keys to Elkhorn's Success
 - *A clear vision with visible progress in a short period of time*
 - *An organization exclusively dedicated to historic downtown Elkhorn*
 - *Hard work and dedication from a small group of people*
 - *Appreciation for their historic resources and the desire to protect and make them the centerpiece around everything they do*
 - *Successful existing businesses driving new businesses*

Sidney, Nebraska

- **Keys to Sidney's Success**
 - *Understand and use the comprehensive Main Street Approach to revitalization—Nationally Accredited Main Street Community*
 - *Utilize their historic assets for economic development*
 - *Strong public sector leadership and partnerships with the private sector to make things happen*
 - *Respect and resourcefulness (community organizations that are able to work together)*

Fremont, Nebraska

- Oldest Main Street Community in Nebraska
- Keys to Fremont's Success
 - *Understand and use the comprehensive Main Street Approach to revitalization—Nationally Accredited Main Street Community*
 - *Organization exclusively dedicated to downtown*
 - *Long-term commitment (time + money)*
 - *Strong leadership (people that really care and fight hard for downtown—they don't sit back and expect someone else to do it)*
 - *People that use their heads and apply learned knowledge*
 - *Willingness to seek out the answers and use the resources afforded to them*

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