



Creating Jobs. Keeping Character.

## **Montevallo Main Street Board Retreat**

December 13, 2016

Facilitated by Main Street Alabama

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This document is the final report from the Montevallo Main Street Board Retreat held December 13, 2016.

Magic Wand: We began the retreat by asking board members to relate their “dreams” of downtown:

Responses:

- Businesses that keep people in town
- Events that bring the community together
- Downtown housing
- Historic look/modern amenities
- Ice cream parlor
- Stylish storefronts
- Lots of people/bustling with activity
- Cross promoting/businesses working together
- Destination
- More restaurants
- Appreciation for history and our roots
- Build on excitement & opportunities to shop

### **The next activity was to review the Board of Directors Roles & Responsibilities.**

Collectively, the board of directors assumes legal and philosophical responsibility for the Main Street program’s activities. It must educate, build consensus, stimulate action in the commercial district, and involve volunteers in the revitalization process.

### **Policy:**

- Establishing and/or continuing the legal existence of the program.
- Ensuring that the program fulfills legal requirements in the conduct of its business and affairs.
- Adopting, following, updating, and administering bylaws.
- Adopting policies that determine the program’s purposes, governing principles, functions and activities, and of course of action.

- Assuming responsibility for internal policies governing the program.

### **Planning:**

- Establishing a consensus vision for the Main Street district's future.
- Establishing short-term and long-term goals for the Main Street program.
- Developing an annual work plan that incorporates activities in all four points of the Main Street approach.
- Ensuring that committees adequately plan for events and activities.
- Developing a strategic plan for the Main Street program.

### **Committee Oversight:**

- Recruiting effective committee chairs (use board members initially).
- Monitoring committee activities and ensuring progress.
- Providing adequate resources for committees.
- Coordinating the work of all committees so that they advance the program's goals.
- Soliciting committee members to help create the work plan.

### **Funding and Financial Management:**

- Raising sufficient funds to ensure that the program can meet its objectives.
- Developing an annual budget for the program.
- Approving and monitoring the finances of the program.
- Authorizing an annual or biennial audit.
- Assuming responsibility for all expenditures necessary to operate the program, other than those delegated by the board to the executive director.

### **Advocacy:**

- Understanding and publicizing the program's work to the community.
- Relating the services of the program to the work of other organizations and agencies.
- Giving support and prestige to the program and inspiring confidence in its activities.
- Serving as advocates of preservation-based economic development in the district.
- Serving as spokespersons for the program when requested by the board president.
- Advocating public policy beneficial to the Main Street district.

### **Evaluation:**

- Regularly reviewing and evaluating the program's operations and maintaining standards of performance.
- Monitoring the program's activities.
- Counseling and making decisions on plans adopted by committees and the executive director.

### **Personnel:**

- Hiring and regularly evaluating the executive director.
- Approving personnel policies.
- Participating in the recruitment, selection, and development of individuals to serve on the board of directors as advised by the nominating committee.

The board then reviewed the basic roles and responsibilities of the Executive Director. The Board members were asked to think about the top things they wanted Sarah to focus on relating to the 12 roles and responsibilities of an executive director.

- ✓ **Administration:** *Running and staffing the Main Street office, budgeting and purchasing, monitoring financial records and books, assembling and monitoring the annual work plan*

- ✓ **Advocacy:** *Supporting the mission, policies, priorities, plans and projects of the organization, promoting downtown interests as they relate to citywide issues, promoting downtown interests on joint projects with city and other organizations*
- ✓ **Business & Property Assistance:** *Connecting business owners with business resources, assisting individual tenants or property owners with physical improvement project*
- ✓ **Coordination:** *Helping the board coordinate the activities of the Main Street committees, serving as the communication link between committees, attending Main Street meetings*
- ✓ **Facilitation:** *Assisting chairs with committee meetings*
- ✓ **Information Gathering:** *Researching background information necessary for good board and committee decisions, helping discover strategies for the work plan, investigating resources to help volunteers complete their tasks*
- ✓ **Networking:** *Representing the local Main Street program at the state and national levels, maintaining contact and exchanging ideas with local, regional, state, and national organizations with similar interests*
- ✓ **Partnership Development:** *Searching out new partners, helping build strong, productive working relationships among partners*
- ✓ **Public Relations:** *Publicizing Main Street's successes, developing and conducting ongoing public awareness and educational programs, speaking to community groups, working with the media, serving as authority on the revitalization effort*
- ✓ **Record Keeping:** *Developing and maintaining systems to track the successes and failures of the Main Street program, maintaining individual building and business files and technical resource files, reporting to the state*
- ✓ **Stakeholder Visitation:** *Making a point to regularly meet face to face with key Main Street stakeholders including business and property owners*
- ✓ **Volunteer Management:** *Helping to recruit, screen, train, supervise, evaluate and terminate volunteers, supporting volunteer activities, empowering volunteers*

The next activity was **Leadership Compass** – an opportunity for individual board members to think about their characteristics, how they learn, how they work, and what assets they bring to the organization. Once individuals had completed the task of determining what “direction” they were – groups were formed using the North, South, East and West titles. Each group identified what was best about being “their direction” and what was hardest. They also developed a list of what others need to know about working with them. *It was an opportunity to look at others on the board and think about what makes them tick – why they respond the way they do during discussions, crisis, as well as board and committee work.* Characteristics of each direction are below as well as the best ways to work with each group

### **NORTH GROUP - What's Great & What's Hard**

Great:

- Endeavor to persevere
- Get it done!
- Lead by example

Hard:

- Bossy
- Confrontational
- Impatient

### **Approach to work – from the work sheets**

- Assertive, Active, Decisive
- Likes to be in control and determine the course of events
- Quick to act, expresses urgency for others to act quickly also

- Enjoys challenging people and situations
- Thinks in terms of the “bottom line”
- Likes a quick pace and the fast track
- Courageous, ambitious and confident
- Perseveres – not stopped by NO
- Goal centered, ambitious
- Hardworking leader who is comfortable being in front
- Values the words – “Do it now” and “I’ll do it”

### Best ways to work with the North

- ❖ Meet your commitment
- ❖ Honesty

### Additional ways provided by Main Street Alabama:

- ❖ Present your case quickly, clearly, and with enthusiasm and confidence
- ❖ Let them know they will be involved – their payoff and their role
- ❖ Focus on the challenge of the task
- ❖ Provide them with plenty of autonomy
- ❖ Establish timelines and stick to them
- ❖ Give them positive, public recognition
- ❖ Use them to complete tasks that require motivation, persuasion and initiative

Mascot: North Star

Theme Song: “Don’t Stop Believing”

### **SOUTH GROUP: What’s Great and What’s Hard:**

Great:

- We listen to everyone
- We are trusting/open minded
- We have a great time – all the time!

Hard:

- We get screwed over
- Too sensitive
- Too nice/don’t stand up for self

### Approach to work - from the work sheets

- Friendly, likeable team player
- Allows others to feel important
- Supportive, nurturing and caring towards colleagues
- Willing to trust other’s statements at face value
- Peace-loving, sympathetic, and helpful
- Feelings-based, trust own emotions and intuition as truth
- Able to focus on the present moment
- Process-centered
- Generous, non-competitive and likes to build on the ideas of others
- Values words; “right” and “fair”

### Best ways to work with the South

- ❖ Don’t micromanage
- ❖ Communicate what’s expected

### Best ways to work with the South provided by Main Street Alabama:

- Remember process, attention to what is happening with the relationship between you
- Justify your decisions around values and ethics
- Appeal your relationship with this person and his or her other relationships
- Listen hard and allow the expression of feelings and intuition in logical arguments
- Be aware that this person may have a hard time saying “NO” and may be easily steamrolled
- Provide plenty of positive reassurance and likeability
- Let the person know you like them and appreciate them

Mascot: Tasmanian Devil

### EAST GROUP - What’s Great & What’s Hard

Great:

- Create options
- Think outside the box
- Mix it up

Hard:

- Don’t finish
- No clear direction
- Unpopular ideas

### EAST GROUP: Approach to work - from the work sheets

- Innovative, creative and sees the big picture
- Very idea oriented, focuses on future thought
- Risk-taker, adventurous, spontaneous
- Has insight into mission and purpose
- Looks for overarching themes and ideas
- Appreciates a lot of information
- Strong spiritual awareness, free spirited, unconventional
- Likes to experiment and explore
- Values works: “option” and “possibility”

### Best ways to work with the East

- Entertain multiple ideas
- Provide general direction

### Additional ways provided by Main Street Alabama:

- ❖ Show appreciation and enthusiasm for ideas
- ❖ Listen and be patient during idea generation
- ❖ Avoid criticizing or judging ideas
- ❖ Allow and support divergent thinking
- ❖ Provide a variety of tasks
- ❖ Provide help and supervision to support detail and project follow through

Mascot: Squirrel

### WEST GROUP: What’s Great & What’s Hard

Great:

- Use data
- Balanced perspective (weighs all sides of an issue)

- Works with what we already have

Hard:

- Moves carefully
- Reserved
- Able to see fatal flaw

WEST GROUP: Approach to work - from the work sheets

- Seen as practical, dependable and thorough
- Provide planning and resources to others
- Moves carefully, deliberately, and follows procedures and guidelines
- Uses data to make logical and analytical decisions
- Weighs all sides of an issue, balanced
- Introspective, self-analytical, focused, reserved
- Careful, thoroughly examines people's needs in situations
- Works well with existing resources, gets the most out of what has been done in the past
- Skilled at finding the fatal flaw in an idea or project
- Values works: "objective" and "organized"

Best ways to work with the West:

- Provide data with plan instead of assuming the plan is flawless and needs no analysis
- Give time to process

Additional ways provided by Main Street Alabama:

- ❖ Allow plenty of time for decision-making
- ❖ Provide data – objective facts and figures that a West can trust
- ❖ Don't be put off by critical "NO" statements
- ❖ Minimize the expression of emotion and use logic when possible
- ❖ Appeal to tradition, a sense of history, and correct procedures

Mascot: Spreadsheet

We then moved to goal setting by the board for the committees to work on in the coming year. Overarching goals set by the board for each committee:

**Organization:** Committee Purpose/Overarching Goal: Funding the program, recruiting, training & rewarding volunteers, and public relations – promoting the program.

- Streetscape: PR for the project/manage weekly construction update meetings
  - Getting information out about the project
  - Ad campaign – "open for business"
- Implement/maintain and update annual membership drive
  - Mixer/ party
- Learn about and become a Main Street convert (educate)
- Consider Alumni when reaching out for funds
- Signature fundraiser
- Volunteer recruitment, training, retention
  - Attend National Main Street Conference
  - Stakeholder visitation
  - Advocate – one on one – develop elevator speech
  - Web trainings – invite more to attend

- Speakers bureau

**Design:** Committee Purpose/Overarching Goal: Enhancing the visual quality of downtown through education, design advice, guiding future growth, identifying incentives for projects.

- Streetscape
  - Chalk out next block/foreshadowing
  - New poles – figure out banners and holiday decorations
  - UMOM pocket park
  - Sound system?
  - Field trip!! Go to other communities and check out their project
- Facades/Buildings
  - Educate property owners and contractors
  - Research incentives and funding
  - Contractor referral??
- Windows and interior layout
  - Assist with display ideas
  - Store layout assistance (UMOM)
- Adopt Main Street Alabama design guidelines
- Vacant buildings
  - Victory and Convenience Store - gateways

**Economic Vitality:** Committee Purpose/Overarching Goal: Understanding the market, strengthening existing businesses, finding new uses for vacant or underutilized buildings & encouraging investments downtown.

- Streetscape: work with businesses on possible delivery and websites – prepare them for the construction
- Invite alumni to invest in the downtown – angel investors??
- Work with Main Street Alabama on Market Analysis in 2017 – we will use Jay’s project schedule and overview as work plan
- Understand zoning and codes
  - Signage as well
- Property Development
  - Research possible incentives for downtown projects
  - Brownfield grant
  - Old city hall RFP
  - Inventory of buildings
  - Work with realtors and bankers
- Strengthen existing businesses
  - Access to training
  - Improve your business series
  - Work with promotion committee on a shop local program
  - Educate businesses about what UMOM can do to help them

**Promotion:** Committee Purpose/Overarching Goal: Marketing the district’s unique characteristics to shoppers, investors & visitors, through special events, image building activities and retail events.

- Streetscape: Construction party events, “I Dig Downtown”
  - Ready for construction
- Cash register ringing activities
  - Downtown bucks
  - Partner with Arts Council on Arts Walk to get people in the stores

- Brochure, parking map, business directory
- Did You Know? – Image building activity
- Special events
  - Take advantage of what is already happening in Montevallo
  - Wood carving event – partner with chamber
  - Bicentennial event - partnership

We will need to schedule a work plan training soon: Organization, Promotion, Design, and Economic Vitality. This is typically a 1.5 hour training that will focus on the need for work plans, goals set by the board and basic responsibilities of each committee/team.