
2010 Great American Main Street Awards® Application Instructions

The Great America Main Street Awards® (GAMSA) application process has two stages - Preliminary and Semifinalist:

- **The Preliminary Application** is an online application and will ask for statistical figures from your community, narrative about your revitalization efforts, and photographs. The application fee of \$150 is due with your preliminary application.
- **The Semifinalist Application** will be required for semifinalists only and will ask for additional background material, including a short video, maps, letters of support, other supporting documents, and a resolution of support from your local government. There is no additional charge for this application.

Only entries that conform to the application directions will be considered. Please note that all materials submitted will become the property of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and will not be returned.

Eligibility Guidelines

The Great American Main Street Awards® competition is open to all National Main Street Programs accredited for at least the two years prior to applying for the award. In other words, to be eligible for the 2010 Awards, you must have been accredited in both 2008 and 2009. At this time, previous winners are ineligible to apply for GAMSA.

Preliminary Application Details

The Preliminary Application must be submitted via our online application. Eligible Main Street Programs (see above), will receive an email with instructions for how to receive your personalized link to the online application. Please remember, the *Preliminary Application* must be submitted entirely online.

If you have not been invited to submit but believe you may be eligible, please email your name, program name, city, and state to mainstreet@nthp.org. We will attempt to respond to all inquiries within 3 business days.

You will be able to save and revisit your responses until your application is complete and submitted. Please note that this link is unique to your account, so safeguard it throughout the entire application process.

The online application will include questions asking for:

- Background information about your commercial district and Main Street program;
- History of the revitalization effort;
- Your work in the four points;
- Economic impact of the revitalization effort;
- Key participants;
- Your own assessment of merit
- Outlook for the future

In addition, you will be required to submit up to thirty (30) high resolution digital images. you can find tips and suggestions taking photos as well as types of photos to submit online at www.mainstreet.org/gamsa. Go to the “How to Apply” page for details.

Before you start the online application, carefully read all instructions and the questions found at the end of this document. It is strongly recommended that you first and compose your answers in a word processing program, such as MS Word, and then cut and paste your responses into the online application. Be aware that you must always save your answers in the online application before exiting or closing the browser, even before viewing a previous page. We also advise that you save a complete copy of all your answers for your records.

If you have any technical problems completing the application, contact (202) 588-6219 or mainstreet@nthp.org.

Application Fee

A one-time application fee of \$150 is due with the submission of your *Preliminary Application*. Payment can be made online (Visa, Master Card, Discover and American Express only) or by check. Instructions for submitting payment are included in the online application. Online payments must be received by the Preliminary Application Deadline (September 1, 2009). If you are mailing a check, it must be postmarked by the same deadline. No additional payment is necessary for the *Semifinalist Application*.

Selection Process

All entries are reviewed and assigned preliminary scores by National Trust staff using the criteria below. The top scoring applications will be selected as semifinalists and then be invited to submit a *Semifinalist Application*. A jury of representatives from the community revitalization, economic development, and historic preservation fields will review the semifinalist applications and select up to five winners. The jury will use these same criteria to evaluate each semifinalist application. Evaluation of applications is based on the achievements of the commercial district and community as a whole, and not the performance of an individual or a single organization.

- Active involvement of the public and private sectors;
- Broad-based community support for the revitalization effort;
- Quality of achievements over time;
- Innovative solutions to significant problems;
- Commitment to historic preservation;
- Evolving track record of successful commercial district revitalization;
- Comprehensive revitalization effort: activity in all four points of the Main Street Four-Point Approach® to commercial district revitalization;
- Economic impact of the revitalization program; and
- Successful small business development.

Semifinalist Application Details

If your district is selected as a semifinalist, you will be invited to submit a *Semifinalist Application*, and will receive additional instructions. Additional background materials requested in the semifinalist application will include:

- Maps – state map showing your community, city map showing your district and keyed map of your district
- short video – no more than 5-minute video showcasing your commercial district. Please note that if you are selected as a winner, this video may be shown at the Awards Ceremony in Oklahoma City. In addition, photos and video clips may be used in our online promotion of the awards, and distributed to media outlets where possible for additional recognition of your achievement.
- supporting documents - your most recent annual report (with financial statements) or Form 990, and four other documents such as brochures or other publications that illustrate the success of your commercial district revitalization efforts.
- letters of support from stakeholders in your community
- resolution of support from your local government

Semifinalists may also be asked additional questions to clarify previously submitted material or provide more in-depth information.

We recommend that applicants anticipate being selected as a semifinalist and begin preparing these additional items. They could be helpful to your organization, even if you are not selected as a semifinalist.

Deadlines and Notification Dates

June 19, 2009	Online application available
September 1, 2009:	Preliminary applications due
November 6, 2009:	Semifinalists selected and all applicants notified of status
January 8, 2010:	Semifinalist applications and supporting materials due
March 1, 2010:	2010 GAMSA winners selected and all semifinalists notified of status
May, 2010:	Winners announced at the 2010 National Main Streets Conference held in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Confirmation of receipt of your preliminary application and semifinalist application will be sent via email within five business days of submission.

Recognition of Winners

Winners of the 2010 Great American Main Street Awards® competition will be notified in March 2010 and will be officially honored at an awards ceremony during the 2010 National Main Streets Conference held May 2-5, 2010 in Oklahoma City. The awards ceremony will feature the winners' achievements, as well as the presentation of the award. The information on winners is kept confidential until the official announcement.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation will also distribute press releases announcing the award winners to local and national media and winning communities will be featured in an issue of the National Trust Main Street Center's monthly journal, *Main Street News*, on the www.mainstreet.org and www.PreservationNation.org, as well as other media. Great American Main Street Awards® winning communities also receive a bronze plaque and a certificate marking their achievement.

Preliminary Application Questions

Below you will find detailed descriptions of all the questions you will be asked on the online application. Please use this as a reference for preparing your answers. It is strongly recommended that you compose and save all your answers before beginning your online application.

Important note about response lengths:

Please make note of the response length limits. These will be rigorously enforced and responses that exceed the indicated length may not be considered. The online application will have a word count feature but it will NOT restrict you from submitting answers that are too long. So please be sure to check each of your answers before finally submitting your application.

1. Contact Information and Authorizations

In the online preliminary application, you will be asked to submit the following contact information and agree to the release authorization below:

Contact Information

- Name of the commercial district
- Name of the city/town/neighborhood (if different)
- Contact person
- Title
- Organization
- Address 1
- Address 2
- City
- State
- Zip code
- Phone number
- Fax number
- E-mail
- Website for the applying organization

Release Authorization

- I, the undersigned represent and warrant that I have the authority to give and thereby give the National Trust for Historic Preservation the absolute and unqualified right to use, in whole or in part, in whatever manner the National Trust may desire, including, but not limited to, use for publicity, audiovisual presentation, and/or promotion, any written or photographic materials entered in the National Trust's Great American Main Street Awards® program.
- The National Trust for Historic Preservation is hereby given permission to make any editorial changes and/or additions to the materials submitted as it deems necessary or desirable for production purposes.
- I, the undersigned, further agree to defend, indemnify, and hold the National Trust, its trustees, directors, officers, employees, members, and agents harmless from and against any and all claims and liabilities that may arise out of any misrepresentation or breach of this warranty.
- I, the undersigned, have verified that the information provided in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Coordinators Authorization

- I, the undersigned, have received permission from my state coordinator to apply for this award.

2. Background Information

The following information submitted online should apply to the commercial district that is applying for the award and not the entire city or town within which the district is located.

- What is the number of blocks in your commercial district?
- What is the nearest major city?
- What is the population of your town/city, based on the 2000 US Census where your district is located?
- Indicate the number of businesses in each category:
 - Retail shops
 - Restaurants
 - Services
 - Offices
 - Arts and entertainments
- Annual budget of the revitalization organization
- Percentage of your annual budget from the following funding sources:
 - Public funding
 - Private funding
- Indicate your organization's primary category (select one):
 - Main Street program
 - Business Improvement District
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Community Development Corporation
 - City or County Agency
 - Downtown Development Authority
 - Historical Society
 - Other organization: _____
- Indicate your organization's tax status. Please choose the primary category if more than one applies.
 - 501 (c) 3
 - 501 (c) 4
 - 501 (c) 6
 - Government agency
 - For profit
 - Other: _____

3. History of the Revitalization Effort

Briefly outline the history of your commercial revitalization effort. Please include what prompted your community to begin its revitalization program, reasons for its economic decline, formation of the revitalization effort, and its successes.

Response Length: No more than 500 words.

4. The Main Street Four Point Approach®

Organization:

How has your Main Street organization improved the community in ways that previously existing organizations may not have addressed? What are some innovative approaches your group has used to provide for succession of volunteer leadership, adjust to changing economic or governance situations, or sustain itself over the long haul?

Response Length: No more than 250 words.

Promotion:

How have your organization's promotion efforts changed the image of your downtown or commercial district? Highlight some innovative approaches and significant accomplishments in positioning, marketing, and promoting your district?

Response Length: No more than 250 words.

Design:

In the realm of design, which projects by your Main Street program and its partner organizations have helped transform your district visually and functionally? What are some innovative approaches or noteworthy accomplishments to date?

Response Length: No more than 250 words.

Economic Restructuring:

How has the capacity of your program grown to facilitate preservation-based real estate development? What are some your organization's innovative accomplishments in the arena of economic restructuring?

Response Length: No more than 250 words.

Describe the small business development efforts in your community, including roles played by other organizations. Give an example of how your organization assisted a small business.

Response Length: No more than 250 words.

5. Economic Impact

Quantify the economic impact of your revitalization effort for the categories below:

- Net number of new jobs
- Net number of new businesses
- Number of building rehabilitations
- Number of new buildings
- Vacancy rate when your program began
- Vacancy rate today
- Dollar amount of public investment
- Dollar amount of private investment

6. Key Participants

List the major organizations and constituent groups that have been actively involved in your revitalization effort and briefly describe their roles.

Response Length: No more than 250 words.

7. Your Own Assessment of Merit

Key Accomplishments or Milestones:

If asked to sum up the legacy of your Main Street program to date, what outcomes or activities would you highlight? Briefly describe up to, but no more than, three (3) major achievements.

Response Length: No more than 250 words.

What Makes Your District a Winner?

Applying the Main Street Approach has made a big difference in hundreds of communities across the United States. What sets your district apart from the typical successful story. Why should you win a Great American Main Street Award®?

Response Length: No more than 250 words.

8. Outlook for the Future

What are your district's strategic initiatives for the next five years?

Response Length: No more than 250 words.

9. Images and Descriptions

You are asked to submit 30 digital images, along with appropriate photographer credit and a brief description. Directions for how to submit them will be found on the online application.

Image File Format Guidelines:

Digital images should be provided in jpg or tiff format and should be 1600x1200 pixels or larger. A 1600x1200 pixel image translates to a 5x4 photo at 300 dots per inch (dpi). Photographs taken for the web at 72 dpi are unacceptable because the quality is too low to be used in print publications. If possible, please submit color photos.