

New Mexico

STREET TALK

New Mexico MainStreet Program • Fall 2002 • Vol. 3, No. 2



EXPANDING THE SCOPE OF REVITALIZATION

New Mexico

The New Mexico Economic Development Department is pleased to announce the addition of two new communities to the Main Street program. The recent certification of Clovis and the Village of Los Ranchos is the result of their extended commitment to revitalization, having spent over a year working with New Mexico MainStreet to develop their organizations, build support for revitalization in the community, and secure financial resources to implement their programs. (For participation requirements see sidebar.)

CLOVIS DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

New Mexico MainStreet conducted a Resource Team Visit in Clovis on September 17-19, 2002, to help the community launch a successful revitalization program. A five-member multi-disciplinary group immersed itself into Clovis' downtown revitalization challenges and opportunities for three

MainStreet Welcomes New

Council to offer more detailed guidance in the Main Street "four points."



Railroad architecture defines Clovis' history.

The Clovis downtown Revitalization Program is developing a professional track record in its visible presence as a responsible and intelligent voice for downtown concerns and in producing the Arts Festival. It is helping the community to recognize the valuable assets Clovis has in its downtown buildings, civic investment, businesses and people. In short, the revitalization process is underway and all signs bode well for a high-impact program that produces community-building results in Clovis.

one of these plans, the 2010 Master Plan, a Village goal is to develop the district as a shopping destination, encourage mixed-use development, including housing, and redevelop the existing underutilized shopping centers as Village or neighborhood centers; economically vital and pleasant nodes for the district.

The Resource Team visited Los Ranchos August 26 - 28 and followed the same format as the Clovis visit. It was well understood by the members of the community that were interviewed by the team, including business owners, government officials, and residents, that the business district does not capture its full potential for economic opportunity. Many commercial sites are underutilized, and there is significant leakage based upon the buying power of the community.

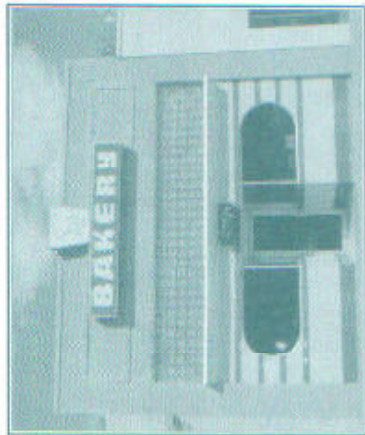
Communities

NEW MEXICO MAIN STREET PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Communities selected to join the New Mexico MainStreet network must meet the following designation criteria on an ongoing basis to achieve and maintain designation:

WORK IN A TRADITIONAL MAIN STREET DISTRICT

Main Street districts must have a physical setting conducive to pedestrian scale and orientation, a critical mass of buildings, businesses, and structures that would be eligible for rehabilitation



Cultural architecture on Main Street, Joplin.

The team conducted interviews with diverse Main Street leaders and community partners, and analyzed published plans, policies and written materials about the community. Interviews included representatives from varied stakeholder groups including business and property owners, elected officials and staff, Clovis / Curry County Chamber of Commerce, Eastern Plains Council of Governments, arts groups and preservation groups, and Clovis downtown Revitalization Program (CDRP) members.

After observing the community and listening carefully to participants' comments, team members developed a strategic plan to guide design of an effective revitalization approach for the coming years. The summary of the team's findings was presented at the September 19, 2002, Clovis City Commission meeting. Essentially, the findings confirmed that all of the building blocks for a star Main Street program are in place in Clovis, including a substantial inventory of quality architecture, a distinct identity associated with its development with the railroad long-term downtown businesses, and, most importantly, leadership in the program's strong board of directors and from the public sector in the City's investment of program funding and quality attention.

Immediately following the presentation to the Commission, the team convened a public forum at the Hispanic Business

Stuart, Program Associate, National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street Center, Jesse Montfort Bopp, Esq., Local Government Director, New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration, Maryellen Hennessy, Director, New Mexico MainStreet Economic Development Department, Keith Kjelstrom, Program Associate - Organization and Economic Restructuring, New Mexico MainStreet, and Susan Freed, RA, Program Associate - Architecture, New Mexico MainStreet.

LOS RANCHOS MAINSTREET

The Village of Los Ranchos presents a different type of revitalization opportunity. The Los Ranchos 4th Street business district is not a "typical" Main Street project, in that it is not a traditional downtown with a mix of civic, social and commercial uses, nor is it a typical urban Main Street district with a dense street wall of building fabric, both of which often have a concentration of architecturally or historically significant buildings. The 4th street corridor evolved as auto-oriented strip commercial development typical of the latter half of the 20th Century, with some surviving historically significant structures on 4th Street. The challenge that lies ahead for Los Ranchos is to build an identity for the district that reflects the high quality that is so evident in other parts of the Village.



Los Ranchos is a village with rural character.

Several plans and studies have already been undertaken by the Village, addressing different aspects of future improvement. In



Los Ranchos' business district is about "the road".

During their stay, the team listened and learned what was important to the community: to build a strong relationship between businesses and residents from the business's point of view as well as from the customer's point of view; to retain and strengthen existing businesses; to beautify the Village commercial district; to increase retail sales and gross receipts tax revenues to provide a stronger tax base which in turn will provide better services for all citizens of the community; to be proud of the commercial district and what it represents to the community as an integral part of the Village; to develop a sense of place (the acknowledgment, enhancement and preservation of those entities that create community character); and to create a public space that builds on Village assets and forms a Village Center.

The team felt that these were achievable goals for the community, based upon the leadership and commitment of the public and private sectors. The Resource Team Report outlined specific steps, strategies and priorities for the newly evolving Main Street organization to implement in order to achieve the aspirations the community holds for the district.

Resource Team Members included Phyllis Taylor, Principal, Niles Southwest, Linda Harber, Principal, Linda Donovan Harber Associates, Maryellen Hennessy, Director, New Mexico MainStreet, Economic Development Department, Keith Kjelstrom, Program Associate - Organization and Economic Restructuring, New Mexico MainStreet, and Susan Freed, RA, Program Associate - Architecture, New Mexico MainStreet.

USE THE MAIN STREET APPROACH™

Main Street provides the only comprehensive approach specifically designed to address the issues and opportunities of traditional downtown commercial districts. It is proven to work and following the approach is a requirement of initial and on-going designation.

HAVE A DOWNTOWN ORGANIZATION

A separate, independent organization with a mission to act as the advocate for downtown is the only way to reverse decline and foster progress. The organization should include a Main Street committee structure.

HAVE SUSTAINABLE PROGRAM FUNDING

Financial stability of the Main Street organization is crucial to staying focused on the program's mission. An adequate operating budget must cover salaries, travel, training, and an active program of work and clerical assistance.

EMPLOY A PROGRAM MANAGER

A paid professional staff to manage the revitalization work is critical. Communities with small populations can have success with a part time manager, most communities must have a full-time management to be effective.

In addition to these requirements, designated communities must meet on-going administrative requirements:

- work planning
- attendance at network training events
- reporting of economic development statistics
- progress in overall program development.