

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS ON MAIN STREET, PART I



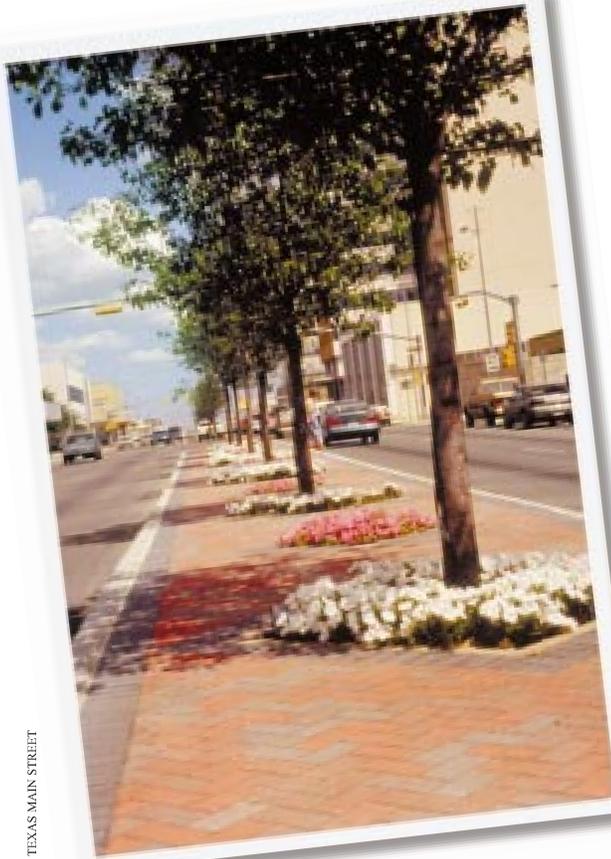
MAIN STREET 101

LINDA GLISSON



Small communities with traditional main streets (left) usually have sidewalks and small public spaces that adequately serve the district's needs.

Urban commercial districts may be able to support extensive improvements, such as plazas (above), parks, fountains, and monuments.



TEXAS MAIN STREET

If carried out as part of a comprehensive revitalization program, public improvements can create a positive image for the commercial district and demonstrate the community's concern for its appearance.

People often believe that downtown revitalization is synonymous with new public improvements projects—that trees, fountains, plazas, public art, parks, streetlights, and shrubbery are the essential elements of a revitalization effort.

They aren't. Many commercial districts cannot adequately maintain the streetscape amenities they have. Adding an expensive new public improvement project often just intensifies the problem.

A public improvements program alone will neither spur private investment nor draw the shoppers and visitors to a commercial area that offers little in the way of shops, services, and entertainment. There are few, if any, cases where a major public improvements project has succeeded in curailing an ailing economy, particularly if it was the sole element of a revitalization program. If carried out as part of a comprehensive program, however,

public improvements can help create a positive downtown image as well as demonstrate public and private concern about the appearance of the commercial district and the comfort of customers and residents.

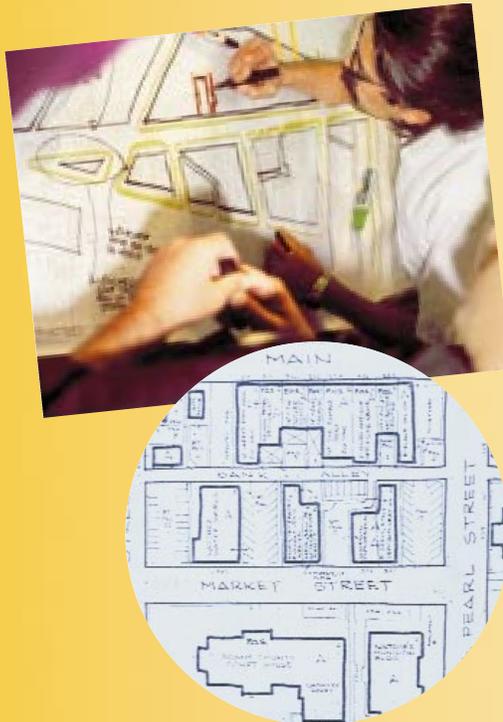
The extent to which public improvements are needed in any business district varies according to patterns of use, levels of activity, population density, and the scale of the buildings in the area. Small communities with traditional main streets usually have sidewalks and small public spaces that adequately provide for existing levels of activity. Larger cities with intensively active commercial districts may need expanded pedestrian spaces and additional amenities. These districts, as well as urban centers, may also be able to support extensive improvements such as plazas, parks, fountains, and monuments.

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The Role of Public Improvements

Public improvements in a commercial area should accomplish the following:

- 1. Public improvements should support, not overshadow (see photo #1), the functions of the district.**
 - They should provide basic utilities, such as water, sewage, and energy.
 - They should facilitate pedestrian and vehicular circulation and accommodate all aspects of transportation, such as parking, bus service, and connections to other major roads.
- 2. Public improvements should provide direction to and through the commercial district (see photo #2).**
 - Signs must be well designed and properly located to guide people to and through the district.
 - Entrances into the district should be clearly defined and inviting.
 - Exits from the district should provide direction to other parts of town.
 - Parking areas and transit stops should be clearly marked.
 - If possible, maps and directories should be used to show the locations of businesses, cultural attractions, public facilities, and historical information.
- 3. Public improvements should instill a sense of security throughout the district.**
 - Adequate lighting should be installed in public spaces.
 - Landscaping should not create dark areas where people can hide.
 - Trash should be collected on a regular schedule, broken fixtures promptly repaired, and graffiti removed as soon as it is discovered.
 - If possible, public spaces should be designed to accommodate a variety of uses, such as festivals, concerts, sidewalk sales, etc.; the presence of these activities will make the district safer.
- 4. Public improvements should be integrated with other physical improvements (see photo #3).**
 - Streetscape projects and private improvements such as façade rehabs should be planned as parts of the same program.
 - Public improvements should be planned incrementally and timed to fit the district's overall schedule of activity.



Conducting a Public Improvements Inventory

To conduct a public improvements inventory, take a base map of the downtown and walk through the district. Describe each element and evaluate it according to the following criteria:

- **Function.** How well is the element serving the purpose for which it was intended?
- **Installation.** Has the element been properly installed? If replacement is necessary, are there any factors unique to the element or its location that might affect installation?
- **Location.** Is the element placed where it will be most effective? How is it integrated into its surroundings?
- **Condition.** Does the element seem to be in good condition?
- **Maintenance.** What are the element's maintenance needs? How expensive is its maintenance? Who is responsible for its upkeep? Would removal, modification, or replacement of the element create maintenance costs in other areas of the district?
- **Circulation.** How does this element affect pedestrian and vehicular circulation? Does its design facilitate movement into businesses? Does it direct people to other parts of the district or city?
- **Visual character.** Is the element visually compatible with other design aspects of the district? Does its design impede its function?
- **Seasonal change.** How might the element be used differently or have a different impact on its environment throughout the year? For example, will a fountain that functions well in warm weather become a maintenance problem or safety hazard in winter?

The inventory should be conducted over several months to determine how different spaces are used at various times of the day, week, and year. It should also be updated annually.

Developing a Public Improvements Program

Successful public improvements result from careful deliberation and are tailored to the specific needs and character of the commercial district. Although the impetus for the program can come from anyone, broad participation is necessary for it to succeed. A public improvements program can be triggered by general concern about the condition of the business district or by a specific event, such as the closing of an important downtown store, the opening of a regional shopping mall, or the deterioration of utilities. In general, a combination of city staff, elected officials, merchants, community leaders, property owners, citizens groups, and consultants may need to be involved. Strong leadership and citizen participation are essential throughout the entire process.

While there are many ways to develop a public improvements program, the planning process usually involves four distinct stages: (1) conducting an inventory; (2) analyzing the information; (3) establishing goals and priorities; and (4) preparing an implementation strategy.

Analyze all public improvement elements according to specific function, such as parking (right). Some elements overlap in function; a crosswalk (far right) affects both pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

An inventory should catalog all public improvement elements, from directional and entryway signs (below) to street furniture and lighting.



KENNEDY SMITH

corridors, and other focal points of the commercial area. Also include major public buildings as well as community symbols such as fountains and statues. Another important factor is usage: who uses the district; how do they use it; when do they use it; and what are their needs?

The inventory should list public improvements already in place: where they are, how they are used, any plans for modification, and any problems that might impede their modification. It should consider basic public improvement elements (directional signs, street furniture, lighting, etc.); design criteria (visual guidelines, as well as security and maintenance concerns); and the effects of the improvements on downtown businesses.

The inventory should also take into account the effect of public improvements on patterns of movement downtown, especially pedestrian circulation. To maximize pedestrian exposure to the district’s shops and businesses, the walking environment must function well and be inviting. Public improvements should enhance the commercial district by creating spaces that encourage pedestrian movement and provide points of interest.

Communities may require different types or levels of inventories, according to their planning and public improvement needs. An inventory might analyze a single representative block, target a specific element, such



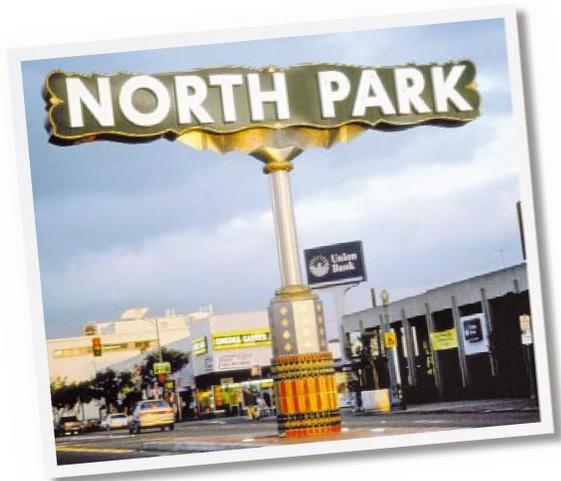
as benches, or—when a more comprehensive analysis is required—catalog every element within the downtown. [See sidebar “Conducting a Public Improvements Inventory” on page 9.] In addition to conducting an inventory, collect any existing studies on present or forecasted patterns of use in the commercial district, such as pedestrian and/or traffic counts, parking usage, and plans to upgrade public infrastructure.

Analysis

Begin the analysis by reviewing all collected information **according to specific function**. For example, all elements that affect parking should be examined together, as should all elements that affect vehicular traffic or pedestrian movement into and out of shops. Public improvements will often overlap: a crosswalk, for instance, affects both pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Next, examine each function, i.e., parking, traffic circulation, etc., to determine whether improvements are needed. Consider the following factors:

- **Impact.** What impact will this change have on the downtown? What impact will it have on other functions within the district? How will the functions of the district be affected during construction or installation?
- **Cost.** How much will the improvement cost? Is it worth the price? Who will pay for it? What are the maintenance costs?
- **Responsibilities.** Who will be responsible for designing, installing, maintaining, and managing the improvements?



Inventory

The scope of a public improvements program should be established early in the process and include a map that designates the district’s boundaries and the extent of the improvement effort. Identify major entrances, circulation

Establishing Goals and Priorities

The next step is to establish goals and priorities for public improvements throughout the business district. Although goals and priorities will vary among districts, they should include such basic considerations as the following:

- promoting the economic revitalization of the district;
- improving the district's appearance;
- reinforcing the rehabilitation of buildings;
- improving the functional characteristics of public spaces;
- increasing a sense of security; and
- creating spaces for public activities and special events.

After developing the goals, put together a list of priorities for each goal. Keep the following considerations in mind:

- Correct problems with existing infrastructure before adding new public improvement elements to the district.
- Try to find management solutions to problems before considering design solutions.
- Plan and implement major improvements so as to cause the least disruption.
- Make sure that new public improvements are visually, as well as functionally, compatible with existing elements.
- Take maintenance concerns into consideration when upgrading or adding new public improvements.

Implementation Plan

The final step is to develop an implementation plan. Remember that public improvements need not be implemented all at once. They should be carried out gradually, as funds and energy permit, and in harmony with the pace of building improvements. Implementation of each proposed improvement involves five distinct steps:

• **Choose an approach.** Does the improvement involve repairing or replacing an existing element or adding a new one?

• **Select appropriate elements.** Is the design or repair of the element visually and functionally compatible with existing elements in the district? Does the element conform with established design guidelines?

• **Organize the work.** When will the work begin? How long will it last? Is the work schedule timed to create as little disruption as possible for businesses and traffic? Who will be responsible for each phase of the work plan?

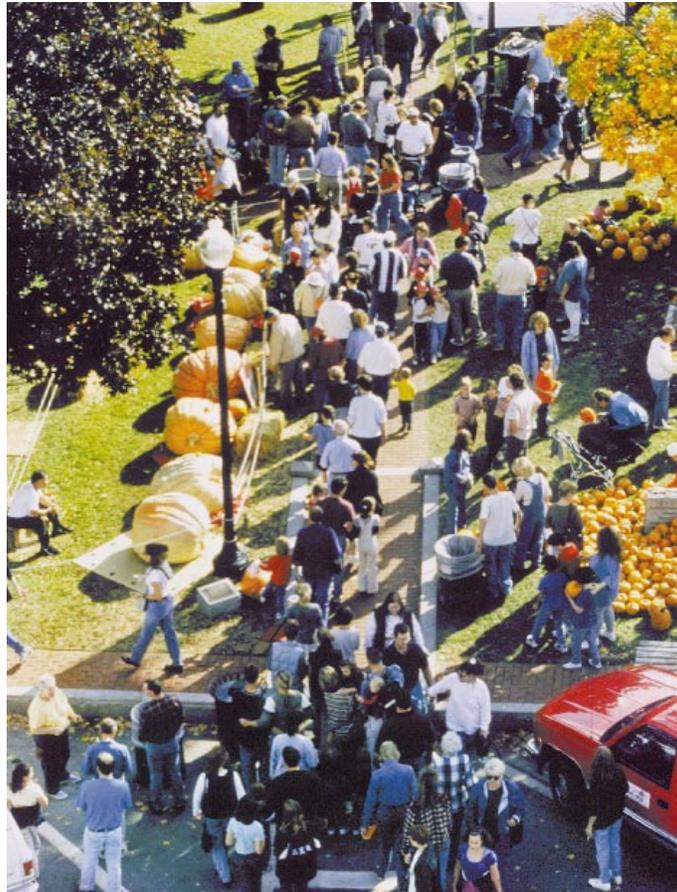
• **Plan follow-up activities.** After the element has been repaired or installed, determine how well it is functioning. Is there an adequate maintenance plan in place? Who is responsible for the maintenance?

Both the public and private sectors are responsible for design improvements downtown. A public

improvements program by itself cannot leverage private investments. On the other hand, a program carried out in conjunction with private building improvements and within the broader framework of the Main Street approach will significantly contribute to the revitalization effort and create a more attractive environment for businesses, customers, and investors.

Next month, "Main Street 101" will discuss "steps for survival" while a public improvements project is in progress, from planning the construction process in phases to public campaigns and other promotional activities.

By Kennedy Lawson Smith, with additional writing by Linda Glisson



If possible, design public spaces so that they can accommodate a variety of uses, such as festivals (above), concerts, sidewalk sales, and other activities.

Funding for Public Improvements

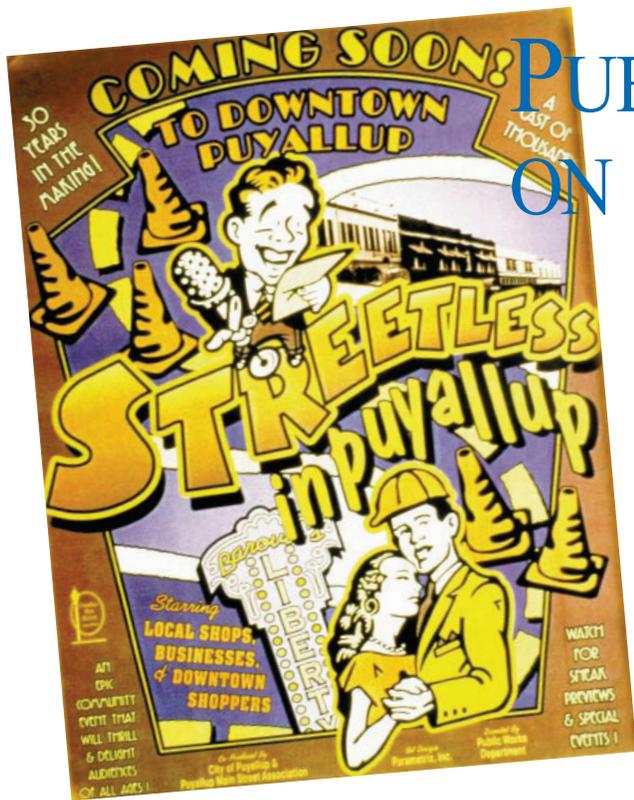
Because a public improvements program is often carried out incrementally, funding for various stages of the program can come from different sources. Public funding commitments can be used to leverage private contributions. A local government, for example, might offer to fund part of the cost of street and sidewalk improvements if local property owners agree to finance the rest through a special assessment district. Common sources of funding for public improvement projects include:

Public Funding

- Bond issues
- General revenue funds
- Special taxing districts that levy a tax on the property owners who most directly benefit
- Tax-increment financing, in which future increases in tax revenue are allocated to pay for improvements
- Special sales or food and lodging taxes
- Federal grants and loans for projects that benefit low-to-moderate income residents, create additional jobs or finance the rehabilitation of deteriorating infrastructure
- Federal funds through TEA-21, the transportation enhancements act, for projects that improve the streetscape and make roads and intersections safer

Private Funding

- Foundation grants
- Gift catalogs that solicit private donations for the purchase of items such as pavers, benches, or public art



PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS ON MAIN STREET, PART II

Planning Construction

Lessening the disruptive impact of the construction process on downtown businesses requires coordination between the contractor and store owners. How the improvements are to be implemented should be discussed and agreed upon during the negotiation process with the contractor.

A sample plan for phased construction could be set up as follows:

- Make improvements to alleys (concrete, lighting) and rear entrances of buildings first.
- Improve one side of the street surface, keeping two-way automobile traffic open on the other side; avoid disturbing the sidewalks during this phase.
- Improve other side of the street in the same manner.
- Lastly, improve sidewalks by closing one parking or street lane and building plywood bridges to give pedestrians access to stores. And don't tear up all the sidewalks at once.

One method of phasing construction is to limit the number of blocks that can be under construction at one time. For instance, the contractor could have half of one block, half of another, and then an entire block under construction, for a total of no more than two blocks at any one time. Another method would be to plan the order of sidewalk improvements to minimize the disruption of pedestrian traffic.

Other ideas that can help mitigate the impact of streetscape construction include the following:

- Keep the channels of communication open. Both negative and positive comments from business owners, the contractor, and the public should be collected and channeled to a central source. If applicable, use this input to modify elements of your construction

plan. Distribute weekly memos to update businesses on the progress of the improvements. The Main Street director should get daily construction briefings and might also consider developing a block captain system to facilitate communications.

- Develop off-site storage for construction equipment and materials.
- Develop remote parking lots for customers and employees. Large businesses or churches may have parking lots that could accommodate downtown customers. Ask them to allow shoppers to park in their lots for the duration of the construction process, either for free or for a fee. Provide golf carts or other transportation to shuttle people between main street and the more remote lots. If temporary lots are close to the commercial district, provide clear directional signs



Keep sidewalks open while improving the street surface to give pedestrians easy access to stores.

Last month, Main Street 101 looked at the role of public improvements on main street and the four stages of planning a streetscape project. This month, we'll look at ways to minimize business disruption and create a positive image of the commercial district during a major construction project. As a companion piece to this article, we're putting the spotlight on Old Town Lansing (Mich.) which has proven that "Construction Can Be Barrels of Fun!". (See pages 12-13.)

Any construction project will necessarily disrupt normal daily activities along main street. The more extensive the effort, the greater the impact. However, with sufficient forethought and planning, steps can be taken to minimize disruption to the normal course of business and encourage customers to keep shopping in the district.

Minimizing the impact of a streetscape improvement project requires effort in three separate areas: planning the construction process in phases; individual efforts by storeowners; and promotional activities to inform the public that main street is still open for business.





To lessen the impact of a major bridge and road construction project in its downtown, St. Charles, Ill. put together a survival guide for business owners and developed a comprehensive promotional campaign. Events and festivals continued to draw crowds to the business district throughout the construction process.



Accentuating the Positive

Promotion of a public improvements project can create excitement about the changes and minimize irritation about the inconvenience. One of the best ways to mitigate the disruption caused by construction projects downtown is to keep up the appearance of

“business as usual” so that people will keep frequenting the area.

Develop an aggressive promotional campaign, starting before construction begins and ending with a ribbon-cutting celebration when work is completed. The promotions should emphasize how the area is being improved and offer terrific deals or special services to keep customers coming, despite the inconveniences.

Here are a few ideas for developing a 19-month promotional campaign during a public improvements project:

Appoint or hire a part-time coordinator for promotional activities. Among other tasks, the coordinator would be responsible for:

- creating a project logo, graphic image and/or a “character” for the project;
- developing a promotional campaign through news articles, construction updates, banners for the construction area, and outdoor signs for parking or rerouting;
- printing coupons for businesses affected by streetscape construction;
- sending memos and newsletters to

downtown merchants and press releases to the media to keep them informed of the “who, what, when, where, why, and how” of the improvement process;

- packaging tie-ins with print and radio advertising;
- scheduling and managing each promotional event; and
- coordinating the actions and responses of contractors, business owners, and Main Street members during the construction process.

Visitors. Work with the visitors’ bureau to inform tour bus operators and individual tourists about road and parking changes. Stress that the commercial district is still open for business.

Kick-off party. Plan a one-day event to introduce the project and describe its outcome. Activities could include music, a chance to smash concrete (with hard hats, safety glasses, and hammers provided), tours of the construction site, or a groundbreaking ceremony conducted by municipal leaders.

“Guess Completion Dates” contest. Contestants could guess completion dates for various phases of the project, with entries and prizes to be picked up at downtown businesses.

Construction coupons and shoppers’ relief retail promotion. This joint retail promotion would reward customers for continuing to patronize main street businesses during the construction period. Coupons could be issued for dry cleaners (to clean clothes that get dusty); restaurants (a drink for dry throats or a special dessert); and car washes (for dirty automobiles). A relief package

of coupons, map, and small product giveaways could also be handed out.

“Out the Back Door” sales or specials. This promotion would encourage customers to use rear entrances where available.

By Amanda West, with additional writing by Linda Glisson

hours. However, when considering off-hour work, be sure to take a look at local labor laws, which may make this strategy too expensive. Also, try to avoid extensive work during busy retail periods, such as Thanksgiving and Christmas.

- While construction is in progress, reroute public transportation to secondary streets to reduce traffic.

Getting Merchants Involved

Although there will always be negative input from those affected by the construction project, involve merchants as much as possible in the planning process for the improvements. Asking for their input up front will not only give business owners a greater understanding of the unavoidable short-term disruptions the process will cause; they may also have ideas that will contribute to a more sensitive construction plan.

Business owners can also take steps on their own to reduce customer inconvenience during construction. Possibilities include developing rear entrances to their stores, holding special sales events, and offering to make home deliveries. In one community, a merchant offered valet parking to customers on the day that construction blocked entry to his business.



For More Information

Here are some past *Main Street News* articles that offer tips or plans for surviving downtown construction projects:

“De-MAZING Bainbridge Island, Wash.,” pg. 9, *Main Street News*, October 1999, No. 158.

“Downtown Construction: Ten Steps for Survival,” pgs.6-7, *Main Street News*, March/April 1999, No. 152.

“Abating Bridge Construction Troubles,” pg. 9, *Main Street News*, May 1998, No. 143.

“Amos the Square Cat,” pg. 9, *Main Street News*, October 1994.

“Fit to be Tied,” pg. 10, *Main Street News*, August 1990, No. 59.



Construction can be Barrels of Fun!

By Amy Collett, AICP

Who says a construction project in your main street district can't be fun? Take it from me, you have two choices when it comes to handling construction in your commercial area: you can make it fun or you can make it miserable. During the two years that the streets in Lansing's Old Town business district have been under construction, my staff and I have learned, the very hard way, how to make construction projects less painful. Hopefully, our mistakes and lumps can help your main street handle construction with levity and ease.

Lansing, Mich., like many cities with infrastructure built in the early 1900s, is dealing with the issue of combined sewers, in which a single pipe serves the sanitary and rainwater sewer needs of a community. Under normal conditions, combined sewers work well, but when heavy rainfalls occur, they can overflow and carry sanitary waste into the local rivers and

streams. The EPA's Clean Water Act and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality are requiring Lansing to separate its combined sewers.

During the 1999 and 2000 construction season, the combined sewer that cut directly through Lansing's Old Town Business District was targeted for separation. My staff and I were unprepared for what would happen.

The Old Town Business District where people first settled in Lansing. It is the largest collection of historic commercial buildings and historic houses in the city. Located along the Grand River, it was once home to grist mills, breweries, and automobile manufacturers. Later, it became a thriving commercial district serving the North Lansing Community. In the 1960s and '70s, North Lansing's commercial district suffered from the malls and super grocery stores that sprang up around the city. After many attempts at revitalization, the Old Town Main Street pro-

gram was created in 1996 as one of the six Neighborhood Main Street Initiative demonstration sites. Both the National Trust's Main Street Center and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) are helping Old Town become a revitalized arts and entertainment district for the Greater Lansing Community.

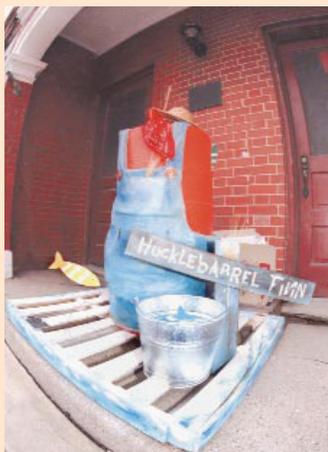
Year One: Reacting to the Problem

Construction on the sewer system was scheduled to start in early May 1999, but didn't actually begin until the end of June 1999. The Main Street office was deluged with angry phone calls and visits from concerned business owners who felt that the contractor and the City were not communicating timelines and information properly.

Main Street immediately sponsored a weekly "construction coffee" at a local restaurant affected by construction to strengthen the lines of communication between the businesses, the contractor, the City of Lansing, and the Main Street office. Old Town Main Street also developed a customer parking plan, which included renting a small vacant lot for additional parking and creating signs and maps for customers.



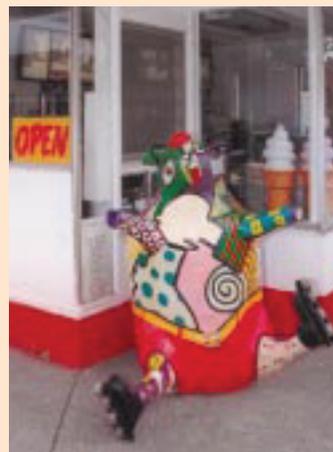
ARTISTS: DOUG AND LAURA DELIND "SUNSHINE HORSE AND FRIEND"



"HUCKEL BARREL FINN"
ARTISTS: BOB WILSON, MARIE BROXHOLM, SUE BURGER



"CAROUSEL EARTH", WITH ROBERT BUSBY,
CREOLE GALLERY OWNER
ARTISTS: RON RICHARDS



"PICASSO ON SKATES"
ARTISTS: MARY METLER AND SUE WINKLER



"MOTHER AND SON FUN"
ARTISTS: EVAN ROSEN AND MARTHA BROWNSCOMBE

"PICASSO," "HUCKEL BARREL FINN" AND "MOTHER AND SON FUN" PHOTOS BY TIM BURKE

Old Town Main Street recruited local artists to decorate 40 orange plastic barrels donated by the construction company handling the streetscape improvements. Shoppers are invited to vote for the favorite barrel in the "Best of Barrel" contest; the winning artist will get a \$500 grand prize at the end of the summer.

How to Survive Construction on Main Street

Here are nine steps that can help your business district not only survive but thrive during a major construction project.

- 1. Start at the top!** Your first visit should be with the mayor and city council to involve them in the construction response team. Identify major stakeholders and decision makers and use their influence to ensure a quality assistance package for businesses.
- 2. Get in on the design of the construction contract.** Ensure that materials will be staged outside the commercial district and that construction vehicles will stay out of customer parking spaces. Include clear benchmarks in the project contract, with bonuses for early completion.
- 3. Become friendly with the construction company.** You'll need a good relationship with the project superintendent in order to ask for frequent street sweepings, dust palliatives, and forewarning before street closures.
- 4. Stay Positive!** The media loves conflict—especially between the business community and the city. Make sure business owners understand that grumbling about the construction will discourage customers from shopping in your district.



- 5. Remember that everything is a media opportunity.** A *positive* approach to construction can produce *positive* media results.
- 6. Hold weekly meetings with business owners.** Be sure to invite all the participants in the construction process as well as anyone who could possibly help a business owner solve construction issues. Because you don't have the time to learn the science of the construction project, avoid acting as an intermediary between business owners and the construction company—be a facilitator!

- 7. Create a hotline** for the general public to answer questions about access and parking.
- 8. Create a public relations campaign, including a logo and theme.** Hire a public relations consultant for ideas if you need assistance. At the very least, use the local radio stations' morning drive programs to inform customers about construction progress and traffic detours.
- 9. Encourage your businesses to create a customer data base.** Use it for direct marketing and business promotions via mail or e-mail during the slow construction season. Ask merchants to begin creating the data base at least six months before the construction begins.

The small things we did in Year One helped, but certainly did not add up to the comprehensive response that was needed. We felt we were *reacting*, instead of *acting*. Main Street staff joked that it seemed we really wanted to hide out in our office—away from the angry merchants and pray that the TV and newspaper reporters didn't come by to see how business was doing! When the media did show up in Old Town, we tried to smile but no one was particularly convincing.

Unfortunately, the timing of the construction project did not go as planned. For reasons beyond the control of both the contractor and the City of Lansing, the sewer project moved one block during the 1999 construction season and was promptly rescheduled to start again in Old Town in March 2000. The bad news that the sewer project would take much longer than expected gave Old Town Main Street

four cold winter months to plan an aggressive strategy to assist businesses during the construction season and have a little fun with the construction.

We began by meeting with representatives of the Mayor's office and the Public Service Department. We asked for assistance and monies to put together a comprehensive construction assistance program. Clearly concerned about the effect of another year of construction on the welfare of Old Town businesses, the City of Lansing brought in a public relations firm to help us develop a plan of attack. According to Erik Mueller of Kolt and Serkaian Communications, "Old Town Main Street was smart to come to the City and our public relations firm in the off-construction season to lay out a plan *before* construction began and [before] public perceptions toward construction were developed."

Year Two: Attacking the Problem

During the second year of sewer construction, Old Town Main Street provided a much different assistance package to business owners. Instead of reacting to problems as they came up, we had a comprehensive plan of action to help businesses and forestall problems.

One-on-one meetings. Several weeks before construction began, city engineers and Main Street staff visited every business affected by construction and created a matrix of concerns and potential problems, such as frequency and timing of deliveries, and customer and employee parking. Each business listed primary contacts and after-hour phone numbers. This matrix was shared with the construction company and is used before work starts on new blocks.

Old Town construction hotline. Main Street set up a hotline for the construction-related concerns of business and property owners. It includes an after-hours recording with construction updates on road closures and detours, and voice mail for questions, which are always answered on the next business day.

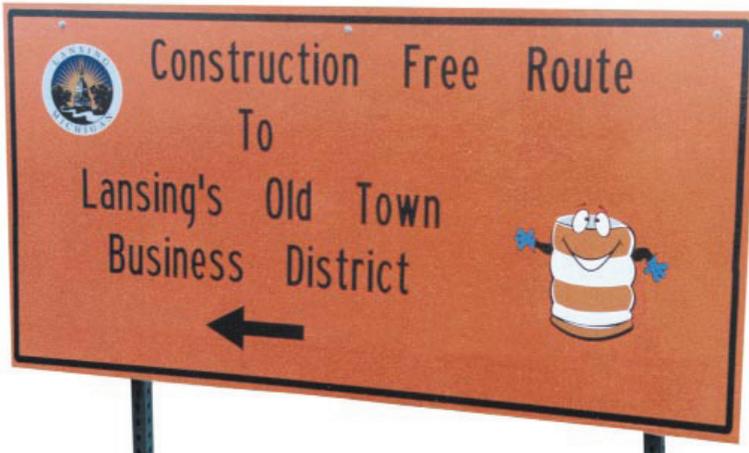


ARTIST: JOHN PATENGE
"LEND A HAND"

Construction signs program. Old Town Main Street coordinated the development of a construction sign system with the Lansing Public Service Department. The system includes signs for individual businesses, parking directives, detours, and "construction free zones."

Construction coffees. Every Wednesday morning at 8:30 a.m., Old Town Main Street hosts Construction Coffees at Ramon's Restaurant. These will continue until construction leaves the Old Town Commercial District. Construction company representatives, consulting engineers, the City's Public Service Department, the community police officer, and Main Street all attend to update business owners and managers on construction progress and address construction-related problems.

Promotional campaign. Main Street hired Old Town cartoonist Todd Ross to develop "Norton" the Friendly Barrel, which is used on all directional and way-finding signs, as well as in our newsletter and on customer maps. Next, Main Street coined the slogan "Old Town is Barrels of Fun," for all advertising and media promotions.



Beyond the campaign for Old Town, the Main Street office worked to update the media on construction progress by issuing frequent press releases that feature the products and services of Old Town businesses affected by construction. Main Street also coordinated gift certificate giveaways on local radio stations and made frequent visits to radio morning show programs to update the public on construction progress.

Construction complaints procedure guide. Main Street and the Public Service Department created a list of important phone numbers and a "how-to" sheet for dealing with emergency and non-emergency problems during and after business hours.

"Barrels on Parade" public art campaign. To bring a little levity to the situation, we shamelessly stole Chicago's "Cows on Parade" idea and brought it to Old Town in the form of artist-decorated construction barrels. Lanzo Construction donated 40 orange plastic barrels to

Old Town Main Street and we recruited artists throughout the Greater Lansing community to turn the barrels into works of art. "Barrel Benefactor" sponsorships were made available to local corporations, as well as five media barrel sponsorships. The barrels are on display throughout the commercial district this summer



ARTIST: GARY GLENN
"FLAME FANTASY"

and have attracted substantial media attention, including positive editorials and a video produced by the Michigan Department of Transportation.

To entice customers to continue shopping in Old Town, we invited shoppers to vote for their favorite barrel in the "Best of Barrel" contest. Retail stores and galleries have participated in the contest by putting out ballot boxes and encouraging their customers to vote. Later this summer, we will tally the votes and award a \$500 grand prize to the winning artist.



"JUST FOR FUN"
ARTIST: BARBARA HRANILOVICH

Old Town Main Street Program Manager Amy Collett (left) and Bibbity Bob pose with one of the 40 "Barrels on Parade."

The staff of Old Town Main Street has learned several important lessons from the two construction seasons we have survived: stay absolutely positive; find ways to inject a little fun into the construction project; and communicate, communicate, communicate.

Amy Collett, AICP, is the program manager for Old Town Main Street, Lansing, Michigan.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

Executive Director

The Oceanside (Calif.) Main Street Program is seeking an executive director to handle the roll-out and management of the program. This job requires strong marketing and communication skills in order to promote the Main Street program to residents and non-residents. The director will represent the community on a regional and national level and will initiate and coordinate public events for the city. Applicants should have experience managing multi-faceted programs in the private and/or public sector, with strong public relations and fund-raising abilities. Must be a strong leader, with excellent verbal and written skills. The position requires someone with management expertise in the areas of recruiting, hiring, training, and supervision; start-up experience; good entrepreneurial skills, and an enthusiasm for the job. A degree in business, marketing, or public administration is desirable. Salary range: \$40-45,000, DOQ, plus some benefits assistance. Oceanside has currently applied for California Main Street Certification. Please forward your resume with cover letter by August 14, 2000 to: The Downtown Business Association, 310 Mission Avenue, Oceanside, CA 92054 or fax to 760/722-8329.

Business Development Manager

Grayslake, Ill. (pop. 18,000), a mature and rapidly growing community located 40 miles north of Chicago and 40 miles southwest of Milwaukee, is seeking a business development manager. This position, which is appointed by and reports to the Village Manager, will be responsible for assisting the Economic Development Commission in implementing and coordinating its programs, which include façade grants, low-interest loans, streetscape incentives, and marketing and recruitment of new businesses. The business development manager is expected to develop working relationships with business and property owners and members of the private development community. Knowledge of and experience with economic development public/private partnerships is essential; Main Street program experience, helpful. Bachelor's degree in marketing, planning, business, or public administration required. Salary doq, EOE. Send resume to: Michael J. Ellis, Village Manager, Village of Grayslake, P.O. Box 325, 10 South Seymour Avenue, Grayslake, IL 60030.

Executive Director

Salina Downtown, Inc. is accepting applications for a hands-on coordinator to continue successful revitalization of the downtown. The right candidate will have a related degree, plus experience in marketing, communications, promotions, event planning, administration, and the four-point approach of the Main Street Program. This is a mature, successful program that needs a committed professional to take us to the next level. Salina is a central Kansas city of 45,000 with a vibrant arts community, two small colleges and a thriving retail sector. Submit resume and three references by August 1, 2000, to: Search Committee, Salina Downtown, Inc., P.O. Box 1065, Salina, KS 67402-1065.

Job announcements should not exceed 150 words and should be mailed or faxed to the editor of Main Street News by the 5th of the month for the next month's issue (i.e. November 5th for December issue). Mail to Editor, Main Street News, National Main Street Center, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20036 or fax to (202) 588-6050.

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