

## THE MAIN STREET APPROACH TO RECOVERY

As downtowns begin to reopen to the public, the Main Street Approach™ can serve as a powerful tool for economic recovery efforts. The Main Street Approach is a time-tested framework for community-driven, comprehensive revitalization that has strengthened downtowns across the country. The strategies that guide this approach are organized around four points: Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion, and Organization. Design supports a community's transformation by enhancing the physical and visual assets that set the commercial district apart. Keep reading to learn about Design-related recovery activities and ideas to help your Main Street navigate the impact of COVID-19.



### ☐ Evaluate the need for COVID-19-related street infrastructure.

Consider hand washing stations or temporary signage outlining social distancing reminders.

### ☐ Advocate for people-first streets.

Work with your local Department of Transportation to evaluate potential street closures that could allow for additional space for pedestrians, distanced outdoor seating for restaurants, additional space for sidewalk sales, and multi-modal transportation.

### ☐ Reopen guidelines will require many business owners to rethink their interior layouts.

Offer technical assistance as part of your design services that focus on store layouts for occupancy limitations, social distancing guidelines, and in-store check-out lines.



☐ **Work with local transit officials to ensure safe transit practices at local bus stops, transit stations, and ride-sharing operations.**

Make sure they're encouraging patrons to observe social distancing through informational signage and that areas are being regularly sanitized.

☐ **Consider short-term modifications to existing facade and/or sign grants.**

This can allow for more broadly defined design needs for small business owners trying to adhere to COVID-19 guidelines.

☐ **Leverage the growth in trail and park use.**

More and more people have embraced their local outdoor spaces and developed new recreation habits during stay-at-home orders. As part of downtown design activities, leverage this growth to push for more trails and park connectivity, Sunday street closures for safe bike and walking districts, as well as district park enhancements.

☐ **Greater design focus is needed on technology infrastructure as part of district public improvements.**

COVID-19 has resulted in likely long-term shifts to remote workforce and e-commerce sales that necessitate cell 5G and high speed fiber networks. An especially important opportunity for rural communities, this infrastructure can help small businesses access online retailing, attract remote workers to communities, and allow an existing workforce to remain competitive.

☐ **Retail, restaurant, and office spaces will need to be reimaged.**

As vacancies in these spaces occur due to remote work or business closures, think creatively about how to re-use these spaces. Converting an upper-floor office space to housing, a vacant retail space to a pop-up store, or a vacant restaurant to a new small-scale food producer will require a renewed look at space and how we maintain our historic preservation and sustainability ethos in these conversions.

