

CHECKLIST FOR GETTING STARTED WITH A MAIN STREET PROGRAM



Task	CL Role
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Contact the Indiana Main Street Program (IMS) through your OCRA Community Liaison. Click here for a map.	Give IMS 101 if requested. Abby will refer initial contact to the CLs for follow up.
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. Put together a core team of people to talk with fellow downtown business and property owners about the idea of forming a downtown organization. Also, talk with the City, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Commission, and other organizations. Gather input and support.	Provide technical assistance on types of professionals for a Main Street board
<input type="checkbox"/> 3. Hold a town hall style meeting to help educate the public about downtown revitalization. IMS can be the featured presenter as part of the public presentation. Talk with the local media ahead of time and invite them to attend. Then, if you decide to move ahead . . .	Be a speaker for the meeting- Provide a MS101. CL should include Abby to jointly present IMS program at this type of meeting.
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. Identify board members and supporters. Create an interim board of directors (5-9 people).	Provide technical assistance on types of professionals for a Main Street board
<input type="checkbox"/> 5. Once formed, the interim board should choose a name for the organization. Pick something that is simple, straightforward, and businesslike. Save the “catchy” for a tag line or promotional campaign.	CLs may facilitate discussion to help build consensus.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6. Determine the organization’s boundaries/primary focus area. Remember it’s not an “in or out” issue— it’s a “where should we concentrate our efforts for maximum success.” Here are the identifiers the IMS Program uses when helping potential Main Street communities decide. The area is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A traditional business district and center for socio-economic interaction; • Characterized by a cohesive core of historic and/or older commercial and mixed-use buildings representing the community’s architectural heritage with compatible in-fill development; • Typically arranged with most of the buildings side-by-side and fronting the sidewalk along a main street with intersecting side streets; • Compact, easily walkable, and pedestrian-oriented. • Take plenty of photographs documenting your primary focus area. 	CLs should work with Jackie and Abby to review details and to provide specific guidance for the community. This should be a conversation. The CL will coordinate a walk-about, face-to-face (or virtual) discussion with the interim board to determine an appropriate of level of certification and overall eligibility for the program, standards review and emphasis.

<input type="checkbox"/> 7. Draft Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation (your OCRA Community Liaison has samples-See Program Guide). IMS will be happy to review them. You might also wish to have an attorney review them. If you are not ready to become a 501c3, then you will only need to draft by-laws. Here is a good resource on completing your Articles of Incorporation from the Indiana Attorney’s General office.	Provide technical assistance. Share drafts with IMS team for additional guidance / feedback.
<input type="checkbox"/> 8. File as an Indiana Nonprofit Corporation (Domestic) with the Secretary of State . Once you have successfully filed, you will receive a Certificate of Incorporation. However, it is not necessary to become a 501c3 in order to be an Indiana Main Street organization.	Local IMS Group responsibility
<input type="checkbox"/> 9. Once incorporated, prepare an agenda and hold an “official” first meeting to: a) adopt bylaws, b) elect officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, c) decide on a fiscal year, d) select a bank and discuss financial arrangements, e) authorize preparation and filing of IRS forms, f) identify an address or post office box for mail, and g) other necessary business. Make sure the new Secretary takes minutes.	Attend, if invited. CLs should not lead the discussion, but be there to answer questions.
<input type="checkbox"/> 10. File form SS-4 with the Internal Revenue Service to get a Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN), found at www.irs.gov . At the same time, download a 501c3 or (c)6 nonprofit designation application packet. Most downtown organizations focusing on the Main Street Approach® try for a 501c3 designation. Suggestion: Seek advice and talk with an attorney prior to attempting to fill out the form!	Local IMS group responsibility
<input type="checkbox"/> 11. Check with your municipality to see if you need to file anything locally.	Local IMS Group responsibility
<input type="checkbox"/> 12. Reserve an Internet domain name for your organization and set up social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest etc.).	Local IMS Group responsibility
<input type="checkbox"/> 13. The board should talk with local insurance agents and purchase appropriate insurance coverage for your organization as soon as possible. Minimally, the board should consider general liability, board and officer liability, worker’s compensation, and special events policies. The National Trust Insurance Services offers insurance for Main Street organizations. (http://www.nationaltrustinsurance.org/Mainstreet.html)	Local IMS Group responsibility

<input type="checkbox"/> 14. Once the organizational paperwork has been done, hold goal-setting sessions with board members. Determine a mission and vision statement, then clear goals and objectives to create a 12-18 month work plan. Put together teams based on the Main Street structure. Have each team hold an activity brainstorming session to come up with a list of activities to meet their list of objectives (in the beginning, think quality, tangible and visible impact, low-cost, and doable). Be realistic in what you can accomplish, but also don't think too small.	CLs can facilitate. Bring in IMS PMs to assist with initial sessions, specifically the development of mission and vision statement. This would also apply to Mission, Vision, and Strategy Updates throughout the life cycle of an IMS org. CLs then work with the community to develop work plan action items.
<input type="checkbox"/> 15. Create a draft first year budget, then seek out funds from supporters and stakeholders.	CL can facilitate. Once the budget is complete, it should be shared with IMS PM via email for feedback.
<input type="checkbox"/> 16. Complete a business inventory of your designated Main Street district. This is needed as part of the IMS designation application. Your OCRA Community Liaison has the required form.	Local IMS Group responsibility
<input type="checkbox"/> 17. Send a press release to the media for free publicity. Don't forget—letters to the editor are great!	Local IMS Group responsibility. CL can provide support including sample docs...etc. with assistance from the IMS PMs and Comms Manager.
<input type="checkbox"/> 18. Apply for Indiana Main Street designation by submitting an intent to apply. Once received, the community will be given access to an INeGMS account where they can begin building their applications. All application must be submitted electronically in INeGMS.	CL will provide TA on the application while it is being developed ahead of submission. Scoring panels will consist of OCRA Staff, Main Street Council Members. *Scoring rubric has been created.
<input type="checkbox"/> 19. After IMS designation – hold a celebration!	CL and IMS PMs attend.

- New Executive Directors should complete an orientation with IMS PM within 90 days – CL looped in.
- A Google folder for new Board Member Training/Onboarding Toolkit and materials will be available.