



Our Transformation Strategies

Sterling Main Street is a proud member of the Main Street America™ network.

Made up of small towns, mid-sized communities and urban commercial districts, the thousands of organizations, individuals, volunteers, and local leaders that make up Main Street America™ represent the broad diversity that makes this country so unique. Working together, the Main Street America Network helps to breathe new life into the places people call home.



Main Street empowers communities to set their own destinies. While revitalization is challenging work, the Main Street program offers a road-map for locally-owned, locally-driven prosperity. Every community is different, with its own distinctive assets and sense of place. The Main Street Approach™ offers community-based revitalization initiatives with a practical, adaptable framework for downtown transformation that is easily tailored to local conditions. The Main Street Approach is centered around Transformation Strategies. A Transformation Strategy articulates a focused, deliberate path to revitalizing or strengthening a downtown's economy. A program's work on Transformation Strategies should be organized around the Main Street Four Points: Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion & Organization.

from www.mainstreet.org

Our Transformation Strategies are meant to be a work in progress; a road-map. The following three strategies represent the vision set forth by the Sterling Main Street Board of Directors for continuing to make downtown Sterling a more vibrant place for its business owners, property owners, community residents and visitors.

Current initiatives will continue to evolve, and/or be completed, new initiatives will be developed by volunteer-led committees, and new goals will continue to be set. In developing our initiatives, the questions asked for each include:

- ❖ How will it improve downtown?
- ❖ Is it targeting consumer groups to use downtown more?
- ❖ Is there community-wide support for the project?
- ❖ Do we have the resources to make the project impactful?
- ❖ How will we measure that impact?

We invite you to review our strategies, initiatives and committee needs. Volunteers are needed. If there is an area of interest to you in helping us continue to make Sterling, Illinois the best it can be, please contact us and get involved today!

Sterling Main Street Transformation Strategies (2019-2021)

STRATEGY: Downtown Sterling is thriving with a quality mix of businesses, including unique retail shops, diverse dining and nightlight options and service-based businesses.

EXPECTED OUTCOME & GOALS	ORGANIZATION	PROMOTION	DESIGN	ECONOMIC VITALITY
<p>EXPECTED OUTCOME:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low Vacancy rate • Low business turnover • Complimentary business mix <p>MEASUREABLE GOALS FOR 2019:</p> <p>Organization: Database of downtown businesses created.</p> <p>Promotions: Increased participation by downtown business owners in cooperative marketing and promotional activities.</p> <p>Design: 1 or more vacant properties takes advantage of “I wish I was” signage.</p> <p>Economic Vitality: Downtown survey completed</p>	<p>ACTION:</p> <p>Current Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintains year-round indoor farmers market <p>New Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct base-line survey of downtown businesses to gather property and staffing data. 2. Identify vacant/under-utilized properties. 3. Build relationships with vacant property owners and work to identify obstacles to leasing, selling or rehabbing property. 4. Grow relationship with current business owners, identify struggles & concerns, as evaluate how can MS assist to address. 	<p>ACTION:</p> <p>Current Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain “Available Properties” section on Main Street website. 2. Continue to grow cooperative events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Sip & Shop o Pop Up Markets o Hot Dog Day o Christmas Walk <p>New Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore additional opportunities for marketing vacant properties 	<p>ACTION:</p> <p>Current Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educate property owners regarding Façade Grant program 2. Downtown beautification efforts including annual Clean & Green and Downtown Flower baskets. <p>New Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with property owners to provide (or assist with) “I wish I was” or other enticing signage to attract new businesses. 2. Are vacant properties tenant-ready? If not, how can we help improve and market these spaces. 	<p>ACTION:</p> <p>Current Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. None <p>New Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct base-line survey of downtown businesses to assess current needs of existing businesses. 2. Identify types of businesses which would be a “good fit” for our downtown. 3. Work with SBDC and other community partners to identify new start-ups or recruit expansions from other communities.

Why are we doing this project? How will it improve downtown? Is it targeting consumer groups to use downtown more? Is there support community-wide for the project? Do we have the resources to make it impactful? How will we measure that impact?

Sterling Main Street Transformation Strategies (2019-2021)

STRATEGY: Retain and attract young professionals and a talented workforce to our community.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES & GOALS	ORGANIZATION	PROMOTION	DESIGN	ECONOMIC VITALITY
<p>EXPECTED OUTCOME: Downtown Sterling is seen as a thriving and vibrant place and used to help area employers attract and retain talent.</p> <p>MEASUREABLE GOALS FOR 2019:</p> <p>Organization: Increased number of committee members and volunteers in the 20-35 age range</p> <p>Promotions: Increased event attendance by this demographic</p> <p>Design: TBD</p> <p>Economic Vitality: TBD</p>	<p>ACTION: Current Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Main Street & Chamber Millennial vision group 2. Provide support, as needed, to those taking lead in workforce development needs 3. Hops on the Rock 4. Year-round Farmers Market <p>New Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify other “quality of life” barriers which Main Street can provide a direct role in improving; develop additional initiatives & workplans to address those barriers. 	<p>ACTION: Current Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain quality & diverse schedule of events 2. Pop Up Market series 3. Sip & Shop Events 4. Movies at Grandon <p>New Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with millennial group and other partner organizations to create a “signature event” for the Sterling area. 	<p>ACTION: Current Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NONE <p>New Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with City in riverfront redevelopment planning to ensure voices of all ages are included in the process 	<p>ACTION: Current Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NONE <p>New Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work to attract types of businesses identified by Millennial Group as important to fill vacancies in the downtown.

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Sterling Main Street Transformation Strategies (2019-2021)

STRATEGY: Sterling Main Street continues to see an increase in annual funding through a diverse array of sources.

EXPECTED OUTCOME & GOALS	ORGANIZATION	PROMOTION	DESIGN	ECONOMIC VITALITY
<p>EXPECTED OUTCOME:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased funding from a variety of sources • Increased volunteer base <p>MEASUREABLE GOALS FOR 2019:</p> <p>Organization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in unrestricted partnership contributions • Increased number of volunteers <p>Promotions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased community awareness of Main Street and its benefit to the community • Events are fully sponsored <p>Design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 50% of flower baskets are sponsored <p>Economic Vitality: TBD</p>	<p>ACTION:</p> <p>Current Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual partnership campaign 2. Year-round Farmers Market 3. Martin building occupancy 4. Revenue producing events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car Show • Hops on the Rock <p>New Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of individual giving campaign 	<p>ACTION:</p> <p>Current Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Solicits sponsors for events 2. Sip & Shop Events bring in revenue 3. Pop Up Markets bring in revenue <p>New Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New marketing strategies developed to better "tell our story." 	<p>ACTION:</p> <p>Current Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partnership with Sterling Today for Façade Grant program <p>New Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Solicit sponsors for each of the downtown flower baskets 	<p>ACTION:</p> <p>Current Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. None <p>New Initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TBD

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