

Responsibilities of the Design Committee

The Design Committee's purpose is to create an attractive, coordinated and quality image of the community by capitalizing on its unique assets and heritage. Its responsibilities do not lie solely with the improvement of traditional commercial buildings. It should be involved in all aspects of design that have an impact on the overall image of the downtown, including analyzing parking, developing a logo, coordinating window displays and acting as a design resource for property owners. If the local Main Street program is planning to develop a local low-interest loan pool or other financial incentives to stimulate interest in design projects, this Committee will play a critical role in setting up and administering a design review and approval process.

Many Design Committees make the mistake of jumping immediately into establishing design ordinances. However, an ordinance is only one of a variety of measures that the Committee should consider for the protection of the business district's visual quality.

The Committee's members should include people who are qualified -- either by profession or volunteer interest and experience -- to supervise its projects, such as architects, landscapers, interior designers, graphic artists, sign painters, contractors, historic commission representatives, artists and citizens interested in good design. It might also include a downtown property owner and the city's building inspector.

Specific functions:

- Directs design improvement activity with regard to building maintenance and rehabilitation, historic preservation, new construction, public and private signs, graphic material, public improvements, visual merchandising, traffic and parking.
- Works with the Promotion Committee to ensure a consistent, high-quality graphic image in signs, advertisements and other graphic material associated with the Main Street program.
- Establishes a sound relationship with local design and construction professionals, sharing technical information on historic preservation, rehabilitation and maintenance of traditional commercial buildings.
- Promotes awareness of local design and historic preservation issues throughout the community.
- Monitors design changes throughout the community.
- Works with the Economic Restructuring Committee to plan, implement and administer appropriate incentives to encourage design improvement and property development activity.
- Allocates funds for design improvement activities in accordance with the Main Street program's overall annual work plan and budget.
- Monitors local ordinances and other applicable regulations affecting downtown design issues and works toward developing a supportive regulatory environment for downtown revitalization activity.
- Establishes a sound working relationship with the State Historic Preservation Office and other state and regional agencies that provide assistance in areas related to downtown design_improvement through historic preservation.
- Conducts and maintains a thorough inventory of downtown properties.