

# Assessing the Feasibility of a DC Main Street Program

## About This Evaluation Framework

The evaluation framework below is designed to help DSLBD and other stakeholders understand the necessary neighborhood conditions that allow a Main Street program to be successful. These conditions are grouped into five categories. If a program area fulfills specific criteria within each of the five categories, the area would be considered to have the conditions necessary to support a successful Main Street.

## When to Use This Evaluation Criteria






1. Evaluating whether a Main Street is the right entity to serve an area before the distribution of a Request for Applications for an organization to oversee a program.
2. Identifying which organization is the most suitable to receive a Main Street grant.
3. Evaluating whether an existing program's funding should be maintained or removed during formal program review.
4. Creating a road map to help stakeholders build the groundwork that would make a new program successful in their community.
5. Communicating the fundamental conditions necessary to make a program sustainable and impactful to community stakeholders.



*Note: Please see back for each category's corresponding evaluation criteria.*

This document summarizes a portion of key recommendations from the Foggy Bottom West End Study conducted by Jon Stover & Associates, on behalf of the DC Department of Small and Local Business Development. For additional information about this study, please contact Dexter Williams at [dexter.williams2@dc.gov](mailto:dexter.williams2@dc.gov).

# Main Street Program Feasibility Evaluation Criteria

	 <b>Need for Retail Support</b>	 <b>Main Street Model Suitability</b>	 <b>Organizational Capacity</b>	 <b>Stakeholder Champions</b>	 <b>Coverage Area</b>
Criteria #1	Established <b>receptivity among business owners</b> for a Main Street program.	Neighborhood conditions that <b>align with the Main Street Four-Point Approach™</b> .	<b>Existing organization with a similar or complementary mission</b> to a Main Street program that has expressed interest in receiving Main Street accreditation to serve the area.	Established <b>interest from residents and/or other stakeholders</b> in joining a Board of Directors and Executive Committee for a Main Street program.	Neighborhood, corridor, or district with a <b>cohesive identity</b> .
Criteria #2	<b>Lack of other entities already providing similar services</b> as a Main Street (excluding any organization that would be overseeing the new Main Street).	<b>Walkable commercial corridor</b> with a concentration of ground-floor commercial storefronts.	Existing nonprofit organization that represents the <b>same or proximate geographic area</b> as the study area.	Established <b>financial support and/or the presence of a local anchor institution</b> and other key partners who could be expected to provide financial support.	Appropriate <b>number of retail businesses</b> within the study area.
Criteria #3	Notable <b>supply of underutilized ground-floor commercial spaces</b> that are vacant or in visibly poor condition.	Large portion of <b>local businesses</b> .	Existing nonprofit organization that has a <b>track record of operational success</b> .	Established <b>base of volunteers</b> within the study area, as demonstrated by participation in prior community events or initiatives.	Appropriate <b>geographic size</b> of study area
Criteria #4	n/a	Supply of <b>historic assets</b> worthy of preservation.	Existing nonprofit organization that has <b>strong ties with local businesses</b> in the study area.	Established <b>track record of strong event attendance</b> at prior events or festivals within the study area.	<b>Contiguous study area</b> , with no major barriers to pedestrian traffic.

Note: Each of these criteria has a specific number of points assigned for each. Each category has a scoring threshold to measure whether the study area satisfies these criteria. If an area meets the scoring threshold of every category, then it would be expected that the area has the fundamental conditions necessary to have a successful, sustainable Main Street program. Please see the full report for the full scoring framework.

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