

Missouri Main Street Connection



DOWNTOWN STRONG
Building Resilient Economies

Request for Qualification

To provide support for small businesses and Main Street organizations in Missouri communities through services that create a supportive ecosystem by developing a multi-dimensional strategy capable of supporting economic recovery and enhancing community resilience.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Missouri Main Street Connection (MMSC) is seeking to select multiple service providers to provide services to strengthen local Main Street organizations and individual local businesses that have faced hardship due to the pandemic and/or are looking to grow their operations.

MMSC is seeking submission from qualified service providers to produce recommendations and tangible deliverables to Missouri Main Street communities that increase sales, increase revenue, and create jobs. **We encourage you to submit an RFQ that demonstrates how your qualifications enable you to assist Missouri communities to recover from COVID-19 through the requested services listed in this RFQ.** Full scope of services requested is to be selected from the *applicable areas of service* below.

Qualified service providers interested in providing recommendations and tangible deliverables to Missouri Main Street communities should submit RFQ's to MMSC, no later than 5:00 PM (CT), **June 1, 2021**. Submissions should be emailed to info@momainstreet.org, provided the RFQ is submitted in a PDF or Microsoft Word format.

WHO WE ARE

The mission of Missouri Main Street Connection is to provide communities with the knowledge and tools to economically and physically revitalize their downtowns.

Missouri Main Street Connection is the leading statewide nonprofit organization devoted to preservation-based economic development. Through the Main Street America™ movement and our partners, we empower community revitalization by celebrating, supporting, and sustaining Missouri historic commercial districts in both rural and urban settings.

Since 2005, MMSC has provided technical assistance and support for participating Missouri communities. Currently there are 195 participating communities receiving MMSC services. MMSC works to ensure that the downtown districts in Missouri's cities and towns remain

essential elements to their sense of community, their cultural heritage, and to the state's economy. Downtown revitalization is encouraged through economic development within the context of historic preservation. The primary purpose of a local Main Street® Program is to ensure the long-term success of the downtown by creating, educating, training, and empowering a comprehensive, professional, volunteer-based downtown revitalization organization.

BACKGROUND ON GRANT

In partnership with the Economic Development Administration (EDA), Missouri Main Street Connection (MMSC) is investing through the Downtown Strong: Building Resilient Economies grant in Missouri communities over the next two years particularly for increasing sales, revenue, capacity, and employment in Missouri communities, businesses, and Main Street organizations.

This program was prepared by Missouri Main Street Connection, Inc. using Federal funds under award number 05-79-06056 from the Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Economic Development Administration or the U.S. Department of Commerce.

This project will be partially funded with Federal funds from the United States Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration and therefore is subject to the Federal laws and regulations associated with that program.

SUBMITTER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- Design and develop services as described in the applicable areas of service to provide recommendations, tangible deliverables, and finished products to Missouri Main Street communities.
- If additional service providers are required for the proposed service, the submitter is responsible for obtaining their qualifications, collecting all contact and other requested information from each proposed provider, and communicating all relevant details to others involved. It is assumed that all providers listed on the submission have been contacted and have agreed to participate.
- If the consultant is selected, they will work with the MMSC staff to finalize content and cost.
- In their submissions, service providers shall describe their experience and provide project examples that demonstrate, to the satisfaction of MMSC, the expertise and ability of the service provider to provide the services they submit. The service provider should also include references with the submission.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Service provider must agree to all terms and conditions for consideration.

- **Submissions must be submitted electronically to info@momainstreet.org by 5pm CT on June 1, 2021.**
- **Service provider will serve as primary contact for the MMSC staff and must have a valid e-mail address that is checked regularly.**
- **The costs of preparation and delivery of the submission are solely the responsibility of the service provider.**
- **Upon submission, the submitter acknowledged that they will be performing these services in person in the communities. If the local community chooses, these services may have later start time.** (See timeline below)

MMSC reserves the right to reject any or all submissions, in whole or in part, to advertise for new submissions, to abandon the need for such services, and to cancel this RFQ at any time prior to the execution of the written contract.

By submitting an RFQ, the service provider agrees that MMSC may copy the submission for purposes of facilitating the evaluation or to respond to requests for public records and represents that such copying will not violate the rights of any third party.

By submitting an RFQ, the service provider agrees that it will not bring any claim or have any cause of action against MMSC based on any misunderstanding concerning the information provided herein or concerning MMSC's failure, negligent or otherwise, to provide the submitter with pertinent information as intended by this RFQ.

TIMELINE

The dates set forth below are for informational planning purposes only. MMSC reserves the right to change these dates.

May 7, 2021	By or before submit RFQ to potential service providers
June 1, 2021	Submissions due to MMSC
June 11, 2021	Select successful service providers
June 18, 2021	Agreements with MMSC, service provider & Grant recipient
July 1, 2021	Agreements returned to MMSC and finalized
July 1, 2021	Contract period begins on rolling basis
September 2023	Services delivered as part of contract must be complete

Notice of intent to award the contract will be sent by e-mail to all service providers submitting a timely RFQ. Negotiation and execution of contract with the successful service providers shall be completed before any work is started. If the apparent successful service provider fails to negotiate and deliver an executed contract by that date, MMSC may, in its sole discretion, cancel the award and award the contract to the next highest ranked service provider.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

MMSC will utilize an evaluation committee made up of board, advisory members and employees of MMSC to evaluate the RFQ's. Service providers may contact Gayla Roten in writing or via e-mail glroten@momainstreet.org with questions related to the interpretation of this RFQ and the procurement process.

The committee will consider all information provided in the submitted RFQ when making its recommendation and may consider relevant information from other sources. The evaluation committee's selection will be subject to the final approval of MMSC Director.

The submissions will be evaluated and a recommendation will be made using the following criteria, which are listed in no particular order:

- A. Past performance of work that is identical or similar to the scope of services identified (50%);
- B. Experience and references that demonstrate, to the satisfaction of MMSC, the expertise and ability of the service provider to provide the Scope of Services described in the RFQ (20%);
- C. The capacity of the service provider to complete responsibilities described in the Scope of Services (20%);
- D. Familiarity with the Main Street Approach® as the fundamental basis for historic commercial economic development (10%).

APPLICABLE AREAS OF SERVICE

Services, as described below, are designed to strengthen local Main Street organizations and individual local businesses that have faced hardships due to the pandemic. Local businesses and Main Street organizations that are approved by MMSC will be partnered with a corresponding consultant who will *facilitate one-on-one evaluation and produce recommendations, tangible deliverables, and final products as they apply to each individual service*. As you read through these services, you will see that there are overlapping services. This is designed as a way to meet each organization or business at their different experience levels and needs. Please select the options that best fit your qualifications and expertise. The communities that MMSC works with have been encouraged to think creatively about the services that would be most helpful for them in recovering from COVID-19's impact and increasing sales, revenue and job creation. ***Therefore, this list of potential services and examples listed below are not an exhaustive list of what you as a contractor can provide or may be asked to provide.***

Please check the boxes corresponding to the services you are qualified to provide.

Service Categories:

- o **Direct Entrepreneur Support in Retail and Restaurant Development**

Assessment of local business' current business model or operation to assist and plan for potential enhancements that will accelerate the business.

Potential Services:

- Business Evaluation – Review current operations and suggest enhancements through a report. Examples include but are not limited to: inventory open-to-buy; merchandising/store displays/lighting; food trends.
- Business Plan - Create or update a business plan to coincide with the goals of a business.
- Implementation of Business Solutions – Examine issues a business currently faces and develop a report that includes solutions and implementation plans. Examples include but are not limited to: local financing options; staff hospitality training; accounting best practices.
- Local Sourcing Identification – Identify products and materials for both retail and restaurant owners that can be found from a local source, in order to further support the local economy and reduce supply chain interruptions through consulting and a brief. Examples include but are not limited to: a restaurant working with a local bakery to provide bread for sandwiches on their menu; a retail store working with local producers to highlight locally made products in their store.

- Operational Growth Initiatives & Shifts** – Highlight in a plan to be executed necessary changes in a business to support continued growth and explore options for future business growth.
Examples include but are not limited to: plan to support the hiring of new staff to extend business hours; explore the option of business expansion; create a development plan to support business owner’s goal to open a second location.
- Business Promotions** – Train a business to develop in-store promotions and special events for image building to increase sales.
Examples include but are not limited to: promotions calendar; special events tailored to the business that support the annual sales goal; special menu items and demonstrations.

Website Development

Develop a website or update a current website in ways that will enhance a business or the Main Street organization for their goal to enhance their districts business environment.

Examples include but are not limited to: a downtown-wide online marketplace; a user-friendly business directory; updated system for advertising vacant space for new businesses.

Economic Vitality Toolkit

Creation of a set of internal plans to expand operations or transition their business and/or an organization to develop and expand how the organization and their Economic Vitality Committee works with current and potential business owners, as well as local property owners and developers.

Potential Services:

- Individual Business Marketing Plan** –Create a marketing plan.
- Individual Business Owner Succession Plan** –Develop a plan for a business owner to transition out of the day to day operations of the business in the future or find a buyer for their business.
- District-wide Business Marketing Plan** –Create a marketing plan that highlights all of the businesses in the Main Street organization’s district in order to bring more customers downtown. The plan will also showcase how the Main Street organization should highlight their economic impact to their local government entities as well as potential partners.
- District-wide Business Retention Plan** –Create a business retention plan with details on how the Economic Vitality committee and local Main Street organization can support businesses who are currently located in the district especially as they recover from the effects of the pandemic.

- District-wide Business Recruitment Plan –Create a business recruitment plan to be used by the Economic Vitality Committee in recruiting local entrepreneurs to open new businesses.
- District-wide Business Owner Succession Plan –Create a business owner succession plan and teach the local organization and Economic Vitality Committee what they should do to ensure that their local businesses have a succession plan in place for anchor businesses whose closure would greatly impact the community and downtown.
- District-wide Vacant Upper Story Development Plan –Create a vacant upper story development plan that will explore options for utilizing the upper stories of buildings for business development.
- District-wide Asset Mapping –Identifying current assets in the downtown based on organization and community input. Through this process, the organization will be able to strategically plan other projects and business support that enhances these assets.

o **E-Commerce Sales Modules**

Enhancing and expanding e-commerce in order to reach more customers and grow the business.

Potential Services:

- Business Social Media Marketing Plan –Create a social media marketing plan.
- Advertising Tactics –Analyze and assist a business in determining the best advertising tactics based on their business and goals.
- Social Media Engagement –Teaching a business how to create more engagement on their social media platforms and how to utilize this engagement to grow their business.
- Diversify Customer Base – Teaching a business through training and market driven strategies how to reach new customers in order to expand and diversify their customer base.
- Utilize & Increase Sales on Online Platforms – Teaching new techniques tailored to a business that will improve their online sales.

o **Micro-Business Development**

Provide training on how organizations can utilize the incubator approaches to test the market and growing local businesses, or work with a business owner interested in utilizing other local entrepreneurs to create or expand businesses that offer a place for new entrepreneurs to test the market for their products or ideas.

Potential Services:

- Pop-up Shop & Incubator Utilization – Develop a plan for a pop-up shop/business incubator program that will allow a Main Street organization to take an active role in helping establish and grow local businesses.

- District- wide Featured Artisans Utilization –Teach a Main Street organization how to work with businesses who are interested in using featured artisans to expand their product offerings—while supporting another local small business.
- Cooperative Business Models for Testing Market Potential –Teach a Main Street organization the benefits of entrepreneurs utilizing a cooperative business model to test the local market with potential new products, services, and businesses.
- Market & Demographic Analysis Training –Provide a market and demographic analysis of a community and downtown to the Main Street organization and Economic Vitality Committee. Then use that analysis to teach them how to analyze the data to create action steps for enhancing the local business mix.
- Individually Featured Artisans Utilization – Work with a business to implement an expansion of their product lines to include featured local artisans.
- Cooperative Business Models for Testing Market Potential – Explore cooperative business models with a business as a way to test the market for the potential of new products, services, and businesses.

o **Community Ecosystem Development**

Working with a Main Street organization to create plans and programming that will help the organization better assist its district and specifically the business community within the district following the Main Street Approach™.

Potential Services:

- Staff Transition Plan –Work with the local Main Street organization to develop a staff transition plan for each staff position.
- Partnership Agreements –Work with a Main Street organization to determine potential partners to build relationships with and how to approach these partners, as well as develop partnership agreements with them. Examples include but are not limited to: establishing or updating a service agreement with the local municipality or county government; entering into a formal partnership agreement with a local college/university or other major sponsor.
- Organization Policies and Procedures –Review a Main Street organization’s current policies and procedures and make recommendations to implement new systems that increases efficiency. Examples include but are not limited to: financial oversight plan; emergency plans; volunteer training.
- Building and Business Inventory –Work with a Main Street organization and their Economic Vitality committee to develop a building and business inventory as well as a plan for how to utilize the information collected effectively.
- Preservation Education & Advocacy Program –Evaluate current preservation education and advocacy work done by Main Street organization and develop new plans for the future.

- Communication Plan –Create an organization-wide communication plan with the Main Street organization that covers all modes of communication with the community and Main Street district with a focus on promoting businesses in the district.
- Amenity Plans to Promote Safety –Develop amenity plans that promote customer safety and address the concerns of district visitors that want to support downtown, but also have lingering safety concerns as many districts gradually return to normal.
- Prep Downtown for Incentives – Teach a Main Street organization what incentives are available at the state and federal level to encourage new development and businesses and formulate a plan for how to share the information and encourage new business development.

CONTENTS OF THE SUBMISSIONS

Submissions should demonstrate competency and capacity for how the service provider intends to conduct the work proposed. In addition, the submission should include a description of the key personnel who will be responsible to complete any services as well as their relevant experience, education, and, if applicable, any relevant certification(s) held by them. This RFQ should be filled out using the fillable spaces provided with a font size of no less than 12 point, and the entire RFQ should not exceed twenty-four (24) regular letter-sized (8.5" x 11") pages and five (5) attachments, which are not counted against the page count.

KEY PERSONNEL

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Experience, education, qualification, etc.:

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OTHER PERSONNEL (additional if applicable)

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Experience, education, qualification, etc.:

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Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Experience, education, qualification, etc.:

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Experience, education, qualification, etc.:

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Experience, education, qualification, etc.:

QUALIFICATION RATIONAL

In the space outline your plan and provide your ability to perform the services selected in this submission with any information that would strengthen your case. (Attach up to 5 project examples of prior work that would strengthen your submission.)

DISCLAIMER

This RFQ does not commit MMSC to award a contract or to pay costs incurred by submitter in the preparation of a submission. The MMSC may accept other than the lowest bid, waive minor informalities, and award a contract based only on the written submission without any discussions with submitter. Issuance of a contract may be subject to the approval of MMSC’s Board of Directors. The MMSC reserves the right to reject any or all submissions because of non- responsiveness to RFQ requirements, insufficient MMSC funds, evidence of unfair bidding procedures, financial insolvency of submitter, or if, in the opinion of MMSC’s Director, the best interests of Missouri will be served.