



BACKGROUND

On December 11, 2019, the Owosso Main Street/DDA (OMS) board held a Board Retreat in preparation for the 2020/21 programming year. The strategic planning process is used to assist with budget prioritization, strategic Planning, and to further focus the direction of the OMS Program.

The Board of Directors gathered together to discuss the future direction of the program and to set the goals and objectives for the Owosso Main Street/DDA organization & committees. Under the Main Street model, communities take a four-point approach to tackle downtown revitalization in a comprehensive way. The four points are Organization, Design, Economic Vitality, and Promotions. These points are meant to work together to create a healthy and attractive downtown with an engaged population, being served by a number of diverse businesses. This four-point approach is implemented through OMS' two committees: the Promotion & Outreach Committee; and the Design & Business Vitality Committee (each with their own sub-committees and task teams).

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

OMS is a volunteer-driven organization. While there is a paid employee in the form of an Executive Director, this employee is there to help guide the efforts of the board and program volunteers.

To give the committees direction, the OMS Board of Directors sets goals and objectives allowing each committee to work towards those goals through the lens of their committee's skill set. Under each goal, committees create specific projects to help achieve their objectives. These projects should have specific tasks, goals and a means to measure success.

Once projects are determined by committee members under board goals and objectives, it is up to the committees to create a work plan for each project. Work plans should include all steps necessary to complete the plan, including a start and finish time for each task, as well as a budget, and the person assigned to complete each task. One person should act as the chair for each project, taking the lead to make sure that the work plan is completed. Individual volunteers should be assigned to complete the individual tasks.

Once a work plan is completed, it is compiled with the other proposed project work plans to help determine an overall program budget. It is up to the board to either approve or deny a project and work plan, based on how the proposed project is slated to meet the board's objectives and how the work plan is laid out. Once a project is approved, the committee has the authority to carry out the tasks and complete the project without board interference.

MISSION STATEMENT

The board reviewed the mission statement developed for the organization during the 2015/2016 board retreat:

“Owosso Main Street’s mission is to foster an active and thriving downtown that is the heart of our community by promoting historic preservation and drawing both local residents and visitors to our city.”

The board agreed that this mission statement still fits the values of the organization and will remain for the 2020/2021 year.

VISION STATEMENT

The board reviewed the vision statement developed for the organization during the 2015/2016 board retreat:

“Our downtown, bright with promise and potential, captures the spirit of community. It is a gathering place to work, eat, play, and stay. Downtown Owosso is rich with opportunities in art, entertainment, business, and learning. Owosso Main Street unites individuals, businesses, and local government to revitalize our historic downtown. It is a comprehensive approach that focuses on community assets and partnerships to preserve and promote historic Owosso.”

The board agreed that this vision statement still fits the path the organization is planning, and will remain for the 2020/2021 year.

TRANSFORMATION STRATEGIES

In 2017, OMS worked with the National and Michigan Main Street Centers to develop new transformation strategies for our downtown. Using market data, community input, and reviewing all our community assets, the board of directors approved two transformation strategies for the downtown. They are as follows:

- *Day Trip Destination*
- *Increase Upper-Floor Residential Development/Density*

****For a deeper dive into OMS’ Transformation Strategy Development please review the National Main Street Center’s powerpoint presentation and OMS’ Transformation Strategy write-up.****

TAGLINE

During our 2018 Rebranding Services provided by the Michigan Main Street Center and the MEDC, OMS received and new brand logo, brand strategy, brand statement, and community tagline. The new Downtown Owosso tagline is: *“Gather Around”*

****For all rebranding information please review the Rebranding Report and/or YouTube presentation provided by Arnett-Muldrow.****

BOARD OF DIRECTORS SELF-ASSESSMENT

This year the Board of Directors did something different with the annual self-assessment. Each board member was asked to review the assessment and make notes, listing what they believe is the largest gap or rooms for improvement needed with the program.

During the Board Retreat members then had an open discussion, sharing their notes with one another. After much discussion, the Board determined that two board-level initiatives should take place over the next year. They are as follows:

1. Develop a comprehensive volunteer recruitment & retention strategy that increases the capacity of the overall program; and
2. Develop a fund generation structure/program (in addition to DDA & TIF funding) that secures adequate financial resources for building program capacity.

The board agreed to form new sub-committees around this effort to ensure completion of these initiatives.

2019/20 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & RESULTS

During 2019 Strategic Planning with the Michigan Main Street Center, the Board of Directors developed a new set of goals and objective. Each goal and objective, and their 2019/20 reported results are located in the table below:

NOTE: These objectives are still in-process

2019-2020 GOAL & OBJECTIVE EVALUATION	
Goal 1: CULTIVATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT DEMONSTRATES A COMMITMENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF BUSINESSES, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS IN DOWNTOWN OWOSSO.	
Objective	Result
Increase in # of available residential units.	3 residential units restored in 2019 (without any local support); However, as a result of OMS/DDA's new oversight of the City's Revolving Loan Fund - up to 17 new residential units are in the pipeline for development over the next 3-years - using revolving loan funding.
Increase the # of new businesses.	Downtown saw 4 new business join the district in 2019, however the district saw the loss of 7 businesses.
Increase in approved façade grant applications.	3 Facade Restorations were completed in 2019 using MEDC/CDGB Facade Grant funds, resulting in a total investment of over \$600,000.00.
Increase in building renovation and/or restoration	Over \$800,000.00 in investment within the OMS/DDA district, much of it influenced by the facade grant.
Increase in Main Street Volunteerism of City Staff and other community organizations	Our program has been able to maintain all of our gains in volunteerism that were accomplished last year. In addition, we have gained new volunteer relationships with one additional non-profit & one new church.

Active involvement of City in the Redevelopment Ready Community Program	OMS/DDA Executive Director is on the City's RRC development team along with the City Manager.
Evidence of improved internal communication between City Departments (including Main Street) and other community organizations	While there are still gaps in communication OMS/DDA has achieved substantial improvements between City Departments. Due mainly to the efforts & inclusivity the City Manager provides.
Goal 2: CREATE AND DEMONSTRATE A WELCOMING CULTURE OF HOSPITALITY FOR THE VISITORS, BUSINESSES, AND RESIDENTS OF DOWNTOWN OWOSSO	
Objective	Result
Increase training and educational opportunities to existing small businesses.	As a result of the new Match on Main Programming and a revitalized collaboration between OMS/DDA and the SBDC, over 9 downtown businesses have participated in business planning development and other trainings with the SBDC.
Increase in # of available residential units.	3 residential units restored in 2019 w/ an additional 17 in the works as a result the the RLF program.
Increase in gross sales; daily, monthly, annually	Sales amongst downtown businesses varied; overall sales reported slightly lower than year's past. OMS/DDA formed the Retail Event Committee in 2019 to help encourage/develop a "Event-based" retail model to boost future sales.
Increase in online digital outreach and connections	OMS/DDA worked with a local web developer in 2019 to create an online store for all downtown businesses. We are confident that this site will drastically increase our district's outreach. The site will go live in early 2020
Increase in real-estate sales/development activity	8 downtown buildings were sold in 2019 for a grand total of \$1,424,945.00
Goal 3: EXPAND AND SUSTAIN A MODEL OF "COOPETITION" AMONG DOWNTOWN OWOSSO BUSINESSES, ORGANIZATIONS AND ATTRACTIONS.	
Objective	Result
Evidence of cross-business referrals and promotion	OMS/DDA has observed an average of 6 cross-promotional posts per week amongst downtown businesses
Increase in collaborative, promotional strategies	In 2019 the Retail Event Committee increased their coordinated shopping events to 8 per year.
Increase in networks and networking events	OMS/DDA has continued our monthly business owners meetings; in the fall of 2019 conducted the implementation of a new initiative called "Entrepreneurial Ecosystem". The National Main Street Center led us in this formation which will be our platform of networking and business development for the near future.
Increase the # of new businesses	Downtown saw 4 new business join the district in 2019, however the district saw the loss of 7 businesses.

<p>Increase in collaboration and improved communication between Main Street, City Depts. and other community organizations</p>	<p>In the fall of 2019 conducted the implementation of a new initiative called “Entrepreneurial Ecosystem”. The National Main Street Center led us in this formation which will be our platform of networking and business development for the near future.</p>
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After review, the OMS board elected to keep the current 2019/2020 goals and update their objectives. The board indicated that there was still a lot to accomplish within the current goals but after two years of implementation objectives should/could be updated to better facilitate each goal and measure the program’s impact. A greater focus will be on objectives that better serve district stakeholders with greater tie to work plan outcomes.

2020/2021 Goals and Objectives are as follows:

2020-2021 GOALS & OBJECTIVES
<p>GOAL # 1:</p>
<p><i>CULTIVATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT DEMONSTRATES A COMMITMENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF BUSINESSES, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS IN DOWNTOWN OWOSSO.</i></p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Increase the # of residential units in the pipeline for development.</u> - Use current programming resources (local, private, & public) to better assist property owners in preparing properties for residential development. • <u>Increase the # touch-points with perspective and existing property owners.</u> - Develop a pipeline for persecutive business owners using entrepreneurial ecosystems best practices. Develop better training and communication tools to aid existing downtown businesses. • <u>Increase in approved façade grant applications.</u> - Work with the MEDC and local property owners to start a new round of CDGB facade grants. • <u>Increase in Main Street volunteerism throughout stakeholders.</u> • <u>Active, collaborative involvement between Owosso Main Street/DDA and City in moving the Redevelopment Ready Communities initiative forward (including the City’s Master Plan).</u> • <u>Evidence of improved internal communication between Owosso Main Street/DDA, district non-profits, and City Departments.</u>
<p>GOAL # 2:</p>
<p><i>CREATE AND DEMONSTRATE A WELCOMING CULTURE OF HOSPITALITY FOR THE VISITORS, BUSINESSES, AND RESIDENTS OF DOWNTOWN OWOSSO</i></p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Create a training and educational network to support small businesses.</u> - Using entrepreneurial ecosystems best practices and our program’s relationship with the SBDC, develop/find better educational tools to aid small businesses. • <u>Increase event-driven gross sales for small business with the district.</u>- Work with committee programming and business owners to ensure programming & events translate to larger sale numbers for downtown businesses.

- Develop a Downtown Hospitality training/structure for businesses within the district.
- Increase in online digital outreach and connections. - Continue to build out *downtownowosso.org* to include greater tourism elements and include all state required reporting criteria. In addition increase the number of businesses participating in the online store option.
- Increase in development activity and historic preservation within the district.
- Increase streetscape improvements within the district.
- Create a program that promotes the occupation of vacant spaces.

GOAL # 3:

EXPAND AND SUSTAIN A MODEL OF "COOPETITION" AMONG DOWNTOWN OWOSSO BUSINESSES, ORGANIZATIONS AND ATTRACTIONS.

OBJECTIVES:

- Help promote cross-business referrals and events within the district.
- Maintain/increase collaborative, promotional strategies
- Create new networking events for businesses within the district. Maintain monthly business owner's meetings.
- Work to expand coopetition to the boundaries of the district.
- Create coopetition and best practice educational opportunities.
- Improve communication between Main Street, City Depts. and other community organizations