



MSA GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

August 2025

AGENDA FOR TODAY

- +Who we are / what we do**
- +Federal updates for Main Street**
- +What local and state advocates can do**
- +How MSA can support you!**

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

We advocate for Main Streets!

- **Federal advocacy:** Legislation, regulation, appropriations, and coalition building.
- **State advocacy:** Working with our Coordinating Programs to defend and support.
- **Policy agenda development:** MSA's first-ever policy agenda is hot off the press.
- **Federal grant program tracking:** Finding money for Main Streets.

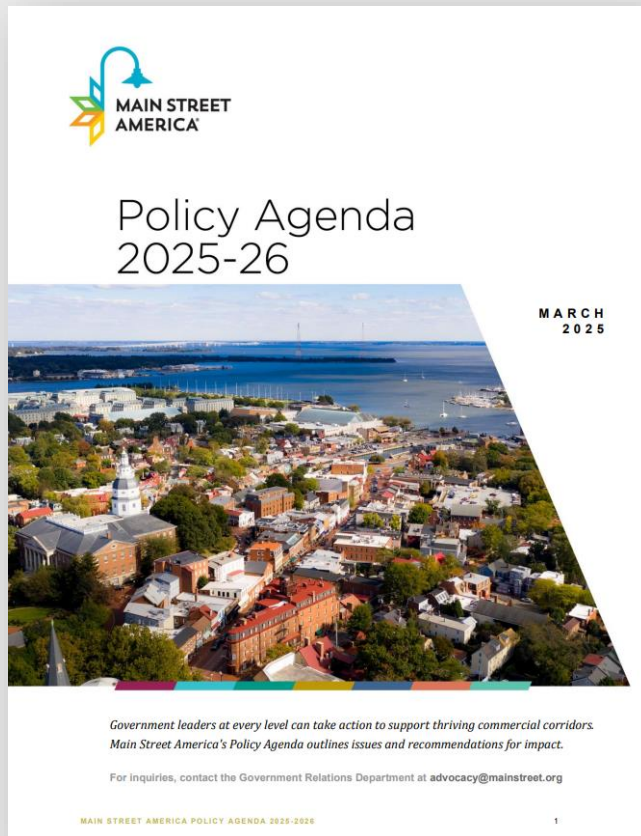


CURRENT GOALS FOR OUR TEAM

- + Building better connections to local elected officials.
- + Expanding our federal advocacy connection with local Main Streets.
- + Creating more tools and resources for local advocacy.
- + Focusing on research and storytelling on relationships with state DOTs.



Main Street America's 25-26 Policy Agenda



Main Street Programs
are Public-Private
Partners

Main Streets are Key to
Sustainable Community
Growth

Main Streets Are
Mixed-Use Spaces Ripe
for Preservation,
Rehabilitation, and
Reuse

Main Streets are the
Backbone of the Small
Business Economy

Main Streets are
People-Centered
Gathering Spaces and
Thoroughfares

Main Streets are
Communities of the
Future

Scan Me



COALITION BUILDING FOR MAIN STREET

MSA GR staff participate in numerous national-level coalitions aligned with our Policy Agenda. These coalitions help us keep an ear to the ground, build partnerships, and represent Main Streets on the national level.

Percent for Place Coalition

Preservation Partners Coalition

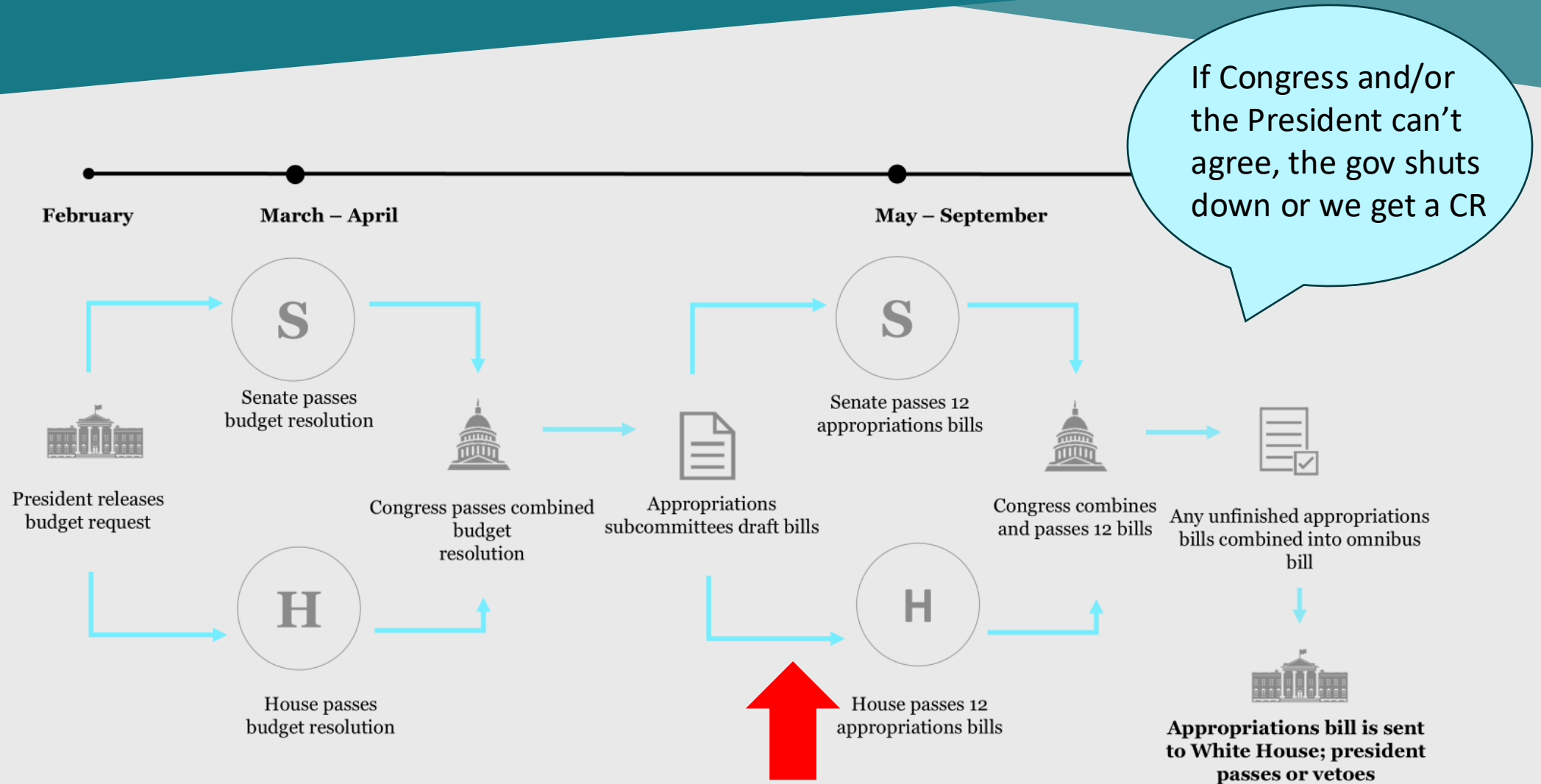
Community Development Block Grant Coalition

Economic Development Administration Stakeholders Coalition

Small Business Rapid Response Coalition

Complete Streets Coalition

UPDATE ON FY26 FEDERAL FUNDING



We are here (and behind schedule)

UPDATES: IMPORTANT PROGRAMS TO MAIN STREET

| Program | Agency | FY24/FY25 Enacted | FY26 President's Budget | House Bill Amount | Senate Bill Amount |
|---|--|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program | U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Community Planning and Development | \$3,300,000,000 | \$0 | \$3,300,000,000 | \$3,100,000,000 |
| Rural Community Development Initiative | U.S. Department of Agriculture | \$5,000,000 | \$0 | \$6,000,000 | \$5,000,000 |
| Rural Business Development Grants | U.S. Department of Agriculture | \$30,000,000 | \$0 | \$57,200, 000 | \$57,200,000 |
| Historic Preservation Fund | U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service | \$188,000,000 | \$11,000,000 | \$168,900,000 | \$168,246,000 |
| Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) | U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration | \$400,000,000 | \$0 | \$265,000,000 | \$360,000,000 |

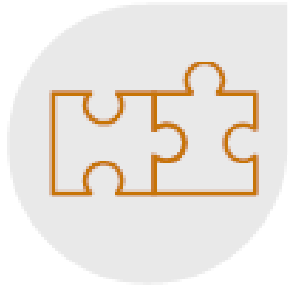
UPDATE: ONE BIG BEAUTIFUL BILL ACT

- + No changes to the Historic Tax Credit Program despite ardent advocacy.
- + Permanence of New Market Tax Credits and Opportunity Zones. In Oregon, 9 Main Streets will be eligible for designation as Opportunity Zones in 2026.
- + Considerations that this bill's provisions for Medicaid, Medicare, and SNAP will create stress on state budgets in future budget years.

A photograph of a historic street scene with multi-story brick and stone buildings. A dark, semi-transparent diagonal overlay covers the upper half of the image. The text 'Local and State Advocacy' is centered in yellow over this dark area.

Local and State Advocacy

MSA POLICY AGENDA – ISSUE #1



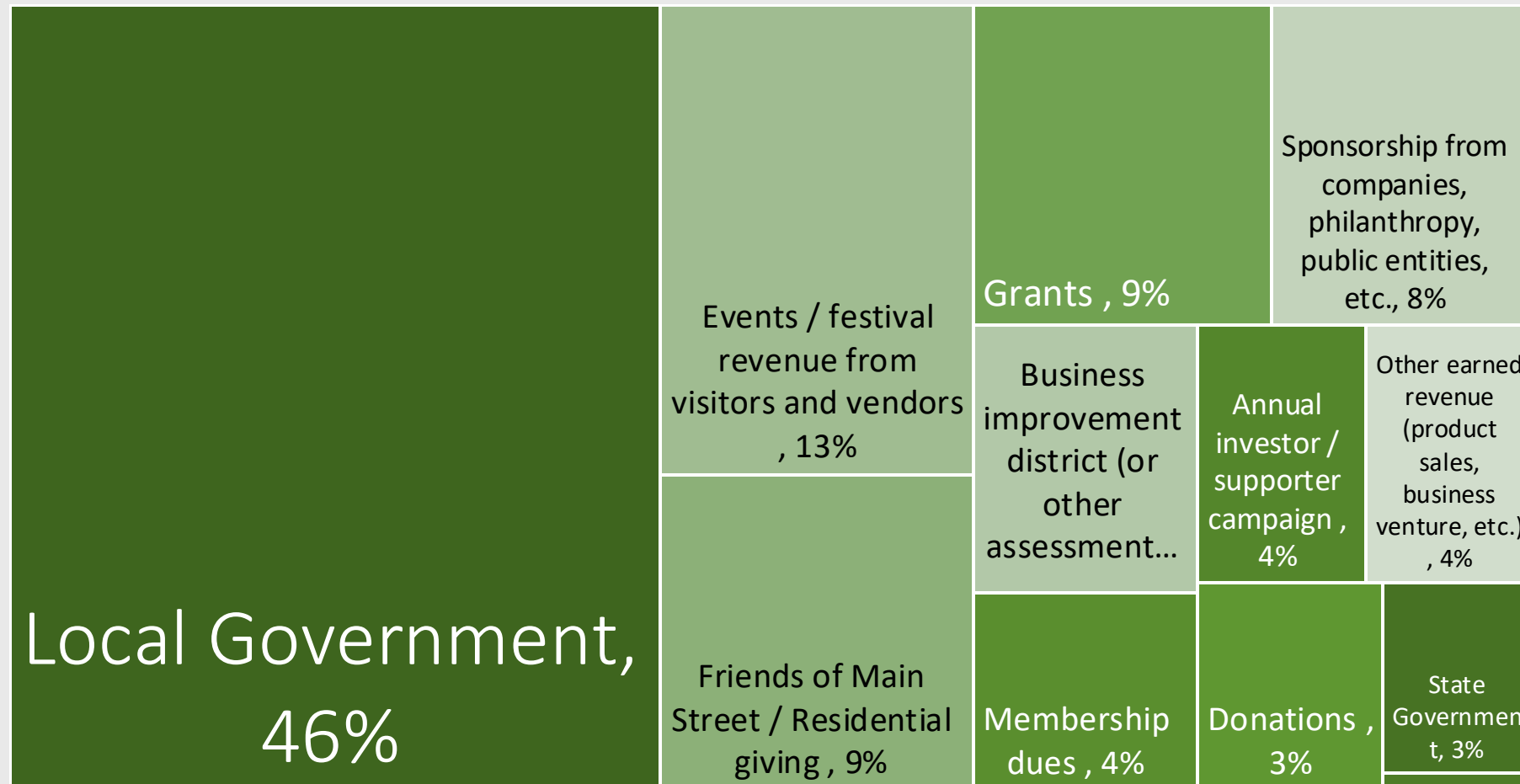
1. Main Street Programs are Public-Private Partners

Establishing the knowledge, skills, relationships, and dedicated staffing to pursue Main Street revitalization is critical. Main Street programs provide this needed capacity, both at the local level and through intermediaries called Coordinating Programs. These programs are key partners to the public sector in implementing strategies for district redevelopment. Government leaders can:

1.1: Develop the capacity of local Main Street organizations and Main Street Coordinating Programs.

1.2: Partner with Main Street programs to create district solutions for community-wide impact.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS A PRIMARY SOURCE OF FUNDING FOR LOCAL MAIN STREET BUDGETS



TIPS TO BE A SUCCESSFUL LOCAL ADVOCATE



Process: Understand your local budget process and attend council meetings.



Goals: Create a shared understanding of your advocacy goals with your board.



Messaging: Develop localized talking points using your stats and stories.



Relationships: Always be creating and sustaining relationships with elected officials and partners.

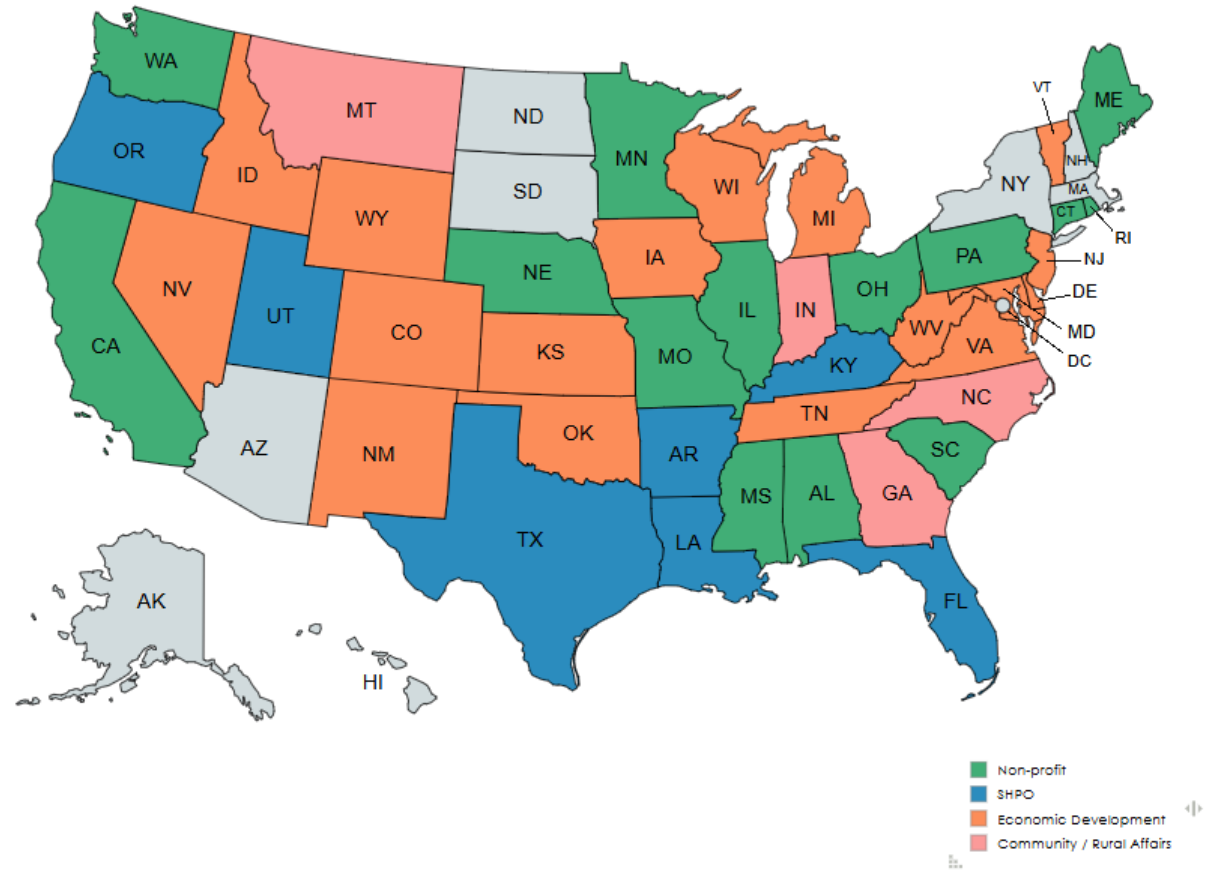
STATEWIDE PROGRAMS NEED ADVOCATES, TOO

There are 46 Main Street Coordinating Programs nationwide.

Every program has a unique budget composition and offers different state programs and incentives.

Most Coordinating Programs rely on funding from the state budget or other state sources for operations and grants.

In many states, local Main Street leaders have organized to advocate for the state.



OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

"The **Oregon Main Street Revitalization Grant** was not funded during the 2025 Oregon Legislative session. Typically, the grant cycles are every other year, so there is no funding for the 2027 grant cycle.

From the information we have gathered, the decision to remove the funding from the SB 5531 lottery bond package, was not due to opposition to the program. Several other factors may have influenced this decision.

- + A high number of new legislators who are not as familiar with the program.
- + Lack of testimony to support the funding.
- + Competition from critical infrastructure projects including water, sewer, and housing. Some of these projects would have typically been funded by federal grants like Community Development Block Grant and others offered by USDA, programs that are now uncertain or unavailable."

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

Several other factors may have influenced this decision.

- + A high number of new legislators who are not as familiar with the program.
 - Regular outreach to legislators (site visits, calls) to explain the Oregon Main Street program and the OMSRG – even if you have not been awarded, the potential to be awarded is also something to discuss. Invite Sheri.
 - A day at the State Capitol to raise awareness about OMS and the OMSRG.
- + Lack of testimony to support the funding.
 - Track the budget process to be aware of when hearings may be. 2-3 local leaders be ready in advance with testimony or letters of support about the value of the program.
- + Competition from critical infrastructure projects including water, sewer, and housing. Some of these projects would have typically been funded by federal grants like Community Development Block Grant and others offered by USDA, programs that are now uncertain or unavailable.
 - Acknowledge this concern. This is a difficult decision for the legislature to balance.
 - Make legislators aware that CDBG and USDA funding cuts are not currently likely.
 - Raise awareness to the strong return on investment for Main Street projects.

ADVOCACY RESOURCES

- + Advocacy Community of Practice
 - State Advocacy Materials
- + Advocacy Toolkit
 - [Mainstreet.org/resources/governmentrelations](https://mainstreet.org/resources/governmentrelations)
- + Policy and Funding Guides
 - Landuse and Governance
 - Federal Funding and Earmarks
 - State Capital Outlays



MSA HILL DAY 2026

save
the date

FEB 10-12



**MAIN STREET
AMERICA®**

Nationally recognized.
Locally powered.™

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