

How a Main Street works

What is a Main Street?

Main Street America (MSA) has been helping to revitalize historic commercial districts for more than 35 years. Made up of small towns, mid-sized communities and urban commercial districts, MSA represents the broad diversity that makes this country so unique. The Main Street Approach™ offers community-based revitalization initiatives with a practical, adaptable framework for downtown transformation that is easily tailored to local conditions and grows with them over time.

As a Main Street America™ Affiliated program, the Upper Georgia Avenue Main Street is part of a national network of more than 1,200 neighborhoods and communities who share both a commitment to creating high-quality places and building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development.

What is the Upper Georgia Avenue Main Street (UGAMS)?

The UGAMS is a community-based organization that will utilize public-private partnerships and community volunteers to build on neighborhood assets and implement strategies to support and improve the business corridor in the neighborhoods within its defined boundaries. This will be achieved through retaining and revitalizing current small businesses, recruiting other small businesses to the neighborhood corridor, beautifying streetscapes to encourage commercial uses, as well as engaging community members and District agencies.

What are the boundaries?

The UGA Main Street area runs along Georgia Avenue, NW from Missouri Avenue to Eastern Avenue, including collaborating with The Parks at Walter Reed development for the Fern Street to Aspen Street portion.

Who leads the UGAMS organization?

Utilizing the nonprofit and Main Street methodology that has worked across DC and the nation, we have recruited a committed and diverse board of directors that is representative of the Shepherd Park, Takoma, Brightwood and Manor Park communities located along the Upper Georgia Avenue economic corridor. The Main Street will be launched by this small founding board of individuals coming primarily from the neighborhood associations and community organizations that are already engaged on the Upper Georgia Avenue business corridor.

As the organization develops and the Main Street is activated, there will be additional Board seats for neighbors and business owners, as well as committee positions.

How is it funded?

The Center for Nonprofit Advancement received a grant totaling \$160,000 in fiscal year 2020 to manage the UGAMS program. Funds are disbursed over a 12-month period as expenses are incurred. These funds will be used to support the salary for the executive director, sub-awards for small business capacity building, training, façade improvements, organizing and advertising events, a retail survey and overhead for administrative functions. Additional funding is expected in the years to come as part of the District's annual budget process, but likely less than the FY 2020 level. Additional resources will be sought to support the UGAMS program via fundraising, donations and in-kind contributions.

How is the Executive Director selected?

In December 2019, a call for candidates to serve as the Executive Director was announced via community listservs, social media, in-person, on job boards, and via the Center. The deadline to submit was January 22. The UGAMS Board of Directors and Center leadership will review applications and conduct interviews to select the best candidate with the most drive and experience to lead the program.

How are Board members selected?

As part of the application process, a founding Board of Directors consisting of community volunteers was needed. These community members were selected to serve as Board Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary based on their proven ability to work within the community, bring certain professional and interpersonal skills, achieve results for their neighborhoods, collaborate with others, and help launch the program on a shortened timeline. UGAMS is actively searching for additional Board members (up to a total of 15 volunteers) to participate as well.

How will members of the community be engaged?

The UGAMS program is inclusive of all residents, small businesses, and nonprofit organizations within its boundaries. Engagement will occur through community meetings and events, social media, blogs, email and print resources, as well as personal interactions with the Executive Director, Board of Directors, and Center for Nonprofit Advancement.

Still have questions?

Learn more at dslbd.dc.gov/service/DCMS or nonprofitadvancement.org/partnerships/upper-georgia-avenue-main-street. For specific questions, contact **Carla Trussell** at carlat@nonprofitadvancement.org.

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